

The Value of Extra-Curricular and Social Life of Students

Recommendations for balancing with school demands

Social Skills

- School is both a place of learning and an opportunity to learn social skills that will help students become well-rounded individuals
- At school they interact with many different types of people which will prepare them for adult life
- There are a few different opportunities for students to gain these social skills at LSA!

LSA Clubs

- With a new semester is starting many of LSA's clubs are starting back up again!
- The link below has all the clubs being offered at LSA this year. Feel free to reach out to the teacher advisor if you need more information about joining a specific club!
- Clubs are a great way to connect with other students and teachers who share similar interests.
- <https://lsaclubs-21-22.weebly.com/>

Working with other students

Students will often need to work with one another on school projects and assignments. This gives them the opportunity to work on skills such as:

- Breaking complex tasks into parts and steps
- Planning and managing time
- Refining understanding through discussion and explanation
- Giving and receiving feedback on performance
- Challenge assumptions
- Develop stronger communication skills.

<https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/design/teach/design/instructionalstrategies/groupprojects/benefits.html>

- Tackle more complex problems than they could on their own.
- Delegate roles and responsibilities.
- Share diverse perspectives.
- Pool knowledge and skills.
- Hold one another (and be held) accountable.
- Receive social support and encouragement to take risks.
- Develop new approaches to resolving differences.
- Establish a shared identity with other group members.
- Find effective peers to emulate.
- Develop their own voice and perspectives in relation to peers.

College Applications

Colleges want to see students who are involved in activities in and out of school.

They want to see a commitment to those activities of more than one year ideally.

There is room for up to ten activities on the Common App and students are asked to include the amount of time spent each week. Admission Counselors know when this is exaggerated. Remember that this is up to ten activities over four years.

College Applications continued

Colleges like to see students build their involvement throughout high school and take on increasingly more leadership opportunities.

They like to see students utilize their summers to grow through camps, volunteering, working and/or college sessions.

They want to see activities that are meaningful for the student's interests, goals and/or aptitude. The quality of the activities is more important than the quantity.

Examples of Extra-Curricular Activities to include on college applications

Club member, officer or founder

Mentor, Ambassador or Math Tutor Program

Student Government Association

Arts-based group or performance

Musical or Cabaret

Summer camp or college summer session (especially if it's longer than a week or attended more than once)

Community Service (especially something ongoing)

Teen Council or other community opportunity

Community performances

Jobs

Life Skills

- The participation in extracurricular activities builds students' time management skills, leadership skills, self-confidence, resiliency, and ability to accept constructive criticism, which are all components important to character development.

Life Skills- Executive Functioning

- Goal setting- Many extracurricular activities plan events, fundraisers, or have basic goals for students to work towards. Students see themselves and others work toward accomplishing things in areas of interest and passion, this also leads to increased self esteem and resilience, which are characteristics of success in multiple areas of life.
- Time management and prioritizing- By balancing academic, social, and extracurricular activities, students begin looking at how to juggle and balance different aspects of their lives. Some extracurriculars required letters of recommendation or certain GPAs to participate, which encourages students to keep academics a priority.
- Problem solving and creative and analytical thinking- whether is a board game club, or theatre production, students will be exposed to the way others think, and be able to exercise their own ways of thinking already.
- Teamwork- As previously mentioned working with others is needed in varying degrees in all careers and relational dynamics. Being confident in your own strengths and recognizing strengths in others is important for success.

Life Skills- Emotional Wellbeing

Studies have shown that participation in extracurricular activities increases self esteem as well as builds positive relationships among peers (which also increases self esteem)

Creative extracurricular activities such as music, dance, drama, and visual arts increased self- confidence, self-esteem, and positive behaviors of participants in one study

<https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/take-action-to-improve-health/what-works-for-health/strategies/extracurricular-activities-for-social-engagement>

Life Skills– Knowledge, Skills, and Connections in areas of interest

Participating in extracurricular activities teaches applicable knowledge and skills in areas of interest- for example, participating in environmental club is going to build knowledge in recycling and environmental protection that could transfer into career skills for that job.

Extracurriculars and clubs may provide opportunities in the community making valuable connections in the field of interest.