

## **IB PARENT ASSOCIATION (IBPA) EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES – March 5, 2020**

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Our IBPA topic meeting for the month was The College Application Process and was presented by IB Counselor Meghann Ewy, IB College Advisor Celeste Hutton and Financial Advisor Sue Tirukonda. The topic was presented first and the IBPA meeting followed.

Meghann Ewy thanked everyone for coming and stated that she was going over college material with the juniors. Celeste Hutton wanted parents to know that students are the drivers in this process and that the parents are in the backseat. She said that some valuable resources are Fiske Guide to Colleges and How to Be Irresistible to Colleges. Creating a list of potential colleges is important, and that it's about students making themselves marketable.

Sue Tirukonda, a financial advisor, gave a presentation on the financial side of college. She shared advise and financial tips and answered questions (the answers are incorporated). She also provided a handout on questions to ask during college visits.

- Students need their parents to be sounding boards during the process.
- Visiting colleges is important because you can learn a lot about a school by being on their campus.
- A college education is one of the best investments you can make.
- The cost of college increases every year. Some colleges have a tuition freeze, which means that the cost would stay the same all four years of college.
- There is a lot of competition. More schools are accepting the common application. More applicants means more competition.
- You have to balance retirement versus college. You can't take out a loan for retirement, but you can for college.
- Many students have conversations with their parents about what is affordable.
- The average cost of college is approximately \$26K/year for a public school and approximately \$54K/year for a private school.
- It's important to ask how much overlap there is in classes the first two years because if you change your major the cost of your education increases. She noted that 47% of KU students finish their degree in 4 years and that nationally 60% of college students finish in 6 years.
- College Navigator website is a good resource which lists colleges, college costs, graduation rates, students who return the 2nd year etc...
- TIP 1: Make your child irresistible to colleges: academics (IB is important), athletics and activities (try different ones, hold leadership positions). Schools build diversity so look outside Kansas. Higher education is a business, which means you can negotiate.

- Tip 2: Most families don't pay sticker price (only 1/3 do). Apply for financial aid no matter what your income is. Talk to the financial aid officers at schools. Look for scholarship sources: non profit, employer, military etc... Use activities your child has been involved in to look for aid. Encourage students to do research and look for scholarship websites. Meghann Ewy and Celeste Hutton pointed out that some scholarships are capped, so make sure you know the details. Additionally you should never be charged for a scholarship application. Your EFC is your Expected Family Contribution (529 Plan is part of this), which is parent and student income and assets. FAFSA is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which is how you apply for financial aid (does not look at home equity). CSS Profile is the College Scholarship Service Profile, which some colleges require additionally (does look at home equity).
- Tip 3: You pick the date to file your FAFSA, so pick wisely. FAFSA opens October 1st and uses data from the previous year's income tax data (2019 tax information for current juniors). You are applying for the next school year. The FAFSA must be completed every year your student is in college. Filing tips are: choose the date wisely, cash in bank (this hurts you, so pay ahead on debt) versus outstanding debt (they don't take this into consideration), don't fudge the information (it will show up on an audit), list your top 10 schools (gives you negotiation power). You can't reduce your income by putting it into retirement. Remember that not all financial aid is the same.
- Tip 4: Private schools may be more affordable than public schools. More of your financial need may be met at a private school because they usually have more money to award but most don't give merit aid.
- There are different aid awards: scholarships, student loans and work study. If you are paying for college using personal resources keep the following in mind: be careful with student loans which can be costly; parents can use home equity loans, credit cards (bad idea) or PLUS Loans; students can get federal loans which have pay back flexibility (private loans are not flexible) and the interest is tax deductible. Federal loan options are subsidized versus unsubsidized, Stafford Loans, Perkins Loans (from schools and is need based) and PLUS Loans (parents take out).

Celeste Hutton stated that early decision is not a good idea because it locks you in and doesn't allow you to compare all your acceptance letters.

Meghann Ewy had some reminders: students are the drivers, make use of the college navigator website, various colleges come to East throughout the spring (KU Honors college visited already, WSU is coming on April 20), juniors will have a question and answer session with some of the seniors on April 21, April 22 is the College Fair at Collegiate (need to pre register for this).

Meghann Ewy selected six seniors to be on a student panel and they answered questions about the application process.

- How did you choose the college you are attending?  
 priorities: education, athletics, major  
 had major student wanted, IB is recognized there  
 had debate and forensics, liked the team, received scholarships  
 consider all school options, pursuing a major on a campus that's diverse and has desired activities  
 taking a gap year, parents concerned initially, interning within desired field, good for networking

- How many schools did you apply to?

Answers were between 1 and 4. One student visited multiple colleges but only applied to one. The students strongly encouraged visiting schools when they are in session. If you do a one on one campus visit they get to know you. Junior Day campus visits have a planned schedule. Meghann Ewy stated that the six students looked at more schools and did a lot of research. She suggested applying to no more than 9 colleges because it's a lot of work, but at least 2 (competition equals more money). Celeste Hutton suggested contacting the admissions office to find out who the local admissions officer is and to meet with professors. Students should make all the contacts and write a handwritten thank you to all the individuals they meet (get their business card).

- What are the instate schools and the IB weighted schools?

These change but colleges should indicate their policies.

- What made you stand out?

personal statements and resumes because it shows them who you are  
emailing individuals

visiting schools

public schools looked at classes taken, grades and testing

activities

athletics

desire to attend their school

show them you are passionate about something: volunteering, activities

supplements and essays need to stand out

Meghann Ewy said that schools have different requirements. Some colleges require six essays.

You should help your student with time management. Students should apply to a school that is a safe bet and also one that is a long shot.

- How did students respond when their parents reminded them about deadlines?

parents were relaxed, student took the lead

upset sometimes, but appreciates it now

parents relaxed, didn't track deadlines

one parent was on student's case, do need reminders

learning curve because 1st generation to attend college

on case more about not being open about the process

Meghann Ewy said that students need to "adult" themselves. She said that in the fall some students had anxiety about whether they were good enough. Students need to figure out who they are, but it's important to support them through the process.

- I. **Introductions/Welcome:** Meeting was called to order at 7:35pm by Ross Lee, President. Meeting attendees: Ross Lee, Grishma Ajmera, Tanya Flores, Jason Niblack, Patricia Blessant, Tamala Cocannouer, Sueanna Budde, Candy Denk-Connolly, Patresa Ebersole, Kathleen Dang-Pham, Martha Dimas, Michael Boykins (IB Coordinator)
- II. **Approval of February Meeting Minutes:** Patricia Blessant motioned to accept the meeting minutes. Tamala Cocannouer seconded. The minutes were accepted as presented.

- III. **Review of Treasurer's Report:** Tanya Flores presented the treasurer's report in Steven Smith's absence. We received \$100 in a company match donation. Tanya noted that an IB expense had incorrectly been charged to IBPA. The error was corrected and the funds were returned to the IBPA account. Sueanna Budde motioned to accept the treasurer's report. Tamala Cocannouer seconded. The treasurer's report was accepted as presented.
- IV. **IBPA Domain Name:** Steve Whisenant informed Ross Lee prior to the meeting that the IBPA domain name [eastibpa.org](http://eastibpa.org) renewal date was approaching. The cost is \$15.99/year. We discussed whether it is being used and the reasons for holding the domain name. Jason Niblack motioned to approve the \$15.99 to renew the IBPA domain name. Patricia Blessant seconded. Motion passed.
- V. **IBPA Meeting Topics:** Ross stated that the IBPA themed meetings had gone well. Future meetings are: Senior Recognition in April and IBPA Board elections in May.
- VI. **IB Coordinator's Report:** Mr. Boykins had one teacher request. Mr. Harris, the Debate and Forensics teacher, requested \$100 per IB student (\$800 total) to offset the cost of competing at the National Championships. We had a lengthy discussion about funding events and activities that benefit specific students. In the past we have supported Debate and Forensics, Science Olympiad, CAS projects etc.. which are are student specific. We decided to address this at a future meeting so that we would have a policy in place going forward about supporting such requests and that funding would be dependent on the budget. Ross decided that in this case we would vote on a donation amount and the majority agreed to giving \$200 (\$25/IB student). The motion passed on a majority vote.
- VI. **Senior Recognition:** Tanya Flores mentioned that an individual needed to put together the slide show. Mr. Boykins stated that generally a senior takes on that project, and that he would talk to the seniors about it.
- VII. **New Business:** Ross Lee mentioned that there was a need for Spanish interpreters at the Guadalupe Clinic, and that this could be a good CAS project for IB students fluent in Spanish. Mr. Boykins stated that it could be promoted by the Spanish teachers if the legal aspects could be worked out.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.

**Email Action Item:** On February 12, 2020 IBPA approved via email to increase the amount for Mr. Maack's request for books (see February 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes) so that the purchase could be made through Watermark books. IBPA stated that they would prefer to buy the books from Watermark Books instead of Amazon if the cost difference wasn't more than 10% higher. Watermark's price for all the books is \$230.13, which is roughly 15% higher than Amazon.

Minutes submitted by acting Board Secretary, Tanya Flores