**Your College Application**

* Most colleges require that you apply online
* Review college websites for application information and the current year application. Be sure you follow all procedures and submit all documents by the due date. Watch for the actual time that an application is due (e.g. If it is due at midnight EST, that means it is due by 9:00 PST).
* Tips to strengthen your application for admission:

1. Take academic coursework beyond core/required classes
2. Take more challenging courses when available (Honors, Advanced Placement etc)
3. Take the time to present yourself well in your application. This means giving yourself plenty of time to write your essays!
4. Continue working hard throughout your senior year

* Providing the following information about you may also strengthen your application:

1. Information that helps the college understand your academic choices and grades
2. Information about any “risks” you have taken such as participating in an exchange programs, standing up for your beliefs, accepting new challenges, adjusting to new environments etc.
3. Information about how a hardship in your life has affected your academic success in school
4. Information about specific qualities you possess that will benefit the college community, such as contributions to multiculturalism, athletic, musical, artistic or other unique talents you possess.

* **Essays:** Many colleges, both public and private, require one or more personal essays. The essay should give the college a better picture of you as a student and as an individual
* **Tips for writing your essay:**
* Be *passionate* about what you write
* Answer the question and demonstrate how well you think as well as how well you write
* Don’t repeat what is included in other parts of the application by making your essay a second resume
* Don’t select topics the bore (i.e. the social problem of the year), irritate (a hot political topic) or suggest that you don’t see the world beyond high school
* **Do** proofread and ask someone to proofread for you
* Don’t make careless mistakes
* Stay away from vague examples
* Write about what you know
* Be authentic – use personality! Show that you bring lively and exciting flavor to the classroom
* Realize that humor can be difficult to pull off in an essay. Don’t try to be funny if that is not your personality
* Keep the topic small so that you can effectively deal with the material
* If you write about parts of your life dealing with issues around drugs, divorce or depression , be sure to evaluate and reflect rather than simply relaying information
* Write in the first person – let them hear your voice!
* Remember that the essay is being ready quickly and for a general impression
* Don’t be afraid to use a second page rather than compressing words
* Make it easy to read
* When you are finished, make sure you can say “This sounds like me”