



COLLEGE PLANNING

HANDBOOK FOR SENIORS

Class of 2022

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Welcome!

To the Class of 2022,

We know this is an exciting time for you! It is time for you to make some big decisions. There are many questions that must be answered. What are you planning to do after graduation? College? Technical School? Military? Work? Have you applied to college or technical school? How are you going to pay for college? All of these are important questions and we are here to help you explore your options and guide you as you make some important decisions this year.

This packet is intended to help guide you and your family through some important aspects of your senior year. Please read through the entire packet. There is a lot of important information included, but try not to get overwhelmed. We are here to help you with any questions you may have or any additional information you may need.

Your high school career is $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way complete, but that remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ is perhaps the most important portion. Let's work together to make your Senior year a successful one! We are excited about the Class of 2022, and we look forward to working with you this year!

Mrs. Taggart
Principal

Mrs. Camp
Counselor

Mrs. Howard
College Counselor

Ms. Horn, Mrs. Ivey, Mrs. Picken Mr. Clayton, and Mrs. Solar
Senior Class Sponsors



Calendar of Events

Mark your calendars for these important upcoming events for Seniors and Parents:

August 3	Senior Parent Meeting	Dec. 11	National ACT Date
August 11	Senior Dinner/Devotional	Dec. 14-17	Exams
August 12	First Day of School		
August 16	NAIA/NCAA Parent Athlete Night	Jan. TBD	LifeSouth Blood Drive
August 28	National SAT Date		
August 30	Cap & Gown Info - 8:00 am	Feb. 9-11	ACT Prep on Campus
		Feb. 12	National ACT Date
Sept. 3	Cap & Gown Orders - 1pm	Feb. 23	National Honor Society Inductions
Sept. 8	Meet Kindergarten Buddies	Feb. TBD	Montala Pageant
Sept. 8-10	ACT Prep on Campus		
Sept. 11	National ACT Date	March 4	Senior Class Picture (Off-Campus)
Sept. 13	Junior League College & Career Night	March 8	School Day ACT @ ACA
Sept. 16	Lee McDaniel- Deliver Class Rings 8:30	March 9	Senior Cap & Gown Portraits @ ACA
Sept. 20	Financial Aid Night at ACA	March 12	National SAT Date
Sept. TBD	LifeSouth Blood Drive	March 30-1	ACT Prep on Campus
Oct. 1	FAFSA Application Opens	April 2	National ACT Date
Oct. 2	National SAT Date	April 13	School Day SAT @ ACA
Oct. 4	College (& Career) Fair at ACA	April TBD	Junior/Senior Banquet
Oct. 5	Fall School Day ACT		
Oct. 8	Senior Night @ Football Game	May 1	National Candidate Reply Date
Oct. 13	School Day PSAT	May 2	AP Government (AM)
Oct. 20-22	ACT Prep on Campus	May 7	National SAT Date
Oct. 22	Homecoming Football Game	May 9	AP Calculus (AM)
Oct. 23	National ACT Date	May 11	Seniors' Last Day of School (Awards Day, Senior Lunch, & Graduation Practice)
Nov. 6	National SAT Date	May 13	Baccalaureate
Dec. 1	Deadline for most Academic Scholarships	May 15	Graduation
Dec. 4	National SAT Date		
Dec. 6-9	Faulkner Exam Week (DE Exams)		
Dec. 8-10	ACT Prep on Campus		



Senior Year Events

Beginning of Year Senior Dinner

Every year, the Senior classes meet together (with their parents!) the Wednesday night before school begins. This event will take place on Wednesday, August 11th. You will have time to make your crowns for the first day of school, visit with your friends, eat dinner (more info will be sent closer to time to coordinate food) and spend some devotional time together. If you will not be able to attend this dinner, please let us know! We want to be sure to have enough food for everyone!

Cap & Gown Ordering

W.C. McDaniel from Herff-Jones will be on campus August 30th to give the Seniors information on Caps and Gowns. Orders are due on Friday, September 3rd! The cost for the Cap & Gowns is approximately \$102 (including shipping and tax). Students will get a final price for these at the information meeting. Seniors will keep their cap and gown after graduation and do not have to return them. This amount is not included in tuition. You can also order additional Senior Year items from them, but only the cap and gown are mandatory. Invitations, thank you cards, etc. are all optional items. Please send a check, cash, or your credit card information to pay for these.

Yearbook

In order to give you the proper yearbook-style send off, there are some things we need from you to complete your coverage in the book. Please submit the information below to Mrs. Foster (room 144, cfoster@alabamachristian.org) by **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2021**. Failure to complete and submit this information on time may affect your coverage.

- Submit **ONE picture of yourself under the age of seven** to Mrs. Foster via email (cfoster@alabamachristian.org) or as a hard copy. (This is required for all seniors, even if they are not buying a senior note in the back of the yearbook.)
- Senior Notes (see attached information)
- Send Mrs. Foster an email that includes the following items:
 - o **Your full name** (as it will appear on your diploma).
 - o **Your chosen senior quote.** **Note the guidelines below. If you do not adhere to these guidelines, your quote will be rejected. Quote guidelines: Your quote must be in standard English - no abbreviations, creative spelling, or questionable/inappropriate content. The quote must not exceed 150 characters in length (including spaces and punctuation). No profanity, acronyms, gang-affiliated words or phrases, sexual innuendo, or drug or alcohol references are allowed. No derogatory comments about other students or staff members are allowed. No shout-outs to or about other students or teachers are allowed. (Some may not approve of being mentioned in another student's quote, and even if that person "approves," we do not need to



worry about who does and does not want to be mentioned in yearbook quotes.) If you are unsure whether or not your quote meets these guidelines, email it to me ahead of the deadline to make sure. We must have time for the administration to review quotes and for the quotes to be typed on the senior pages. **Do not miss the deadline, or you may not get to include a quote.**

Senior Class Pictures

Each year, the senior class takes a field trip to an area location to take a dressy picture that will be used for promotional materials and will be displayed in the senior section of the yearbook. This year's picture will be on Friday, March 4th at the Shakespear. We wanted to go on and give you dress code information so that you can be preparing for the picture.

Each senior boy should wear a pair of khaki pants, a long-sleeved white button-down dress shirt (tucked in with a dark belt), dark shoes, a bow tie in a color of his choosing, and a navy sports coat. (If you do not own a sports coat and do not know of someone who can lend you one, let Mrs. Howard or Mrs. Taggart know and we will try to find one you can borrow. If you have an extra navy coat or know of someone who can lend one, please let Mrs. Howard or Mrs. Taggart know as well!)

Each girl should wear a *pure white dress* (not cream-colored, eggshell, off-white, etc, but can have lace in cream-colored, eggshell, or off-white). The dress must be floor length. (Girls whose dresses are revealing or too tight risk not being allowed on the field trip and not being included in the picture. If you are in doubt, please email Mrs. Taggart pictures of yourself from the front and back angles wearing the dress.) The dress may not be strapless, but may have straps no less than two-three inches in width. Your shoes will be removed for the pictures, but you must wear shoes to school and on the trip. Jewelry may be worn, but should be low-key and dainty (nothing chunky and large).

Junior/Senior Banquet

The date for this year's Jr/Sr Banquet is TBD. Every year, the junior class hosts a formal dinner for the senior class. All seniors are invited to attend for free. A date can be from another class or school; however, the ACA senior will be responsible for paying a fee (usually \$30-35). Students are expected to wear formal attire (suit/tux for young men and formal dresses for young ladies). Dresses should be modest. Dresses should not be shorter than two inches above the knee (including slits). Tops should not be too low cut and any two-piece dresses should not be too revealing (two inches or less). The Montala Pageant gives some additional guidelines to consider when purchasing gowns (refer to the student handbook).

As per the student handbook:

1. If a student is thought to be dressed inappropriately at a school event, any employee may call it to the attention of an administrator. The administrator will go to talk to the student.
2. The student will be asked to leave if the administrator determines the dress is inappropriate. The administrator will meet with the student and parent the next available school day to determine if further action is needed.



Senior Awards Day

Senior Awards Days are separate from High School and Middle School Awards Day. This year Senior Awards will be on Wednesday, May 11, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. Middle and High School awards will be held on a separate day. Academic awards, scholarships, Valedictorian/Salutatorian, Mr. & Miss ACA, the Wade Norton Award and others will be presented that day. Seniors should plan on wearing church appropriate clothing that meets the school dress code. The top 25 Scholarships in the class will be presented during Awards (either by the College Representative or by ACA). Other scholarships are recognized on the screen. Please remember we are only as good as the information we are given. Make sure you have turned in all your scholarships by the deadline given in the spring. Scholarships turned in after the deadline will not be recognized at Awards Day. Prior to Awards Day is the Senior/Kindergarten Cap & Gown walk. Seniors meet in the MPR at 7:45 a.m. dressed in their gowns (no caps - guys wear khaki pants with a collared shirt - tie optional/girls wear school appropriate dresses). The walk begins at 8:05 a.m. Seniors will wear their gowns for Awards Day. Following Awards, Seniors are dismissed to go to their Senior Lunch beginning at 11:00 a.m. (location announced later). Mandatory graduation rehearsal begins at 1:00 p.m.

Baccalaureate

Baccalaureate will be held on May 13, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., at University Church of Christ. More details about this event will be given closer to time.

Graduation

Graduation will be held on May 15, 2022, at Faulkner University at 2:30 pm. ACA requires tickets at the door to attend ACA's graduation ceremony. Each member of the senior class will receive 15 tickets late April or early May. A certain number of tickets will be for the reserved section and will be designated differently on the actual ticket. Students will count their tickets and sign a document, signifying they have received their tickets for graduation. ACA will not replace lost tickets. Please remind your children that they are responsible for the tickets once they sign for them. If a guest to graduation does not have a ticket, the guest will not view the ceremony. An ACA graduation announcement does not allow admittance. A child who is younger than six and able to sit in an adult's lap will not need a ticket. Seniors will not have exams in the spring; therefore, third and fourth nine weeks grades make up their semester grades. Wednesday, May 11, 2022 will be the last day of school for seniors and they will be dismissed following Senior Awards. **If a student does not have all of his/her credits needed to graduate, he or she will not participate in graduation.** Financial accounts with ACA must be paid in full for your child to participate in graduation. If this is a problem, please contact the business office as soon as possible.

Students who fail courses and who will not graduate will receive notification by 4:00 pm on Thursday, May 12, 2022.

Rehearsal: Attendance Mandatory (Wednesday, May 11, 2022, at Faulkner University from 1:00-2:30 pm). Please do not be late. Students should dress modestly for practice. Girls should bring the shoes they are planning to wear so they can practice walking up on the stage in them. Rehearsal will last for about one and a half hours. This time could vary depending on cooperation and listening skills. If a student is not at rehearsal,



we will assume that he/she will not participate in the graduation ceremony. Exception: student participating in a school athletic event.

GRADUATION DAY:

Arrival

- Graduates need to be at Faulkner University by 1:30 p.m., dressed and ready for the class group picture, taken at 1:40 p.m. If a student is not present on time, he/she will not participate in the picture. Graduates should meet in the Multiplex.
- There will be a photographer at graduation to take a group picture. Students will receive information about these pictures when they pick up their graduation packet and diploma.

Seats

- We have reserved seating for graduates.
- Each family will receive a portion of their tickets as “reserved”. These tickets will be on the floor. Seating will be determined by a random drawing early in May.
- Mothers need to sit near the aisle for the rose ceremony if possible. If not, please be sure your child knows where you are sitting.

Gowns

- **As soon as your child receives their gown, have them try it on. If there is an issue, please report it immediately.**
- For the best appearance, you should remove the gown from its container and place it on a hanger soon after receipt. Gowns may need to be ironed or steamed for best appearance.
- Flowers and pins are not appropriate for graduation gowns. Do not add anything to the cap or gown other than honor cords students receive from Alabama Christian Academy.

What to Wear Under the Gown

- Boys need to wear dark or khaki pants, dark socks with dark dress shoes, and a **white**-collared shirt with a tie. (Bow ties are fine.)
- Students will also need their caps and gowns with the maroon sash; girls do not need the white collar, and boys do not receive one.
- Girls need to wear dresses that cannot be seen while wearing a gown and black or nude dress shoes.

Tassels

- Wear tassels on the right side of the mortarboard. After all graduates have received their diploma covers and are back in their seats, the speaker will ask the class to stand and move their tassels to the left side as a group.
-

Caps

- Place caps on the head so the mortarboard is level. The front of the cap is indicated on the inside of the crown.
- Remove caps during the commencement ceremony **at the appropriate times**, which we will discuss during practice.



Graduation cords

- The following cords are the only cords that have been approved to be worn on the gown during graduation.
 - ✓ Advanced Diploma – white cord
 - ✓ Key club – royal blue
 - ✓ Mu Alpha Theta – sky blue
 - ✓ Tri-M – pink
 - ✓ National Honor Society – blue/gold ribbon with medallion
 - ✓ National Spanish Honor Society – red/gold
 - ✓ LifeSouth – red/silver

Herff Jones (Graduation Announcements, Gowns, Etc.)

If there is a problem with your gown or announcement, contact W.C. McDaniel at (205) 502-7534 or by email at wcmcdaniel@herffjones.com.



Graduation Requirements & Diplomas

Appointment Procedures

Mrs. Camp reviews each Senior transcript to ensure they are on track to graduate. Mrs. Camp is happy to discuss academic or social concerns at any time. If you need an appointment to see Mrs. Camp, please send her an email and she will get with you as quickly as possible.

Grade Point Average

When filling out college applications, one of the first questions you will need to answer is your Grade Point Average (GPA). Many colleges and scholarship programs prefer to look at unweighted grade point averages. We can provide you with both your unweighted and weighted GPA. Rarely, some applications may ask for your class rank. Please note that ACA does not give out class rank because this can fluctuate during the school year. We will let you know if you are in the top 5%, 10%, etc.

Course Grade	A	B	C	D	F
Regular Course	4.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	0
Honors Course	4.5	3.5	2.5	1.5	
Dual Enrollment Course	5.0	4.0	3.0	2.0	
AP Course	6.0	4.5	3.0	2.0	

Graduation Requirements

Students attending ACA from grade 9 through 12 must earn 26 units of credit to graduate and receive a Standard or Advanced Diploma. ONLY units of credit earned in grades 9 – 12 apply toward graduation requirements. When counting units of credit for graduation, each semester of work passed will be counted as $\frac{1}{2}$ unit. For example, if students pass first semester Spanish, but never pass second semester Spanish, they earn $\frac{1}{2}$ unit of credit in Spanish toward graduation. Whether receiving a Standard or Advanced Diploma, all seniors MUST have taken the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the ACT twice (or once each) and have had their scores reported directly to ACA in order to graduate. Finally, it should be noted that all accounts MUST be cleared and paid in full before seniors will be permitted to participate in graduation exercises and have their diplomas mailed.



Requirements for a Standard Diploma

4 units Bible – one for each year enrolled at ACA (includes Bible/Chorus and dual enrollment course)

4 units English

- 1 unit 9th Grade English or Honors English
- 1 unit 10th Grade English or Honors English
- 1 unit 11th Grade English or Dual Enrollment Composition I & II
- 1 unit 12th Grade English or Dual Enrollment Literature I & II

4 units Mathematics – one math course must be successfully completed each year enrolled at ACA

1 unit Algebra I–

Algebra I taken in the 8th grade earns one unit of credit which is included in the high school GPA and satisfies the Algebra I requirement. Students taking Algebra 1 in the 8th grade must still successfully complete a math course each year enrolled at ACA in grades 9 – 12. The Algebra IA and Algebra IB combination completed in the 9th and 10th grades will satisfy the Algebra I requirement and will count as 2 of the 4 required math units.

1 unit Geometry

1 unit Algebra II

1 additional unit – For students who do not complete the Algebra IA and Algebra IB combination, the additional required unit MUST be selected from Finite Math, Precalculus with Trigonometry, Calculus, Advanced Placement Calculus, and Dual Enrollment Finite Math.

4 units Science:

- 1 unit Biology or Honors Biology
- 1 unit Chemistry or Honors Chemistry
- 2 additional units must be selected from Physical Science (limited to those who took the course in 9th grade), Anatomy & Physiology, Biomedical Science, Advanced Placement Biology, Environmental Science and Physics.

4 units Social Studies:

- 1 unit World History or AP World History – 9th grade
- 1 unit U.S. History & Geography OR AP European History – 10th grade
- 1 unit U.S. History & Geography OR AP U.S. History – 11th grade
- ½ unit American Government OR AP American Government – 12th grade
- ½ unit Economics or Honors Economics – 12th grade

1 unit Physical Education – Beginning with the 2014-15 school year, participation in fall marching band for two semesters may be substituted for Physical Education. Students must participate in marching band for two fall semesters to earn the full unit of Physical Education. Spring semesters of concert band do not count toward this requirement.

½ unit Health

½ unit Intermediate Technology or Communications

4 units Electives – A list of electives is available through the guidance office. (Additional core courses may be taken as electives.)



Requirements for an Advanced Diploma

4 units Bible – one for each year enrolled at ACA (includes Bible/Chorus and dual enrollment course choices)

4 units English

- 1 unit 9th Grade English or Honors English
- 1 unit 10th Grade English or Honors English
- 1 unit 11th Grade English or Dual Enrollment Composition I & II
- 1 unit 12th Grade English or Dual Enrollment Literature I & II

4 units Mathematics – one math course must be successfully completed each year enrolled at ACA

- 1 unit Algebra I – Algebra I taken in the 8th grade earns one unit of credit, which is included in the high school GPA and satisfies the Algebra I requirement. Students taking Algebra 1 in the 8th grade must still successfully complete a math course each year enrolled at ACA.
- 1 unit Geometry
- 1 unit of Algebra II
- 1 unit of Precalculus with Trigonometry

NOTE: The Algebra IA and Algebra IB combination do NOT count toward an Advanced Diploma.

4 units Science:

- 1 unit Biology
- 1 unit Chemistry
- 2 additional units must be selected from Physical Science (limited to those who took the course in 9th grade), Anatomy & Physiology, Biomedical Science, Advanced Placement Biology, Environmental Science and Physics. (**This only applies to the 2019 Senior Class since Medical Anatomy is no longer an option.)

4 units of Social Studies:

- 1 unit World History or AP World History – 9th grade
- 1 unit U.S. History & Geography OR AP European History – 10th grade
- 1 unit U.S. History & Geography OR AP U.S. History – 11th grade
- ½ unit American Government OR AP American Government – 12th grade
- ½ unit Economics or Honors Economics – 12th grade

1 unit Physical Education (see Standard Diploma Requirements)

½ unit Health

½ unit Intermediate Technology or Communications

2 units Foreign Language (must be the same language)

2 units Electives – A list of electives is available through the guidance office. (Additional core courses may be taken as electives.)

Advanced diplomas are awarded to students completing required work AND maintaining a 3.00 academic GPA. If students have more AP/Dual Enrollment classes, they can count as an honors credit. However, honors credits cannot count as one of the AP/Dual Enrollment class credits. Graduating seniors receiving advanced diplomas are awarded white honor cords.



Valedictorian and Salutatorian

For the purpose of calculating GPA for Valedictorian and Salutatorian the core GPA will be used. Core GPA is calculated by using grades from the five core classes - Bible, English, Math, Science and Social Studies - from 9th - 12th grades only for a total of 20 credits. AP, Dual Enrollment and Honors classes are weighted in this calculation. In case of a tie, high school credits earned in the 8th grade will be used to break the tie. If a tie still exists, the students will be co-valedictorians or co-salutatorians.

A transfer student's total number of quality points cannot exceed the total number of quality points possible for ACA students.

The Valedictorian and Salutatorian give an address at the Commencement Exercises. All speeches are subject to administrative approval

Diplomas

You may pick up diplomas and report cards at school beginning Tuesday, May 24, 2022, unless there is a problem at graduation or a financial hold on the account. The administration will determine if a student has not followed the instructions given at graduation practice and will hold his/her diploma. If a diploma is held, the student will need to make an appointment with the administrator. There is a section in the school handbook concerning this matter.

Please remember that the graduation ceremony is a dignified time, and we try to direct our graduation so that it is special to all concerned. Please remind your child that he/she is not the only person graduating, and it is rude and thoughtless to act in a manner that would take away from another person's part in graduation. If someone creates a distraction, the spotlight will be on him/her and not on the person who follows. Everyone deserves his/her moment at graduation.



Career & College Counseling Center

Students are encouraged to meet with Mrs. Howard before or after school or by requesting an appointment on her website or by email. She is on campus Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Services available through the counseling center with Mrs. Howard:

- Self-Discovery Assessments through Naviance to identify interests, abilities, and career values
- Career and College Information (College Applications, ACT/SAT Registration, Recommendation letters, Scholarship Assistance, and Transcripts)
- Opportunities for part-time employment, full-time employment, and volunteer opportunities (as she is notified)
- Assistance in finding college/university or other educational programs

TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts may be requested by submitting the Google Form “Transcript Request.” This request form is on the counseling website and will be emailed to your child at the beginning of the year. Transcript requests will only be honored if they are submitted through this form. ACA will provide **three** FREE transcripts. After three have been submitted, a fee of \$5 per transcript will be assessed. Please make sure you have sent in your application to a college **before** you request the transcript. If a college receives a transcript and it has no application to match it with, they often just throw them away. If a transcript is sent prior to an application being submitted, and another transcript must be sent, a fee may be assessed.

At Senior Exit Interviews, the final transcript request form will be completed. Final high school transcripts are not available until after you have completed high school. These will be finalized after graduation. Once transcripts are available, Mrs. Howard will mail the final transcript to the school indicated on the request form **if** the student indicates they have already applied and been accepted to the college. Transcripts are typically ready and mailed by the second week of June.

If students need to request a transcript after they have graduated from ACA to transfer schools, begin a new program for employment, they may do so by emailing showard@alabamachrisian.org. Cost is \$10.



Post-Secondary Options

Post-secondary is any education option after high school. Options may include: two-year college, four-year college or university, independent private schools, the military, apprenticeships, or beginning the work force.

Four-Year College

Four-year universities generally have certain academic requirements for entry. These universities are typically larger in size with a higher teacher-to-student ratio. At four year colleges, you can obtain a bachelor's, master's, specialists, or doctoral degree.

Two-Year College

Community and Junior Colleges offer two-year associate degrees. They are usually easier to get into than most colleges and universities and are generally less expensive. Most students will receive an associates degree upon graduation at a community college.

Private Colleges

Community and Junior Colleges offer two-year associate degrees. They are usually easier to get into than most colleges and universities and are generally less expensive.

Technical/Trade Institutions

A trade school (also known as a technical school) is a postsecondary educational institution designed to train students for a specific job in a skilled trade career. Most importantly, a trade school offers hands-on training to prepare students for actual work in their chosen field. Trade school programs are entirely concentrated on relevant job training. Although each program is unique, most programs take anywhere from a few months to a year. Some more specialized types of training programs can last anywhere from one to two years. The length of schooling to gain entry-level technical skills is usually under one year.

Military Service

There are six military service branches, each with their own active-duty and part-time components. According to todaysmilitary.com, "Each varies in service commitment, location, and how its members contribute to the overall mission of protecting our country, though all components are on the same rank-based pay scale." The branches of service are: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, and the Coast Guard.

Apprenticeship

Paid on the job training. Apprenticeships bridge the gap between school and the world of work. An apprenticeship is a way to learn a skilled trade through structured on-the-job training, and get paid while you do so.

The Work Force

Joining the workforce is generally a phrase used to describe someone who chooses to begin employment in some capacity, instead of going to college or joining the military. Students may choose to do this temporarily or long term. Those who choose to take a year off after high school may hear the term "gap year," meaning the student is taking a break from school to work, do some form of ministry, just figure out what they want to do, etc.



Naviance and Common App

CEEB Code: 011869

(Students will be asked to supply this code throughout the college search and application process.)

Students should apply online to college institutions. Students should request to have the transcript sent electronically by the following steps:

1. Go to your Naviance account at www.connect.naviance.com/alabamaca
2. Click on the “colleges tab”
3. Go to “colleges I’m applying to”

Complete the Important Privacy Notice for Common Application: (check: yes, I do waive my right to access and check by completing this form, I authorize all schools, etc.) This sets you up with a common application username and password. The Common Application is available online at www.commonapp.org, which allows students to apply to hundreds of different college institutions with ONE application process. The participating colleges and universities are listed online.

Click on +add colleges to this list. Enter the college you are applying to and request that a transcript be sent electronically. This is the ONLY way a transcript request can be made. Please do not request a transcript until you have completed and submitted the application for admission.

Other Benefits of Naviance:

- Resume Builder
- Interest inventories and career assessments
- College Search and Comparison
- Goal Tracker
- Transcript Request
- Send Letters of Recommendation
- Calendar for on ACA’s campus College Visits
- Career Cluster and Exploration
- ACT Prep (seven FULL LENGTH tests!!!)
- Scholarships



Choosing a College

Choosing a college requires that you know yourself. Ask yourself the following questions and perhaps the best college fit for you is one that will match your responses to these questions:

1. What are your academic interests?
2. How would you describe your learning style? Do you like small or large classes; seminars or lectures; internships?
3. Did you take advanced placement classes at ACA and do you want to continue to be challenged in a rigorous academic environment or do you want a less pressured academic environment?
4. How would you weigh the importance of social opportunities versus a focus on academics? Are you an adventurer or risk taker who enjoys a lot of change or do you prefer a stable, predictable environment?
5. Do you want to spend the next four years with people like you or do you want to meet people from different cultures and backgrounds very different from your own?
6. What do you do well or care deeply about? What interests, talents, or skills do you want to pursue while you are in college?

The “best college” and the “best fit” is the college that is right for you. It is not necessarily your parent’s college or the one your friends will attend. It is the college that will best meet your needs! Make it a priority to try to find a college that matches your academic, spiritual, and personal interests. A good college fit is one that will:

1. Offer a program of study to match your interests and needs.
2. Provide a style of instruction that is well suited to the way you learn best.
3. Provide a level of academic rigor to match your ability.
4. Offer a community that feels like home to you.
5. Value you for what you do well.
6. Meets your spiritual needs.

College Comparison Worksheet: [Here!](#)



College Planning Checklist

The following has been devised as a checklist to give you a basic outline of working through the college admissions process. This list is not exhaustive, so please just use it as an additional resource:

Summer - October

- Visit colleges that interest you (Many colleges are doing virtual tours now because of COVID. Here are some resources for virtual tours: Your Student Naviance Account, <https://www.youvisit.com/> <http://www.ecampustours.com/> <https://www.campusreel.org/>
- Submit your FAFSA!!!
- Finalize your list of colleges. Be sure your list includes "safe" schools as well as "reach" and realistic schools.
- Create a Common Application account at www.commonapp.org. Depending on where you are wanting to apply - this application can cover several colleges with one app.. BUT make sure the colleges that you are interested in are on this site. If they aren't, there is no need to fill this out.
- Keep a calendar of all admission and scholarship deadlines and other important dates. PAY ATTENTION TO DEADLINES!
- If you plan to compete in Division I or II college sports and want to be eligible to be recruited by colleges, you must register with the NCAA Clearinghouse [here](#).
- Work on essays for college applications and scholarships. Things get busy during your senior year - get a head start!
- Work on your resume. Colleges will ask for it. (there is a resume builder in Naviance)
- Keep taking the ACT and SAT. This is the #1 way to receive college scholarships! More on this in the testing section of this website.
- Research College Scholarships on Naviance, various emails from Mrs. Howard, Financial Aid and Scholarship webpages of your top choice colleges, www.fastweb.com, www.scholarships.com, www.cappex.com.
- Scholarship deadlines are typically between Oct. and April of your senior year.
- Get started on your applications right away if you plan to apply through an Early Decision or Early Action Program. Deadlines for early applications tend to fall in October or November.
- Begin asking for letters of recommendation. GIVE A **TWO-WEEK** NOTICE TO ANYONE YOU ASK!
- Meet with Admissions Representatives from colleges and universities. They will be coming to campus during chapel and lunch!
- Take the ACT again if needed for extra scholarship money.

November-December

- Confirm materials have been received by colleges, including letters of recommendation, official test scores, and transcripts. You can contact the admissions office at the college you will be attending. They do not let me know what all they have received.
- You can find free Financial Aid Calculators on many college websites.
- Continue to watch deadlines for scholarship applications. Continue to search and apply for scholarships.
- To request a transcript from Mrs. Howard, click [here](#), or submit the request through Naviance.
- Take the ACT again if needed for extra scholarship money.



January-February

- Contact your college and confirm that all necessary application materials have been received.
- Rolling admissions may be an option but WATCH February 15th financial aid deadlines, some scholarship deadlines are even earlier. Make sure you know and follow the deadlines to have paperwork turned into the college you are applying for.
- Be careful with senioritis. It's a real thing.. but colleges want to see strong second semester grades!

March-April

- Visit colleges to which you have been accepted if you still need help making a decision.
- Take the ACT again if needed for extra scholarship money.
- Many award decisions and financial aid award letters arrive this month, read everything you receive carefully, as some of it may require action on your part.
- Didn't get into the college you wanted? On the waiting list? Call the admissions office and ask if you can be admitted conditionally. Let them know of your continued interest in the college and update them on your spring semester grades and activities. Fill out the necessary paperwork to do so and get it back to them ASAP!
- Compare award letters from colleges.
- Make a final decision on a school and submit enrollment forms and deposit checks before May 1st!
- Sign and return award letter/financial aid packages by the deadline.
- Notify each of the schools to which you were accepted that you will not be attending in writing so that your spot can be freed up for another student. Send them a thank you for helping you with this process.

If you are not planning on going to college, meet with Mrs. Howard to let her know your plans and discuss your options.

May

- Study hard for any AP/Dual Enrollment Exams and finish your classes strong.
- Request your final transcripts from ACA, Faulkner University (if you took DE classes), or any other college you took early classes from. Let us know what college you will be attending so we can send the final transcript to the correct college. To request a transcript from Mrs. Howard, click [here](#).
- Thank your teachers, coaches, and anyone else who wrote you letters of recommendation or otherwise helped with your college applications.
- Finalize your summer plans: work, internships, travel, community service, etc.
- Finalize your housing plans for next year and shop for items you will need.
- Sign up for and attend orientation (even if it's online orientation) at the college you will be attending in the fall!
- GRADUATE!



Criteria for Admission

Every college institution establishes their own criteria for admission. The most general criteria for admission are:

- 1) GPA (grade point average)
- 2) ACT/SAT Scores

Some colleges institutions break down their criteria for admission into several criteria including:

- 1) The rigor of the high school curriculum. (Did you challenge yourself by taking advantage of Advanced Placement (AP) and honors courses? Tougher classes will not only look better on a college application, they will better prepare you for college.
- 2) Some colleges will look solely at the students CORE GPA (meaning only English, History, Science, Math, and foreign language – in some cases). It is important to maintain good academic grades in ALL courses and not only rely on your electives to boost your GPA!!
- 3) Colleges may use your highest ACT/SAT scores called superscoring. This does not happen everywhere, however, some colleges will take the highest subject grade from multiple testing attempts to give you a “new” composite score.
- 4) Many colleges want to look at your resume. They want to see if you were able to balance extracurricular activities, leadership skills, and community service.
- 5) It is important to have out-of-school experiences, including summer activities, work, and hobbies that reflect responsibility, and dedication. Meaningful use of your free time is essential. Students should include these commitments in their resumes.
- 6) Students who go the extra mile to develop a special talent in sports, research, writing, the arts, or anything else will gain an edge. Students should consider sending a college evidence of anything that makes them stand out such as a portfolio of their creative writing, or sending a link to a demonstration of their talent.
- 7) Some colleges require letters of recommendation from the college counselor and several academic teachers. These letters help the college admission counselors gain further insight into the impact a student has had both inside and outside the classroom.
- 8) Essays are required by some college institutions. They are the highest ranked non-academic feature of an application and the only part of the college application over which the student has absolute control. The essay should reflect the student’s personality and tell something about the student that is not on the application. A student’s essay should show their ability to use language correctly and



appropriately. It is imperative that the essay be proofed for errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation. A good essay is not good because of the topic but because of the voice.

- 9) It is important that the students have demonstrated enthusiasm for attending a university, as evidenced by campus visits, an interview, and ongoing contact with the admissions office. Early in the college-planning process, students should schedule campus visits, including an information session, tour, and interview if available. They should stay in touch with admission representatives and attend local presentations.

Below is the full set of essay prompts for 2021-2022.

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.



About the College Admission Process - Top 10 Facts

1 You have the right to request information from colleges and universities without feeling pressure tactics to persuade you to apply or enroll.

2 You have the right to accurate information about each institution's academic programs, facilities, and faculty, along with each institution's retention and graduation statistics.

3 You have the right to the names of all accrediting, certifying, or licensing organizations for each institution.

4 You have the right to complete information about all direct and miscellaneous expenses, the types of non need-based and need-based financial assistance provided, and the methods by which eligibility is determined.

5 You have the right to accurate information about all aspects of campus safety, including institutional crime statistics.

6 You have the responsibility to assure that all required items necessary for the completion of your application are received by each institution within the required timeframe.

7 Once admitted to a college or university, you have the right to wait until May 1 to respond to an offer of admission and financial aid (unless you have been admitted under a binding Early Decision program).

8 You have the right to request in writing an extension to May 1 without penalty if an institution requires an earlier commitment (unless you have been admitted under a binding Early Decision program). A sample request is on page 23.

9 You have the right to historical information about prior waiting list activity including the number wait-listed, the number ultimately admitted and the availability of housing and financial aid. Colleges and universities cannot require a deposit from you to maintain your place on a waiting list.

10 You have the responsibility to submit a deposit to only one institution—and upon submitting that deposit to withdraw from all other institutions to which you have been admitted.

- Taken from the New England Association for College Admission Counseling, www.neacac.org -



Types of Admission

1. **Regular Decision** is the application process in which a student submits an application to an institution by a specified date and receives a decision within a reasonable and clearly stated period of time. A student may apply to other institutions without restriction.

2. **Rolling Admission** is the application process in which an institution reviews applications as they are completed and renders admission decisions to students throughout the admission cycle. A student may apply to other institutions without restriction.

3. **Early Action (EA)** is the application process in which students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date. Students who are admitted under Early Action are not obligated to accept the institution's offer of admission or to submit a deposit prior to May 1. Under non-restrictive Early Action, a student may apply to other colleges.

4. **Restrictive Early Action (REA)** is the application process in which students make an application to an institution of preference and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date. Institutions with Restrictive Early Action plans place restrictions on student applications to other early plans. Institutions will clearly articulate these restrictions in their Early Action policies and agreements with students. Students who are admitted under Restrictive Early Action are not obligated to accept the institution's offer of admission or to submit a deposit prior to May 1.

5. **Early Decision (ED)** is the application process in which students make a commitment to a firstchoice institution where, if admitted, they definitely will enroll. While pursuing admission under an Early Decision plan, students may apply to other institutions, but may have only one Early Decision application pending at any time. Should a student who applied for financial aid not be offered an award that makes attendance possible, the student may decline the offer of admission and be released from the Early Decision commitment. The institution must notify the applicant of the decision within a reasonable and clearly stated period of time after the Early Decision deadline. Usually, a nonrefundable deposit must be made well in advance of May 1. The institution will respond to an application for financial aid at or near the time of an offer of admission. Institutions with Early Decision plans may restrict students from applying to other early plans. Institutions will clearly articulate their specific policies in their Early Decision agreement.

- *Taken from the National Association for College Admission Counseling's Statement of Principles of Good Practice Interpretations of Mandatory Practices -*



Corresponding with Colleges via Email

Using proper email etiquette is important, especially with the admissions office. They are trying to see if you are a good candidate for their college or university so it is vital that you take some thought into every initial email and response. (These tips will also help you when you are communicating with your college professors and future employers. Begin implementing these tips when emailing back and forth with your teachers at ACA!)

DO: Remember that your email messages may be added to your admissions file.

DO: Choose an appropriate email address. You may want to rethink addresses like partygirl@hotmail.com or hatetostudy@yahoo.com

DO: Give your full name, address, phone number, and high school on each message.

DO: Spell check your email and use proper punctuation.

DO: Use salutations, example: Dear Admissions Officer.

DO: Be as polite and respectful in an email as you would in a face-to-face meeting or telephone conversation.

DO: Check the email address of the recipient before hitting the “send” button.

DO: Check the school’s website if you have several questions before sending an email. If you still have specific questions, it is better to call the school and have a conversation.

DON’T: Use all lowercase letters or uppercase letters; all lower-case letters are difficult to read and all uppercase feels are if you are SHOUTING.

DON’T: Use “IMPORTANT INFORMATION!!!” or “Please read” as resubjects for your email. These are commonly used for “junk email” or viruses.

DON’T: Send anything confidential in an email. Email is more like a postcard than like a letter in a sealed envelope.

DON’T: Send blanket emails to several schools at once. Do some research and then ask specific questions indicating genuine interest.

(This advice originally appeared in a Washington University newsletter for counselors.)



May 1 - Important Date

May 1 of the student's senior year is an important date to remember in that it is the National Candidate Reply Date.

Sample Letter of Withdrawal of Application from Consideration:

Your Street Address

City, State, Zip

Date

Director of Admissions

Name of University

Address

City, State Zip

Dear (enter name of Director of Admissions),

Thank you for your offer of admission to (name of college). I have decided to pursue my education at another university and wish to withdraw my name from your prospective Class of (year).

I appreciate the interest that you have shown in my application.

Sincerely,

Signature



College Admission & Military Entrance Testing

Below is a recommended College and Career Testing Timeline:

Sophomore Year: Fall - PSAT (used to determine National Merit Winners); Spring: ACT/SAT, and ASVAB

Junior Year: Fall - PSAT, ACT/SAT; Spring: ACT/SAT and ASVAB (if not taken sophomore year)

Senior Year: Fall - ACT/SAT

Alabama Christian Academy requests that students apply to at least THREE colleges they are interested in during their senior year. This will allow for students to compare universities in regards to cost, location, campus involvement, etc. It is highly recommended that one of those schools be a “safety” school. A safety school is one in which your academic credentials exceed those of the average accepted student. Meaning, there is a high probability that you will be admitted (though it’s important to recognize that nothing is certain).

ACT

The ACT is a standardized test used for college admissions in the United States. There is a writing portion for the ACT. It is an essay that measures writing skills taught in high school English classes and entry level college composition courses. The writing portion is **optional** at most colleges. Please check to see what your desired college has for requirements. The ACT consists of four sections of multiple choice questions in the following subject areas: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. The ACT scale goes up to a 36, being a perfect score. The test without the essay is 3 hours and 30 minutes (with breaks), with the essay is just over 4 hours with breaks.

All students are required to take the ACT test **two times** before graduating from Alabama Christian Academy. Students may take it as often as they want to but at least twice. There will be two ACTs offered on campus at ACA each school year, once in the fall and another in the spring. These tests are approximately \$55 and will be charged to the student’s account if they choose to sign up. The spots will be first-come first-serve started with the seniors and working down to the sophomores. We recommend students complete geometry before taking the ACT so they will be familiar with the questions for math on the test.

In addition to the two school day ACT tests that will be held on campus, there are National tests scheduled almost every month. Those test dates are posted on the calendar in the front of this packet and also posted on their website: <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act/registration.html>. If you or your child need assistance with registration for a National test, please contact Mrs. Howard and she will be happy to help! Registration takes about 30 minutes. (Students will just need to get your debit card



information, if they don't have their own, to pay for the test). ACT Prep textbooks are also available at registration and cost around \$35 (it is also available on Amazon).

ACT Prep courses will be offered on campus at ACA for FREE ONLY for those signed up to take the upcoming National ACT. All National tests are offered on Saturdays and our ACT Prep course will take place the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday leading up to the Saturday test date. If you would like your child to complete the ACT Prep course, ACA needs a copy of the testing registration to confirm their "ticket" for Prep. This course will be first-come first-serve as we only have a certain number of spots available, so the sooner you register, the better chance you'll get into the prep course. The Official ACT Prep Guide book is required for the prep course at ACA (at the expense of the student).

SAT

ACA offers the SAT test on campus once each year, typically in October. The SAT is a multiple choice test created and administered by the College Board. The purpose of the SAT is to measure a high school student's readiness for college, and provide colleges with one common data point that can be used to compare all applicants. There are two sections of the SAT - Math and Evidence-Based Reading and Writing. Some students perform better on the SAT over the ACT (or the opposite) so testing both can be extremely beneficial. Overall, the higher you score on the SAT and/or ACT, the more options for attending and paying for college will be available to you. The SAT is scored on a 200 to 800 point scale. Your total SAT score is the sum of the two section scores. The highest possible SAT score is 1600. If you choose to take the **optional** essay, you will receive a separate score. The test without the essay is 3 hours, with the essay is 3 hours and 50 minutes.

Most colleges will accept scores from both the ACT and the SAT. There is not necessarily a better test over the other, but it would be helpful to take both just to see if you score higher on one over the other. In addition to the one school day SAT we will host at ACA, there are National SAT dates almost monthly. If you or your child would like help registering for the SAT, please contact Mrs. Howard.

PSAT

The PSAT is another form of assessment used for students to be considered for a National Merit Scholarship. You must also satisfy high academic standards and other requirements, but if you earn a qualifying score to enter the National Merit Scholarship Program, you could compete for national recognition and college scholarships. This test is taken by students in the 11th grade. If students choose to take the PSAT their sophomore year, it is strictly a practice test. The scores will NOT count towards Merit scholarships. If your scores are high enough your junior year, you can qualify for a National Merit commendation and/or



scholarship. The score range for the PSAT is anywhere from 320-1600. PSAT scores between 950 and 1060 are above the national average and that will put you in the top 50% of test takers.

ASVAB

The ASVAB test is a timed, multi-aptitude test, which is given at more than 14,000 scrolls and Military Entrance Processing Stations (MEPS) nationwide. The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery is your ticket to a great United States military career. This test is developed and maintained by the Department of Defense. This assessment helps to determine which branch every individual would be best for and even what military jobs you can hold after you finish basic training or boot camp. The better your ASVAB score, the broader your options. We will host an ASVAB on campus for those interested once a year. If your child is interested in taking the ASVAB an additional time, please contact Mrs. Howard and she will get a recruiter to come to campus and give your child another test. (This may happen at a military career center if they cannot come to our campus, but Mrs. Howard can help get this set up). This test can be used as an entrance exam for all branches of the military: Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, National Guard, and Coast Guard. This test will be given to the sophomore class every spring, however, if you would like to take it again as a junior or senior, sign up with Mrs. Howard.



Tips for Completing Your College Application

You may see some terms while filling out applications and scholarships that you do not understand. Below are a few with a description of each. If you have any additional questions about specific terms on your applications or scholarships, please feel free to reach out to Mrs. Howard.

CEEB or College Board Code

The College Board assigns a code to every high school in the nation to identify schools. The CEEB for Alabama Christian Academy is **011869**. This will be asked on applications and testing registration sites ALL the time! Try to remember it :)

Degrees/Certifications

Certification - earned after completing a short series of courses for a particular skill competency.

Associate's Degree - earned after what is usually two years at a community or junior college.

Bachelor's Degree - earned after what is usually four years at a university or four years at a college.

Master's Degree - earned after what is usually two years of post-bachelor's degree study.

Doctorate Degree - earned after what is usually 2-4 years of post-master's degree study.

GPA or Grade Point Average (can be weighted or unweighted)

This is the cumulative average of ALL of a student's grades (translated into points on a 4.0 scale) earned from the freshman year forward. The unweighted average uses unweighted grade points, where the weighted average uses weighted grade points. Colleges usually look at weighted averages and ACT/SAT scores.

GPA - Unweighted

This refers to a grade point average that assigns 4.0 quality points to an "A", 3.0 to a "B", 2.0 to a "C", and 1.0 to a "D", regardless of whether the courses are standard, honors, or AP level.

GPA - Weighted (Also known as Quality Point Average)

This refers to a grade point average that uses the above noted scale but assigns 0.5 extra quality points for Honors classes, 1 extra quality point for Dual Enrollment classes and a scale for AP classes.

Match School

One in which your transcript mirrors that of the average freshman. Therefore, your GPA, SAT?ACT scores and coursework (college prep, honors, etc.) are all on par with those undergrads typically admitted. While



this will not guarantee an acceptance (especially considering that extracurricular activities, essays, etc. come into play), you can apply with confidence and the understanding that you have a great shot!

Reach School

Colleges where your academic qualifications are below the average accepted student. For example, it is unlikely you would gain entry to an Ivy League university with a 1.5 GPA. However, even if your SATs might be 100 points lower than average or you have a 3.4 GPA instead of a 3.8, if you really like the school, throw your hat into the ring. It could be a long shot, but an admissions officer might just see your potential!

Safety School

A safety school is one in which your academic credentials exceed those of the average accepted student. Meaning, there is a high probability that you will be admitted (though it's important to recognize that nothing is certain).

Letters of Recommendation

Many colleges and scholarships require letters of recommendation from your counselor, principal, or teacher. Some schools have a specific form for them to complete, while others just require a letter. Please be sure to give the person filling out the form a minimum of **TWO WEEKS** to complete the recommendation letter. Chances are, they have more than one letter to complete. To receive a good, thorough recommendation letter, it is helpful to provide your counselor, teacher, or principal with a list of your accomplishments – both in school and out of school. Please give them a copy of your resume when asking them to complete your recommendation. It would also be nice to write an email or a letter thanking them for writing your letter.



College Visits

The summer is a great time to get started visiting colleges. It is very important to visit colleges you are interested in attending. It is not recommended to make up your mind to attend a college based solely on the website or what your friends think about the college or university. You will be living at the college you choose to attend for quite a while, so you should be sure you are comfortable with the campus and the town where the school is located.

Each student at Alabama Christian Academy receives 10 days to which they can be absent. **STARTING IN AUGUST 2021, Juniors will receive ONE additional absence to visit a college during the school year with documentation from the admissions office that you attended campus. Seniors will receive TWO additional absences to visit colleges during the school year with documentation from the admissions office that you attended campus.** If the students go over the allotted absences and do not use them for college visits only, the student will be responsible for attending and paying for Saturday School at ACA. These absences are ONLY available as college days and MUST be pre-approved by Mrs. Howard or Mrs. Taggart **ONE WEEK (7 days) IN ADVANCE.**

It is recommended that at least one parent attend this visit with their child. In order for this to count as one of the student's visit days, the form must be completed, submitted, and approved 7 days prior to the visit. If it does not get approved, the student will only be able to attend if they use one of their 10 absences.

If you or your student would like assistance with scheduling these off-campus visits with colleges, please reach out to Mrs. Howard. She will help coordinate, if needed.



College Day Request Form

Student's Name: _____

Date Visiting College: _____

Please allow my son/daughter to be dismissed from classes for a college day to visit the campus of _____
_____. I will be accompanying my child on this college
visit (YES/NO). He/She has appointments set up with college personnel.

I understand that the student is responsible to both obtain assignments in advance and to turn in all make-up work according to the teacher's requests. If a student has a D or F in a course, he/she may not be excused to take a college day. A student may not take a college day on the day that a major assignment is due. Failure to comply with the above may result in a student not being allowed to make-up or turn in any missed work, which may adversely affect the grade a student receives in a course. It is also my understanding that if my child does not use this day as a college day, it will be considered one of the 10 absences my child is given and could result in Saturday School if the student goes over. All of the student's teachers must sign below and if desired, add comments regarding the student's academic performance, upcoming assignments/tests, etc.

Signature	Comments
Period 1 _____	_____
Period 2 _____	_____
Period 3 _____	_____
Period 4 _____	_____
Period 5 _____	_____
Period 6 _____	_____
Period 7 _____	_____

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Approved _____ Date Received _____
Mrs. Taggart, Upper School Principal

Approved _____ Date Received _____
Mrs. Howard, College Counselor



Financial Aid & Scholarship Information

The biggest portion of scholarship money will come from the college you attend. You must be accepted to a college before you can begin to ask that college/university for scholarships. Most have an acceptance deadline of December 1st in order to receive scholarships, but some may have an even earlier deadline. Make yourself aware of the scholarship deadlines for the school(s) of your choice.

Finding and applying for other scholarships takes a great deal of time and effort. Research and completing paperwork for these scholarships is not easy so the sooner you get started, the less overwhelming it will feel. Mrs. Howard can help by providing and navigating the resources available for scholarships, but she cannot give individuals a list of scholarships tailored to their specific needs and talents. She will update the counseling website and send emails about various scholarship opportunities as she receives them. There are thousands of scholarships out there. Use other resources and search for scholarships online! Do your research! Two great websites are fastweb.com and wiredscholar.com. There are several other websites to find scholarships available on the counseling website.

Scholarships are only one type of financial aid, and there generally separate applications for each scholarship. Most other forms of aid (grants, loans) require that students fill out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is a federal form which cannot be filled out until October 1st, when the previous year's tax information is available. The form can be filled out on-line at www.fafsa.ed.gov. It MUST be completed for students to be eligible for State and Federal aid. This type of aid usually depends upon families' financial needs. It is a great idea to fill this out whether you think you would qualify for it or not - there is SOME money for which you may be eligible automatically, without any financial need. The application takes about 60 minutes to complete and you will need the previous year's tax information available to you to complete the application.

Students and parents should be aware that every college handles scholarships differently. Some college applications for admission automatically qualify you to be considered for a scholarship, while other colleges have a separate scholarship application process. The scholarship/admission office of each college is the best source of information concerning the scholarships available at that institution. The ACA College Counseling Office receives only a limited number of scholarship notices from the colleges, which will be passed along to students. Students should check the scholarship list in their Naviance account for updated scholarship information.



Merit scholarship types vary. Some of them are:

1. Academic
2. Leadership
3. Departmental
4. Talent
5. Athletic
6. External (includes any type of scholarship) -- Many organizations offer scholarships including state and local governments, businesses, employers, clubs, civic groups, church and religious organizations, military associations, private foundations, and charities.

Helpful guidelines to make your scholarship search successful:

- Strictly observe deadlines and strive to submit applications early
- Be honest about grades, experiences, memberships, qualifications, family finances, and other information
- Only apply if you meet the scholarship's minimum requirements
- Carefully follow instructions
- When submitting the application, only include items requested
- Proofread your application carefully
- Keep copies of EVERYTHING you send in case your application gets misplaced. (Save them in a specific folder labeled for the college on your drive so you can easily find them from anywhere!)

Students should bring a copy of all scholarship awards and acceptance letters to Mrs. Howard as they receive them. These will be used in recognizing each student at awards day!



Student Athletes (NAIA & NCAA Clearinghouse Information)

Students interested in playing NAIA or Division I or II varsity sports are required to complete the NAIA and/or NCAA Clearinghouse application. This must be completed online. Request transcripts to be submitted electronically to NCAA from Mrs. Howard. Be sure to request to have final transcripts sent upon graduation. You do not need to complete an application to be talked to by college coaches, but you will not be eligible for play until this is completed. The recruiter you are working with for each university should give you a timeline as to when this process will take place. If this does get completed early before you are recruited, you will be ahead of schedule! The sooner, the better!

We plan to have someone from both the NAIA and NCAA on campus for our parents and students to get a better understanding of the eligibility requirements. We will send updated information as we schedule these events.

NAIA Eligibility Clearinghouse

www.play.mynaia.org

NCAA Eligibility Clearinghouse

<https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/>



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