

What's Next?

Use the following suggestions to make the most of your summer and your sophomore year.

Summer

- **READ!** Read at least five books not required by your school. Try something you've never read before.
- **Do** your summer homework. Don't put it off until the last minute.
- **Explore.** If you're considering a career or career pathway, learn more about it. Talk to people who hold that job. Set up a job shadow day. Get a job. Take a trip. While there, visit some colleges in the area.
- **Think** about what's next. It's never too early to start prepping for the ACT or SAT. There are excellent practice tests available online. Use them!
- **Help** someone else. Look for organizations in your community that need volunteers: hospitals, nursing homes, food pantries, homeless shelters, and more. It will make you feel good and also looks good on your college applications.

Fall (Congratulations - You're a Sophomore!)

- **Talk** with your counselor about the year ahead. Confirm that your courses will put you on the right track for college admission.
- **Ask** about test dates for the PSAT, ACT, and SAT. You'll need to register up to six weeks ahead of time.
- **Start** developing a résumé—a record of your accomplishments, activities, and work experience. This will be an important part of your college application.
- **Become** a joiner. If you haven't participated in many activities outside of class, now is the time to sign up. Consider clubs at school, team sports, leadership roles, or involvement in a religious or civic community group.

Spring

- **Work** with your counselor to set your junior schedule. Enroll in the most challenging courses.
- **Explore** summer opportunities on college campuses—this is a great way to find out what college life is really like.
- **Continue** researching colleges and universities. Go to college fairs and open houses. Learn as much as you can about colleges online.
- **Begin** planning college visits. If your school offers excused absences for college visits, use them! Try to visit colleges near you over spring break. Include a large, medium size, and small campus.
- **Develop** a preliminary list of colleges that interest you. Go online to request additional information. This is a great way to get on the radar of colleges that interest you.
- **Begin** to look at some college applications. Make note of all the pieces of information you will need to compile. Make a list of teachers, counselors, employers, and other adults who could write letters of recommendation.
- **Consider** lining up a summer job or internship.

