EXAMINING THE APPLICANT'S FILE: SOME READING TIPS

An admission committee carefully reviews information provided by the student and the high school. To help you read your files, here are a few questions on each section of the application. Please carefully read the admission cases and take notes on the candidate rating form.

Personal Information

Is there anything about the student's background or family information that stands out in relation to the college to which s/he is applying? Are there any special circumstances of which you should be aware when evaluating the more objective parts of the application? Has the student ever been suspended or received disciplinary action from his/her high school?

Transcript

What kind of grades has the student received over the years? Is there a trend - an upward or downward one? Has the student taken advanced and/or challenging classes? Look at the high school profiles to get a brief sketch of what is offered. Does the high school have strict prerequisites for entrance into these courses? If shown on the transcript, what kind of program does the student plan to take in the senior year - is it challenging or weak? What are the student's curricular interests? If available, where does the student rank? (Does your high school provide rank in class?)

SAT/ACT/SAT Subject Tests

What are the student's SAT or ACT scores? Are there areas that are significantly higher or lower? How strong are the Subject Test scores? Do they show proficiencies in specific subject areas? How do the scores fit the score ranges on the college's profile? How important do you think test scores will be in the evaluation process? Do the SAT/ACT scores correlate with the student's GPA? Is one significantly higher than the other?

Activities

What has the student done outside the classroom, both connected to school and out of school? How much time has the student committed to those activities? How much depth is presented? Has the student pursued a leadership role in those activities?

Essay

Does the essay tell you something about the student beyond the transcript? What did you learn? What qualities or talents does the student reveal? Do you hear the student's voice? Do you get a sense of the student as a person? Does the student tell his/her story effectively? Are the grammar, spelling and punctuation correct?

Letters of Recommendation

What two or three things have you learned about the applicant through the recommendation? What struck the teacher most about the student? How positive or enthusiastic is the recommendation? Is there more information that will help the admission committee determine how capable the student is in meeting the academic demands of the college?

High School/College Profiles

What can the admission committee learn from the high school profile that might assist them? How might the colleges help us learn which student might be the best fit for their college? Does the high school profile give you information that might better help you understand the student's educational opportunities and accomplishments? (How does your school profile present its own academic program?)