

Dear sophomore,

Welcome to your second year in high school! It's time to build upon your hard work as a freshman, and to advance your academic and extracurricular life in a way that will provide you with the greatest possible future opportunities. Our faculty and administration are extremely excited to help you strengthen your academic and extracurricular schedule, as well as help you further develop and enjoy a faith-filled life.

Please take this opportunity to review the pages enclosed. As you will know, your GPA is an important aspect to succeed academically this year.

The college process truly begins in the fall of your junior year; however, please feel free to stop by my office any time to schedule an appointment. I would be more than happy to begin discussing the college application process and help you with mapping goals and evaluation options for your future.

I look forward to working with you this year and getting the chance to get to know you better. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Cal Kanaly  
Director of Guidance and College Counseling

# SOPHOMORE YEAR

## GOALS

- △ Focus on GPA and take the most challenging classes you can handle.
- △ Narrow down your extracurricular activities to 2-3 that you will continue to do throughout high school.
- △ Start a list of colleges to consider and go to college fairs in the area.
- △ Begin researching career options and/or interests
  - Talk to adults about what they do in their job.
  - List the careers that interest you and research the field.
    - Call the human resources department
    - Flip through magazines related to that career (Ex. *Psychology Today*)
  - Review a college course catalog for areas of study that seem interesting.
- △ Make a list of what you would like in a college.
- △ Subscribe to college organizations such as College Board. Read the college editions of *US News and World Report* and *Newsweek*.
- △ Visit colleges through website tours.
- △ Register at colleges' websites and request information.

## 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 the 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.
- △ If applicable, take SAT Subject II tests

## **GET ORGANIZED**

- △ Create a file to keep track of important papers, grades, scholarship opportunities, etc.
- △ Update your log sheets.

## **SUMMER CONSIDERATIONS**

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

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

- △ Take the most challenging courses you can, including honors and/or college level courses
- △ Participate and excel in a sport, extracurricular activity AND in a school activity. Join school and community teams and/or clubs.
- △ Community Service – complete your required HSPS community service hours doing something you love. Summer trips are great educational experiences.
- △ Read magazine articles, newspapers, books.
- △ 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!

## SOPHOMORE YEAR CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

### September

- Start assessing whether you are overwhelmed or challenged by your course load.

### October

- Take the PSAT!

### January

- Take time to review your PSAT scores and areas of strength and weakness that you can work to improve in the next 2 years.
- Start planning for next year's courses. Next year is specifically the time that you should consider stretching for a College Level or two and a couple of honor level courses.

### February

- Think about summer opportunities.

### March

- Talk with your teachers about possibly 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.