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COLLEGE READINESS: WHAT EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW

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Agenda

- Definition of college ready
- Myths
- Reality
- Readiness habits
- The college world
- What parents need to know
- What parents can/should do now



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Why Good Grades Aren't Always Good Enough: College Admission vs. College Ready



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Big Myths about Middle School and Readiness

1. Middle school is the place where students should focus on specific content areas instead of interdisciplinary work.
2. Middle school students are too young to be thinking about life after high school.
3. High School is the time to “get serious” about rigor and deep thinking.
4. Students should wait to talk about lifelong career goals until high school.
5. Everyone (parents, grandparents, guardians, community leaders, etc.) understands the importance of middle school in lifelong learning.



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Big Myths about High School and Readiness

1. High School Graduation= College and Career Readiness
2. College Admission = College and Career Readiness
3. Getting good grades in high school is good enough.
4. AP courses directly replicate college course atmosphere.
5. Students going straight into the workforce do not need the same rigorous academic training as college bound students.



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The Reality

- 25-30% of college freshmen do not “persist.”
- Up to 30% of students nationwide have to take remedial courses in college.
- As many as 1 million students fail placement exams.
- Nearly four out of five students enrolled in a remedial course in college had a GPA of 3.0 or higher. (2004 Diploma to Nowhere study)
- Many high school graduates do not have the skills or habits for entry level positions of employment.



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The Reality

- Many students even at prestigious private institutions struggle with the expectations of the first year in college.
- Many students who struggle in regular courses do not persist or **change majors**.
- The majority of students take 5-6 years to graduate, not 4 years.
- Only 63.2% who start college get a degree within six years; this includes students who started Associate Degree programs.

(2009 Beginning Postsecondary Survey administered by the National Center for Education)



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Essential College Readiness Habits

- Time Management
- Responsibility
- Accountability
- Social Awareness

STUDENT VOICES*



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Independent Work: High School vs. College

	High School	College
Class time	every day 5-6 hours= 30 hours per week	varies day to day= 15-16 hours per week
Independent work	1-2 hours a night, few weekend hours= 10 hours	Two hours for ever hour spent in class= 32 hours
Students and texts	Instructors need to spend much class time going over content and what is in book to make sure students understand concepts. Focus on facts.	Instructors assume that students read and understood facts. Class time is spent on application and analysis.



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College Faculty Expectations

- Thesis-driven essay of 500 words in an hour
- Ability to read 30-35 pages of text in an hour
- Critical reading not just memorization: analysis, application, evaluation, and questioning
- Commitment to coursework shown through habits



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What Parents Need to Know: Review and New

- College ready vs. college admission
- Connection between rigor and college and career preparation
- The importance of habits (especially time management) and self-advocacy to their child
- FERPA—Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
- HIPAA—Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act