

FACTORS IN THE **ADMISSIONS DECISION**

COLLEGE PREP GRADES ARE #1

While many factors influence college admissions decisions, colleges consistently list grades achieved in college prep classes as the most important. Each college will have its own evaluation system and criteria they hope to find in candidates.

Other factors considered include:

- Difficulty of classes taken
- ACT/SAT score
- Class rank
- Recommendations
- Extracurricular activities
- Essays and/or interviews

Make sure to highlight your skills, strengths and experience in a manner that demonstrates your ability to succeed at each specific college and how you will contribute to the campus.

TONE DOWN THE TWEETS

You may be surprised to learn that many college admissions officers and potential employers check social media sites of potential students and job applicants before extending offers. In fact, in a recent Kaplan Test Prep Survey, **one out of three college admissions officers visited an applicant's social media page** to find out more. The bottom line: What you post online likely won't get you into college, but it just might keep you out.

Negative social media posts commonly found include:

- Photos depicting inappropriate behavior
- Poor communication skills
- Bad-mouthing other schools
- Discriminatory comments related to race, gender, religion or other topics
- Lying about activities or other accomplishments

When it comes to social media, when in doubt, leave it out.

ACT OR SAT: WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES?

While the ACT and SAT are both standardized college admissions tests accepted by most colleges and universities, there are differences. Check to see if the colleges you are interested in attending prefer one test over the other. If either test is accepted, keep in mind the following differences when determining which test is best suited to your skills and strengths.

- The ACT has four sections: English, Mathematics, Reading and Science. The SAT has three sections: Evidence-based Reading, Mathematics and Writing. While the SAT does not have a stand-alone science section, science-related questions are included throughout its three sections.
- The writing section is no longer a requirement on the SAT. The writing section has always been optional with the ACT.
- While both the ACT and SAT primarily are multiple-choice tests (except for the writing section), the SAT has a math section that requires students to produce their own answers.
- Total testing time (including the optional essay) is 3 hours, 40 minutes for the ACT and 3 hours, 50 minutes for the SAT.

