

Grosse Pointe South

Underclassman Parent Pre-College Conversation



“It is no exaggeration to say that the current regime in [~~elite~~] college admissions has been far more successful in democratizing *anxiety* than opportunity.”



-Jerome Karabel, *The Chosen: The Hidden History Behind Admissions and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton*

*What if it didn't have to
be this way?*

Purpose of the evening *IS*:

1. Share information so you can *gently* guide your student over the next few years (the process/our support)
2. Expose college myths perpetuated in our culture
3. Expand the notion of what a “good college” is.

Purpose of the evening is *NOT*:

- A roadmap of how to get your student into U of M or other highly selective schools
- Intended to create a “to do” list for you or your student

Pre-College Planning

Freshman

In School

Sophomore

- Help with Freshman year transition
- Meet with students to plan schedule for next year
- Career exploration activities on Naviance (strengths, interests, aptitudes)

- Support students throughout year
- Meet with students to plan schedule for next year
- Continued Career exploration activities on Naviance (strengths, interests, aptitudes)

College & Trades Nights
Spring each year

Junior

Senior

- Support students throughout year
- College rep visits during school
- College & Career 101 in Eng classes
- Help plan schedule for next year
- Junior Parent meeting
- College search on Naviance
- Support application process
- Meet with students/families

- Assist with application process
- College rep visits during school
- Meet with students/families as needed
- Follow up with students: applications, FAFSA/Fin Aid/Scholarship, advocate with schools
- Financial aid information and support for families

At home...

Freshman

- Support transition to high school; learning to do school as a high school student
- Casual conversations at home about college
- Keeping your eyes peeled for campus opportunities (*and keeping it light*): games, shows, shopping, independent touring
- Encouraging interest exploration: clubs, sports, activities

Sophomore

- Stay the course at school—correct/adjust if needed
- Continued casual conversations at home/look online
- “Gas-tank” tour: compare/contrast two colleges (close)
- Encouraging/narrowing interest exploration: thinking about leadership opportunities
- Use summer for some *authentic* exploration (jobs, camps, volunteering)

The Myths

“The college admissions process nowadays makes it harder for high school students to enjoy school and pursue intrinsic fulfillment. The process “warps the values of students drawn into a competitive frenzy” and “jeopardizes their mental health.”



-Greg Lukianoff & Jonathan Haidt, *The Coddling of the American Mind: How Good Intentions and Bad Ideas are Setting up a Generation for Failure*

Students
must have a
4.0 GPA for
good
schools

- **FALSE.**
 - Certainly the higher the GPA the more “options”
 - 3.0-3.5 Many options
 - Also options below 3.0
- **Michigan Assured Admission Pact** (11 colleges)
 - GVSU, CMU, WMU, WSU, EMU, SVSU, NMU, LSSU, OU, UM-Dearborn & Flint, FSU

My student
is behind if
they aren't
in all
honors
classes

- **FALSE.**
 - Students need to move at a challenging but appropriate pace for the best college readiness
- Colleges like to see growth
- Balance between *appropriately challenging* classes and building a strong GPA

My student needs to be as many sports/activities as time allows

- **FALSE.**
 - Students need to learn to find balance, set limits (*learn to take care of themselves now*)
- Colleges like to see **authentic** interest, sustained over time (sometimes more is just more...*and they know it.*)

The application process is really hard

- **FALSE.**
 - Most colleges don't require Letters of Rec
 - Many colleges don't require essays
 - South students will have a college essay done Jr year.

I need to hire outside help

- **FALSE.**
 - Weigh the pros/cons for your family

For example:

<u>School</u>	<u>Middle GPA</u>	<u>L of R</u>	<u>+Essay</u>
Wayne State University*	3.43		
Central Michigan University*	3.52	optional	
Grand Valley State University*	3.46	optional	
Michigan State University	3.74		
University of Michigan	3.92	X	X

<u>School</u>	<u>Middle GPA</u>	<u>L of R</u>	<u>+Essay</u>
University of Kentucky	3.28		
Loyola University, Chicago	3.7	X	
Miami University, Ohio	3.56	optional	

The “Good” College

Too often students perceive college admissions:

- **The Gold Star:** a way to validate themselves or their hard work (*“If I can get into SCHOOL X it means...”*)
- **A Brand:** a status symbol equating selectivity with desirability
- **Elusive:** Harder to achieve than it needs to be

What is “Fit?”

Investigating, testing, and narrowing down what qualities and features a student is looking for in a *college experience*, and determining schools that match those ideals

Such as: size of school, size of program, academic offerings, athletics, campus culture, distance from home, location of campus, special programs available

Some of the “other” considerations...

Big fish in a little pond...little fish in a big pond

Athletics—participating and spectating

“Find somewhere you can make a life for yourself”

Focus on undergraduate work (not just what’s next)

Access to support resources

Comfort and amenities

Undergraduate opportunities (involvement, research)

Additional Resources that may be helpful...

- [Naviance](#): Naviance is a college and career readiness software platform used by schools to help students plan for their futures. It provides tools for career and college exploration, such as interest inventories and college searches, as well as resources for managing the college application process, like tracking letters of recommendation and scholarships. Parents and students can also use it to access resources, set goals, and collaborate with school counselors. (Parents log-in the same way you login to MiStar)
- Interested in more info on Military, Trades, Testing, College Research? Check out the Counseling Center page [LINK](#)

A few book recs

- [College is Yours 2.0: Preparing, Applying, and Paying for Colleges Perfect for You](#) by Patrick O'Connor
- [Love the Journey to College: Guidance from an Admissions Consultant and Her Daughter](#) by Jill Madenberg and Amanda Madenberg
- [Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania](#) by Frank Bruni
- [Dream School: Finding the College That's Right for You](#) by Jeff Selingo
- [Colleges That Change Lives: 40 Schools That Will Change the Way You Think About Colleges](#) by Loren Pope

Q & A

Thank you for joining us:

