**Grades 9-10**

**College Admissions Planning Tool**

As College Counselors and members of the Guidance Team, we are most concerned that our students are able to seize opportunities for development of personal interests and talents and find meaning and satisfaction in their academic and extracurricular pursuits. From our perspective, students in Grades 9 and 10 are laying the foundation upon which they will be prepared as Juniors and then Seniors to enter the formal college admissions process. Please find below preliminary considerations and guidelines to assist Freshmen and Sophomores in college admissions planning.

**Grade 9**

**Testing**:

* + Not to worry. There will be no Standardized Tests this year.
  + The first test to anticipate, particularly for USA-bound students, is the PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/) which will be given in mid-October of Sophomore year. Information about the PSAT is on the Collegeboard website [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

**Counseling**:

* + GAPS Program
  + Focus on coursework and becoming involved in extracurricular activities.
  + Develop good study and health habits.
  + Work toward taking ownership of the high school experience and to develop strengths and identify areas for growth.

**College Planning and Preparation**:

* + Colleges consider academic performance from Grade 9 forward. It is time to get serious. Work hard and focus on academic achievement.
  + Gradually, students and parents can begin to become familiar with and investigate colleges, review admissions requirements and discover what is on offer.
  + Become more familiar with the Collegeboard website.
  + Consult resources available on our website for US, UK, Canadian and European universities.

**Grade 10**

**Testing:**

* Register to take the PSAT/NMSQT\*. Monitor US Newsletter for information about registration procedures and deadlines. Prepare independently (free online through Collegeboard) or enroll in a formal intensive prep course (BESPOKE, Kaplan). (\*The National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test for Juniors).
* Learn about the alternative standardized test, the ACT (American College Test).
* Consider diagnostic testing with BESPOKE or Kaplan to determine if one should purse the ACT or SAT track.

**Testing II:**

* SATII (Subject tests) for which a student is prepared (most likely a foreign language or Math I – completed Algebra II and Geometry) may be scheduled in the Spring testing round of Sophomore year. See [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) for test content as well as for test dates and international registration deadlines. Always register early!

**Counseling:**

* Meet with 10th Grade counselor, identify goals and continue to reflect on strengths and areas for growth.
* Academic performance is paramount.
* Consider IB/AP curriculum for junior year.
* Confirm graduation requirements are being met and that complete transcript is on file.
* Pursue meaningful engagement in a variety of extracurricular activities without overextending.

**College Planning & Preparation:**

* Begin to discuss college plans with guidance counselor with the goal of selecting an appropriate course of study as a Junior.
* You may choose to attend visits from university admissions reps and visit college while on break.
* Begin to explore college websites and consult other hardcopy and internet resources. Consider summer programs at universities of interest.