

Preparing the Public Secondary School Student for  
Highly Selective College Admission

by

Shelley M. Blumenthal

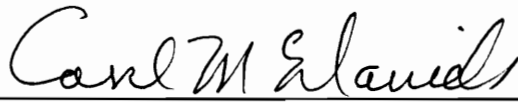
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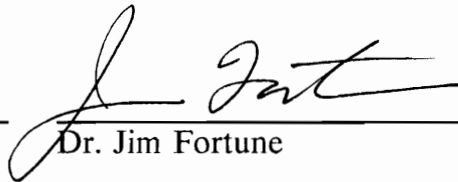
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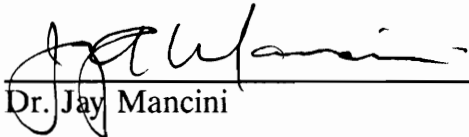
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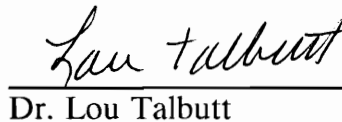
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Counselor Education and Student Personnel Services

(ABSTRACT)

Typical public secondary school students seem unable to compete with distinguished public and elite private secondary school students when seeking admission to highly selective colleges. This study has identified the characteristics that distinguish college guidance and school-wide programs at public secondary schools perceived to be the strongest (distinguished) from other public secondary schools. School boards, public secondary school counselors, school administrators, and the communities they serve now have college guidance programs they can emulate to better prepare students for admission to highly selective colleges.

The Gerstein and Lichtman (1990) model was used to identify 26 distinguished public secondary schools. Gerstein and Lichtman (1990) sent nomination forms to state supervisors of guidance, counselor educators, leaders of professional organizations, editors of journals, and guidance supervisors in local school districts throughout the country to identify exemplary elementary school

counseling programs. In this study, Nomination Forms were mailed to admissions directors at 41 highly selective colleges. They identified the top 26 distinguished public secondary schools which were then the subjects of this study.

Guidance directors at the 26 distinguished public secondary schools were mailed, and asked to complete and return a College Guidance Questionnaire to identify school-wide characteristics and programs at their respective schools. In addition, the questionnaire identified college guidance activities that help to facilitate admission of their students to highly selective colleges.

The purpose of this study and the answers to these three research questions are:

1. Which public secondary schools are perceived to be distinguished and exemplary by the highly selective colleges?

The 26 distinguished public secondary schools nominated most frequently by the 33 respondent highly selective colleges were (\*=top three):

Benjamin Franklin H.S. (CA)  
Bethesda Chevy Chase H.S. (MD)  
Beverly Hills H.S. (CA)  
Central H.S. (AR)  
Cherry Creek H.S. (CO)  
Clayton H.S. (MO)  
Evanston Township H.S. (IL)  
Henry M. Gunn H.S. (CA)  
Horace Greeley H.S. (NY)  
Hume-Fogg Academic H.S. (TN)  
\*Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy  
Lexington H.S. (MA)  
Lincoln H.S. (OR)  
Louisiana School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts  
Millburn H.S. (NJ)  
Mountain Brook H.S. (AL)

\*New Trier Township H.S. (IL)  
North Carolina School for Science and Mathematics  
Palo Alto H.S. (CA)  
Scarsdale H.S. (NY)  
Stuyvesant H.S. (NY)  
Sunny Hills H.S. (CA)  
\*Thomas Jefferson H.S. for Science and Technology (VA)  
University H.S. (AZ)  
Walt Whitman H.S. (MD)  
White Station H.S. (TN)

2. What are the composite characteristics and programs of the identified distinguished public secondary schools that facilitate admission of their students to highly selective colleges?

The characteristics of the distinguished public secondary schools that help to facilitate admission of their students to highly selective colleges include:

- A. a mean per pupil expenditure of \$7,685;
- B. a mean student to counselor ratio of 261 to one (excluding New Trier's Adviser System, the half-time college counselor at Benjamin Franklin, and the six part-time grade advisers at Stuyvesant);
- C. students remain with the same counselor throughout secondary school;
- D. guidance directors with administrative responsibilities and limited or nonexistent counseling assignments;
- E. sufficient support staff—secretaries, registrars, and paraprofessionals;
- F. Advanced Placement (AP) programs with a mean of eighteen AP courses per school;

- G. computer technology for computer generated academic transcripts, standardized test scores, and mid-year grade reports;
  - H. in the calculation of grade point average and when assigning class rank, grades in AP courses are weighted; and
  - I. memberships for counselors in professional associations such as the College Board, National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC), and regional chapters of NACAC.
3. What are the composite college guidance activities that are employed by members of the guidance staffs at each distinguished school?

Some of the college guidance activities that are employed by members of the guidance staffs at the distinguished public secondary schools are:

- A. the use of a Career Center of catalogues, videos, applications, career information delivery systems (e.g. Virginia VIEW), college search computer software, and scholarship and financial aid information;
- B. encouragement of college bound students to take the PSAT or P-ACT<sup>+</sup> (PLAN) in tenth grade;
- C. a college day or night program each spring or fall including representation from highly selective colleges;
- D. special evenings for conferences with parents and their students to assist families in the college search;
- E. an evening financial aid/scholarship information session conducted annually by an area college financial aid officer; and

F. an evening panel of college admissions officers—including representation from highly selective colleges—to provide information about the college admissions process and to field questions.

To confirm the data received from the College Guidance Questionnaire, a verification visit was conducted at one of the top three distinguished public secondary schools (Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology). Based on the results of this study, major conclusions and recommendations were drawn which can strengthen college guidance programs and school-wide characteristics, and to better prepare public secondary school students for admission to highly selective colleges.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

### INTRODUCTION

In discussion with other professionals, the experiences of secondary school counselors have demonstrated that many highly qualified students with strong credentials often have been placed on the waiting list or denied admission at the most elite private colleges. Jump (1988) claims that they have simply been victims of a process that is essentially unfair. The same students concurrently received offers to attend the more selective state universities in their respective states of residence (e.g. University of Michigan, University of Virginia).

A majority of public secondary schools in the United States have a relatively small percentage of college bound students when compared to our nation's elite private and distinguished public secondary schools. However, a few in each class may be clearly outstanding and worthy of careful consideration for admission to the highly selective colleges. It is apparent that hundreds of secondary schools are not well known by the college admissions officers, and do not possess the name recognition that is afforded to the distinguished public and elite private secondary schools.

The nationally declining eighteen-year old population (Hodgkinson, 1986) may explain the perceived decrease in selectivity at many American colleges. In addition, the rising costs of higher education may have influenced qualified students

to forego applications to elite universities and seek admission to more affordable state universities.

Unlike public institutions who are somewhat limited in the number of out of state students they may enroll, the elite private institutions publicize their interest in geographically diverse student populations. A countless number of public schools with solid college preparatory curricula possess attractive talent pools to draw from in an attempt to meet the university goal of geographic diversity. However, they may not be well known, may possess diverse populations, and may have inferior college preparatory curricula and post-secondary advising programs when compared to their elite and distinguished peers. Consequently, although there may be interest in diversity from elite private colleges, qualified students from many public schools are at a disadvantage when competing for spaces in the freshman classes at highly selective colleges.

The problem of the public school student being less competitive in highly selective college admission is substantiated in the example of two recent public school graduates. One former University of Virginia student was waitlisted—given the opportunity to remain in consideration for admission should places in the freshman class become available subsequent to the May 1 candidate's reply date—at Williams College, denied admissions to Yale University, Amherst College, and Brown University, and invited to participate in the honors program at Indiana University. She completed secondary school with a 4.07 cumulative grade average

(4.0 scale), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Verbal 610 and Math 710 scores, a rank of third in the class of 273, had extensive community and extracurricular involvement, and took five periods (seven period day) of College Board Advanced Placement courses during her senior year. Since Advanced Placement courses are weighted one extra point (e.g. five points for an "A" instead of four points for other "A" grades) at her alma mater, a student may attain a grade point average that exceeds the 4.0 scale.

A second student currently enrolled at the College of William and Mary additionally received honors admission to Mary Washington College, and was waitlisted at Duke University, Carleton College, and Bowdoin College. The student completed secondary school with a 4.06 grade average (Advanced Placement courses weighted one extra point as described above), ranked fourth in the class, had five Advanced Placement periods in a seven period day, SAT scores of Verbal 670 and Math 520, eloquent writing skills and several community ascendant activities. The former Virginia student earned a perfect 4.0 grade average and the William and Mary student achieved a 3.82 average in their respective freshman years.

Particularly puzzling was Bowdoin's decision since the weakest variable at this level of selectivity was the student's SAT Math score. Since 1970, the SAT scores are no longer a Bowdoin admissions requirement. A review of successive Williams College mailings to secondary school counselors that partially address the

profile of students offered admission each spring suggest that disproportionately large numbers of elite private and distinguished public secondary school students received offers. The accompanying letter in each mailing indicated that geographic diversity was not a consideration in the selection process.

For the 1991 entering class at Williams College, sixteen students from Stuyvesant High School (New York City), nine from Regis High School (New York), and seven from Syosett High School (New York) received acceptances. In addition to these public schools, all candidates from two state technical secondary schools—Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Virginia (6) and Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy—were offered admission.

Phillips Andover Academy in Massachusetts distributes to its seniors a "matriculation statistics" listing of college decisions for its most recent graduating class of approximately 400 students. It is interesting to note that in 1990, 29 students gained admission offers to Yale, forty to Brown, six to Amherst, five to Williams, five to Carleton, six to Bowdoin, and thirteen to Duke; yet the aforementioned recent public school graduates failed to gain admission to any of these colleges.

Conventional wisdom suggests that elite private education enhances one's chances of gaining admission to prestigious colleges. This hypothesis is apparent as well when considering distinguished public secondary schools with unique and



especially interesting programs (e.g. Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, Stuyvesant High School).

Meyer (1977) believed that no special chartering exists between American secondary schools and selective colleges in the way that selected British public schools have been chartered by Oxford and Cambridge Universities. He suggested that "all American high schools have similar status rights, (and therefore) variations in their efforts should be small" (Meyer, 1977, p. 60). On the contrary, Kamens (1977) argued that "schools symbolically redefine people and make them eligible for membership in societal categories to which specific sets of rights are assigned" (pp. 217-218).

Additional research is consistent with the second view. Alexander and Eckland (1977) discovered that students from high schools where the student body's social status was high also attended selective colleges at a greater rate than those from other secondary schools, even when family background and student academic ability were held constant.

Some private colleges acknowledge the special nature of certain secondary schools. Private boarding school graduates attend more selective colleges than their public school peers, even when SAT scores and family background are held constant (Cookson, 1981). Harvard University applicants from private high schools had an advantage for admission over their public school counterparts, even when their academic credentials were comparable (Klitgaard, 1985, Table 2.2). Karen (1985)

noted that Harvard applications from selected boarding schools were placed in special folders to distinguish them from other applications. In addition to the elite status of certain schools as designated by color-coding folders, attendance at one of the selected schools provided an advantage for admission, even when controlling for such characteristics as parental background, SATs, and grades (Karen, 1985).

The special nature of certain secondary schools is not limited to the private sector. The previously described 1991 Williams College admission action with respect to distinguished public schools supports this notion. It is important that students from all schools are given the opportunity to maximize their potential through appropriate college guidance and academic opportunities.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Typical public secondary school students seem unable to compete with distinguished public and elite private secondary school students when seeking admission to highly selective colleges.

The problem was to determine which school-wide characteristics and offerings, and college planning strategies and activities exist at distinguished public secondary schools, therefore assessing what other public secondary schools can do to prepare their outstanding students for highly selective college admission. Public school counselors, administrators, school boards, and communities need models to

emulate should they choose to improve college placement at highly selective institutions.

## RESEARCH QUESTION DEVELOPMENT

The perception of certain secondary schools in the eyes of college admissions officers is enhanced when the secondary schools possess their own entrance requirements. Examples include Philadelphia's Central High School and Philadelphia High School for Girls, and New York's Stuyvesant High School, public secondary schools with longstanding selective admission standards, and the recently established Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Fairfax County, Virginia, Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, and Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science, a two-year, residential University of North Texas early-admissions program for high school juniors gifted in mathematics and science (Ramsay & Redding, 1988).

It is clear that highly selective colleges admit disproportionate numbers of students from selected elite private schools and distinguished public schools. The aforementioned third and fourth ranked graduates of a less well known school and the respective dispositions of their applications to highly selective private colleges compared to their peers from distinguished public secondary schools supports this notion.

Students from selected elite private secondary schools and distinguished public secondary schools received preferential treatment in the college admissions process. The schools that fall into these categories seem to possess certain characteristics and offerings that facilitate their eliteness with regard to reputation and college admission.

The purpose of this study was to determine:

1. Which public secondary schools are perceived to be distinguished and exemplary by the highly selective colleges?;
2. What are the composite characteristics and programs of the identified distinguished public secondary schools that facilitate admission of their students to highly selective colleges?; and
3. What are the composite college guidance activities that are employed by members of the guidance staff at each distinguished public secondary school?

#### DEFINITION OF UNIQUE TERMS

college guidance activities—group or individual sessions that assist students in college admission preparation

distinguished public secondary schools—those public secondary schools (grades 9-12, 10-12, or 11-12) most often identified by the college admissions officers at highly selective colleges as being exemplary

elite private secondary schools—a select group of boarding schools judged by Ballzell (1958) and McLachlan (1970) as the most elite. These sixteen schools are: Phillips (Andover) Academy, St. Mark's School, Groton School, Deerfield Academy, and Middlesex School, all in Massachusetts; Phillips (Exeter) Academy and St. Paul's School in New Hampshire; St. George's School (Rhode Island); Kent School, The Taft School, The Hotchkiss School, and Choate Rosemary Hall in Connecticut; The Lawrenceville School (New Jersey); The Hill School (Pennsylvania); The Episcopal High School and Woodberry Forest School in Virginia

highly selective colleges—the 41 four-year colleges with 1987 freshman class combined SAT score averages exceeding 1,200

state technical secondary schools—selective state or locally supported schools for gifted and talented students aimed at reducing the shortage of mathematics and science professionals

## RELATED LITERATURE

Students at highly selective private colleges are from affluent backgrounds, much more so than the college student population as a whole. Parental incomes in 1986 exceeded \$100,000 for approximately 25 percent of the freshmen at highly selective colleges, a descriptor that places them in the top few percent of families in the general population. Seven percent of all freshmen college students in 1986 were from families of such influence (Kingston & Lewis, 1990).

A majority of freshmen at highly selective private colleges had family incomes greater than \$50,000 compared to the 31 percent of the total freshmen population. Kingston and Lewis (1990) concluded that elite institutions are primarily attended by upper-middle class students since less than one fifth of American families reached the \$50,000 income level in 1986.

Jamesville-Dewitt High School in Dewitt, New York had four full-time counselors for approximately 700 students. In addition, the guidance staff was given a budget that provided them with expenses for a two week tour of colleges each summer. Such opportunities allow public school counselors to establish close relationships with college admissions officers and to market their schools and students. In Virginia, the Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia (July, 1988) allowed for as many as 350 students per counselor. The student to counselor ratio allowance remained the same in 1992.

"Close networks of personal relationships between officials at certain private secondary schools and some elite colleges transform what is for many students a relatively standardized procedure into a process of negotiation" (Kingston & Lewis, 1990, p. 29). The elite private secondary school counselor is able to communicate more vital information about the needs of his or her school and students. Thus, selected secondary school students gain an inside track on opportunities for acceptance at desired highly selective colleges. Kingston and Lewis (1990) called this process "bartering." Elite private secondary schools and distinguished public

secondary schools are consequently connected to privileged college admission opportunities.

Kozol (1991) described the special nature of suburban Chicago schools such as Glencoe High School and those public schools in Winnetka. The world of academic opportunities at New Trier Township High School in Illinois far exceeds that of many public secondary schools in the same geographic region.

## POPULATION

The target population was college admissions directors at 41 highly selective institutions (Kingston & Lewis, 1990), those with 1987 Freshman Class mean combined SAT scores of 1,200 and above. With over 2,800 colleges nationwide, an objective point was established for this study to separate the selective from highly selective institutions. All 41 highly selective colleges were surveyed to ensure a return that identified a sufficient number of distinguished public secondary schools used for a sample and were consequently mailed survey questionnaires.

The second population was the distinguished public secondary schools identified and chosen by the aforementioned college admissions directors as especially distinguished and with the strongest college preparatory programs. The sample included the 26 public secondary schools identified most frequently by the college admissions directors.

A suspected list of well known public secondary schools was compiled prior to the research and thought to be possible distinguished public secondary schools included in the sample. The list follows: Beverly Hills (CA), Bronx Science (NY), Conestoga (PA), Greenwich (CT), Grosse Pointe South (MI), Illinois Mathematics and Science, Indian Hill (OH), New Canaan (CT), New Trier (IL), Princeton (NJ), Ridgewood (NJ), Rye (NY), Shaker Heights (OH), Simsbury (CT), Stuyvesant (NY), Syosett (NY), Tenafly (NJ), Texas Mathematics and Science, Thomas Jefferson for Science and Technology (VA), Wellesley (MA), and Weston (MA).

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The type of research included a nomination form (see Appendix D) to identify outstanding public secondary schools. Each college admissions director was asked to identify ten public secondary schools—including the top three—perceived to provide truly outstanding college admission preparation. A survey questionnaire (see Appendix E) was mailed to the guidance director at each of the 26 public secondary schools mentioned most often to gather information suggesting features of the schools and their respective college guidance programs.

## MEASUREMENT

The top 20 public secondary schools were identified through the aforementioned Nomination Form. The sample included guidance directors of



those schools named by the chief college admissions officers. The survey questionnaire (College Guidance Questionnaire) identified the college guidance activities and school programs available, and the characteristics of the schools. For example, SAT preparation courses, student to counselor ratio, Advanced Placement offerings, entrance standards, and per pupil expenditures.

## FEASIBILITY

Prior to the research, Deans of Admission at two of the 41 highly selective institutions agreed through telephone conversations to participate in the proposed research project. An admissions officer at a third institution expressed some concern regarding the use of the identified secondary school names in relation to the respective college.

Through the communication of the Nomination Form's accompanying cover letter (see Appendix C), the chief college admissions officers were assured of their institution's anonymity with regard to the ten identified public secondary schools and had a clear understanding of the purpose and benefits of conducting the research.

## FLOW CHART

Pilot study with local secondary school counselors and area college admissions directors

|  
Nomination Forms mailed to 41 college admissions directors

|  
Tallied and identified the distinguished public secondary schools

|  
College Guidance Questionnaires mailed to guidance directors

|  
Gathered information on the schools and college guidance programs

|  
Visited a most distinguished public secondary school to gather and verify data

|  
Telephoned a college admissions director for comments about data

## LIMITATIONS

The description of the study's limitations is divided into two sub-sections for clear understanding and consideration of the research. The sub-sections include: "Samples in the Study" and "The Nominations of Distinguished Public Secondary Schools."

### Samples in the Study

In the selection of the 41 highly selective colleges, the objective SAT minimum combined mean of 1,200 and above was used. However, the method of selection did not include mean cumulative grade average, mean class rank, and subjective factors such as reference letters, personal interviews, and the quality of extracurricular activities.

In recent action, the National Association of College Admissions Counselors encouraged member institutions not to publish mean SAT scores. In lieu of the mean, it was recommended that the middle fifty percent (25th to 75th percentiles) ranges be published.

### Nominations of the Distinguished Public Secondary Schools

The tally of nominations included an assignment of .5 point for each nominated public secondary school within a twenty mile radius of the nominating college. As a result, it was possible to link some public secondary schools to the respective nominating colleges and limit total anonymity.

### **SIGNIFICANCE**

Since equality between secondary schools and college applicants from their respective secondary schools is nonexistent in the admission process, students from specific elite private and distinguished public secondary schools are at an advantage. The study will identify the characteristics that distinguish college guidance and

school-wide programs at public secondary schools perceived to be the strongest from other public secondary schools. School boards, public secondary school counselors, administrators, and communities will have programs that they can emulate.

The study will contribute information relevant to the programs and opportunities available to students at distinguished public secondary schools that facilitate their extraordinary stature in the eyes of admissions officers at highly selective colleges. Counselors at less distinguished public secondary schools, administrators, school boards, and communities can be made aware of the unique opportunities available to students at distinguished public secondary schools and the college guidance programs that facilitate admission of greater numbers of students to highly selective students.

Consequently, the counselors, administrators, school boards, and communities may have information to facilitate the resources necessary to strengthen their college guidance programs. As a result, the administrators may determine whether to plan to strengthen school programs in an attempt to better prepare their students for the college search and make them more competitive in the highly selective admission process. If public secondary school counselors, administrators, their respective school boards, and communities want their students to gain admission to highly selective colleges, then characteristics of the

distinguished public secondary schools may be adopted into new and improved college guidance programs.

## OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter II reviews the relevant literature for this research, emphasizing this study's theoretical and research contexts. Chapter III is a discussion of this study's research methodology.

In Chapter IV the results of the data are reported and discussed. Chapter V includes a summary and discussion of this study's conclusions, recommendations, and implications for future research.

## CHAPTER II - REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### OVERVIEW

In reviewing the literature, the chapter is divided into main sections for the purposes of clarity and breadth. The literature review will acquaint the reader with the existing studies as they relate to what has been found, who has completed the work, when and where the studies were done, and what approaches to the research methodology were followed.

In the "Historical Background" section, the history of college admission to the most highly selective colleges and the criteria considered is necessary for an understanding of the admission process. The hierarchy of American colleges and admission practices at some of the Ivy League Institutions—Columbia University, the University of Pennsylvania, Harvard, Yale, and Princeton universities; and shifts in the values of their constituencies are discussed.

Highly selective colleges do not judge all of their applicants by the same standard. As a result, categories for admission consideration at elite colleges are identified and described in the "Highly Selective College Admission Categories" section.

The "Social Factors" section focuses on an underlying theory throughout this study that social mobility is related to secondary schools and colleges attended. There is rationale in the desire to attend and receive a degree from a most selective

and reputable college because the degree is perceived to have greater value upon graduation.

Since the selection of respective freshmen classes by elite colleges is not an exact science, many talented and deserving secondary school seniors are denied admission each year. The section titled "Inequality in the Selection Process" cites literature that confirms such inequity.

In the "Preference to Elite Private and Distinguished Public Schools" and the "New Jersey's Distinguished Public Schools" sections, the importance of the reputation of the applicant's secondary school is considered. A disproportionate number of students from distinguished public and private secondary schools are afforded opportunities to attend highly selective colleges.

Under "Methodology," procedures for the development of prior research that parallels this study's methodology is described. These methodological practices have influenced the procedures adopted in the development of the present study.

The "Eight-Year Study" section and the section on "Kozol's Research" are related to this study because of their respective populations—secondary schools. The consistent theme in both previous studies is democratization and equality in the schools. The present study is more specific to offerings in schools and their relationship to highly selective college admission.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The hierarchy of American colleges with regard to selectivity and prestige begins at the top with the Ivy League members. Admission to these elite universities is a consequence of extraordinary academic preparedness, college entrance test scores, and other outstanding achievements.

"At the top of the Ivy League stands the Big Three, Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, perhaps the premier undergraduate institutions" (Farnum, 1990, p. 75). Pierson (1969) noted that graduates of Harvard, Yale, and Princeton are disproportionately and overwhelmingly represented among our society's social elites.

Other Ivy League colleges include Brown University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Dartmouth College, and the University of Pennsylvania. High selectivity and quality education are not limited to the Ivies and have become more apparent at a variety of other institutions of higher education—Stanford University, Rice University, Johns Hopkins University, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology for example.

Crucial to the historical understanding of the Ivy League and the highly selective nature of its members is to compare the evolution of several of its members with an emphasis on the sociological factors surrounding their student bodies. In an analysis of the college attendance patterns of the upper classes of Baltimore, Boston, New York, and Philadelphia from 1870 to 1970, Farnum (1990) found that each city's constituency preferred certain local universities—Johns



Hopkins, Harvard, Columbia, and Pennsylvania respectively—as well as Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. The local universities were most popular in each city before World War I, and between World Wars I and II at least one of the Big Three (Harvard, Yale, Princeton) was the most desirable in each city. By the time World War I commenced, the national upper class preferred Harvard, Yale, and Princeton.

Farnum (1990) hypothesized that Columbia's and Pennsylvania's failure to develop similar national prestige gained by Harvard, Yale, and Princeton during the same time period resulted from their emergence of student bodies with more heterogeneity and backgrounds previously deemed socially undesirable. However, Harvard, Yale, and Princeton retained their unmatched attraction for the upper classes and rising elites, and consequently were more homogeneous and less receptive to students of diversity.

Coincidentally, two social movements of importance were under way between the world wars. First, the great migration from Europe increased the populations of East Coast cities with Italians, Slavs, and Jews. Secondly, public secondary education was concurrently emerging as an institution, extending previously unconceived opportunities to children of the immigrants (Farnum, 1990).

Recently, sociological and historical literature has considered the issue of admission discrimination at elite colleges during the 1920s and 1930s, especially against Jews (Wechsler, 1977; Synott, 1979; Karabel, 1984; Karen, 1985; Oren, 1985; Levine, 1986). With the exception of Wechsler, the focus of this literature has been

primarily on those colleges that were effective in imposed quotas and who handled the "Jewish problem." As a result, those institutions were able to sustain social eliteness and maintain their upper class White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) constituencies (Farnum, 1990). By successfully closing opportunities to rising immigrant groups, the Big Three preserved their institutional prestige and relationship with the upper class.

Before the late nineteenth century, the admissions process at all colleges was conducted on the basis of examinations administered at the respective college, usually focused on Latin and Greek translations of certain authors and in some instances, mathematics based on a particular text (Broome, 1903). Since these exams were specific to each college and administered on campus, each college's student body was geographically restricted.

In the late nineteenth century, the need for a smoother transition between secondary and higher education was facilitated by the notion that higher education should be more universally accessible, and the desire to improve the financial state of institutions by enrolling more students. The certificate system—first instituted by the University of Michigan and subsequently adopted by most western schools—provided for an examination of the secondary school, and if acceptable, the certification would allow for any of its recommended graduates to be admitted to the college (Farnum, 1990).

In the east, the certificate system was opposed due to the ties of colleges to their traditional feeder schools. This was especially the case with the most prestigious colleges such as The Big Three. However, some administrators such as Nicholas Murmy Butler, the dean at Columbia, saw "the emerging public school system as desirable in order to draw large numbers of students, at that time a source of both income and prestige" (Farnum, 1990, p. 79).

Columbia began a series of admission innovations to improve the articulation with New York's growing public school system. Butler moved to standardize entrance examinations under the College Entrance Examination Board as well as specific distribution course requirements from secondary schools. In addition, a statement of good moral character from the applicant's principal or headmaster was required. Entrance examinations could be either those given by the College Board or Columbia, and the New York State Regents' Exams could be used as a substitute (Farnum, 1990).

A new method of admission was developed at Columbia by 1919 in which the student could present a minimum school record plus an exam of mental alertness and power—the first evidence of an optional IQ test in college admission. Although Butler's recruiting efforts were successful, the social composition of New York had changed to include many students from immigrant and Jewish families (Farnum, 1990).

Consequently, an obvious movement "to identify and favor the traditional constituency of the Protestant elite" (Farnum, 1990, p. 80) emerged. Revised application forms asked for photographs, place of birth, religious affiliation, and parents' names, occupation, and places of birth. A personal interview was an additional requirement (Wechsler, 1977).

The IQ test in the form of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the Thorndike Intelligence Examination was a requirement by 1929. However, by 1939, the IQ test at Columbia was dropped and admission requirements were similar to those of 1919 (Farnum, 1990). Apparently, the concern over Jewish dominance in the student body had subsided.

In 1949, Columbia's requirements included strong preparation in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign languages; the SAT and three achievement tests—all administered by the College Board. The SAT had become standard across the United States and was no longer viewed as discriminatory (Farnum, 1990). Columbia's admissions requirements remain relatively the same today.

Butler's democratic influence greatly affected the background of students in terms of secondary school affiliation. Private secondary school students accounted for 51 percent of Columbia's population in 1890 and through 1911 (Farnum, 1990). By 1930, however, the percentage of private secondary school graduates at

Columbia was reduced to 28, reached a low of 19 percent by 1940, and had risen back to 28 percent by 1972 (Farnum, 1990).

Protestant faiths were dominant through 1911 and included 81 percent of the senior class in 1879. The aforementioned "Jewish problem" reached its peak in the 1920s and was reduced when the more selective admissions policies resulted in a 22 percent Jewish population (Farnum, 1990). In 1934, the Freshman Class at Columbia included 58 percent Protestants, 25 percent Catholics, and 17 percent Jews. Comments by Butler suggest that "not only were geographic quotas being used precisely to limit the Jewish population, but that meritocratic standards were being abrogated to do so as well" (Farnum, 1990, p. 84).

At the University of Pennsylvania (Penn), admissions requirements throughout the institution's history were similar to that of those at Columbia. Between 1850 and 1890 admission was based on a university battery of examinations in specified subject areas. By 1890, students could choose between the conventional examination system or the certificate option prevalent in the western state universities. In addition, Penn permitted examinations in cities across the United States in an attempt to attract a larger and more national student body (Farnum, 1990).

Through 1901, the requisites for entrance remained the same with just a few minor revisions. However, by 1910, submission of a secondary school record was permitted in lieu of examinations to recognize the special qualities of the varied

schools. The examination option was fulfilled by either those administered by Penn or the College Board, and classical languages were no longer a requirement—democratic approach—in an effort to be nondiscriminatory (Farnum, 1990).

"In 1922 the required entrance subjects and their distribution had been standardized into the credit or unit system, popularized by the College Board" (Farnum, 1990, p. 84). Three methods of entrance evolved: examinations in required subjects; secondary school record and a certificate (for students receiving diplomas from accredited schools); and secondary school record and alternative exams—either four College Board comprehensive exams or two exams in mental power and English usage—for applicants from schools with limited accreditation (Farnum, 1990). It appears that by offering additional options, Penn made the attempt to be more inclusive and democratic by increasing the number of qualified applicants.

The selectivity for admission to Penn increased by 1930 with the onset of the SAT as a requirement regardless of one's chosen entrance method. The regional accreditation school associations replaced the certificate in the recognition afforded to secondary schools (Farnum, 1990). The top quarter became the standard for class rank and evidently limited the democratic approach of the certificate.

Major changes in the admission process at Penn were implemented by 1950. The two possible routes were accredited secondary school graduation with the

successful completion of the required curriculum, the full endorsement of their principal, the SAT, and three scholastic achievement tests in English, a foreign language, and either a natural or social science, or by College Board administered aptitude and achievement tests in the senior subjects (Farnum, 1990).

By 1960, Penn had become truly selective. "Applications for admission now greatly exceed the available places in the freshman class. It is apparent that we are now in a truly selective admissions situation (U of P Registrar's Notebook, 1960). Penn was finally forced to address the desirable dilemma of limiting its entering class, an issue that Columbia had addressed earlier.

Similar to Columbia, Penn's student background in terms of secondary school continued a steady pattern of increased percentages of students from the public sector. "This pattern clearly shows the influence of the democratic certificate admissions policy implemented in 1890, as well as the rise to prominence of the public school system. At Penn, however, a resurgence of private school graduates occurred by 1940, whereas at Columbia this reversal trend did not happen until around 1970" (Farnum, 1990, p. 88).

During the time period (1919 and 1935) that Columbia's Jewish population declined from 40 to 17 percent, Penn's Jewish population rose dramatically. Apparently, Penn had a greater commitment to nondiscriminatory admission (Farnum, 1990).

However, during this time period, an influential body of alumni argued against the democratic admission process and insisted that the university's mission was to educate a "special class of people with superior ability but also with superior social and economic credentials" (Farnum, 1990, p. 90)—a proposal to restore the Protestant elite and to follow the example of the ancient English universities. In fact, two faculty members were sent to Oxbridge in 1930 "in search of suggestions that might be of value in reconstructing the educational work of the College" (Cheyney, 1940, p. 387).

Due to their strength as institutions, Harvard, Yale, and Princeton followed a less democratic approach to college admission than their Ivy League colleagues, Columbia and Penn. The Big Three were opposed to the standardization of exams administered by the College Board and required students to take their own exams and maintain the positive relationships with their feeder schools (Farnum, 1990). In 1915, they adopted the College Board exams to facilitate a national talent pool and not for the democratic process that was at the focus of Columbia's and Penn's admission practices. The Big Three could afford to be more independent since they were financially secure and enrollment was steady (Farnum, 1990).

Harvard initiated a plan in 1911 which required that applicants could enroll based on their respective records in approved secondary schools and scores of four comprehensive examinations. By the 1920s The Big Three adopted a cap on enrollment and allowed them to operate on independent admission criteria. Synott



(1979) noted that Princeton—and later Yale and Harvard—searched the full range of selection methods including personal interviews, alumni preference, psychological testing, character references, and geographic distribution in an attempt to limit numbers and consequently to facilitate selective admission.

The Big Three were less heterogeneous than Columbia and Penn with regard to secondary school background. From 1900 to 1940, the private school sector was represented at Harvard between 40 and 60 percent, at Yale between 50 and 60 percent, and at Princeton between 70 and 90 percent. Subsequent to World War II, the number of students from public schools began to exceed the number enrolled from private schools (Farnum, 1990).

According to Synott (1974, 1979), Harvard, Yale, and Princeton all developed quotas that focused on Jews. During the pre-World War II period the Jewish population never exceeded 25 percent at Harvard, six percent at Princeton, and thirteen percent at Yale.

The Big Three essentially delayed their democratization and retained the Protestant elite, and were able to build quality academic programs based on social prestige. "They thus have sustained their position as America's most prestigious undergraduate institutions in an era that stresses considerations of academic quality and individual merit" (Farnum, 1990, p.95).

## HIGHLY SELECTIVE COLLEGE ADMISSION CATEGORIES

Regardless of a highly selective college's history, most elite colleges agree on the basic criteria for evaluation of their respective applicants. These include: the secondary school record—including difficulty of course load in relation to availability at one's school and grades in those courses taken—and class rank, the scores from the American College Test (ACT) or the SAT, three College Board Achievement test scores (in most instances), the essay(s), school references, extracurricular involvement, the interview (if available), and the student's employment experience.

However, not all prospects in an applicant pool are judged against one another, but rather the students may be placed in divisions or categories. Consequently, applicants compete against others within the designated category and not the members of the entire applicant pool. Competition for a space in the freshman class is with other students of similar interest, background, and talent.

Moll (1979) has named five categories—although lesser or greater numbers of divisions may exist depending upon the institution's mission—that emerge when an admission committee structures its entering class. These are: "The Intellectuals," "The Special Talent Category," "The Family Category," "The Social Conscience Category," and "The All-American Kid Category." Each category is described below:

1. The Intellectuals. A consistent complaint by the faculty on college campuses refers to the shortcomings of the college's students. Consequently, "superior intellectual competence is uniformly admitted" (Moll, 1979, p.126) based on the choice of the most demanding program of study, a nearly perfect academic record, and outstanding intellectual ability as demonstrated by the aforementioned test scores.
2. The Special Talent Category. Most often, this category is reserved for the athlete who will fill a void in the athletic program. At Kalamazoo College in Michigan, a place might be filled by a tennis player, and at Bowdoin College where ice hockey is the critical winter sport, the most talented goalie might successfully compete against other hockey goalies in the special talent pool. Applicants from this category are selected to boost morale and please alumni who are counted on to make annual financial contributions. Occasionally, a talented musician or artist may be chosen from this category, but usually it consists of a pool of student athletes in competition for an offer of admission.
3. The Family Category. In private higher education, the alumni are asked to fill the financially supportive role that is usually handled in public higher education by taxes on the state's residents. Although not all legacies are admitted to their parent's alma mater, most elite colleges are generous to alumni children. For those great contributors, more removed relatives (e.g.

nephews, grandchild) can gain an admission advantage. Some universities may view their extended family as their local populations (e.g. the Boston area for Harvard).

4. The Social Conscience Category. Since the elitist institutions have a history that includes a dominance of children of the Protestant establishment, most colleges have recently fulfilled a debt to society. As a result of student demands in the late 1960s, many elite colleges have been successful in meeting the goals of enrolling the same percentage of African American students in each freshman class as the percentage of African Americans in the nation's population. Motivation is the focus when the admission committee evaluates students in this category, and in many instances, potential supersedes achievement because of inferior schooling and lack of family support. "A respectable minority representation (now branching beyond blacks) is an essential component of the prestige college's class today" (Moll, 1979, p.128).
5. The All-American Kid Category. These are the solid, but not outstanding students who possess exemplary personal qualities. They play a big role in the school and community through leadership roles, and have the common sense necessary to make significant contributions to their respective communities and the nation in the future. Occasionally, unique factors such

as the applicant's family wealth or his geographic location can give him an advantage.

The importance and the emergence of the Social Conscience Category in the eyes of college officials is evidenced by the following distribution of a Harvard University Freshman Class (Fitzsimmons & Lewis, 1991):

Asian American	18.1%
African American	9.1%
Mexican American	3.4%
Puerto Rican	1.4%
Other Hispanic	2.9%
Native American	0.7%

The Class of 1995 at Dartmouth College (Furstenberg, 1991) included the following Social Conscience Category representation:

Asian American	10.8%
Black	8.1%
Hispanic	5.7%
Native American	2.3%

The importance of admission categories varies according to the institution. Male-oriented colleges are likely to be more preoccupied with student athletes than predominantly female colleges. The Intellectuals Category may be a larger division at institutions such as the University of Chicago, Oberlin College, and Swarthmore College (Moll, 1979). Colleges that have recently turned coeducational—such as Washington and Lee University—often have a goal or limit for the newly admitted gender.

"A college simply can't apply a uniform standard of 'academic and personal excellence' and end up accidentally with an adequate showing of legacy students and minorities, with a basketball team, and with geographic distribution" (Moll, 1979, p. 130).

## SOCIAL FACTORS

The false notion of equal opportunity in college admission mirrors America's inaccurate belief that it is largely a classless society. The secondary school one attends significantly effects college choices, and consequently life opportunities. Warsh (1990) writes that Benjamin DeMott "argues relentlessly that there are social situations from which there is no way out, that assimilation and upward mobility are often a public relations smoke screen" in his book, The Imperial Middle: Why Americans Can't Think Straight About Class. A similar smoke screen may be present in the highly selective college admission process and the selection of the incoming freshman class.

Students in attendance at prestigious secondary schools possess cultural capital in terms of their chances for admission at elite colleges. These distinguished public and elite private secondary schools tend to have exemplary college guidance and school-wide programs in place that facilitate admission to their students at a disproportionately greater rate. The schools possess a perceived power that allows their admission candidates to benefit from when they submit applications.

The position of political candidates parallels highly selective college admission in that the power elite in the political area often donates large financial resources that far outweigh what other classes can contribute (Domhoff, 1983). The prestigious secondary schools have reputable programs (e.g. mentorships) and resources that place their students at a distinct advantage, and students at schools without name recognition at a disadvantage while in competition for a place in the entering classes at elite colleges. The role that large donations can play in the admission status of applicants is described in the aforementioned "Family Category."

Admission to and graduation from one of the highly selective colleges gives one the opportunity to enhance his social mobility in society and economic opportunities. For example, approximately one half of former President Ronald Reagan's cabinet have an Ivy League degree (Cookson & Persell, 1985).

It is timely to consider more efficient strategies for the preparation of public secondary school students for admission to elite institutions of higher education. As described in the "Social Conscience Category," elite colleges have been successful in attracting ethnic minorities to their campuses in recent years. However, highly selective colleges profess that they are concerned about the homogeneity of the student population and the downward trend in the number of students whose parents did not attend college (Hassan & Reynolds, 1987-88).

A Harvard University profile indicated that between 1985 and 1988, the number of working class graduates—those whose parents did not attend college—

dropped from sixteen to eleven percent. Williams College has seen fewer applications from students who hail from white working class backgrounds, and admittedly tends to attract rich, white students; a reality on most highly selective college campuses (Hassan & Reynolds, 1987-88).

As college costs continue to rise at a faster rate than the cost of living, high ability, college bound students and their parents will limit their respective searches to the most affordable in the hope of keeping the graduate or professional school option available. More recent concern for students and their parents, counselors, and admissions officers at highly selective colleges stems from the evolution of private organizations and independent counselors-costly services that maybe effective for students with the means to afford them—which places working class students at a disadvantage (Hassan & Reynolds, 1987-88). In addition to the SAT preparation courses offered by such companies as Stanley H. Kaplan—Avon Old Farms School and Suffield Academy hired the Princeton Review to raise student scores—independent consultants have flourished in areas "where clients can afford the cost of their services and where the 'right' college credentials are highly valued" (Hassan & Reynolds, 1987-88, p.8).

The student and counselor from an unknown secondary school may benefit from this study in terms of strategies that will allow them to effectively compete in the highly selective college admission process. Hassan and Reynolds (1987-88) noted that the media presents elite college admission and it's accompanied success



as attainable by the rich and famous as exemplified by Brooke Shields (Princeton), Jodie Foster (Yale), and John F. Kennedy, Jr. (Brown). Students from less well known public secondary schools are not only denied the success and entitlements that are facilitated by elite college graduation, but the opportunities to benefit from such an education.

### INEQUITY IN THE SELECTION PROCESS

Each spring, many talented and qualified secondary school seniors are denied admission to the most selective colleges in the United States despite having possessed extraordinary credentials. Jump (1988) cited the competition for places in the freshman classes at the highly selective colleges when, in 1982, Princeton accepted only one third of the secondary school valedictorians who applied and just under half of the applicants displaying SAT scores in the 750-800 range (800 scale). In 1987, Stanford denied sixty percent of the applicants with all "A" grades on their secondary school transcripts, and seventy percent of those who submitted SAT scores above 700 (Jump, 1988).

"It is part of admissions mythology that individual merit is the yardstick by which candidates are judged. The problem is that little agreement exists on what constitutes merit, how it can be measured, or how to compare applicants of diverse background and interests" (Jump, 1988, A52). When admissions officers at the most selective institutions wrestle with the evaluation process in terms of students from

varied backgrounds and secondary schools, the student from the less distinguished public secondary school fails to obtain the competitive edge necessary to gain an offer of admission.

Many of the applicants who qualify for the categories representative of the intellects, those with special talents, the influential families, and minorities have the personal qualities of the all-American type students (Moll, 1979). However, all of the admission categories with the exception of "The Intellect"—as subjective and arbitrary as they may be—fill places in the entering class at highly selective colleges in lieu of others deserving admission based on meritocratic criteria. Consequently, outstanding students from schools with limited if any recognition are disadvantaged in terms of admission candidacy.

When one considers that highly selective colleges have special categories on their individual agendas and that too few spaces in each freshman class exist for too many qualified applicants, other selection procedures may appeal to professionals. Jump (1988) advocated for some type of random selection as the only fair way to choose the entering class. One possible way to select a class is to have qualified students draw lots. Another option is to accept qualified students when their applications are complete, on a rolling basis, until the class is filled. A third possibility is to place all qualified applicants on a waiting list and accept those who respond first (Jump, 1988).

The inequity in the selection of applicants to highly selective colleges is well documented by the results of a study of Ivy League colleges conducted by Cookson and Persell (1985) illustrated in Table #1.

TABLE #1

IVY LEAGUE ACCEPTANCE

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<u>College</u>	<u>S16BS</u>	<u>OLBS</u>	<u>SPHS</u>	<u>NGA</u> <u>(% accepted)</u>
BROWN	35%	20%	28%	22%
COLUMBIA	66%	29%	32%	41%
CORNELL	57%	36%	55%	31%
DARTMOUTH	41%	21%	41%	22%
HARVARD	38%	28%	20%	17%
PRINCETON	40%	28%	18%	18%
PENNSYLVANIA	45%	32%	33%	36%
YALE	40%	32%	15%	20%
OVERALL % ACCEPTED	42%	27%	30%	26%

S16BS=Select 16 Boarding Schools

OLBS=Other Leading Boarding Schools

SPHS=Select Public High Schools

NGA=National Group of Applicants

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It is obvious that the "Select Sixteen" boarding schools are more successful in placing their graduates in the Ivy League colleges and that selective public secondary schools have greater success in placement than other leading boarding schools (or similar results) and the national applicant group. The perception of the secondary school carries a weight in the evaluation of the applicants' credentials. The question again arises with regard to the strategies necessary to best prepare public secondary school students for highly selective college admission.

#### PREFERENCE TO ELITE PRIVATE AND DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SCHOOLS

One of the contributing factors to the admission decision at selective colleges is the perceived strength and reputation of the secondary school. In her analysis of the competitive and devastating nature of admission to the elite colleges, Luciano writes: "The surest way into a top college is to have a wonderful academic record from a first-rate high school. So attending the name secondary school in your area can be a plus" (1986, p. 139).

In addition to the name local public schools in the respective applicant's area, the private sector of secondary school education continues its emergence. Of the five prominent parts of the private school arena—independent preparatory schools, home school, Afrocentric academics, parochial schools, and for-profit institutions (Toch, 1991)—the preparatory schools, in many instances, referred to as the boarding schools are most successful in highly selective college admission.

Prep school youths have historically been in pursuit of an Ivy League university admission letter, similar to a tribal right of passage to manhood as achieved through killing their first lion. As Ivy League acceptances continue to become more scarce, prep school officials are forced to convince their constituencies that other colleges match up to Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, and are consequently worth the grueling preparation (Cookson & Persell, 1985).

Virtually all prep school students go to college, so the critical issue is not whether or not one attends, rather, where one enrolls is what counts. The prep school students' collective identity functions in their aspirations for admission to similar colleges, including those with modest academic credentials and less affluent social backgrounds (Cookson & Persell, 1985).

Baltzell (1958) cited the importance that elite secondary schools play in upper class recognition. He distinguished between the truly socially elite and those schools that served somewhat less powerful and less affluent families. The "Select Sixteen" identified earlier describes a core group of eastern Protestant schools recognized for both setting the pace and baring the brunt of criticism received by prep schools for snobbish, undemocratic values (Baltzell, 1958). One Select Sixteen college counselor noted that attending the right college is "part of the formula for their lives" (Cookson & Persell, 1985).

In the 1930s and 1940s, two thirds of the graduates of the Select Sixteen (Baltzell, 1958) prep schools subsequently attended Harvard, Yale, or Princeton.

In the 1970s, following the widely touted increase in heterogeneity at these most selective colleges, the rate of the Select Sixteen was one in five (Kingston & Lewis, 1990).

Boarding school attendance is predicated on the notion that students will be admitted to more prestigious colleges. Since college admission has changed in the past twenty five years, boarding schools have found it more difficult to meet the expectations of facilitating admission to highly selective colleges.

Consequently, prep schools have responded by honing their extensive college guidance operations and exercising political clout with college admissions officers. The result is a greater payoff for elite prep school graduates, compared to other applicants (Cookson & Persell, 1985). The same can be said for selective and distinguished public schools when admission to elite colleges is a high priority for the school administration and other constituents.

Many children enter boarding school and distinguished public secondary school with high expectations about how their attendance will assist them in entering prestigious college settings. Their parents are unquestionably the first source of pressure in urging them to attend the "right" college. Among boarding school ninth graders, 51 percent said that they believed in ten years that the most valuable part of their boarding school experience would be "where it helped you get into college" (Cookson & Persell, 1985).

Prep school students share an identity that is visible in their aspirations for college choice, although their SAT scores may range in competence. With one third having combined scores of 1,050 or below they apply in overwhelming numbers to the most selective private colleges in the country and possess a strong feeling of entitlement (Cookson & Persell, 1985). Such annual occurrences provide the public school student with even greater obstacles in seeking admission to highly selective colleges.

Although prep schools are still more effective than most other secondary schools in facilitating highly selective college admission—part of the promise of the prep rite of passage—the potency of the prep magic has fallen somewhat in the last few decades. Several colleges still receive a significant portion of their applications from prep school students, suggesting that these colleges are more likely to be perceived as appropriate by prep school students (Cookson & Persell, 1985).

History shows that a small group of boarding schools, including the Select Sixteen, have had close relationships with the Ivy League institutions, and especially with Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. Karabel (1984) reported that two thirds of all graduates from twelve of the Select Sixteen boarding schools enrolled at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton in the 1930s and 1940s. However, by 1973, the average had dropped noticeably to 21 percent with rates between the twelve secondary schools ranging from eight to 51 percent (Cookson & Persell, 1978, Table 4). In summary, the number of select sixteen school graduates attending Harvard, Yale, and



Princeton in the last fifty years dropped from two out of three to an average of one in five.

Despite the competitive environment in highly selective college admission, college counselors at elite prep schools are listened to more closely by college admissions officers than their public school counterparts. This suggests that prep school counselors have a reputation for offering a steady supply of "socially elite and academically prepared students" (Cookson & Persell, 1985).

The question arises time and again regarding the higher rate of selective college acceptance by prep school students when compared to public school students. Is this due to superior academic credentials or the higher social family status of prep school students? Cookson (1981) found that those from public schools with similar SAT scores as those from the prep school sector generally enrolled at less prestigious colleges.

In general, the Select Sixteen applicants fare very well in elite college admission. Ninety percent of the high scorers (1,220 to 1,580 combined) who applied to the most highly selective were admitted, and 66 percent of the Ivy League applicants were admitted (Cookson & Persell, 1985).

The relationship between elite prep schools and elite colleges results in one of three distinctive outcomes for applicants (Cookson & Persell, 1985). Students with strong academic credentials and College Board scores, seem to be "turbocharged" by the prep right of passage, Select Sixteen students in particular.

These strong students are easily placed by college counselors since they have flourished in a prep school and would have gone to elite colleges in good number regardless of the secondary school, but Select Sixteen prep school attendance accentuates the opportunity for admission.

Cookson and Persell (1985) identify a second group of beneficiaries from the "knighting effect" of elite prep school attendance. Of the students from families in the bottom third of the socioeconomic status ladder who scored between 1,220 and 1,580 on the SAT, 89 percent were accepted by a highly selective college. For academically talented but less affluent students, prep schools facilitate a route for upward mobility.

The third outcome is one where attending prep school places floors under their students. Fifty nine percent of the high socioeconomic status-low SATs (540 to 1,050 combined scores) group attain admission to a selective college (Cookson & Persell, 1985). The prep schools, thus, serve both mobility functions, and maintenance functions.

Cookson and Persell (1985) concluded that prep schools, especially the Select Sixteen schools, offer strong and relatively weak students a significant boost in achieving admission offers to institutions of their choice. For females, students from modest socioeconomic family backgrounds, and minorities, the independent schools facilitate educational mobility. For upper and upper-middle class students

with good academic records, the prep schools assist with the connection to prestigious institutions.

"The organizational support that the schools offer to students is matched by few, if any, public schools" (Cookson & Persell, 1985, p. 188). Prep school students know that they are expected to enter a selective or socially acceptable college, and they have been afforded the tools to attain admission. Since highly selective college admission is most competitive, failure to attend a selective institution is considered by most prep school students to be a severe roadblock on the road to social and economic success. "Where you go to college defines in good measure who you are, and the days when preps could automatically expect to go to an Ivy League or other highly selective college are over. They have to earn their way—or at least part of their way" (Cookson & Persell, 1985, p.188).

The prep schools open doors for their students, and compared to their peers in the public sector, the prep school students begin the college search with significant advantages. The prep school support system is deep and wide, and provides the academically fallen student with the help necessary to get back on his feet. It is reasonable to consider that students from exemplary public schools—where per pupil expenditure and staffing are greater—are afforded privilege in the highly selective admission competition when compared to other public school students.

The distinguished public schools can be divided into two types: (1) selective secondary schools where an admission process exists, and (2) public secondary schools that serve the specific school division in their area. Of the selective secondary schools, the Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science (Ramsay & Redding, 1988) has a contrasting approach in that it is a university program where program graduates receive a high school diploma, approximately two years of college credit, and the option to finish a bachelor's degree at the University of North Texas or transfer to another institution. The advanced program and its selective nature insure an advantage in the highly selective college admission competition.

Public and private schools have the opportunity to implement College Board sponsored Advanced Placement (AP) programs into their respective curricula to challenge students academically and facilitate preparation for comprehensive subject examinations. Satisfactory scores can earn students college credit at participating universities. To begin an Advanced Placement Program at a secondary school, the school division must send the appropriate teacher(s) to summer training workshops. School divisions where the average family income is below federally established guidelines may recommend their teacher(s) for a Mellon grant that will finance the cost of the training workshop.

In essence, the greater the school budget is in a given attendance area, the better the chances exist that the school division will elect to implement an

Advanced Placement Program. The school division invests money into each added course and must have the population that is well endowed financially to afford the \$65 per exam fee—a modest fee reduction is made available to students in families with annual incomes that fall below a federally determined border.

In addition to the advantage of college credit, Dillon (1986) found admission preference to be another meaning of AP. The designation AP on a secondary school transcript is taken on faith as proof of rigorous college preparation and worthy of special consideration in determining admission. When Dillon (1986) surveyed fifty selective colleges, she found that a student's admission chances are considerably enhanced by enrollment in Advanced Placement courses. "The list of AP-oriented institutions includes the most competitive colleges in the nation, those whose practices are closely watched because year after year they attract the most highly qualified students" (Dillon, 1986, p. 14). The quality of the school's academic program and the student's selection of courses within that program effect how competitive the student will be in the competition for highly selective college admission.

Note in Table #2 some selected characteristics of three distinguished public schools and their respective college guidance programs (College Board Guide to Secondary Schools, 1986).

TABLE #2

SELECTED SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

School	Number Students	Public	Private	Number Counselors	# AP	#H	SATV	SATM
New Canaan (CT)	1300	15%	60%	7	6	9	466	522
Radnor (PA)	1199	32%	41%	7	7	14	450	507
Ridgewood (NJ)	1377	n/a	n/a	8	9	10	466	513

School=secondary school name

# Students=student population

Public=percentage of graduates enrolled at four-year public colleges

Private=percentage of graduates enrolled at four-year private colleges

#Counselors=number of counselors including the director

#AP=number of College Board Advanced Placement courses offered

#H=number of honors courses offered

SATV=mean SAT Verbal score

SATM=mean SAT Math score

One of the many innovative secondary school programs that affords students an advantage in the highly selective college admission competition is available at the Roanoke Valley (Roanoke, Virginia) Governor's School for Science and Technology. In 1985, the Governor's School opened as a regional center for the study of advanced courses in science, mathematics, computer applications, and high technology. The school serves 200 students in grades 10-12 for a half-day program (students return to their home schools for the remainder of the school day). Students must apply for admission and are chosen competitively from seven participating school divisions.

Courses emphasize rigorous college level sciences and mathematics and include Laboratory Techniques and Research Skills, Principles of Chemistry, College Chemistry, College Biology, Principles of College Physics, University Physics, Computer Science, Algebra II/Trigonometry/Statistics, Geometry/Trigonometry/Statistics, Advanced Algebra/Pre-Calculus, AP Calculus AB and BC, Intermediate Calculus, and Discrete Mathematics. Additional electives include Advanced Computer Science, Aerodynamics/Astronautics, Marine Biology, Astronomy, Behavioral Research Models, Laboratory Instrumentation, Trigonometry, and Mentorship.

All mathematics and computer science courses, the Laboratory Techniques and Research Skills, and the Principles of Chemistry are advanced courses. All other science courses are college level courses that earn community college credit.

Students may also choose to take a course through directed study. This involves weekly contact with a faculty member and independent achievement and completion of competencies (Governor's School for Science and Technology, 1989).

The aforementioned Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Alexandria, Virginia was established in 1985 as the result of a partnership of business and education created to improve education in mathematics, science, and technology. Approximately 400 students are selected for each of grades nine through twelve on the basis of aptitude and interest in the biological, physical, mathematical, and computer sciences and related fields. Five school divisions in northern Virginia are served by this Governor's School, a full day program (Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, 1991).

All students are enrolled in an eight period daily program designed to satisfy the 25 credits required for graduation. Seventeen AP courses and six post-AP courses are available to students. The school placed first in the United States with the largest number of National Merit Semifinalists in the 1991-92 academic year (Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, 1991).

## NEW JERSEY'S DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Brady, Johns, and Rapp (1992) rated the very best public secondary schools in New Jersey. The criteria for determining the best schools included the mean SAT scores, the percentage of students enrolled at four-year colleges, and the



percentage of students attending colleges and universities described as most competitive (% H.S.C. in Table #3) by two out of three most-respected guides—Peterson's Guide to Four-Year Colleges, Barron's Profile of American Colleges, and Lovejoy's College Guide. In addition, the percentage of students winning one of four prestigious awards—National Merit Scholarship Program finalists, Edward J. Bloustein Distinguished Scholars Program awardees, National Achievement Scholarship Program for Outstanding Negro Students finalists, and National Hispanic Scholars Awards Program winners.

Of New Jersey's 350 public high schools, Brady, Johns, and Rapp (1992) listed the top eight schools, eleven honorable mention, and the next 22. The top eight public secondary schools and data from the 1990-91 academic year follows in Table #3.

TABLE #3

## NEW JERSEY'S TOP EIGHT

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School	Mean SAT	% to 4-Year Colleges	% Winning Awards	% H.S.C.
Holmdel	1032	81.3	12.8	14.4
Millburn	1060	87.8	17	23.9
Mountain Lakes	1080	97.7	17	20.5
Princeton	1075	78	14.1	29.9
Ridgewood	1043	82.3	12.1	14.5
Rumson- Fair Haven	1049	81.1	14	16.1
Summit	1053	76.4	11.5	14.3
Tenafly	1051	88.6	13.3	18.5

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## METHODOLOGY

Over the past thirty years, several studies in the literature have addressed practices in the schools. The two described in this section have contributed methodological procedures to this study.

The primary goal of a project completed by Gerstein and Lichtman (1990) was to identify elementary guidance and counseling programs considered to be exemplary. They planned to identify these guidance programs in order to share their expertise and experiences with other practicing counselors, graduate counseling students, and counselor supervisors.

Since a common list of elementary school counseling programs was nonexistent, Gerstein and Lichtman (1990) contacted state supervisors of guidance, counselor educators, leaders of professional organizations, editors of journals, and guidance supervisors in local school districts throughout the country. The individuals were sent a one-page nomination form and asked to nominate exemplary programs. Contact persons for the 200 programs nominated were mailed a questionnaire (Gerstein & Lichtman, 1990).

Cooper (1962) researched the college admission guidance practices at secondary schools in the northeastern section of the United States. The study examined the techniques and devices used by secondary school counselors to inform their students and assist them in gaining entry into college. The eleven states covered by the questionnaire were Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland,

Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont—areas where the pressures of college entrance are great.

A trial questionnaire was constructed and mailed to guidance counselors at fifteen schools. The counselors were asked to respond with suggestions for improvement with regard to ease of response, items to be included, and clarity. As a consequence of the trial, the final form of the questionnaire was adopted (Cooper, 1962).

Cooper (1962) mailed questionnaires that contained seventy items to each school within each state from information received from the Department of Guidance at the respective State Education Departments. The items on the questionnaire were relative to school size, graduating class, numbers attending four-year colleges and other institutions of higher learning, number of counselors, number of transcripts mailed, and additional information regarding the college counseling process.

The methodology used by Cooper (1962) and by Gerstein and Lichtman (1990) have components that are relevant to this study of distinguished public secondary schools and their college guidance programs. In this study, the researcher implemented procedures related to Cooper's study (modernized) and Gerstein's and Lichtman's project to effectively complete the research.

## THE EIGHT-YEAR STUDY

The Eight-Year Study was encouraged in part by John Dewey's influence on increasing democratization and humanization in the schools (Tyler, 1980).

As a consequence of the rigid requirements for college entrance, high school officials felt that they were prevented from implementing improvements. Young people sought the same freedoms and flexibility afforded to them in earlier grades, and high school personnel were interested in making accommodations, however, they did not want to jeopardize college admission opportunities for their students (Tyler, 1980).

The Progressive Education Association appointed a commission to construct a plan—The Eight-Year Study—to deal effectively with the conflict. Some secondary school principals sought to eliminate or reduce considerably the required courses demanded of college candidates. Conversely, some college officials were concerned that if college preparatory requirements were eliminated, underprepared students would gain admission.

The commission recommended a pilot program including 28 schools and two school systems in Denver and Tulsa. For eight years, each school was permitted to develop an educational program that was believed to be appropriate for its students, regardless of current college entrance requirements. Every region of the country except the South, public and private schools, large and small schools, and suburban and inner-city schools were represented in the study. When the proposal was

presented to the United States colleges, almost all agreed to admit graduates from the representative schools without prejudice based on their lack of traditional course preparation (Tyler, 1980).

A summary of the results follows (Tyler, 1980):

1. Most significant in terms of curriculum development was the widespread acceptance of the notion that schools could develop curricula that would interest most of their students, meet the needs of the students, and concurrently facilitate the preparedness crucial to college success. Subsequent to The Eight-Year Study, most state departments of education and institutions of higher education have greatly reduced specific requirements and entrusted each school with curriculum responsibility. In the past few years, the trend has been to require a certain core of preparation at the secondary level as mandated by the state departments of education (e.g. Virginia's Advanced Studies Diploma) and the individual colleges (e.g. foreign language admission prerequisite).
2. The study resulted in the recognition by most colleges that they could locate many students who would succeed in their college studies, despite their failure to meet specified subject requirements. The colleges discovered that successful candidates could be admitted on the basis of reading and writing ability tests, quantitative problem solving, and on evidence of strong interest in further education.

3. Progressive education is believed to be a serious conceptual framework useful in planning and operating educational programs.
4. The development of the inservice workshop to furnish time and assistance to teachers in the development of instructional programs and materials, and in acquiring new knowledge and skills for their profession.
5. An important outcome was the acceptance of educational evaluation in place of testing.

The Eight-Year Study facilitated an appreciation for all secondary schools in the college admission process. Unfortunately, it may have reinforced the importance of the secondary school reputation variable in highly selective college admission by encouraging elite colleges to continue established relationships with their feeder secondary schools, in lieu of more progressive schools with fewer college preparatory requirements.

#### KOZOL'S RESEARCH

In his new book, Savage inequalities: Children in America's schools, Kozol (1991) described the lives of children in inner cities and less affluent suburbs.

Kozol (1991) compared the affluent suburban secondary schools to less affluent schools and noted the great disparity in funding between the two groups. He clearly cited the correlated differences in success rates and used several examples of inequalities that parallel the highly selective college admission process.

Most students in communities like Glencoe and Winnetka, Illinois learn to read early in elementary school, and many read at the same level as high school seniors in the finest Chicago secondary schools while still in sixth or seventh grade. New Trier Township High School in Illinois, long considered one of the distinguished public secondary schools in the United States provides numerous offerings that compare favorably to many elite prep schools (Kozol, 1991).

New Trier Township High School students are most successful in the college admission search. "Ninety three percent of seniors going on to four-year colleges—many to schools like Harvard, Princeton, Berkeley, Brown, and Yale" (Kozol, 1991, p. 65) allows its students to benefit considerably when seeking admission to the most selective colleges. Curricular choices include seven foreign languages, aeronautics, criminal justice, and the literature of Nobel winners.

A faculty adviser is assigned a group of freshmen who remain with them through graduation. "Each of the faculty advisers—they are given a reduced class schedule to allow time for this—gives counseling to about two dozen children" (Kozol, 1991, p. 66). At Rye High School in affluent Westchester County, New York the student to counselor ratio is approximately 150 to one. Counseling in general, and college guidance specifically is sure to be more efficient and thorough in the distinguished public secondary schools than in other public secondary school settings.



Kozol argued that budgetary considerations are critical in providing equitable educational opportunities in the public schools. The same argument can be made for equitable opportunities in the competition for spaces in the first year classes at highly selective colleges. One might hypothesize that the reputation of public secondary schools has a correlation with the per pupil expenditure in the respective school divisions.

The differences in expenditures (per pupil) on a state by state basis was chronicled with the following figures (Virginia Journal of Education, 1991):

Top Five-New Jersey (\$7,033), New York (\$7,031), Connecticut (\$6,767), Alaska (\$6,647), and the District of Columbia (\$5,845)

Bottom Five-Utah (\$2,440), Mississippi (\$2,785), Arkansas (\$2,960), Alabama (\$3,023), and South Dakota (\$3,061)

In the 1989-90 academic year, 92 of the 140 seniors at Rye High School were enrolled in Advanced Placement courses and per pupil funding was in excess of \$12,000. The maximum teacher salary approached \$70,000 (Kozol, 1991).

Virginia, the eighteenth ranked per pupil expenditure state averaged \$4,363 in the 1991-92 academic year (Virginia Journal of Education, 1991). A list of 1987 per pupil expenditures in some distinguished New York secondary schools (Kozol, 1991) where college guidance for the right institution is a priority can be compared to a 1991-92 figure of just over \$4,000 in the Montgomery County, Virginia school division:

Great Neck	\$11,265
Jericho	\$11,325
Manhasset	\$11,370
Oyster Bay	\$ 9,980
Bronxville	\$10,000

Kozol's (1991) findings confirm that per pupil expenditure should be examined when surveying guidance directors at the distinguished public secondary schools identified most frequently by the chief admission officers at the highly selective colleges.

## CHAPTER III - METHODOLOGY

### OVERVIEW

This study was conducted to identify the distinguished public secondary schools in the United States, characteristics of the distinguished public secondary schools, and the college guidance activities practiced by their counselors. The gathered data will be made available to other public secondary school counselors, administrators, school boards, and communities to serve as a model for exemplary college guidance programs.

The goal of the study was to identify activities and strategies that less distinguished public secondary schools may implement to assist their students in gaining admission to highly selective colleges. Ultimately, a more equitable distribution of students from less well known public secondary schools may be afforded highly selective collegiate choices.

The research methodology is described in this chapter in sections to provide clear understanding of procedures in a logical manner. The early sections include the description of the research and the research design, and the description of the pilot study.

A section titled "Selection of Subjects" cites the target populations and sample of subjects for research. The instruments for successful completion of the study are identified in the "Instrumentation" section.

## DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

The approach implemented in this study consisted of survey research methodology.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

The first of two surveys included a brief questionnaire structured as a nomination form (see Appendix D) focused on the identification of distinguished public secondary schools that possess extraordinary college guidance programs. Each college admissions director was asked to identify ten public secondary schools—including the very top three—perceived to provide truly outstanding preparation for highly selective college admission.

A survey questionnaire (see Appendix E) was mailed to the guidance directors at the 26 most frequently identified public secondary schools to gather data suggesting features of the schools and their respective college guidance programs. A verification visit to one of the most distinguished public secondary schools was conducted.

In addition, a summary of the results from the second survey (College Guidance Questionnaire) was discussed by telephone with one college admissions officer who nominated the most distinguished public secondary school. The respective college admissions officer was asked for rationale in her nomination of the highest rated public secondary school and to comment on the results.

## PILOT STUDY

A copy of the College Guidance Questionnaire for guidance directors was mailed to the secondary school counselors in the Montgomery County, Virginia school division. Each counselor was asked to make suggestions and comments about the clarity of the questionnaire.

In addition, a copy of the questionnaire was mailed to the admissions directors at area four-year colleges—Radford University and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Each admissions director was asked to make suggestions and comments about the clarity of the questionnaire.

## SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

The first target population was college admissions directors at 41 highly selective colleges and universities (Kingston & Lewis, 1990), those with 1987 Freshman Class mean combined SAT scores of 1,200 and above. With over 2,800 colleges nationwide, an objective point was established for this study to separate the selective from highly selective institutions. All 41 highly selective colleges and universities were surveyed to ensure a return that identified a sufficient number of distinguished public secondary schools to use for a sample in the survey.

The second population was the distinguished public secondary schools identified and chosen by the aforementioned college admissions directors as especially distinguished and with the strongest college preparatory programs. The

sample included the 26 distinguished public secondary schools identified most often by the admissions directors at the highly selective colleges.

## INSTRUMENTATION

A nomination form to identify the exemplary college guidance programs was mailed to the admissions directors at the following 41 most highly selective colleges (Kingston & Lewis, 1990):

Amherst College	Pomona College
Brown University	Princeton University
Bryn Mawr College	Reed College
California Institute of Technology	Rice University
Carleton College	Smith College
Claremont McKenna College	St. John's College (MD)
College of William and Mary	Stanford University
Columbia University	Swarthmore College
Cornell University	Trinity University (TX)
Dartmouth College	University of Chicago
Davidson College	University of North Carolina
Duke University	University of Pennsylvania
Emory University	University of Virginia
Grinnell College	Vassar College
Harvard University	Washington and Lee University
Haverford College	Wellesley College
Johns Hopkins University	Wesleyan University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Williams College
Mount Holyoke College	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Northwestern University	Yale University
Oberlin College	

The College Guidance Questionnaire was mailed to the directors of guidance at the 26 distinguished public secondary schools named most often by admissions directors at the highly selective colleges.

## FIELD PROCEDURES

The 41 college admissions directors were asked to complete the Nomination Form and return it in the self-addressed stamped envelope within one week of its receipt. Telephone calls were made—and additional mailings were sent when necessary—to those college admissions personnel who failed to return the Nomination Form. The 26 guidance directors were asked to complete the College Guidance Questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed stamped envelope within one week of its receipt.

A visit to a most distinguished public secondary school was completed to verify the results, and a telephone interview with a college admissions director for her rationale in the selection of the most distinguished public secondary school and comments on the data were conducted.

## DATA COLLECTION

Upon receipt of each Nomination Form, the secondary schools were listed in roster form. Those schools previously listed were marked each time they appeared on a Nomination Form.

Data from the returned College Guidance Questionnaire was listed under each item in Section A of the questionnaire. For the items on the remaining sections of the survey, marks for each check received were recorded on a master College Guidance Questionnaire.

To identify the most distinguished public secondary school, the following point system was used:

- 1 = nomination, added for each #3 rating; added for each #2 rated school located within a twenty mile radius of nominating institution
- 2 = added for each #2 rating
- 3 = added for each #1 rating
- .5 = each nomination within a twenty mile radius of nominating institution, added for each #3 rated nomination within a twenty mile radius of nominating institution
- 1.5 = added for each #1 rated nomination within a twenty mile radius of nominating institution.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The 26 public secondary schools listed most often on the Nomination Forms served as the sample of distinguished public secondary schools. The guidance directors at the most frequently identified public secondary schools functioned as the sample.

The collected data in Section A of the College Guidance Questionnaire was observed and studied to determine if a pattern exists that suggests characteristics of distinguished public secondary school college guidance programs. For example,



a low student to counselor ratio that did not exceed a specific ratio that continued to be identified.

The remaining sections of the questionnaire were considered with regard to the presence of each item at the respondent distinguished public secondary schools. The public secondary school who received the highest number of points was considered the most distinguished of the nominated schools.

## RESEARCH PLAN AND GOALS

<u>Intended Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
4/29/92	Pilot study was mailed to local secondary school counselors and area college admissions directors
5/11/92	Nomination Forms were mailed to admissions directors at 41 highly selective colleges
5/22/92	Mailed a postcard reminder (See Appendix F) to the 41 college admissions directors with regard to the completion and return of the Nomination Forms (to those not returned)
6/19/92	Telephoned college admissions personnel who failed to return the Nomination Form
7/21/92	Telephoned college admissions personnel who had not completed and returned their respective nominations
8/11/92	Telephoned remaining college admissions personnel who had not returned the Nomination Forms and indicated that they would do so
8/16/92	Completed final tally and identification of the 26 distinguished public secondary schools and the most distinguished public secondary school

- 8/17/92 Questionnaires sent to the guidance directors at the 26 distinguished public secondary schools
- 8/27/92 Mailed a postcard reminder (See Appendix G) to 26 guidance directors with regard to the completion and return of the College Guidance Questionnaire
- 9/17/92 Telephoned those guidance directors who had failed to return the College Guidance Questionnaire
- 10/2/92 Telephoned those guidance directors who had failed to return the College Guidance Questionnaire
- 10/15/92 Began to gather data on the secondary schools and college guidance programs
- 11/16/92 Verification visit to a most distinguished secondary school (Thomas Jefferson)
- 12/22/92 Summary of the results of the College Guidance Questionnaire shared with a college admissions officer who nominated the most distinguished secondary school

## CHAPTER IV - RESULTS

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the results of the study in sections and in the order that the research was conducted. The headings include the "Return of the Nomination Forms," "Nominated Secondary Schools," "The 26 Distinguished Public Secondary Schools," "The Top Distinguished Public Secondary Schools," and "Enrollment in the Distinguished Public Secondary Schools."

In addition, the chapter includes the information received from the College Guidance Questionnaire. The sections are titled as follows: "Return of the Questionnaires," "Demographics," "Four-Year College Bound," "Budget for Resources," "Counselors and Counseling Assignments," "Support Staff," "Advanced Placement Program and Dual Enrollment," "Computer Technology," "College Guidance Activities and Resources," "Class Rank and Grade Point Average," "Professional Associations and Relationships," "Preliminary SAT/Preliminary-ACT<sup>+</sup> (now called PLAN)," "Some Special Notes About Schools," "Verification Visit," "Report of Shared Data with a College Admissions Director," "Summary of Findings," "Composite Profile of the Distinguished Public Secondary Schools," and "Chapter Summary."

## RETURN OF THE NOMINATION FORMS

Prior to the deadline for mailing the College Guidance Questionnaires to the secondary school guidance directors, 33 sets of nominations were secured from the admissions officers at the 41 highly selective colleges surveyed—an 80.5 percent return. Of the eight non-respondents, four of the admissions officers indicated that they would not participate in the nomination process.

One admissions director wrote that he found it very difficult to respond to the Nomination Form. "There are so many good secondary school counselors across the country and I could do little more than point out the obvious schools that you have already heard about. There are also some wonderful counselors at secondary schools that normally do not send large numbers of people to highly selective institutions but who know the profession extremely well." The remaining three admissions directors unwilling to participate indicated that it was office policy not to rate secondary schools, despite the promise of anonymity in the nominations.

## NOMINATED SECONDARY SCHOOLS

As promised in the cover letter to the college admissions directors, the respective nominations of each college admissions officer will remain confidential. The eighteen private secondary schools and the one overseas American school included in the sets of nominations are not included in the list of distinguished secondary schools since they are not United States public secondary schools.

The full list of 196 public secondary schools identified by admissions officers at the highly selective colleges is listed in the Appendix H. The top 26 are listed in rank order by the total number of distinguished school points and the total number of points resulting from "top three" nominations respectively in "The 26 Distinguished Public Secondary Schools" section.

### THE 26 DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The list of the distinguished public secondary schools was compiled from the public secondary schools nominated most frequently by the admissions officers at the highly selective colleges. Since eleven public secondary schools tied for sixteenth place with three in the number of nominations received, 26 schools were included on the list rather than the proposed 25.

The 26 distinguished public secondary schools are listed below with their locations and total numbers of distinguished school points and total number of points resulting from "top three" nominations respectively. The list is in rank order by distinguished school points.

<u>Nominations</u>	<u>Top Three</u>	
11.5	16.5	Stuyvesant H.S., New York, NY
10	23	New Trier Township H.S., Winnetka, IL
9	23	Thomas Jefferson H.S. for Science and Technology, Alexandria, VA
8	24	Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, Aurora, IL
8	9	North Carolina School for Science and Mathematics, Durham, NC
7	12	Central H.S., Little Rock, AR

6	11	Bethesda Chevy Chase H.S., Bethesda, MD
5	10	Walt Whitman H.S., Bethesda, MD
5	6	White Station H.S., Memphis, TN
4.5	8.5	Palo Alto H.S., Palo Alto, CA
4.5	6.5	Henry M. Gunn H.S., Palo Alto, CA
4	5	Hume-Fogg Academic H.S., Nashville, TN
4	4	Clayton H.S., Clayton, MO
4	4	Evanston Township H.S., Evanston, IL
4	4	Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts, Natchitoches, LA
3	9	Horace Greeley H.S., Chappaqua, NY
3	8	Beverly Hills H.S., Beverly Hills, CA
3	6	University H.S., Tucson, AZ
3	4	Benjamin Franklin H.S., Los Angeles, CA
3	4	Lexington H.S., Lexington, MA
3	4	Lincoln H.S., Portland, OR
3	4	Sunny Hills H.S., Fullerton, CA
3	3	Cherry Creek H.S., Englewood, CO
3	3	Millburn H.S., Millburn, NJ
3	3	Mountain Brook H.S., Mountain Brook, AL
3	3	Scarsdale H.S., Scarsdale, NY

## THE TOP DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Of the 33 college admission officers submitting nominations, 23 (70%) agreed to rank the top three on their nomination lists.

The top distinguished public secondary schools identified by the highly selective colleges follows: Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, New Trier Township High School, and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. In addition, Stuyvesant High School should be noted based on the total number of nominations it received from the highly selective colleges.

## ENROLLMENT IN THE DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Students are selected to attend Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in a competitive process that evaluates admissions test scores, academic achievement, personal essays, teacher recommendations, and self-reported interests and activities. Applications are reviewed by independent selection committees composed of counselors, teachers, school administrators, and human relations staff members. School districts participating in the regional school are the counties of Fairfax, Loudon, and Prince William and the cities of Falls Church and Fairfax, all in Virginia.

Tucson, Arizona students gain eligibility for admission to University High School based on a qualifying score on the entrance examinations: the Cognitive Abilities Test and the Ravens. In addition, applicants must have a high grade point average for the two semesters prior to enrollment and top performance on a state approved achievement test.

Nashville, Tennessee students gain admission to Hume-Fogg Academic High School based on achievement test scores, academic record, and subsequent selection from a computer lottery.

The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics selects students during their tenth grade year through a competitive process that considers an applicant's interest in science and mathematics, and includes a review of standardized test scores, past academic performance, special talents,

accomplishments, and out-of-school interests. Student essays, personal interviews and the home school's assessment of student characteristics help present a complete picture of applicants. To assure the benefits of a diversified student body, the admissions committee considers geographic and other demographic variables in its deliberations.

Stuyvesant High School's admissions procedure is similar to the one at University High School in Tucson, Arizona, however, eligible applicants are from the New York City Public School System. The admissions process at Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy and Louisiana School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts is most similar to the one in place at North Carolina School for Science and Mathematics.

The remaining distinguished public secondary schools are committed to enroll students in residence within their respective school divisions's geographic district.

## RETURN OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Twenty three of the 26 College Guidance Questionnaires were returned by the school counselors—an 88.5 percent response rate.

Of the three non-respondents, one counselor said that she did not have the time to complete and return the questionnaire, and another failed to respond despite a verbal agreement to participate and a faxed second questionnaire to his



school. The third non-respondent reported that she mailed the completed questionnaire, however, it appears to have been lost. The counselor agreed to complete the College Guidance Questionnaire again upon receipt of a second mailing, but a response was not received. The three non-respondents were Bethesda Chevy Chase High School, North Carolina School for Science and Mathematics, and Walt Whitman High School.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Nineteen of the 23 distinguished public secondary schools serve students in grades nine through twelve, three are occupied by tenth through twelfth graders, and one has eleventh and twelfth graders, exclusively. The total enrollments from the 17 schools reporting figures ranged from 535 (Hume-Fogg) to 2,980 (Cherry Creek) for an average of 1,584 (see Table #4).

Almost two thirds (15) of the responding secondary schools provided data for per pupil expenditure. The two lowest financial amounts are at Hume-Fogg Academic High School (\$3,840) and University High School (\$3,200). However, the relationship of University High School and the University of Arizona makes the per pupil expenditure at the school a misleading piece of data. The greatest reported expense per student is at Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy—one half towards academic pursuits and one half for residential costs. The fifteen schools and their respective per pupil expenditures are listed below:

Benjamin Franklin - \$4,500  
Beverly Hills - \$6,317  
Clayton - \$8,000  
Evanston Township - \$13,108  
Henry M. Gunn - \$5,500  
Horace Greeley - \$12,481  
Hume-Fogg Academic - \$3,840  
Illinois Math and Science - \$17,600 (includes residential expenses)  
Lexington - \$6,300  
Louisiana Math, Science, and Arts - \$7,500  
Millburn - \$9,000  
Mountain Brook - \$5,127  
Palo Alto - \$6,400  
Thomas Jefferson - \$6,400  
University - \$3,200

Average - \$7,685

The per pupil expenditures of the distinguished public secondary schools can be compared to public secondary school expenditures on a state by state basis (including the District of Columbia). The top five and bottom five (Virginia Journal of Education, 1991) respectively were: New Jersey (\$7,033), New York (\$7,031), Connecticut (\$6,767), Alaska (\$6,647), the District of Columbia (\$5,845); Utah (\$2,440), Mississippi (\$2,785), Arkansas (\$2,960), Alabama (\$3,023), and South Dakota (\$3,061).

All 23 respondents reported enrollments for the Class of 1992. Consistent with the total enrollments, Hume-Fogg had the lowest (120), Cherry Creek had the highest (726) number of most recent graduated seniors, and the average was 364. The most recent numbers in the graduated classes at the distinguished public

secondary schools were proportional to the school enrollments according to the respective number of grade levels at each school.

#### FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE BOUND

With the exception of Benjamin Franklin and Central High Schools, the public secondary schools possess an extraordinarily high percentage of four-year college bound students ranging from a low of 37.4% to a high of 100%. The unique profiles of Benjamin Franklin and Central—in relation to the sample of secondary schools—will be discussed later in this chapter. The schools and their respective four-year college bound student percentages follow:

Benjamin Franklin - 37.4%  
Beverly Hills - 73%  
Central - 62%  
Cherry Creek - 85%  
Clayton - 87%  
Evanston Township - 70%  
Henry M. Gunn - 77%  
Horace Greeley - 92%  
Hume-Fogg Academic - 100%  
Illinois Math and Science - 100%  
Lexington - 88.4%  
Lincoln - 75%  
Louisiana Math, Science, & Arts - 92%  
Millburn - 90%  
Mountain Brook - 97%  
New Trier Township - 90%  
Palo Alto - 78%  
Scarsdale - 96%  
Stuyvesant - 99+%  
Sunny Hills - 70%  
Thomas Jefferson - 100%

University - 99%  
White Station - 80%

Average - 84.3%

## BUDGET FOR RESOURCES

In response to the item referring to the guidance department's annual budget for college guidance resources, twelve schools gave a specific monetary figure and six indicated that their own departments did not have a given budget figure. In lieu of a specified budget amount, the schools' respective budgets are handled by requests through the central school division office or the principal's budget.

The annual college guidance resources budgets ranged from a low of \$500 at Benjamin Franklin, Palo Alto, and University High Schools to a high of \$10,000 at Evanston Township High School. Computer resources and the maintenance of those computer terminals are included in Evanston's annual budget. At Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, \$3,750 is appropriated for computer software and \$3,000 is provided for college search publications. The average of the twelve reported resource budget amounts was \$1,314.17.

## COUNSELORS AND COUNSELING ASSIGNMENTS

It is important to note that just over half of the secondary schools employ college counselors who are free from personal and crisis counseling. The distinct variety of student to counselor ratio figures in the sample is cited in Table #4 with

an average student to counselor ratio of 261 to 1, a high of 500 to 1, and a low of 100 to 1, excluding the exceptional ratio at New Trier Township High School.

When considering the counselor allotment, New Trier Township High School's Adviser System must be addressed. New Trier will be cited in more detail later in this chapter. In addition, Benjamin Franklin's 500:1 ratio includes one half-time college counselor, and Louisiana Mathematics, Science, and the Arts has a 100 to one student : college counselor ratio. Stuyvesant High School has one college adviser, one assistant college adviser, and six part-time grade advisers for two periods daily plus three guidance counselors.

Stuyvesant's grade advisers remain with the same students throughout secondary school. In addition, eighteen (of the 23) other distinguished schools arrange their counseling assignments so that each student remains with the same counselor throughout his or her secondary school years.

Guidance directors with departmental organizational and administrative responsibilities, and reduced or nonexistent counseling loads are employed at eighteen of the secondary schools. Two other schools employ assistant principals with guidance department organizational and administrative responsibilities.

## SUPPORT STAFF

For the data to be most meaningful, Table #4 lists the schools, the guidance department—in some instances, the college office—support staff, and the school

and senior class enrollments when provided by the respective public secondary schools. The large numbers of support staff at the distinguished public secondary schools allow counselors to spend their time guiding students through the college search—and to consider highly selective colleges—in lieu of performing clerical tasks (e.g. collecting homework, filing folders).

TABLE #4

SECONDARY SCHOOL GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT CHARACTERISTICS

School	Enrollment	Grade Levels	Senior Class	#Secretaries	#Registrars	#Paraprof.	Student to Counselor Ratio
B. Franklin		9-12	630	3	1	2	500:1
Beverly Hills	1,850	9-12	457	2			350:1
Central	1,850	10-12	480	1	1		375:1
Cherry Creek	2,980	9-12	726	4	1		280:1
Clayton		9-12	140	2	1		200:1
Evanston Twp	2,700+	9-12	626	5	1	4	150:1
Henry M. Gunn	1,200	9-12	300	1	1		400:1
Horace Greeley	870	9-12	220	2	2	1	145:1
Hume-Fogg	535	9-12	120	2			250-300:1
Ill. Math & Sc.		10-12	167	2	1		157:1
Lexington		9-12	306	2	1		225:1
Lincoln		9-12	270	1.5	1	2	300:1
Louisiana MSA	400	11-12	156	1	1		100:1
Millburn		9-12	196	2			175:1
Mtn. Brook	696	10-12	220	1	1		139:1
New Trier Twp	2,700	9-12	694	3*	1*		25-30:1
Palo Alto	1,100	9-12	286	1	.5	4	185:1
Scarsdale	1,130	9-12	304	4			
Stuyvesant	2,700	9-12	691	2*		1*	
Sunny Hills	2,000	9-12	410	4		2	250:1
T. Jefferson	1,620	9-12	398	2		1	333:1
University	666	9-12	133	1	1		450:1
White Station	1,900	9-12	440	1			
Average	1,584	9-12	364	2.15	.72	.74	261:1

\*College office support staff

## ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM AND DUAL ENROLLMENT

Each of the 23 responding distinguished secondary schools has Advanced Placement (AP) courses in their academic programs. However, Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) and Louisiana School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts (LSMSA) have extremely demanding curricula and their students take numerous Advanced Placement examinations despite labeling only five and four courses AP, respectively.

In May 1992, LSMSA students were administered Advanced Placement examinations in sixteen subject areas. The college counseling coordinator at IMSA stated that "because the academic environment at the Academy provides a decidedly different learning experience, one which is concept-centered, interdisciplinary and discovery-based, the established AP curricula do not lend themselves to the IMSA classroom experience." However, in 1991, 196 exams were taken with 92.34% of students scoring "3" (passing) or better and 67.34% scoring "4" or better (1 is lowest, 5 is highest). In 1992, 64% of the scores were "3" or higher nationally.

Exclusive of IMSA and LSMSA, the fewest number of Advanced Placement courses offered by any one school is ten. Seventy percent of the secondary schools offer at least sixteen Advanced Placement courses in their respective academic programs. Table #5 displays the number of Advanced Placement courses available at each school.



Several Advanced Placement courses are consistently offered at most of the distinguished public secondary schools (see Table #5). At least 65 percent of the schools include General Biology, General Chemistry, Computer Science A, English Literature and Composition, French Language, European History, United States History, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Physics B, Spanish Language, and Spanish Literature in their curricula.

With the exception of IMSA and LSMSA, each distinguished public secondary school includes AP English Language and Composition and/or AP English Literature and Composition, as well as AP United States History. Excluding IMSA, each secondary school offers General Biology to its students.

LSMSA reported that although they do not label courses under the AP Calculus AB and BC names, many of their students participate in the AP examination administration in May. Every other school in the sample offers AP Calculus AB and twenty have AP Calculus BC in their academic programs.

#### *FOREIGN LANGUAGES*

The foreign languages are well represented in the sample. Advanced Placement French Language is available at 87 percent of the distinguished public secondary schools and Spanish Language is offered at 83 percent of the schools. Advanced Placement German Language is available at 61 percent and Spanish Literature is offered at 65 percent of the schools.

With so many Advanced Placement course offerings, students are exposed to a variety of disciplines not available at other schools and are challenged to compete favorably in college level courses sponsored by the College Board. Most important to this study is the perception of the secondary schools with extensive Advanced Placement programs by the highly selective colleges, and increased highly selective college admission opportunities for students who enroll in Advanced Placement courses available at their secondary schools.

TABLE #5

## NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES

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School	# of Advanced Placement Courses
Benjamin Franklin	10
Beverly Hills	21
Central	12
Cherry Creek	18
Clayton	16
Evanston Township	22
Henry M. Gunn	14
Horace Greeley	15
Hume-Fogg	19
Lexington	25
Lincoln	11
Millburn	17
Mountain Brook	16
New Trier Township	25
Palo Alto	16
Scarsdale	17
Stuyvesant	21
Sunny Hills	19
Thomas Jefferson	25
University	22
White Station	18
Average	18
High	25 (3 schools)
Low	10

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TABLE #6

## NUMBER OF SCHOOLS WITH ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES

Advanced Placement Courses	# Schools Offering
History of Art	6
Studio Art: General Portfolio	9
Studio Art: Drawing	3
General Biology	22
General Chemistry	18
Computer Science A	15
Computer Science B	12
Macroeconomics	9
Microeconomics	10
English Language and Comp.	14
English Literature and Comp.	20
French Language	20
French Literature	12
German Language	14
Comparative Government and Poli.	10
U.S. Government and Politics	13
European History	16
U.S. History	21
Latin: Virgil	10
Latin: Catullus-Horace	8
Calculus AB	22
Calculus BC	20
Music Theory	9
Physics B	17
Physics C: Mechanics	12
Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism	9
Introductory Psychology	3
Spanish Language	19
Spanish Literature	15

When the distinguished public secondary school students exhaust all of their respective school's offerings in a discipline, the schools may permit students to dual enroll at a local institution of higher education while concurrently taking the remaining courses at their home schools. All but one permit dual enrollment, however, Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy does not permit their students to dual enroll because of the extensive selection of courses in all its academic disciplines.

#### COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

A great number of the secondary schools in this study are technologically advanced and are making heavy use of computer technology. Seventy four percent send academic transcripts that are generated by the computer system and 87 percent of the schools mail computer generated mid-year grade reports to the colleges of choice. Admissions departments at highly selective colleges usually solicit school profiles that accompany the printed academic transcript and copies of college entrance test scores. Ninety six percent of the 23 secondary schools include school profiles when mailing transcripts to college admissions offices.

Computer terminals are available for student use in the search for appropriate colleges at 91 percent of the public secondary schools. Eighty seven percent provide the resources for each counselor in their schools to have a computer terminal in his or her office.

The computer technology provides for more efficient use of time by the support staff when generating transcripts and mid-year grade reports compared to schools that are forced to write transcripts by hand and copy transcripts and mid-year grade reports on a copy machine. Student and counselor access to computer terminals allows computer software to assist students in the identification of prospective colleges and financial aid resources, and in the preparation for admission tests.

#### COLLEGE GUIDANCE ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

All 21 secondary schools with computer terminals for students possess college guidance software that may be accessed by students in the college search and while preparing for college entrance examinations. In addition, 52 percent reported that an SAT or ACT preparation course is offered at the school during school hours (3) or after school hours (9).

College day or night programs are made available for students and their parents on the school campus at 87 percent of the 23 secondary schools. In addition, one school transports their students to a heavily college represented county-wide college day program.

Special evening programs and opportunities are popular at the distinguished public secondary schools. Nine guidance directors indicated that their staffs maintain evening hours to guide parents of college bound students at a more

convenient time than the traditional work day and one school was in the process of considering an evening hours arrangement.

A financial aid/scholarship information session is held annually for students and parents at every school except Millburn High School. Sixty one percent arrange panels of college admissions officers annually and one school organizes a panel every other year for college bound students and their parents.

Every school maintains a career center of catalogues, videos, applications, and other college related information such as Virginia VIEW (the Virginia Career Information Delivery System) and the College Board's Testwise (college entrance examination preparation software) so that it is accessible to students in the guidance suite. They all update a college information bulletin board—or in one case a file—of college information for student reference.

A scholarship information bulletin board is available to students at 21 schools and one provides a file of scholarship literature for its students. Ten guidance departments sponsor organized visitations to colleges of interest for the students at their respective schools.

When secondary school students are given access to numerous college guidance resources and provided with valuable college guidance activities by their counselors, they are afforded greater opportunities in the college search. The most qualified students benefit from exemplary college guidance departments in that they have increased chances to gain admission to highly selective colleges.

## CLASS RANK AND GRADE POINT AVERAGE

A majority of the distinguished public schools rank students in relation to their classmates, however, only ten of those schools provide a rank with all students in the class. Most schools who do not rank their students in relation to their peers cited the extreme demands of their respective programs and the strength of their students.

Advanced Placement course grades are weighted in calculating grade point average and class rank at thirteen schools, and eleven schools weight honors courses in grade and class rank calculation. New Trier Township High School calculates a weighted grade point average and subsequent class rank of all major courses taken at New Trier.

## PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

Membership in the National Association of College Admissions Counselors and/or its regional association was held by counselors at 91 percent of the secondary schools and annual association meetings are attended by counselors at sixty five percent of the secondary schools. Three additional schools were represented at professional association meetings periodically but not annually.

In addition, 65 percent reported that their school divisions pay expenses for attendance at professional association conferences. At eleven schools, an annual



budget was provided for counselors to visit college admissions offices for appointments with admissions officers and campus tours.

Every questionnaire was checked by the item where admissions officers from highly selective colleges visit the school each fall to meet with counselors and prospective students. Almost all (21) guidance directors reported that counselors maintain personal acquaintance with admissions officers from highly selective colleges. Thirteen schools reported that counselors attempt to use personal influence to facilitate a student's admission offer to a highly selective college, while four will do so occasionally depending on the circumstances.

#### PRELIMINARY SAT/PRELIMINARY-ACT<sup>+</sup> (NOW CALLED PLAN)

Sixty five percent of the responding 23 distinguished public secondary schools encourage college bound students to take the PSAT or P-ACT<sup>+</sup> in the tenth grade. One counselor noted in writing and in a telephone conversation his concern over any suggestion that encouraging tenth graders to take the PSAT is representative of an exemplary college guidance program.

#### SOME SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT SCHOOLS

##### Benjamin Franklin and Central High Schools

Conversations with two admissions officers at separate highly selective colleges noted their interest in attracting talented under represented minority

students. As a consequence of the "Social Conscience Category," minority students possess the "hook"—as described by an Ivy League college admissions officer—necessary to land a place in the freshman class of the highly selective institutions of choice.

Benjamin Franklin High School is an inner city Los Angeles school with a 96 percent minority and low-income student enrollment. The college counselor for the past 21 years has been active in local, regional, and national levels of the National Association of College Admissions Counselors, receiving its "Human Relations Award" in 1985. Most recently, he was the recipient of Peterson's "Counselor of the Year Award." Benjamin Franklin's total college-bound population was raised from fifteen percent to the current 91 percent.

Racially, 65 percent of the student body at Little Rock Central High School is black. Central has produced more than one third of Arkansas' black National Merit Semifinalists over the past ten years and also leads the state in the number of students chosen for the National Achievement Scholarship Program for Outstanding Negro Students.

#### New Trier Township High School

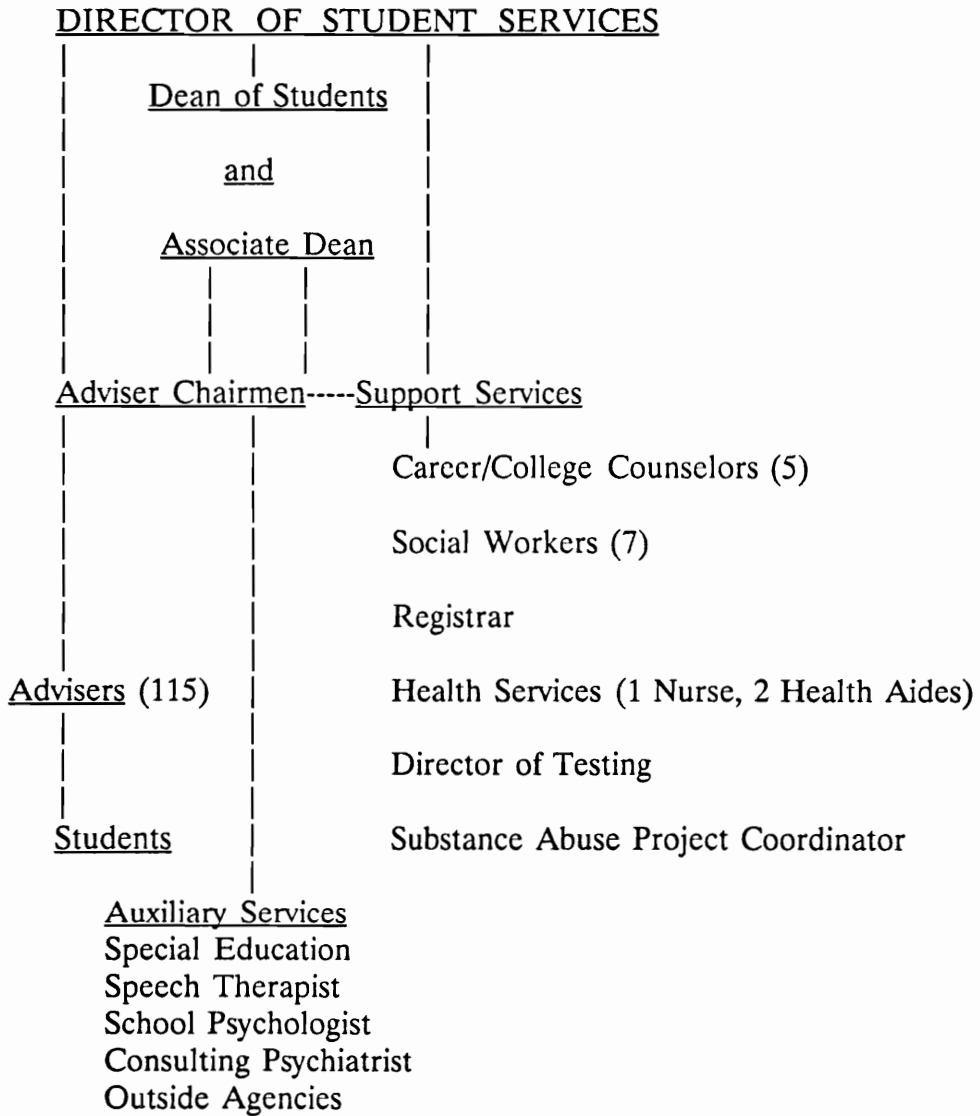
The Adviser System at New Trier Township High School seeks to establish a climate of concern and caring devoted to the well-being of each individual student. The adviser is a faculty member who accepts the assignment as one fifth of his or her teaching responsibility.

Meeting the adviser group of 25 to thirty students each morning over the course of four years provides opportunities for the adviser to establish a rapport with advisees and to take responsibility for their personal and academic progress. In general, the adviser serves as a role model and a resource person whose counsel and perspectives on individual students is highly valued.

New Trier's Adviser System facilitates a mechanism for specialization within the school's Guidance Services (see organizational chart below). There are college/career counselors with a primary focus on college counseling.

Consequently, each college counselor has an approximate assignment of 134 seniors to guide exclusively and extensively through the college search. In addition, the Career/College Department has support from three secretaries and one registrar.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR GUIDANCE SERVICES AT  
NEW TRIER TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL



The functions of the Adviser System can be grouped into four categories: personal adjustment—orientation in the school and aid in physical, social, emotional or scholastic adjustment and growth; guidance—curriculum planning, vocational and

college preparatory advice; communication—with students, parents, and teachers; administration—processing of records, reports, bulletins.

Some examples of the aforementioned guidance functions:

1. The adviser helps the student select the program of studies best suited to his ability and post-high school plans;
2. The adviser encourages the student to achieve up to his academic potential;
3. The adviser informs students of major testing programs required for college entrance and encourages students to sign up for appropriate tests and to utilize the services of the Career/College Counseling Department;
4. The adviser provides the college counselors with written evaluations and insights into characteristics of each of his or her advisees.

## VERIFICATION VISIT

### Introduction

A verification visit was conducted to confirm the data received from the College Guidance Questionnaire. In addition, it was important to learn about college guidance activities and structural aspects of the guidance department not previously articulated on the questionnaire.

Seventy percent of the college admissions officers who returned the questionnaires submitted rankings of the top three distinguished public secondary

schools. Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (established in 1985) was selected from the top three (also in the top three were Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy and New Trier Township High School) because it is not a residential school and is geographically closer to the researcher.

It was apparent during the site visit to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology that the findings and the previously received data from the College Guidance Questionnaire were consistent. However, in areas related to budgetary resources and personnel, the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology Director of Guidance was somewhat conservative in completing the College Guidance Questionnaire.

This section titled "Verification Visit" is divided into eight sub-sections and verifies the data gathered from the College Guidance Questionnaire. The sub-sections are: "Introduction," "Professional Staff," "Career Center and Resources," "Curriculum," "Clerical Support," "College Guidance Activities," "Class Rank and GPA," and "Relationships with Admissions Officers."

#### Professional Staff

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology has eight full-time professional school counselors—including the guidance director—rather than seven and the student counselor ratio was 200 to one (seven counselors have 225 students each) and not 250 to one as reported on the College Guidance Questionnaire. The guidance directors in the Fairfax County schools do not receive

a counseling assignment and consequently are free to administer the guidance program, assess the needs of the staff, and coordinate administrative functions such as the Advanced Placement Program and its examination schedule. By choice, the guidance director at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology counsels fifty students annually in addition to fulfilling her responsibilities as the program's director.

Students are assigned to respective counselors by alphabetical order with the first letters of their last names and, in most cases, will remain with the same counselor for four years. Occasionally, the guidance director will reassign students to a different counselor after the tenth grade year in an attempt to distribute even numbers of students per counselor. Regardless of the number of students in each assignment, the students remain with the same counselor for the final two years of secondary school.

Although students at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology have personal difficulties, they rarely are self-referred to the guidance department like other public secondary schools. Consequently, in an effort to make their guidance program more effective, the counselors are expected to make contact with each student at least twice a school year.

A critical aspect of the school's holistic approach to student development and consequently the college guidance program is Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology's Teacher Adviser System. The Teacher Adviser System

was not described in either the College Guidance Questionnaire or the school profile. In addition, a mentorship coordinator facilitates the maintenance of relationships between the school's laboratories and contacts in local government, private research laboratories and technical facilities for information exchange and off-campus student mentorship opportunities.

Eighteen teachers in each grade level serve as teacher advisers in lieu of one teaching assignment during an activity period—the eighth period of the school day. A full-time activities director organizes a monthly menu of options for student interest (e.g. gender equity, role of the counselor) for four days each week.

Specific days of each activity month are designated for developmental guidance group activities to be administered by teacher advisers with assistance and advice from the counselors when necessary. In addition, teams of two counselors deliver grade level appropriate guidance and counseling programs on assigned days each month.

#### Career Center and Resources

The Career Center at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology is located in space that previously housed two classrooms and is directed by the paraprofessional assigned to the Guidance Department. Fairfax County's paraprofessionals are employed for 191 days—including one week prior to and one week after the ten month teacher assignments—and the entry level starting salary was \$14,400.



Although the College Guidance Questionnaire indicated that Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology has forty volunteers, all in the Career Center, 49 trained adults actually volunteer in the Career Center. Two volunteers staff the facility at all times throughout the school day which is 8:30 a.m. to 3:50 p.m.

The budget for guidance resources was \$2,700 and not the \$1,500 reported on the questionnaire. In addition, the school's portion of fees from the administration of the Advanced Placement examinations and the \$3.50 for the mailing of each student transcript beyond the free first three may be used for additional resources (see Projected Guidance Budget listed below).

Projected Guidance Budget—1992-93

Guidance Handbook	\$2,700.00
Course Selection Guide	2,800.00
<u>Guidelines</u> (newsletter) printing	427.00
Postage for <u>Guidelines</u>	1,350.00
Academic Awards	500.00
Junior college speaker	200.00
Volunteer luncheon	50.00
Myers-Briggs (for English)	500.00
Professional Journals	150.00
Brochure racks and brochures	250.00
Supplies (Guidance, Career Center, ADP)	1,500.00
Career Center written material	1,500.00
Career Center software	500.00
Conference and college travel	2,000.00
Refreshments	200.00
Total	\$14,427.00

The Career Center's college guidance resources include but are not limited to the following software purchased by Fairfax County's central school administrative office: CASHE, a financial needs assessment and database for scholarships; EPSILON, a financial needs analysis; and the Guidance Information System (GIS), a national career information delivery system. The center also is equipped with Virginia VIEW (the Virginia Career Information Delivery System), and the College Board's Testwise (college entrance examination preparation software), College Cost Explorer (software to assist in financing higher education), and College Explorer and Peterson's (college search software packages). Each of the eight counselors has the College Explorer software on his office's computer terminal.

### Curriculum

The verification visit confirmed that 100 percent of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology's graduates attend four-year colleges. The guidance director cited the example of a recent graduate who immediately entered the military to obtain the financial resources for a college education subsequent to his military service.

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology offers all the Advanced Placement courses listed on the questionnaire with the exception of AP microeconomics, AP macroeconomics, and music theory. However, similar courses

without the AP designation are included in the curriculum and students do take AP examinations in these subjects.

Students are eligible to dual enroll with institutions of higher learning, however, they only do so in the summer months because the school's curriculum includes post-AP courses through the collegiate sophomore year. Most students who elect to enroll in summer college courses do so at nearby George Mason University in Fairfax County, Virginia.

A unique and most interesting component of the curriculum is the mentorship program. Every senior must undertake and complete a research project at the beginning of the summer following the junior year in conjunction with a laboratory course.

A former cooperative education teacher is the director of the mentorship program and assists in placement for students who choose to complete the research project outside of the school setting. Examples of recent placement sites are the National Institute of Health and Georgetown University to assist with and observe AIDS research under the direction of physicians and scientists.

### Clerical Support

Two secretaries are employed in the Guidance Department. One secretary is responsible for generating academic transcripts and supportive records, and is employed for 191 days annually—one week prior to and one week following the ten month teacher contracts.

A second secretary is employed for twelve months and carries out the remaining clerical support responsibilities. It should be noted that a separate admissions office obtains some of the paper work on each enrolled student and then the guidance secretary solicits the remainder of the enrollment information.

All counselors have their own computer terminals and printers accessible to them in their respective offices. Consequently, each counselor is able to process his or her letters of recommendation and print them without secretarial assistance.

Test scores such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test, Achievements, and Advanced Placement are purchased on computer tape by the Fairfax County School system. School profiles are mailed with computer generated admissions test scores and transcripts, thus freeing the secretary from great amounts of time at the copy machine duplicating test record cards and hand written permanent record cards (transcripts). Supplemental information is sent as an addendum to the credentials mailing if requested by the individual college admissions office.

#### College Guidance Activities

The counselors at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology "aggressively" encourage tenth graders to take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). Although one must be an eleventh grader to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program, being administered the PSAT/NMSQT provides a practice session for National Merit qualification and the Scholastic Assessment Test.

Through the Adult Education Program of Fairfax County Public Schools, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology's paraprofessional is hired to conduct an SAT preparation course and it is open to other students from the county. The course is offered with seven classes prior to both the May and November SAT administrations for \$60 per course.

In addition to the software and six computer terminals, the Career Center houses an extensive library of catalogues, applications, and files and shelves of college resources (e.g. viewbooks, The College Handbook). In lieu of a scholarship bulletin board found at other distinguished public secondary schools, the school has well organized file cabinets that include need based and merit scholarship information.

On the questionnaire it was noted that students may attend a college night program at a locale in Fairfax County. Sponsored by the Virginia Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, one program is held at George Mason University each April, and two—one on a Sunday at a large shopping mall and the second at a county secondary school—are offered in October. Although not reported on the questionnaire, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology hosts a college day program on the afternoon of the George Mason University college night approximately every other year.

The school visit confirmed that Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology organizes a panel of admissions officers—usually from highly

selective colleges—for a generic program on college admission each December for its eleventh graders. A panel of admissions officers for seniors with more specific topics (e.g. the application essay, the interview) is conducted each fall.

Following the aforementioned junior year program, each eleventh grader meets with his counselor in January to discuss potential colleges for his search. Next, a family conference with the student’s counselor is arranged in March, and then the student and counselor have a follow-up college information exchange.

A comprehensive and sequential schedule of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology’s college guidance activities for the 1992-93 academic year is listed below. The financial aid workshop was conducted last year by two Duke University financial aid officers who were paid out of the departmental budget. In other years, a local college financial aid officer administered the workshop.

*1992-93 Calendar of College Guidance Activities*

**10th Grade**

9/21-PSAT Orientation (counselors)

12/14-PSAT Results (counselors)

December/January-College/Career Center two day orientation program  
(through PE classes)

6/7-Pre-College Planning, seniors will talk with students about how best to consider colleges

**11th Grade**

12/7-Decisions '94-An evening program for parents and students which will explain the college matching process, financial aid and scholarships, and how colleges select students

12/14-PSAT Results

1/4-Returning College Students-Will share expertise on college life and the transition process

March-May-Optional 8th Period College Selection Workshops-topics will include how to research a college, utilizing the Career Center resources, college visits, essays, interviews, financial aid, and making the college match

5/24-College Recommendation Packet/Scholarship Search—Juniors, parents, and teachers will complete various forms which will be used by the counselors to write personalized college recommendations. Also included will be information on the financial aid materials available and how to use them

### **12th Grade**

10/5-A representative from the University of Virginia will be here to address the college admission process (Everything you always wanted to know but were afraid to ask). Counselors and other staff members will hold concurrent sessions on: Interviewing Skills, How to Make Yourself Come to Life on the College Application, and the Senior Year College Visit.

11/16-Mock Applications-Seniors will serve as an admissions committee (teacher advisers will deliver this program)

1/4-Returning College Students

4/12-Transitions-College Student Life staff and student representatives will discuss college life. Teacher Advisers will be combined in large classrooms and will leave the room to facilitate open dialogue for the students

5/3-Senior Survey-Counselors meet with their seniors to close the year and have seniors complete their surveys

### Class Rank and GPA

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology does not rank its students in relation to the members of the class. The guidance director stated that class rank is an "invalid measure when you have a skewed population."

The colleges have been receptive to the no class rank policy, however, the military academies and a large eastern university needed to have considerable explanation of the policy in the initial college admissions year. In addition, some

merit scholarship programs ask for an estimated class rank from the counselor when an exact rank is unavailable.

As described on the questionnaire, Advanced Placement and post-AP courses are weighted in the computation of grade point average.

#### Relationship with Admissions Officers

Institutional membership dues with the College Board, the National Association of College Admissions Counselors, and the Potomac and Chesapeake Association of College Admissions Counselors are paid through funds in the guidance department's budget. Each counselor is budgeted \$500 to use at a conference—college admission related or non-college admission related—of his choice and additional conference expenses are financed by the respective counselor. Although there is no annual budget for college visits, leave time for counselors is readily available for college visits or to participate in organized college tours.

Personal acquaintances with college admissions officers are established at professional meetings, college tours organized and paid for by consortiums of colleges, and during visits by admissions officers at the designated lunch hour or at 3:00 p.m. (activity period). The counselors do telephone college admissions officers to personally influence their admissions decision when a student absolutely desires to enroll in a specific college (e.g. a recent graduate who hoped to attend Cornell University).



### Key Findings form Verification Visit

The key findings in the verification visit included important information known prior to and confirmed during the visit and information discovered exclusively during the visit.

Prior to and confirmed during the visit:

1. tenth graders are enthusiastically encouraged to take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT);
2. an SAT preparation course is offered to all Fairfax County students for \$60 per course (seven classes) prior to the May and November SAT administrations;
3. a well organized Career Center houses an extensive library of college catalogues, applications, files and shelves of college resources, computerized information systems, and file cabinets of need based and merit scholarship information;
4. college night programs are easily accessible to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology students;
5. several in-school and evening college guidance sessions on various college related issues are made available to students and their parents;
6. Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology does not rank its students in relation to other members of the class;

7. counselors occasionally telephone college admissions officers in attempts to personally influence an admissions decision when students absolutely desire admission to a specific institution.

Found during the visit:

1. Fairfax County employs a guidance director with a nonexistent counseling load at each secondary school to administer the guidance program, assess the needs of the staff, and coordinate administrative functions;
2. Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology's teacher adviser system consists of eighteen teachers who serve as advisers in lieu of one instructional assignment during an activity period that includes college guidance and developmental counseling;
3. the budget for guidance resources including college and career guidance was \$2,700;
4. Fairfax County's fundamental college guidance resources were state of the art software packages;
5. every senior must undertake and complete a research project at the beginning of the summer following the junior year in conjunction with a laboratory course and may include a mentorship as the focus of his research;
6. a budget is provided for membership dues to college admissions related professional associations;

7. each counselor is afforded \$500 for use at a professional conference or to visit colleges.

Based on the verification visit to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, it appears that the college guidance programs and school characteristics at the distinguished public secondary schools are probably more favorable in reality than what the results of the College Guidance Questionnaire suggest. For example, during the verification visit it was discovered that Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology's budget for guidance resources including college and career guidance was \$2,700.

## REPORT OF SHARED DATA WITH A COLLEGE ADMISSIONS DIRECTOR

### Introduction

This section titled "Shared Data With A College Admissions Director" is divided into ten sub-sections and reflects comments made in a telephone interview by a college admissions director at one of the highly selective colleges who chose Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology as the most distinguished public secondary school. The sub-sections are: "Introduction," "Thomas Jefferson, The Most Distinguished School," "The Distinguished Schools," " Budgetary and Expenditure Considerations," "Personnel and Program Organization," "Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment Programs," "Submission

of Secondary School Records," "College Guidance Resources and Activities," "Class Rank and GPA," and "Relationships with Admissions Officers."

It should be noted that prior to employment as an admissions officer at a highly selective college, the admissions director was a public secondary school guidance counselor. Her perspective is especially insightful since she has experienced admission from two crucial positions in the college guidance process.

#### Thomas Jefferson, The Most Distinguished School

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology was chosen as most distinguished because of the outstanding college preparation and guidance received by its students. The college admissions director knows the school well from her visits to the school and because of the great number of applications reviewed annually.

The counselors at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology consistently make efforts to meet with the admissions director on her visits to the school—during lunch periods or the activity period. The meetings facilitate a more informed understanding of the college and consequently the appropriate placement of students in the college.

The career centers in the Fairfax County secondary schools provide opportunities for the counselors and the career center coordinator to develop positive relationships with the admissions officer. Since Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology's counselors have a relatively small number of

students in their counseling loads and no administrative responsibilities, knowledge of students interested in the represented college can be more easily conveyed to the admissions officer during a school visit.

### The Distinguished Schools

The college admissions director indicated that her institution—although a national institution—attracts the greatest number of its students from the Northeastern and Middle Atlantic states. Consequently, she is not as familiar with the following nominated distinguished public secondary schools: Central, Cherry Creek, Henry M. Gunn, Hume-Fogg, Lexington, Lincoln, Mountain Brook, Palo Alto, Sunny Hills, and White Station.

Conversely, the admissions director is most familiar with Benjamin Franklin, Bethesda Chevy Chase, Beverly Hills, Clayton, Evanston Township, Horace Greeley, Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, Louisiana School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts, Millburn, New Trier Township, North Carolina School for Science and Mathematics, Scarsdale, Stuyvesant, Thomas Jefferson, University, and Walt Whitman High Schools. The familiar schools are so recognized either by their reputations for highly selective college preparation and/or by their presence in the admissions director's recruiting territory.

The nomination of the most distinguished public secondary schools by the highly selective college admissions directors is no surprise to the admissions director. As her top choice, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and

Technology is obviously one she agrees should be represented and Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, New Trier Township, and Stuyvesant are secondary schools also believed to be most distinguished.

The schools who send high percentages of their populations to four-year colleges and the opportunities to visit these schools are attractive to the admissions director. In addition, schools with talented under represented minority students (e.g. Central High School) and urban schools with counselors who emphasize four-year college as a post-secondary option (e.g. Benjamin Franklin High School) are of great interest to the admissions staff at her institution. Qualified students from these schools assist in the development of a highly selective college's diverse student body.

#### Budgetary and Expenditure Considerations

The high per pupil expenditures at most of the schools reporting financial amounts is no surprise and expected by the admissions director. She believes that the greater the departmental budget for college search publications, software, and other materials, the greater the opportunities for students to consider a wider variety of highly selective and diverse colleges.

#### Personnel and Program Organization

The admissions director is an advocate of the career center model at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology and other Fairfax County secondary schools, although she would prefer to see a counselor rather than a

paraprofessional as the career center coordinator. New Trier Township's Adviser System provides increased college guidance for its students and allows New Trier's college guidance program, college preparation, and school structure to be more sophisticated.

It was noted that many public school counselors do well in the representation of their students considering the large student to counselor ratios at their schools. The admissions director said that reference letters are important in the selection of an entering class and thus students are at an advantage when their respective counselors know them well.

The admissions director advocates that students remain with the same counselor throughout secondary school given the large counseling loads at most public schools. She believes that such an arrangement best facilitates opportunities for counselors to know students well, and consequently to guide them most appropriately in the college search. In addition, she endorsed her experience as a counselor in which a guidance director had a much reduced student load and each counselor remained with the same grade level throughout secondary school.

The presence of a registrar in the guidance department is seen as most helpful in relieving counselors from clerical duties and allowing time for college guidance activities. In addition, the admissions director reacted favorably to twelve month secretarial and counselor positions to expedite necessary communication during the summer months. She cited the example of arranging fall visits to

secondary schools during the summer and the inconveniences for admissions officers when guidance offices are not staffed.

### Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment

The admissions director said that Advanced Placement courses are "absolutely" advantageous in the evaluation of an application for admission to her institution. She was especially impressed with the number of Advanced Placement courses offered at the schools in the sample.

AP English and social studies (United States History, United States Government and Politics, Comparative Government and Politics) courses are seen as most important, and European History is viewed as "icing on the cake." Consistent with the admissions director's comments, all secondary schools in the sample except Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy have at least one of the AP English courses as well as AP United States History.

The admissions director noted that a secondary school's curriculum is most impressive when it includes both AP Calculus AB and AP Calculus BC. Advanced Placement offerings in the foreign languages are not as important to her staff as the aforementioned courses, however, their presence in the curriculum is "a bonus."

Generally, the admissions director has found the evidence of AP courses to contribute to a more solid curriculum than one that involves dual enrollment (e.g. senior year of English at a community college). However, enrollment in college



courses in a subject area where the student has exhausted his or her secondary school's offerings is well perceived by the admissions director.

#### Submission of Secondary School Records

In the review of applications for admission, a secondary school profile ensures a fair evaluation of the candidate and should accompany each transcript. Computer generated transcripts and mid-year grade reports are not more desirable than hand written transcripts and mid-year grade reports provided the written reports are legible.

#### College Guidance Resources and Activities

The admissions director found that computer terminals for each counselor and additional computer terminals for student use assist students to learn about more options in the search for highly selective colleges. A guidance department is helpful to its college bound students when it develops a career center of catalogues, videos, and applications, and when college information and financial aid bulletin boards or files are easily accessible.

For the highly selective colleges, the admissions director commented that college day or night programs are beneficial but not as effective as an individual school visit by an admissions officer. She also advocates a school sponsored financial aid workshop that is conducted by a college financial aid officer because a school counselor should not be expected to be an expert on financial aid.

A program with a panel of college admissions officers to discuss the admissions process and to field questions from students and parents can better prepare them for the college search. The admissions director said that a panel contributes to the perception that the school is most sophisticated.

The admissions director was inclined to believe that the stronger secondary school students should be encouraged to take the PSAT or P-ACT<sup>+</sup> (PLAN) in the tenth grade.

#### Class Rank and GPA

If a secondary school does not provide a class rank, then the admissions director feels that the school must present a clear explanation of its grading system and provide grade distributions. She said that schools that do not rank may be perceived as better and agreed that non-ranking schools cite the demands of their respective academic programs and the strength of their students. In addition, her staff believes that the most sophisticated schools will weight course grades in the calculation of each student's grade point average.

#### Relationships with Admissions Officers

It was noted by the admissions director that membership in national and regional admissions related associations, and attendance at the association meetings are definitely advantageous. The secondary school counselors are afforded professional growth and networking opportunities with college admissions officers

in which personal acquaintances are gained—an important variable in the highly selective college admissions process.

Although only eleven of the 23 respondents have budgets for college visits, the admissions director believes that counselor visits to her college facilitate knowledge of the institution and information on what her staff looks for in the selection of its class. As a result, the counselor is better prepared to advise his students and the chances of appropriate matches between students and the colleges can be greatly improved.

The admissions director welcomes telephone calls from counselors who attempt to use personal influence in the admissions decision when she knows the counselor and believes that the counselor has considerable knowledge of her institution. However, she dislikes such telephone calls when the counselor is not as familiar with the college.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Of the Nomination Forms mailed to admissions directors at the 41 highly selective colleges, 33 sets of nominations were returned (80.5%).
2. From a total of 196 nominated public secondary schools, the 26 identified most frequently make up the 26 distinguished public secondary schools.
3. Seventy percent of the 33 nominating admissions officers agreed to rank the top three schools—Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, New

Trier Township High School, and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology received the highest point totals.

4. Twenty three of the 26 distinguished public secondary schools (88.5%) returned the College Guidance Questionnaire.
5. The average enrollment from those guidance directors reporting such information was 1,584 and the average size of the Class of 1992 was 364.
6. The average of the twelve reported resource budget amounts was \$1,314.17.
7. The average student to counselor ratio was 261 to 1 excluding the exceptional ratio at New Trier Township High School.
8. Eighteen of the distinguished schools arranged their counseling assignments so that each student remains with the same counselor throughout the secondary school years. In addition, Stuyvesant's grade advisers remained with the same students throughout secondary school.
9. The schools had an average of 2.15 secretaries, .72 registrar, and .74 paraprofessional.
10. Each of the 23 responding schools has Advanced Placement courses in their academic programs.
11. Advanced Placement General Biology, General Chemistry, Computer Science A, English Literature and Composition, French Language, European History, United States History, Calculus AB, Calculus BC,

Physics B, Spanish Language, and Spanish Literature are each available at greater than 65 percent of the schools.

12. AP English Language and Composition and/or AP English Literature and Composition, as well as AP United States History are offered at each school except IMSA and LSMSA.
13. Excluding IMSA, each secondary school offers AP General Biology to its students.
14. Every school except LSMSA (although many of its students are administered the examinations) offers AP Calculus AB and twenty have AP Calculus BC in their academic programs.
15. Advanced Placement French Language and Spanish Language are offered at 87 percent and 83 percent of the secondary schools respectively.
16. All but one school permit their students dual enrollment.
17. A great number of the secondary schools are technologically advanced and are making use of computer technology.
18. Special evening programs and opportunities are popular at the distinguished public secondary schools.
19. Nearly all guidance directors admitted that counselors maintain personal acquaintance with admissions officers from highly selective colleges.

20. Sixty five percent of the responding schools encourage college bound students to take the PSAT in tenth grade.
21. Benjamin Franklin and Central High Schools enroll many talented under represented minority students and thus possess the "hook" necessary to land places at highly selective colleges.
22. The Adviser System at New Trier Township High School facilitates exclusive college counselor roles with assignments of 134 seniors.
23. Guidance directors with departmental organizational and administrative responsibilities, and reduced or nonexistent counseling loads are employed at eighteen of the secondary schools. Two additional schools employ assistant principals with guidance department organizational and administrative responsibilities.
24. Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology's student to counselor ratio was 200 to one.
25. The verification visit confirmed that students remain with the same counselor and that a guidance director handles organizational and administrative responsibilities with a minimal counseling load.
26. The Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology Career Center's college guidance resources are extensive.
27. Every Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology senior must undertake and complete a research project and may

choose to complete the project under a mentor outside of the school setting.

28. Standardized test scores are purchased on computer tape by the Fairfax County school division.
29. Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology does not rank its students, and weights AP and post-AP courses in the computation of grade point averages.
30. The career center model at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology and other Fairfax County secondary schools was advocated by the admissions director from a highly selective college in a telephone interview.
31. The admissions director said that AP courses are "absolutely" advantageous in the evaluation of an application for admission to her institution.
32. The admissions director said that she welcomes telephone calls from counselors who attempt to use personal influence in the admissions decision when she knows the counselor and believes that the counselor has considerable knowledge of her institution. Conversely, she said that she dislikes such telephone calls when the counselor is not as familiar with the college.

## COMPOSITE PROFILE OF THE DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Based on the findings in this study, there are generalizations—with variations—that can be made about the 23 responding distinguished public secondary schools. Although all of the schools in this study are public, six have selective admissions requirements and seventeen enroll students in residence within their respective school division's geographic district.

The distinguished public secondary schools receive great financial support as evidenced by per pupil expenditures and large annual budgets for college guidance resources. In addition, the extraordinarily high four-year college bound populations at the schools are assisted in the college search with continuity in the guidance process since each student remains with the same counselor throughout secondary school.

An important characteristic of the distinguished public secondary schools is the allowance for support staff in the guidance programs. The schools have sufficient support staff in the form of secretaries, registrars, and paraprofessionals which allows counselors appropriate time to implement necessary college guidance activities. Consequently, students interested in highly selective college admission are afforded access to optimum preparation.

The schools provide students with most demanding curricular choices through numerous College Board Advanced Placement courses. AP English Language and Composition and/or AP English Literature and Composition, AP



United States History, AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, and AP General Biology are offered most frequently at the schools. Other popular courses include AP General Chemistry, AP Computer Science A, AP French Language, AP European History, AP Physics B, AP Spanish Language, and AP Spanish Literature. In addition, the schools permit students to dual enroll at a local college or university concurrently with secondary school enrollment when they exhaust all of their course offerings in a discipline.

Computer technology is an integral component in the college admission process at the distinguished public secondary schools. Academic transcripts and mid-year grade reports that are mailed in support of student applications to college admissions offices are computer generated. Students and counselors have access to computer terminals for the use of college search software programs.

College day or night programs at the distinguished public secondary schools allow students to become familiarized with the option of highly selective college admission when the highly selective colleges are represented in the program. Strategically scheduled annual financial aid workshops at the distinguished public secondary schools assist families to plan for financing tuition and other expenses at colleges and universities. A career center of college resources (e.g. college catalogues, videos) and a scholarship information bulletin board or file is made available to the students at the distinguished public secondary schools.

To facilitate professional development and to enhance rapport with college admissions officers, counselors at the distinguished public secondary schools hold membership in the National Association of College Admissions Counselors and/or one of its regional associations. By maintaining personal acquaintance with admissions officers at highly selective colleges, counselors may provide additional information and support for their student applicants.

The results of this study indicate that the distinguished public secondary schools and their college guidance programs possess financial resources, personnel, curricula, and college guidance activities which prepare qualified students for admission opportunities at highly selective colleges. On the basis of the verification visit to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, it is clear that the offerings and college guidance support for students in pursuit of admission to highly selective colleges may be even more favorable than what was learned from the completed College Guidance Questionnaires.

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

The "Results" chapter has described the results of the study in the order that the research was conducted. From the Nomination Forms that were returned by admissions officers at the 41 highly selective colleges, 23 of the identified 26 distinguished public secondary schools including the most distinguished public secondary schools returned College Guidance Questionnaires.

Data from the College Guidance Questionnaires is cited and discussed in the chapter in relation to preparation for highly selective college admission. Finally, the chapter includes a composite profile of the 23 responding distinguished public secondary schools with variations based on the previously noted data.

## CHAPTER V-SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

### INTRODUCTION

Typical public secondary school students seem unable to compete with distinguished public and elite private secondary school students when seeking admission to highly selective colleges. The problem was to determine which school-wide characteristics and offerings, and college planning strategies and activities exist at public secondary schools, therefore assessing what other public secondary schools can do to prepare their outstanding students for highly selective college admission.

Kozol (1991) compared several affluent suburban public secondary schools to less affluent suburban public secondary schools and noted the great disparity in funding between the two groups. He also noted the correlated differences in success rates and used several examples of inequalities that parallel the highly selective college admission process.

Based on his own experiences and subjective methodology, Kozol (1991) cited several suburban Chicago and New York City area public secondary schools with numerous academic offerings and high per pupil expenditures. Although Ballzell (1958) and McLachlan (1970) judged a select group of boarding schools ("Select Sixteen") as the most elite, identification of the most distinguished public secondary schools had been unknown.

Students from selected elite private secondary schools and distinguished public secondary schools receive preferential treatment in the college admissions process. The secondary schools that fall into these two categories seem to possess certain characteristics and offerings that facilitate their eliteness with regard to reputation and college admission. Consequently, the following research questions were asked and answered in this study:

1. Which public secondary schools are perceived to be distinguished and exemplary by the highly selective colleges?
2. What are the composite characteristics and programs of the identified distinguished public schools that facilitate admission of their students to highly selective colleges?
3. What are the composite college guidance activities that are employed by members of the guidance staff at each distinguished school?

To answer question number one, methodological procedures were adopted from a project completed by Gerstein and Lichtman (1990) who had a primary goal to identify elementary school guidance and counseling programs considered to be exemplary. They planned to identify these programs in order to share their expertise and experiences with other practicing counselors, graduate counseling students, and counselor supervisors.

Since a common list of elementary school counseling programs did not exist, Gerstein and Lichtman (1990) sent nomination forms to state supervisors of

guidance, counselor educators, leaders of professional organizations, editors of journals, and guidance supervisors in local school districts throughout the country to identify exemplary programs. The individuals were sent a one-page nomination form and asked to nominate exemplary programs. Contact persons for the 200 programs nominated were mailed a questionnaire (Gerstein & Lichtman, 1990).

In this study, a nomination form was mailed to each admissions director at 41 highly selective colleges as identified by Kingston and Lewis (1990). To identify the distinguished public secondary schools that possess extraordinary college guidance programs, each admissions director was asked to identify ten public secondary schools—including the very top three—perceived to provide truly outstanding preparation for highly selective college admission. The results identified the answer to research question number one with a list of the 26 most frequently nominated distinguished public secondary schools and the three most distinguished public secondary schools.

To answer question numbers two and three, methodological procedures were adopted from Cooper's (1962) research on college admission guidance practices at secondary schools in the northeastern section of the United States. The study examined the techniques and devices used by secondary school counselors to inform their students and assist them in gaining entry into college. Cooper (1962) mailed questionnaires that contained seventy items to public secondary schools in eleven states.

In this study, a "College Guidance Questionnaire" was mailed to the guidance director at each of the 26 most frequently nominated distinguished public secondary schools to gather data suggesting features of the schools and their respective college guidance programs. A verification visit to one of the most distinguished public secondary schools was conducted. A subsequent telephone discussion with the admissions director at one of the highly selective colleges concerning a summary of the results from the College Guidance Questionnaire and verification visit provided additional data.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into sections to summarize the study, discuss conclusions that can be reached given the results, and to provide recommendations to school counselors, administrators, board members, and communities. The chapter concludes with an examination of what the findings of this study imply for future research.

## SUMMARY

Thirty three of the 41 highly selective colleges nominated 196 different public secondary schools for distinguished status. The 26 public secondary schools who received the most nomination points make up the sample of distinguished public secondary schools (eleven tied for sixteenth place). The most distinguished public secondary schools identified by the highly selective colleges include Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, New Trier Township High School in Illinois,

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Virginia (established in 1985), and Stuyvesant High School in New York City (based on the number of nominations it received).

Of the distinguished public secondary schools, Hume-Fogg Academic High School (TN), Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, Louisiana School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts, North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, Stuyvesant High School (NY), Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (VA), and University High School in Tucson, Arizona have a competitive admissions process. The remaining distinguished public secondary schools are committed to enroll students in residence within their respective school division's geographic district. A complete list of the distinguished public secondary schools and their methods of enrollment (competitive admission or local school division) are located in Table #7.



TABLE #7  
METHODS OF ENTRY AT  
DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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Competitive Admission

Hume-Fogg Academic High School (TN) (inner city)  
Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (state-wide)  
Louisiana School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts (state-wide)  
North Carolina School for Science and Mathematics (state-wide)  
Stuyvesant High School (NY) (inner city)  
Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (VA)  
(regional in-state)  
University High School (AZ) (inner city)

Local School Division

Benjamin Franklin High School (CA)  
Bethesda Chevy Chase High School (MD)  
Beverly Hills High School (CA)  
Central High School (AR)  
Cherry Creek High School (CO)  
Clayton High School (MO)  
Evanston Township High School (IL)  
Henry M. Gunn High School (CA)  
Horace Greeley High School (NY)  
Lexington High School (MA)  
Lincoln High School (OR)  
Millburn High School (NJ)  
Mountain Brook High School (AL)  
New Trier Township High School (IL)  
Palo Alto High School (CA)  
Scarsdale High School (NY)  
Sunny Hills High School (CA)  
Walt Whitman High School (MD)  
White Station High School (TN)

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### Per Pupil Expenditure

The mean per pupil expenditure of the distinguished public secondary schools who reported data was \$7,685 compared to the approximate \$4,000 per pupil expenditure in the Montgomery County, Virginia public secondary schools, and to the New Jersey public secondary schools (highest state mean at \$7,033) and the Utah public secondary schools (lowest state mean at \$2,440). The mean percentage of four-year college bound students enrolled in the distinguished public secondary schools was 84.3 percent of the student populations, and the average reported annual college guidance resources budget per school was \$1,314.17.

### Student: Counselor Ratio

The average student to counselor ratio was 261 to one. However, it should be noted that the data on student to counselor ratio excludes the exceptional ratio at New Trier Township High School that results from its "Adviser System," the half-time college counselor at Benjamin Franklin High School in Los Angeles, California, and six part-time grade advisers at Stuyvesant High School with the same grade level assignments throughout secondary school. Another key point in the discussion of counseling loads is that eighteen of the 23 respondent distinguished schools arrange their counseling assignments so that each student remains with the same counselor throughout his or her secondary school years.

### Guidance Directors

Administrative duties for counselors are limited or nonexistent at the distinguished public secondary schools because eighteen have guidance directors with departmental organizational and administrative responsibilities, and reduced or nonexistent counseling loads. Two other schools employ assistant principals with guidance department organizational and administrative responsibilities. Consequently, counselors are more available to meet with students individually and in groups.

### Support Staff

The distinguished public secondary schools have sufficient support staff—secretaries, registrars, and paraprofessionals—in their college guidance programs to allow counselors appropriate time for necessary college guidance activities. For example, Scarsdale High School in New York had four secretaries for the Guidance Department with a student population of 1,130. Consequently, students interested in highly selective college admission are afforded access to optimum assistance by available counselors.

### Advanced Placement Program

Schools strengthen their college guidance programs and consequently their students' chances for admission to highly selective colleges when College Board Advanced Placement courses are included in the curriculum and when dual enrollment with area colleges is permitted. The distinguished public secondary

schools offer extensive (average=18) Advanced Placement course offerings including General Biology, General Chemistry, English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition, French Language, European History, United States History, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Physics B, Spanish Language, and Spanish Literature.

#### Computer Technology

Advances in computer technology at the distinguished public secondary schools have given students and counselors access to college search and financial aid software packages. In addition, academic transcripts, standardized test scores, and mid-year grade reports are computer generated.

#### College Guidance Activities

The distinguished public secondary schools greatly assist their students by implementing valuable college guidance programs. Students and their parents may explore various post-secondary options by attending college day or night programs, and may consider ways to finance the high cost of enrollment in a highly selective college by participation in an annual financial aid/scholarship information session conducted by a local college financial aid officer. In addition, many distinguished schools arrange an annual panel of college admissions officers—including highly selective college representation—for college bound students and their parents.

### Career Center

A career center of college catalogues, videos, applications, career information delivery systems, computer software, and other college related information is accessible to students in the guidance suites of the distinguished public secondary schools. Bulletin boards and file cabinets of scholarship and financial aid literature complement the available college search information.

### Preliminary SAT/Preliminary-ACT<sup>+</sup> (now called PLAN)

Approximately two thirds of the respondent secondary schools encourage college bound students to take the PSAT or P-ACT<sup>+</sup> (PLAN) in the tenth grade.

### Grade Point Average and Class Rank

The decision to assign a class rank varies among the distinguished public secondary schools. However, the majority of the schools in this study reward students for enrolling in the most demanding courses. Advanced Placement courses are weighted in calculating grade point average and class rank, and eleven of the 23 schools weight honors courses.

### Professional Association Membership

The distinguished public secondary schools routinely maintain membership in the National Association of College Admissions Counselors and/or its regional association. Personal relationships between school counselors in this study and admissions officers at highly selective colleges are established and sustained by

attendance—most school divisions pay expenses—at professional association meetings.

### Under Represented Minorities

As evidenced by the inclusion of Benjamin Franklin High School in Los Angeles, California and Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas in this study, highly selective colleges value the opportunity to enroll talented under represented minority students. These two schools may have appeared because of the success that their graduates have enjoyed in highly selective colleges. They may also represent a growing number of secondary schools who enroll talented under represented minorities.

### New Trier Adviser System

The community served by New Trier Township High School in Illinois has enthusiastically committed itself to the well-being of each individual student and the opportunity for extensive college guidance. In the New Trier Adviser System, teachers volunteer to serve as group advisers in place of one of their teaching periods.

The adviser provides information to his or her group of 25 to 30 students that is normally given by the school counselor (e.g. registration information). Consequently, each college counselor can focus energies on post-secondary counseling (each college counselor has 134 seniors to guide through the admissions process). The guidance services program at New Trier Township High School is

further supported by a clerical staff and many other professionals that assume responsibilities typically assigned to public secondary school counselors (e.g. Director of Testing).

### Verification Visit

The top three distinguished public secondary schools (Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy, New Trier Township High School, and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology) selected by the college admissions officers were identified to conduct a verification site visit to confirm the data from the College Guidance Questionnaire. Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology was selected for the verification visit because it is not a residential school and is geographically closer to the researcher.

It was apparent during the site visit that the findings and previously received data from the College Guidance Questionnaire were consistent. However, in the areas related to budgetary resources and personnel, the Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology Director of Guidance was somewhat conservative in the completion of the College Guidance Questionnaire (e.g. student to counselor ratio was 200 to one and not 250 to one).

The Career Center at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology with its outstanding college guidance resources is located in space that previously housed two classrooms and is directed by a paraprofessional assigned to the Guidance Department. She is employed full-time for 191 days including one

week prior to and one week after the ten month teachers. The Career Center is also staffed by 49 adult volunteers, two are present at all times throughout the school day. The volunteers are trained by the paraprofessional.

A unique and most interesting component of the curriculum is the mentorship which requires every senior to undertake a research project at the beginning of the summer following the junior year in conjunction with a laboratory course, and to complete the project prior to graduation. A former cooperative education teacher is the director of the mentorship program and assists in placement for students who choose to complete the research project outside the school setting.

#### Telephone Discussion With A College Admissions Director

Subsequent to the verification visit to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, the data from the College Guidance Questionnaire and the site visit was shared by telephone with a college admissions director at one of the highly selective colleges who chose Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology as the most distinguished public secondary school. The nomination of the most distinguished public secondary schools was no surprise to the admissions director. In addition, schools with talented under represented minority students who emphasize four-year college as an option are of great interest to her admissions staff.



The high per pupil expenditures at most of the secondary schools facilitate greater guidance department budgets. The admissions director said that the greater the opportunities for students to consider a wider variety of highly selective and diverse colleges.

The admissions director is an advocate of the career center model at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology and other Fairfax County public secondary schools, although she would prefer to see a counselor rather than a paraprofessional as the career center coordinator. The admissions director said that the New Trier Adviser System provides increased college guidance for its students and allows New Trier's college guidance program, college preparation, and school structure to be more sophisticated.

The Advanced Placement course offerings by any secondary school are "absolutely" advantageous in the evaluation of an application for admission to her institution. The admissions director was especially impressed with the number of Advanced Placement courses offered at the distinguished public secondary schools (see Table #s 5 and 6 in Chapter IV).

If a secondary school does not provide a class rank, then the admissions director feels that the school must present a clear explanation of its grading system and provide grade distributions for each course. In addition, her staff has found that the most sophisticated schools will weight advanced course grades in the calculation of each student's grade point average.

The admissions director noted that membership in admissions related associations, and attendance at the association meetings are definitely advantageous. The secondary school counselors grow professionally and are afforded networking opportunities with college admissions officers—an important variable in the highly selective college admissions process.

### Answers To Research Questions

1. Which public secondary schools are perceived to distinguished and exemplary by the highly selective colleges?

The 26 distinguished public secondary schools nominated most frequently by the admissions officers at the 33 respondent highly selective colleges were:

Benjamin Franklin High School (CA)  
Bethesda Chevy Chase High School (MD)  
Beverly Hills High School (CA)  
Central High School (AR)  
Cherry Creek High School (CO)  
Clayton High School (MO)  
Evanston Township High School (IL)  
Henry M. Gunn High School (CA)  
Horace Greeley High School (NY)  
Hume-Fogg Academic High School (TN)  
Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy  
Lexington High School (MA)  
Lincoln High School (OR)  
Louisiana School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts  
Millburn High School (NJ)  
Mountain Brook High School (AL)  
New Trier Township High School (IL)  
North Carolina School for Science and Mathematics  
Palo Alto High School (CA)  
Scarsdale High School (NY)  
Stuyvesant High School (NY)  
Sunny Hills High School (AZ)

Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (VA)  
University High School (AZ)  
Walt Whitman High School (MD)  
White Station High School (TN)

2. What are the composite characteristics and programs of the identified distinguished public schools that facilitate admission of their students to highly selective colleges?

The characteristics and programs of the distinguished public secondary schools that help to facilitate admission of their students to highly selective colleges include:

- A) A mean per pupil expenditure of \$7,685;
- B) A mean student to counselor ratio of 261 to one (excluding New Trier Township High School's Adviser System, the half-time college counselor at Benjamin Franklin High School, and the six part-time grade advisers at Stuyvesant High School);
- C) students remain with the same counselor throughout secondary school;
- D) guidance directors with administrative responsibilities and limited or nonexistent counseling assignments;
- E) sufficient support staff—secretaries, registrars, and paraprofessional;
- F) Advanced Placement programs with a mean of eighteen AP courses per school;

- G) computer technology for computer generated academic transcripts, standardized test scores, and mid-year grade reports;
  - H) in the calculation of grade point average and when assigning class rank (at those schools who rank their students), grades in AP courses are weighted; and
  - I) memberships for counselors in professional associations such as the College Board, National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC), and regional chapters of NACAC.
3. What are the composite college guidance activities that are employed by members of the guidance staff at each distinguished public secondary school?

Some of the composite college guidance activities that are employed by members of the guidance staffs at the distinguished public secondary schools are:

- A) the use of a Career Center of catalogues, videos, applications, career information delivery systems (e.g. Virginia VIEW), college search computer software (e.g. College Board's College Explorer), and scholarship and financial aid information;
- B) encouragement of college bound students to take the PSAT or P-ACT<sup>+</sup> (PLAN) in tenth grade;
- C) a college day or night program each spring or fall including representation from highly selective colleges;

- D) special evenings for conferences with parents and their students to assist families in the college search;
- E) evening financial aid/scholarship information session conducted annually by an area college financial aid officer; and
- F) an evening panel of college admissions officers—including representation from highly selective colleges—to provide information about the college admissions process and to field questions.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of this study, there are eight major conclusions that can be reached in terms of preparing public secondary school students for admission to highly selective colleges.

1. Budget Support-Kozol (1991) argued that budgetary considerations are critical in providing equitable educational opportunities in the public schools. The high mean per pupil expenditure of \$7,685 at the distinguished public secondary schools compared to the eighteenth ranked (nationally) state of Virginia mean of \$4,363 in the 1991-92 academic year suggests that the distinguished public secondary schools prepare their students well for highly selective college admission.
2. Per Pupil Expenditures-High per pupil expenditures facilitate greater departmental budgets for college search publications, software, and other

college search related information and thus, greater opportunities for students to consider a wider variety of highly selective and diverse colleges. Budgetary considerations dictate the numbers of professional school counselors and support staff members. Schools with higher per pupil expenditures are most likely to have sufficient support staff and lower student to counselor ratios, and consequently more extensive and exclusive college guidance for their students.

3. Counselor Assignments-The guidance departments at the distinguished public secondary schools are organized in a manner that allows students to remain with the same counselor throughout secondary school. Such an arrangement allows counselors to know students well and thus advise them more appropriately in terms of college admission in general, and more specifically in the highly selective college admission process. Counselor reference letters are important in the selection of entering classes at highly selective colleges, and students are at an advantage when the counselor knows them well.
4. Talented Minority Students-Admissions officers at highly selective colleges are interested in attracting qualified under represented minorities to their campuses. Talented minorities assist in the development of a highly selective college's diverse student body. Counselors should encourage talented minority students to consider highly selective college options since they have

improved chances for admission when considered in the "Social Conscience Category."

5. Curricula-Another major consistent factor among the distinguished public secondary schools is the inclusion of the College Board's Advanced Placement Program in the curricula. Due to the decidedly different learning experiences at Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy (IMSA) and Louisiana School for Mathematics, Science, and the Arts (LSMSA), the schools labeled only five and four courses AP, respectively (however, numerous AP exams are taken each spring by their students).
6. Advanced Placement Program-Exclusive of IMSA and LSMSA, the mean number of AP courses offered at the distinguished public secondary schools was eighteen. It should be noted that approximately half of the secondary schools in the United States offer Advanced Placement courses to their students. The presence of extensive Advanced Placement programs at public secondary schools allows students seeking admission to highly selective colleges the opportunities to enroll in the most demanding academic program, and to display the ability to succeed in a rigorous environment. As a result, these qualified students increase their chances for admission to highly selective colleges.
7. Computer Technology-Computer technology saves time for the support staff in public secondary school guidance departments and improves record

keeping. Computer generated transcripts, admission test scores, and mid-year grade reports accompany admissions materials that are mailed to college admissions offices rather than the more antiquated and sometimes inaccurate copy machine transcript copies (printed by hand).

In addition, computer terminals, software, and printers assist counselors and students to learn about more options in the search for admission to highly selective colleges and to identify a diverse pool of colleges to consider.

8. Better Than They Seem-Finally, it appears that the college guidance programs and school characteristics at the 23 respondent distinguished public secondary schools are even stronger in reality than the data obtained from the College Guidance Questionnaires. The verification visit to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology was most valuable and informative in the identification of college guidance programming that facilitates admission to highly selective colleges. There was more strength than appeared on the questionnaire, even to the point of under estimating some school characteristics and college guidance activities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study and the answers to the research questions contribute to the presentation of recommendations for consideration in establishing or strengthening college guidance programs and school-wide characteristics in public



secondary schools. These recommendations may or may not require additional financial resources to implement. When it appears that additional financial resources are necessary to accommodate a recommendation, communities can choose to reallocate resources or create alternative means to accomplish important college guidance goals.

1. The school administration should include a guidance director employed on a twelve month administrative contract with a greatly reduced or nonexistent counseling assignment. The director is the liaison to the principal, faculty, and support staff, directs the guidance department and more specifically the college guidance program, and evaluates the guidance professional support staff. Consequently, counselors are available to meet with students individually and in groups.
2. When a public secondary school already has a guidance director, a greatly reduced or nonexistent student load will allow the director to coordinate the Advanced Placement Program, the school administered PSAT, state mandated testing, the child study team, and the scheduling and registration process. Consequently, the counselors will be allotted the necessary time to meet with all of their students to focus on college guidance, and to work toward highly selective college choices for the most qualified students.
3. Public secondary schools should employ a sufficient number of certified school counselors to provide a student to counselor ratio that does not

exceed 200 to one. A manageable load of 200 or fewer students will allow qualified students interested in admission to highly selective colleges to meet individually with their counselors by the end of January and to arrange a follow-up family conference by the end of March of the eleventh grade. In addition, subsequent discussion as necessary between counselor and students and/or parents will take place to ensure the most effective college guidance procedures.

4. A final—and possibly the easiest to implement—personnel consideration is to arrange counseling assignments in a manner that will allow students to remain with the same counselor throughout secondary school. Highly selective colleges expect a full secondary school report on each student in the application process. With the large numbers of students that public secondary school counselors are responsible for, counselors gain a greater knowledge of applicants that they endorse through letters reference.

It is recommended that counseling assignments be arranged either by a full grade level for each counselor (more than one for each grade level in the largest of schools when staffing makes it possible) or preferably, by even distribution of the student population among counselors by last name alphabetically (e.g. A-F, G-L).

5. Public secondary schools can improve their school's perception and increase their students' chances for admission to highly selective colleges with two

program additions. When calculating cumulative grade point averages, secondary schools should weight Advanced Placement and honors designated courses. In addition, it is recommended that schools implement Advanced Placement programs and a minimum of ten Advanced Placement courses in the curriculum.

6. To improve efficiency in counseling services, communities and schools must provide the funding to equip their guidance departments with computer technology. Grades and tests can be recorded on the computer system to expedite the generation of records and increase accuracy. Secondly, students will have access to software that provides more varied and highly selective choices.
7. When considering college guidance programming, public secondary schools will assist their constituencies by scheduling the following four evening (preferably) programs:
  - A) an annual college day or night program each spring or fall and include the highly selective colleges on the invitation list;
  - B) special evenings periodically for conferences with parents and their students to assist families in the preparation for highly selective college admission;

- C) an evening financial aid/scholarship information session each December or early January to be conducted by an area college financial aid officer; and
  - D) organize an evening panel of college admissions officers—including representation from highly selective colleges—to provide information about the college admissions process and to field questions.
8. To prepare for the administration of college admission testing, counselors should encourage more capable students to register for the PSAT in the tenth grade. High PSAT scores in the eleventh grade can gain students notoriety in the National Merit Scholarship Program and a PSAT administration can familiarize students with the structure of the SAT.
  9. Upon the establishment of the Career Center, secondary school counselors should purchase the following computer software for their schools: the College Board's College Cost Explorer, College Explorer, and Testwise; and Peterson's college selection program, CASHE, Epsilon, and the Guidance Information System. The Center should include catalogues, merit scholarship information, videos, application files, and other college related information.
  10. To consider effective ways to improve the structure of the guidance department and college guidance programs, secondary school administrators, guidance directors, and members of the community served by the respective

schools should explore the Adviser System at New Trier Township High School.

11. Another important staffing concern is the need to employ a sufficient number of secretaries, registrars, and paraprofessionals to effectively meet the clerical needs of the guidance department and college guidance program. It is crucial that counselors are afforded the appropriate time to successfully guide students through the college search and to encourage the pursuit of highly selective options in lieu of the completion of secretarial tasks.
12. A final suggestion for secondary school administrators, guidance directors, and communities is to seek memberships in the College Board, the National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC), and NACAC's regional association that services the specific school. Included in this provision is funding for at least one counselor to attend the NACAC national conference to network with admissions officers, including those from highly selective colleges.

To implement any of the recommendations at public secondary schools and their college guidance programs, there must be a willingness to put together efforts from school personnel and the community served by the school. Dependent on the resources available to the school, implementation will require a degree of funding, volunteerism, initiative, and creativity from those responsible for providing college guidance services to public secondary school students.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The identification of the 26 distinguished public secondary schools with exemplary college guidance programs by admissions officers at highly selective colleges, and both the characteristics of the schools and their college guidance activities has created methodological implications for future research. In addition, further research through the study of other populations and samples can provide public school administrators, counselors, and communities with additional information for implementation and revision of the college guidance programs in public secondary schools.

### The Next 22 Distinguished Public Secondary Schools

It is important to note that 196 different public schools were nominated by the highly selective colleges for inclusion in the distinguished sample. Clearly, the 26 distinguished public secondary schools include approximately ten schools that are most distinguished. To further consider public secondary school characteristics and college guidance programs, the researcher could send the College Guidance Questionnaire to the public secondary schools that received 2 or 2.5 nomination points, the next highest 22 schools in this study.

### Additional Site Visits

Since the verification site visit was so insightful and valuable, it would be fruitful to consider conducting site visits to all or several of the 26 distinguished public secondary schools.

### New Jersey's "Top Eight Public High Schools"

In this study, the distinguished public secondary schools were identified through the aforementioned nomination process by admissions officers at highly selective colleges. Brady, Johns, and Rapp (1992) named the top eight public secondary schools in New Jersey, including Millburn High School (one of the identified distinguished public secondary schools in this study), from data on SAT scores and four-year college attendance.

In the future, New Jersey's "top eight public high schools" can be used as the sample to identify characteristics of these outstanding schools and their college guidance activities. Since the schools (Holmdel, Millburn, Mountain Lakes, Princeton, Ridgewood, Rumson-Fair Haven Regional, Summit, and Tenafly High Schools) are located geographically near each other, site visits to all eight schools by the researcher are feasible with the College Guidance Questionnaire to be used as the research instrument.

Through future research, public secondary school administrators and counselors can implement exemplary college guidance programs and revise their existing programs. In a study of the sample of eight New Jersey public secondary schools, other New Jersey public secondary school administrators, counselors, and communities can use the research data to evaluate their respective college guidance programs.

### Suburban New York City Distinguished Public Secondary Schools

Public secondary school administrators and counselors can also benefit from research of characteristics and college guidance activities at public secondary schools in the suburban New York City school divisions noted by Kozol (1991). He cited the large per pupil expenditures in Bronxville, Chappaqua, Great Neck, Jericho, Manhasset, Oyster Bay, and Rye.

The data from the College Guidance Questionnaire and a verification visit to one of the schools can provide valuable information to public secondary school counselors and administrators—especially those in suburban New York City school divisions—who hope to consider characteristics and college guidance programs at their schools. Although the sample of New York schools is based on their large per pupil expenditures, previous research suggests that the large per pupil expenditure is frequently a characteristic of public secondary schools with strong preparation for highly selective college admission.

### "Select Sixteen" Boarding Schools

It was noted previously in this study that close networks of personal relationships between some counselors at elite secondary boarding schools and admissions officers at some highly selective colleges transform a standardized, bureaucratic procedure into a negotiation process. Consequently, students at these boarding schools gain an inside track in the highly selective college admission search



as their counselors and college admissions officers exchange more vital information about candidates for admission.

Future research possibilities include the population of American boarding schools and the sample of Baltzell's "Select Sixteen" boarding schools. A revised College Guidance Questionnaire can be mailed to the college counseling directors at the "Select Sixteen" boarding schools and a verification visit to one of the schools should also be conducted. The "Select Sixteen" boarding schools are: Phillips (Andover) Academy, St. Mark's School, Groton School, Middlesex School, and Deerfield Academy in Massachusetts; Phillips Exeter Academy and St. Paul's School in New Hampshire; The Lawrenceville School in New Jersey; St. George's School in Rhode Island; Kent School, The Taft School, The Hotchkiss School, and Choate Rosemary Hall in Connecticut; The Hill School in Pennsylvania; and The Episcopal High School and Woodberry Forest School in Virginia.

Since the personal relationships between counselors at elite secondary boarding schools and admissions officers at highly selective colleges, and the college guidance activities at elite boarding schools are instrumental in the admission of students to highly selective colleges, public secondary school administrators and counselors may benefit from the data. Aspects of the college guidance programs, personnel, and resources can assist public secondary schools in the development or revision of effective college guidance programs.

In addition, what is learned from the elite boarding schools and their college guidance programs may provide modeling for radical change in the structure of public secondary school guidance programs, and more specifically the process by which public secondary school students are prepared for highly selective college admission.

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

### Pilot Study Letter

Dear Colleague,

How can public secondary schools and guidance counselors be most effective in advising students with regard to highly selective college admission? To be of most help, it is important for the counselors to be aware of the college counseling practices and school characteristics which will facilitate the greatest opportunities for their students to gain admission to highly selective colleges.

In the near future, I will survey guidance directors at some of the nation's distinguished public schools with exemplary college guidance programs as identified by admissions directors at highly selective colleges.

Would you kindly take a few minutes of your time to review the enclosed questionnaire and make suggestions about items that may be unclear. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Shelley M. Blumenthal  
Guidance Counselor  
Home telephone # (703) 961-1521



## APPENDIX B

### Secondary School Guidance Directors Letter

August 17, 1992

Dear Colleague,

How can public secondary schools and guidance counselors be most effective in advising students with regard to highly selective college admission? To be of most help, it is important for the counselors to be aware of the college counseling practices and school characteristics which will facilitate the greatest opportunities for their students to gain admission to highly selective colleges.

Your school and college guidance program have been identified by the nation's most selective colleges as exemplary in facilitating the best preparation for admission to their institutions. This study is being undertaken to provide a model for public secondary school counselors and administrators to develop programs that will assist students in pursuing admission to highly selective colleges. A summary of the findings will be mailed to you so that you may profit from the experiences of other counselors.

Would you kindly take a few minutes of your time to respond to the enclosed questionnaire? A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Shelley M. Blumenthal  
Guidance Counselor  
Home telephone #(703) 961-1521

P.S. The enclosed Virginia Tech business card holder is for your use and is a token of my appreciation for completing and returning the questionnaire.

## APPENDIX C

### Letter to College Admissions Directors

May 11, 1992

Dear Colleague,

How can public secondary schools and guidance counselors be most effective in advising students with regard to highly selective college admission? To be of most help, it is important for the counselors to be aware of the college counseling practices and school characteristics which will facilitate the greatest opportunities for their students to gain admission to highly selective colleges.

In late June, I will survey guidance directors at some of the nation's distinguished public secondary schools with exemplary college guidance programs as identified by admissions directors at the nation's most selective colleges.

Would you kindly take a few minutes of your time to identify ten or more—including the very top three—public secondary schools on the enclosed nomination form that you perceive to be most distinguished and with exemplary college guidance programs (e.g. New Trier H.S., IL and Thomas Jefferson H.S., VA). Your responses will be anonymous.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Shelley M. Blumenthal  
Guidance Counselor  
Home telephone #(703) 961-1521

P.S. The enclosed Virginia Tech business card holder is for your use and is a token of my appreciation for completing and returning the questionnaire.

APPENDIX D

NOMINATION FORM COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY \_\_\_\_\_ Return by 5/20/92

EXEMPLARY PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL COLLEGE GUIDANCE PROGRAMS

#1 Secondary School Name \_\_\_\_\_ #2 Secondary School Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Director \_\_\_\_\_ Guidance Director \_\_\_\_\_

#3 Secondary School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary School Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Director \_\_\_\_\_ Guidance Director \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary School Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Director \_\_\_\_\_ Guidance Director \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary School Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Director \_\_\_\_\_ Guidance Director \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary School Name \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary School Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Guidance Director \_\_\_\_\_ Guidance Director \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like a summary of the findings of this study, place a check mark here \_\_\_\_.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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APPENDIX E

College Guidance Questionnaire

Return by 9/1/92

**SECTION A**

Please respond to the following:

1. Name of Guidance Director \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name of Secondary School \_\_\_\_\_
3. School Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Enrollment (Grades 9-12) \_\_\_\_\_ or (Grades 10-12) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Number of guidance counselors: Full time \_\_\_\_\_ Half time \_\_\_\_\_ Less than half time \_\_\_\_\_
6. Number of secretaries \_\_\_\_\_ Number of paraprofessionals \_\_\_\_\_ Number of registrars \_\_\_\_\_
7. Amount of per pupil expenditure \$ \_\_\_\_\_
8. Student to Faculty Ratio \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_
9. Student to Counselor Ratio \_\_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_\_ Number of volunteers \_\_\_\_\_
10. Number of students in Class of 1992 \_\_\_\_\_
11. Percentage of Class of 1992 enrolled at four-year colleges \_\_\_\_\_
12. Annual budget for college guidance resources (c.g. College Handbook) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
13. If you would like a summary of the findings of this study, please place a check mark here \_\_\_\_.

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Place a check mark to the right of the item if the activity or situation exists or is practiced at your school or in your college guidance program.

**SECTION B**

1. International Baccalaureate Program's Higher Level \_\_\_\_\_
2. International Baccalaureate Program's Subsidiary Level \_\_\_\_\_

3. The following subjects of the College Board's Advanced Placement Program:

ART History of Art\_\_\_ Studio Art: General Portfolio\_\_\_ Studio Art: Drawing\_\_\_

BIOLOGY General Biology\_\_\_

CHEMISTRY General Chemistry\_\_\_

COMPUTER SCIENCE Computer Science A\_\_\_ Computer Science B\_\_\_

ECONOMICS Macroeconomics\_\_\_ Microeconomics\_\_\_

ENGLISH English Language and Composition\_\_\_ English Literature and Composition\_\_\_

FRENCH French Language\_\_\_ French Literature\_\_\_

GERMAN German Language\_\_\_

GOVERNMENT Comparative Government and Politics\_\_\_ United States Government and Politics\_\_\_

HISTORY European History\_\_\_ United States History\_\_\_

LATIN Latin: Virgil\_\_\_ Latin: Catallus-Horace\_\_\_

MATHEMATICS Calculus AB\_\_\_ Calculus BC\_\_\_

MUSIC Music Therapy\_\_\_

PHYSICS Physics B\_\_\_ Physics C: Mechanics\_\_\_ Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism\_\_\_

PSYCHOLOGY Introductory Psychology

SPANISH Spanish Language\_\_\_ Spanish Literature\_\_\_

4. Students are permitted to dual enroll at local colleagues while in secondary school. \_\_\_

**SECTION C**

5. At least one guidance counseling professional is employed for twelve months. \_\_\_

6. At least one secretary is employed in the guidance office for twelve months. \_\_\_

7. Each student normally remains with the same counselor throughout his or her secondary school years. \_\_\_

8. The school employs college counselor(s) who are free from crisis counseling and personal counseling responsibilities. \_\_\_

9. A guidance director with guidance department organizational and administrative responsibilities, and a reduced or nonexistent counseling load. \_\_\_

#### SECTION D

10. Student academic transcripts are computer generated. \_\_\_
11. A school profile accompanies each transcript mailed to a college. \_\_\_
12. Mid-Year grade reports are generated by the school computer system. \_\_\_
13. Computer terminals are available for student use in the college search. \_\_\_
14. Each counselor has a computer in his/her office. \_\_\_

#### SECTION E

15. Students have access to college guidance software (e.g. College Board's College Explorer). \_\_\_
16. An SAT or ACT preparation course is taught during school hours as part of the curriculum. \_\_\_
17. An SAT or ACT preparation course is taught at the school after school hours. \_\_\_
18. A college day or night program is hosted annually. \_\_\_ Spring \_\_\_ Fall \_\_\_
19. College orientation classes are made available to interested students. \_\_\_
20. A planned series of lectures is made available to parents of college bound students. \_\_\_
21. The guidance department produces and distributes a planning booklet to assist students in the college search. \_\_\_
22. Each four-year college bound student has a personal interview with a counselor to communicate about the student's college search. \_\_\_
23. Periodically, the counselors maintain evening hours to guide parents of college bound students. \_\_\_
24. A financial aid/scholarship information session is held annually for students and parents. \_\_\_
25. A panel of college admissions officers is arranged annually for college bound students and their parents. \_\_\_
26. A college library of catalogues, videos, applications, and other college related information is accessible to students in the guidance suite. \_\_\_
27. School sponsored visits to colleges are available to students. \_\_\_
28. A college information bulletin board is available to students. \_\_\_

29. A scholarship information bulletin board is available to students. \_\_\_

#### **SECTION F**

30. When a student repeats a subject, the highest grade is the only grade for the subject that is recorded on the student's transcript. \_\_\_

31. All major and minor extracurricular activities are recorded on the respective student's transcript. \_\_\_

32. The school ranks its students. \_\_\_

33. Class rank includes all students in the class. \_\_\_

34. College bound students are assigned a rank among college bound students. \_\_\_

35. Grades in Advanced Placement courses are weighted in calculating grade average and class rank. \_\_\_

36. Grades in Honors courses are weighted in calculating grade average and class rank. \_\_\_

#### **SECTION G**

37. Counselors hold membership in the National Association of College Admissions Counselors and/or its regional association. \_\_\_

38. At least one counselor attends the National Association of College Admissions Counselors or its regional association annual meeting. \_\_\_

39. The school division pays for attendance at professional association meetings. \_\_\_

40. A budget is provided for annual visits to college admissions offices for meetings with admissions officers and campus tours. \_\_\_

41. Admissions officers from highly selective colleges visit the school each fall to meet with counselors and prospective students. \_\_\_

42. Counselors at the school maintain personal acquaintance with admissions officers from highly selective colleges. \_\_\_

43. Counselors attempt to use personal influence to facilitate a student's admission offer to a highly selective college. \_\_\_

#### **SECTION II**

44. College bound students are encouraged to take the PSAT or P-ACT in the tenth grade. \_\_\_

45. College bound eleventh graders are encouraged to have completed an SAT or ACT administration by the end of January. \_\_\_



Please feel free to note other items that you believe bear on this topic in the space below and enclose a school profile when you return this questionnaire. Thank you!

## APPENDIX F

### Reminder Post Card - Nomination Form

Dear Admissions Director,

On May 11, you were mailed a Nomination Form to assist in the identification of distinguished public secondary schools. If you have completed and returned the form, let me express my sincere appreciation and ask that you disregard this reminder.

If you have not had the opportunity to complete and return the form, please do so at your earliest convenience. The results of this project will facilitate a model for secondary school counselors, school administrators, and local school boards to emulate in the preparation of their respective students for the highly selective college admission process.

Thank you for attending to this matter! Feel free to call me at (703) 951-4455 at work or collect at home (703) 961-1521 if you need another nomination form or have any questions.

Sincerely,

Shelley M. Blumenthal

## APPENDIX G

### Reminder Post Card - Questionnaire

Dear Guidance Director,

On August 17, you were mailed a College Guidance Questionnaire to assist in the identification of college guidance activities and program characteristics of distinguished public secondary schools. If you have completed and returned the questionnaire, let me express my sincere appreciation and ask that you disregard this reminder.

If you have not completed the questionnaire, please do so at your earliest convenience. The results of this project will provide a model for other secondary school counselors, school administrators, and local school boards to emulate in the preparation of their respective students for the highly selective college admission process.

Thank you for attending to this matter! Feel free to call me at (703) 951-4455 at work or collect at home (703) 961-1521 if you need another questionnaire or have any questions.

Sincerely,

Shelley M. Blumenthal

## APPENDIX H

### Public Secondary Schools Nominated by Admissions Officers

*Nominations (points) Top Three (points)*

A. Philip Randolph H.S., New York, NY	1	1
Adlai Stevenson H.S., Prairie View, IL	2	2
Air Academy H.S., Boulder, CO	1	1
Algonquin Regional H.S., Northboro, MA	.5	2
Amherst Regional H.S., Amherst, MA	2.5	2.5
Andover H.S., Andover, MA	1	3
Arcadia H.S., Pasadena, CA	1	1
Auburn H.S., Auburn, AL	1	1
Austin H.S., Austin, TX	1	1
Baton Rouge H.S., Baton Rouge, LA	1	3
Bel Gardens H.S., Bel Gardens, CA	1	1
Bell H.S., Bell, CO	1	1
Bellaire H.S., Houston, TX	1	3
Beloit Memorial H.S., Beloit, WI	1	1
Ben Franklin School, New Orleans, LA	1	1
Benjamin Franklin H.S., Los Angeles, CA	3	4
Benjamin Mays H.S., Atlanta, GA	1	1
Berkeley H.S., Berkeley, CA	2	2
Bethesda Chevy Chase H.S., Bethesda, MD	6	11
Beverly Hills H.S., Beverly Hills, CA	3	8
Boston Latin Academy, Boston, MA	2	2
Brighton H.S., Rochester, NY	1	1
Bronx H.S. of Science	2	4
Bronxville H.S., Bronxville, NY	1	1
Brookline H.S., Brookline, MA	1	1
Brooklyn Technical H.S., Brooklyn, NY	1	1
Broughton H.S., Raleigh, NC	1	2
Cambridge Ringe & Latin Sch., Cambr., MA	1	1
Campolindo H.S., Moraga, CA	1	1
Carmel H.S., Carmel, IN	1	1
Catlin Gable H.S., Portland, OR	1	1
Central H.S., Little Rock, AR	7	12
Central H.S., Memphis, TN	1	1
Central H.S., Philadelphia, PA	2	3
Chapel Hill H.S., Chapel Hill, NC	2	2
Chattanooga Sch. of Arts & Sci., Chatt., TN	1	1
Cherry Creek H.S., Englewood, CO	3	3
Claremont H.S., Claremont, CA	1	3
Clayton H.S., Clayton, MO	4	4

Columbus H.S., Columbus, GA	1	1
Conestoga H.S., Berwyn, PA	.5	.5
Coral Gables H.S., Coral Gables, FL	2	2
Crescent Valley H.S., Corvallis, OR	1	1
Crescenta Valley H.S., La Crescenta, CA	1	1
David Prouty H.S., Spencer, MA	.5	.5
Dedham H.S., Dedham, MA	1	1
Deerfield H.S., Deerfield, IL	1	1
Dover-Shoreborn H.S., Dover, MA	1	3
Dunedin H.S., Dunedin, FL	1	1
East H.S., Denver, CO	1	1
East H.S., Memphis, TN	1	1
Eastside H.S., Gainesville, FL	1	1
East Brunswick H.S., East Brunswick, NJ	1	2
East Longmeadow H.S., East Longmeadow, MA	1	1
Edgemont H.S., Scarsdale, NY	2	2
El Camino Real H.S., Woodland Hills, CA	1	1
Eleanor Roosevelt H.S., Green Belt, MD	1	1
Evanston Township H.S., Evanston, IL	4	4
Farragut H.S., Knoxville, TN	1	1
Fox Chapel Area H.S., Pittsburgh, PA	1	1
Fox Lane H.S., Bedford, NY	1	1
Frederick Douglass H.S., Atlanta, GA	1	1
George Mason H.S., Falls Church, VA	1	2
Granada Hills H.S., Granada Hills, CA	1	1
Greenwich H.S., Greenwich, CT	1	1
Hanover H.S., Hanover, NH	2	2
Harlingen H.S., Harlingen, TX	1	1
Henry M. Gunn H.S., Palo Alto, CA	4.5	6.5
Highland Park H.S., Dallas, TX	1	1
Highland Park H.S., Highland Park, IL	1	3
Hinsdale Central H.S., Hinsdale, IL	1	1
Homewood-Flossmoor H.S., Flossmoor, IL	1	2
Horace Greeley H.S., Chappaqua, NY	3	9
Horton Watkins H.S., Ladue, MO	2	2
Hume-Fogg Academic H.S., Nashville, TN	4	5
Hunter College H.S., New York, NY	1	1
Illinois Math & Sc. Academy, Aurora, IL	8	24
Indian Hill H.S., Cincinnati, OH	1	4
James A. Garfield H.S., Los Angeles, CA	2	2
John W. North H.S., Riverside, CA	1	1
Kenwood Academy, Chicago, IL	.5	.5
La Hoya H.S., San Diego, CA	1	1
Lake Brantley H.S., Altamonte Springs, FL	1	1
Lane Technical H.S., Chicago, IL	.5	.5

Langley H.S., McLean, VA	1	1
Lawrence H.S., Cedarhurst, NY	1	1
Lexington H.S., Lexington, MA	3	4
Lincoln H.S., Portland, OR	3	4
Lincoln Park H.S., Chicago, IL	.5	.5
Littleton H.S., Littleton, CO	1	1
Longmeadow H.S., Longmeadow, MA	1	1
Loretto Academy, El Paso, TX	1	1
Los Gatos H.S., Los Gatos, CA	1	3
Louisiana School for Math, Sci., and the Arts, Natchitoches, LA	4	4
Lowell H.S., San Francisco, CA	1	1
Lower American H.S., Ardmore, PA	2	2
Mamaroneck H.S., Mamaroneck, NY	1	1
Masconomet Regional H.S., Topsfield, MA	1	1
Mayo H.S., Minneapolis, MN	1	1
Miami Palmetto H.S., Miami, FL	1	1
Midwood Technical H.S., Brooklyn, NY	1	1
Millburn H.S., Millburn, NJ	3	3
Mississippi Sch. of Math & Sci., Columbus, MS	1	1
Mountain Brook H.S., Mountain Brook, AL	3	3
Mt. Ararat H.S., Topsham, ME	1	1
Mt. Greylock H.S., Williamstown, MA	1	1
Myers Park H.S., Charlotte, NC	1	1
Needham H.S., Needham, MA	1	1
New Canaan H.S., New Canaan, CT	2	3
New Trier Township H.S., Winnetka, IL	10	23
Newman Smith H.S., Carrollton, TX	1	1
Newton H.S. North, Newton, MA	1	1
Newton H.S. South, Newton, MA	2	5
Nicolet H.S., Glendale, WI	1	1
Nikes West H.S., Skokie, IL	.5	.5
Niscayuna H.S., Schenectady, NY	1	1
North Carolina Sch. for Sci. & Math, Durham, NC	8	9
North Mecklenburg H.S., Huntersville, NC	1	1
Norton H.S., Norton, MA	1	1
Nova H.S., Ft. Lauderdale, FL	1	1
Oak Park and River Forest H.S., Oak Park, IL	.5	.5
Old Rochester Regional H.S., Mattapoiset, MA	1	1
Oliver Ames H.S., North Easton, MA	2	2
Open H.S., Richmond, VA	1	1
Overland H.S., Aurora, CO	2	2
Palisades H.S., West Los Angeles, CA	1	1
Palo Alto H.S., Palo Alto, CA	4.5	8.5

Parkway North H.S., St. Louis, MO	1	1
Parkway West H.S., Ballwin, MO	2	3
Pine View H.S., Sarasota, FL	2	2
Piscataway H.S., Piscataway, NJ	1	1
Plano East H.S., Plano, TX	1	1
Plant H.S., Tampa, FL	1	1
Portland H.S., Portland, ME	1	1
Princeton H.S., Princeton, NJ	2	3
Randolph H.S., Randolph, NJ	1	1
Richard Montgomery H.S., Rockville, MD	1	1
Richmond Community H.S., Richmond, VA	2	2
Riverside H.S., Greer, SC	1	1
Riverwood H.S., Atlanta, GA	1	1
Robert E. Lee H.S., San Antonio, TX	1	3
Robinson Secondary School, Fairfax, VA	1	1
Roosevelt H.S., Los Angeles, CA	1	1
Roxbury Latin H.S., Roxbury, MA	1	1
Rufus King H.S., Milwaukee, WI	1	1
Santa Fe H.S., Santa Fe Springs, NM	1	1
Santa Monica H.S., Santa Monica, CA	2	3
Scarsdale H.S., Scarsdale, NY	3	3
Shaker H.S., Latham, NY	1	1
Shawnee Mission East H.S., Kansas City, MO	1	1
Shorewood H.S., Seattle, WA	1	1
Simsbury H.S., Simsbury, CT	1	1
Solon H.S., Solon, OH	1	1
South H.S., Minneapolis, MN	1	1
South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Math, Hartsville, SC	1	1
South Kingston H.S., Wakefield, RI	1	4
Spanish River H.S., Boca Raton, FL	1	1
Spring Valley H.S., Columbia, SC	1	1
Staples H.S., Westport, CT	1	3
State College Area H.S., State College, PA	1	1
St. Helena H.S., St. Helena, CA	1	1
St. Petersburg H.S., St. Petersburg, FL	2	2
Strath Haven H.S., Wallingford, PA	2.5	3.5
Stuyvesant H.S., New York, NY	11.5	16.5
Sunny Hills H.S., Fullerton, CA	3	4
Syosett H.S., Syosett, NY	1	1
Taylor Alderdice H.S., Pittsburgh, PA	1	1
T.C. Williams H.S., Alexandria, VA	1	2
Teaneck H.S., Teaneck, NJ	1	1
Thomas Jefferson H.S., Alexandria, VA	9	23
Torrey Pines H.S., Encinitas, CA	1	1

University H.S., Tucson, AZ	3	6
University School, Campaign, IL	1	1
Upper Arlington H.S., Upper Arlington, OH	1	2
Upper Merion H.S., King of Prussia, PA	1	1
Upper St. Clair H.S., Upper St. Clair, PA	2	5
Vanguard Program (at Jesse Jones H.S.), Houston, TX	1	1
Van Nuys H.S. Van Nuys, CA	2	2
Vestavia H.S., Birmingham, AL	1	2
Walt Whitman H.S., Bethesda, MD	5	10
Ward Melville H.S., East Setauket, NY	1	1
Wayland H.S., Wayland, MA	.5	.5
Wellesley H.S., Wellesley, MA	.5	.5
West H.S., Iowa City, IA	1	1
Western H.S., Baltimore, MD	.5	.5
Westlake H.S., Austin, TX	1	2
Weston H.S., Weston, MA	1	1
West Windsor-Plainsboro H.S., Princeton Junction, NJ	1	1
W.G. Enloe H.S., Durham, NC	1	1
White Station H.S., Memphis, TN	5	6
Whitney Young Magnet H.S., Chicago, IL	1.5	1.5
William Hall H.S., West Hartford, CT	1	1
Winston Churchill H.S., Potomac, MD	1	1
Woodrow Wilson H.S., Washington, DC	1	1
Wyoming H.S., Cincinnati, OH	1	1
Yselta H.S., El Paso, TX	1	1



## VITA

### SHELLEY M. BLUMENTHAL

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#### **EDUCATION:**

- November 1993 Doctor of Philosophy, Counselor Education and Student Personnel Services,  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
- August 1982 Master of Education, Guidance and Counseling, Lynchburg College
- May 1979 Bachelor of Arts, Special Education, Lynchburg College

#### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:**

- August 1988 - Present Counselor, Blacksburg High School, Blacksburg, VA
- Responsibilities: Provide personal, educational, and career counseling individually and in groups for three hundred juniors and seniors. Collaborate in information exchange and helping procedures with faculty, community agencies, parents and other professionals to assist and refer students.
- September 1987- August 1988 Counselor-Graduate Research Assistant, Virginia VIEW Career Information Hotline, Blacksburg, VA
- Responsibilities: Answered inquiries related to postsecondary education and job training/outlook information, occupational licensing, financial aid, and general occupational-educational information.
- September 1984- July 1987 Director of Admissions, Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, VA
- Responsibilities: Directed the college's admissions program, evaluated eighteen hundred applicants annually, and supervised six professionals, four support staff, and six student assistants.

July 1983-  
August 1984

Assistant Director of Admissions, Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, VA

Responsibilities: Supervised the admissions staff in the Dean's absence, coordinated several major recruitment programs, and trained extensively new staff members and student assistants.

July 1979-  
June, 1983

Admissions Counselor, Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, VA

Responsibilities: Counseled families and guidance staffs on college selection and major choice, represented the college at admissions programs and secondary school visits, and compiled and analyzed admissions data to evaluate the program's effectiveness.

*Shelley M. Blunthel*