



INDEPENDENT
EDUCATIONAL
CONSULTANTS
ASSOCIATION

Top Ten Strengths and Experiences Colleges Look for in High School Students

(based on a 2006-2007 survey of IECA member consultants)

(These are ranked, so probably should be #ed, even if it takes more space. The rankings are the most imp't part.)

1. A rigorous high school curriculum that challenges the student and may include AP or IB classes.
2. Grades that represent strong effort and an upward trend. However, slightly lower grades in a rigorous program are preferred to all As in less challenging coursework.
3. Solid scores on standardized tests (SAT, ACT). These should be consistent with high school performance.
4. Passionate involvement in a few activities, demonstrating leadership and initiative. Depth, not breadth, of experience is most important.
5. Letters of recommendation from teachers and guidance counselor that give evidence of integrity, special skills, positive character traits, and an interest in learning.
6. Special talents or experiences that will contribute to an interesting and well-rounded student body.
7. A well-written essay that provides insight into the student's unique personality, values and goals. The application essay should be thoughtful and highly personal. It should demonstrate careful and well-constructed writing.
8. Demonstrated enthusiasm, often exhibited by campus visits and an interview, showing an interest toward attending the college.
9. Out of school experiences, including work and community service that illustrate responsibility, dedication, and development of areas of interest.
10. Demonstrated intellectual curiosity through reading, school and leisure pursuits, and more.