

From: "Paul Sally" <sallyp@nths.net>
Date: May 16, 2019 at 7:36:22 PM CDT
To:
Subject: New Trier: Article in the Wall Street Journal

All,

An article in today's Wall Street Journal discusses a new measure the College Board is providing to colleges alongside a student's SAT score called the Environmental Context Dashboard (ECD). According to College Board, "the ECD is a data-driven tool used to measure educational disadvantages based on students' environments" and "is not a decision-making tool, rather it's a lens through which to view applications."

A New Trier faculty member was quoted in the article, after a lengthy conversation with the reporter, expressing an opinion that elite colleges already are seeking diversity and that this measure could disadvantage white and affluent students. This statement does not align with our values, contradicts our commitment to educational equity, and is counter to our public statements supporting equitable educational opportunities at both the K-12 and post-secondary levels. We believe our students benefit by attending post-secondary institutions with diverse student populations as they prepare to work and live in a diverse, global society.

In addition, the quote included the phrase "diversity kids" to refer to our students of color. While not the intent of the faculty member, the impact of this phrase is dismissive and reductive. In a school in which we value students as individuals, it is wrong to use a term that assumes a shared experience by students simply because they are not white.

Our motto in our Post-High School Counseling office is that "College is a match to be made, not a prize to be won." We have never believed one or two test scores alone should define any student, and we support efforts that make the college admissions process more just for all students. We also do not believe New Trier High School students are disadvantaged in the college admissions process. Our broad, varied, and rigorous curriculum, our excellent teaching staff, our vast extracurricular program, and our opportunities for student leadership and service help students stand out in the college admissions process. In addition, our dedicated post-high school counselors have decades of experience in college admissions, and our families benefit greatly from their dedication and insight. We partner closely with universities and colleges to ensure that they understand the unique experiences and talents of each student.

Thank you for taking the time to read this message. I want to express my appreciation to our students for the hard work they put into their education, and I want them to know the school recognizes that the college admissions process creates a great deal of stress for them. I also want to acknowledge the resilience of our students of color and thank them for their contributions to our school. We are working to ensure we are a school that supports each and every student. There are great matches out there for each one of our students' post-high school journey, college or otherwise. We strive to help them find those matches and to help them toward a future path marked by hope, success, and happiness.

Paul Sally

Superintendent