

# LOWELL HIGH SCHOOL



## “Questions Most Often Asked” Fall 2008

### **With a freshman class of 650, isn't it too big?**

That depends on what you and your student want for a high school experience. Having so many students makes possible a broad range of offerings — diverse topics for English, many levels of math classes from Algebra through AP Calculus and 9 different foreign languages. There is also scholastic depth in a large variety of subjects through our Honors Program (55 sections) as well as 96 sections of Advanced Placement (AP) classes. Furthermore, Lowell has 22 AAA sports, and over 80 student clubs. There are also many fellow students with whom your child can share common interests – no matter how obscure – or be stretched by friends who come from different backgrounds and are into different things – from Astrophysics, computer web building, drama and art to Japanese cartoons.

### **Does the school do anything to keep kids from being lost?**

Yes. The registry system (homerooms) assigns students to a peer group that he/she will have the entire 4 years at Lowell. It is an opportunity to touch base with the same group of kids over time. Counselors are assigned to each registry so there is continuity. Our Counseling Department does a fantastic job even with a heavy workload. Kids are welcomed into departmental offices for extra help, and the system of sports and clubs help everyone find their own niche. Peer counselors are also available for students who are more comfortable with supervised, trained help from their own age group.

### **Are all the kids at Lowell geeks and nerds?**

While Lowell has a nationwide reputation for academic excellence (ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the world for AP exams), the truth is that Lowell's student body is very well-rounded. Our students are active in statewide student government, are on winning sports teams, win art prizes as well as excel in the Academic Decathlon. The editor of our award-winning student newspaper covered the Democratic National Convention, our cheerleaders regularly win competitions, our school plays and musical attain critical review, our Symphonic Band played in New York City at Carnegie Hall in March 2001, and our Chamber Choir performed in the International Children's Culture and Art Festival in China in November 2004. Lowell students pursue their many different talents at a very high competitive level, or just for fun!

### **What is the modular system and self-scheduling?**

The school day is broken up into 20 mods (periods of time). Classes are assigned 2 or 3 mods depending on the needs of the academic program. Students decide which classes, teachers and schedule they would like and sign up much as many of us did in college. Students decide if they wish to tackle the regular, Honors or AP class in some subjects. Most students have a few unscheduled mods throughout the day. Lowell students are expected to develop good time-management skills and use their “free” mods to do research in the library or computer labs, visit departmental offices for tutoring or to obtain feedback on individual work, study in our subject area resource centers, practice in the language lab or work quietly with friends.

### **What is the role of parents at the school?**

Parents are very important in their support of the school. There is an active PTSA (Parent Student Teacher Association) which meets monthly as well as a monthly Academic Affairs forum which discusses school program issues. Parents fundraise and use the monies to support a grants program which provides supplemental materials and supplies to faculty and staff. Most importantly, over the past three years of the budget crisis, parents have contributed almost \$1.5 million to the Lowell Fund to restore critical programs and positions. Parents also run the Book-to-Book Center and work in the VICCI (Volunteers in College and Career Information) Center. Lowell also has a very active Alumni Association which has its own grants program. Parents and alumni have joined together in establishing the Lowell Sports Foundation which specifically funds sports awards and equipment.

### **What about college placement?**

Lowell students are fortunate in that most U.S. colleges are familiar with the excellence of the school. Last year over 150 schools sent admissions officers to our campus to meet with Lowell students both in groups and individually. A number gave seminars or "hints sessions" on their admissions processes. The VICCI Center also hosts free SAT preparation classes, has computer resources and a library of college videos, view-books and other materials.

### **Who can I talk to if I have specific questions?**

The PTSA will also try to facilitate conversations between parents. Call Debbie Gee Wong – Parent (353-8319), Marny Leslie – Parent (239-6208), Rebecca Wightman - Parent (864-1977) or Scott Lee - Student (794-4400), and they will try to answer your concerns or put you in touch with someone who can address your questions.

### **How can I get a tour of Lowell before making my decision to apply?**

Through our Big Brothers and Sisters Organization at Lowell, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student can make an appointment to shadow a Lowell student by submitting a request through the email, [shadowlowell@yahoo.com](mailto:shadowlowell@yahoo.com). Be sure to include in the emailed request, the student's name, evening phone number, middle school name, and what type of shadow duration (a whole day or 1/2 day). You will be contacted within 2 weeks to schedule a date for the shadow visit.

### **How do we get in?**

Because Lowell is a competitive public school, it has a unique admissions process. Please note that admission is selective, based on California Achievement Test (CAT-6<sup>th</sup> Edition) scores, grades achieved in academic subjects in middle school (all of 7<sup>th</sup> grade and 1<sup>st</sup> semester of 8<sup>th</sup> grade), and many other factors, including extracurricular/leadership activities, community service, athletics, socio-economic status (SES), and extenuating circumstances. The SAT-9 is not acceptable to the school district. Remember to provide as much information as possible in all these areas to maximize your opportunity for getting accepted to Lowell. The application will be available on November 8<sup>th</sup>. They must be returned in person to your 8<sup>th</sup> grade middle school counselor or to the Educational Placement Center by December 12<sup>th</sup>. **THE APPLICATION CANNOT BE MAILED.**

For questions about the Lowell admissions process, contact the Educational Placement Center at 241-6066 (after November 8, 2009).