



# Applying to college

Presented by: Lana Meskunas



# Welcome to the Guidance office!



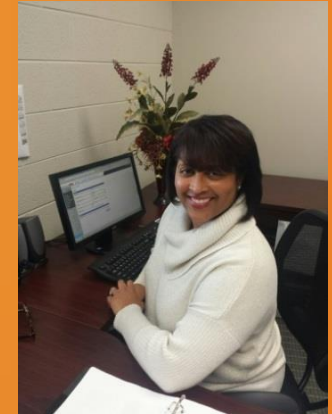
Mr. Eric Cleaves  
9<sup>th</sup> Grade



Ms. Kristen Gist  
10<sup>th</sup> Grade



Ms. Jenny Moorer  
11<sup>th</sup> Grade



Mrs. Rosalyn Smith  
12<sup>th</sup> Grade



Mrs. Susan Blades  
Registrar



Mrs. Jeanine Campbell  
Registrar




Mrs. Lana Meskunas  
College and Career



Mrs. Kara Lingerfelt  
Scholarships



# Choosing the right school

- 
- **The College VISIT!!**
  - **Commuting vs. living on campus**
  - **Urban vs. small college town**
  - **Size of the school**
  - **Extracurricular/ athletic activities**
  - **Size of classes/ faculty-student ratio**
  - **Restrictions/ regulations of social life**
  - **Type of programs offered**
  - **Cost of the school**



# The Application

- Your college application creates a portrait of **who you are** and what you can bring to a college.
- Remember that it is really important that you are aware of and **meet all the deadlines** for your applications.
- **When applying for scholarships, be sure to adhere to deadlines. Many are due by Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>, although some will still take the Dec. ACT into consideration.**

## Steps to applying:

1. **Apply to the school using their online application**
2. **Send your transcript to the college using JCHS's online portal.**
3. **Send your ACT/SAT score to the college from your ACT/SAT account.**



# Application Fees

- College application fees vary.
- Most are in the \$35 to \$70 range.
- The fee is usually nonrefundable, even if you're not accepted.
- Many colleges offer fee waivers for applicants from low-income families. If you need a fee waiver, see Mrs. Meskunas.
- Remember, if you qualified for a fee waiver for the SAT/ACT you may qualify for application fee waivers. Some colleges do not accept fee waivers.
- Applications will be filled out online through the college's website.



# Deadlines

- Deadlines will vary. To be sure you need to check with the colleges you have chosen to apply to.
- Missing an application deadline automatically means that you've missed your chance to apply.
- If you are trying to apply early decision, the deadline is usually in mid October/first of November. Schools have different criteria for accepting early decision applicants. Some schools look for GPA, test scores and or specific coursework. You should review the admissions section of your college's website for details. Research the college's mission statement.
- Early decision (ED) is binding, so if you chose to apply early decision make sure it is THE school you want to attend.
- Early action applications are usually due by November 1<sup>st</sup>. It is similar to early decision, but it is not binding.
- **Scholarship applications to colleges should be completed before Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>. Several schools require you to be admitted before you can fill out the scholarship application.**



# Transcripts

- Applications are incomplete without the transcript
- Request your transcript here: <https://madisoncityal.scriborder.com/>
- **Senior year grades matter! Your high school sends a final transcript to the college you will attend.**



# Test Scores

Fee Type	What is this?	SAT Cost	ACT Cost
Registration Fee	The normal fee for each administration of the test you register for	\$55	\$93 (\$68 without essay)
Late Fee	Charged if you register after the regular deadline but before the final late deadline	\$30	\$38
Waitlist Fee	Charged if you register after the late registration deadline and are seated on test day.	\$53	<u>\$68 (standby testing)</u>
Change Fee	Charged if you change the test center, test date, or test type	\$25	\$44

- SAT/ACT Give you a limited number of schools to have your scores sent to initially (4)
  - \$12.00 per additional test score sent out (SAT)
  - \$18.50 per additional test score sent out (ACT)
- JCHS does NOT send test scores
- It is important that you check the average test scores for your college to see if you should retake your SAT or ACT





# The Common Application

- The Common Application is a not-for-profit organization that serves students and member institutions by providing an admission application – online and in print – that students may submit to any of the 1000+ members.
- <https://www.commonapp.org>
- If the school you are applying to is one of the 1000+ that accepts this application, you can save a lot of time and effort by using The Common Application.
- There is a search feature so you can verify if the school you are interested in accepts The Common Application.
- Even if you are using The Common Application some of the colleges may also request additional materials when you apply.



# College Essays

- Common app or highly selective
- This can be the most time-consuming and difficult part of applying to college.
- The personal essay is usually about 300 to 500 words in length or longer, depending on the college.
- Sometimes you have a choice and other times the colleges give you specific prompts.
- **You need to give this part a lot of thought and dedicate a lot of time to it.**
- Once you think you are done, have several people read your essay.
- Explore the link below for more ideas and tips:
- <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/essays>



# College Essay Tips

- Be honest – write about something small in scale; a story only you can tell in your own words.
- Let your voice be heard.
- If there is something strange about your record, you should explain it (e.g., academic trends primarily).
- You should write about something that's important to you.
- Don't try to guess about which topic they want to read.
- Content, style, originality – cautiously humorous, risk taking.
- Discuss unique talents.
- How would you describe the strength and weaknesses of the topic – your point of view – regarding the essay question?
- Interesting or unique insights about a particular topic are welcome.
- Something that will enlighten them about yourself as it relates to the chosen topic.
- Use language with which you are familiar.
- Don't try to borrow someone else's phrases.
- The essay should show your character and personality – not just bragging about your list of accomplishments.
- Answer the question when you choose a topic – follow the directions, length, and format.
- Most readers look for essays that are persuasive and somewhat argumentative.



# Recommendations

- Some colleges ask you to submit one or more letters of recommendation from a teacher, counselor or other adult who knows you well.
- Choose someone who knows you well, but that is also still involved in your academic life.
- Give the person at least 3 weeks prior notice so that he or she can write a thoughtful letter. Provide information regarding the programs / colleges you are applying to.
- Remember, teachers are asked to write a lot of recommendation letters every year. Asking them at the last minute reflects poorly on you and may result in a less than ideal recommendation.
- Remember to thank those who write a letter for you.



# Recommendation Packet

for selective colleges *ONLY*

- Student Brag Sheet
- Parent Brag Sheet
- Resume
- DUE to Mrs. Meskunas during the summer before senior year or at least 3 weeks before needed



# Interviews and visits

- If the colleges you are considering offer interviews, you should schedule one as this shows you are very interested.
- This is an opportunity to connect directly with someone who will be part of the decision making process concerning your application.
- If an on-campus interview is not feasible, you can arrange to meet with an alumnus near you.
- The interview is also a good time to ask questions, so you can make sure the college is right for you.
- Follow interview protocol:
  - Be on time!
  - Dress neatly and professionally
  - Use appropriate language
  - Avoid eating or drinking during the interview
  - Do a little background research on the university and have some questions of your own ready



# University of Alabama In-State Scholarships for 2023-2024

Scholarship	Test Score*	GPA	Yearly Value
Presidential	30-36 ACT or 1360-1600 SAT	3.50+	Tuition
Foundation in Excellence	29 ACT or 1330-1350 SAT	3.50+	\$9,000
Foundation in Excellence	30-36 ACT or 1360-1600 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$9,000
Collegiate	28 ACT or 1300-1320 SAT	3.50+	\$8,000
Collegiate	29 ACT or 1330-1350 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$8,000
Capstone	27 ACT or 1260-1290 SAT	3.50+	\$7,000
Capstone	28 ACT or 1300-1320 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$7,000
UA Legends	26 ACT or 1230-1250 SAT	3.50+	\$6,000
UA Legends	27 ACT or 1260-1290 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$6,000
Crimson Achievement	25 ACT or 1200-1220 SAT	3.50+	\$5,000
Crimson Achievement	26 ACT or 1230-1250 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$5,000
UA Recognition	24 ACT or 1160-1190 SAT	3.50+	\$4,000
UA Recognition	25 ACT or 1200-1220 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$4,000

## Deadlines

•**Spring 2024:** UA will accept test scores through December 15 of a student's senior year and transcripts through May of a student's junior year. Admitted students who meet the December 15 application date will be considered for automatic merit scholarships.

•**Summer/Fall 2024:** UA will accept test scores and transcripts through December of a student's senior year. Admitted students who meet the May 1 application date will be considered for automatic merit scholarships.



# Auburn University In-State Scholarships 2023-2024

## COMPETITIVE MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS

Competitive merit scholarships are renewable for four years. First-year students must enroll summer or fall immediately following high school graduation to receive consideration.\*

### Consideration

- First-year students accepted for admission by early February receive automatic consideration. A scholarship application is not required.
- Consideration is based on high school GPA and standardized test score. Verify Auburn has received your most recent academic information in the Applicant Portal. Auburn will accept the ACT Superscore Report. Auburn will also calculate a superscore for the SAT and any individual score reports from ACT. Only your best testing result will be used for scholarship consideration. Updated highest scores from individual tests must be received by Auburn by January 10. *Scores received after this deadline will not be reviewed for competitive merit scholarship consideration.*

### Awards

- Scholarships are awarded competitively. Consideration does not guarantee an award. Each entering class competes with itself. Actual awards are determined based on the number of qualified admitted students, the credentials of those applicants, and available funding.
- First-year students accepted for admission earlier are more likely to receive an award.
- Scholarships are awarded mid-November, mid-December, and mid-February.
- Recipients are notified by email to their Auburn email account and by postal mail to their permanent address.

*\*Please visit First-year Student Scholarships under Frequently Asked Questions for more information on specific enrollment situations that may impact competitive merit scholarship eligibility.*

Information on scholarship payment and renewal can be found at Competitive Merit Scholarships.

	GPA	ACT	Estimated Award
Spirit of Auburn Presidential Scholarship	3.5	33-36	\$11,000
Spirit of Auburn Founders Scholarship	3.5	30-32	\$9,000
Spirit of Auburn University Scholarship	3.5	28-29	\$5,000





# What Seniors should be doing now

- Add to, review, and finalize your resume.
- Finalize your college essay if needed.
- Make note of all deadlines for admissions and financial aid.
- Set up a meeting with Mrs. Meskunas if you have questions.
- Review recommendations and ask for additional ones if necessary.
- Take SAT or ACT one more time, if needed.
- **Complete college applications (Sept. – Dec.).**
- **Send official transcripts (JCHS Homepage)**
- **Send SAT/ACT scores to colleges ([actstudent.org](http://actstudent.org) or [sat.collegeboard.org](http://sat.collegeboard.org))**
- Gather information needed for FAFSA and CSS profile (selective colleges)
- Fill out FAFSA (available Dec.).
- Apply for local scholarships (all year).
- Take necessary AP exams.
- Notify colleges of your decision to accept or decline their offer (May).
- Accept or decline financial aid/scholarships from the college you plan to attend.



# What Juniors should be doing now.

- Check your GPA, transcript and rank for accuracy
- **Take the PSAT/NMSQT**
- Begin the process of applying to any of the Military Academies, if applicable
- Write a first draft of your resume (fall)
- Take the SAT and/or the ACT (winter or spring)
- Register with the NCAA clearing house as a recruitable athlete, if applicable
- Request admissions information from colleges and universities
- Visit colleges, either in person or online
- Clean up your social media presence.
- Make sure you graduate on time by fulfilling all district requirements
- Gather any college admissions specific information such as your art or music portfolio, athletic game tapes, or tests.
- Ask teachers, coaches, employers, or other adults for recommendations.



# What Freshmen and Sophomores should be doing now

## Freshmen

- Finalize your 4 year plan.
- Get to know your counselor.
- Know your course descriptions.
- Monitor your grades.
- Explore the extracurricular and community organizations open to you.
- If interested, join JROTC.
- Investigate community service opportunities. Keep track of your hours.
- Start thinking about college and what you would like to gain from college.
- Visit colleges during weekends or breaks.

## Sophomores

- Check your GPA.
- Finalize your 4 year plan.
- Enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) courses where possible.
- Take the PSAT.
- Prepare for SAT/ACT.
- Military academy? Start planning now.
- Investigate careers.
- Think about what type of college you would like to attend.
- Visit colleges during weekends or breaks.
- Consider community colleges.
- Prepare for college application fees and exam fees.



# Social Media

- Do not post anything that you would not want a college representative or potential employer to see.
- Be careful! People are checking.
- Make certain that you have an appropriate, professional email address. Don't use livingtoparty@gmail.com. You will need a separate email address other than your school email. Otherwise, colleges will not be able to contact you after you graduate.



# Scholarships

Where to look:

- College or University's website
- James Clemens High School's Website (Academics – Guidance – College Scholarships)
- Follow JLV College Counseling
- Use scholarship search engines such as Fastweb.com or GoingMerry.com
- Ask people in your community. Certain banks, doctors, law firms, businesses, and organizations offer scholarship opportunities.



# Financial Aid

- Not being able to afford a certain school should not stop you from applying if you think you can get in.
- You don't know which colleges your family can afford until you get an estimate based on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) that you submit at the beginning of December in your senior year. **This is now a graduation requirement for seniors. There is an opt-out form available.**
- This form determines what your family can contribute and what types of scholarships and grants you might be eligible.



# Midyear Graduates

Madison City Schools Time Clock x Mid-Year Grads - Ilmeskunas@m... x 238D9D9D-2E9B-462E-926A-C66 x +

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## EARLY OR MIDYEAR COMPLETION

Students may complete their course work for graduation early from Madison City Schools by meeting all requirements for an Alabama Diploma as described in the Alabama Administrative Code 290-030-010-.6 (11) and when the conditions listed below are met. Students may also accelerate their program of studies by enrolling in summer school and dual enrollment at a postsecondary institution.

- Students must submit the Early or Midyear Completion form with a parent's signature no later than the semester prior to midyear graduation*
- Students who plan to complete early must follow course sequence/prerequisites.*
- Students who plan to complete early will not be given preferential treatment in registration and course selection.*
- Students who plan to accelerate their program of studies for the purpose of early completion may do so if space is available in classes after grade level students have completed registration.*
- Students who complete graduation requirements early will not be permitted to remain at school during the regular school day. However, they may return to school for senior activities and after school activities provided they remain in good standing with the school and follow the local school procedures for returning to the campus.*
- A student must be a full time student to be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. Therefore, a student who completes graduation requirements early will not be eligible for extracurricular activities.*
- Students who complete graduation requirements early will receive their diplomas at the regularly scheduled graduation ceremony.*

Students who complete their coursework early are responsible for making contact with school officials

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