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*"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat."*

*Theodore Roosevelt*

Each month our administrative team wants to give you information relevant to your child's experience at Wheaton Academy as well as to talk about key issues that we face as we seek to partner in helping students know Jesus better, develop a biblical worldview, discover their gifts and prepare for God's call on their life. This month we want to talk about the following topics:

- College Readiness at Wheaton Academy & An Invitation to learn more
- Exciting ACT Results

We are thankful for our community at Wheaton Academy – we have a wonderful group of students and families – we view working with you and your child in the year ahead as a unique privilege.

### **College Readiness at Wheaton Academy**

Jose Altuve, the American League MVP for baseball, has an amazing story of overcoming struggle and failure. The buzz words of grit, perseverance and social emotional learning are prevalent in the news right now, and research shows that unless students are placed in difficult situations where failure is a real possibility and they are forced to deal with and overcome stress, they will not be adequately equipped for life. Students must be placed in situations where they struggle, make mistakes and even fail so that they can be allowed to work through those mistakes, recover, bounce back and ultimately grow.

The mission of Wheaton Academy is to "nurture growth in students through relationships, excellence, and service to the glory of God." This growth occurs as students develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, understand and adopt a Biblical worldview, discover their God-given gifts and equip themselves for further study as well as for their vocation. In order to prepare our students to represent Christ outside of Wheaton Academy, we must strategically pay attention not only to the development of our students' academic and cognitive skills or their various gifts and talents, but also to the development of elements of their character and disposition that have a significant impact on their ability to navigate the world around them. The college readiness traits we are committed to developing are perseverance, self-control, social intelligence, gratitude, passion and hope.

So, we must commit to allowing students to struggle, to fail initially, to be forced to figure out situations on their own, to have to advocate for themselves, and to solve their own problems in the small areas of high school life in order to give them practice for the big areas of the rest of life. Essentially, this statement concurs with the truth of Scripture: God builds our faith through testing and trials. The mission of Wheaton Academy calls us to this difficult task of preparation and of testing of our students by allowing them to experience and process the failure and struggles necessary to equip them to be ready for college and life beyond.

## **Invitation for Coffee and Donuts with the Principal**

On Wednesday, December 13, 9:15-10:15 a.m., we want to invite you for donuts and coffee to hear more about our College Readiness initiative and to talk about our partnership in preparing students to be ready for life after Wheaton Academy. During this time with Kori Hockett, our Principal, and a few other administrators, we will connect about ways to help students be college ready. Please join us in the Atrium for this important conversation.

## **Exciting ACT Score Results**

Each year Wheaton Academy requires all senior students to take the ACT, not only for college admissions but also for data on student achievement so that we can continue to accelerate student learning. This practice is unique among schools since you will often see ACT scores that reflect top achieving students who take the test, whereas at Wheaton Academy, our score reflects every single senior. Our 2017 results were extremely exciting. The average composite ACT score was 26.2, which compares to the state average of 21.4 and the national average of 21.0. The ACT has four sections: Reading, English, Science and Math. Our average scores for Reading and English were 26.9, Math was 25.1 and Science was 25.1, up 0.5 point from 2016 when our average science score was 24.6. This data enables our departments to continue to make decisions to improve curriculum and instruction for our students. We look forward to continuing to help students demonstrate their learning throughout the rest of the year!