Five Factors Colleges Look for in High School Students



1. High School Curriculum & Performance

High achieving students should take on a challenging high school curriculum. It is recommended to take AP and honors classes, as an advanced curriculum is preferred to straight A’s in less challenging courses. In addition to curriculum and grades, colleges also look at students’ scores on the SAT or ACT.

2. College Application Essay

A well-written application essay that offers insight into your personality, values, and goals can go a long way in helping you stand out during the admissions process.

3. Extracurricular Activities & Involvement

Students can standout by displaying passionate involvement in a few extracurricular activities, especially those that demonstrate leadership, initiative, and community impact. Colleges like to see angled and proficient students with focused passions, not necessarily well-rounded students who are marginally adept in many different things.

4. Demonstrated Enthusiasm in Attending the University

Whether through the college application essay or by directly connecting with admission representatives, students should proactively demonstrate their enthusiasm in attending the colleges they are interested in attending.

5. Letters of Recommendation

These letters can provide evidence of your intellectual curiosity, positive character traits, skills, and achievements.