



Senior College Meeting

CLASS OF 2026

Make sure to pick up your senior packet
and review before the meeting.



JDR Grad

- Order graduation announcements early.
- You will keep your graduation gown and do not need to turn back into the school. The cost is part of the graduation fee, and are ordered in Mrs. Romei's class.
- Website - www.jdrgrad.com
- Only legal names are placed on the diploma, no nicknames.



Senior Photos

Go to this website to schedule your appointment with Waldrup Photography- <https://www.waldrupphoto.com/>

Here is their contact info:

text - 256-384-4416 , email - waldrupstudio@gmail.com or call -
256-517-8776

728 Arcadia Cir NW, Huntsville, AL 35801

By Appointment Only



PRESENTERS & PANELISTS FOR THE MEETING

- **Jake Brown, Recruitment Counselor, Troy University**
- **Gracie Palmer,, Regional Student Recruitment Relationship Specialist, University of North Alabama**
- **Bailey Baldwin, Admission Counselor, Samford University**
- **Hayden Futral, Admissions Counselor, Auburn University**
- **Tamira Perry,, Recruitment & Outreach Coordinator, Calhoun Community College**
- **Emily Griffith, Regional Admissions Counselor, The University of Alabama at Birmingham**
- **Anna Walton, North Alabama Regional Recruiter, The University of Alabama**
- **Kyrie Jobb and Edy Aguilar, Admissions Counselor, The University of Alabama in Huntsville**
- **Staton Robbins, Admissions Counselor, Jacksonville State University**
- **Blake Batchelor, Office of Enrollment Services, University of South Alabama**
- **Lori R. Cobb, Director of Counseling Services, St. John Paul II Catholic High School**



Disclaimer:

Much of this workshop addresses college admission in a global context; individual experiences will vary.

All events are subject to change.



Please be careful of gather college information from other sources - teachers, staff, websites, chat rooms, parents, etc... It might not be correct.

Please contact Mrs. Cobb or the admissions counselor directly. If we don't know the answer, we will direct you to the correct person.



Senior Packet

- Transcript Sign-Off and Diploma Name Form (Return today!!)
- Transcript
- Official Transcript Release Form(Return today, if in your packet!!!!)
- Service Hour Report
- Honor Cord Policy/Senior Awards
- School Profile (Sent with transcripts)
- College Visit Absence Form (3 college visits)
- Senior Calendar
- FAFSA
- Definitions of Admissions Options
- ACT/SAT Test Dates
- ACT Prep for Dec. ACT Class



Transcripts

- Make sure name (legal full name), address, birthday, grades, etc... are correct.
- Service hours are now on the transcript.
- **We are a non-ranking high school. Mark this on applications.**
- **We are on a 4.5 grading scale not a 4.0 scale.**
- Turn in Official Transcript Form **TODAY** in black bins before you leave.
Will start sending transcripts to non CA schools on 8/9-12.
- **All transcripts must be requested in Naviance Student by student.**
- Do not request more than once in Naviance.
- No charge for transcripts.
- Some college will take grades off the transcript to recalculate to their GPA, especially selective colleges.
- Mr. Hill will upload current schedules to your transcripts, so watch those class changes! Will add dual enrollment and summer classes once they are received.
- **We do not send official test scores, they are not on the transcript.**



Why JP II Does Not Rank Students?

At JP II, not ranking students has never hindered college or military academy admissions.



- GPA differences are often as small as 0.001—making ranks virtually meaningless.
- Colleges use holistic admissions: GPA, course rigor, test scores, activities, and growth.
- A lot of colleges recalculate GPAs on their own scale (4.0, 6.0, etc.).
- Class rank is not a consistent or accurate indicator of ability across schools.
- Ranking can lead to unhealthy competition and discourage academic risk-taking.



Transcripts

***Do not panic if you get a notice
about a missing transcript.***

You may always check in Naviance about
the status of your transcript.

Contact Mrs. Cobb to have the college
check to see if it is still in processing.
Processing can take up to 3 weeks.



Senior Awards & Honor Cords (Refer to Handout)

- Students may only wear Honor Cords listed on handout (May add an English Honor Society)
- Senior Awards Criteria (see handout)
- Senior Awards & Senior Picnic - May 18th



Madison County Private School College Fair

Thursday, August 21st

6:00-8:30 pm

Randolph School

More info on the Class of 2026



ALL TRANSCRIPTS MUST BE REQUESTED IN NAVIANCE.

I will be visiting Mrs. Romei's class on August 14th and 15th to review how to request transcripts, ask for letters of recommendation, and match your Common App with Naviance.

I'm also available during Falcon Flight Time and your study hall period for additional help. Bring your laptop.

Depending on interest, I may offer a Saturday help session—keep an eye out for the Google Form to sign up.



Transcripts

- Make sure to mark how you are applying either Common App or Direct to the Institution in Naviance.
- Make sure to correct in Naviance if you change your mind on how you are applying.
- Match your Common App to Naviance so all your documents are sent correctly - counselor report, letters of rec, and transcripts



ACT/SAT Tests

- **We do not send ACT/SAT Test or AP scores. This is the student's responsibility.**
- Still time to take ACT/SAT Tests to qualify for certain scholarships.
- Will offer ACT prep this fall – Check email for details
- Some colleges are still test-optional for 2025-2026, but may still require for scholarships.
- Check to see if college will superscore for scholarships.
- Academies will still require test scores for acceptances.
- See Mrs. Cobb for Fee Waivers, students on scholarship.
- May want to consider CLEP exams.



Senior Calendar

- Located in Naviance & copy in Senior Packet.
- Please mark your calendar for important dates.
- Watch dates for applications & scholarships.
- Info about Graduation Cord included in packet.
- **Final Senior checklist sent at the end of February or early March by email from Mrs. Cobb.**

All dates are subject to change.



Graduation

Graduation - May 21st @ 4PM Mark Smith Concert Hall VBC.

Seniors will receive 14 Graduation Tickets

(6 preferred and 8 general seating)

**Graduation Gowns will be ordered in Theology Class. Do not need to return
Cap and Gowns after graduation. Included in graduation fee.**

Only 288 days until graduation!



SENIOR EXAM EXEMPTIONS

Exemptions for final exams are determined by individual class. Exemptions are only granted to seniors under the following conditions:

- Minimum average for the class must be at least 83 for the second semester.
- No more than ten (10) unexcused check-in tardies per class for the year.
- No more than ten (10) excused or unexcused absences per class for the year.
- Required service hours must be completed by the end of first semester.
- International/transfer students whose first year in attendance is as a senior should have 25 service hours completed by the end of April.
- Administration will provide faculty a list of students who did not meet the behavioral or service requirements; individual class instructors will assess GPA, tardies, and absences in a class.

Students will lose their exemption if they receive an in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.

Note: First semester exams can be exempted for seniors if the class is an elective semester-only class,
Requirements: see above. The Assistant Principal will review on a case-by-case basis those seniors affected by extreme absences due to illness or surgeries.



College Visit Absence Form

- **Please fill out the form before your absence!**
- Submit this form to the Counselor's Office before the date of the visit in order for the absence to be EXCUSED.
- You must turn these into the counseling office two days before your visit. Do not email Mrs. Allen or Mrs. Cobb, must have College Visit Form completed.
- The student is responsible for all required make-up work.
- Seniors are allowed 3 college visits.
- If you need an additional day, please contact Mr. Henry or Mr. Hill for approval.



College Visits to JP II

We will have in person visits during
Falcon Flight and after school.

If you are applying to a college that is
visiting, please stop by to speak
with the rep.



Service Hours

- **All service hours must be entered into MobileServe by end of 1st semester(1/16/26).**
- For new seniors by the end of April.
- Must be with a non-profit agency.
- Could affect final exam exemption if not entered into MobileServe.
- See Mrs. Cobb for more assistance or email at lcobb@jp2falcons.org.



Letters of Recommendations

Choose Core Academic Teachers (English, Math, Science, History, or Theology)

These teachers can best speak to:

- Your academic ability and work ethic
- How you perform in a classroom setting
- Your participation, growth, and character over time

Why not others like coaches, pastors, or job supervisors?

- They don't see you in an academic environment
- Colleges want to know how you'll do in college-level classes

Please ask for letters of recommendation in person, then request in Naviance. Give teachers at least two weeks notice.



The College Essay

- Gives colleges insight into your personality, values, and experiences.
- Shows how you think, write, and reflect.
- An opportunity to go beyond your GPA and test scores.
- Should help answer: “Who are you, and what will you bring to our campus?”



Topics to Avoid

- Generic topics: Winning the big game, mission trip summaries, etc. (unless highly personal).
- Overused clichés: “Hard work pays off,” “I learned to never give up,” etc.
- Bragging without reflection: Listing achievements with no emotional or personal insight.
- Controversial or sensitive topics (e.g., politics, religion) unless handled with great care and maturity.
- Negative tone without growth: Complaining, blaming others, or lack of resolution.
-



To Waive or Not to Waive

Waiving Your FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) means you give up the right to see your recommendation letters.

Reasons to Waive:

- **Shows trust** in your recommenders.
- **Letters are seen as more honest** and credible by admissions offices.
- Some schools **may not accept** non-waived letters.
- Waiving FERPA is **standard and expected** in most cases.

***Tip:** If you chose your recommenders wisely, there's no reason not to waive!*



If applying to a highly selective college,
make sure to have several safety schools
as a backup.

Don't put all your eggs in one basket!

DEFINITIONS OF ADMISSION OPTIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION



National Association for
College Admission Counseling
Guiding the way to higher education

STUDENTS: WHICH COLLEGE ADMISSION PROCESS BEST SUITS YOU?

Non-Restrictive Application Plans

Regular Decision

DEFINITION:

Students submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision in a clearly stated period of time.

COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

Rolling Admission

DEFINITION:

Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render admission decisions throughout the admission cycle.

COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

Early Action (EA)

DEFINITION:

Students apply early and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date.

COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

Restrictive Application Plans

Early Decision (ED)

DEFINITION:

Students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted they definitely will enroll. The application deadline and decision deadline occur early.

COMMITMENT:

BINDING

Restrictive Early Action (REA)

DEFINITION:

Students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They may be restricted from applying ED or EA or REA to other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 to confirm.

COMMITMENT:

NON-BINDING

Students are not restricted from applying to other institutions and have until May 1 to consider their options and confirm enrollment.

Students are responsible for determining and following restrictions.

For a copy of this flyer, please visit www.nacacnet.org



General Admission Info

- Make sure to review my slide show on the JP II website from the Rising Senior Meeting.
- Watch for deadlines and make sure you have applied for the correct admission cycle.
- Early Action, Early Decision I/II(Binding), or Rolling Admissions - See Admissions Handout.
- **Early Decision is binding for selective colleges - Parent, Student, and Counselor must sign agreement student will attend college if admitted.**
- Some schools have a restrictive Early Action, like Yale, Notre Dame, and Georgetown.



General Admission Info

- For Common App, the counselor and school report, and teachers recs go together in Naviance. I will send closest to your deadline - November 1st, December 1st, January 1st, etc...
- For Common App colleges, I recommend to waive your FERPA before you match your account in Naviance.
 - Waiving your FERPA lets colleges know the letter of recommendation is more weighted and the student did not write their own letter of recommendation.
- No matter how you apply to a college - Direct to the Institution, SENDedu, Coalition Application, Common Application, etc..., **all transcripts must be requested in Naviance.**
 - Even if it is a self-reporting school.
- ***Make sure to mark correctly either Common App or Direct to the Institution, especially if you change your mind for applying.***



General Admission Info

- Letters of recommendations must be requested in Naviance. You must ask a teacher in person first. **Please give teachers at least two weeks notice.** Let a teacher know if they will receive an email from a college or it will go through Naviance. Some emails will go to our spam. I recommend all letter requested before 11/25/25 for January 1st deadline.
- Do NOT request Mrs. Cobb for Common APP. I am not a teacher and I fill out a separate report.
- **Make sure your resume and brag sheet is completed in Naviance for a better letter of rec.**
- Have Ms. Kay or Mrs. Cobb proofread your essays. Share in a Google doc. **Do not use AI to write your college essays.**



Should I apply via the Common App or Direct to the Institution?



Colleges in Naviance

Steps in Naviance

- Add colleges to “Colleges I’m Applying To,” mark correctly, and request transcripts
- Waive Your FERPA & Match to Naviance to Common App Account
- Request letters of rec in Naviance

Detailed steps in the Class of 2026



Match by Concourse

- A college admissions platform that flips the process: colleges apply to students!
- Students create one profile, and colleges send admission offers based on that.
- Naviance has partnered with Concourse to make it easier for students to get noticed.
- It's free, easy, and reduces stress around applying to college.

Several Alabama colleges are participating in Match. Will post info on the Class of 2026 how to create your profile in Naviance with Match.

First class at JP II to have access to this platform.



What is Common App Direct Admissions?

- A new program launched by Common App in partnership with select colleges.
- Offers provisional admission to participating colleges before a student applies.
- Based on information already in the student's Common App account (GPA, courses, etc.).
- Designed to reduce barriers and help students see more college options.



Honors Colleges

- May require a separate application.
- Higher admissions qualifications than the university admissions qualifications than the university requirements.
- Graduation requirements (Minimum GPA, minimum hours of Honors courses, etc.).
- Provide small, rigorous learning environment with designated classes across other schools and colleges (College of Business, Arts and Sciences, etc.).
- Typically provide separate housing.
- Many Perks.
- Priority Registration.
- Individualized Advisement.
- Assistance with prestigious scholarships, fellowships, and internships.
- Separate facilities.
- Special events.
- **ALWAYS CHECK THE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY FOR ITS POLICIES.**



Free Application Week (Tentative Dates)

1st - 1st week of October

3rd week of February

Will post info on Class of 2026



Paying for College

(FAFSA is projected to open October 1, 2025)



Cost of Attendance

Estimated full and reasonable cost of completing a full academic year (9 months) as a full time student. COA is published by each school.

Hard Costs - The “School Bill”

- Tuition and Fees
- Room and Board

Soft Costs - The “Extras”

- Books and Supplies
- Transportation
- Living Expenses
- Miscellaneous



FAFSA

- Much Shorter and More User-Friendly
- Student Aid Index (SAI) is an eligibility index number that your college's financial aid office uses to determine how much federal student aid you would receive.
- Pell Grant Eligibility Based on AGI (Adjusted Gross Income) and SAI (Student Aid Index)
- In Divorce or Separation, Typically The Parent who Claims the Student on their Tax Return
- No Financial Consequences for Contributions Made by Others
- Income Protection Allowance Goes Up



New FAFSA Changes

- A maximum borrowing limit for all students of \$257,500.
- Limited Repayment Plans for New Borrowers.
- Parent PLUS Loan Borrowers Affected.
- Pell Grant Ineligibility with Full Scholarships.
- New Workforce Pell Grants.



Determining Financial Need

How the SAI is calculated.

- There are some changes in the language used to calculate “need”.
 - o COA – cost of attendance
 - o SAI – student aid index
 - o OFA – other financial assistance



**The Student Aid Index (SAI) calculation may see further adjustments to income exclusions, potentially increasing aid eligibility for low and moderate-income families.*



Applications for Financial Aid

FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid

- www.FAFSA.gov
- Used by ALL colleges/universities
- Opens on October 1, 2025 (Date could change)

CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE -

- Used by 400 schools to award institutional aid

School specific Scholarship Application

- Required by some schools; deadlines vary

APPLY EARLY!



College Scholarships (Merit/Departmental)

- Have a specific GPA and ACT/SAT criteria.
- Have hard deadlines.
- May have a separate application.



Scholarship Websites

- Naviance – Sallie Mae
- www.fastweb.com
- www.scholarships.com
- www.scholarship.org
- www.collegenet.com
- www.finaid.org
- www.unigo.com
- <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search>
- www.niche.com



Some of My Favorite Scholarships

- SMART - Very Competitive, must commit 4 years to DoD, major in STEM (\$25,000 – 38,000 stipend).
- Buick Achievers Scholarship Program - \$25,000 per 4 years, major in STEM in the automotive or related industries , academic achievement and financial need, leadership.
- Siemens Math, Science and Technology Award Scholarships –Siemens Corporation teamed up with the College Board for a yearly science competition with awards ranging \$3,000 up to \$100,000 for the first place winner. Competitions are held on some of the most prestigious campuses like MIT, Carnegie Mellon, Notre Dame, Georgia Tech, etc...



Some of My Favorite Scholarships (Cont.)

- Stokes Educational Scholarship Program - is to facilitate the recruitment of individuals, particularly minority high school students, who have demonstrated skills critical to NSA. Is open to high school seniors planning on majoring in computer science or computer/electrical engineering. Could receive up to \$30,000 per year for tuition and mandatory fees.
- Gates Millennium Scholarship, GMS, - provide a fully-funded post secondary opportunity for outstanding minority students with significant financial need.
- Other notable scholarships - Burger King, GE Reagan, Smith Scholarship, AXA Achievement Community Scholarship, AAAA Scholarship, Horatio Alger National Scholarship, VFW Voice OF Democracy Competition.



Scholarship Board

Make sure to check out the scholarship board on the JP II website. It is a great resource for scholarships for various colleges.

<https://content.myconnectsuite.com/api/documents/f0b0444eccd04ebdb6c09a9b6b692ba6.pdf>



In-State Tuition at Out-of-State Colleges

- Ask colleges in neighboring states for reduced tuition
- Look for a regional exchange program - Academic Common Market (Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia).
<http://www.sreb.org/academic-common-market>
- Establish residency - take a gap year to establish residency.
- You or your parents work for the college, state or government - veterans and their dependents of the U.S. military may receive in-state tuition rates at many public colleges or universities in the country.



CO-OP/Internship Programs

- Not just for Engineers or Business Majors anymore, may add another semester or year to college, alternate a semester (CO-OP 1 semester, 2 semesters with classes).



Work Colleges

Work Colleges share two fundamental beliefs. First, that a college experience should educate the whole person. Second, earning a college degree shouldn't require a lifetime of debt. Through an innovative approach of Work-Learning-Service, all Work College students offset college costs by participating in a mandatory work program and performing service in their communities. Most work positions are limited to 8 -15 hours per week and designed to enhance a student's academic studies.

Work College Members - Alice Lloyd College, Ecclesia College, Berea College, Sterling College, Blackburn College, College of the Ozarks, and Warren Wilson College - www.workcolleges.org

(n.d.). Retrieved November 11, 2016, from <http://www.workcolleges.org/students/why-attend-work-college>



Military

- Service Academies
- ROTC
- National Guard
- Loan Repayment Programs
- Alabama G.I. Dependents' Scholarship - covers tuition, textbooks, and laboratory fees. No application deadline. There is no restriction on the number of eligible dependents under the veteran.



Parent's Role: The College Application Process

Overzealous moms and dads who ask too many questions on college tours, write their child's essays for them, and refer to their child's application as "ours" can actually hinder a student's college admission chances. Some college admission officers have begun complaining that parents are too involved in the process.

- Be supportive, try not to nag
- Help student make a calendar with important dates
- Have that financial discussion now, if you haven't already
- Be careful of forcing your or their siblings alma mater upon your child, it might not be the right fit for them
- Students should take ownership of their applications and essays



Social Media Gone Wrong

How social media mistakes can hurt college applicants:

While college applications are the primary factors in admissions decisions, what students post on social media can influence those decisions. A significant percentage of colleges check applicants' social media, and inappropriate or offensive content can lead to negative perceptions or even rescinded acceptances.

Real-world examples:

- In 2017, Harvard rescinded the acceptances of at least 10 admitted students due to their participation in a private Facebook group chat that contained racist and sexually offensive content.
- A Snapchat video containing racist slurs led to a football recruit's rejection from Cornell University.
- Marquette University revoked a student's admission offer and scholarship due to a Snapchat post mocking the death of George Floyd.
- A University of Florida valedictorian's admission was withdrawn after the university learned of a racist Instagram post she had made.



Watch for Graduation Checklist!

Sent by email around the end
of February or the
1st week of March!!!



PLEASE READ EMAILS
& LISTEN TO
ANNOUNCEMENTS.
PARENTS - MAKE SURE
YOU HAVE JOINED THE
CLASS OF 2026.



For any NCAA or NAIA
questions,
see
Mrs. Cobb



I will be glad to help in anyway I can,
***but your emergency is not always my
emergency.***

My office hours are 7:30-4:00 PM M-F.

Email me to set-up an appointment
during Falcon Flight or study hall.

Please watch your deadlines!



BEFORE YOU CLICK SUBMIT

- KNOW THE NAME OF THE COLLEGE YOU ARE APPLYING TO.
- KNOW YOUR DEADLINES!
- YOUR EMERGENCY IS NOT MY EMERGENCY.
- CHECK FOR SPELLING.
- BE HONEST ON ALL APPLICATIONS.
- FEE WAIVERS – MUST QUALIFY FOR FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH AT A PUBLIC SCHOOL.
- START TURNING IN ACCEPTANCES/SCHOLARSHIPS EARLY TO COUNSELING OFFICE. WE HAVE DEADLINES TOO.
- READ EVERYTHING!!
- PLEASE BE NICE TO THE ADMISSION COUNSELORS.
- DON'T BE AFRAID TO APPEAL A FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE. THIS MAY NOT APPLY FOR CERTAIN STATE SCHOOLS.
- DON'T FORGET TO SEND A "THANK YOU" NOTE OR EMAIL TO ADMISSION COUNSELORS IN THE SPRING, EVEN IF YOU ARE DECLINING OFFERS.



Turn in ALL acceptances and scholarship letters to the counseling office.

We will be glad to make copies of letters or forward an email acceptance to Mrs. Cobb.

We must have documentation from the college regarding acceptances and scholarship information.

Deadline is May 1st for the graduation program.



For any outside letter of recommendations that are not with the Common App or come to a teacher/counselor from an outside source, please let the teacher know beforehand the rec is coming and from what source.

These often go to our SPAM accounts.



Stats for the Class of 2025 (78 graduates)*

*(scholarship totals do not include foreign exchange students who are returning to their home country)

- The total offered scholarships - \$10,729,293
- Total accepted scholarships - \$3,187,167
- \$153,276 average amount offered in scholarships (out of 70 students)
- 26.32% of students achieved a 30 or higher on their ACT
- Total Service Hours - 8783 total hours
- 3 collegiate athletes
- 1 Appointment to the US Military Academy at West Point
- 2 ROTC Scholarships (1 - 4 year and 1 - 3 year scholarship)
- 1 National Merit Finalist, 1 Commended Scholar, and 2 Special Recognition Program Scholars
- 95% plan to attend a four-year institution
- 5% plan to attend a two-year institution



What will be the Class of 2026 college stats?



Resources

Morrison, M. C. (n.d.). The Role of Parents in the College Admission Process. Retrieved August 11, 2017, from

<https://www.unigo.com/get-to-college/college-admissions/the-role-of-parents-in-the-college-admission-process>.