



College Admissions 101

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Key Takeaways

- Your teen *will* go to college if they want to.
- Authenticity is key.
- Combine practicality with passion.
- Getting into a school that is *the best fit for **you*** is more important than getting into a school that a ranking system tells us is best.
- College admissions is unpredictable and ever-changing.
- Your child will determine their future, not the name of the school on their diploma.

Preparing Your Teen for College

COLLEGE STUDENT

VS.

BABY

AN EXAMINATION OF ATTRIBUTES



Poor personal grooming
Likes strange annoying music
Erratic eating habits

Passes out during lectures
Often stressed and frustrated
Would rather play than learn
Likely to protest publicly

Clothes provided by parents
Rapid weight gain
Wakes up in a pool of drool



Traits of a well-prepared college applicant:

- Independent
- Self-motivated
- Genuinely curious and eager to learn
- Respectful, responsible, and organized
- Healthy habits – both mental and physical

Things that every student “must” do

1. Develop independence and self-motivation
2. Develop strong study habits
3. Develop communication skills and teamwork skills
4. Be given space enough time and space to grow, to develop social skills, to play, and to follow their curiosity and passions
5. Read. Read. Read. Read. Read! Did I mention reading?
6. Develop strong writing skills
7. Explore extracurriculars (Dr. Riley’s rule of 3 for each year for middle schoolers: one activity that explores a career or that is academic; one activity that promotes physical activity; and one activity that promotes social skills, the arts, or other skills such as teamwork or public speaking)

What is considered in College Admissions?

Academics

Extracurriculars

Test Scores

Personal
Qualities

Misc Factors

Academics

The most important consideration in college admissions is your academic history.

❑ Course Rigor

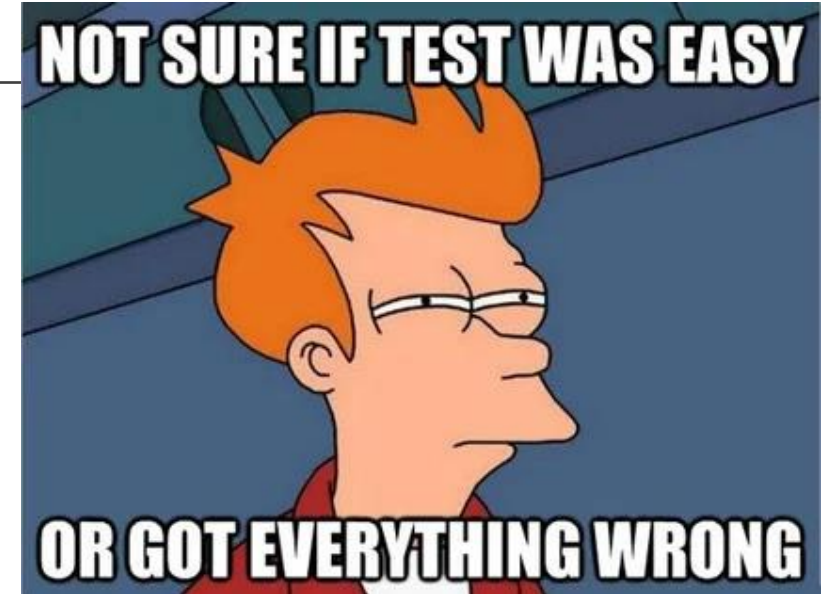
- ❑ Is this student curious and passionate about learning?
- ❑ Did this student take courses that challenged them to grow and learn?
- ❑ Did this student take courses that will prepare them for college-level work?
- ❑ AP Curriculum, IB Curriculum, Honors Courses, and Running Start Courses

❑ GPA

- ❑ While GPA is absolutely critical, your course rigor is just as important.
- ❑ Your weighted GPA (and in some cases your weighted academic GPA) is more important than your unweighted GPA

❑ Class Rank

- ❑ To discourage unhealthy habits and competition, most schools will NOT tell you your class rank. However, you can probably discern your own “guestimate” regarding whether your student is in the top half of their class, the top quarter of their class, the top 10% of their class, etc.



What is a good GPA and SAT score?

(protip: Search for the name of the school you are interested in and the words “common data set.” You’ll want to be in the 75th percentile)

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

- SAT Score: 1580 (800 math, 780 eng/read)
- GPA: 74% had a 4.0, 19.67% had a 3.75-3.99

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

- SAT Score: 1490 (780 math, 730 eng/read)
- GPA: 19.2% had a 4.0, 58.8% had a 3.75-3.99

GEORGIA TECH

- SAT Score: 1530 (790 math, 750 eng/read)
- GPA: 92.54% had a 4.0, 5.26% had a 3.75-3.99

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

- SAT Score: 1250 (610 math, 640 eng/read)
- GPA: 3.7% had a 4.0, 24.3% had a 3.75-3.99, 22.9% had a 3.5-3.74

Extracurriculars – An Overview

College applicants must be involved in extracurriculars. While academics are important, extracurriculars can often make or break a college application. While there is no one right way to be involved, here are some general guidelines that an average student should follow. By the time a student applies to college, they should have done the following:

- Be significantly involved in approximately 2-4 extracurriculars that develop a skill related to your future major/career
- Be involved in 2 or more meaningful service activities
- Be involved in 2 or more activities that you enjoy such as sports, music, art, etc.
- The most competitive applicants will have done one or more high value items that show passion, vision, independence, and initiative such as an internship, research with a professor, a passion project, etc

SAT, ACT, and AP Exams

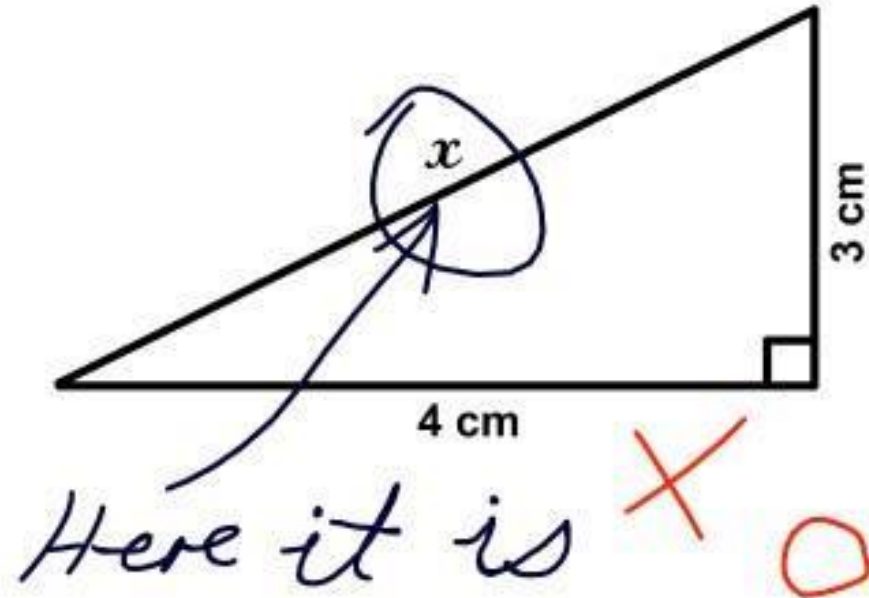
- SAT vs ACT

- Test optional schools.
- What is a good score? Hint: Look at the Common Data Set
- What is super scoring? How many times should my teen take the SAT/ACT?
- When are they? When should my teen begin studying?

- AP exams

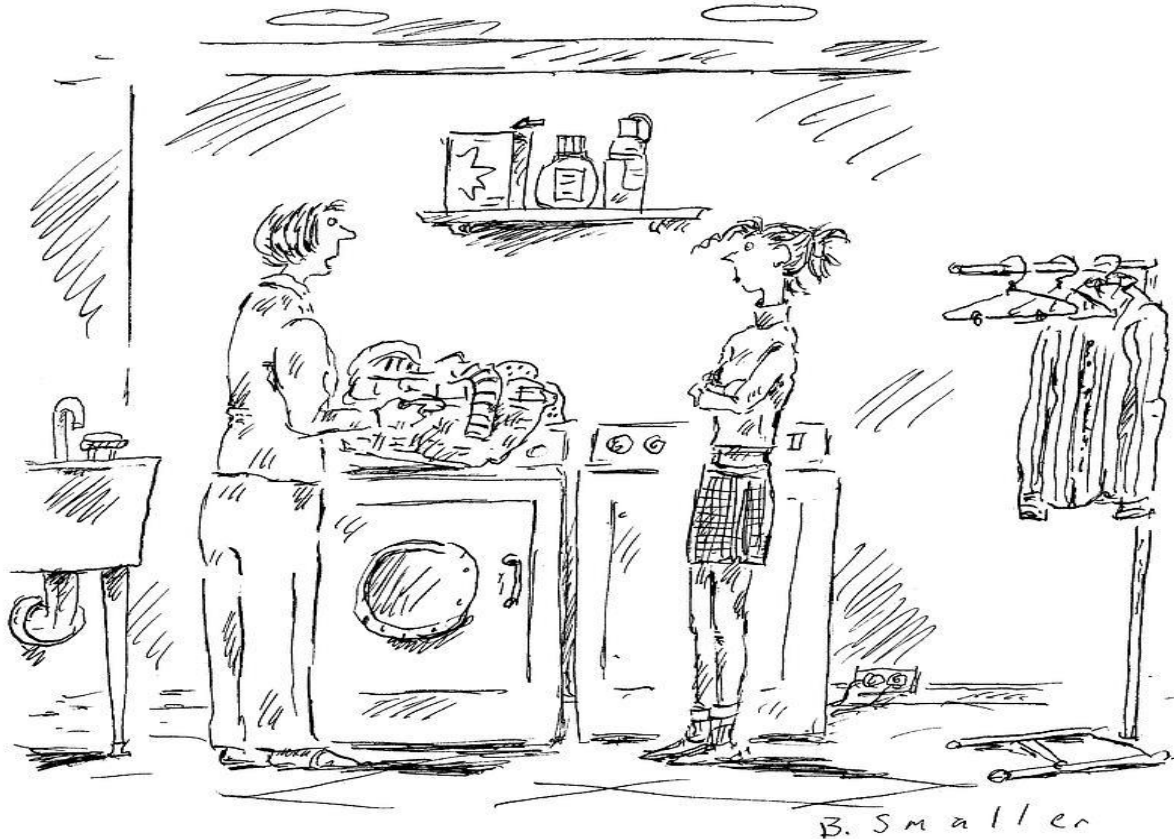
- How many exams should I take?
- What is a good score?

3. Find x .



Ocular Trauma - by Wade Clarke ©2005

Personal Qualities



"We want you to have fun, as long as it's fun that enhances a college-admission application."

Admissions officers prefer to admit students who are...

- Independent
- Self-motivated
- Curious
- Hard working
- Compassionate
- Not afraid to challenge themselves to grow

Misc Factors

College Expectations vs Reality

Other factors which may impact your college admissions decision may include...

- Recruited athlete
- Diversity
- Exceptional Talent



Admissions Timeline

- ❑ **6th – 8th grade:** Develop strong study habits, independence, and organizational skills. Explore extracurriculars broadly.
- ❑ **9th grade:** Explore as many extracurriculars as possible, especially activities that help you explore careers and activities that build skills such as public speaking and leadership. Maintain excellent grades throughout career-oriented high school. Begin researching colleges, visiting colleges, talking about college, etc. Summer after 9th grade is a good time to do summer activities that allow you to explore career paths.
- ❑ **10th grade:** Begin focusing on extracurriculars that relate to your major/career path and eliminate superfluous extracurriculars. Consider beginning to prep for the ACT/SAT. Summer after 10th is a good time to do a career-oriented summer camp/program.
- ❑ **11th grade:** Build depth in your extracurriculars (leadership, impact, etc). Take the ACT/SAT. At the end of 11th, finalize your college list and begin the process of working on admissions essays, activities list, etc. Summer after 11th grade is a good time to do something impactful related to your career choice such as doing an internship and it is also a great time to write admissions essays.
- ❑ **12th grade:** Finish admissions essays, do college interviews if requested, apply for financial aid and scholarships, etc. Apply to college in the months of October through January. In the Spring, accept college admissions offer.

Main Components of the College Application

- Admissions Essays: Personal Statement and Supplementals
- Transcript
- Test Scores
- Activities List
- Letters of Recommendation
- Interviews (in some cases)

Getting into college only has to be difficult if your teen wants to go to a college that is difficult to get into.

Washington Guaranteed Admissions Program (WAGAP)

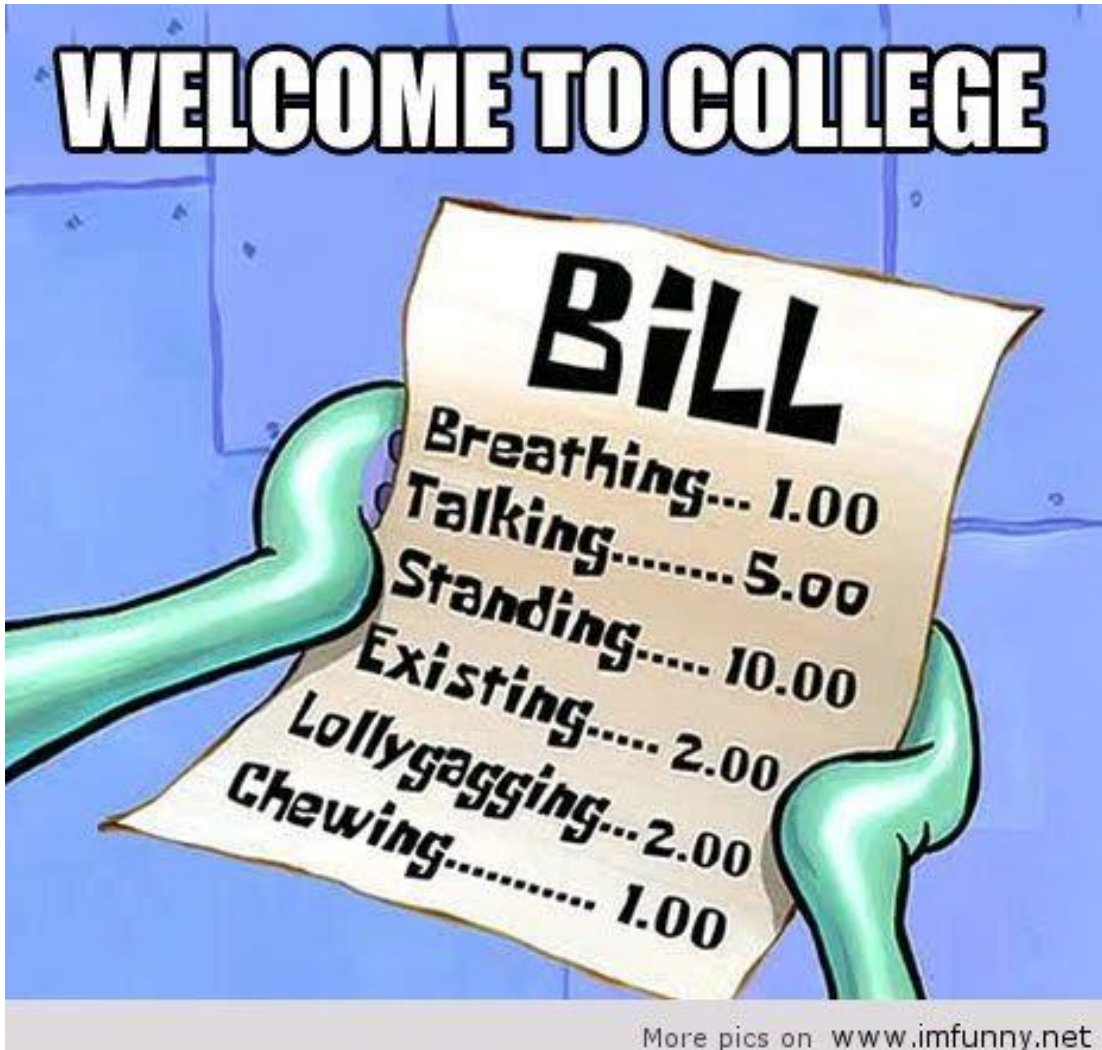
HOME » ADMISSIONS » WASHINGTON GUARANTEED ADMISSIONS PROGRAM (WAGAP)

The Washington Guaranteed Admissions Program (WAGAP)[™] supports a college-going culture and guaranteed admission efforts at [Central Washington University](#), [Eastern Washington University](#), [The Evergreen State College](#), [University of Washington Tacoma](#), [Washington State University](#) and [Western Washington University](#). Together, and in partnership with our communities, we are committed to meeting the college and career goals of Washington students to increase access and credential completion in Washington through WAGAP.

The program lets students learn if they are admitted to these six universities before applying. If these simple criteria are met, students are guaranteed admissions:

- Minimum GPA of 3.0 or higher
- Completed or are on track to complete by fall 2025 all the [College Academic Distribution Requirements \(CADRs\)](#)
- School has an agreement with the participating university and college to be part of the program. Participating schools and districts can be found [here](#).

In-State Tuition



In-State Tuition:

- University of Washington - *Estimated 4-year cost: \$142,804*
- Western Washington University - *Estimated 4-year cost: \$126,272*
- Washington State University – *Estimated 4-year cost: \$141,472*
- By doing your first 2 years of college at a local community college while living at home and then transferring to one of these schools as a Junior, the price of going to these schools would be approximately \$30-\$40k lower. Your time in college (and, as a result, the total cost) could be lower if you earn a significant number of college credits by doing AP exams and/or running start classes.

Western Undergraduate Exchange:

- 170 participating colleges (4-year University of Arizona, Arizona State, San Jose State, Oregon State, etc)
- Students pay a maximum of 150% of in-state tuition (out of state tuition is often 2-3x the cost of in-state) – *University of Arizona Estimated 4 year cost: \$177,694*
- <https://www.wiche.edu/resources/wue-handout/>

Recommended Books

1. The Fiske Guide to Colleges
2. Who Gets in and Why: A Year Inside College Admissions
3. The College Bound Organizer
4. The College Conversation: A Practical Companion for Parents to Guide Their Children Along the Path to Higher Education
5. Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania
6. The Price You Pay for College
7. Paying for College

Ivy Academic Prep

- ❖ **Admissions Advantage:** With an acceptance rate of 2x to 12x the national average, students are frequently admitted to all of the top-20 colleges including Harvard, Stanford, Princeton, Yale, UPenn, Stanford, MIT, and more!
- ❖ **Invest in Success:** Our students receive an average of \$55,114 in scholarships per school, which means our students recoup 3x to 8x the price of our packages on average.
- ❖ **Elite Counselors:** We have a perfect 5-star rating online and our counselors are highly experienced admissions professionals with elite admissions experience.