



December 21, 2009

Dear Parents of Our 9th and 10th Grade Talmidim,

Allow me to introduce myself via this e-mail. My name is Rabbi Yossi Bennett. I am one the 12th grade Iyun Rabbeim and serve as well as the Post High School Coordinator. This position extends from planning for post high school (SAT's, ACT's, Yeshiva Applications, College Applications) to retaining a strong connection with our talmidim even after they leave the four walls of the Mesivta.

It is not too early to already begin touching base with you regarding your son's long-term goals and future plans. As many of you already know, the four year high school experience your son is enjoying at Mesivta Ateres Yaakov doesn't end on graduation day. Rather, the relationships he forges and the foundation he builds will help secure for him a solid, fulfilling and fruitful life as a Ben Torah and a productive member of his community and Yiddshkeit at large.

Now that the first quarter of the year is behind us, and the always daunting Parent-Teacher Conferences have been conducted, you may be thinking forward to the preparations your son should be making to ensure that he has the best possible college opportunities.

Allow me to outline the process for you. The two most important factors that colleges look at during the freshman admission process are Cumulative Grade Point and Regents Averages (GPA) and SAT Scores. These two factors by far outweigh any extracurricular activities, awards or commendations a student may have.

What is a good GPA and SAT score?

The old 65 passing grade does still exist, but don't be deceived... it will not get your son into college. Together, we must encourage your son to strive for excellence. Personally, I often remind my shiurim that 80 is a passing grade by me. Why? Because that is what the colleges want to see down the line. That is what will enable them to be successful after high school. Most credible colleges want to see a GPA of 80-85 and SAT score of 1050-1100, minimally. Attaining that GPA begins now – not in 11th grade. If progress reports are showing grades under this bracket in any subject, remediation is required. In addition to any private intervention, the Mesivta offers Peer Tutoring that has proven to be extremely effective. If necessary, additional assignments may also be recommended to assist in raising a grade. I encourage you to be involved, both with Rabbi Rudansky and with the teachers themselves, to ensure that your son is succeeding.

It is strongly recommended that a student who is eligible for university Honors Programs should also have taken two SAT Subject Tests (SAT II's), been involved in extracurricular activities that highlight leadership abilities and have received other academic awards or achievements.

Who is eligible for an Honors Program?

The colleges vary on their requirements for their Honors Programs. To be considered, a student must have achieved a 90+ cumulative GPA and anywhere from a 1250 to a 1400 on the SAT's, depending on the college.

Post High School Learning in Israel

You send your son to our Mesivta and allow us to partner with you in producing a well-rounded Ben Torah prepared to face the many challenges of the changing, modern world. With that said, we feel that it is extremely vital to his success as a Ben Torah to spend minimally 1 year learning in yeshiva, generally in Eretz Yisrael, before plunging into college. You will hear more about this in 11th and 12th grade, but Rabbi Sandler and I take this part of our jobs very seriously. We spend a great deal of time establishing close relationships with the many post high school yeshivas, visiting them, evaluating them, and analyzing which is the best environment for each talmid. Our experience has shown that the vast majority of the boys who decide to learn in post high school yeshiva benefit from it greatly down the line as they embark on their future paths.

Looking forward to growth, success and achievement in the years to come,

Rabbi Yossi Bennett
Post High School Coordinator
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