

# Stop stressing: colleges don't care about NT

by Jeremy Lee

Coming from a successful high school, New Trier students often think that their chances at getting into a college or university may be smaller because of the competitive and rigorous atmosphere.

While this is a common rumor and concern at New Trier, it isn't necessarily true.

Department chair of post high school counseling, James Conroy, mentions how he thinks NT Students are not at a disadvantage.

"I don't think they're penalized. People think there is a quota. There is no quota. People think colleges want to take three from one high school and five from another."

Conroy mentions how a small university needs a specific member for their band, and if an applying student happens to play that instrument, then they have a higher chance of being accepted.

Another factor to consider is the same 100 schools that most New Trier students apply to, or as the Post High School Counseling



According to James Conroy, colleges don't take into account the high school attended | Borushek

office calls it, the "Holy Grail." Part of the Post High School Counselor's job is to broaden a student's list of schools they apply to. This is important because, according to Conroy, it has become harder to get into these same schools.

The more elite and expensive schools, like the Ivies, are now offering more money for anyone who can get in. Previously, however, if you could not afford a school then you would have to choose a less prestigious school offering more money.

Now, Conroy explains, since students who can't

afford these elite schools are getting in, it is making more competition for students like these at New Trier.

This is why the post high school counseling office recommends applying to schools that not as many New Trier students would apply to.

According to Conroy, many elite schools have raised their minority and first generation populations. While this is important and creating diversity, for places like New Trier this doesn't help because the majority of the students are white and have parents who are college graduates.

Many Big Ten schools are familiar with New Trier and aware of its academic success.

Some students are concerned that more will be expected from Big Ten schools because of their familiarity with New Trier.

A recent rumor regarding the University of Wisconsin-Madison concerns the fact that the university is cutting back on New Trier kids because they expect more from them.

Conroy says that this myth is not true. A few years ago their admissions counselor for our area changed, and the

previous one was familiar with New Trier and did many interviews here, therefore letting more students in. This is no longer the case; so it is not the fact that they want higher GPA's and ACT's from us. The only reason it changed, according to Conroy, was due to the admissions counselors, "It was nothing that we did."

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- James Conroy

Another reason why it is not credible to compare New Trier's admission to other similar high school's is because student's admission is based on their major.

For example, if most of the students applying from New Trier are applying to the prestigious engineering school at a university, and

the majority of students from another high school are applying to the school of education, which has a lower required GPA and ACT, then the students from the other school are more likely to get in than the New Trier students.

Conroy agrees with this concept, "If we [New Trier] had everybody applying to the school of agriculture, then we would have a lot of people getting in."

Overall, being a Trevian student in general does not affect one's admission to a college. Many students tend to believe the rumor that it is harder to get into schools since they went to New Trier, however this isn't entirely true.

Just because New Trier may have more students rejected from Ivy Leagues doesn't mean that they were denied because they were New Trier students.

Also, New Trier is not superior just because they may have more students accepted into a prestigious school, it's based on more factors like GPA, test scores, extracurriculars, factors that actually matter, not a student's high school background.

## New Trier students elect a different path

by Katherine Rhea

According to James Conroy, the Post High School Counseling Facility Department Chair, 95 percent of all New Trier students go off to a four year college.

The other two to three percent go off to two year schools. Another two to three percent participate in a gap year after graduation, such as joining the workforce, volunteering, or joining the military.

Many perceive New Trier's students as Ivy League bound. However, there are only nine Ivy League schools all of which have an acceptance rate just under nine percent, according to the Washington Post. "I would say 25 to 30 kids, at the most, go Ivy League," said Conroy.

According to Conroy, students are also applying to schools far away from the North Shore bubble. "After last winter more and more kids are saying 'get me to a decent climate,'" said Conroy, "Hollywood also makes California look like Disney World and the East Coast still has a large appeal."

Conroy also mentioned that more students are looking down south. "Southern schools are becoming more liberal and less entrenched in the southern way."

Students do not limit themselves to just America too, but apply overseas, according to Conroy. "We have about six or seven students who are at University of St.



Some students prefer to go overseas, like to the University of British Columbia | University of British Columbia

Andrews in Scotland. McGill in Montreal is a popular choice as well as University of British Columbia.

Some of the kids choose to go overseas because they are citizens of that country as well." However, there is a small percentage who do choose to go overseas for college.

The top school for many New Trier students in the past has been Stanford. The location, division one sports, and academic excellence is appealing to many. "Last year 39 students applied and only four were accepted. All four chose to enroll," said Conroy.

A small percent of New Trier students choose to do a gap year instead of going straight down the path of graduating high school at seventeen and college at twenty one.

"Most of the gap year students apply to a college, are accepted, and defer for a year. The college would just move you into the following year or semester. I would say that between 85 to 95 percent

of the colleges encourage gap years," said Conroy, "I am also a big promoter of gap years as long as the students want to do them."

The gap rate percentage has gone up within the last ten years, according to Conroy. Ten years ago the percentage of students taking a gap year was zero while, as of recently, the rate has climbed to almost ten percent.

Overall New Trier is perceived to have a high college enrollment rate, which it does. However, not all students at New Trier are going to the "top" schools in the nation.

Most students go their best fit; whether that be a small school in the Midwest or a large school in California.

But some students elect to do something different and not go to school right away, or go to school in a different location. They take a gap year to travel the world, join the military, or venture over the border to go school in Canada.

## How the level system affects students' psyches

by Lynley Evans

It's commonly joked that New Trier kids fear any grade lower than an A, but it is more of a reality than we realize. As New Trier students, we put such an emphasis on getting perfect grades and a high GPA to compliment our college applications, that we shy away from an academic challenge.

Often we take a few classes where we know we can get an A without much work or studying. Though it seems favorable for the college process, this mentality is actually hurting us more than it is helping.

There are two distinct responses to getting back an A or C paper or exam. An A paper is often looked at and reviewed for a few seconds, and then shoved into a folder or displayed on the desk for others to see. When a C exam is received, though often an embarrassing and shameful process, the student must review the exam, question by question, to discover what was incorrect or misunderstood.

Though the first response is more desirable, the lower grade provides an opportunity for the student to further their understanding and use skills that are more beneficial and allow the student to grow not only with an understanding of the material, but also as a strategic learner.

Taking classes that are personally challenging and possibly getting lower grades instead of taking easier classes to ensure an A, provides this experience.

Asking for help is an important skill, easily acquired when facing an academic challenge. When a student fails a test, they elicit skills that will apply in many situations they will face in the future.

To better grasp the material, a student must be resourceful in order to receive the necessary help. Teachers, study groups, and other online resources are available for help. Students who enter college with this resourcefulness will benefit when they are faced with more rigorous college courses.

Students who have strategically placed themselves in classes that are not nearly as challenging and are constantly getting As, are missing this skill, and may not know what to do when they are struggling in a class.

I have experienced this situation first hand. My junior year, I moved down a level in one of my courses. Even though it was a class that I easily succeeded in, I did not take the appropriate amount of time working and studying the material. Because the class was easy for me, I focused on other courses that were more of a challenge.

Even though I had a significantly lower grade in my original level, I learned so much more in that class not only in the material, but also with study skills and group work, than I ever did in the class where I received an A. When I got Bs and Cs on tests, it forced me to go back

and review the ways that I was studying, and take a more useful approach. I learned what types of study skills were and were not working, which helped me in my classes.

At New Trier, we too often label A students as 'smart' and see anyone getting a lower grade as average. Technically, an A is defined as excellent work, a B is defined as good, and a C is the average.

This would mean that given a classroom, the majority of students would be receiving Cs and a few would fall about or below this grade. This scale is barely considered in our school.

Because of New Trier's high GPA standards and the pressure we put on ourselves to achieve the stereotype of a successful New Trier student C grades are not seen as the average. Some teachers look down upon students who receive C's.

This stigma contributes to why we fear taking a class where we might not be the best student in the room.

We need to be more accepting and comfortable with receiving lower grades. Once we are comfortable with getting a few Bs or Cs, we will more easily step out of our comfort zone.

Why do you think the Common App asks applicants to write about a time they've failed? It's because the way a student learns to grow from a failure of any sort says more about their character than any 5.3 GPA.