

SOPHOMORE YEAR

- GRADES COUNT. Continue to work on your grades and stay focused on academics. Keep your GPA where it needs to be - as high as possible.
- Your counselor will work with you on checking your transcript (record of your high school grades) to make sure you are taking the courses required for your diploma option, for graduation and for your post-secondary goals. It is your responsibility to know what these courses are as well.
- While a good GPA is important for admissions and scholarships, it may be secondary to your ACT or SAT score and rigor of curriculum (Honors, Advanced Placement, Distance Learning, Career Tech, and Dual Enrollment courses). Do not be tempted to take "easier" classes to have a higher GPA. Remember, most colleges would prefer to have a student with a low A or B in a challenging course than an easy A in a simpler course. Plus, these challenging courses often help students increase their ACT and SAT scores, which most often determines scholarships and admissions.
 - [Advanced Placement Student and Parent Information/Resources](#)
- Use the results from any standardized assessments you take to improve your skills in your areas of weakness. If you take this seriously and do this, it will help you to score higher on all standardized assessments.
- It is time to start thinking about taking the ACT and/or SAT college-entrance exams. One of these is required for college admission and for scholarship consideration. Prepare for the exam by taking practice tests and attending any test-prep seminars available to you and by using your results from all other assessments for remediation. Although ACT recommends that students begin taking it in their junior year, if you are a good student who has completed geometry and biology and are currently in Algebra II/Trig, we recommend you go ahead and take the test in the tenth grade. (You will find the types of questions tested on the ACT website at www.act.org.)
- If you are interested in getting started in college and becoming a dually-enrolled student, you may want to consider enrolling in [The University of Alabama's Early College Program](#). See your counselor for further information.
- Continue to build your resume. Attend leadership programs/seminars/conferences whenever possible. Volunteer in your school clubs and in the community! Remember, colleges want well-rounded students who are high-achievers and leaders in their school and in their communities.
- Attend the National College Fair sponsored by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC). This Fair is always held on a Sunday afternoon in September at the Birmingham/Jefferson Civic Center. Go to www.gotomyncf.com to register. See your counselor for further information.
- Get prepared early and begin your [scholarship search](#) for both college merit scholarships and independent scholarships.
- Now is the time to continue to develop your lists of possible college choices and to arrange [college visits](#). One of the best times to visit colleges is during fall break, semester break, and spring break while college classes are still in session.
- If you are a student athlete and want to participate in college athletics, it is your responsibility to know the requirements for eligibility. You will find information on the NCAA, NAIA, and NJCAA in this handbook. Be sure you read this information carefully. The most important thing for you to do in the tenth grade is to keep your GPA up and to score as high as possible on the ACT or SAT.
- Apply for on-campus, college summer programs held during the upcoming summer months. These programs will give you an opportunity to acquire more in-depth information about the college and to enhance your academic skills.
- If you are interested in attending one of the military academies, it is time to begin looking over the application process. See your counselor for further information.
- Keep up your extracurricular and community service during the summer. Colleges and prospective employers will want to know what you have done during this "free" time.
- VERY IMPORTANT! Maintain a folder or filing box to store any certificates, pictures, letters, awards, newspaper clippings, medals, etc. that demonstrate academic, leadership, community service, and/or athletic accolades or accomplishments. This documentation will be invaluable when you begin the college and scholarship applications.