

What This Year Is About

Sophomore year is about turning freshman-year experience into direction. Students know how high school works; now the focus shifts to becoming more intentional about **grades, course choices, activities, and future opportunities**. The choices students make this year can begin shaping the options they will have during junior and senior year.

Academic Priorities

- **Learn from freshman year.** Identify the habits, classes, or routines that caused problems and make changes now.
- **Keep grades steady or improving.** Colleges notice academic trends.
- **Choose courses thoughtfully.** Look for an appropriate level of challenge without creating an unrealistic workload.
- **Think ahead.** Pay attention to prerequisites for future classes.
- **Build relationships with teachers.** Consistent effort, participation, and communication.

Get Involved With Purpose

Sophomore year is a good time to move from simply **joining** activities to becoming a consistent and dependable participant.

- Stick with activities you genuinely enjoy.
- Look for opportunities to take on small leadership roles or additional responsibility.
- Keep a running record of **activities, awards, volunteer work, service hours, leadership, and accomplishments**.

Start Thinking Ahead

You do **not** need to have college or a career figured out yet. This is the year to start exploring possibilities.

- Think about subjects, careers, majors, or fields that interest you.
- Begin thinking about meaningful summer opportunities such as a job, volunteering, a program, class, camp position, or other experience.
- Become familiar with the SAT and ACT and when students typically take them—without stressing about testing yet.
- Practice communicating professionally with teachers and other adults through emails, questions, and follow-up.



Parents Should Know

Sophomore year can feel less urgent than freshman or junior year, which makes it easy for students to quietly coast.Watch **effort and habits**, not just whether your child is passing. This is also a good year to talk about course choices, responsibilities, time management, and the connection between decisions now and opportunities later.

What to Watch For

- Doing the minimum because sophomore year feels less important.
- Grades or effort beginning to slide.
- Dropping activities too quickly.
- Choosing future courses without considering prerequisites or long-term goals.
- Not keeping track of activities, awards, service, or accomplishments.

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Settle into classes and strengthen routines.	Review grades and begin thinking about next year's courses.	Plan to do something meaningful that builds experience, maturity, responsibility, or independence in the summer.

Sophomore Checklist

- ☐ Review freshman-year habits and make needed changes.
- ☐ Keep grades steady or moving upward.
- ☐ Choose junior-year courses thoughtfully.
- ☐ Stay consistently involved in meaningful activities.
- ☐ Track activities, awards, service, and accomplishments.
- ☐ Explore interests and possible future paths.
- ☐ Make purposeful summer plans.

KEY TAKEAWAY: Sophomore year is about building your foundation. Strengthen your academic record, become more purposeful about how you spend your time, and start creating options for junior year and beyond.