What Do U.S. Colleges Value in the Admission Process?

1. Consistent academic performance & engagement in the classroom. (Consistently strong performance is best; but upward grade trends are also viewed positively.)
2. Rigor of curriculum and classes. (IBDP and MYP are in themselves rigorous curriculae.)
3. School and/or community involvement; Promise of contribution of same to university. (Depth is more important than quantity.)
4. Standardized testing. (NB: More and more schools in the U.S. are adopting test-optional policies)
5. Special talents. (Athletic, artistic…)
7. Overall fit of the student for the university.
8. Institutional priorities (including diversity [geographic, ethnic/racial, socioeconomic], alumni connections, donors…)
9. A student’s demonstrated interest in a particular college.

Since we cannot know how items five through nine will be valued in the admission process at each school in the country, it is always best rely most on the first four criteria. To a great degree, these are the elements over which you have the greatest control, so it is in your best interest to focus in on those early in your high school career!