

Primary College Admission Factors (With Explanations)

1. Student and college “match”. You can improve your chances for admission and success in college if, through your application, conversations with college personnel and visits, you and the college establish a “match” for each other. *Colleges want students who do not pose an academic risk, can be a positive influence, and who have a demonstrated interest in the college.*
2. A high school curriculum that challenges the student (“rigor”). *Academically successful students should include several Honors and AP classes, and, if possible, college classes.*
3. Grades that represent strong effort and an upward trend. *Grades should show an upward trend over the years. However, slightly lower grades in a rigorous program are preferred to all A’s in less challenging coursework.*
4. Solid scores on standardized tests (ACT, SAT, PSAT). *Colleges expect your scores to be consistent with your GPA. Generally, colleges accept your best ACT or SAT score. Also, a qualifying ACT score could enable you to win a Michigan Merit Award scholarship.*
5. Passionate involvement in a limited number of in or out of school activities, demonstrating initiative and leadership. *Depth of experiences is more important than the number of experiences. Generally, colleges define leadership as making a measurable positive difference with a person or group.*
6. A resume is not required, but it does allow you to neatly summarize “special attributes and accomplishments”. Include your passions, honors, awards, unusual talents or experiences, or any other factors that help you stand out. *Overall, colleges are seeking students who bring diversity and will be active, contributing, academically sound members of the student body.*
7. Work or out-of-school experiences (including summer activities) that illustrate responsibility, dedication and development of areas of interest. *Work or other meaningful use of your free time can demonstrate maturity and time management skill.*
8. A well-written essay and/or personal statement that provides a personal insight into your unique experiences, personality, values and goals, not seen elsewhere in the application. *It should demonstrate careful and well-constructed writing.*
9. Letters of recommendation from teachers and a counselor that give evidence of your integrity, special skills and positive character traits. *You should request teacher recommendations only from teachers who like and respect you, and are very familiar with your academic work.*
10. Supplementary recommendations by adults who have had significant and direct contact with you. *Letters, or other contacts, from coaches or from others who have known you through work or voluntary activities, are valuable. However, recommendations from casual acquaintances are rarely given much weight.*