

Dear freshman,

Welcome to high school! This is a very exciting time for you. You will have the opportunity to pursue those goals that you have already identified, and to work towards identifying and pursuing new goals and areas of interest. Our faculty and administration are committed to you, and we hope that you will not hesitate to take advantage of our genuine desire to see you succeed.

Although this is not the time to begin stressing yourself about college admission requirements, it is a time to become more motivated and focused in your studies and extracurricular activities. The college admissions process is a few years away, but I would like to emphasize that your class selection and academic performance will play a role in dictating your college options. As you probably well know, this is the first year that your grades will count towards an overall GPA for college admission. Therefore, as a freshman, do not worry yourself about college yet, but rather begin to familiarize yourself with the curriculum and activities that Holy Spirit Preparatory School has to offer. Pursue your interest in activities offered, and stay motivated in your academic endeavors, always trying to perform to your best ability. This will naturally hone your interests and advance your goals over time.

To help you remain focused, I have put together this booklet for your freshman year. I have included, among other things, (i) the college calendars from freshman to senior year, (ii) sample resume and interview tip sheets, and most importantly, (iii) volunteer and activities log forms. If you have any questions or need assistance in any way, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to getting to know you this year.

Sincerely,

Cal Kanaly
Director of Guidance and College Counseling

FRESHMAN YEAR

GOALS

- △ Make a list of academic and personal goals (revise them at least once a year). Consider making grades a main point of focus your freshman year!
- △ Find a sport/activity you love and work hard. Join the school team, a club team, and travel to camps. If you play multiple sports/activities, try to excel in at least one.
- △ Meet with your counselor to review schedule and future academic goals.
- △ Allow teachers and counselor to get to know you so that if needed they may write personalized and specific recommendations on your behalf from various summer programs, scholarships and college applications.
- △ Check out websites of “dream” colleges. Research the admission requirements to determine how your goals compliment the college requirements.

STRENGTHENING YOURSELF

- △ Participate and be committed throughout your high school career in those activities you choose.
 - Join a sports team or start one (Example: mountain biking, rafting, fencing, or yoga teams).
 - Join an honor (NHS), academic (science, computer) or social (chess) club or start one (Ex: prep club).
 - Run for a student government position or work with someone on their campaign.
 - Complete the required school service hours.
- △ Get involved in the arts (music, art, write poetry).
- △ Travel.
- △ Volunteer in the community.
- △ Find a hobby.

TESTS

- △ Take PSAT.
- △ Review PSAT results in December and/or January.
- △ Take the Stanford and when results are mailed home, review your strengths and weaknesses.
- △ If applicable, take AP/CLEP tests.

GET ORGANIZED

- △ Create a file to keep track of important papers, grades, scholarship opportunities, etc.
- △ Complete the log forms included in this packet each year.

SUMMER CONSIDERATIONS

- Δ Call colleges, ask counselor, explore websites to find out about summer programs.
- Δ Apply to programs and/or camps.
- Δ Join a volunteer service
- Δ Look for job opportunities

Selective Schools (*If you are considering or showing some interest in applying to selective colleges below are a few recommendations*):

- Δ Take the most challenging courses you can, including honors and/or college level courses
- Δ Participate and excel in a sport, extracurricular activity AND in a school activity. Join school and community teams and/or clubs.
- Δ Community Service – complete your required HS/PS community service hours doing something you love. Summer trips are great educational experiences.
- Δ Read magazine articles, newspapers, books.
- Δ Keep in mind that you will probably need teacher recommendations and counselor recommendations. Behave well and be involved so that there is plenty of information to write on your behalf!

FRESHMAN YEAR CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

September

- Start thinking about your high school curriculum in respect to college goals.
- Get involved in new activities.

October

- Take the PSAT!

January

- Review your PSAT scores and concentrate on ways you can improve various areas over the next few years.

February

- Start thinking about summer plans. Summer is a great time to pursue your specific interests.

March

- Talk with your teachers about registering for the SAT Subject Tests in May or June, specially for the classes that you have completed and will not take in future high school years (Ex.: College Level Biology, College Level Chemistry, College Level World History).

May

- If applicable, take AP or CLEP tests.
- If applicable, take the SAT Subject tests.
- Update log sheets.

June

- Take SAT Subject tests as appropriate
- Read.