

2009 Tennessee College Access and Success Conference Proposal

Beyond the Numbers: Other Factors in College Admissions Decisions

Introduction

The goal of all admissions offices is to build a community among its student body through the careful and thorough application review process. At competitive colleges and universities, admissions committees take more than the GPA, SAT/ACT and class rank into consideration. This highly interactive session will examine how admissions decisions are made so college counselors can better assist their students to identify a “good fit” and to help them have a better understanding of the admissions decision process. Come and learn how that is done when admissions committees look “beyond the numbers”.

Let’s Talk Numbers First

- Class rank – how is it used?
- GPAs – what about non-traditional grading systems, home schooled candidates, value points for AP courses, dual enrollment courses/college courses.
- SAT/ACT/SAT 2s

Early Decision vs. Regular Decision: Who Wins?

- Volume of pool – less ED candidates
- ED impacts competitiveness of the Regular decision pool
- Counselors - why are you concerned that ED candidates have an edge over RD candidates?
- Athletic recruiting, legacy applicants, and special program applicants also contribute to the overall competitiveness.

Non-Number Factors: Getting the Edge

- Activities and leadership that make a difference
- Separating from the pack – involvement that is unique or feeds into the needs of the college/university (i.e. 1st gen student, musicians, engineers, etc.).
- Interest in attending – how is this demonstrated and why does it matter anyway?
- Community building – the fit.
- How does the essay measure up? Counselor recommendations – are they even read?
- Does being a legacy candidate guarantee admission?

We’re Here to Help: Tell Us How We Can Better Serve College Counselors

- What non-number factors are you aware of that college/universities use in admissions decisions?
- What tools are you using to help your students identify safety, likely and reach schools?
- What do you like or dislike about how admissions decisions are made?