

MCNEAL SAMS COLLEGE CONSULTING NEWS AND NOTES

SOPHOMORE CHECKLIST

- SET GOALS:** Take the time to define what you want to achieve this year and create an action plan. Not sure where to start? Make an appointment with your McNeal Sams consultant.
- SCHEDULE:** Make an appointment with your McNeal Sams consultant. We will help you launch your sophomore year.
- REGISTER:** You may have the opportunity to sit for the PSAT in October. Many high schools offer sophomores the chance to take the PSAT. If your high school offers you the chance, take it! The test is a "practice" SAT. No need to prepare or stress. This test allows you to become familiar with the test and learn what areas you may need to work on for future tests.



A LITTLE ADVICE AS YOU BEGIN ANOTHER YEAR ...

Welcome to the new school year! We hope you had a rewarding and relaxing summer. In this month's newsletter, our focus is on helping you start your school year successfully.

A couple of tips for both sophomores and freshmen:

- As a high school student, keep in mind something we will say over and over: your grades matter! All end of semester and end of year grades you earn will be reported to colleges from 9th through 12th grade.
- Remember, colleges are learning AND living communities. Colleges want to know that when you are a part of their community you will contribute. Your contributions in high school and in your local community demonstrate how you will share your talents, interests, and time. Get involved!

SOPHOMORE YEAR ... WHAT TO EXPECT

Now that you are a sophomore, your college choice journey moves into phase two, exploring your strengths and interests. Specifically, we encourage you to take the following steps:

- **Schedule an appointment with your McNeal Sams college consultant** before the end of September. We want to review your strengths and interests and discuss a plan of action for your sophomore year.
- **Take practice standardized tests.** No, we are not encouraging you to start your official testing or test preparation. Yes, we do want you to sit for at least one practice SAT and one practice ACT before the end of the year. Most high schools will offer you the opportunity to sit for a PSAT in October. And at many high schools, there is a practice ACT in the spring. If your school does not offer you these options, let your consultant know. We will arrange for you to take practice versions of each test.
- **Begin to explore college types.** By this we mean we want you to begin to explore colleges of various sizes, settings, and distances from home. Answering the big three questions this year - what size, setting and distance you want in a school - will ensure you are ready for your junior year.

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FRESHMEN CHECKLIST

- SET GOALS:** A new year, maybe even a new school, it means the chance for a fresh start. Take the time to define what you want to achieve this year and create an action plan. Not sure where to start? Make an appointment with your McNeal Sams consultant.
- GET INVOLVED:** Studies repeatedly show that when you invest your time and talents into a community, you are happier and more successful. Find a few activities and get involved!

FRESHMEN YEAR ... STARTING STRONG

Welcome to high school! Your college choice journey begins with no talk of college. Your freshman year is the time to establish the foundation for your future. We want you to explore who you are, what your strengths are, and what interests you both in and out of the classroom.

First and foremost, as we mentioned on page one of this newsletter, your academic performance matters. The number one factor in college admission is your academic record. Your McNeal Sams college consultant wants to help.

We have a tool to help you understand your learning and study style, strengths and needs. You can use that information to establish appropriate study habits. Schedule an appointment with your McNeal Sams college consultant before the end of September. We will help you start your year off strong and explain what you should expect and do this year.



KINDNESS CORNER: THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING

Now that school is about to start again, we acknowledge that high school can get overwhelming at times. Your coursework is more demanding, you are expected to be involved in all of these activities, your friends all want to do something different, and, on top of all that, your parents want you to start your college search journey.

Don't let it get the best of you. In the words of Audrey Hepburn, "Nothing is impossible, the word itself says I'm possible."



TALK AROUND TOWN

Some items we find interesting:

Article: ["College Admission: Things That Make You Go Hmmm..."](#), article by Brennan Barnard

Podcast: [FutureU Podcast](#): bi-monthly, on every other Tuesday, regarding what's next in higher education.

Book: [Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be](#), book by Frank Bruni

