



THE COLLEGE
WOMAN'S CLUB
OF WESTFIELD



Getting a Head Start:

Preparing for College Admissions
in 8th, 9th, and 10th Grades



Introductions

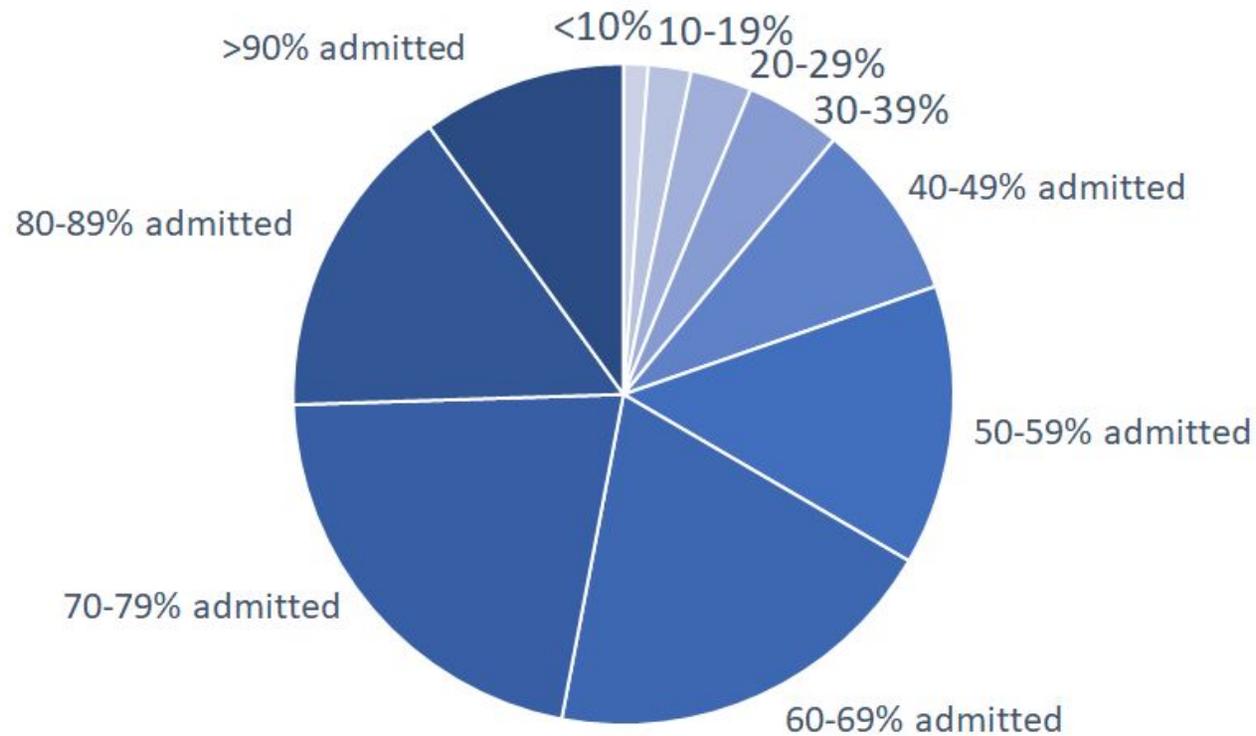
- **Anne Wargo**, President, College Woman's Club of Westfield
- **Susana MacLean**, President, MacLean College Counseling
- **Tim Lear**, Dean of College Admissions, Pingry School



Agenda

- Most colleges accept most of their applicants
- What do colleges want?
- What do colleges want to know about you?
 - Academics
 - Extracurriculars
 - Character
- What kind of college environment is right for you?
- What NOT to worry about now

Most Colleges Accept Most of Their Applicants



Pew Research analysis, 2017 data



What Do Colleges Want?

A community, a well-rounded group of interesting individuals.
There is no single, right, type of applicant.





What Do Colleges Want to Know About You?

ACADEMICS

What Kind of Student Are You?

EXTRA-CURRICULARS

What Engages You?

CHARACTER

What Kind of Person Are You?

What Do Colleges Want to Know About Students?



ACADEMICS

What Kind of Student Are You?

EXTRA-CURRICULARS

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What Kind of Person Are You?

Course Rigor

Honors, Advanced Placement (AP),
International Baccalaureate (IB)

Course Selections

5 Core Academics, Electives

Grades

Test Scores

SAT or ACT, AP tests



Academics: What Kind of Student Are You?

8th Grade

- Work on time management.
- Develop good study habits.
- Learn as much as you can, laying the foundation for doing well in high school.
- Select the most challenging classes you can handle for 9th grade. A B+ in a harder class is better than an A in an easier class.
- Choose high school electives you think you might enjoy. Try something new.

9th Grade

- Pace yourself. Work ahead on long-term projects.
- Keep an open mind about academic subjects.
- Form study groups.
- Go to math and writing labs.
- Ask your teachers for help.
- Use Khan Academy and YouTube videos to help with challenging material.
- Make a tentative plan for courses for all 4 years.
- Register for 10th grade PSAT.

10th Grade

- Participate in class discussions. Ask good questions. Contribute.
- Get to know your teachers.
- Take the PSAT as a baseline, with NO prep.
- Refine your 11th grade courses selections, adjusting rigor and electives choices.
- Register for 11th grade PSAT.
- Spring or summer, take practice (not official) ACT and SAT tests. Choose one.

What Do Colleges Want to Know About Students?



ACADEMICS

What Kind of Student Are You?

EXTRA-CURRICULARS

What Engages You?

CHARACTER

What Kind of Person Are You?

What Engages You?

Sports, Fitness, Nutrition

Drama, Music, Art, Crafts, Fashion

Science, Tech, Engineering, Math, CS

Journalism, Politics, Social Justice

Creative Writing, Literature, Film, Media

History, Psychology, Languages

Environmental Science, Resource Mgt.

Business, Marketing, Social Media

Medicine, Agriculture, Veterinary Med.

What Do Colleges Want to Know About Students?



ACADEMICS

What Kind of Student Are You?

EXTRA-CURRICULARS

What Engages You?

CHARACTER

What Kind of Person Are You?

Explore and Deepen Your Interests

Relevant Courses in School

School Sports and Clubs

Volunteer Work, Tutoring, Coaching

Hobby, Project, Self-Directed Learning

News Outlets, Social Media, Websites

Start a Business or Fundraiser

Individual and Team Competitions

Paid Work, Internships, Job Shadowing

Family Responsibilities

Summer Pre-College Program

Research with a Professor



Extra-Curriculars: What Engages You?

8th Grade

- Think about what you like to do, what interests you.
- Explore listings of clubs and sports at your high school.
- Look into activities and organizations outside school.
- Identify interests you can pursue on your own.
- Take a chance and decide to try something new and different next year.

9th Grade

- Try lots of different activities. Cast a wide net.
- Connect with others who share an interest.
- Attend meetings and practices consistently.
- Volunteer to help with tasks. Make yourself useful.
- Look for resources to learn more: podcasts, YouTube, social media accounts, online courses.

10th Grade

- Eliminate activities you didn't really enjoy last year.
- Focus: add ways to deepen and explore a few interests.
- Contribute to your clubs and teams perhaps earning a leadership position in 11th or 12th grade.
- Enter competitions for a skill or talent (skateboarding, poetry, art, rock climbing).
- Start a small business, project, or volunteer effort.

What Do Colleges Want to Know About Students?



ACADEMICS

What Kind of Student Are You?

Intellectual Curiosity

Initiative, Problem-Solving

Leadership

EXTRA-CURRICULARS

What Engages You?

Creativity, Innovation

Maturity, Responsibility

Resilience, Persistence

CHARACTER

What Kind of Person Are You?

Kindness, Compassion

Likeability, Collaboration

Individuality



Character: What Kind of Person Are You?

8th Grade

- Know that you can have multiple interests and talents. You don't have to fit a "type."
- Know that in high school, there will be more freedom for you to be you.

9th Grade

- Be curious.
- Be open-minded about others. A new friend could open up a new interest.
- Have multiple friend groups.
- When a class is difficult, talk with the teacher, show them you want to learn.
- Be respectful of classmates.
- Don't be afraid of talking with upperclassmen. They can become mentors.

10th Grade

- Make a good impression on your school counselor.
- Look for opportunities to help others and exhibit leadership, in and out of school, whether it comes with a title or not.
- Ask good questions in class, offer interesting opinions.
- Talk to your teachers outside of class, get to know faculty advisers for your clubs.
- If you have an interest or skill, share it with others.

What Kind of College Environment is Right for You?



Big, medium, or small?

In a City, Suburb, Town or Rural Area?

Fast-paced or quiet?

University? Or Liberal Arts College?

Academically Intense, or More Laid Back?

Specialized in Art, Engineering, or Business?

How much Greek Life?

Co-Ed or Single Sex?

Artsy and Off-beat or Lots of School Spirit?

Religious Affiliation or None?

Small Classrooms or Big Lecture Halls?

What Kind of College Environment is Right for You?



8th Grade

- Tag along on older siblings' college tours and info sessions. Pay attention, but don't stress.

9th Grade

- What kind of learner are you? Do you love class discussions? Or do you prefer to sit in the back of the room? Do you learn better through hands-on experience or by reading and listening to lectures?

10th Grade

- Visit a handful of local colleges and universities. A big state school, a small liberal arts college; in a city, in the suburbs, in a small town, in a rural area.
- If you might want to study a specialized field, visit a specialized college like an engineering, business, or art school.
- Which types of schools felt more "right" for you?



What NOT to Worry About Now

- Your college major.
 - Think about what might interest you, but it's way, way too soon to commit.
 - You will probably change your mind several times, including in college.
 - Many majors can be selected in sophomore year of college.
- Your career.
 - Some careers require certain majors: engineering, education (sometimes), nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, visual and performing arts, computer science.
 - Other careers do **not**: business (yes, business!), education (sometimes), medicine, veterinary medicine, the law, almost anything else.
 - Your career may not exist yet!



Questions

Moderator

- **Anne Wargo**, President, College Woman's Club of Westfield

Panelists

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- **Susana MacLean**, President, MacLean College Counseling

Contact Us



THE COLLEGE
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To join the **College Woman's Club of Westfield**

<https://cwclubwestfield.org/join/#join>



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Sample Students

History Buff

- Dreamed of being a high school history teacher.
- Consumed books, documentaries, and podcasts on history.
- Frequently travelled to historic sites and battlegrounds.
- Volunteered at a local historical site, dressed in period costume, and taught visiting children about Colonial times.



Sample Students

Avid Birder

- Studied field guides and learned about migration patterns and habitats.
- Travelled hours every weekend to see new species of birds.
- Submitted species sightings data to scientific database.
- Volunteered at a hawk watch site to collect data for scientists.
- Wrote articles for the state Audubon magazine.



Sample Students

Business and Fashion Enthusiast

- Wanted to work on the business side of haute couture in Paris.
- Designed and sewed smocked dresses for little girls.
- Created an Etsy site, photographed, priced, listed, and sold dresses.
- Tracked costs of materials, sewing machines, Etsy fees.
- Took a two-week summer business program.



Sample Students

Vintage Auto Aficionado

- Loved vintage cars.
- Tracked online vintage car sales and pricing trends.
- Volunteered at a transportation museum.
- Took a one-week summer course on car design.
- Advised extended family members on car purchases.
- Maintained and repaired two family cars.