

TOP TEN STRENGTHS AND EXPERIENCES COLLEGES LOOK FOR IN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



- 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.

Based on a survey of IECA member consultants