



# SUMMER 2021 NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 4

SUMMER 2021

WHERE AMBITION  
MEETS ACHIEVEMENT

## FAST FACTS

**1503**

average SAT score for SAT 1500 Prep

**32**

average ACT score for ACT Prep

**90%**

average SSAT percentile for SSAT 8 Prep

## Welcome to our Summer Newsletter!

During the final weeks of summer, students achieved their summer goals, mastered key skills, and completed all their main objectives. Thank you to all our parents and students for a wonderful and productive summer full of amazing growth!

MEK REVIEW  
SUMMER NEWSLETTER

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## WEEK 7 & 8 HIGHLIGHTS

- 1** Many test prep students started surpassing their target score!
- 2** HS honor students learned 60% of the upcoming curriculum for their math and science courses.
- 3** Students completed a survey on the last week of class to share their feedback on their course experience.

### TEST PREP | Milestones & Achievements

|                        |   |                     |  |
|------------------------|---|---------------------|--|
| <b>SAT 1500</b>        | Class average on week 8 was 1503!<br><b>Way to meet your goals, SAT 1500!</b>                                       | <b>ACT Advanced</b> | Class average as of week 8 was 32, putting student's in the 96th percentile of ACT test-takers. <b>Way to go!</b>                              |
| <b>SAT 1400</b>        | Class average as of week 8 was 1388, with 50% of students surpassing their 1400 goal! <b>Awesome job, SAT 1400!</b> | <b>Exam Prep 8</b>  | Class average for SSAT test this week was 2061 out of 2400, a <b>86% accuracy rate!</b>  |
| <b>SAT Foundation</b>  | In just two weeks, students' average SAT score improved 48 points from 1118 to 1166. <b>Great work!</b>             | <b>SSAT/ISEE 8</b>  | Class average for SSAT test improved 163 points. On students' last test the average was a 2167 out of 2400 points, a <b>90% accuracy rate!</b> |
| <b>SAT Maintenance</b> | Class average as of week 8 was 1508.<br><b>Great job!</b>   |                     |  |

### HIGH SCHOOL HONORS & AP COURSE PREP | Topics Covered

|                          |  |                            |   |
|--------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|
| <b>AP U.S. History</b>   | Progressive Era<br>WWI, WWII, and Cold War Basics<br>Multiple Choice Section of the Test | <b>Honors Analysis II</b>  | Graphing Trigonometric Equations<br>Polar Coordinates   |
| <b>AP Chemistry</b>      | Thermodynamics<br>Equilibrium<br>Acids and Bases   | <b>Honors Geometry</b>     | Special Right Triangles and Right Triangle Trigonometry<br>Area of Polygons<br>Coordinate Geometry Proofs |
| <b>AP Calculus BC</b>    | Volumes of Revolution<br>Integration by Parts  | <b>Honors Pre-Calculus</b> | Inverse Trigonometric Functions<br>Multiple-Angle Formulas  |
| <b>Honors Analysis I</b> | Composition of Functions<br>Complex Numbers<br>Series                                    | <b>Honors Chemistry</b>    | Polarity<br>Sigma and Pi Bonds<br>Hybridization   |

## MEK LEARNING CIRCLES | Milestones & Achievements

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### Writing Circles

Students have written 15 essays over the summer! They've also taken a final cumulative writing and grammar test. Students in Writing 4-5 as a class went from writing 2/5 level essays to 4/5 essays. Students in Writing 6-8 on average went from writing 3/6 level essays to 5/6 level essays. Great job!

### Critical Reading Circles

Students have read and written critical essays on 15 texts! They also took a cumulative reading quiz and earned an average of 78%. Plus, on average CR 5 students went from writing a 1/5 essay to a 3/5 essay, and CR 6-8 students went from a 2/6 level essay to scoring a 4/6.

### Non-Fiction Reading

Presentations have significantly improved. The students are able to craft effective hooks, theses, and main ideas and can skillfully and effectively incorporate textual evidence to support their stances on various debate topics.

### Pre-Algebra & Algebra

Students will have taken four cumulative tests and completed 1,100 math problems over their summer course.

### Math ONS & PSM Circles

Students learned 75-90% of the upcoming math curriculum.

### Vocabulary Circles

Students learned 150+ new words!

## STUDENT OF THE WEEK

### COLLEGE TEST PREP



### GRACE CHENG, 11<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

EXAM PREP 8

*"Grace has worked very hard this summer, always paying attention in class, following all protocols, and giving her best effort on all assignments. She also has taken a lot of initiative in her own improvement by attending office hours or emailing her teachers with questions. Because of that, her score is in the top 1% of test takers, not just for MEK Review, but nationally."*

- Rachel Erwin, SAT 1500 English teacher

Out of over 200 students, Grace was chosen by her teachers to be Student of the Week because of her relentless perseverance, her dedication, and hard work.

### Way to go Grace!

Let's learn a little bit more about our Student of the Week:

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### What do you like about your class?

I like how receptive my teachers are. They create an environment where I feel comfortable asking questions to further my knowledge on test-taking strategies, as well as on topics that I do not understand. The teachers provide effective studying strategies and support even outside of class that make the class particularly impactful.

### What have you learned?

I have learned how to approach the SAT through well-defined procedures that help me approach each problem correctly.

### What colleges or field of study do you plan on pursuing in the future?

I plan on pursuing something related to history, literature, or economics.

### What do you like to do outside of MEK?

I enjoy golfing, playing the piano, reading, and listening to music.

# STUDENT OF THE WEEK

## HIGH SCHOOL ADMISSIONS TEST PREP



**SHASWAT SINHA, 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

EXAM PREP 8

*“Shaswat is constantly volunteering, sharing his thoughts and observations, and putting strong effort into his work. He is thoughtful and engaging.”*

- Iulia Boboc, Exam Prep 8 Teacher

Out of over 100 students, Shaswat was chosen by his teacher to be Student of the Week because of his great attitude, inspiring drive, and great performance.

### **Awesome job Shaswat!**

Let's learn a little bit more about our Student of the Week:

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#### **What do you like about your class?**

I love learning with other kids who, like me, want to push themselves to the limit, give it their all, and make their dreams come true. In addition, I have great teachers who make sure that we understand everything they teach, and they support us every step of the way. This contributes to a great learning environment which encourages me to do my best.

#### **What have you learned so far?**

I have learned how to solve problems involving number theory, RPP(Ratios, proportions, and percentages), word problems, and geometry with greater accuracy and speed than I had done before. Furthermore, I have learned lots of useful methods and tricks that I hadn't learned in school.

#### **What are your favorites subject in school?**

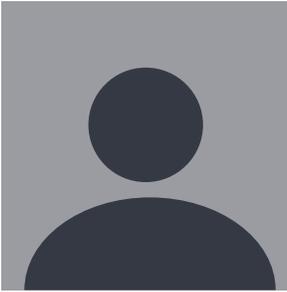
I am most interested in math. I am interested in math because I just love solving math problems. The more challenging they are, the better it feels when I solve them. Furthermore, there is always one concrete answer-with multiple ways to get it.

#### **What do you like to do outside of MEK?**

I love to play with my brother, hang out with friends, maybe watch a movie or two. Some of my favorite hobbies are reading, gaming, and swimming. I also like to play soccer and cricket.

# STUDENT OF THE WEEK

## MEK LEARNING CIRCLES



**ISAAC CHO, 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

*MLC CRITICAL READING*

*"Isaac Cho does a fantastic job elaborating on details and taking compositional risks in his writing!"*

- Anatoliy Alkhazov, MLC CR 7 Teacher

Out of over 400 students, Isaac was chosen by his teachers to be Student of the Week because of his outstanding progress, amazing spirit, and great participation.

### **We're so proud of you Isaac!**

Let's learn a little bit more about our Student of the Week:

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#### **What do you like about your class?**

I like how MEK expanded my knowledge on subjects like math and English. For math, I like how the lessons improved my problem solving skills. For English, I like how the teachers give me feedback on how to write better essays.

#### **What have you learned?**

So far, I have learned a lot in geometry and critical reading. In geometry class, I've learned how to complete proofs and how to utilize the postulates/theorems. To add, critical reading has taught me to understand and annotate texts more efficiently.

#### **What are your favorites subject in school?**

Math and science are the two subjects that interest me the most. I like how math is very logical and how science is informative.

#### **What do you like to do outside of MEK?**

Outside of MEK, I like to play tennis, listen to music, and socialize with my friends.

# TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

RACHEL ERWIN



Rachel Erwin, Director of College Test Prep English

Rachel Erwin is the Director of Exam Prep - English for MEK Review who is currently teaching SAT 1500. She also conducts weekly virtual office hours, where she helps students one-on-one.

**The following is an interview between her and our marketing writer:**

**Interviewer:** *What is your favorite part about teaching at MEK?*

**Erwin:** One of the best parts about teaching at MEK is the students. Our students are incredibly goal driven and focused. They want to learn new skills and improve their scores. It is fun to teach such hard working students.

Another thing that I enjoy about teaching at MEK is that we have one of the best curriculum structures. We develop our curriculum using experience and data, and our materials are designed to be the most effective. This makes it more enjoyable because we know we're working with the best tools for instruction.

**Interviewer:** *What does your title mean? What are your responsibilities/leadership roles at MEK?*

**Erwin:** For my role as Director of Exam Prep - English, I oversee anything English related for the Exam Prep Department, including the programs, curriculum, students, and teachers for courses like SAT and ACT Prep. Tony Kim oversees the Math side of Exam Prep, and together we run the department. I know the students very well, whether or not I teach them personally. I look at their data and their scores. I talk to their teachers. I like to know how the students are doing in their courses, and I really enjoy knowing every student in the Exam Prep Program, even if they aren't in one of my classes.

**Interviewer:** *What does it take for a student to reach an elite SAT score in the reading/writing section? What type of student improves the most?*

**Erwin:** There is a lot that goes into getting an elite score. The national average score for SAT is usually around the 1000s, which is at the very low end of MEK scores. If a student scores a 1450 or higher on the SAT, they're generally in the top 1 to 5 percent of test takers, which is the MEK average.

Our students who really want elite scores, meaning students who want a 1500 or higher, need to consider the following when preparing for the SAT.

Number one is time. Some students mistakenly believe that they can "will" themselves into improvement. They falsely believe that taking a lot of practice tests in a short timeframe will get them the score they want, but that's not how it works. Students need ample time in order to develop the skills necessary to earn their goal score. What students need to realize is that learning, reflecting, and studying takes more time than they think.

Second, if a student wants to earn an elite score, they have to come to class every day ready to engage and participate. They have to take notes, answer questions, and completely believe in the strategies that MEK instructors teach their students. We are teaching students how to get the correct answers 100% of the time.

**Interviewer:** *You're known for really drawing out students' unique stories in college application essays. What would you say is the secret to a great college essay?*

**Erwin:** Because our MEK students tend to be more informed, they generally know the basics of personal statement writing, such as avoiding cliches.

My students have a tendency to believe that they have nothing unique to say. They believe that because they never walked on the moon or started a Fortune 500 company that they don't have any interesting stories to tell. But what I tell them is that, most of the time, the topic they write about doesn't matter. What's important is how the student talks about their topic in their essay.

There are plenty of essay topics that are boring and cliché in one student's hands, but in another student's hands these same topics are interesting, unique, and powerful. And the difference between a topic being cliché and boring versus unique and powerful is specificity.

Especially for a personal statement on the Common App, a more specific, narrow story actually makes the essay more memorable. Students should focus on telling one story or impactful moment from their life. Sometimes students want to cram in a variety of stories, which ends up reading like a list of their resume in essay form or an attempt at presenting themselves and their philosophy on life. These almost always make for boring essays.

College essay writing is about picking one narrow moment and using that powerful story to extrapolate all the reasons why the story matters, what it shows about the student and their character, and who they are as a person. These types of essays are infinitely more interesting than the more generic, general essays.

**Interviewer:** *When you were in high school, you were salutatorian, Captain of the basketball and volleyball teams, Captain of the Color Guard, you played tennis, were in honors band, volunteered, were officer in student council, the list goes on and on. How did you learn to manage your time and your grades with so many activities? What's your advice to other busy high schoolers?*

**Erwin:** At MEK, we emphasize the importance of study and scheduling habits. Sometimes students will attend my office hours so that we can set up a study schedule together. We list out all the activities they have to do in a given week, and together we schedule times between activities where they can spend time studying.

As a busy high school student, the way to reach balance between participating in activities and studying is to create a formal structure and schedule that will help them stay on top of their responsibilities.

For our students at MEK, they also need to schedule in time for rest. A lot of our students burn themselves out. It's possible to be a part of many different activities in high school and have fun, but some of our students take on too much. Especially in this hectic time of Covid, students must schedule in time to rest and recharge.

To read the rest of the interview, [click here!](#)

## EARLY BIRD EXTENSION!

Just for our current students, we extended our Early Bird Discount until **September 4th!** That means you can still save **15% off tuition** when you register by September 4th. Plus, an additional 5% off when you pay in full.

Don't wait! Save your seat today.

## REMINDER: CANVAS CLOSING

Earlier this week, MEK Review emailed parents and students to let them know that their Canvas Courses will be closing by **September 3rd**. Any resources or materials students wish to download and save should be completed by September 3rd, before the course closes.

## IN-PERSON OPTIONS

This fall, MEK is offering safe in-person options for students! Your child can shake the virtual setting slump, and come to our one-on-one or group classes at our Closter and Palisades Park Campuses.

[Click here for more details.](#)

## FINAL WORDS

This is the last issue of our 2021 Summer Newsletter. We have loved sharing with parents the amazing journey students have taken this semester. And can't wait to see you in the fall!



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