



# Applying to college

Presented by: Lana Meskunas



# Welcome to the Guidance office!

Mrs. Heather Porter



11th Grade  
Freshman P-Z

Mrs. Rosalyn Smith



12<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Freshman G-O

Ms. Kristen Gist



10<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Freshman A-F

Mrs. Lana Meskunas



College and Career



Mrs. Susan Blades  
Guidance Receptionist



Ms. Laura Spencer  
Registrar




Mrs. Lynn  
Ferrell

Mrs. Kara  
Lingerfelt



# Choosing the right school

- 
- **The College VISIT!!**
  - **Commuting vs. living on campus**
  - **Urban vs. small college town**
  - **Size of the school**
  - **Extracurricular/ athletic activities**
  - **Size of classes/ faculty-student ratio**
  - **Restrictions/ regulations of social life**
  - **Type of programs offered**
  - **Cost of the school**

These are all things to consider when visiting a school.



# The Application

- Your college application creates a portrait of **who you are** and what you can bring to a college.
- Remember that it is really important that you are aware of and **meet all the deadlines** for your applications.
- **When applying for scholarships, be sure to adhere to deadlines. Many are due by Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>, although some will still take the Dec. ACT into consideration.**



# Application Fees

- College application fees vary.
- Most are in the \$35 to \$70 range.
- The fee is usually nonrefundable, even if you're not accepted.
- Many colleges offer fee waivers for applicants from low-income families. If you need a fee waiver, see Mrs. Meskunas.
- Remember, if you qualified for a fee waiver for the SAT/ACT you may qualify for application fee waivers. Some colleges do not accept fee waivers.
- Applications will be filled out online through the college's website.



# The Common Application

- The Common Application is a not-for-profit organization that serves students and member institutions by providing an admission application – online and in print – that students may submit to any of the 900+ members.
- <https://www.commonapp.org>
- If the school you are applying to is one of the 900+ that accepts this application, you can save a lot of time and effort by using The Common Application.
- There is a search feature so you can verify if the school you are interested in accepts The Common Application.
- Even if you are using The Common Application some of the colleges may also request additional materials when you apply.



# Deadlines

- Deadlines will vary. To be sure you need to check with the colleges you have chosen to apply to.
- Missing an application deadline automatically means that you've missed your chance to apply.
- If you are trying to apply early decision, the deadline is usually in mid October/first of November. Schools have different criteria for accepting early decision applicants. Some schools look for GPA, test scores and or specific coursework. You should review the admissions section of your college's website for details. Research the college's mission statement.
- Early decision (ED) is binding, so if you chose to apply early decision make sure it is THE school you want to attend.
- Early action applications are usually due by November 1<sup>st</sup>. It is similar to early decision, but it is not binding.
- **Scholarship applications to colleges should be completed before Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>. Several schools require you to be admitted before you can fill out the scholarship application.**



# Transcripts

- Applications are incomplete without the transcript
- Request your transcript here: <https://madisoncityal.scriborder.com/>
- **Senior year grades matter! Your high school sends a final transcript to the college you will attend.**





# Test Scores

Fee Type	What is this?	SAT Cost	ACT Cost
<b>Registration Fee</b>	The normal fee for each administration of the test you register for	\$68 (\$52 without essay)	\$70 (\$55 without essay)
<b>Late Fee</b>	Charged if you register after the regular deadline but before the final late deadline	\$30	\$35
<b>Waitlist Fee</b>	Charged if you register after the late registration deadline and are seated on test day.	\$53	<u>\$56 (standby testing)</u>
<b>Change Fee</b>	Charged if you change the test center, test date, or test type	\$30	\$35
<b>Question and Answers</b>	An optional service that sends you the test questions and correct answers (useful for seeing what mistakes you made)	\$18	\$22

- SAT/ACT Give you a limited number of schools to have your scores sent to initially (4)
  - \$22.00 - \$26.00 (subject tests) (SAT)
  - \$12.00 - \$13.00 per additional test score sent out
- JCHS does NOT send test scores
- It is important that you check the average test scores for your college to see if you should retake your SAT or ACT



# College Essays

- Common app or highly selective
- This can be the most time-consuming and difficult part of applying to college.
- The personal essay is usually about 300 to 500 words in length or longer, depending on the college.
- Sometimes you have a choice and other times the colleges give you specific prompts.
- **You need to give this part a lot of thought and dedicate a lot of time to it.**
- Once you think you are done, have several people read your essay.
- Explore the link below for more ideas and tips:
- <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/essays>



# College Essay Tips

- Be honest – write about something small in scale; a story only you can tell in your own words.
- Let your voice be heard.
- If there is something strange about your record, you should explain it (e.g., academic trends primarily).
- You should write about something that's important to you.
- Don't try to guess about which topic they want to read.
- Content, style, originality – cautiously humorous, risk taking.
- Discuss unique talents.
- How would you describe the strength and weaknesses of the topic – your point of view – regarding the essay question?
- Interesting or unique insights about a particular topic are welcome.
- Something that will enlighten them about yourself as it relates to the chosen topic.
- Use language with which you are familiar.
- Don't try to borrow someone else's phrases.
- The essay should show your character and personality – not just bragging about your list of accomplishments.
- Answer the question when you choose a topic – follow the directions, length, and format.
- Most readers look for essays that are persuasive and somewhat argumentative.



# Recommendations

- Some colleges ask you to submit one or more letters of recommendation from a teacher, counselor or other adult who knows you well.
- Choose someone who knows you well, but that is also still involved in your academic life.
- Give the person at least 3 weeks prior notice so that he or she can write a thoughtful letter. Provide information regarding the programs / colleges you are applying to.
- Remember, teachers are asked to write a lot of recommendation letters every year. Asking them at the last minute reflects poorly on you and may result in a less than ideal recommendation.
- Remember to thank those who write a letter for you.
- **Mrs. Meskunas will be your counselor recommender (not Mrs. Porter). If you are using the Common Application, you will need to submit her email address as your counselor. [lmeskunas@madisoncity.k12.al.us](mailto:lmeskunas@madisoncity.k12.al.us)**



# Recommendation Packet

for selective colleges *ONLY*

- Student Brag Sheet
- Parent Brag Sheet
- Resume
- DUE to Mrs. Meskunas at least 3 weeks before needed
- Found on the JCHS website under the Guidance tab



# Interviews and visits

- If the colleges you are considering offer interviews, you should schedule one as this shows you are very interested.
- This is an opportunity to connect directly with someone who will be part of the decision making process concerning your application.
- If an on-campus interview is not feasible, you can arrange to meet with an alumnus near you.
- The interview is also a good time to ask questions, so you can make sure the college is right for you.
- Follow interview protocol:
  - Be on time!
  - Dress neatly and professionally
  - Use appropriate language
  - Avoid eating or drinking during the interview
  - Do a little background research on the university and have some questions of your own ready



# Current Admission Requirements

- Alabama A&M – 18 ACT & 2.0 GPA
- Alabama State University – Sliding scale 18+ ACT & 2.0-2.49 GPA
- Auburn University – Individual basis Average – 24-30 ACT & 3.86 GPA
- AUM – 18 ACT & 2.3 GPA
- BSC – Individual basis Average – 26 ACT & 3.6 GPA
- Huntingdon College – 20 ACT & 2.5 GPA
- Jacksonville State University – 20 ACT & 2.0 GPA
- Judson College – 18 ACT & 2.0 Academic GPA
- Miles College – Unconditional admittance given with high school diploma
- Samford University – Average range – 23-29 ACT & 3.48-4.0 GPA
- Spring Hill College – 20 ACT & 3.0 GPA
- Troy University – 20 ACT & 2.0 GPA
- Tuskegee University – 18 ACT & 2.6 GPA
- University of Alabama – 21 ACT & 3.0 GPA
- UAB – 20 ACT & 2.75 GPA
- UAH – 20 ACT & 2.9 GPA
- University of Mobile – 21 ACT & 2.75 GPA
- University of Montevallo – 20 ACT & 2.5 GPA
- University of North Alabama – 18 ACT & 2.25 GPA (Unweighted)
- University of South Alabama – 19 ACT & 2.5 GPA
- University of West Alabama – 19 ACT & 2.0 GPA
- Due to COVID-19, many universities went to test optional for admittance. However, many still required ACT/SAT scores for scholarship consideration.



# Automatic Scholarships

- Alabama A&M – 23 ACT & 3.25 GPA
- Alabama State University – 18 ACT & 2.75
- Auburn University – Assessment of academic achievement
- AUM – 18 ACT & 2.5 GPA
- BSC – Determined by scholarship grid: <https://www.bsc.edu/fp/aid.html>
- Huntingdon College – Minimum to qualify for scholarships is acceptance to the college
- Jacksonville State University – 20 ACT & 3.0 GPA
- Judson College – 18 ACT & 2.0 GPA
- Miles College – No specific GPA but must submit ACT or SAT score
- Samford University – Holistic view
- Spring Hill College – 20 ACT & 2.5 GPA
- Troy University – 23 ACT & 3.0 GPA
- Tuskegee University – 21 ACT & 3.0 GPA
- UAB – 20 ACT & 3.5 GPA or 24 ACT & 3.0 GPA
- UAH – 21 ACT & 3.0 GPA
- University of Alabama – 21 ACT & 3.5 GPA or 25 ACT & 3.0 GPA
- University of Mobile – 20 ACT & 2.75 GPA
- University of Montevallo – 20 ACT & 3.0 GPA
- University of North Alabama – 20 ACT & 3.0 GPA
- University of South Alabama – 21 ACT & 3.0 GPA
- University of West Alabama – 19 ACT & 2.0 GPA





# University of Alabama In-State Scholarships for 2020-2021

Scholarship	Test Score	GPA	Yearly Value
Presidential	30-36 ACT or 1360-1600 SAT	3.50+	Tuition
Foundation in Excellence	29 ACT or 1330-1350 SAT	3.50+	\$8,000
Foundation in Excellence	30-36 ACT or 1360-1600 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$8,000
Collegiate	28 ACT or 1300-1320 SAT	3.50+	\$7,000
Collegiate	29 ACT or 1330-1350 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$7,000
Capstone	27 ACT or 1260-1290 SAT	3.50+	\$6,000
Capstone	28 ACT or 1300-1320 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$6,000
UA Legends	26 ACT or 1230-1250 SAT	3.50+	\$5,000
UA Legends	27 ACT or 1260-1290 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$5,000
Crimson Achievement	25 ACT or 1200-1220 SAT	3.50+	\$4,000
Crimson Achievement	26 ACT or 1230-1250 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$4,000
UA Recognition	21-24 ACT or 1060-1190 SAT	3.50+	\$3,000
UA Recognition	25 ACT or 1200-1220 SAT	3.00-3.49	\$3,000

## Presidential Elite Scholar

A student with a 4.0 GPA and a 36 ACT or 1600 SAT will be selected as a Presidential Elite Scholar and will receive:

- Value of tuition for up to four years for degree-seeking undergraduate and graduate or law studies
- One year of on-campus housing at regular room rate
- \$1,000 per year stipend for four years
- \$2,000 one-time allowance for use in summer research or international study (after completing one year of study at UA)
- \$2,000 book scholarship (\$500 per year for four years)

**Please note, if a student should meet the criteria for more than one merit scholarship, they will only be awarded the higher scholarship package.**



## Auburn University In-State Scholarships 2020-2021

Freshman Scholarships are awarded exclusively to incoming freshmen and are renewable for four years. Students accepted for admission must apply through the Auburn University Scholarship Opportunity Manager (AUSOM)) to receive consideration for Freshman Scholarships. Incoming freshmen accepted for admission must complete the scholarship application through the Auburn University Scholarship Opportunity Manager (AUSOM)) by 4:45 p.m. CST on December 15.

Incoming freshmen with a minimum 3.5 high school GPA and a minimum 26 ACT score or equivalent SAT score as of the freshman scholarship deadline are more likely to receive a four-year merit scholarship based on academic achievement. The charts in the sections below provide estimated award amounts.

The minimum test score and high school GPA required for consideration must be reflected on the applicant record within AUSOM by December 15. Following receipt by Auburn, it may take up to three days before test scores and GPAs are updated in AUSOM. For the purposes of awarding scholarships, the highest composite ACT or equivalent total SAT score from a single test date is used, and the writing score is not considered. Minimum academic requirements for scholarship consideration and award amounts are for students planning to enroll Summer or Fall 2020 and are subject to change for enrollment in future terms.

Test Score	High School GPA	Estimated Annual Award Amount	Estimated Four-Year Award Amount
26-27 ACT 1230-1290 SAT	3.5+	\$2,000	\$8,000
28-29 ACT 1300-1350 SAT	3.5+	\$4,000	\$16,000
30-32 ACT 1360-1440 SAT	3.5+	\$8,000	\$32,000
33-36 ACT 1450-1600 SAT	3.5+	Value of resident tuition	Value of resident tuition



# What juniors should also be doing now.

- Check your GPA, transcript and rank for accuracy
- Begin the process of applying to any of the Military Academies, if applicable
- Write a first draft of your resume (fall)
- Take the SAT and/or the ACT (winter or spring)
- Register with the NCAA clearing house as a recruitable athlete, if applicable
- Request admissions information from colleges and universities
- Visit colleges, either in person or online
- Clean up your social media presence.
- Make sure you graduate ontime by fulfilling all district requirements
- Gather any college admissions specific information such as your art or music portfolio, athletic game tapes, or tests.
- Ask teachers, coaches, employers, or other adults for recommendations.



# Your senior year: (begins the summer after your junior year)

- Add to, review, and finalize your resume.
- Review and finalize your college essay before you apply if needed.
- Make note of all deadlines for admissions and financial aid.
- Set up a meeting with Mrs. Meskunas if you have questions.
- Review recommendations and ask for additional ones if necessary.
- Take SAT or ACT one more time, if needed.
- **Complete college applications (August/September – December of your senior year).**
- **Send official transcripts (JCHS Homepage)**
- **Send SAT/ACT scores to colleges (actstudent.org or sat.collegeboard.org)**
- Gather information needed for FAFSA and CSS profile (selective colleges)
- Fill out FAFSA (available October 1st of your senior year).
- Apply for local scholarships (all year).
- Take necessary AP exams.
- Notify colleges of your decision to accept or decline their offer (May of your senior year).
- Accept or decline financial aid/scholarships from the college you plan to attend.



# What Freshmen and Sophomores should be doing now

## Freshmen

- Finalize your 4 year plan.
- Get to know your counselor.
- Know your course descriptions.
- Monitor your grades.
- Explore the extracurricular and community organizations open to you.
- If interested, join JROTC.
- Investigate community service opportunities. Keep track of your hours.
- Start thinking about college and what you would like to gain from college.
- Visit colleges during weekends or breaks.

## Sophomores

- Check your GPA.
- Finalize your 4 year plan.
- Enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) courses where possible.
- Take the PSAT your junior year
- Prepare for SAT/ACT.
- Military academy? Start planning now.
- Investigate careers.
- Think about what type of college you would like to attend.
- Visit colleges during weekends or breaks.
- Consider community colleges.
- Prepare for college application fees and exam fees.



# Social Media

- Do not post anything that you would not want a college representative or potential employer to see.
- Be careful! People are checking.
- Make certain that you have an appropriate, professional email address. Don't use livingtoparty@gmail.com. You will need a separate email address other than your school email. Otherwise, colleges will not be able to contact you after you graduate.



# Financial Aid

- Not being able to afford a certain school should not stop you from applying if you think you can get in.
- You don't know which colleges your family can afford until you get an estimate based on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) that you submit at the beginning of October in your senior year.
- This form determines what your family can contribute and what types of scholarships and grants you might be eligible.



# Scholarships

There are thousands of scholarships out there. Start investigating now. Many are for your senior year only. Here are some helpful websites:

<https://www.madisoncity.k12.al.us/Page/3136>

- [CollegeGreenLight.com](http://CollegeGreenLight.com)
- [Bigfuture.org](http://Bigfuture.org)
- [Fastweb.com](http://Fastweb.com)
- [GoingMerry.com](http://GoingMerry.com)
- [SallieMae.com](http://SallieMae.com)

You can also follow Mrs. Meskunas on twitter @ JCHSJetAdvisory.