

Arabia Mountain High School

Guidance and Counseling Department Handbook



2015-2016

Arabia Mountain High School Administrative Team

Dr. Rodney Swanson, Principal
Dr. Malik Douglas, Assistant Principal
Dr. Constance Franklin, Assistant Principal
Dr. Stephanie May, Assistant Principal
Mrs. Rheanolia Wynn, Assistant principal

Arabia Mountain High School Counseling Staff

Tammy Rogers, Head Counselor; *Grade 9*
Meika Banks, A-F; Grades 10 -12
Jennifer Roe, T-Z; Grades 10 – 12
Tequila Morgan, N-Z; Grades 10- 12
Annette Ham, Administrative Assistant
Lakeisha Bridges, Registrar

School Contact Information

6610 Browns Mill Road
Lithonia, GA 30038
Front Office: 678-875-3602
Front Office Fax: 678-875-3610
Counseling Office: 678-875-3632
Counseling Fax: 678-875-3646

Dear Students and Parents:

This handbook is designed to help you get to know your Guidance and Counseling Department. Programs and procedures are described briefly to give you an overview of our extensive program. We feel the best way to achieve our goals is through a collaborative effort with students and parents. We are here to provide information, guidance, and support to help you make the most of your high school experience.

The Arabia Mountain High School Counseling Department works as a team to offer information and advisement that enables students to choose and implement the most positive, appropriate and productive comprehensive education plan. While collaborating with psychologists, social workers, other support staff, along with parents and the community, the Arabia Mountain Counseling Department functions as an integral part of the student's educational program. Systematic and developmental in design, these services promote decision-making and problem-solving skills which help students develop into complex thinkers, effective communicators, responsible and ethical citizens, self-directed individuals, and quality workers – Ideal Arabia Mountain High School graduates!

Sincerely,

Tammy B. Rogers

Tammy Bates
Head Counselor

The Role and Mission of Arabia Mountain High School Counseling Services

Mission:

The mission of the Arabia Mountain High School Counseling Program is to provide a comprehensive, developmental counseling program addressing the personal/social, academic and career development of all students. In partnership with other educators, parents or guardians, and the community, Arabia Mountain High School counselors facilitate the support system to ensure all students at Arabia Mountain High School have access to, and are prepared with the knowledge and skills to contribute at the highest level as productive members of society.



Table of Contents

Administrative and Counseling Staff.....	2
Counseling Message.....	3
Role and Mission.....	4
Table of Contents.....	5
Hours of Operation, Appointments.....	6
Insurance Forms, Work Permits.....	6
Certificates of Attendance.....	7
Proof of Attendance, Schedule Changes.....	7
Waivers: SAT/ACT etc.....	7
Confidentiality, NCAA Clearinghouse.....	8
Home School/Non-Accreditation Transfer Credit.....	8
Transcript, Standardized Testing.....	8-10
Graduation Requirements.....	10
Class of 2012 and Beyond Program of Study.....	11
Promotion/Retention Policy.....	12
DeKalb OnLine Academy.....	12
On-line Course Programs, Accel Program.....	12-13
Post Secondary Planning.....	13
SAT Test Dates and Registration Fees.....	14
ACT Test Dates and Registration Fees.....	15
Year by Year College Planning Guide.....	16-24
College Application Process.....	24-25
Scholarship Information.....	25-28
References.....	29

Hours of Operation

The counseling office is open from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm Monday through Friday.

Contact Numbers:

Main Office (678) 875-3602
Counseling Office (678) 875-3632
Ms. Banks (678) 875-3648
Ms. Morgan (678) 875-3630
Ms. Roe (678) 875-3638
Mrs. Rogers (678) 875-3627
Attendance Office (678) 876- 3619
Registrar's Office (678) 875-3606

Appointments

- Students can come in before school, during class changes, or after school to sign in for a counselor appointment. A counselor will send for them as soon as possible. Students are not released during class time to schedule appointments. Emergencies are handled on an immediate need basis.
- Parents should call (678) 875-3632 (Ms. Ham) to schedule an office visit or telephone conference. Please give your student's name, grade level, and the nature of your call. Calls are returned as soon as possible.
- Parents may e-mail your student's teacher(s) or call Ms. Ham to request a conference with the teacher(s).

Work Permits

Work Permits applications are to be completed online through the Department of Labor. The student must complete the appropriate section of the form. After the online form is completed, they must print the form and take the form to the employer. The employer will then complete their portion of the form. The student must then bring the form to Ms. Bridges (registrar) for verification before the work permit can be issued. Students may leave these in the morning before school and collect forms after school the next day.

Certificates of Attendance

A Certificate of Attendance is required for all students attempting to get their driver's license from the Department of Transportation. Mrs. Rosalind Young, attendance administrative assistant handles all requests.

Proof of Attendance

Parents/Guardians of students in need of proof of attendance for purposes of Social Security verification, etc... should see Ms. Bridges (registrar). Please allow two business days for completion.

Schedule Changes

Students must complete a Schedule Change Request Form completed and signed by the student and parent in order to request a schedule change. Schedule Change Request Forms can be found in the counseling center and the main office. Parent signature is required on the Schedule Change Request Form in order for it to be processed.

Once classes are scheduled, it is difficult to make schedule changes because many classes will have reached maximum enrollment. Students may not be enrolled in a class that is considered filled. Overloading classes constitutes a violation of State Standards and is not permitted. If there is a need to request a schedule change, students must do so well in advance of the semester for which the change is desired.

After classes have been scheduled, requests will be considered only for the following reasons:

- the student has failed a required course and must repeat the course
- the student has failed a prerequisite and is not eligible to continue in the course sequence
- the student has failed to enroll in a course required for graduation
- the student demonstrates poor achievement in a prerequisite course and is advised by both the teacher and counselor or administrator not to enroll in a more advanced course
- there is a scheduling conflict or a course has been cancelled

Requests for changes of a class period or lunch **will not** be honored. Arabia Mountain High School reserves the right to make adjustments to student schedules due to changes in enrollment and/or to balance class sizes.

Students enrolled in an Advanced, Accelerated or AP class requesting a change to a regular level course are expected to complete the first semester before the change will be made.

WAIVERS: SAT, ACT, College Application, NCAA Clearinghouse:

Students are eligible for 2 ACT, 2 SAT, and 4 College Application Waivers throughout the 11th and 12th grades. Only students who receive free or reduced lunch qualify for waivers. Students can choose to either complete the paper application or online application for the SAT and ACT. Both agencies prefer online registration. In order to receive college application waivers, students must have already received an SAT waiver. Please see your counselor if you are eligible for an SAT and/or ACT fee waiver.

NCAA Clearinghouse waivers are completed by the counselors online, by request, and after students have received an SAT fee waiver. The NCAA Clearinghouse application must be completed online by the student.

Confidentiality Policy

There are four instances in which a counselor and/or teacher is legally bound to inform a parent and/or authority with information given during a counseling session:

- when a student indicates he or she is going to physically harm himself or herself or jeopardize his or her life
- when a student indicates he or she is going to physically harm another or jeopardize another's life or has knowledge that another's well-being is threatened
- when a student indicates he or she is being sexually, physically and/or emotionally abused
- when a student indicates he or she has committed a felony (i.e. stealing a car, etc.)

NCAA Clearinghouse

Students who are considering participating in athletics in college need to be certified whether or not you are academically eligible to participate during your freshman year. This is done through the NCAA Clearinghouse. Please visit the NCAA Clearinghouse website to begin this process at www.ncaa.org.

The Student Transcript

An official copy of your transcript contains the following information:

- Courses, grades, attendance, and credits for each grade level, beginning with grade 9
- Current cumulative weighted and unweighted GPA
- Graduation date (if applicable)
- Counselor's signature

All college applications and many scholarship applications request that an official transcript accompany the application. A student's transcript provides the college admissions and scholarship committees with important objective data.

An unofficial copy of your transcript is the same except there is not an official signature or seal. A student or parent/guardian can request an unofficial transcript for personal use such as a college visit by calling or stopping by the high school guidance office.

Requesting Transcripts

Transcript Request Forms must be completed and signed by the student or parent and turned in to Ms. Ham. Transcript Request Forms are located in the Counseling Center and on the web site. Transcript requests will be processed within 48 hours.

Standardized Testing

Students in grades 3 through 8 will take an end-of-grade assessment in the content areas of language arts, mathematics, science, social studies. These tests are administered towards the end of the school year, typically in April or early May. Each school district selects a local testing window from within the state designated timeframe to administer the end-of-grade measures.

Students at the high school level will take an end-of-course assessment in the following ten courses:

- Language Arts
 - Ninth Grade Literature and Composition
 - American Literature and Composition
- Mathematics
 - Algebra I (Beginning Winter 2015)
 - Geometry (Beginning Winter 2015)
 - Coordinate Algebra
 - Analytic Geometry
- Science
 - Physical Science
 - Biology
- Social Studies
 - United States History
 - Economics/Business/Free Enterprise

To assist students in preparing for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), DeKalb County Schools administers the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) in October of each school year. The PSAT provides firsthand practice for the SAT and gives students the chance to qualify for National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) scholarship programs. The eleventh grade score on the PSAT is the score used to determine students' chances at qualifying for these scholarship programs. The PSAT measures the skills your student has developed over the course of his education. These skills include critical reading skills, math problem-solving skills, and writing skills. Tenth grade students do not have to pay to take the PSAT. Ninth and Eleventh graders must pay a small fee in order to sit for the exam.

Standardized testing for college acceptance is an issue that generates many questions and much anxiety. Although test scores are only one part of the college application process, colleges that require standardized tests use them as means of comparing students to other college-bound seniors in the country. All colleges/universities require some type of entrance or placement examination. Most colleges and universities in the U.S. will accept either the American College Test (ACT) or the SAT I. You may take either or both tests several times to improve your score. Please consult with the college or university of your choice for specific requirements. It is recommended that students begin taking these tests during the spring of their junior year in high school. In addition, some colleges and universities require the SAT Subject Tests. You must contact the college or university of your choice to see if the SAT Subject Tests are required.

Graduation Requirements

All students must successfully complete all graduation requirements in order to receive a high school diploma. Students must earn 24 units in specified areas in order to complete the course

requirements. Those course requirements vary depending upon the student's diploma type. The diploma types are as follows:

Class of 2012 and subsequent years:

General Education Diploma

- College Preparatory Seal
- Career Technology Seal
- Honors/Distinction Seal
- Students with Disabilities (GHS GT required)
- Students with Disabilities (Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA) required)

DEKALB COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM PROGRAM OF STUDY FORM
Class of 2012 and subsequent years

Courses	General Education Diploma (Check One)					Transition Diploma Required course work determined by Individualized Educational Program (IEP)
	Students with Disabilities (SWD) Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT) Required	Students with Disabilities (SWD) Georgia Alternative Assessment (GAA) Required	College Preparatory Seal	Career Technology Seal	Honors/Distinction Seal +	
English*	4	4 Access Courses	4	4	4	
Math*	4	4 Access Courses	4	4	4	
Science*	4 4 th science can meet science or elective requirement	4 Access Courses	4 4 th science can meet science or elective requirement	4 4 th science can meet science or elective requirement	4 4 th science can meet science or elective requirement	
Social Studies* Rq'd .5 Am. Govt. - .5 Wld. Geog. 1 Wld. History 1 US History ^ 1 Economics	4	4 Access Courses	4	4	4	
Health/Physical Ed. .5 Health .5 PE 9 1**	2	2 Access Courses	2	2	2	
Electives*** Humanities*** World Languages* Career Technology***	6 2 units of math Support classes Required *No Foreign Language as determined by IEP General Electives determined by IEP	6 Access Courses	6 *2 Units of the same World Language required ***3 Units of Career Tech in the same pathway required or 3 Units of Humanities 1 General Elective	6 *1 Unit of a World Language required ***Units of Career Tech in the same pathway required 2 General Electives	6 *3 Units of the same World Language required 3 General Electives	
Totals	24	24	24	24	24	

Students must pass the Georgia High School Graduation Test in 5 areas to receive a diploma.

+Requires 3.5 Cumulative Grade Point Average (CUGPA) and a 3.0 Core Grade Point Average (CGPA)

*Core Courses

** One unit may be exempt through validated full-year participation in school sponsored athletics, marching band, dance and/or JROTC.

***Students are required to select elective courses based on the **area of concentration** with a minimum of three (3) units within the area of Career Technology or a minimum of three (3) units within the area of Humanities. **Career Technology units** must be in one of the following areas: BUS ED, FCS, TE, T&I or JROTC. **Humanities** include the following areas: World Languages, ~ESOL, Fine Arts, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, ELA and Social Studies.

~All identified ELL students must be enrolled in an ESOL course. Course level placement must be made per results of the ACCESS and/or WIDA Standards Language Proficiency Level. For approved ESOL delivery models, please refer to GaDOE ESOL Resource Guide.

****All identified ELL students must be enrolled in an ESOL course. Course level placement must be made per results of the ACCESS and/or WIDA Standards Language Proficiency Level. For approved ESOL delivery models, please refer to a GaDOE ESOL Resource Guide.

^Transfer students who have earned 0.5 CU for Economics have met state requirements; therefore, transfer students must take another 0.5 CU social studies elective to meet local graduation requirements.

-Transfer students who have not successfully completed 0.5 CU of World Geography may substitute another 0.5 CU social studies elective to meet local graduation requirements.

Promotion/Retention Policy

Students who enter the ninth grade in 2005-06 and beyond are required to complete three hundred sixty hours (24 units) in order to meet the requirements for graduation. The requirements for promotion are as follows:

- to the tenth grade, 90 hours (6 units), three (3) of which must be core courses and three (3) elective courses*
- to the eleventh grade, 180 hours (12 units), six (6) of which must be core courses and six (6) elective courses*
- to the twelfth grade, 270 hours (18 units), nine (9) core courses and nine (9) elective courses*

*Core Courses: English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, World Languages

Students that do not meet the above promotion requirements will be retained in their current grade. **Units must be earned by the end of Spring Semester.**

DeKalb On-Line Academy (DOLA)

DeKalb OnLine Academy is DeKalb County School System's virtual school. DeKalb OnLine Academy is designed to enhance the educational experience for students by providing greater access to learning via online courses. DeKalb OnLine Academy offers a comprehensive curriculum that includes core courses required for graduation, Advanced Placement courses, as well as elective courses.

DOLA offers two programs:

- DOLA During the Day
- DOLA Beyond the School Day

The DOLA During the Day program is for students who have space in their regular schedule to take courses that are not offered at their local school or to take courses failed. Fees are not required for the DOLA During the Day program. Students and parents must complete a DOLA Contract in order to participate in the DOLA online program.

The DOLA Beyond the School day is for students who would like to take a course not offered at their local school, or to take courses failed. Fees are required for the DOLA Beyond the School Day program: \$250 per .50 unit; \$500 per 1.00 unit.

For additional information, please speak with your students counselor or visit:
http://dola.dekalb.k12.ga.us/dekalbonlineacademy_home.aspx

On-line Course Programs

Prior to any student enrolling in an online program, students and parents must meet with their child's counselor for advisement. **All** courses taken outside must be approved by DeKalb County's virtual

learning committee prior to the student being enrolled in the course. Failure to follow this process may result in the student not receiving credit for the course.

MOWR

The Move On When Ready (MOWR) program provides for students who are dual credit enrolled at a participating eligible public or private high school, or home study program in Georgia, and a participating eligible postsecondary institution in Georgia. These students take postsecondary coursework for credit towards both high school graduation or home study completion and postsecondary requirements. Beginning with Fall term 2015 (FY 2016) the program is offered during all terms of the school year; fall, spring and summer semester or fall, winter, spring, and summer quarter.

Interested students must complete and submit an application to the college of their choice. Students are strongly encouraged to check with the college or university for specific admissions requirement information. Once students receive an acceptance letter, students must see their counselor to review course information, and to complete their schedule and the registration process.

Post Secondary Planning

Options

- Attend a two or four year college or university
- Military (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard)
- Full time work

School Code

For purposes of registering for the SAT and ACT, and completing college applications, you will need Arabia's school code. Our school code is:

111868

SAT Test Dates and Registration Fees

www.collegeboard.com

U.S. Registration Deadlines		
2015-2016 Test Dates	Regular Registration Deadlines (Postmark/submit by)	Late Registration Deadlines
October 3	September 3	September 18 (mail) September 22 (online or phone)
November 7	October 9	October 23 (mail) October 27 (online or phone)
December 5	November 5	November 20 (mail) November 23 (online or phone)
January 23	December 28	January 8 (mail) January 12 (online or phone)
March 5	February 5	February 19 (mail) February 23 (online or phone)
May 7	April 8	April 22 (mail) April 26 (online or phone)
June 4	May 5	May 20 (online) May 25 (online or phone)

Basic Fee Information

Test	Fees
SAT Reasoning Test	\$54.50
Late Registration Fee	\$27
SAT Subject Tests	
Basic registration fee	\$26
Language Tests with Listening (add to basic reg. fee)	Add \$18
All other SAT Subject Tests (add per test to basic reg. fee)	Add \$18

ACT Test Dates and Registration Fees

www.act.org

Test Date	Registration Deadlines (Postmark/Submit by)	Late Registration Deadlines
September 12	August 7	August 8-21
October 24	September 18	September 19- October 2
December 12	November 6	November 7- 20
February 6	January 8	January 9-15
April 9	March 4	March 5-18
June 11	May 6	May 7-20

Basic Fee Information

ACT (No Writing)	\$39.50
ACT Plus Writing	\$56.50
Late Registration Fee	\$25.00

** Please refer to the websites for additional registration and fee information.

Year-by-Year College Planning Guide

9th grade

Ninth grade is the beginning of your high school experience. College applications are a long way off, but there are some things you should be thinking about as you lay the foundation for a successful high school experience that will lead to a rewarding college application process. When a student becomes a freshman, everything starts to “count”. Freshman grades are used in determining GPA. Freshman activities, honors, and awards can be listed on college and scholarship applications. Freshman courses, grades, credits, and attendance become part of each student’s transcript.

Ninth graders should look for ways to form a happy foundation for a great Arabia experience and take advantage of the wonderful opportunities available to you here.

One of Arabia's strengths is its faculty, so get to know your teachers. They can become mentors, advisors, advocates, and even friends. Do not be afraid to ask your teachers how to be successful in their classes.

You can also enhance your high school experience by getting involved in activities. Freshman year is a great time to try a lot of things and discover what you like, whether it is athletics, music, service, or clubs. Seek out leadership roles. If you find things to do that you like, you will look forward to school each day and your ability to succeed, even excel in academics and extracurricular life will come more naturally.

- The ninth grade year is the time to evaluate your career plans. By starting early, you will be better prepared.
- Do not neglect your study habits! Keep up the good work, and continue to improve your study skills.
- Continue to explore post-secondary credit opportunities including college, technical schools, special purpose schools, apprenticeships, and the military related to your selected career interest.
- Find out about college entrance requirements for the schools you are interested in. Explore all your options.
- Create a file of the following documents and notes report cards, lists of awards and honors, school and community activities, and volunteer work.
- Start thinking about the colleges you want to attend.
- Find out about AP and other honors-level courses you can take in high school to help you prepare for college or earn college credit. *Remember*, the rigor in your high school curriculum is one of the most important factors in getting accepted into the college of your choice.
- Continue to get involved in campus and community activities.
- Take the Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) to evaluate your skills in English, math, reading and science reasoning. It's good practice and your scores won't count towards your college application.
- Spend your summer participating in summer programs, volunteering and educational programs to help give you a better idea about what kind of training or career would be right for you.
- If you already know the colleges you are interested in applying to, it is a good idea to visit their website to find out about their admissions requirements. This will help to ensure you are on the right track while planning which high school courses you will take.

10th Grade

With one year of high school behind you, you may be ready to start looking a little more towards the future, but you still have a lot of high school ahead. Continue to challenge yourself with rigorous courses and work hard to earn the best grades you can. Continue the extracurricular activities you started as a freshman even as you explore new interests. If possible, seek leadership opportunities. As in ninth grade, get to know your teachers. One of your sophomore year teachers may end up writing a letter of recommendation for you when you apply to college.

- Continue your conversations with your guidance counselors, teachers, family members or trusted adults about your plans to meet your education and career plans.
- Find out about AP and other honors-level courses for junior year. These can help you prepare for college or earn college credit.
- Update your college planning file — or start one, if you have not already.
- Continue extracurricular activities. Remember, many admissions officers look for well-rounded students who participate in the world around them.
- Check into work-based learning experiences such as career-related field trips, job shadowing, entrepreneurial ventures, internships, cooperative education, and youth apprenticeships.
- Take the PSAT in October. The scores will not count for National Merit Scholar consideration this year, but it is good practice for taking the PSAT in your junior year (when the scores will count).
- It is not too early to start studying for standardized tests like the ACT and SAT.
- Investigate your options for participating in post-secondary credit course enrollment next year. This allows juniors and seniors to enroll in college courses if they meet certain requirements. Examples include the Accel program, dual enrollment and articulated credit.
- Make a list of reasons why you like different post-secondary institutions - programs, location, cost, and so on. Visit college campuses and "tour" colleges.
- Start thinking about what factors are important to you in choosing a college: size, location, availability of extracurricular activities, for example.

11th Grade

The junior year in high school is a big year in the college admissions world. Rigor of courses and grades really do count. College admission committees often weigh junior and senior year grades more heavily than freshman and sophomore grades. First and foremost, focus on doing well in your classes!

The following is a college admissions calendar for the junior year. Read it carefully so that you are informed about what to do and what is available to you as you go through this important year in high school.

August

- Obtain schedules and forms for the SAT I, SAT Subject Test, ACT and AP exams.
- Continue to take classes to enhance your career choice.
- Continue to research career options in your selected pathway.

September

- Begin preparing for the PSAT and SAT Reasoning Test. You may read preparation books on your own. For more information, visit these online resources:
<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/prep.html>
- Register for the PSAT exam offered in October. Remember that when you take the PSAT in your junior year, the scores will count towards the National Achievement Program (and it is good practice for the SAT I).
- Identify sources of post-secondary information.
- Continue to revisit career options.
- Start a paper file for college catalogs and other admissions information.
- Watch for college nights at any schools in your area you may want to attend.

October

- Take the PSAT. Although the sophomore year PSAT was given for practice, the junior year scores may qualify you for National Merit Semifinalist status and make you eligible for possible National Merit scholarships. Mark on your PSAT answer sheet that you wish to receive materials from colleges, and schools will send you information if your PSAT score suggests that you would qualify for admission.
- Attend College PROBE Fair (check with your counselor/advisor for dates).
- Narrow your list of colleges to include a few colleges with requirements at your current GPA, a few with requirements above your current GPA, and at least one with requirements below your GPA.

November

- Review requirements for post-secondary credit opportunities like dual enrollment for your senior year.
- Attend meetings with post-secondary representatives.
- Keep up the good work in your classes.

December

- You will receive your scores from the October PSAT if you took it that month. Review your scores with your counselor/advisor and parents. Depending on the results, you may want to consider signing up for free online SAT prep.
- Obtain testing schedule for SAT I, ACT and SAT Subject Test.

January

- Start the second semester working hard in your classes. Strong second-semester grades may be a key factor in an admission decision. Remember that junior and senior grades are often weighed more heavily by admission committees.
- You will get mail from colleges based on your PSAT scores. Read the college catalogs thoroughly from the schools you find most interesting. They contain a great deal of information

and will help you narrow down your choices. Research is the key to a successful and well-informed process.

- Use your PSAT scores and your GPA to determine your academic qualifications. Begin to match these qualifications with the admission statistics for various colleges. It is important to be realistic about your academic profile. The college counseling staff is happy to help you with this important task.
- Plan college visits for later in the spring. Colleges offer information sessions and tours year round. The spring sessions and tours book up early. You will find more flexibility and access if you plan in advance -- especially if you plan to visit colleges during spring break.
- Attend the required college counseling meeting for juniors and parents. This meeting is your first formal introduction to Arabia's college counseling program.
- As you plan your senior schedule, be aware of and plan for the curriculum requirements at the schools that most interest you.

February

- Register for the SAT I or the ACT, or both. Research the requirements of the colleges you are interested in to learn about admission deadlines and which tests to take. Some colleges require the SAT Subject Tests in addition to the SAT I Reasoning Test.
- Begin assembling your list of post-secondary opportunities that reflect your career selection needs.
- Begin to accumulate information about post-secondary institutions.
- Plan college visits. Colleges offer information sessions and tours year round. The spring sessions and tours book up early. You will find more flexibility and access if you plan in advance -- especially if you plan to visit colleges during spring break.

March

- Register for ACT, SAT I, SAT Subject Test (if you plan to attend a two-year or four-year college or university).
- Consider post-secondary school visits during spring break.
- Begin to explore summer programs and internships.
- Visit college campuses over spring break.

April

- Take the SAT Reasoning Test. Register at www.collegeboard.com and/or take the ACT. Register at www.act.org
- Continue to gather information and evaluate colleges you are considering.
- Request letters of recommendation from two teachers. You should choose teachers that know you the best, as opposed to those that you like the best.

May

- Take the SAT Subject Tests, or take the SAT Reasoning Test again if you wish. Determine which subject tests are recommended by the colleges you are considering. Visit this website to assist in determining if the college of interest requires the SAT Subject Tests www.compassprep.com/admissions_req_subjects.aspx
- Take AP exams if you are in AP courses.

- Apply for NCAA eligibility, if appropriate.

June

- Consider taking the SAT Reasoning Test again, particularly if you are not satisfied with your score or you are considering applying under an early decision plan, or take the SAT Subject Tests if you did not do so in May.
- Add any new report cards, test scores, honors or awards from the year to your file.
- Continue with your college visits. Call ahead for appointments with the financial aid, admissions and academic advisors at the colleges in which you are most interested.

Summer in between Junior and Senior Year

- Visit college campuses in which you are interested, recognizing that you may need to return to some campuses when they are in session to get a complete view of the schools. If you wait until your senior year begins to visit colleges, you have waited too long.
- Try to narrow your list to fewer than 10 schools that meet your criteria and that represent a range of selectivity.
- Plan to attend summer programs: camp, sports, travel, volunteer or enrichment programs. The Counseling Website has a listing summer program resources. Come by any time and take a look. Colleges often ask you to write about your summer experiences in an essay or describe them in an interview.
- If you are not satisfied with your standardized test results, use the summer months to hone your testing skills in a regimented fashion. You could use a tutor or use test prep materials on your own.
- Begin brainstorming about possible college essay topics.
- Decide if you are going to apply under any early decision or early action programs. This requires you to submit your applications early, typically between October and December of your senior year.

12th Grade

The fall of your senior year is the time to finalize your college list and prepare your applications. This is the time to work closely with your counselor on making your application list appropriate for you and your goals. The more information you share with your counselor, the more help your counselor can give you in this process. We are here to help!

The following is a college admissions calendar for the senior year. Read it carefully so that you are informed about what to do and what is available to you as you go through the application process.

August

- Review GRADUATION status according to your program of study/diploma type.
- Check schedule for appropriate classes. Continue to take appropriate classes to enhance your next step after graduation.

September

- Schedule a meeting with your college counselor. Your parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend this meeting. Come prepared with a list of colleges you have researched and are seriously considering for application. Your counselor will go over this list with you and add other colleges if needed. Come with questions you have about scholarships, financial aid, standardized testing, etc.
- Check your transcripts to make sure you have all the credits you need to get into the schools that interest you.
- Pay close attention to announcements in the *Arabia Mountain Advocate*. The newsletter will announce visits by college admission representatives to Arabia, evening programs in the Atlanta area, scholarship deadlines, helpful hints, and other important information. This bulleting is also available on the Counseling website.
- Make arrangements to visit the colleges to which you have decided to apply. Arrange for an interview with the admission office if it is required or recommended.
- Register for the October/November SAT I, SAT Subject Test and ACT tests if you plan to take them again.
- Continue or begin working on your college essays.
- Take another look at your list of colleges, and make sure they still satisfy your requirements. It's not uncommon for students' goals to change.
- Make sure you meet the requirements (including any transcript requirements) for all the colleges to which you want to apply. Double-check the deadlines.
- Become familiar with the application process for your schools of choice.
- Give any recommendation forms to the appropriate teachers or counselors, making certain that your portions of the forms are filled out completely and accurately.
- Most early decision and early action applications are due between October 1 and November 1. Keep this in mind if you intend to take advantage of these options, and remember to request that your official transcripts be mailed to the college.

October

- Make a final list of schools that interest you and keep a file of deadlines and required admission items for each school.
- Take the SAT or ACT tests. Have the official scores sent by the testing agency to the colleges or universities that have made your final list of schools. Register for December or January SAT I or SAT Subject Tests, if necessary.
- Concentrate on doing well in your classes. First semester senior year grades are important to colleges.
- Prepare applications for your colleges. An ideal list includes four to six colleges: one to two each of a reach school, a target school, and a likely school.
- Many scholarship deadlines are in November and December. Check the DeKalb County Scholarship link and the Arabia Mountain Advocate on the website for deadlines and application information.
- Attend PROBE and NSSFNS College Fairs if available.

November

- Take the SAT Reasoning Test again if you did not take it in October. In most cases, the senior year SAT Reasoning Test is higher than the junior year score. Take the SAT Subject Tests if

they are required for admission to the colleges to which you are applying and you have not taken SAT Subject Tests yet.

- Submit your college admission applications. Be sure to check them over thoroughly! Having someone else review your application with you can help you catch any errors.
- Continue with post-secondary planning. Review and follow significant deadlines.
- Distribute teacher/counselor recommendation forms, if required.
- Be sure to consult with your school counselor about scholarship opportunities. Not all scholarships are for top students and athletes. There may be a perfect scholarship for you — it's worth doing a little research.
- Work on your scholarship applications, and mail according to deadlines.
- Check with the financial aid office of schools you are applying to for specific information on scholarships and costs for tuition, fees, room and board, and any additional financial aid info they require.

December

- If you have not already done so, make sure your official test scores are being sent to the colleges to which you are applying.
- Schedule any remaining required interviews.
- Take the SAT Reasoning Test and/or the ACT again if you are still dissatisfied with your scores. Take the SAT Subject Tests if they are required for admission to the colleges to which you are applying and you have not taken SAT Subject Tests yet.
- Submit all applications with January 1 deadline.
- Become familiar with resume writing.
- Start thinking about how you are going to spend your summer. Summer is a great time to earn extra money and gain work experience. Ask your counselor about internships, and start researching the summer job market in your area.
- Research financial aid options. We recommend you look at the financial aid forms even if you think you will not qualify for financial aid. You will be sure to miss out on financial aid if you do not apply.
- If you are admitted to a college under the Early Decision program, you must withdraw all your other applications by writing to the colleges. You are honor bound to do this. Your college could rescind its offer of admission if you do not withdraw your applications to other schools.
- Keep your grades up! Do not let senioritis take over. If you have been admitted to a college by this time, remember that your admission is conditional on your first and second semester senior grades being at or above the level at which they stood when you were admitted.
- Re-check your graduation status.

January

- After completing all your college applications, this is the time to relax and wait for the college's admission decisions.
- Make sure your parents have completed their income tax forms in anticipation of the financial aid applications. If you have to file taxes this year, do it as soon as possible. You will need to do this for any financial aid forms.
- Complete and submit your college financial aid application and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) between January 1 and February 15. Go to the FAFSA on the Web form at: www.fafsa.ed.gov.

- Focus on doing well this semester. Do not let senioritis take over! The colleges' acceptances are conditional upon your successful completion of your senior year at the level at which you were performing when you applied. Colleges require that we send a midyear transcript and a final transcript at the end of the school year, so do not be tempted to let up on your efforts in school.
- Check for other financial aid options. In order to be considered for financial aid, you will need to submit a FAFSA, even if you have not yet been notified of your acceptance to the college(s) to which you applied.
- Observe deadlines for admissions, financial aid, testing and housing deposits.
- Request that your high school send your official transcripts to the colleges to which you are applying.
- Contact the admissions office of the colleges to which you have applied to make sure that your information has been received, and that they have everything they need from you.
- Attend the financial aid workshop for both you and your parents. There is a lot of help out there when you are looking for info on financial aid.

February

- If you completed the FAFSA, you should receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) within four weeks. Make the necessary corrections and return it to the FAFSA processor.
- Many of you will receive college decisions letters. Remember to bring copies of all acceptance letters to the Counseling Office.
- Notify your counselor if a college requests additional information in order to make a decision (e.g., updated grades, honors, etc.).
- Complete your scholarship applications.
- Contact the financial aid office of the colleges to which you have applied to make sure your information has been received, and that they have everything they need from you.
- Observe deposit deadlines for post-secondary schools.
- Maintain good grades.
- Check your selective service status for financial aid purposes.

March

- College decisions will continue to arrive, and you should begin deciding which college you would like to attend from those to which you are admitted.
- Continue to seek scholarships.
- Compare your acceptance letters, financial aid and scholarship offers. These are all important things to consider when choosing a college.

April

- You will probably hear from the colleges as to whether or not you are accepted by mid April.
- Write a letter of acceptance to the college you plan to attend and enclose required deposits.
- Finalize your post-secondary enrollment.
- Decline any other offers of admission in writing so that colleges may admit other qualified candidates.

May

- Take AP exams for any AP subjects you studied in high school.
- Decision time! You should decide on a college by May 1. Notify that school by mailing your commitment deposit check. Many schools require that your notification letter be postmarked by this date.
- If you were placed on a waiting list for a particular college and have decided to wait for an opening, contact that college and let them know you are still very interested.
- Be sure to complete the Final Senior Survey Form to ensure that your final official transcript is sent to the school you plan to attend.
- Enjoy graduation!!!!

June

- The Counseling Office will send your final transcript to the college you are attending.
- Participate in any summer orientation programs for incoming freshmen.

College Application Process

Admissions Options

Because there are many admissions options, it is important for you to understand the various plans and deadlines and to discuss with your child's school counselor, which one is appropriate for your son or daughter. Some of the more common options are briefly reviewed:

Early Action: an admission plan or practice which allows a prospective student to apply for admission according to an early deadline (before the regular admission deadline) and receive notice of acceptance, denial, or deferment with no obligation to the university to enroll, if accepted for admission.

Early Decision: The only binding or contractual admission option is the early decision. Students can opt for this admission option, but they are committing, or promising, to withdraw all other college applications if accepted to the early decision college. Students can only choose one college to apply to under the early decision option. Colleges that are considered highly selective offer early decision. The reasoning is that the option attracts highly qualified and competitive students to apply with the intention of accepting admission if chosen. Once the early decision process has finished, or the selection process has finished, the remaining open spaces for admission are opened to students applying under the regular decision option.

Regular Admission/Decision: This type of admission gives students the option to apply by a certain date. Once that date has passed, the college will review all the applications and send out admission decisions by a specific date. Colleges opting for this admission option are strict on their deadlines, so students should plan accordingly. Most moderately to selective colleges and private colleges offer regular admission.

Rolling Admission: Rolling admission is just that, rolling. Students may apply anytime during the admission timeline (usually September through July). The college admission committee offers

admission throughout this time. Be aware that colleges have limited space for new freshmen students, so admission could close early. Most state colleges usually have rolling admission policies.

Completing and Mailing the Application

Step 1 – Apply to the colleges of your choice. Submit online if possible. Make sure that your Social Security Number is correct and that your full **legal** name and birth date match the information on your transcript. Note any deadlines set by the college and plan ahead by **two to four weeks** (Step 2-5). Be sure to factor in additional time for holidays including Thanksgiving, Winter Break, and Spring Break

Step 2 – Contact the testing agency and order your SAT/ACT scores sent to the colleges or scholarship programs (if not done at the time of SAT/ACT registration). Plan ahead by **six weeks!** SAT: www.collegeboard.com or (866) 756-7346 ACT: www.act.org or (319) 337-1313.

Step 3 – Ask for a teacher letter of recommendation (if **REQUIRED**) at least **two** weeks ahead of deadlines. Please provide the teacher with a stamped envelope addressed to college (**The return address must be Arabia Mountain High School's address not your address.**)

Step 4 – For a counselor evaluation section and/or letter of recommendation to be completed (must be **REQUIRED**); the student must submit a Senior Information Sheet to his/her counselor at least **two** weeks before the college deadline date.

Step 5 – Submit the completed Transcript Request form with any other documentation (i.e., counselor section if any), to Ms. Ham in the Counseling Center.

Step 6 – See your counselor if you have any questions.

Scholarship Information

The financial aid office of each college to which you apply is the best source of information concerning the scholarships available at the institution. Please remember that the Arabia Mountain High School Counseling Office receives only a limited number of scholarship notices from the colleges, which we will pass along to students in the Arabia Mountain Advocate. A comprehensive list of scholarships about which Arabia Mountain has been notified is available online, and in the Counseling Office.

Individuals are encouraged to pursue any scholarships for which they may be eligible either by reason of employment, service, association membership, talent, or major field of interest.

Students are strongly encouraged to conduct scholarship searches using the scholarship resource websites listed on the website resource list. This website resource list can be found on the counseling web page on our school site.

HOPE Scholarship

Georgia's HOPE Scholarship is available to Georgia residents who have demonstrated academic achievement. The scholarship provides money to assist students with their educational costs of attending college in Georgia.

- Students must graduate from high school with a 3.0 GPA as calculated by the Georgia Student Finance Commission for a college prep diploma or a 3.2 for a career tech diploma. Students graduating under the single diploma type must have a 3.0 GPA as calculated by GSFC.
- Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA in college.
- If a student falls below a 3.0 GPA in college, they may only regain the HOPE Scholarship one time.
- The HOPE Scholarship will not pay for remedial or developmental courses.
- A student may receive the HOPE Scholarship until the first of these events:
 - The student has earned a baccalaureate or first professional degree;
 - The student has attempted at any postsecondary institution a total of 190 quarter hours or 127 semester hours;
 - The student has received a total of combined payment of 127 semester hours or 190 quarter hours from the HOPE Scholarship, HOPE Grant, and Accel program (Accel payments made beginning with Fall 2011 term are excluded from the 127 hour cap); or
 - Beginning with those students receiving HOPE for the first time on or after July 1, 2011, seven years from a student's graduation from high school or the equivalent; provided, however, that for a student that serves on active duty in the military during such seven-year period such active duty service time will be credited back to the seven years.
- The HOPE Scholarship will pay:
 - At an eligible public postsecondary institution, for FY2012, a percentage amount of the standard tuition charges from the previous year. In subsequent years, the award amount will be a percentage of the immediately preceding year's HOPE Award Amount (view the chart on GAcollege411 to find award amount).
 - At an eligible private postsecondary institution, a percentage amount of the HOPE award amount for private colleges.

Rigor Requirements of the Hope Scholarship

For students graduating on or after May 1, 2016, they must pass 3 courses from the following types of courses:

- Advanced Math
- Advanced Science
- Advanced Placement (AP) in core subjects;
- International Baccalaureate (IB) in core subjects;
- Core subjects taken at a University System of Georgia (USG) Institution; or
- Advanced Foreign Language

For students graduating on or after May 1, 2017, they must pass 4 courses.

Zell Miller Scholar Program

Students are eligible for the Zell Miller Scholar program:

- As an incoming freshman:

- Having graduated from an eligible high school with a grade point average of at least 3.7 as calculated by Georgia Student Finance Commission and having received a score of at least 1,200 combined critical reading score and math score on a single administration of the SAT or an ACT score of at least 26; or
- Having graduated from an eligible high school as the valedictorian or salutatorian; or
- Having completed a home study program meeting the HOPE eligibility requirements, having received a score of at least 1,200 combined critical reading score and math score on a single administration of the SAT or an ACT composite scale score of at least 26, and earning a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.3 at eligible postsecondary institution at the end of the quarter or semester in which the student has attempted 45 quarter hours or 30 semester hours, provided that such student shall be eligible to receive a retroactive scholarship for such student's freshman year to be paid at the end of the freshman year.
- A student must maintain a 3.3 grade point average in college to maintain the Zell Miller Scholar program. If the student falls below a 3.3 grade point average, they remain eligible for the regular HOPE Scholarship if the student's GPA is still a 3.0 or above.
- A student meeting the requirements to be a Zell Miller Scholar must also meet all the requirements to be a HOPE Scholar.
- If a student loses eligibility for the Zell Miller Scholar program for any reason, they may regain that eligibility one time.

■ The Zell Miller Scholar Program will pay:

- At an eligible public postsecondary institution, 100% of the standard tuition charges (view the chart on GAcollge411 to find award amount);
- At an eligible private postsecondary institution, 100% of the HOPE award amount for private colleges.

HOPE Grant Program

- Only available for students seeking a certificate or diploma at a branch of the Technical College System of Georgia or a unit of the University System of Georgia.
- Students must meet achievement standards by earning a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 at the end of the quarter or semester in which the student has attended 30 or 60 semester hours or 45 or 90 quarter hours of courses towards a diploma or certificate for which the student received HOPE Grant funds.
- HOPE Grant will pay:
 - A percentage amount of the standard tuition charges from the previous year (view the chart on GAcollge411 to find award amount).
 - No students with a baccalaureate degree can receive the HOPE Grant.

In addition to the requirements listed above for all of these aid programs, students must still meet the basic eligibility requirements of:

- Be a legal resident of Georgia;
- Meet academic achievement standards required by the program or the college;
- Be registered with the Selective Service, if required;
- Be in compliance with the Georgia Drug-Free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990;
- Meet HOPE's U.S. citizenship or eligible non-citizen requirements;
- Be in good standing on all student loans or other financial aid programs;
- Not have exceeded the maximum award limits for any HOPE program;
- Meet enrollment requirements; and

- Attend an eligible Georgia school.

All parents and students are encouraged to access GaCollege411 (www.gacollege411.org) for questions regarding HOPE eligibility requirements and courses included in the calculation of the grade point average utilized by the Georgia Student Finance Commission for eligibility.

The DeKalb County School System does not calculate the final grade point average (GPA) for HOPE Eligibility.

References

www.collegeboard.com

www.act.org

www.gacollege411.org

www.doe.k12.ga.us/

www.dekalb.k12.ga.us

