

MYTHBUSTERS

Parent Session

VSA College Leadership Workshop

Talk Flow

- Financial Planning
- College Application Process Myths
- Life in College and Personal Reflections

MENTAL HEALTH

SCHOOL

HOME

WORKLOAD

PEER PRESSURES

LOVE

COMMUNICATION

SUPPORT
&
ACCEPTANCE



College admissions process

"How can I assist my student through the college process?"



Financial Aid

- FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
 - Completed starting Oct 1st of Senior Fall
 - Requirements for completing FAFSA:
 - income documents by both the parent and the student if they are dependent (w2 and 1040)
- CSS Profile
 - For non-government financial aid such as grants, loans, and scholarships
 - o Check College Board's website for participating private institutions
- SAR (Student Aid Report)
 - Used by schools to determine eligibility for federal financial aid
 - such as Pell Grants and work-study jobs
 - o Contains EFC (expected family contribution)

Grants

- money given to pay for college that does NOT have to be repaid
 - example: Federal Pell Grant, TEXAS Grant
- grants may be funded by government or by private institutions
- Eligibility factors:
 - financial need of student
 - family income
 - academic record

Scholarships

- Scholarships are given based on a number of factors
 - academic record, major, race, age, extracurricular activities
- Your senior's high school counselor can provide more information on scholarships and application process
- Most colleges have their own scholarship programs
 - look into scholarships for major/departement
- Important to apply EARLY!

Loans

- Loans must be repaid, usually after graduation, or if student leaves college or drops to below half-time status
 - subsidized loans
 - awarded based on financial need; government pays interest until student begins repayment
 - unsubsidized loans
 - not awarded based on financial need; interest accrues until full repayment
- son or daughter may be required to attend a loan session to receive info on responsibilities to lender

Work Study Programs

- Can be applied for during the FAFSA process
- If eligible/granted:
 - will be indicated on SAR
 - student will be notified by school's financial aid department
- Student can hold a part-time job while going to school, either on or off campus

Myth #1

The most “elite” school is the best one to attend.

School Rank \neq School Quality

- It's not about the numbers of the school, it is:
 - resources school offers
 - student activities and opportunities (social, cultural, academic)
 - financial support
 - environment (physical & social)
- Close research of school and visits are necessary

Myth 2

Only test scores and GPA matter to get into college.

Grades and What Matters Most

- Grades alone will not get you in
- Involvement plays a large role in their marketability
- Consistency demonstrates Dedication & Passion
- Factors: Academics, Essay, SAT, Extracurriculars, Uniqueness, Above and Beyond

Demonstrated Interest

- Visit Campus
- Email Representatives
- Research the School

Myth 3

Personal Statement Doesn't Matter

- Content and quality matter.
- By the time you apply, everything is set in stone... so the essay is your last chance to shine!
- Tips:
 - Be honest and genuine – it should come from the heart.
 - Have close friends and family proofread/edit it. Sell yourself!

Myth 4

The more extracurricular activities, the better.

- Breadth vs depth
- Alignment with goals
 - Service, technical, academic, etc.
- Some diversity

Myth 5

Certain extracurricular activities look better than others.

- **Passion** shows through the clearest
- How you communicate it

Myth 6

*A high SAT/ACT score guarantees admission.
A low score is impossible to overcome*

- Yes and No
- TX Public Schools: Assured Admissions depends on both SAT and GPA
- Private Schools: Holistic Admissions
- You never know

Myth 7

Only junior year matters.

Completely false

Admissions officers look at trends and the pathway throughout school

Tips for Fam

Development & Encouragement

- Support student's development in the following:
 - studies
 - passions
 - extracurriculars
 - well-roundedness (skills at home, in life, etc.)
 - artisanship

General College Considerations

- Quality of Life
- Student Population
- Financial Aid Packages and Policies
- Clubs available
- What makes it unique or appealing (beyond name)

Social & Personal Skills Your Student *Should* Learn

- What do you think they should learn in college?
 - example: how to wash clothes

Average Day of a College Student

- 12-16 hours, full time
- lives on campus/some commute
- extracurricular activities (sports, clubs, societies, Greek life)
- lots of studying, planning
- moderate to very little sleep
- outrageous eating habits (we are always hungry!)

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Personal perspectives from the presenters

Be involved!

- Step out of your comfort zone, you'll surprise yourself in so many ways!
- Take genuine interest, get out there and participate!
- Interest clubs
- Honor societies
- Greek life
- Religious affiliations
- College life is what you make it out to be

Planning

- Planning is absolutely crucial.
 - for the present, near future, and life!
- Advisors are always there to help.
 - get to know your advisor and maintain a professional relationship
- Use and exhaust all resources on campus provided!

Establish relationships

- Advisors & teachers are your BEST friends!
- Get to know teachers and staff around campus. They WANT you to succeed and know just how to help!
- Key to the real world is establishing good connections while in college!
- Clubs and societies are important and can complement/enhance achievements

In the end...

- College selection and acceptance criteria are not easily defined
- It takes a bit of research and talking with current students to truly understand and assess the school