

BVPAGE Meeting 10/5/18

Board members: Jeannie, Heidi, Christy, Erin, Cathryn

Attendance including board members: 15

OPEN FORUM/COLLEGE ADMISSIONS:

- I. KGTC This weekend. Parent day is Sunday. BVPAGE is hosting a student panel similar to what we did last Spring. Heidi Mann and Tracy Elford will also present the BVPAGE acceleration survey results. There are a lot of breakout sessions to choose from.
- II. SEAC – Calendar is up and on the SEAC section of Blue Valley School District website. They have parent support meetings as well. They also host a special needs summer resource fair. They are doing a talent show this year as well and are looking for submissions.
- III. Next meeting is November 15th. Diane McLean will talk about executive skills and functioning. Evening meeting at 7pm.
- IV. OPEN FORUM
 - a. COLLEGE ADMISSIONS:
 - i. Book recommendations:
 1. U.S. News and World Report “Best U.S. Colleges” – There’s a to-do checklist in it starting from Freshman year. Has lots of demographics. Top 20 are usually the same. Available at library and through most gifted teachers.
 2. *What Colleges Don’t Tell You and Parents Don’t Want You to Know* – only for 8th grade or Freshman
 3. *Where You Go is Not Who You’ll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania*
 - ii. Teaching life skills before they leave home checklist
 - iii. Colleges understand that class ranking is not a predictor of success if you come from a great school
 - iv. Set up a separate email account for your child to manage college admission information otherwise their regular email will get overwhelmed.
 - v. Early decision: “I want to go to THIS school.” You can only apply early decision to one college because you’re committing to go there if they say yes. It is binding. May limit your availability to scholarships because they know you’re willing to pay full price. Some have an October deadline, most November 1st. Hear by mid-December.
 - vi. Early decision 2: Same thing, just different time of year when you apply. Apply Jan. 1st and hear by mid-Feb.
 - vii. Early action: Applying early regular admission to find out if you get in. Should choose this option if student is ready to apply and happy with testing and grades. During this time it is a smaller pool of applicants and you are often applying with the athletes. Helps relieve stress. You can wait after an acceptance to see what else comes in. It isn’t binding. You can wait to see what scholarships come in and can still apply regular admission. Not all schools offer it. More access to scholarships.

- viii. Rolling deadline – lot of state schools have them. You can apply during later dates but housing and scholarships are most likely gone. Often starts right when Senior year starts.
 - ix. FAFSA opens October 1st for seniors. There are ways to get around filling out financial aid forms but it's good to fill them out for scholarship purposes. Be consistent with the numbers you provide when you apply to different schools.
 - x. There is starting to be a shift toward a focus on social and soft skills from academic stats. Try to highlight them when possible.
- b. SCHOLARSHIPS
- i. Websites for smaller scholarships, one at a time:
 1. Bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search
 2. Petersons.com
 3. Cappex.com
 4. Chegg.com/scholarships#
 5. Fastweb.com
 6. Collegenet.com
 7. Scholarshipmonkey.com
 - ii. Counselor's Office is a great resource for extra scholarships
 - iii. Universities will offer scholarships based on GPA, test scores, etc. Many require students to maintain a 3.25 GPA while in college
 - iv. Student can also get participation scholarships for band, choir, orchestra, etc.
- c. TESTING
- i. Often now on SAT schools will ask for subject tests to supplement
 - ii. Take the PSAT as many times as school offers it – it prepares them very well for SAT.
 - iii. Testing coaches can help with managing the stress and focus factor as much as the academic help
 - iv. Ask gifted teachers for tutor/coaching recommendations if you think your child needs help beyond gifted class. Need the right personality fit.
 - v. Some schools will actually list how much money each ACT score equals. It can help motivate your child to retake to improve the score.
 - vi. Wait to send your scores if you think your child will want to retake them
 - vii. National Merit is one test taken on the same day nationwide. Same as PSAT. Looks good on the applications even if you don't get in the top group. Top 1000 in U.S. become National Merit Scholars and can get scholarship money.
 - viii. If you have a 504, you need to show you've been using it so you can get what you need on standardized tests. 504s do not go to college with students automatically. You don't have to take it if you want it kept private.
- d. GIFTED PROGRAM IN HIGH SCHOOL IS A VALUABLE RESOURCE
- i. Make sure your kid uses gifted education to help them prepare!!! Gifted resources are available even if not taking a gifted class
 - ii. Some schools offer weeks of tutoring for National Merit Test (PSAT). The experience of taking it is great. Worth it even if they don't get finalist.

- iii. Ask your school if English/AP classes help with college essays.
- iv. They will help your child get the right recommendations from the right teachers
- v. It's better to challenge yourself and take honors classes. A B in honors means more than an A in regular. Colleges will see you are pushing yourself.

e. ADVICE FROM PARENTS

- i. Do what works for your family, not what you're supposed to do.
- ii. Pick one of the two tests between SAT and ACT and focus on it.
- iii. Be careful doing early decision if you want/need financial aid. May be better to wait until early action or general admission
- iv. Look at summer programs of places they are interested in so they can get a taste of that and get on the school's radar early – gifted teachers can help identify those. Many schools also do a "student for a day" program as well.
- v. Find out about the culture on campus. Find ways to immerse in "a day in the life" so they can see what the people are like. Asking how housing is organized.
- vi. There are forms through the school for kids to decide what access parents have to their grades, schedule, medical, etc. Try to get medical power of attorney for them once they turn 18 so you can make decisions quickly if needed. Can do releases with their pediatrician for prescriptions.
- vii. If your child is not motivated to see the value of doing well in high school – take them on a college visit early (around 12 or 13) so they get it.
- viii. Junior year is the hardest because of AP, feeling pressure of starting to make decisions. It's a pressure cooker. Let them cry and freak out. Give them a pass if they are so stressed. Where you go in not who you'll be.
- ix. Don't ask their friends where they're going or if they've heard.
- x. Wherever they go, own it. Get involved. It's ok to go to a state school. You make what you want of your education. It's more important to love where you go. Let's find the school that's the right fit for you.
- xi. Parents can get competitive and annoying. Let them know this is ultimately your child's decision and not yours.
- xii. Community college is still a good option, but in some cases you need to make sure it will be a good fit for where they may want to go to later culture-wise. Scholarships can be harder for transfer students, but it may be worth it for the savings on sending them to community college for 2 years.
- xiii. It's ok to take a gap year and work. May make you a better candidate for acceptance in some cases.