

REPORT ON COLLEGE COUNSELING

PROGRAM PLACEMENT, TRENDS

AND

FUTURE DIRECTION OF SERVICES

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Superintendent	Dennis R. Lauro, Jr.

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I. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

In the late 1970s, I served as counselor and director of guidance services at Pelham Memorial High School. The program was very different from what it is today. Following several years of service as Principal of Tenafly High School, in Tenafly, New Jersey, I returned to Pelham to take a district-wide position. At that time, I was a key player in making a number of changes to help improve guidance services. Seven and a half years ago, when I was Pelham's Superintendent, I worked with the then Guidance Director Dr. Lois Guberman and an educational consultant, Dr. Carol A. Dahir. That resulted in a Board report and a plan to improve guidance services. The recommendations from that report have now been largely implemented. They are referenced elsewhere in this report.

Knowing my experience both in the field of guidance and, in particular, my long-time involvement to help the program at PMHS to evolve and improve, the Pelham School Board's Program Committee asked me to come back to Pelham to assess the guidance program's growth and development since 2004. The Program Committee further requested that I develop a set of recommendations and, based on my findings, share my thoughts and ideas on how the program should chart a future course. It has been a pleasure for me to return to Pelham and work on this project.

I hope the resulting report will be helpful to the school counselors, the Board, Guidance Director, Principal, and Dr. Lauro in planning future guidance programs and activities. At the Program Committee's direction, my focus has been on college advisement practices – changes, challenges and future direction. I have also commented on the work of the school counselors and how it has changed in the context of new social problems and the increasingly competitive college application and admissions process; along with the fiscal crisis.

The process of developing the report included the participation of multiple staff and Board Members and many hours of research and meeting time. This report to the Program Committee has been prepared for presentation to the Board as a whole, additional staff, counselors and larger community. The Guidance Supervisor, so invaluable in developing the report, will be charged with the responsibility of working with his department, the principal and superintendent to implement the recommendations of the report and keep the Program Committee and the Board informed on his progress. Counselor input was also important.

II. WORK OF THE SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Before I focus this report on “college advisement and placement services,” it is important to fully understand and appreciate the work of today's school counselor. The full range of counseling duties and responsibilities has been documented in prior reports to the Board. Some of the most useful documents were included but were not limited to the following:

- School Counseling Services and Activities (Attachment C), p. 12 of School Counseling Program Study, Dr. Carol A. Dahir, NYIT Professor, February 2, 2004.
- Job Description Outline – prepared by Director.
- Counseling Curriculum Map, Counseling Department – What is School Counseling?
- Guidance Calendar 10/11

A review of these documents and others will reveal and underscore the broad width and scope of school counselor duties. The reader may be surprised to learn just how much school counselors are expected to accomplish in the fulfillment of their job descriptions. Some of these duties would likely take away from counselor ability to focus on college advisement.

The school counselor is on constant call to confer with, listen to, coordinate, refer and case manage a wide variety of student problems that are sometimes part of adolescent growth and development. Unfortunately, but increasingly, these issues include the following examples:

- Bullying (both in school and cyber).
- Alcohol and drug problems.
- Poor self-esteem issues.
- Self-destructive behavior, which would include exhibiting or discovery of issues such as eating disorders, cutting, suicidal warning signs, or gestures.
- Acting out behavior ranging from minor infractions to serious disciplinary issues.
- Sexual orientation.
- Overly stressed students due to pressures, family problems, inclusive of a child or spousal abuse, and other manifestations of dysfunction such as alcoholism in the home.
- Parental neglect and/or unrealistic expectations.
- Financial problems.
- Adjustment to school and transition issues.
- Sexual harassment in school or the larger community.
- Adolescent social adjustments/Growing up issues.

Collectively, these problems have become endemic to growing up in America today for many adolescents. The guidance department does not handle these alone, but school counselors frequently receive reports, make observations, or have students who self-refer in search of help. While social issues and adolescent depression problems have always been part of every school counselor's in-box, the proverbial stack of crisis intervention

issues mount and consume a greater share of counseling time than they did years ago, due to the escalation of these issues.

While some of these cases are very dramatic and compelling, school counselors have a substantial load of mundane and program management duties for which they are also responsible. They oversee all student academic selections and scheduling. They are responsible for implementing a large number of standardized tests and surveys. They provide reports and analysis of student performance data and conduct a number of student and parent/student conferences.

School counselors increasingly are engaged in monitoring student academic interventions. They confer with teachers, supervisors, and pupil personnel staff to help students stay on course. They also provide their own department counseling in pre-college planning and student social and personal growth and development. They are also responsible for helping students select courses and then scheduling them.

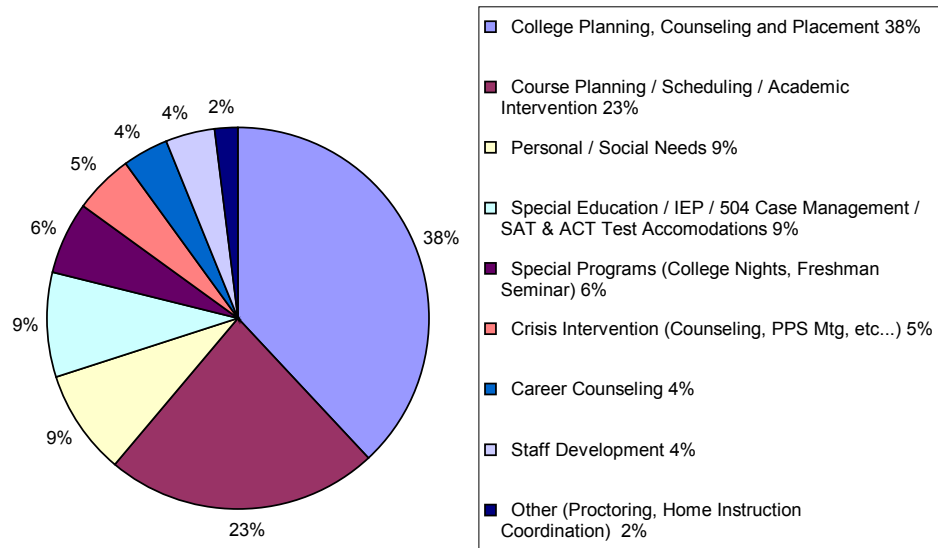
More than ever, school counselors are required to support special education services. They have recently been given the role of 504 case management, which is a huge responsibility. The management of 504 cases is required in the administration of the Individual Disability Education Act (IDEA). IDEA is legislation aimed at ensuring students who qualify are given special accommodations according to federal law. In administering this requirement, counselors must regularly attend case meetings and work with faculty and staff to provide eligible students with the educational supports they need to succeed in school. They also advocate for students with special needs and participate in weekly Pupil Personnel Services and Individual Study Team Meetings.

School counselors are also expected to plan a number of special evening programs for parents, ranging from six to eight of these annually. Each program requires considerable planning and organization. In addition, the counseling office is a continuous source of information to parents and students, especially with respect to college planning and placement.

Lastly, and by no means least, on their long list of duties, the school counselors are college planning and placement advisors. This aspect of their work requires more time and effort than ever before because of the increasing competition and growing number of applicants for a limited number of spaces.

CHART A

Rough Estimate of Percentage of Time Spent on College Counseling, Other Duties



Note: According to the 2010 State of College Admissions published by NACAC (p. 6), private school counselors spend 54% of their time on college counseling vs. public school counselors who spend just 22%.

III. COLLEGE/CAREER PLACEMENT

Notwithstanding their long list of other responsibilities, school counselors are responsible for advising students on college pre-planning, choice, and application process. This task is arguably the most challenging and time consuming of all that they do; perhaps the most important as well.

In addition, the college application process has become increasingly stressful, complicated, charged and competitive. A recent report found that a smaller percent of American students graduate from college than ever before, with the United States ranking about 14th internationally in this category. Currently about 50% of students who attend college, actually graduate across the country.

At the same time, the very top tiers of American colleges have seen an increase in applications with no corresponding increase in student spaces. As I was told by a Yale Associate Director of Admissions, the Ivy League and similarly selective schools may only accept 10% of applicants in the current climate. Nearly all of their applicants are exceptional students. This includes most of those they reject.

With college graduation rates in decline and applications on the rise, with limited spaces available, there is a critical need for school counselors to help students find what is termed a “good match” or best fit. This requires helping students to connect with colleges which match up well with the student’s academic needs, learning styles and interests, but which will also be sufficiently challenging where the student can succeed. In addition to these considerations, students in some cases are looking for a career or technical program that will lead to preparation for particular careers and enable them to pursue their interests and dreams. Here are some examples of motivational factors that help explain the thinking that entered into student selection and application strategy (*names have been changed*).

- *Jim will attend the Culinary Institute. He attended PMHS and the BOCES Program. His dream is to one day own his own restaurant or catering business.*
- *Mary will attend Savannah School of Design which is known for its graphic design program. She wants to be a fashion designer.*
- *Ted will go to Binghamton which is a very highly competitive New York State school. He was also accepted to some top private schools but chose Binghamton for both its excellence and lower tuition rates, which is important to him in the current economy.*
- *Sue will attend the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. She was the star of our girls’ basketball team and was offered a full scholarship. She hopes to teach and coach one day. Charlotte has a good education school.*
- *Steve plans to attend Baruch College. He aspires to work one day near the Financial Center on Wall Street; and likes Baruch, a CUNY School, for its location and*

reputation in business and finance. Its local location and cost were also considerations.

- *Bill plans to attend George Washington University. He doesn't know yet what he wants to do, but has an interest in government and politics and likes George Washington's reputation in the field.*
- *Mark will attend RPI. He was highly successful in the PMHS Science Research course and won a prize for an engineering project. He hopes to work some day in the emerging green energy field. He was accepted by a number of schools but felt RPI was his best choice.*
- *Sarah will attend Northwestern. She is very talented and wants to go into theater. She considered acting schools, but decided Northwestern with its Liberal Arts Program would give her more future options and she would take part in its excellent theater program as well.*
- *Tim is headed for John Jay. He's always wanted to go into law enforcement and told his school counselor he wants to protect NYC from terrorist attacks. John Jay has an excellent reputation for criminal justice.*
- *Louise will attend Boston College. Although not extremely religious, she and her family are attracted to the Jesuit tradition at Boston College, loved the campus, and want a strong liberal arts program at a highly competitive college.*
- *Stan will attend Amherst. He was accepted by a number of elite colleges, but opted for the small college atmosphere and excellence of Amherst along with its traditions. A number of Pelham graduates have gone there and loved it!*
- *Barbara will attend Westchester Community College. She will be first in her family to attend college. She plans and hopes to transfer to a four-year school when she graduates with a two-year degree. The quality of the program, comparatively low cost, proximity and reputation for successful transfer attracted her.*
- *Henry will go to Saint Thomas Aquinas College. He is a hardworking student with a combination of learning disabilities. He likes the programs at STAC which is known for its support of special needs. His career goals are currently unsure, but he is highly motivated to earn a college degree, through the pathways program, which serves special needs students.*
- *Mitch will attend Harvard University. He left Pelham Memorial High School for one year to attend private school, but missed Pelham so much he returned for grades 10 through 12. He was an outstanding scholar, student athlete and leader. Harvard was lucky to get him!*

- *Tim will join the United States Military, but eventually plans to apply funds he earns there to attend college. He is also motivated to see something of the larger world and serve his country.*

All of these examples are based upon reasonable facsimiles to students I have known about at PMHS in recent years. Taken as a group, they remind us that our high school is comprehensive and that students have a variety of needs, aptitudes, interests, backgrounds, and financial circumstances. It is the school counselor's job to help students with the process to find and select schools that are good matches in consideration of all these factors.

Too often, we judge our placement success rate based only on the number of students who are accepted to only top tier or elite colleges and universities. This is a valid reference point for a substantial number of Pelham students. It is not, however, where all students will end up, nor should they. However, where students do aspire to such a placement and have the ability, the school counselor also helps them to meet their goals. It is very encouraging to note that recent alumni surveys indicate our graduates, by a very large percent, feel they have been well prepared in high school to succeed in college.

All students are helped or advised through the college/career placement process in the following ways:

- Pre-college planning starting during sophomore year;
- Career curriculum related to college choice;
- Parent/student conferences;
- Special programs (college/financial aid nights, fairs, etc.);
- Liaison work with college admissions;
- Resource orientation/utilization such as Naviance software;
- Development of application strategies;
- Assistance with application essay and process;
- Ongoing advertisement; and
- Transition activities from high school to college.

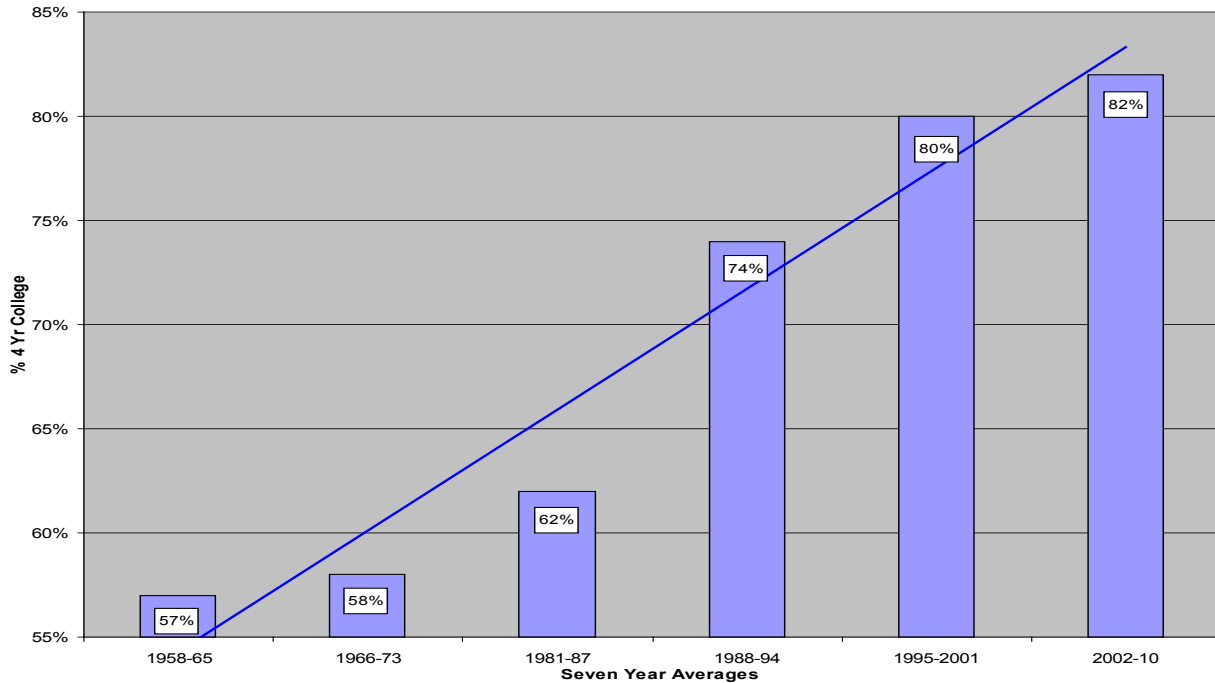
In a recent 2008 Futuristic Research survey of graduating seniors, counseling services were, in general, rated favorably by the students. However, the college planning program was given neutral ratings, lower than other services.

IV. PELHAM STUDENT PLACEMENT TRENDS

In general, what are some indicators of how students are doing with respect to a successful high school experience and post high school placement? First, it is worth noting that while Pelham has always enjoyed very high graduation rates, these rates have been further enhanced through the still new “Bridge Academy” which has been producing 100% graduates, most of whom have also gone onto post high school education. This is a very positive recent development. (See Attachment F: Bridge Academy Student Placement).

Increasing Percentages of Students Attend College - Regarding college placement in recent years, about 82% of Pelham graduates attend a four-year college and 10% go onto two-year or technical programs, with a resulting 94-95% going onto post secondary school of some kind. The exact breakdown may vary but generally, these percentages hold. This compares very favorably with Pelham’s placement records of earlier decades. The following graph dramatically demonstrates the increase in Pelham students attending four-year colleges since the 1950’s based on available data.

CHART B
Placement Trends
(1958-2010)
Percentage of Pelham Graduates Attending Four (4) Year Colleges
Based Upon Seven Year Average Intervals



Note: Following Years' Data Unavailable: Pre 1958, 1963, 1974-1980, 2004 and 2006

Commentary on Four-Year College Attendance Trend Lines - Based upon available data, only about 55-60% of Pelham graduates attended four year colleges between the late 1950's and 1987. Prior to 1958, data is sketchy but what we do have shows only about 50% of graduates attended four year colleges in some years. Since 1989, the percentage increased dramatically with about 75-82% of graduates attending four year college.

Most people in Pelham might expect that 80-85% of our graduates go to four year colleges, which has been the case for the past two decades. Clearly, however, the data demonstrates that such a substantial percentage is the product of the 1990's and the past decade rather than traditionally being the case. Note: the trend line continues to be on the incline.

There are several possible explanations for the upward trends. For some time, an increasing number of high school students have been attending college nationally. This, however, has been contradicted by the recent study that the USA has fallen to a 14th ranking among industrial nations whose students attend college. Recent reports also raise concerns that minority attendance has shown recent declines. Falling attendance in some cases may relate to the current economic crisis.

Over the past two decades, Pelham has embarked on a program of academic rigor and has sought to increase college attendance. Whether a cause and effect or a sine qua non, some relationship between school policies and programs and increases in four year college attendance arguably exists.

School counselors note that current financial uncertainty may well have had a substantial impact on college choice. Recently, for example, a PMHS student who was accepted by Notre Dame chose a less well-known smaller college, that made a full scholarship offer. Anecdotally, the guidance office sees this happen more and more. Several students in recent years have joined the military, perhaps motivated in part by financial considerations. This past year a graduate attended the U.S. Military Academy. It is not uncommon over the years for PMHS graduates to attend one of the military academies or directly enlist in one of the services. In many of these cases, this may reflect a desire to serve ones country and also access college funds for the future.

Two new trends nationally are that some students are attending international colleges and universities and high school graduates in some areas are taking a year off before starting college right after high school. This latter group opts instead to travel or pursue some other alternative educational and/or community service option. Neither of these post high school paths has been popular among Pelham Memorial High School graduates. In the case of international study, one recent Pelham graduate did attend the prestigious Oxford University in England. Over the years only a handful of students have pursued a "gap year" experience immediately after high school and deferred starting college a year later than their cohort.

More College Applications Per Student - Pelham seniors on average apply to eight plus colleges. This is a challenge for school counselors who do not want to see Pelham

students hurting the chances of other Pelham graduates when they apply to schools they really do not want to attend. There is also an issue of some students who apply to many schools with no real chance of being accepted. This “shotgun” approach may result in Pelham students competing for the same schools and hurting one another’s chances. Students may be better off focusing time and effort in applying to colleges where they have at least a likely or possible chance along with one or two “reach schools” and as many “safety schools.” Diversity of application strategy should be stressed rather than “applying to where my friends are going.”

Quality of College Placements - Pelham has had a strong tradition of its top graduates attending some of the most elite colleges in the country on an annual basis. There is plenty of evidence in this report that Pelham students are attending the most competitive colleges in greater number than ever before. Still, it is noted that those colleges that are the most competitive of the top tiers in Barron’s have become even more competitive today than they were in the past. To address this trend, this report recommends specific strategies to support our students in applying to this special group of schools.

For many years now, Pelham has consistently used Barron’s Profiles of American Colleges to gauge the quality of student placements. Keeping in mind that the goal is helping students find the best fit or match, it is also expected that a substantial number should be able to attend top tier colleges if they aspire to do so and have achieved a highly competitive record.

The Barron's annual profile places all colleges into six categories as follows:

- Most Competitive
- Highly Competitive
- Very Competitive
- Competitive
- Less Competitive
- Non-Competitive

These categories do not include vocational, one-year schools that are termed “special” programs.

Using the longitudinal data available over the past two decades, we note an interesting upward placement trend for Pelham with respect to higher percentages of students who attend the highly and most competitive schools.

Throughout the 1990s, only 15% or less of graduates attended what Barron’s profiled as the most competitive tier of colleges and universities. In fact, only 5% of students, the 20 year low point, attended the most competitive colleges in 1992-93. Throughout the rest of the decade, the range was between 12-15%. This percentage range prevailed until 2000-2001. Furthermore, as recently as 2001, only 23% attended the two top tiers, most and very competitive, according to Barron’s. In 2002-03, just 31% were placed in these top two strands.

Since then, however, the trajectory has taken off. Throughout the 1990s, there was an average of 13.6% attending the most competitive colleges. In the first three years of the past decade, 2001-2003, an average of 13.3% attended the combined highly and most competitive tiers. Over the last three years of the decade, 40% have attended the highly and most competitive tiers. During the middle years of the decade, 39% attended those same top tier schools. This data is more than an aberration and suggests a positive trend line with larger numbers attending more highly competitive schools.

As a consequence of the increase in percentages of students going to the most competitive, high competitive and very competitive colleges, there was a decline in the percentage going to the merely competitive. In the first three years of the past decade, 2001-2003, 21.3% attended very competitive colleges. In the past three years, 17.6% attended that same category. The overall trend is positive with far more students attending the most and highly competitive college groupings.

It is also true that PMHS has sent and continues to send most of its students to colleges that are classified in the competitive to most competitive range. Very few students – less than 5% - attend schools termed less competitive. However, there is an increase in students who attend noncompetitive and special post secondary programs and schools. In 2001-2003, an average of just 5 students over the three year period attended such programs. In 2005-2007, that percentage increased to 11.6%. Over the past three years, the average has increased to just over 16%. In 2010, it peaked out at 18%. This is also a good trend. It reflects that increasingly all PMHS graduates leave high school with a direction and some post high school educational plan by attending a variety of vocational and job-related technical schools.

Again, we are reminded that PMHS is a comprehensive high school with diversity of socioeconomic background, family expectations, student interests and goals. It is a plus to see students at all levels developing post high school plans. In addition, 80-85% of students attend colleges ranked competitive to most competitive and, out of these, a growing number in a range of 35-45% attend the most competitive colleges in America each year on a consistent basis since 2005. This is a substantial improvement over the 20-35% placement at the two highest tiers that was typical over the prior 15 years of the last two decades. Each graduating cohort varies with respect to academic talent. Placement trend lines, nonetheless, are improving based on average.

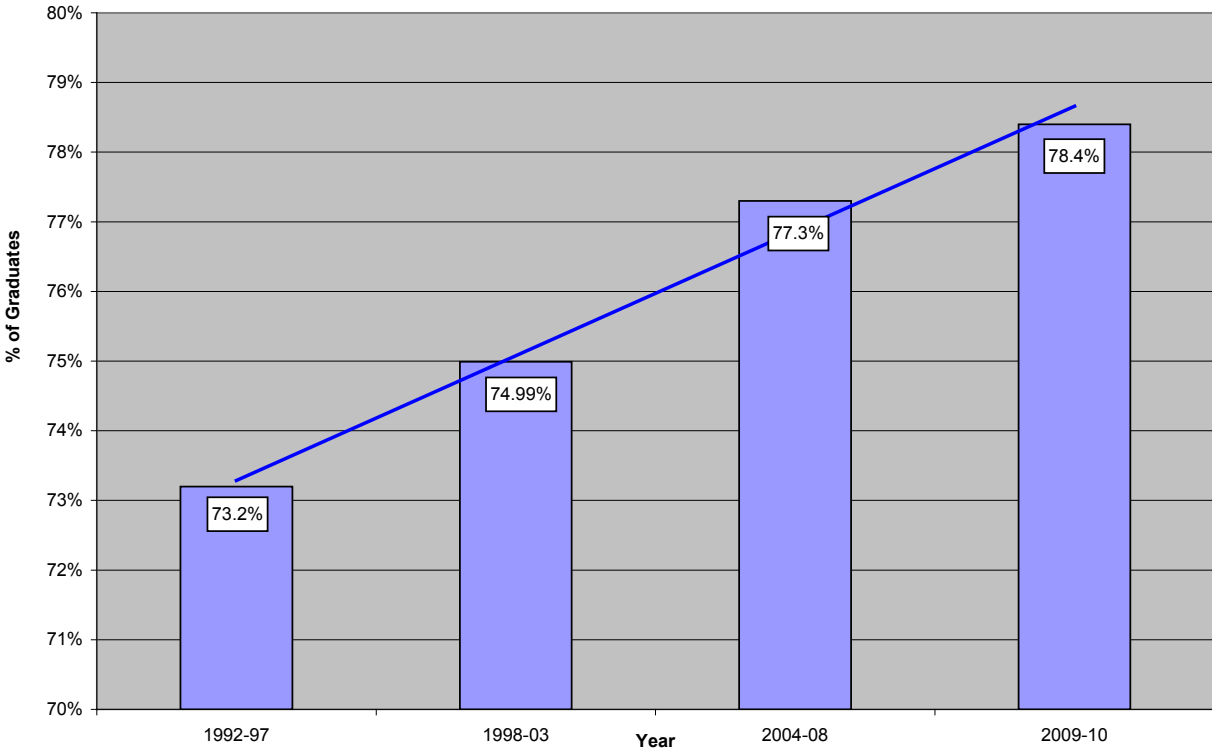
The following graphs and associated notations will make this positive trend line easier to understand. In this order:

- Chart C: Competitive, Very Competitive, Highly Competitive, Most Competitive
- Chart D: Very, Highly and Most Competitive
- Chart E: Most Competitive
- Chart F: Highly Competitive
- Chart G: Very Competitive
- Chart H: Competitive
- Chart I: Less Competitive Four Year/ Special Technical/One-Year Special/Military

CHART C

Placement Trends (1992-2010)

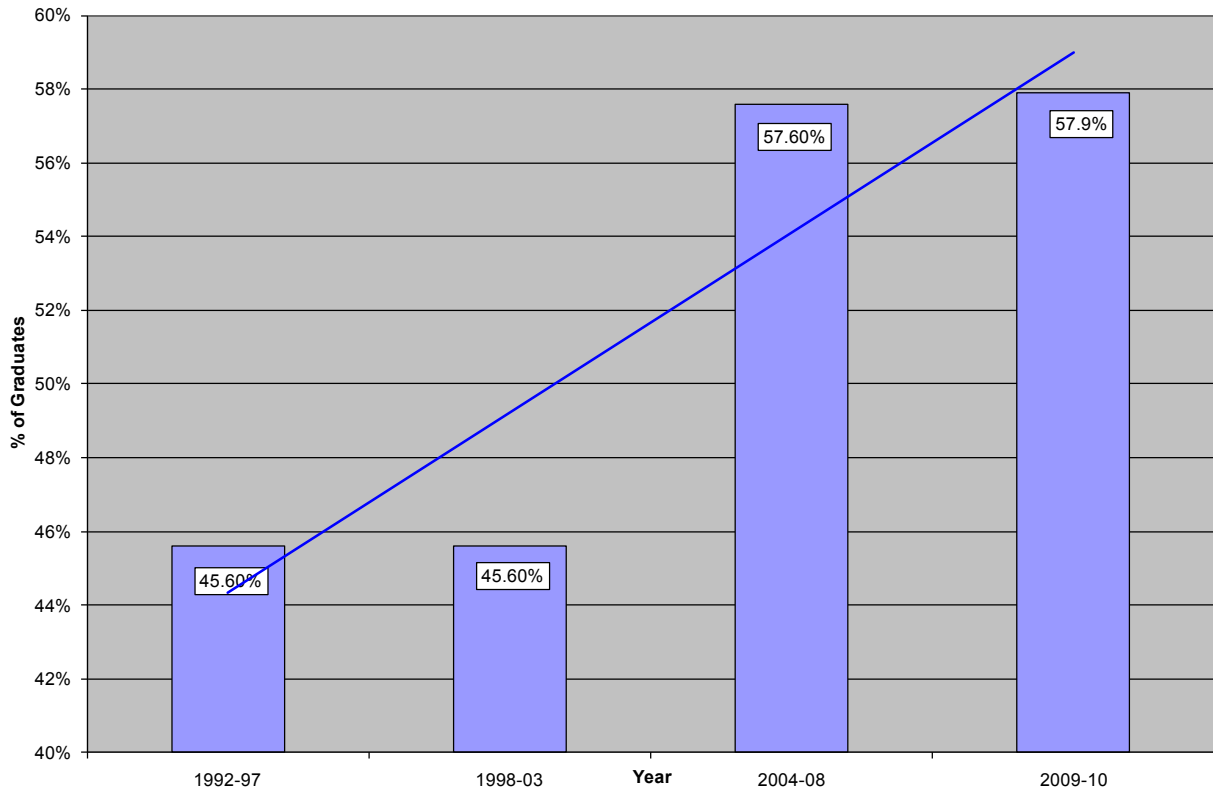
Percentage of Pelham Graduates Attending Colleges/Universities Ranging
"Competitive," "Very Competitive," "Highly Competitive," "Most Competitive"
Rated by Barron's College Guide



Note: This is a very positive trend line reflecting a steady and positive trend line over the two decade period.

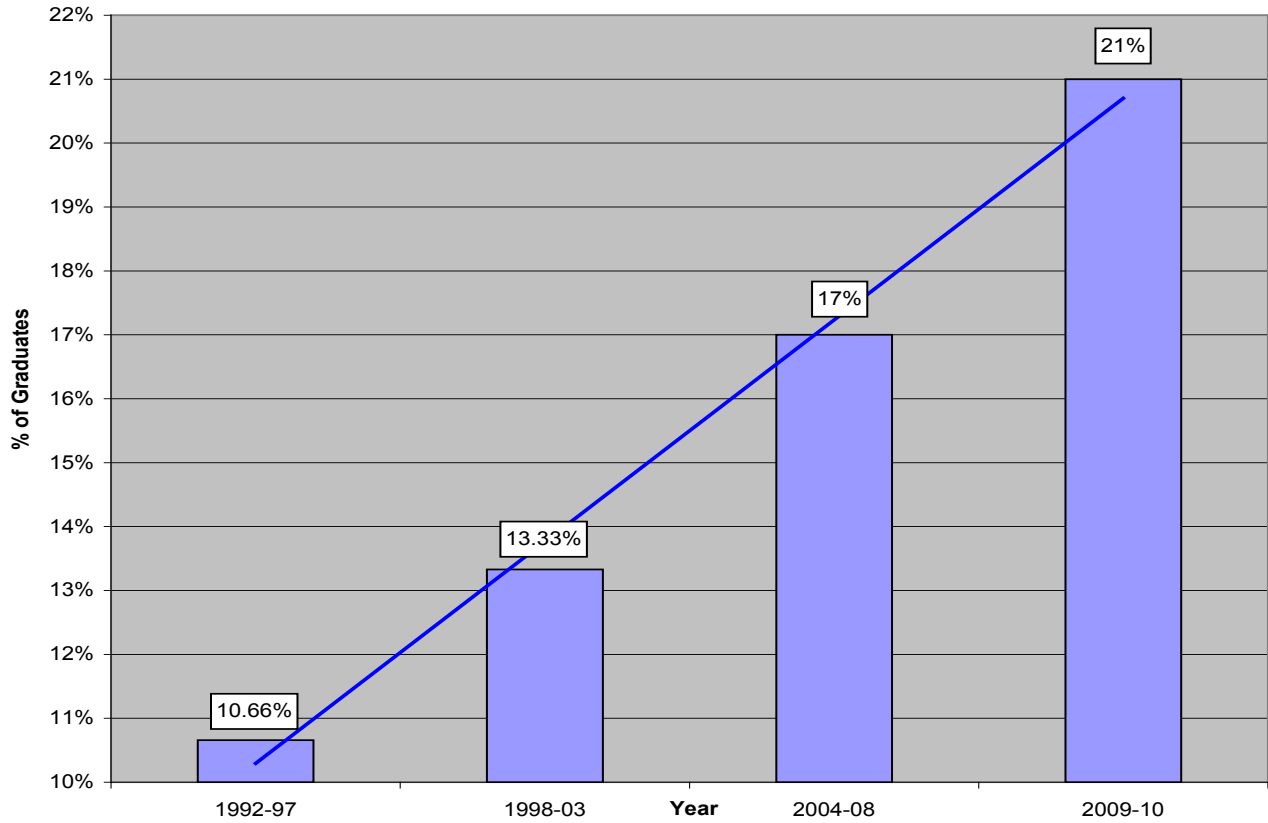
CHART D

Placement Trends (1992-2010) Percentage of Pelham Graduates Attending Combined "Very," "Highly" and "Most Competitive" Colleges/Universities Rated by Barron's College Guide



Note: Graph shows increase from 45.6% to 57.9% and continuing at that plateau in these upper placements for past six years.

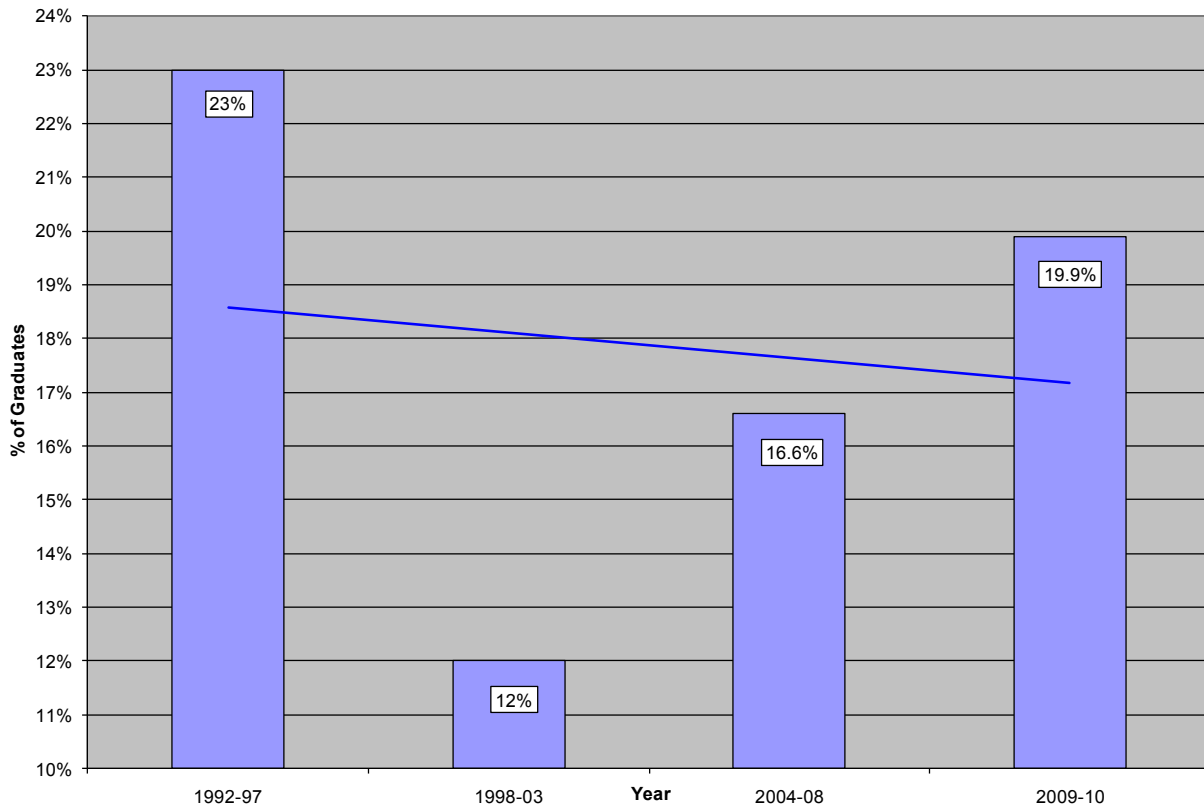
CHART E
Placement Trends
(1992-2010)
Percentage of Pelham Graduates Attending
"Most Competitive" Colleges/Universities
Rated by Barron's College Guide



Note: These colleges and universities are the most elite American post-secondary schools and have the highest admissions standards as rated by Barron's. It is noted that in the early 1990's, 10.66% of Pelham graduates attended colleges in this grouping. By the late 90's, the percentage had increased to 13%. By 2005-2008, it went up to 17.7%. Over the last two years, 2009-2010, the percent peaked at 21%. This appears to be a solid trend line. A number of school policies and practices may have contributed to this trend, such as the expanded numbers of students who now take honors and/or advanced placement courses compared with a decade or more ago when those courses were more exclusive.

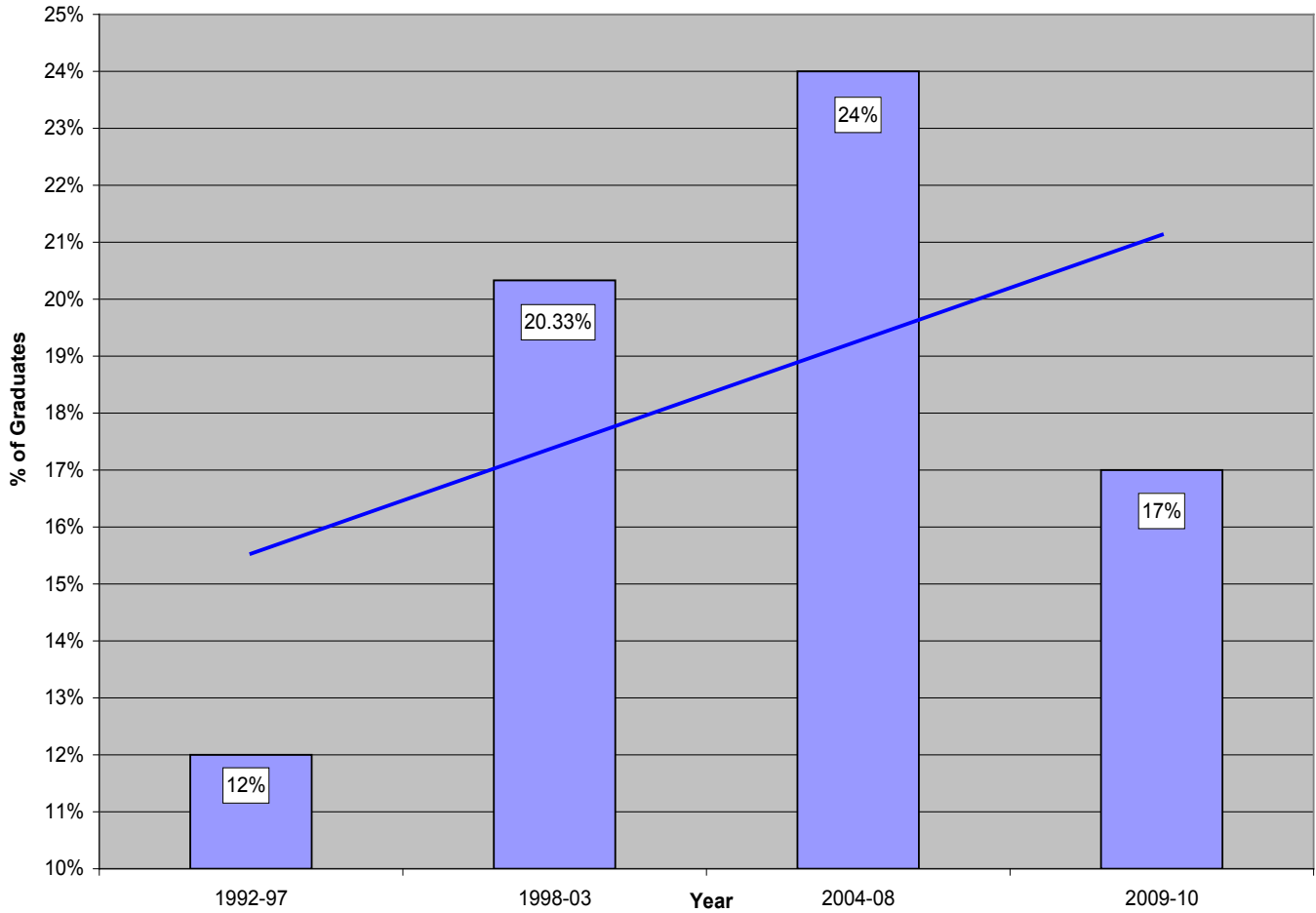
CHART F

Placement Trends (1992-2010) Percentage of Pelham Graduates Attending "Highly Competitive" Colleges/Universities Rated by Barron's College Guide



Note: This placement trend can be understood better in relation to the substantial increase of students who are now attending the "most competitive" category as reflected by an increase from 10% to 21% over the same period. Highly competitive colleges and universities, as ranked by Barron's, include some of the best known and well-regarded institutions in America. Since 1992 when placement of graduates peaked in this category at 23%, a smaller percent of Pelham grads have attended schools in this category. The percentage has increased, however, from 12% in 1998-2003, to 16.6% in 2004 and most recently in 2009-2010 has gone up to 19.9%.

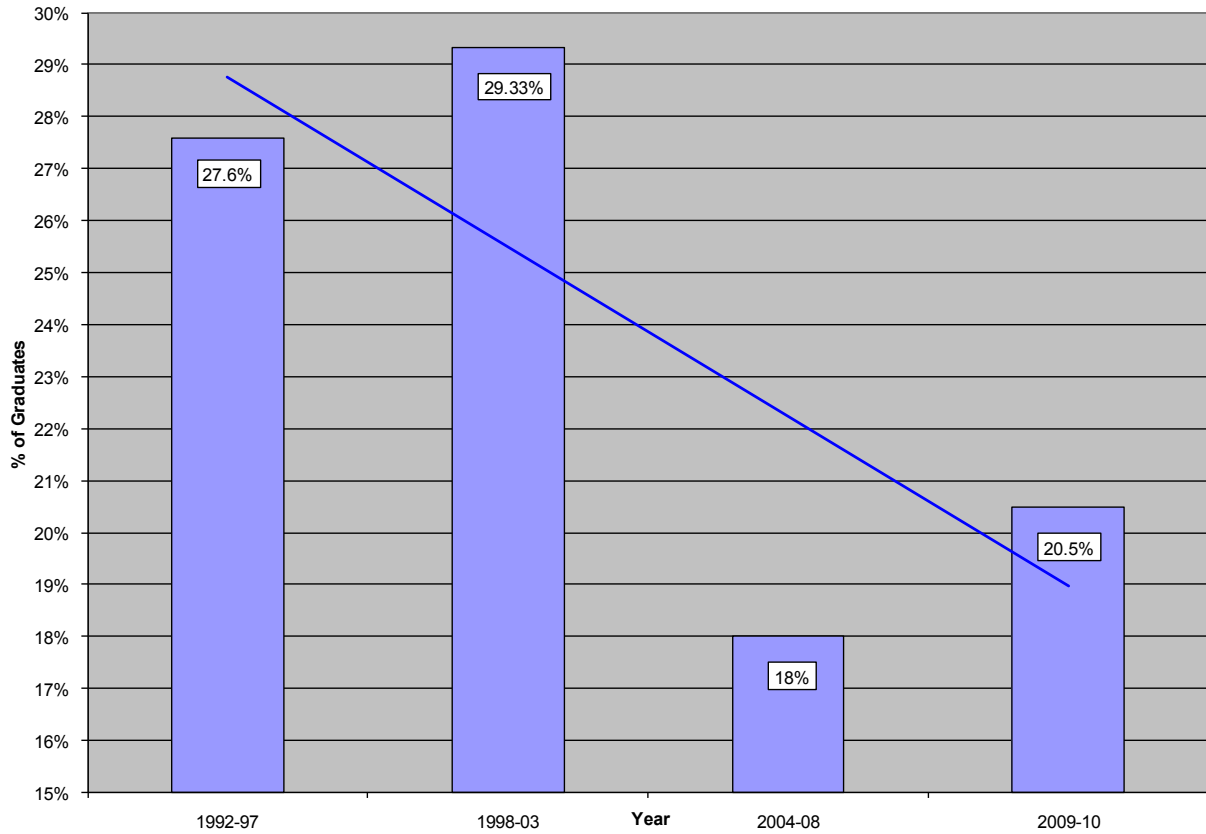
CHART G
Placement Trends
(1992-2010)
Percentage of Pelham Graduates Attending
"Very Competitive" Colleges/Universities
Rated by Barron's College Guide



Note: An increasing trend line between 1992 and 2008 is evident in this graphic. A slight decline in 2009-2010 can be accounted for by increases in graduates placed at highly and most competitive colleges and universities.

CHART H

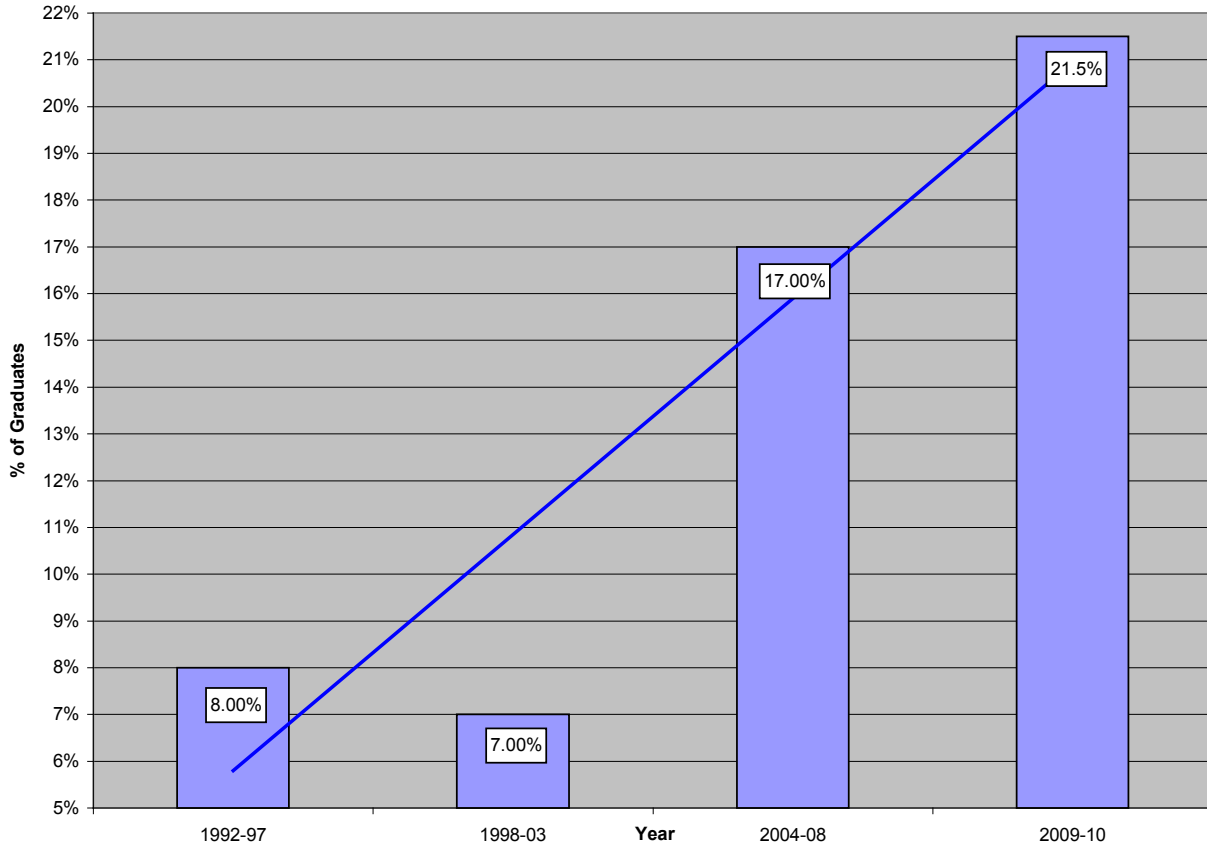
Placement Trends (1992-2010) Percentage of Pelham Graduates Attending "Competitive" Colleges/Universities Rated by Barons College Guide



Note: The decline of between 7-8% of students attending "competitive" colleges is accounted for by the 10-15% increase who now attend "most competitive," "highly competitive," or "very competitive" schools. This shift has taken place since 1992. Over the nearly two decade period, a substantial percentage of graduates have attended reputable and competitive colleges and universities in a range of 18-29%. In the last several years, this percentage has declined due to increases of students attending highly, very and most competitive colleges and universities.

CHART I

Placement Trends (1992-2010) Percent of Pelham Graduates Attending “Less Competitive” Four-Year Colleges / Special Technical Training Programs / One-Year Special Schools or Military Rated by Barron's College Guide



Note: This category reflects a variety of post secondary placements for graduates not attending more competitive four year colleges. These include diverse programs, activities and occupations that also need to be valued. They also reflect a reality that a comprehensive high school has a responsibility to find placements for all of its students. This category includes the military, technical training and other special schools. A study out of Harvard published on February 4, 2011, raises the question of, “Whether college should be for everyone?” On the other hand, employment advertisements in the current climate will sometimes stipulate an associate’s degree or even a bachelor’s is required for a security guard opening. The trend line in this graph is positive to the extent that all students are accounted for and have developed a specific post high school plan. Counselors also work to ensure that students pursue reputable programs and avoid, for example, placements in unaccredited not-for-profits, which sometimes fail to deliver on their promises. The group of students falling into this category needs as much attention and support as any other. This graphic indicates that they are all accounted for, which was not always the case two decades ago. As a result, the growth of this group reflects the requirement that all students must have a post high school plan.

V. NATIONAL PLACEMENT TRENDS

Based upon a review of recent professional literature, interviews with college admissions officers and observations of the Director of Guidance, we now look at some of the chief trends in college placement nationwide. These findings may help to explain in some cases the trends in Pelham. In other cases, we do well to be aware of these trends even when they do not apply to Pelham. In other instances, these trends may raise questions that need to be applied to Pelham's experience and plans for the future.

Based upon a report by the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (Source: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2007), the number of high school graduates peaked at 3.33 million in 2009. Total college enrollment will increase through 2019. This reflects the "baby boomlet" that has taken place in recent years, consistent with Pelham's own experience.

Simply translated, there is greater competition due to the large number of high school graduates currently and into the near future for limited openings at the most competitive and highly competitive colleges and universities. This means less competitive colleges now attract better quality applicants and become tougher to get into. The traditionally most competitive colleges become even more challenging to enter. This, of course, has implications for Pelham where a substantial number of students aspire to these highly competitive placements. Also, all students feel an impact to the extent colleges at every level enjoy an increase in applicant pool from which to select. Thus, the quality of students at all competitive levels is improving.

Despite this trend, NACAC also finds that racial/ethnic imbalance in college enrollment continues. A recent research brief finds that "particular groups, such as low income, first generation, and minority students remain under-enrolled." This concern may apply to Pelham which has a small but more than negligible low income student population reflected in eligibility for federally funded lunch. It also has a 20% minority population, inclusive of 8% African American and a growing first generation immigrant population, along with first-in-the-family generation college applicants. Are we adequately serving the needs of these students?

NACAC in its brief *Effects of the Economy on the Admissions Process, 2008-2009*, (June 2009), found that 71% of survey respondents indicated an increase in the number of students forgoing their "dream schools" in favor of more affordable options. The same report found an increase in community college attendance and that the average number of applications per student was also increasing. It will be recalled that these findings are consistent with issues at PMHS as reported by the Guidance Director and described earlier in this report.

NACAC also reports that colleges increasingly use waiting lists as part of the application process. Wait list selections last year were up 41% from 33% in previous years. These too have implications for student application strategies. This seems to be a growing trend

among colleges due to an increase in the uncertainty they face with respect to whether accepted students will attend.

The top factors in the admission decisions remain the same and continue to be grades in college prep courses, strength of curriculum, test scores, and overall GPA. This finding underscores the importance of academic counseling by school counselors in helping students gain admission to college choices. Student to school counselor ratio is another factor as it relates to quality programs, with many school counselor and guidance programs losing resources and taking cuts, while others are reporting to be over extended and resource deprived.

This is noted in a recent NACAC Report and two related briefs as they further relate to national admissions trends. It is also mentioned in the *Journal of College Admissions* (Summer 2007), “The Success of At Risk Students and the Changing Landscape of Higher Education,” which has application as well for PMHS.

State of College Admissions is a journal published by the National Association for College Admission Counselors (NACAC). In its most recent 2010 summary of admissions trends (p. 3) NACAC shares the following key findings which seem to be fairly consistent with Pelham’s experience as follows:

- Unpredictability in Acceptances
“Common threads of the admissions cycle in recent years seems to be uncertainty in the outcomes of the process and the real or perceived threat of scarcity of resources.”
- Level of Competition Increases
“The past decade has seen the number of high school graduates increase steadily to a peak of 3.33 million. . . In addition, individual students are submitting a greater number of applications – in response to real and perceived increases in competition and the increased ease of applying online – resulting in increased application volume at post secondary institutions.”
- Economic Impact
“Results of surveys indicated that many students and families were reevaluating college application plans and enrollment decisions with more weight placed on financial concerns. Secondary school counselors reported an increase in the number of students planning to attend public versus private college, two year versus four year institutions or to delay pursuit of secondary education. . . Colleges report a dramatic increase in demand for student financial aid.”
- Scant Resources
“Most secondary schools reported either frozen or decreased budgets and staff sizes, resulting in increased student to counselor ratios, particularly at public schools.”

- Continuing Application Volume
 “From 2005 through 2008, approximately three quarters of colleges reported applications had increased from previous years. . . with 65% reporting increases in 2009.”

TABLE A

**Number of High School Graduates
 with Resulting Increase in Competition for College Seats
 at Most Competitive Colleges and Universities**

	1990	2000	2010	2019
Nationally	2,600 Million	2,900 Million	3,29 Million	3,4 Million (projected)
Pelham	134	132	174	N/A

Sources: NACAC Report 2010 and Pelham Annual Guidance Reports - For Corresponding Years

Note: Increasing population of college eligible students without corresponding increases in elite college capacity has contributed to growing competition for admission into very top schools. This at will continue least through 2019.

TABLE B

**Comparison Percentage of Pelham Students
 Submitting Three or More Applications vs. National Average**

	1990	2000	2009
Nationally	61%	67%	75%
Pelham	54%	65.5%	80%
Difference (+/-) Pelham compared to National Average	-7%	-1.5%	+5%

Sources: NACAC Report 2010 and Pelham's 2009 Annual Guidance Reports

Note: Consistent with national trends, a growing number of Pelham students file at least three or more college applications. Fifty-four percent in 1990 vs. 80% in 2009.

TABLE C

**Comparison Percentage of Pelham Students
Submitting Seven or More Applications vs. National Average**

	1990	2000	2009
Nationally	9%	13%	23%
Pelham	38%	37%	69%
Difference (+/-) Pelham Compared to National Average	+29%	+24%	+46%

Sources: NACAC Report 2010 and Pelham's Annual Guidance Reports

Note: On average, Pelham students complete eight applications each year. Consistent with national trend, but much more in Pelham than the national average, a growing number of Pelham seniors file seven or more applications to college or university.

TABLE D

Student - to - Counselor Ratios Based Upon Survey Respondents in Westchester County				
	School	Population	Caseload	Difference (+/-) (compared to Pelham)
1	Gorton	1,219	325	-134
2	Haldane	311	311	-120
3	Suffern	1,515	239	-48
4	Croton-Harmon	570	235	-44
5	Mahopac	1,740	225	-34
6	White Plains	2,052	225	-34
7	Brewster	1,275	215	-24
8	Fox Lane	1,320	210	-19
9	North Salem	450	210	-19
10	Good Counsel	300	200	-9
11	Ossining	1,307	200	-9
12	Sleepy Hollow	860	200	-9
13	Somers	1,032	200	-9
14	Walter Panas	1,029	195	-4
15	Pelham Memorial	823	191	0
16	Kennedy Catholic	575	190	1
17	Lakeland	1,155	190	1
18	Port Chester	1,167	190	1
19	Eastchester	871	185	6
20	Hendrick Hudson	900	180	11
21	Maria Regina	515	180	11
22	Scarsdale	1,500	178	13
23	Mamaroneck	1,508	175	16
24	Valhalla	450	175	16
25	John Jay	1,267	174	17
26	Hastings	540	170	21
27	Harrison	1,000	168	23
28	Horace Greeley	1,256	167	24
29	Byram Hills	858	166	25
30	Blind Brook	420	165	26
31	Dobbs Ferry	n/a	165	26
32	Pleasantville	594	164	27
33	Irvington	659	160	31
34	Westlake	585	160	31
35	Rye	875	154	37
36	Tuckahoe	307	153	38
37	Briarcliff	578	150	41
38	Edgemont	917	150	41
39	Bronxville	447	140	51
40	Rye Neck	414	130	61
41	Iona Prep	742	126	65

Note: Survey shows compared with better high schools in the region, Pelham counselors have a larger ratio of student caseload to counselor. This year's graduating class of 175 will be replaced by an incoming freshman class of 230 resulting in an even larger student/counselor ration in excess of 200.

VI. RECENT COUNSELING IMPROVEMENTS AND AREAS OF COMMENDATION

This section of the report is based in part on a full day I spent with the Director of Guidance, Gene Farrell. I also reviewed various curricular materials and took part in a demonstration of the new computer program Naviance. Once again, I referenced this section to the 2004 report on the guidance program as a whole. However, for the purpose of this report, the focus is on recommendations relating to college/career planning. The program as a whole has adopted most of the recommendations from the earlier 2004 report and implemented them as follows:

A. Technology Applications – The Pelham program very effectively utilizes the Naviance software program. This is a wonderful package which is used by the students to explore college/career interests and by the school counselors as a teaching tool and source of data analysis. Pelham is at the cutting edge in making wide use of this terrific technology when compared with most other schools. Here is a summary of its many applications that were observed:

- Permits students to gather information about schools based upon formal and informal sources. They can take virtual visits, blog with students, or visit official websites.
- School counselors use Naviance in planning conferences. They have a record, for example, of how Pelham students who applied to prospective schools did in gaining acceptance as it related to record of achievement of current students who may apply by comparison.
- Naviance integrates other information on each student based on interest surveys and achievement records that are used to help find good match schools. Parents are also taught how to utilize Naviance. Career interests on college programs are cross-referenced.
- The program tracks where students apply and contributes to greater efficiency. It enables better application strategies to be developed.

B. 2004 Recommendations Implemented

- Each student now develops a four-year career plan, with the guidance of their school counselor.
- School counselors are now more active in tracking individual student progress and helping students understand the relationship of academic and post-secondary opportunities, through the use of Naviance software. This is helpful to all students, inclusive of non-college bound.

- School counselors now work more closely with faculty and supervisors in support of students having academic difficulties by various intervention and referral strategies.
- They provide more active effort in referring students to tutoring and other support services as needed.
- The department created a website and updated same.
- Pre-college planning starts earlier. New freshman seminar programs are used to begin these discussions. Career planning as it relates to college planning and some early activities are instituted.
- A major college fair was reinstated last year and will be continued annually.
- Outreach is evident in helping first generation college students, minorities, and those disadvantaged financially to plan for college and utilize all available resources.

C. Other Changes/Improvements

- Student use of technology to file applications electronically is practically universal in its application.
- Recent initiatives to incorporate special education component to work with students having disabilities (using Vocational Education Services) were implemented.
- Office professionalism upgraded with implementation of bond suite improvements and upgrades of postsecondary planning resources.
- School counselor assignment to new programs such as Bridge Academy, Foundations of Learning and Therapeutic Support have been helpful to the special needs population of students.
- Scheduled freshman seminar program and transition to high school are noted. They enable students to make their first steps in college and career planning.
- Departments meet regularly to share information about admissions process and trends.
- Relationships with college representatives/admissions officers are very strong and nurtured.
- Outreach to parents and electronic messaging of critical information is targeted. Quarterly guidance newsletters are also published.

VII. RECENT SCHOOL-WIDE PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM IMPROVEMENTS/AREAS OF COMMENDATION

There have been a number of general curriculum and program improvements beyond guidance and college advisement that have been made and have been key for students in applying to top schools during this extraordinary competitive period. Without these programs, our students would lose their competitive edge and excellent preparation. These are initiatives launched over the past decade that have contributed or will contribute to our students' preparations for college and placements at top tier schools as follows:

TABLE E

School Improvements Since 2000 **Which Have or Will Support College Placement Trends**

- Increased Student Participation in Advanced Placement Courses, SUPA Psychology and Italian and Other College Level courses. Note increase in juniors and seniors enrolled in AP's: 28% in 1990/1991; 39% in 2000/2001; 47% in 2010/2011. Sixty-two percent of seniors and 45% of juniors are currently enrolled in one or more advanced placement courses.
- Implementation of All Regents High School
- Systemic Approach to Integrating Technology School Wide
- Expansion of Support/Tutorial Services and Summer School
- More Favorable Class Size
- Hiring Practices/New Faculty in Combination with Effective Veteran Teachers
- New/Improved Teacher Evaluation Plan
- Tighter Alignment of Curriculum, Assessment, Instruction and Staff Development K-12
- Higher Expectations for all Students and Emphasis on Excellence K-12
- Curriculum Mapping and Use of Data Analysis to Improve Instruction
- More Effective Student Scheduling and Challenging Course Load Requirements
- Bridge Academy Alternative Approach for Some Students Who Were Not Exceeding in Traditional Courses
- New Inclusionary Programs for Special Needs Students
- Construction of 21st Century Classrooms and New Middle School with Middle School Philosophy
- Improvements in Student Decorum and Behavior Code
- Increased Parent Participation Through New School Programs/Forums
- New ACES Program Initiative To Enable More Students To Take Honors/Advanced Placement Courses.
- Added Co Curricular Programs To Provide More Students With Opportunities To Develop Their Talents And Shine Such As Science Olympiad, Natural History Day, Model UN, And Honor Societies In Foreign Language, Music, Science And Mathematics
- Expanded Four Year Science Research Course Open To All Students

TABLE F

Summary of Notable School System Awards/Recognition 2001-2011

- Selected Multiple Times Over the past Decade as a “Gap Closing” District by New York State
- Rated “Outperforming District” by Standard and Poors
- Received Regional Pioneer Award from BOCES for Systemic Integration of Technology in Teaching and Learning
- Recognized Numerous Times for Student Achievement in the Arts, Including the Helen Hayes Award for Best Student Performance
- Research Science Students Published in Scientific Journals and Won National Scholarship
- Various Writing Awards
- Received Tolerance Award from Regional Dignity Program
- District Rated Triple A
- Athletic Teams Won Numerous League, Regional or Sectional Titles and Appeared in State Championships. Also Won Best Sportsmanship Awards.
- Many Teachers received Recognition for Excellence
- Multiple Awards for Visual Arts
- Students Won History Medals/Competition Winners in Model UN
- Student Musical Selection for New York State Competition or State Regionals

VIII. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

This is a synopsis of some key findings based upon data, assessment of current program school-wide, college advisement curriculum, and a review of literature on national trends and issues in college planning and placement.

- Highly Competitive Period - This is a highly competitive period due to the huge number of applications and student high school graduates nationally, which is at a peak level that is projected to continue until 2019. In addition, increasing competition for placement at elite college comes from a growing number of international students.
- Impact of Fiscal Crisis - The current fiscal crisis and rising college costs is affecting application strategies and college choice decisions nationally and in Pelham.
- Pelham College Admissions Trend - Pelham students are trending well with respect to the most highly competitive tiers of colleges, graduation rates, and the high percentage of students pursuing post high school education as reflective of the schools comprehensive demographics and diversity. There has been a corresponding increase in percentage of students attending four year college. This increase has been dramatic over the past four decades!
- Finding Match - Helping to find a good match or fit for students applying to college is a priority for school counselors, requiring a balance of aspirations, record, interest, finances, and goals. It requires close cooperation involving the students, parents, and school counselors.
- Improved College Placement Programs - Many examples of commendable school counselor services are evident and the schools many supportive programs have been key to effective placement and college preparedness. Improvement in school programs correspond with improvement in student placement trends.
- Demands on School Counselors - School counselors have a very demanding and expanding set of duties. They are increasingly required to do more than college advisement which remains a priority.
- 2004 Recommendations Implemented - The 2004 guidance department report has been substantially implemented with resulting improvement in career/college programs, as evidenced by data referred to earlier in this report.
- Use of Technology - Technology in general and the Naviance program in particular, has dramatically improved college/career advisement services.
- Diversified Student Body - Minorities, first generation college students, and disadvantaged students and those with special needs all attend Pelham schools. Nationally, this group is under-represented at colleges. Programs for students with disabilities are expanding.

- Unpredictable College Admissions Process - We are currently in an unpredictable college admissions cycle – students find it increasingly difficult to gain acceptance to top schools but Pelham students continue to do well and even show improvement in placement trend lines.
- Improved College Admissions Results - A number of school improvement programs over the past decade have corresponded with an improvement in college placement trends, as documented in this report.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

While there is much to commend regarding current placement practices and the program in general at PMHS, there are always ways to improve. One of my key findings was that the college admissions process will continue to be competitive and even more challenging and expensive. In order to ensure continuing success and where possible improvement, I make the following recommendations for program consideration.

- Test Preparation - PSAT - The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) is actually a warm-up exercise or a practice test students take to prepare for the junior year SAT tests, which are so critical to college admissions. The PSAT helps students become more comfortable with test questions and formats which maximize positive performance. Some schools provide the PSAT to all students in their sophomore year and/or encourage students who have a chance to become semi-finalists – to take it then. Taking the PSAT twice, once during sophomore year and again during junior year, could help some students to perform better on the SAT. In addition, it could result in more top students qualifying for National Merit Scholarships. It is recommended that the PSAT be given during the school day for all students, as sophomores, and that this be implemented by the fall of 2011.
- SAT Test Preparation – PMHS is commended for the SAT Prep elective it provides. Since some students may not be able to schedule it to due to conflicts during the regular school year, it is recommended that a course be offered through summer school. Continue efforts to integrate some test sophistication activity for all students in the regular program. Prepare and implement counseling information to encourage students with learning styles which may benefit them to take the ACT to do so.
- SAT Preparedness – Consideration should be given to whether any adjustments could be made to the PMHS academic program (and curriculum) to better prepare students for the SAT/ACT/SAT II.
- Grading Practices – Consideration should be given to whether grading practices impact the college admissions process and whether adjustments are appropriate.
- Mission and Policy Statements – The current guidance mission statement addresses guidance services in very general terms. It is recommended that a more narrowly defined statement be developed as a supplement to specifically address college placement – philosophy and purpose. This should be done as soon as possible. It should be based on a program that meets the needs of all students.
- Early Admissions - The department should also prepare policy guidelines with respect to advisement practices on early decision to ensure consistent practice in the collective message that is shared.
- Timing of College Planning – In response to the 2004 study, guidance now begins college planning primarily in 10th grade. The excellent freshman seminar initiative

does include some reference to college and career planning. Place greater emphasis on course selection as part of college planning. It is recommended that the counseling office consider expanding the 9th grade discussion on colleges. A long-range planning program for 9th grade parents should be added that also includes a financial component. Examine starting a college component in seventh and eighth grades too. The counseling office should review the guidance calendar for parent information sessions to ensure it is designed to share planning information well in advance of when it is needed for families to know.

- Parent Conferences - The department is commended for requiring at least one school counselor/parent conference and up to as many as 3-4 as part of the college/career planning process. It is recommended that a minimum of two conferences should be required – one for the start of the process in junior year, as well as one during senior year. This is recommended in view of how high-stakes and stressful the college planning and selection process has become. The successful working triad of student, parent, and school counselor is key to a successful outcome as emphasized in the professional literature.
- Professional Development and Supervision - Admissions officers should be tapped to provide professional development. Years ago an Associate Director from Yale University provided a half-day seminar for the high school faculty on how to write a reference letter. This was enormously successful and similar programs along this model should be planned for the future. College admissions officers should be tapped to work with English teachers who help students write essays. This should be done in view of current information on what is expected. It is also recommended that the performance appraisal plan for school counselors be reviewed to determine whether it needs to be updated or remains effective to meet professional needs. A new professional evaluation form focused on school counseling skills should be developed.
- Rigor of Curriculum – Consideration should be given to whether PMHS’s rigor of curriculum impacts the college admissions process.
- Explore Integration Opportunities - The faculty as a whole and the Guidance Department already work well together in support of their shared students and the admissions/placement process responsibility. Besides the excellent model of writing references, the English faculty does a great job of helping students write their college essays. School counselors and teachers also partner to help students choose SAT II tests. Are there other areas that could be developed? Opportunities should be explored both with special faculty and core subject area staff (art portfolio, coaches, athletes, etc.). Opportunities should be explored to gain faculty support and expand partnerships with counselors in student placement.
- Application Strategy - The problem of some students filing excessive applications to ring up acceptances and/or in a misguided effort that more-is-better has been identified earlier. The counseling office is commended for its educational efforts to

discourage this shotgun approach. It is recommended that efforts to expose the folly of this practice be continued and even stepped up in the context of the current highly competitive atmosphere. Fewer and more focused applications are better for all students. It is understood that the practice will not be fully eliminated due to the anxiety of the time but students should be reminded.

- Students with Special Needs and Interests - Some students have special needs that may require unique approaches and sensibilities on the part of the college/career advisor. Students with disabilities or who require accommodations, first generation college students, minorities, and economically disadvantaged or even gifted students who are candidates to elite colleges – may require special attention and outreach as the same size will not fit at all. As a result of Pelham’s diverse student population, some of these groups and/or individuals may require special outreach and educational efforts beyond current practice. Supplementary workshops or planning sessions might be aimed at these various groups. Focus would be on disabled students who will need supportive programs at college. An EOP modeled program for minority students would be important. Consider special sessions for students who wish to apply to elite colleges. Financial strategies would help disadvantaged students realize their post high school dreams. Targeted in this way, in addition to current efforts, these students could benefit. These themes could also become part of a college/career course currently under consideration. They would be critical curriculum components. A one-size college planning/placement program does not fit all.
- Public Information – Community Awareness – In preparing this report and learning about the current guidance program, I have been very impressed by the quality of college and career advisement services. Yet, I am aware that the school and larger community as a whole may not always know about all the good work that goes on. As a result, I urge the director and school counselors to undertake a stepped up information campaign. Utilize new media and old. Make greater use of the PMHS television studio. Embark on a speaking campaign to K-12 parents and community organizations. Continue expanded use of new media like targeted email. Develop an organized plan of sharing program information. Also, make the public aware of the positive placement trends revealed in this report. The guidance profile should be updated. Two different profiles should be used - one for colleges and the other for public information purposes.
- Engagement of Community Organizations and Resources – PMHS annually sponsors a model career day program in partnership with the Pelham Civic Association. School counselors continue to work with other community organizations to sponsor the local scholarship program. They collaborate with Rotary in selecting “Scholars of the Month.” These in combination with utilizing alumni are exemplary practices. I recommend not only that these be continued, but that some expansion of school/community partnerships should be explored. There is, for example, a group in town that is interested in cosponsoring a “mentoring program.” Perhaps more alumni could be recruited and utilized as part of the college admissions process through being tapped for references, workshops, and alma mater information in greater

numbers? Also, a variation of the successful sophomore career day could also be provided in middle school.

- How Are We Doing? – Besides stepping up efforts to provide more public information on guidance services, I recommend efforts such as focus groups or surveys be used to elicit school and community feedback specifically on how guidance in general and college/career advisement in particular can hope to improve. In addition, I recommend the program invite and encourage students and parents to express concerns or complaints and a protocol to follow to express those views when they have problems. A culture that embraces feedback is recommended.
- Adoption of Successful Models – Look to identify successful practices in other schools that might be candidates for adoption by PMHS. One such model used at Rye High is “Managing Your Future.” I highly recommend and encourage guidance to further explore this program and develop Pelham’s own model of the Rye program.
- Best Practices – The counseling office should formalize its continuing efforts to liaison with other districts to determine best practices.
- College Visits – The counseling office should consider formalizing its college visit program for counselors and increasing its college visits.
- Guidance Resources Increase – Please recall the section of this report on the “Work of the School Counselor” along with the number of duties added and the growing stress of the college admission role. It is in this context that the district may begin to look at the possibility of measuring school counselor full time equivalent (FTE). According to the Contract Analysis Data, PMHS school counselors have case loads approaching 190 students. Many of the better schools in Westchester County enjoy ratios of 160-170. If a counselor can be added, I urge an expert in college placement be recruited.
- Guidance Reorganization – Every school counselor and the director being responsible for every aspect of the curriculum and every grade level 9-12 on a fractional basis may not be the most efficient organizational model. It can unintentionally promote a “Jack of all trades, master of none” culture or a team of juggling multi-taskers. There is a precedent in Pelham for dividing programs other ways. Some decades ago, for example, the department had a school counselor assigned to just 9th grade. This was her passion and interest and it worked well at the time. More recently, a school counselor has been assigned to be a liaison with the Bridge Academy. Reorganization of the department could yield a better and more efficient dynamic while attempting to maximize school counselor talent and interest. I recommend that some discussion and consideration be seriously given to such concept of reorganizational change.

- General Education Program – The counselors should also be commended for their close work with academic disciplines and faculty to support student success. In turn, the college placement program has been supported by the academic program of studies which prepares students so well. I applaud the emphasis in promoting a challenging schedule for each student. The expansion of advanced placement courses and the addition of research science and other college level courses, such as SUPA, have been key in preparing students to succeed on the college level and for them to be competitive applicants to the best college and university. The recent summer school program called ACES is very promising. I would recommend other enrichment programs be added to summer school. I would hope to see more students through ACES qualify for honors placement. In addition, the creation of a services-learning requirement would enhance student applications. Making National Honor Society more inclusive by adjusting the local grade point average requirements would also help many students. Their college applications would be enhanced if they showed national honor selection. The creation of honor societies in various subjects in recent years has been very positive. These include social studies, foreign language, music, science, and mathematics. Every student achieving at mastery level should have an opportunity to take honors level, college level or advanced placement courses. The current move toward a more unified or consistent grading approach is needed so Pelham students will not suffer in comparison with students from other schools.
- Encourage Diversity of Applications - An example was given in recent years that eight Pelham students applied to a small private New York State College with an excellent reputation at the same time no students applied to a comparable, small New York State private college. In this and other examples, an application strategy encouraging students not to apply in competition with one another should be advised and emphasized. There is a trend for students to flock toward so-called “hot schools” or apply simply because that is where classmates or friends are going.
- College Counselor Visits - Regarding college visits, which college counselors should take every year, it is also encouraged that counselors should visit a greater variety of schools including those that may be overlooked by PMHS students. This would also promote more diverse application strategies.
- Elite College Applicants - Due to the growing competition resulting from expanding demographics and international student applications vying for limited spaces, it has become even more difficult for students to gain acceptance to the country’s most elite colleges such as Ivy League, Little Three, etc. It is recommended that students be advised as to extraordinary effort that is needed in the context of this most competitive group of schools. Students need to know, for example, that these schools would look favorably on summer activity such as internships, advanced course work, travel, significant community service projects and the like. Alumni contacts should be developed. School year schedules need to be extremely demanding. These and other special efforts will be required beyond the usual expectation of outstanding transcripts, excellent test scores, a killer essay and exceptional recommendations. This is not aimed at discouraging students as much as it is to challenge them and

make them aware of what is expected. Intensive counseling support will also be required to gain acceptance into the most elite level of colleges and universities. Relationships and appropriate counselor advocacy with admissions officers would also be key.

- Develop Strategic Plan - To ensure the key report recommendations are implemented, it is further emphasized that the department develop a strategic work plan and report periodically on the progress that is being made. The high school principal and Director of Guidance will need to stay involved to ensure progress in this area.
- Future Research - To further assist the department to improve placement practices, consideration should be given to self-evaluation efforts such as, but not limited to, the following research:
 - Placement of First Generation Students
 - Placement of Special Needs Students
 - Comparison Of Placement Of Pelham Students Attending Private Schools v. PMHS
 - Parent Feedback Surveys
 - Periodic Surveys Of Graduating Seniors With Respect To New Policies And Practices Recommended By This Report As They Are Put Into Place

X. CONCLUSION

Over the period of the past four to five decades, there is dramatic and conclusive data that demonstrates that anywhere from a 30 to 35% increase of Pelham's graduating seniors attend a four-year college. Especially within the period of the past two decades, there has been a significant increase of students attending the top ranks of colleges and universities based on available data from Barron's and annual Pelham High School reports on file. These significant trends are consistent with both national and regional trends and also correspond with curriculum and program improvements at Pelham as identified in this report.

In recent years, especially since the 2004 guidance report, PMHS counseling services have improved in a number of ways. Most notably, PMHS services are on the leading edge of using technology to assist college choice and placement activities. A number of other improvements have also been amply identified in this report.

All of this has come about during a turbulent period of change in college planning and placement. The number of American high school graduates has been increasing for over a decade and will continue to do so through at least 2019. Pelham High is a good example of this trend as after a decade of growth, it will graduate 175 seniors in 2011 and take in 230 freshmen next year. Top colleges and universities also continue to attract international students, adding to the level of competitiveness at the very best schools which are not adding places for new students.

Still, an increasing number of Pelham students are attending schools ranked in the top tiers of American colleges and universities. This report has, however, emphasized diversity of socioeconomic status, student interest, talent and parental education as factors that enrich Pelham's school community in contrast to many other Westchester school districts that are completely uniform in demographic composition.

Consequently, some greater diversity of placement is evident in Pelham than elsewhere. While many of our students do attend the most elite colleges, others enter the job market, join the military or attend community college. The test of effective college placement in Pelham is to ensure that all students are well matched with respect to their personal goals and abilities and their program placements.

Besides increasingly competitive and changing demographics, the current college placement cycle has been made uncertain by a variety of factors. These include the economy which has been reflected in student application strategies. There has also been an increase in first generation college students in Pelham. Students with special needs, disadvantaged background, and even those who have top grades, all face a more challenging path to navigate the changing currents of college admissions' policies, financial requirements and application process.

XI. IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

To ensure that Pelham students are provided all the support they need going forward to remain competitive in terms of post high school placement, a number of improvements in school and counseling programs have been recommended, summarized as follows:

- A. Testing - Administer PSATs in tenth grade to all students. Advise that some students may benefit by taking ACTs. Offer SAT prep in summer school and integrate test skills throughout curriculum.
- B. Mission/Policy Updates - Counseling department will update its post high-school planning/placement mission to reflect changing times and develop a cogent policy with respect to early decision advisement.
- C. Post High School Planning Timeline - Redesign post high school planning to begin even earlier as part of secondary curriculum, ensuring that families get information they need well in advance of when it is needed.
- D. School/Community Awareness/Parent Involvement - Increase minimum parent conferences from one to two in junior/senior year. Expand public information efforts. Update guidance profile. Prepare one for colleges and another for public information purposes.
- E. Professional Development - Expand use of college admissions to work with staff and update skills such as how to help students write application letters. Work with academic faculty in ways in which they can assist application process - developing art portfolio, SAT II advice and other . . . Continue to support counselor college visits on rotating basis.
- F. Diversify Application Strategies - Counselors to encourage and point out need to diversify applications so that cases of PMHS students applying to one school while neglecting other good schools do not continue. Ensure applications are more targeted and thoughtful v. scattergun approach sometimes applied, when too many applications are filed without a strategic plan by applicants.
- G. Special Interest/Needs Curricula - Develop new approaches or outreach to ensure students who have special needs or interests such as identified students and first generation college students. Those seeking placement in the most elite colleges, racial or ethnic minorities, etc. are given the special information and supports they need.
- H. Community Resources - Building on a strong Pelham tradition of community support such as the Pelham Civics' Career Day or Rotary Scholarship Program, identify and engage additional support where needed. Examples to include updating list of Pelham alumni who interview, present information or advocate for

PMHS students with respect to their alma maters and develop a community-based mentoring program for neediest students.

- I. Sustain Culture of Improvement - Make regular use of focus groups, surveys and other instruments to elicit evaluations of placement service “customers” such as graduating seniors and their parents on a regular basis. Incorporate constructive criticism or suggestions to improve program and practices.
- J. Adopt Successful, Rye High School Model - In visiting other schools this past year, counselors were especially impressed by the college planning program observed at Rye High School. It is highly recommended that the Rye curriculum be used as a model for Pelham to adopt, adjusting it as needed to fit its own special needs and school culture.
- K. Guidance Resources - To accomplish the various recommendations in this report, it is recommended that a minimum of a one counselor increase be adopted for 2011-2012. In addition, the counselors be reorganized so that one counselor be assigned to the ninth grade, permitting the remaining counselors and added staff members to spend more time and focus on the college placement process, inclusive of the added activities recommended in this report.
- L. Academic Improvement/National Honor - A number of program and instructional improvements were identified in this report over the past ten years that helped to support corresponding positive college placement trends. These need to be sustained notwithstanding current fiscal constraints. It is also recommended that the National Honor Society Board lower the required GPA for student entrance. This would better help our students compete against students from other schools with lower GPA requirement when applying to highly competitive schools. In the past, Pelham had a lower average requirement. The current movement toward a unified approach to grading at PMHS is also important in this regard.

XII. FINAL SUMMARY

More than seven years ago, in February 2004, a comprehensive report was presented with an extensive list of recommendations to help the guidance program improve. These many years later, I am happy to report that most all of those prior recommendations have been fully implemented. Many examples of excellent practice have been pointed out. Still, my findings have also shown that college placement is a very competitive and expensive proposition that requires continuing effort to change and improve to stay on the cutting edge. The process is high stakes and stressful for both students and their parents.

PMHS Guidance has moved in a very positive direction. It is state-of-the-art in terms of its use of technology and facilities. The program works very closely with the faculty and staff of the high school. The school counselors clearly care about their student clients and benefit, as do the students, from the strong educational climate and academic program at PMHS. According to most measures, placement trends are all headed in a very positive direction. Pelham has improved significantly in recent decades as an academic institution.

Still, just as was the case several years ago, the placement program can not afford to sit still. Hopefully, this report has made some recommendations that will help to meet future challenges and assist school counselors in staying ahead of the curve in these changing and extremely competitive times. The recommendations that are adopted should become part of a strategic plan to help provide a blueprint for improvement over the next several years. That is how the 2004 plan was successfully used. Best wishes for the continuing success and improvement of this critical college post secondary planning and application program!

XIII. INFORMATION SOURCES/OTHER REFERENCES

- A. School Counseling Services and Activities - 2004 Dahir Report
- B. Guidance Director Job Description
- C. Guidance Activities (6-12)
- D. Guidance Calendar (10/11)
- E. Placement Patterns of PMHS Graduates 2001-2010
- F. Barron's College Ratings 1992-2011
- G. National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC Report)
- H. NACAC Report on Effects of the Economy on the Admissions Process, 2008-2009-2010
- I. The Changing Landscape of Higher Education: College Admissions in Context, NACAC, 2006
- J. Understanding Pre-College Variable and the Success of At-Risk Students, Journal of College Admission, Summer 2007
- K. The Future of College Admissions Article, NACAC
- L. Annual Placement Reports Since 1950's to Present
- M. Various Survey Data
- N. Counselor Visitation Materials
- O. Interview Materials

XIV. ATTACHMENTS

- A. School Counseling Services
- B. College Visits
- C. Typical School Profile
- D. Guidance Calendar 10/11
- E. Director Job Description
- F. List of Bridge Academy Placements
- G. Futuristic Research Guidance Ratings
- H. Methodology
- I. Barron's College Admissions Selector

A. SCHOOL COUNSELING SERVICES

- Individual and group counseling
- Crisis intervention
- Consultation with administration, faculty, parents, and community-based professionals
- Weekly PPS team meetings participation in Child Study Team meeting
- 504 case management
- Organizing and participating in parent/teacher/student conferences
- Collaborating and teaming with faculty and community on academic, career and personal-social issues
- Delivering a comprehensive approach to pre-college counseling and guidance
- Classroom guidance
- Managing academic intervention services
- Articulation with Southern Westchester BOCES

B. COLLEGE VISITS

PMHS Guidance Department Recent College Visits (Past four years):

American University
Barnard
Bates
Binghamton
Boston College
Boston University
Bowdin
Brown
Bryant
California Polytechnic
Catholic University
Claremont Mc Kenna
Colby
Colgate
Columbia
Denison
Dominican College
Fordham University
Farleigh Dickinson
Fairfield
Hamilton
Harvard
Harvey Mudd College
Hartford
Hofstra
Johnson & Whales
Keane
Kenyon
Kings College
Lehigh
Manhattanville College
Muhlenberg
New England Institute of Technology
The New School
Newhaven
Lafayette
Loyola Los Angeles
Oberlin
Ohio Wesleyan
Pace
Philadelphia University

Pitzer
Princeton
Pomona College
Providence College
Quinnipiac
Rhode Island College
Rhode Island School of Design
RPI
Salve Regina
Sarah Lawrence
Skidmore
Scranton
St. Thomas Aquinas College
Susquehanna
University of Southern California
University of California Irvine
University of California Los Angeles
University of Rhode Island
Ursinus
University of Virginia
University of California - Berkley
University of California – Santa Barbara
Rutgers
SUNY New Paltz
SUNY Old Westbury
Syracuse
West Point
Westchester Community College
Wittenberg
William Patterson
Yale

Breakfasts/Informational sessions:

Colorado College – Claremont – Macalester- Haverford
Sister Colleges
Colleges that change lives
Duke – Yale – Harvard – Stanford - Princeton
Hopkins
Public Ivies
Breakfast with the president – Brandeis
Rugg’s Seminar

C. TYPICAL SCHOOL PROFILE

COMPONENTS OF A TYPICAL SCHOOL PROFILE

The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) publishes *Guidelines for Designing a School Profile* (\$5 for members) that includes numerous examples of school profiles. Here are the components of a school profile as outlined in that guide.

1. **School and Community Facts**
 - 1.1 Name, address and telephone number of school
 - 1.2 Type of school (public, private boarding, etc.)
 - 1.3 Grades or school years included
 - 1.4 Total enrollment and size of 12th grade (if private, give criteria for admission)
 - 1.5 Six-digit College Board and/or ACT code number
 - 1.6 Accreditation or license
 - 1.7 Pattern of the school year (semester, trimester, quarter, etc.)
 - 1.8 Brief description of the school community
 - 1.9 Web address
 - 1.10 Directions to school
 - 1.11 Visitation policies
2. **The Staff**
 - 2.1 Name of principal/headmaster
 - 2.2 Name of the director of guidance
 - 2.3 Names of counselors (area of responsibility, if applicable)
 - 2.4 Appropriate phone and fax numbers and e-mail addresses
3. **Marking and Related Procedures**
 - 3.1 The marking/grading system
 - 3.2 Method of computing GPA and class rank (if computed)
 - 3.3 Grade weighting policy, if employed
 - 3.4 Policy on reporting class rank to colleges
 - 3.5 Graduating requirements
 - 3.6 Exceptions, if any, that may be made to these procedures – e.g., special education students, ESL, not in rank
4. **Recent College Admissions Test Scores**

Tables should show in summary:

 - 4.1 Percent of students taking admission tests
 - 4.2 Score bands reflecting middle range of scores on the tests mentioned in 4.1
5. **Further Schooling of Graduates**

This can be adequately presented by a table showing the percent of graduates in the last two or three years who have enrolled in various types of postsecondary educational institutions.
6. **Special Curriculum Features**
 - 6.1 Honors course, AP offerings, college study, etc., and coding used to identify level of difficulty
 - 6.2 Independent and off-campus study
 - 6.3 Other special features of the curriculum
7. **Other Information about the Curriculum**
 - 7.1 Complete program of studies with credit values, or
 - 7.2 Courses grouped by subject designations, or
 - 7.3 Unusual characteristics of particular instructional areas or individual courses
 - 7.4 Interpretation of computerized abbreviations
 - 7.5 Special recognition of school or programs

D. GUIDANCE CALENDAR 2010 – 2011

GUIDANCE CALENDAR 10/11

****Important Dates/Tasks****

July/August

- Post grades to transcript
- Summer School Registration
- Modify and Adjust Student Schedules
- Prepare & Mail Final Transcripts to Colleges & NCAA
- Submit Clearance for NCAA Courses
- Update Four Year Plans/Credit Checks
- Master Schedule/ Roster Maintenance
- Study Halls Loaded
- Summer School Grades in and adjust student schedules for failures
- ELA/Math Scores received – AIS placement
- Lab scores received ELL Placement
- IEP's Reviewed and updated
- Graduation & State Reporting
- File Maintenance - Incoming Frosh & Outgoing Seniors
- National Merit Semi Finalist notification
- Names to principal of students not promoted due to credits
- Start School Profile Update
- Student Schedules Printed and Mailed
- Summer Mailing Updated and Mailed (Transcripts to seniors)
- SSD Rosters submitted to College Board

September

- 9/2 Freshman Orientation
- 9/6 Labor Day
- 9/11 ACT Exam
- 9/13 Opening of School
- 9/13 PSAT/Senior Class Meeting Memo Out
- 9/13-15 ACT Administration for extended time testers (submit reports)
- 9/20 Guidance Fall Newsletter Prepared
- 9/22 PSAT Assembly
- 9/22 Reminder Letter out –College Night, A. Payntor (Dickinson College)
- 9/23 Senior Class college presentation (auditorium)
- 9/24 Career Planning meeting
- 9/24 Last Day to Add Classes
- 9/24 Senior Status Letters
- 9/29 PSAT \$ due
- 9/29 First day of Pelham 101 (Session 1)
- 9/30 Absent BOCES students dropped

October

Ongoing Process College Applications

10/2	Rededication @ Homecoming (Saturday)
10/4	ASVAB Letter to go out – Reminder for test
10/4	Begin Budget
10/5	Canvas Departments for Course Catalog Revisions (Due 10/25)
10/10	SAT Administration
10/11	Columbus Day
10/12	SAT Extended Testers (submit reports)
10/13	Parent coffee 6:30 pm / 7:00 Dickenson College Speaker
10/16	PSAT Administration
10/18	PSAT packaged and submitted
10/21	7:00 Senior Parent Transition (6:30 parent coffee)
10/23	ACT Administered
10/25	ACT Extended tester window begins (submit reports)
10/25	Curriculum Handbook Revisions Due Back from Dept. Chairpersons
10/26	1ST semester courses cannot be dropped

November

Ongoing Process College Applications

11/1	Update Course Catalogue
11/4	7:00 PMHS/Eastchester HS College Fair
11/6	SAT Administration
11/8	SSD Extended testers (reports submitted)
11/8	FAFSA Materials Ordered
11/11	Veterans Day
11/12	First Quarter Ends
11/15	Project success begins w/Pelham Guidance and student assistance
11/23	ASVAB – Administer test
11/23	Financial Aid Letter out to Parents grades 11, 12 (Dec. 15)
11/24	Career planning
11/25 -11/26	Thanksgiving

December

Ongoing Process College Applications

Ongoing Process Scholarship Applications

12/1	All January 1 deadline colleges due
12/2	Last day to drop full year classes
12/3	Preparation of Scheduling Materials (printed)
12/4	SAT exam
12/6	SSD Extended testers (reports completed)
12/6	Begin planning for post secondary planning night
12/7	Guidance Newsletter out
12/11	ACT Exam
12/13	ACT Extended time tester window opens (reports completed)
12/13	ASVAB Results/Scores
12/15	PSAT Results in
12/15	Financial Aid Workshop for Senior Parents 7:00 PM Auditorium
12/16	Junior planning handbook revisions
12/24	School Closed – Holiday recess

January

Ongoing Process College Applications

Ongoing Process Scholarship Applications

1/3	Junior planning Conferences Begin
1/4	Scheduling begins: Course catalogues distributed in classes
1/5	Middle Guidance meeting fresh course offering handout for 8 th grader
1/7	8th grade planning (aces program, drop policy, scheduling process)
1/10	VESID letter out
1/10	Begin AP Letters – fees\$
1/12	7:00 AP Night
1/12	Infinite Campus rollover
1/13	Courses mass loaded
1/17	MLK Day no school
1/19 – 1/21	8 th grade students scheduled for electives
1/19	Print out second semester schedules
1/20	Hand out Regents & RCT notices
1/20-21?	Counselors visit freshman seminar
1/22	SAT
1/24	SAT testers –extended time
1/24	BOCES Class presentations
1/25	AP Letters out
1/25-28	Regents/midterm exams
1/28	Second quarter ends
1/28	Teacher Check out begins – semester courses

February

Ongoing Process College Applications
Ongoing Process Scholarship Applications
Ongoing Career Day Planning

2/4 Grades Due
2/7 All course recommendations due
2/8 Department supervisors/coordinators review recommendations
2/10 Counselors call down students from classrooms (Freshman Seminar)
2/11 AP \$ due
2/11 Last day to add a 2nd semester course
2/12 Mid year grades out to colleges
2/12 ACT Exam
2/14 ACT exam extended time testers window open
2/15 BOCES Bus Visit
2/16 Post-secondary planning night
2/21-25 Winter recess

March

Annual Reviews

***SSD/ College Board Applications**

Ongoing Process Scholarship Applications
Ongoing Career Day Planning

3/3 Scheduling complete tally's reviewed & compared to past 2 years
3/7 Scholarships mailed out to seniors
3/8 SAT II Information letter out
3/10 AP test orders
3/12 SAT
3/14 SAT extended time testers
3/15 Begin Master schedule
3/16 Newsletter # 3 Out
3/21 Career Day class visits (cluster choices)
3/22 Naviance email blast "Do what you are inventory"
3/14 Mail out schedule of Career Day
3/30 7:00 - Sophomore College Night J. Holzmann, Fordham University
(6:30 parent coffee)

April

- *Annual Reviews/SSD Collegeboard Applications***
- Ongoing Process Scholarship Applications**
- Ongoing Career Day Planning**
- 4/1 End of 3rd Quarter
- 4/1 AP proctor hiring/training/room organization
- 4/2 Newsletter #4
- 4/9 ACT
- 4/11 ACT Administered for extended testers
- 4/12 Regents & RCT numbers for June Exams
- ??Orientation in Honors Classes on Benefits of June Subject Tests
- 4/12 Career Day
- 4/13 Scholarship packets Due
- 4/18 -25 Spring Break
- 4/28 Canvas Colleges reps for College fair 2011/12 college fair

May

- *Annual Reviews/SSD Collegeboard Applications***
- Ongoing Process Scholarship Applications**
- 5/2-5/11 AP exam administration
- 5/7 SAT
- 5/9 SAT Extended time testers
- 5/10 Final course schedule conflicts completed
- 5/13-16 A.P. Exams and Materials Packaged and Mailed
- 5/17 Student Courses schedules Mailed Home
- 5/18 "Seniors in Danger" letters mailed home
- 5/19 WCC Instant Admits
- 5/30 Memorial Day

June

- 6/1 Memo out for teacher check out procedure
- 6/4 SAT I + II
- 6/6 SAT extended time testers
- 6/11 ACT
- 6/13 ACT extended time testers
- 6/15-22 Canvas Seniors for Final/Post High School Plans
- End of Year report

- 6/24 Last day of School
- Prepare Summer School Materials
- Senior in Danger?

E. DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

PELHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
PELHAM, NEW YORK

JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION TITLE: Director of Guidance Services and Programs

SUPERVISES: Guidance Counselors 6-12
Clerical Guidance Staff
Health Professionals (Nurses)

DIRECTOR OF GUIDANCE & COUNSELING SERVICES

- I. Required Qualifications
 - 1. Shall qualify for New York State Guidance Certification, 6-12
 - 2. Shall qualify for New York State School Administrator Certification (SDA)
 - 3. Shall have successful counseling experience and/or program leadership experience.

- II. Desirable Qualifications
 - A. Has a broad range of educational experience with a successful record of counseling and guidance program management.
 - B. Has strong college and career placement skills and the ability to match students with appropriate placements based upon their needs and abilities.
 - C. Has a clear understanding of state and local graduation requirements.
 - D. Has the ability to communicate in writing and verbally with parents, pupil personnel staff, and students.
 - E. Has knowledge and ability to utilize technology for scheduling, record keeping, student data management and guidance information systems.

- F. Has experience with program budget management.
- G. Has knowledge in the areas of pupil personnel services and community social agencies.
- H. Has knowledge and understanding of contemporary social issues and problems facing students and will be able to develop programs to help students address these issues.
- I. Has ability to evaluate program and staff. Plans staff development to improve guidance services.
- J. Possesses a basic understanding of special education services.

III. Overall Responsibilities

The Director of Guidance Services is responsible for the supervision, coordination and implementation of all guidance services and staff. The Director oversees the guidance programs 6-12 and also maintains a small caseload of his/her own. Specific job activities and responsibilities include the following:

1. College and Career Planning and Placement
 1. Develop programs to help students select careers and colleges that are a good fit to their needs and abilities.
 2. Visit colleges and attend workshops to stay abreast of trends in college placement and programs and share this information with students and parents.
 3. Develop working relationships with college admissions officers, financial aid officers and employers to help support students in the application process.
 4. Oversee, plan and implement special events and activities, programs and events such as college and financial aid nights, and career days.
 5. Coordinate senior transition program by inviting relevant guest speakers and addressing pertinent issues.

2. Academic Counseling, Testing and Records

1. Ensure academic support and intervention for all students. Develop, implement and supervise these programs to help all students reach their full potential.
2. Oversee implementation of policies, coordinate and arrange for appropriate tutors for those students who require home instruction due to long-term illness/disciplinary issues. Coordinate home and hospital-bound instruction program and reentry plans.
3. Oversee the implementation of the 9-12 college admission testing program which includes: PSAT, Advanced Placement, and special accommodations for SAT and ACT.
4. Coordinate hiring, scheduling and payroll for all special accommodation proctoring.
5. Oversee application process, review and approve or disapprove programs for home instruction applicants.
6. Work as an educational advisor to the professional staff to improve program and course offerings, 6-12.
7. Develop projects and programs that may be integrated into the academic curriculum (college essay in English, etc.)
8. Ensure accurate student record keeping.
9. Coordinate the annual course selection process and oversee academic counseling, 6-12.
10. Review and approve all guidance programs and curricula, 6-12, in accordance with the guidance plan.
11. Advocate for student needs based on school and district data

5. Program and Financial Management

1. Develop and present budget recommendations and provide expenditure control for guidance programs.
2. Approves all supplies, materials and texts used by all guidance services.

3. Develop guidance policies and programs and recommends changes and additions as needed.
4. Provides leadership in assessing district-wide needs and recommends program organization changes to maximize program effectiveness.
5. Develop departmental goals and future priorities.
6. Staff and Program Evaluation and Development
 1. Ensure articulation and development of guidance services 6-12 and mental health program K-12 through chairing regular departmental meetings.
 2. Responsible for the observation and evaluation of guidance personnel.
 3. Interviews and makes recommendations regarding the employment of guidance counselor candidates.
 4. Assists in the identification of needs and implementation of training programs for guidance staff.
 5. Provides consultation to the building principals, psychologists and guidance staff in the development of programs and practices that enhance positive emotional and mental health.
 6. Assist in the analysis of test results for the purpose of program evaluation and improvement.
 7. Prepare annual guidance report and other reports as required.
 8. Conduct research relevant to issues under discussion by the Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools and/or staff.
7. Pupil Personnel and Social Services
 1. Develop and implement programs that address student social and personal problems.
 2. Coordinate school programs and interventions with local and regional agencies, such as Pelham Guidance, Family Services, Student Assistance Counseling, etc.

3. Prepare and implement information programs for parents and educational programs for students on such sensitive issues as racism, sexism, drug and alcohol abuse, date rape, eating disorders, etc.
 4. Chair monthly secondary pupil personnel; services team meetings to help ensure coordination and effective program implementation.
 5. Serves as School District Homeless Liaison to coordinate needs of any qualifying students.
8. Information and Technology Management
1. Communicate and interpret guidance programs and information to students, parents, facility and community organizations.
 2. Prepare and edit departmental handbook newsletters, press releases, notices and school profile.
 3. Supervise student computer data services.
 4. Assist in the development of a master schedule.
 5. Oversee integration of new technologies into counseling services, such as college and career search and financial aid data.
 6. Oversee guidance web site content development.
9. District Responsibilities
1. Attend administrative council meetings to discuss and report on guidance issues and programs.
 2. Consult with K-5 principals on a need basis to review or support age appropriate child development programs.
 3. Assume responsibility for other tasks or projects, as may be assigned by the Superintendent.
 4. Serve on district and community committees.

District Nurse Supervisor/Coordinator

Overall Responsibilities:

The Director of Nursing Services is responsible for the supervision, coordination and implementation of all nursing services for the district. He/She will coordinate with the school physician, school district nurses and principals to ensure consistent and effective delivery, and program management of health services. Specific job activities and responsibilities include the following:

Staff and program evaluation and development

- a. Responsible for observation and evaluation of all nurse personnel
 - b. Interviews and makes recommendations regarding the employment of school nurse candidates
 - c. Assists in the identification of needs and implementation of staff development for all nurses
-
1. Ongoing coordination of New York State Immunization requirements for school entrance/attendance
 2. Coordinate submission of local and state reports pertaining to Body Mass Index (BMI), Immunizations, Dental Surveys, etc.
 3. Oversee submission of data as an “HPN Coordinator” for New York Department of health

Program and Financial Management

- a. Develop and present budget recommendations and provide expenditure control for health programs.
- b. Approves all supplies, materials and texts used by all guidance services.
- c. Develop and maintain nursing and health protocols consistent with board of education policies
- d. Coordinate substitute coverage as needed
- e. Approves all supplies, materials and texts used by all guidance services.

F. LIST OF BRIDGE ACADEMY PLACEMENTS

Bridge Academy Student Outcomes

Graduates of 2008

Student # 1 - Lincoln Technical Institute
Student # 2 - WCC
Student #3 - Not Graduating
Student #4 - Employed
Student #5 -Tompkins Cortland Community College
Student #6 -University of Arizona
Student #7 - WCC
Student #8 - University of Hartford
Student #9 - Hunter College
Student #10 - WCC
Student #11 - WCC
Student #12 - St. Thomas Aquinas

Graduates 2009

Student #1 - Iona
Student #2 - WCC
Student #3 - Iona
Student #4 - WCC
Student #5 - Johnson & Wales
Student #6 - Marines
Student #7 - WCC
Student #8 - WCC
Student #9 - WCC
Student#10 - Baruch College
Student#11 - WCC
Student#12 - WCC

Student #13 – WCC

Student #14 – WCC

Graduates 2010

Student #1 – Hofstra University
Student #2 – WCC
Student #3 – Iona
Student #4 – College of Mt. Saint Vincent
Student #5 – WCC
Student #6 – WCC
Student #7 – WCC
Student #8 – Sanford Brown Institute
Student #9 – Marines
Student #10 – WCC

Graduates 2011

Student #1 – Suny Potsdam
Student #2 – St. Thomas Aquinas
Student #3 – Monroe College
Student #4– WCC
Student #5 - Johnson & Wales (Miami Campus)
Student #6 – WCC
Student #7 – C.W. Post
Student #8 – University of Tampa
Student #9– Suny Cobleskill
Student #10 - ??
Student #11 –University of Hartford

G. FUTURISTIC RESEARCH GUIDANCE RATINGS

Pelham Memorial High School Alumni Study
Prepared by Futuristics Research

Rating Guidelines

Rating	Interpretation
4.00 and above	Extremely favorable
3.85-3.99	Very Favorable
3.70-3.84	Favorable
3.4-3.69	Neutral
3.0-3.39	Less Favorable
Below 3.00	Unfavorable

Information Gathered from Alumni Class of 2008

Based upon

Average Rating for Guidance: 3.74

- Rating of Course Planning Services: 3.81
- Rating of Guidance Departments Help with Academic Problems 3.69
- Rating of Guidance Department's Help with Personal Problems 3.74
- College Planning Services 3.43
- Rating of Guidance Department's Availability of Counselors 3.89
- Comfort Level with School Counselor 3.84
- Office Staff Professionalism 4.07

H. METHODOLOGY

1. Document Reviews – Read and analyzed the following:
 - a. February 2, 2004 Board Report by Carol A. Dahir, Ed. D., Assistant Professor, Counselor Education, New York Institute of Technology.
 - b. Annual Placement Report Data 1958-2010 and Annual Reports.
 - c. Comparative Data Analysis Reports, Westchester Schools – 2010.
 - d. Review Guidance Curriculum/Program Maps.
 - e. Guidance Materials Currently Used for College Placement.
 - f. Literature Review – Pertinent Articles and Professional Information.
 - g. Graduation Requirements Study Session, Jeannine Clark, Principal and Eugene Farrell, Director of Guidance.
 - h. Advanced Placement Report, Jeannine Clark, Principal and Eugene Farrell, Director of Guidance.
 - i. Naviance Program Demonstration and Materials.
 - j. Alumni Survey Results.
 - k. Review of Various State and Professional Reports and Trends Regarding College Placement.
2. Fact Finding Interviews
 - a. Telephone and face-to-face interviews (see attached question/discussion points) with Director, Principal, Superintendent and Counselors.
 - b. Full day meeting with Director to discuss current program and future aspirations.
 - c. Various debriefings and modifications of draft documents.
 - d. Conversations with three college admissions officers regarding higher educational perspectives.
 - e. Visits to neighboring school districts and observation of model practices by Director and Counselors.
 - f. Meetings and discussions of Board of Education Program Committee