

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY: EXTRACURRICULARS & COLLEGE ADMISSION



Getting involved in clubs, sports, work or other pursuits outside the classroom can give your student new skills, help build self-confidence and self-esteem, and be fun! In addition, extracurricular activities can play a role in college admission and scholarship applications.

Colleges want to know about your student beyond what grades and test scores can tell them and what your student does in his free time can showcase important personal qualities. For example:

- Serving in student government shows leadership skills.
- Being on the track team through high school shows long-term commitment.
- Doing volunteer work at a hospital shows dedication to helping others.
- Working a part-time job while keeping grades up shows responsibility and time-management.

The number one rule for extracurricular activities for students: **DO WHAT YOU LOVE (or at least what you're interested in)**. Freshmen and sophomores should try out many different activities to get a taste of what they enjoy, and then focus on a few key activities (perhaps even taking a leadership role) during the rest of high school.

Sources: [BigFuture](#), [Admission Possible](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

Good grades in challenging classes are the most important factors in college admission, but extracurricular activities may help a student's chance at being admitted or being eligible for scholarships.

COLLEGE MYTHS (AND REALITIES)

MYTH: If my student didn't do an activity in high school, she won't be able to do it in college.

REALITY: College is still a time to explore interests and try out different activities. Every college has a multitude of clubs, entry-level or non-credit classes, and fun ways to try something new. For example, even if your student has never taken a dance class, she can learn the latest steps at a salsa class. Encourage your student to try out a new sport, volunteer with an organization and see what's right for her!

PARENT CHECKLIST

- Explore interests with your student and encourage involvement.** Talk to your student about the kinds of activities she is interested in – it doesn't have to be sports or an academically-related club. Consider potential careers and try to find activities related to fields he is interested in. Consider activities outside of school as well, like in the community or at church. Remember! It's quality over quantity.
- Remind students that school still comes first.** Extracurricular activities are important – but doing well in classes trumps sports or clubs. Make sure your student understands your expectations for good grades.

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



GEAR UP stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs and is a federally-funded program that helps rural, low-income middle and high schools prepare students for education after high school.

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COLLEGE. It's not a dream, it's a plan.