

Explore Opportunities – Find Your Passion

By Paul Waechtler and Denise Hibbard

New Trier strives to provide opportunities for students to explore various interests. We understand that an important part of adolescent development is discovering a passion for both academic and extracurricular activities. One of the joys of being an educator is watching a student lost in thought as they contemplate an idea or celebrate a great performance in athletics or performing arts.

We were both athletes in high school and spent many hours practicing to improve, probably more than our parents wanted. However, sports were an important part of our identity, and that passion for exercise, teamwork, and competition continues to be a part of our lives today. Students often spend their high school years discovering or refining a passion that shapes their identity. This is why we believe it is so important to offer students opportunities to try several activities during their high school experience. Encourage your student to explore. When they do, help to them reflect on these new encounters. Different experiences will lead to a better understanding of one's strengths, weaknesses, interests, and motivations.

Our students' happiness, independence and success will be enhanced by trying various activities and discovering passions for certain parts of their lives. One of the best parts of our jobs are hearing stories about students who discovered a passion while at New Trier that they are going to pursue after graduation. This can be as a major in college, as a life-long hobby, or involvement in a service group, but each of these can enrich their lives. We have the privilege of watching this happen in various settings as our staff works with your student.