MILESTONES FOR COLLEGE PREPARATION—RISING SOPHOMORES

1. Apply for a SWENEXT WE Local Award
2. Prepare for College
3. Narrow Down Your List of Colleges
4. Work/ Volunteer Experience
5. Make the Most of Volunteering
6. Prepare for College
7. Start Preparing for Your SATs/ACTs
8. Consult Your Guidance Counselor About Junior Year Classes
9. Start looking into Colleges
10. Sign Up to Take the PSAT
11. Make the Most of Your Summer
12. Prepare for College Success
CONGRATULATIONS! YOU’RE A SOPHOMORE!

You survived your first year of high school, and are just three years away from college.

To set yourself up for college success, take a look at the typical milestones a high school sophomore goes through in the next ten months. Keep this schedule handy to remind you of the activities and deadlines.

**SUMMER BEFORE YOUR SOPHOMORE YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL**

A. Start looking into colleges to figure out what you may or may not want in your college experience. This might help you narrow down a list of potential candidates later.

   - Any summer job can help you learn important work skills and earn money for college.
   - If you haven’t already, start to get involved in local volunteering opportunities.
   - Do a job shadow of an engineer to learn about what they do.
   - If you have the opportunity, see if you can sign up for a local STEM summer camp! You can work on your technical skills and also make friends with similar interests.

**FALL SEMESTER – SOPHOMORE YEAR**

C. Sign up for and take the PSAT through your school. Although the scores from your Junior year are used to qualify you for the National Merit Scholarship competition, you can get great practice by doing a trial run in your Sophomore year. Learn more here!

D. Volunteering on a regular basis during the school year may be difficult, but it’s rewarding both in the short-term and for the long haul. Doing volunteer work is often one of the factors considered for college.

E. Apply for a SWENext WE Local Award between September 1 - September 30. Learn more here. If you’re involved in clubs already, look into becoming officers or leaders in the ones you are most passionate about! You’ll make rewarding friendships, memories, and you’ll be able to show what kind of student and person you are when you apply to college in a couple years.

**WINTER BREAK**

F. Narrow down your list of colleges. Start thinking about which ones you want to visit. No pressure though – you still have plenty of time to consider your choices!

G. Continue to volunteer in your spare time between putting up lights and spending time with your family.

**SPRING SEMESTER – SOPHOMORE YEAR**

H. Start thinking about how you’re going to prepare and study for the SATs/ACTs. Look into prep classes that teach you the ins and outs of these tests so you’ll be prepared. If you can’t take an SAT prep class, no worries! You can do self-study by taking free practice tests here!

   - Take any AP/IB/Cambridge exams you’ve been in classes for. They can get you class credit at most colleges (requirements and number of credits vary by school).

I. Consult your guidance counselor about your junior year classes – this is typically when heavier college-prep material starts appearing in your curriculum. Think about any AP/IB/Cambridge classes available to you and sign up for some of these higher level classes if you think you’re up to the challenge!

J. Apply for a summer job or internship. If you find an internship available within your desired career path, all the better! This will give you important work experience and may dictate what direction you want to take your future career.

   - If you are not able to apply for a job or internship, you can look into applying for STEM camps instead.

K. Apply for a SWENext Award between January 1 - March 31. Learn more here.

   - If you’re planning on applying for merit scholarships for college later on, keep an eye on your grades. Some of the better scholarships require your GPA to be at least a 3.5. However, don’t let that stress you out – there will be plenty of scholarships out there without high GPA requirements.

SWENEXT.SWE.ORG