

# Sophomore Checklist

## Fall (September-November)

- Review and Revise Goals.** As you get older your goals and dreams change. Make sure you review and revise your goals to better fit you. If applicable, review goals that you set last year. Spend time making goals that you will work towards this year.
- Stay involved with your activities.** Continue current activities and join new activities.
- Register for the PSAT:** Consider taking the PSAT test. This will be your first indicator about college readiness. Check the Daily Announcements for more information.
- College Exploration.** Talk to your school counselor and other mentors about education after high school. Your counselor can answer questions about what classes to take in high school, how to sign up for standardized tests, and where to get money for college.
- College Preparation.** Take challenging classes in core academic subjects. Most colleges require four years of English, at least three years of social studies (history, civics, geography, economics, etc.), three years of mathematics, and three years of science, and many require two years of a foreign language. Round out your course load with classes in computer science and the arts.

## Winter (December-February)

- End of quarter reflection:** This is something that should be done after each quarter/semester. Reflecting on your progress helps to focus on your goals. Think about what you could improve for the next quarter. Get feedback from each teacher about your current progress in class.
- Make a list of academic goals for the remainder of the school year.** It is important to always have goals; they give you direction and help you create success.
- Earn college credits.** Consider taking AP, PSEO, or CaSH classes during your junior or senior year. Check with your school counselor for requirements. Look for the mandatory meeting in the spring.
- 4-year academic plan.** Review your 4-year course plan with your school counselor to make sure you are on track for graduation.
- Learn about college.** Review Postsecondary options and types of degree information. Review this link or a hard copy of the book can be picked up in the guidance office. [http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/pdf/choosing\\_a\\_college.pdf](http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/pdf/choosing_a_college.pdf)

## Spring (March- April)

- Scholarships.** It is never too early to start looking for scholarships. Refer to the guidance webpage for a list of scholarship search engines.
- Paying for College.** Review the different ways to pay for college. <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college>
- Explore Careers.** Start exploring how your interests align with careers. <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/explore-careers/careers/exploring-careers-step-by-step>

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- List what matters to you in college.** Identifying your top priorities helps keep your search focused on what you need and want in a college. <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges/how-to-find-your-college-fit/college-search-step-by-step>
- Resume:** Create a list of all activities, classes taken, jobs, awards, etc. This will be used when applying to colleges and scholarships in the future.
- End of year reflection.** How did your year go? What are things you could improve on for junior year?

### Summer

- College Search:** Begin your college search. Use this search tool to narrow down options. <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search>
- College Visits.** Start visiting different types of colleges (technical, community, 4-year) to see which is the best fit for you. <https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/pdf/CampusVisitChecklist.pdf>
- Stay involved.** Look for ways to continue to build your resume over the summer: work, volunteer, internships, etc.
- Explore the ACT.** Learn about the entrance exam you will take next year. <http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/descriptions/>

### On-Going

- Focus on your GPA.** Maintaining your grades while taking the most challenging classes you can handle is very important.
- Keep your files updated.** File any new important information. Stay organized! It is important to keep all of your papers, grades, awards, etc. anything you find important in a file to be used and compiled later for your resume.
- Review transcript.** Make sure you understand how to read your transcript. Meet with your school counselor to review classes and grades from ninth grade and make goals of how to improve your GPA.
- Consider attending a college fair.** This is a chance to talk to multiple college representatives at once! Check out the guidance website for a list of college fairs in the area. <http://www.spectrumhighschool.org/cms/one.aspx?pageId=23354378>
- College Representatives at Spectrum:** Talk to college representatives that visit Spectrum. This is a great way to ask a few questions about a college. Check out the College Visits calendar on the Spectrum website. <http://www.spectrumhighschool.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=1303570&pageId=20629606>
- Update your MCIS portfolio.** Keep your MCIS portfolio updated with your activities, interests, colleges, scholarships, etc.