

Help your student select Advanced Placement (AP) courses

Think of high school as a journey of exploration. Courses and activities should include demonstrated growth in academics, social-emotional skills, and a deep pursuit in areas of passion. Avoid a heavy focus on just one of these areas.

Avoid Over-Reliance on AP

Generally, four or so AP courses over the course of high school and spread among departments serves to prepare our students for the rigors of college campus study.

Beyond that, the exact amount should be determined by the student's ability to complete the work without sacrificing sleep.

Also, before loading up on AP courses, check with the colleges where your student plans to apply. Find out what their CURRENT expectation for AP experience is for admissions.

More and more, colleges recognize the importance of experiences that build social emotional skills (in particular, self-advocacy, bringing multiple perspectives to discourse, resilience, communication, and teamwork) along with demonstrations of intellectual capacity. Admissions evaluations have adjusted along those lines.

Lessons Outside the Box

Think outside the AP box for rich opportunities where students can demonstrate their learning and talent. Explore Career & Technical

Education classes along with courses that allow students to dive deeper into specific interests.

Colleges want to see a demonstration of perseverance and depth of study. Check the course catalog for classes that align with your student's interests and goals. Consider things like Marine Biology, Nanotechnology, Teaching Academy, and AP Capstone where students experience real-world application of physics, biology, chemistry, social studies, English, and more.

Through these courses, students can demonstrate that they **understand the subjects and that they can use creative and critical thinking to apply** what they know.

Our graduates who experienced research in high school have earned the opportunity to work in labs and publish their work as undergraduates. These courses shift our students' focus from acquiring knowledge to applying knowledge.

Schedule for Adequate Sleep and Physical Movement

The **MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION** is planning for adequate sleep and physical movement to support the body's ability to manage stress. Ask your student to carefully plan schedule all their commitments on a hour-by-hour weekly spread sheet, the time it will take to prepare for each, and include nine to 10 hours of sleep each night.

Without adequate sleep, teen bodies lose the ability to manage stress. The first high-impact action we can take for this anxious generation is increase the amount of quality sleep.

Stay on top admissions standards

As colleges and universities respond to equity and economic pressures, the criteria they look for in applications will change. Your family can stay on top

these trends and ensure that your student's activities prepare them to apply for admission.

Colleges are under pressure from employers to increase the communication, teamwork, and resiliency skills of graduates. They are working to improve access and equity for students with less-traditional talents and strengths.

Colleges also must assess whether applicants will adapt to college life and persevere to graduate. All these mandates mean changes ahead for admissions criteria.

Annual College Conference

You can learn more about these changes and how your student can build appropriate experiences throughout high school for the new expectations. Every spring, Bellevue Schools brings a panel of college admissions officers to the annual College Conference.

Watch the principal's weekly email newsletter, *Insights*, for details.