**Turning the Tide: Admission Deans’ Commitments**

As admission deans, we recognize that we and the institutions we represent send signals that can shape students’ priorities and experiences throughout high school. We seek to work together with other key adults in students’ lives to support high school learning that is authentic, meaningful and appropriately challenging, to reduce problems related to excessive achievement pressure in certain communities, and to promote an admissions process that is healthier for students and families.

This document affirms this commitment and serves two core purposes. First, it seeks to build on the recommendations of “Turning the Tide,” clearing up misconceptions about what we value in applicants. Second, it affirms our belief in the value of high school educators, parents and students shaping high school curricular and related academic decisions. It is these community members who know best what will make students thrive academically and emotionally in their specific contexts.

**Our commitment to high school students, parents, and educators:**

- We respect decisions by schools that encourage students to strike an appropriate balance between challenging themselves academically and caring for themselves and others. For that reason, we are committed to honoring these schools’ decisions about curricula and instruction. For example, some schools may limit the advanced courses they offer (such as AP and IB courses) and/or limit the number of advanced courses students can take. Students attending such schools will not be disadvantaged in the admissions process. We also value a variety of high school environments, missions, course offerings, requirements, and extracurricular opportunities, and we count on high school personnel to describe via the school’s profile the academic and extracurricular environment of their particular school. While we view favorably students who engage in rigorous courses, we place more value on the quality of students’ academic engagement than on the number of advanced courses they take.

- We recognize that large numbers of students have access to very few—if any—advanced courses. We view increasing these students’ access to such courses as critically important. These students will be reviewed in the context of what courses are available to them and will not be penalized in admissions decisions because they lack opportunities to take advanced courses.
• We will not penalize in the admissions process students who engage in only a few extracurricular activities in high school. While there are good reasons for some students to engage in numerous extracurricular activities, we view meaningful engagement in two to three activities as sufficient.

• We pledge that family commitments and obligations, such as taking care of a younger sibling or working at a job to contribute income to the family, are highly valued by our admission staff and will be considered in admissions decisions. We encourage students to report these responsibilities in their applications.

• We are more interested in what students have learned from community engagement and service and what they have contributed to others than in whether students started a new project or conducted service in a far-away country. While many students can benefit from service work in other countries, service work done locally is typically just as meaningful. What matters to us is not whether service was local or in a distant place but whether service deepened students’ understanding of themselves, others and their communities and increased their commitment to others and the public good.

• We will consider students’ applications holistically. This means that we will not only consider students’ grades and standardized test scores (if we require them) but will also consider other important attributes, including how they might contribute to our campus and society in meaningful ways. We are interested in what students have learned and want to learn, what they care about and why, and what they have done to pursue their interests and passions. We value students who are authentic and honest in their applications. Because colleges vary in many respects, including their curricula, values and expectations of students, it’s important for prospective students to review carefully college admission office materials and websites.

See the full list of signatories on the Making Caring Common website.