

Sophomore: Calendar and Checklist

As you may already know, you are in what many consider the most important year in high school; this is the year colleges look at very closely to determine what kind of student you are shaping up to be. The pressure is on, especially this year and next, to do well in school *and* on standardized tests like the PLAN and next year's PSAT and the SAT. You should be having fun, too! And extra-curricular activities, including sports, volunteering, journalism (yearbook/newspaper), and clubs are a great way to meet new people and learn teamwork and responsibility at the same time.

This is the time when you should begin (or continue) participating in volunteer opportunities and other quality extra-curricular activities. Choose wisely; colleges will look at your extra-curricular to help determine the kind of person you are.

If your freshman year grades weren't indicative of your abilities, you still have time to bring them up enough to make a difference. If you need to improve in some subjects, this is the time to start. You will make a good impression on colleges and future employers if they see steady improvement in grades and a good attendance record. If you are struggling with a course, get a tutor. Speak with counselors or teachers for assistance.

If you are not sure where to begin, here's a calendar for each semester of your sophomore year:

First Semester

- Make sure you are enrolled in challenging classes, and in any prerequisite courses you may need for future classes you plan to take.
- Pick one or two extra-curricular activities in which to get involved.
- Register for the PLAN test.
- Meet with your guidance counselor and/or career tech for career exploration and college/university exploration plans.

Second Semester

- Sign up for college preparatory classes. Consider Honors courses. You'll want your last two years of high school to count.
- Look for a great summer opportunity, like a job, internship, or volunteer position. Try to find one that relates to your academic or career interests.
- Look online for summer school courses offered by colleges. Many of them award college credit, but check with your guidance counselor before finalizing any plans.

- Review goals for your junior year with your guidance counselor to understand academic expectations of high school and the courses needed for college admission.
- Update your file, or start one if you haven't already. It should contain copies of report cards, list of awards and honors, and school and community activities in which you are involved.
- Start researching colleges. If you took the PLAN and/or PSAT in the fall, you probably are receiving mail from them.
- Visit your school's career center.