



**College of Human Sciences & Education**  
*University Laboratory School*

Dear Parents,

The 2016 - 2017 school year is swiftly coming to an end. The final chapters of material are being taught. The students are preparing for their exams. The seniors are ready to graduate. All are signs that the school year is about to come to a close.

I am sure by now that many of you have seen the various reports about the *U.S. News and World Report* article ranking the LSU Lab School at 39th in the state in regards to college readiness. This particular ranking system uses a very limited set of criteria that is based heavily on the amount of AP tests administered at a school, and it does not take into account other factors that are most certainly related to college readiness.

Since the Lab School has a limited number of AP courses it follows we have a limited number of AP exams. Additionally, NOLA.com ([http://www.nola.com/education/index.ssf/2017/04/best\\_high\\_schools\\_2017.html](http://www.nola.com/education/index.ssf/2017/04/best_high_schools_2017.html)) reports that IB scores were not used at all this year because the organization did not release them to *U.S. News* for this ranking cycle. Interestingly, the *U.S. News* website seems to contradict this statement by saying that IB scores are only used for Bronze Schools. If this is the case, it begs the question: Why would IB exams be considered inferior to AP exams? That conclusion is simply unwarranted and there are a host of admissions' standards for universities throughout the world that attest to this fact.

*U.S. News* methodology also excludes college credit obtained through early college or dual enrollment as well as College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests. Interestingly, CLEP is offered by College Board, the same company that provides AP exams.

Given the methodological issues and the insensitivity to credits derived from CLEP and DE, it is not surprising that University Laboratory School would suffer in these rankings and the conclusions derived from the rankings would not reflect reality. For example, *U.S. News* provided our school with a college readiness score of 11/100. Again, this ranking primarily reflects the number of AP tests attempted and passed at a school, and given our low number of AP courses, the ranking should not be surprising.

That said, it should also be noted the ranking is not an indication of the actual college readiness of our students. In fact, quite the opposite is the case.

In the past two year, over 100 juniors and seniors took CLEP tests and obtained over 150 credit hours and we expect a similar number this year. Currently we have 79 juniors and 70 seniors enrolled in one or more IB courses. Over 90% of our juniors and seniors are taking at least one course for college credit and, on average, enter college with over 20 hours of college work completed. In some cases, students are entering college with most of their sophomore coursework completed. Finally, students now have the opportunity to complete a full 2 years of college work and obtain an associate degree upon graduation.

**There is no better barometer for college readiness than actual success in college. Given the success rate of our students, it is clear that college readiness is part and parcel of the UHS experience.**

Beyond the direct documented successes in college readiness, it should be noted that our school consistently ranks as one of the highest performing in the state's accountability model (in the top 10 of a tightly clustered bunch for at least 7 years). Finally, the school was recognized last year by the U.S. DOE as a Blue Ribbon School of Academic Excellence, an award that is extended for five years.

For whatever reason, *U.S. News* has created a very narrow measure of college readiness that is almost solely correlated to the number of AP exams given and passed. That measure is certainly useful, but it is most certainly not comprehensive. Rest assured that your child is receiving a top-level college preparatory and participatory education by any proven standard.

Kind regards,  
The Administration