The Qualities Colleges Look for in Students

Most college-bound students want to know what college admissions counselors are looking for when they evaluate applications. Here’s a list of the top 10 qualities college admissions counselors seek in prospective students:

1. A challenging high school curriculum.
2. Grades that represent strong effort and an upward trend.
3. Solid scores on standardized tests (SAT & ACT), although some colleges no longer require submission of standardized test scores.
4. Passionate involvement in a few activities, demonstrating leadership and initiative.
5. Letters of recommendation from teachers and counselors 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 personality, values and goals.
8. Enthusiasm in attending the college.
9. Work and community service experience that shows dedication and responsibility.
10. Demonstrated intellectual curiosity through reading, school and leisure pursuits.