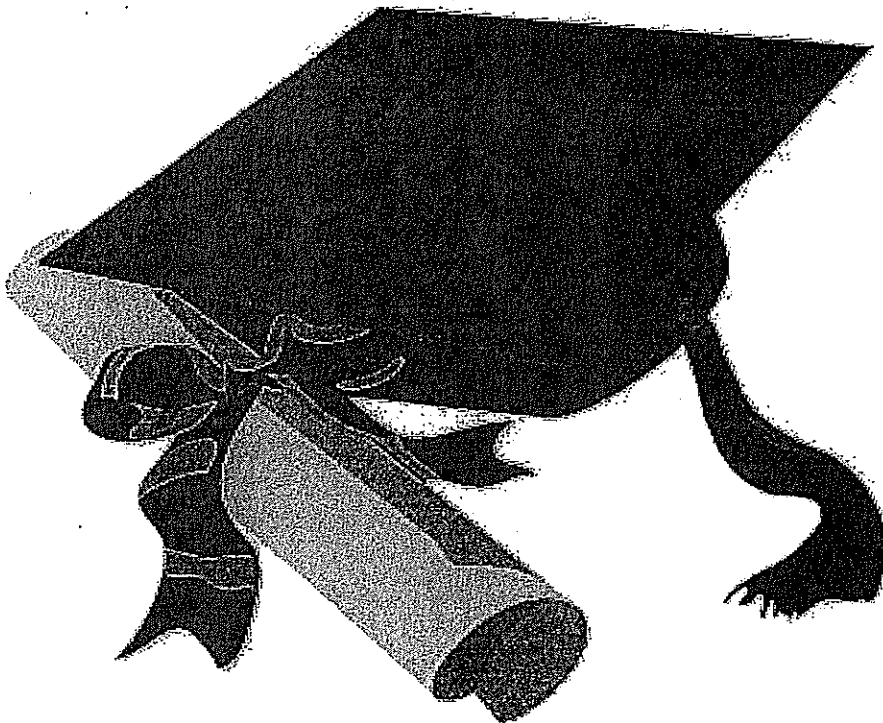


Senior Handbook



Class of 2015

Mr. Chuck Gibson, Principal
Kahadija Baker, Sr. Counselor



I. Requirements to graduate

Students must earn 23 Carnegie units and demonstrate mastery of the Georgia High School Graduation Test in English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Writing to be eligible for graduation.

4 English

4 Math

4 Science

3 Social Studies

$\frac{1}{2}$ Health

$\frac{1}{2}$ Personal Fitness

4 electives

and

3 CTAE/ Fine Arts

= 23 Units

Georgia High School Graduation Writing Test

(information obtained from www.doe.k12.ga.us)

All students seeking a Georgia high school diploma must pass the Georgia High School Writing Assessment. Students with disabilities and English Language Learners may receive appropriate standard accommodations based on their needs and the specifications of their Individualized Education Program, their Individual Accommodation Plan, or their ELL Testing Participation Committee Plan. Students with disabilities unable to participate in the state testing program, even with accommodations, are assessed with the Georgia Alternate Assessment. The Writing Assessment takes place in the fall eleventh grade. Students who do not pass on the first attempt of the tests have multiple opportunities to receive additional instruction, retest, and qualify for graduation before the spring of the twelfth grade.

Students who do not pass all the required test but have met all other graduation requirements may be eligible for a Certificate of Performance or a Special Education Diploma. Students who have left school with a Certificate of Performance or a Special Education Certificate may return to attempt the graduation test(s) again, as often as necessary to qualify for a high school diploma.

Fees and Cost

Senior fees are \$ TBD. These fees will have to be paid in full before you take part in graduation.

Senior pictures and grad ads (costs will depend on what you order)

** is the sponsor for both pictures and grad ads**

Cap and gown orders \$25-30 will be placed Nov20-21, Dec 12

Jan30, Feb.3 \$60+

Cap and gown pictures retakes Sept 6 & 27th -sign up outside Mrs. Newby's door
(cost will depend on what you order)

Yearbook orders will be placed in the winter costs approx \$50+

Senior shirts/sweatshirts costs approx. \$15-25

Invitations orders will be in the late spring approx. \$150+ through Balfour

Jr/Sr prom in spring tickets are approx. \$40 per couple, \$20 for a single

Parking permits \$30

All financial debts and obligations such as lost text books, library fines etc. must be paid prior to graduation. BE SURE TO CHECK WITH MRS. MALONE for your fee assessment.

Exam Exemptions

Graduating seniors who carry a 90 average or higher in any first semester class may exempt that exam. The final exam in any class second semester may be exempted in the average is 90 or higher.

College/Military Day

Seniors may use a day of school to visit a college in preparation for the following year. ~~One college day or one military day will be allowed when official documentation is presented to the administration or counselor's office. The~~ official documentation must be on the school's letterhead. No college day can be taken after May the 1st or the day preceding the prom.

Honor Graduates

Students who have a cumulative GPA of 90.00 or above will be considered for honor graduate status. Selection of honor graduates shall be based on academic standing figured on grades obtained during freshman, sophomore, and junior years and the first semester of the senior year. Both semester and yearlong classes will be computed. At the end of the fourth nine weeks honor graduate additions will be made if necessary for students that have achieved the cumulative GPA of 90.0 to receive regalia recognition for the graduation ceremony.

STAR student

In order to be considered for STAR student you must have taken the SAT by November of your senior year. Score highest on a single test date (scores may not be combined from two or more test dates) on the three-part SAT among qualified seniors in the school. Nominees' SAT scores must be equal to or higher than the latest available national average on the math, critical reading and writing sections.

A student must meet the "top 10" requirement based on cumulative high school (grades 9 through 11) grade average numerically computed by utilizing the system normally utilized by the school. Calculation should be on cumulative grades through the junior year.

If the student with the highest SAT score does not meet the top 10 criterion, the student with the next highest SAT score who does meet the criterion becomes the nominee.

Early decision to schools

Fall of your senior year many schools have an early decision application process. Early decision applications are usually much shorter and it relieves the pressure of trying to get accepted during the regular application process. You can apply to the college of your choice and get accepted, rejected, or deferred. If your application is rejected a lot of schools will not allow you to reapply.

Financial Aid/FAFSA (free application for student aid)

To be eligible for all grants, loans, and federal financial aid you must complete a FAFSA.

The website to complete the FAFSA is www.fafsa.ed.gov

The following was obtained from the fafsa website:

We have simplified the process of filling out the FAFSA. You can follow each section all of the way through for a comprehensive set of instructions.

Before Beginning a FAFSA

1

Get organized!

To simplify the application process, gather required documents and other information ahead of time.

- [Determine Your Dependency Status](#)
- [FAFSA on the Web Worksheet](#)
- [Search for School Codes](#)
- [Students & Parents Apply For a PIN](#)
- [Check Application Deadline Dates](#)

Filling Out a FAFSA

2

Fill out the application!

The FAFSA contains questions that ask about you, your financial information, your school plans, and more.

- [Fill Out Your FAFSA](#)
- [Open Your Saved FAFSA or Correction Application](#)
- [Sign Electronically With Your PIN](#)

View your results online!

You can check the status of your application, make corrections to a processed FAFSA, and get other information.

- Check Status of a Submitted FAFSA or Print Signature Page
- Make Corrections to a Processed FAFSA
- Add or Delete a School Code
- View and Print Your Student Aid Report

Transcripts

~~During your senior year you are able to send your transcript via gacollege411.org~~
for free to in state colleges. Students applying to out of state colleges may request their transcript to be sent in the counseling office for free. Transcripts will be given for free to accompany scholarship applications. All other transcript request have a \$3 fee per transcript.

Letters of recommendation

Most colleges will require an essay, a recommendation from teachers and/or a recommendation from your counselor. As you can imagine, the recommendations could pile up on us. You will need to allow at least 2 weeks for a recommendation.

You will need to have a letter of recommendation sheet on file in the counselor's office.

See appendix A & Letter of Recommendation Sheet

Testing

Asset

(information obtained from www.ACT.org)

The ASSET program is a series of short placement tests developed by ACT that lets you and your school work together to help you succeed in your educational program. ASSET helps you identify your strengths as well as the knowledge and skills you will need in order to succeed in specific subject areas. ASSET also helps your school use this information to guide you toward classes that strengthen and build logically upon your current knowledge and skills.

How Does ASSET Work?

ASSET has three tests of basic skills in writing, reading, and numerical reasoning, plus more advanced tests in algebra and geometry. The ASSET program also offers the Educational Planning Form, which supplements your ASSET test scores by providing your institution with information about your educational needs and goals.

How Are ASSET Scores Used?

The ASSET is not used like a traditional test battery. There is generally no "passing score." Rather, ASSET scores indicate areas in which you are strong and areas in which you may need help. Thus, ASSET can identify problems in major subject areas *before* they disrupt your educational progress, giving you the opportunity to prepare more effectively for needed courses.

You and your institution can use scores from ASSET tests and the information from the Educational Planning Form to prepare a course of study that will be appropriate, relevant, and meaningful for you.

ASVAB

October 20th 8:30-11:30am Fine Arts Auditorium

March 23rd 8:30-11:30am Fine Arts Auditorium

(information obtained from www.asvabprogram.com)

The ASVAB is the most widely used multiple-aptitude test battery in the world. The ASVAB was originally designed to predict future academic and occupational success in military occupations. Since its introduction in 1968, the ASVAB has been the subject of extensive research. Numerous validation studies indicate the ASVAB assesses academic ability and predicts success in a wide variety of occupations. Several composite scores are formed from different combinations of ASVAB test scores. Three composites, or Career Exploration Scores, are provided specifically to help student engage in career exploration. These scores help students to get a good sense of their verbal, math and science and technical skills compared to other students in the same grade. ASVAB results are reported to students and counselors on the ASVAB Summary Results sheet. This report shows grade-specific, gender-specific, and combined standard scores and score bands for all eight tests and three Career Exploration Scores. It also provides students with percentile-based interpretations of those scores. The ASVAB Summary Results sheet provides students with appropriate explanations of the scores, as well as suggestions for their use.

Work Ready Initiative

Overview

The Georgia Work Ready initiative was launched in August 2006 by Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue and the Georgia Chamber of Commerce to improve the job training and marketability of Georgia's workforce and drive future economic growth for the state. This workforce development initiative assesses the "real world" skills of Georgia's workers, provides valuable job training and helps companies reliably match the right people with the right jobs.

As part of the Work Ready initiative, Georgia workers can earn a Work Ready Certificate after completing a free assessment, which utilizes the nationally accredited WorkKeys® assessment developed by ACT to measure individual workers' skills in the areas of applied mathematics, reading for information, locating information and work habits. Businesses can then leverage Work Ready Certificates to determine whether prospective employees have the right skills for their specific job requirements. More information can be obtained at www.gaworkready.org or CTAE coordinator.

NCAA Division I Athletics

On the sliding scale offered by NCAA your SAT or ACT must match your GPA. Sliding scale can be seen at http://www.ncaastudent.org/NCAA_Guide.pdf

Note: Effective August 1, 2010 the NCAA will no longer accept Credit Recovery courses to meet NCAA eligibility requirements.

You can send your transcript to the NCAA on gacollege411.org

COLLEGE PLANNING TIMELINE

→ Twelfth Grade

Search for Scholarships

Throughout high school and until you have completed college, always be looking for scholarship dollars.

Where to look?

- Your school counselor's office
- College financial aid offices
- Local businesses, civic organizations, or your parents' employers
- Online searches such as:
 - bigfuture.org
 - zinch.com
 - cappex.com

Applying for scholarships is free. Don't pay someone to do it for you.

FALL

- If you haven't already taken the ACT (actstudent.org) or SAT (collegeboard.org), or if you want to retake them, register now.
- Begin completing college admissions applications.
- Apply for scholarships.
- Ask for letters of recommendation. Use Great Lakes' Letter of Recommendation Worksheet at mygreatlakes.org/letterofrecommendation.
- Keep track of all admissions and scholarship deadlines.
- Ask your high school to send official transcripts to colleges.
- Attend a financial aid information session at your high school.

WINTER

- Find out if any colleges you're interested in require additional financial aid applications. If so, complete them.
- Urge your parents to file their federal tax return as soon as possible.
- Complete your FAFSA.
- Watch for the email or letter that lets you know that your Student Aid Report (SAR) is ready and review carefully for errors.
- Watch for admission decision letters from colleges.
- Continue to apply for scholarships.

SPRING

- Follow up with the college financial aid office to make sure all of your financial aid paperwork is complete.
- Your financial aid award letters will begin coming from colleges. Use these letters to compare financial aid offers.
- Report any additional scholarships you receive to your college's financial aid office.
- Apply for any additional loans (such as Parent PLUS or private loans) if you need them.
- Make your final college decision; accept their offer and financial aid award.
- Notify the colleges you have chosen not to attend.
- Plan for registration, orientation, and housing.

u hafta FAFSA

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the key to receiving any state or federal financial aid.

- Visit pin.ed.gov and request a U.S. Department of Education PIN. This number will be important throughout the financial aid process.
- Complete your FAFSA after January of the year you are entering college (fafsa.gov).
- Submit your FAFSA by your college's financial aid priority date.

THINKING ABOUT COLLEGE?



Studies show that nearly 90% of beginning high school students want to go to college. It is not too early to begin preparing for that option. Below are some criteria that most colleges and universities use in their admission standards. Grades, practicing knowledge and skills via homework opportunities, and taking challenging math courses all matter as you prepare for college.

Criteria for College Admissions

Academic Rigor. Colleges look at what courses are taken in relation to what is offered at the high school. Admissions office staff evaluate all four years of high school, especially courses taken during the senior year. The program should be strong in Math, Science, English, Social Studies and World Language. College admissions counselors look for honors and advanced placement courses where appropriate and, of course, prefer high grades in these classes. Students should plan to take what are called "gateway" courses which enable a student more opportunities for post-secondary studies. Some of these gateway courses are: Math I, Math II, Chemistry, and Physics.

CORE GPA. Many colleges review and re-calculate grade point averages on CORE courses only, i.e., English, Math, Science, Social Studies and World Language. It is critical that 9th grade students keep this in mind during the 9th grade year and earn high grades! Additionally, it is always wise to contact the admissions office at a college or university and ask how the GPA is calculated for entering Freshmen students.

Extracurricular/Community Service. Colleges also consider a student's involvement in extracurricular activities and community service to determine a student's leadership qualities. Any opportunity a student has to be a member of school clubs and organizations and/or to do volunteer work in the community is highly recommended.

Grades. A student's grades in core courses (English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and World Language) are reliable predictors of college academic success. Grades in these courses plus SAT/ACT scores are the two primary predictors used. A high school transcript is generally evaluated twice by most colleges; once to determine that the candidate meets the institution's minimum requirements and a second time to determine the difficulty of the candidate's program of high school studies.

Letters of Recommendation. These are the least important in determining college admission, but are considered. The effort a student puts forth in a teacher's class is largely the basis for making a strong recommendation. Students are encouraged to show every teacher their best effort.

Standardized Test Scores. SAT/ACT scores are an excellent predictor of academic success. In Georgia, a student's SAT/ACT scores are used in a formula called the "Freshman Index" to determine regular college admission. Typically, students take the SAT/ACT during their junior year for the first time. High school counselors have information regarding tests and dates. Information is available on The College Board and ACT websites.

<http://sat.collegeboard.com/home>

<http://www.act.org/aap/>

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

At all of Georgia's public colleges and universities, a minimum of 17 core units are required for regular admission. In addition, depending upon the particular university or college, more academic units may be required. The minimum requirements by university or college status are outlined on the next page. Parents and students are encouraged to obtain current information/requirements from the colleges they are considering and communicate with them concerning admissions practices and policies. An excellent resource for in state schools is GACollege411.org.

FRESHMAN INDEX (SOURCE: www.gacollege411.org)

Freshman Index Requirements and Freshman Index

The Freshman Index is calculated by combining the high school grade point average (GPA) with the highest earned SAT or ACT test scores. The high school GPA is calculated from the grades earned in the 17 Required High School Curriculum (RHSC) courses for those students graduating 2012 or later.

The following formulas are used to calculate a student's freshman index:

Formula for SAT Test Takers	Formula for ACT Test Takers
Freshman Index = (500 x High School GPA) + SAT Critical Reading + SAT Math	Freshman Index = (500 x High School GPA) + (ACT Composite score x 42) + 88

Required High School Curriculum (RHSC) for Students Graduating High School 2012 or Later
Students graduating high school in 2012 or later should complete the following curriculum:

Carnegie Unit Requirements	In Specific Subject Areas
4 units English	Literature (American, English, world) integrated with grammar, usage and advanced composition skills
4 units mathematics	Mathematics I, II, III, and a fourth year of advanced math or equivalent courses
4 units of science	The four science units should include two courses with a laboratory component. Students graduating from a Georgia public high school should have at least one unit in biology, one unit of physical science or physics, one unit of chemistry, earth science or environmental science and a fourth science.
3 units social science	Must include one unit focusing on U.S. studies and one unit focusing on world studies
2 units of the same World Language or Am. Sign Lang.	Emphasizing speaking, listening, reading and writing skills

*Note: A Carnegie unit is a full academic year of credit

Type of Institution	Minimum Freshman Index (FI)
Research Institutions	2500
Regional Universities	2040
State Universities	1940
State Colleges	1830 ¹
Two-Year Colleges	No FI Requirement

¹ Not required by all state colleges. Check with the admission office for additional information.

CALCULATING GRADE POINT AVERAGE

To determine a student's GPA at any time, add all final numerical grades from all courses, then divide by the total number of courses attempted. Seek input from your high school counselor regarding the calculation of your grade point average. Paulding County uses a numeric GPA scale for the purposes of class rank. The district transcript has both numeric grade point averages weighted and unweighted and 4.0 scale grade point averages weighted and unweighted. It is important to note that the HOPE scholarship eligibility is based on a 4.0 scale GPA, A=4.0, B=3.0, C=2.0, and F=0.0. Only Advanced Placement courses with a passing grade are weighted on the HOPE transcript.

SAT, ACT TESTS AND TEST PREPARATION



Students who graduated from high school in 2006 were the first class to take the new SAT for college admissions. The new SAT has three sections: Critical Reading (called Verbal, prior to 2006), Math, and Writing (new section). The Critical Reading section adds shorter reading passages to existing long reading passages, but eliminates analogies. The Math content was expanded to include topics from third-year college prep math, and eliminated quantitative comparisons. The Writing components include multiple-choice questions on grammar and usage plus a short student-written essay that requires them to take a position on an issue and use examples to support their position. Colleges and universities require that the writing test be taken, but still use the Critical Reading and Math scores to evaluate incoming students. SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) scores are a good predictor of a student's academic success at least for the first year of college. Colleges look at SAT scores, grade point average in core areas, and the actual high school courses taken in their admissions selections.

IMPORTANT IMPORTANT IMPORTANT IMPORTANT

While the best SAT preparation is through rigorous and challenging course work in which the student puts forth maximum effort, students are strongly encouraged to go to www.GAcollege411.org to take advantage of two comprehensive resources for Georgia High School students to help them prepare for the SAT.

SAT Companion

The GAcollege411 SAT Companion features easy-to-use tutorials, interactive practice sessions, techniques and strategies, and more, to strengthen academic skills in preparation for the SAT. The test-prep courses automatically adapt to the student's skill level, give immediate feedback to answers, and offer helpful hints, tips, and explanations for the types of questions and subjects found on the exam. The SAT Companion provides overview information about the different sections of the SAT test along with a list of frequently asked questions about the SAT test.

Official SAT Online Course

The Governor's Office and the Georgia Department of Education are providing public high school students enrolled in grades 9 through 12 free access to the Official SAT Online Course administered by the College Board. This course offers interactive instruction organized into 18 lessons, 6 official practice tests and hundreds of practice questions with answers and explanations, automated essay scoring and personalized score reports. Any student enrolled in a public high school in grades 9-12 will have access to this service. To gain access, obtain the high school code from the high school counselors. Once a student has the high school code, he/she sets up a user name and password.

ACT

The ACT (American College Test) is designed to assess high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. The test covers four skill areas: English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. ACT also has a Writing Test which is 30-minutes long. Postsecondary institutions require that students take this writing test. Colleges and universities make their own decisions about using the results of the ACT Writing Test.

HOPE SCHOLARSHIP REQUIREMENTS



Helping Students and Parents Understand Hope Scholarship Eligibility Changes Beginning with the Class of 2007

In 2004, the Georgia General Assembly passed HB 1325 (codified in 20-2-157 O.C.G.A.) requiring the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) to calculate, for purposes of determining HOPE Scholarship eligibility, the grade point average of every graduating high school senior in Georgia beginning with the class of 2007. State law mandates these changes be effective as of April 30, 2007. Therefore, this law requires the Georgia Student Finance Commission to provide a new mechanism for recording student information and awarding the HOPE scholarship. The mandated changes can be viewed on: http://www.legis.state.ga.us/cgi-bin/gl_codes_detail.pl?code+20-2-157

There are no guarantees that laws regarding HOPE Scholarship eligibility will remain the same for your student when he/she graduates from high school. The goal of the Counseling Department in the Paulding County School District is to keep parents and students informed. Below are questions and answers based on important facts concerning the HOPE eligibility changes, beginning with the graduating Class of 2007:

1. What are the advantages of a student taking a world language course in middle school?

Answer. Research supports that taking additional rigorous courses in high school better prepares students particularly for college entrance exams (SAT and ACT) as well as college courses. Taking a world language course in middle school allows more course opportunities in high school. Also, if a student earns high grades in a World Language course, then the local district high school cumulative grade point average is positively impacted for:

- Class rank which determines valedictorian, salutatorian, upper 10% of class, etc.
- Meeting college entrance requirements
- Being competitive for scholarships

2. What changes has HB 1325 brought for students earning a World Language Carnegie credit completed in the eighth grade?

Answer. This courses will not be included in the calculation for the HOPE grade point average, and thus, it will not be used for HOPE eligibility beginning with the graduating Class of 2007.

3. According to HB 1325, what courses will be used in the new HOPE Scholarship average calculation?

Answer. All academic units attempted by a student while in grades 9-12 in core areas (English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and World Language) will be used to determine the student's HOPE Scholarship grade point average. For example, if a student takes five science courses, all five course grades will be calculated into the HOPE GPA. Courses not in the core academic areas will be excluded from the calculation. If a student fails to earn a unit of credit, but takes a core area course, it too will be included in the calculation.

4. Honors courses are "weighted" courses in our school district. This means students receive additional points on their grade averages. Will the weighted grade be accepted for HOPE calculation?

Answer. No, honors courses cannot include the local additional points, however, the law does allow Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses to be weighted. Course and credit information which is submitted from the local high school to the Georgia Student Finance Commission does not weight honors or Advanced Placement courses. The Georgia Student Finance Commission adds a .5 GPA weight to all Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses. The local school district still weights both honors and Advanced Placement courses for local school district calculations on the high school transcript.

5. Who will calculate my students' Grade Point Average for HOPE scholarship eligibility?

Answer. Upon your student's graduation, the Georgia Student Finance Commission will receive high school transcript data from the Paulding County School District. GACollege411.org will be the method of transmission for this data. The Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) will be responsible for the grade point average calculation and will determine HOPE eligibility for a student.

6. What grading scale will be used to calculate a student's GPA?

Answer. While our district uses numeric grades (Ex. 88, 92, 95, etc.), GSFC will convert these grades to a 4.0 scale.

Please note: The Georgia Student Finance Commission has not published the final HOPE eligible gpa for the single high school diploma. Thus it is important to check their website from time to time. Resource for additional information in our school district and on the Georgia Student Finance Commission website:

www.gsfc.org/HOPE/index.cfm -- For the most current and complete information on HOPE, please use the preceding comprehensive website for the Georgia Student Finance Commission.

MORE HOPE INFORMATION

HOPE Program

Georgia's HOPE Program helps students in several ways: • Scholarships for students in degree programs at public and private colleges and universities, • Grants for students enrolled in certificate or diploma programs at public colleges or technical colleges, and • General Education Development (GED) awards for high school equivalency certificate recipients who are entering college. This information and much more can be found at GACollege411.org at https://secure.gacollege411.org/Financial_Aid_Planning/HOPE_Program/Georgia_s_HOPE_Scholarship_Program_Overview.aspx

HOPE Scholarship, Scholarship Award Amounts

At a public institution, the HOPE Scholarship award amount covers tuition, HOPE-approved mandatory fees, and a book allowance of up to \$300 per academic year. At a private college or university, you may receive a HOPE Scholarship award of \$3,000 per academic year if you are a fulltime student (12 hours). If you enroll as a half-time student (6-11 hours), you may receive an award of \$1,500 per academic year. Full-time students attending eligible private colleges also may be eligible for a Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant; check with the school financial aid office or GACollege411.org for additional information.

Eligibility (Please note that eligibility rules can be changed at any time.)

To be eligible as an entering freshman, you must have or meet the following qualifications: • Be a U.S. citizen or meet the eligible non-citizen requirements. • Meet HOPE's Georgia residency requirements. • Meet the Selective Service registration requirements. • Be a 1993 or later graduate of an eligible high school if you plan to attend a public college, university, or technical college. • Be a 1996 or later graduate of an eligible high school if you plan to attend a private college or university. • Beginning May 1, 2007, all students entering college must earn a 3.0 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale for all core curriculum coursework for the high school diploma. All core curriculum coursework attempted in the student's high school career (grades 9-12) will be counted toward the HOPE Scholarship cumulative grade point average, and numeric grades will be converted to the 4.0 scale. If you meet eligibility requirements, you may receive first-year HOPE Scholarship assistance for the first 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours attempted or until the 1st Spring checkpoint at any eligible Georgia public or private college, university or public technical college. Graduates of Georgia high schools that are not certified by statute may retroactively receive the HOPE Scholarship for the first 30 semester hours or 45 quarter hours attempted at any eligible Georgia public or private college, university or public technical college, if they have earned a 3.0 grade point average.

HOPE Scholarship Award Limits

A college degree-seeking student becomes ineligible for the HOPE Scholarship once the student has: • Received payment from any combination of HOPE Scholarship, HOPE Grant, and Accel Program funds totaling 127 semester hours (190 quarter hours) of credit; or • Attempted 127 semester hours (190 quarter hours) of college degree credit, regardless of whether HOPE funds were received while attempting the hours; or • Earned a baccalaureate (four-year) college degree, regardless of whether HOPE funds were received while earning the degree.

Apply for the HOPE Scholarship--Spring of Senior Year, complete Free Application for Federal Student Aid

HOPE Grant

Grant Award Amounts

The HOPE Grant covers tuition, HOPE-approved mandatory fees, and a book allowance of up to \$300 per academic year.

Eligibility and Award Limits

Georgia residents meeting HOPE's citizenship requirements and who are attending a Georgia public technical college or public college or university and enrolled in a certificate or diploma program are eligible for HOPE assistance regardless of high school graduation dates or grade point averages. Full-time enrollment is not required. You must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress

according to the college's policy to maintain eligibility, but a 3.0 cumulative grade point average is not required. A student may receive the HOPE Grant for up to 63 semester hours (95 quarter hours) of study. However, any previous coursework for which you have received HOPE Scholarship and/or ACCEL payments will count toward the lifetime award limit of 127 semester hours (190 quarter hours) and will reduce the number of HOPE Grant hours for which you can receive assistance.

NOTE: Certificate programs offered through Continuing Education Departments do not qualify for HOPE assistance.

Apply for the HOPE Grant—Spring of senior year, please complete Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS BY INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Thanks to a decision made by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, students now enjoy greater flexibility in planning a high school course of study that prepares them for admission to Georgia's public colleges and universities. The current graduation rule requires 23 credits earned to receive a high school diploma. Colleges and universities in the state of Georgia, also require that entering freshmen have successfully completed a minimum of two World Language credits in the same language for admission. The new graduation rule provides for students to select courses that meet the needs of their individual advisement and career plans, without limiting their options for continuing their education after they graduate from high school.

Research Universities

Georgia State University, University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, Medical College of Georgia

- 17 Core Units are required. 4 additional academic units are recommended.
- Honors and Advanced Placement coursework highly recommended.

Regional Universities

Georgia Southern, Valdosta State

- 17 Core Units are required. 2 additional academic units are recommended.
- Honors and Advanced Placement coursework recommended.

State Universities and Senior Colleges

Kennesaw State, University of West Georgia, Southern Tech, Clayton State College, North Georgia, Albany State, Armstrong Atlantic State, Fort Valley State, Georgia College and State University, Savannah State, Dalton College

- 17 College Core Units are required. 2 additional academic units are recommended.
- Honors and Advanced Placement coursework recommended

Two-Year Colleges

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, Georgia Highlands College, Middle Georgia College, DeKalb College, South Georgia College, Gordon College, Gainesville College, Atlanta Metropolitan

- 17 Core Units are required.

Technical Colleges

Chattahoochee Tech, North Metro Tech, Coosa Valley Tech, Carroll Tech, and others

- 15 Core Units

Technical schools want students to enroll in the most rigorous math and science classes possible. Higher level math and science are recommended if the student is seeking an Associate Degree. All students must take the ASSET Test. Certain scores must be obtained before admission into certain programs. Technical degrees lead to 4-year degrees in the Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) Program. The BAS is established through an articulation agreement between the technical schools in the state of Georgia and three (3) 4-year institutions (Clayton State, Dalton College, and Valdosta State).

Websites for the 21st Century Graduate

College Information

<http://www.act.org> provides information on the ACT and will allow you to register online.

<http://www.collegeboard.com> provides information on the SAT and will allow you to register online.

<http://www.GAcollege411.org> is an online, interactive tool that helps students make choices about careers, colleges, technical schools, and financial aid.

<http://www.petersons.com> is Peterson's Guide to Colleges and Universities.

<http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net/ncaa/NCAA/common> provides the NCAA Eligibility Guide

Career Information

<http://careerpathsonline.com> is the site for Career Paths.

<http://collegeboard.com> offers Career Browser.

<http://www.GAcollege411.org> provides career interest inventory and results information.

<http://www.umsl.edu/services/govdocs/oooh20002002/1/htm> is the Occupational Outlook Handbook.

<http://www.todaymilitary.com/app/tu/careers> is the Military Career Center.

Scholarship/Financial Aid Information

<http://www.college-scholarships.com> is an all purpose college and scholarship information site which includes links to nine free internet scholarship search data bases, links to college websites and online applications, college admissions office email addresses and (mostly toll free) phone numbers, ACT and SAT prep information, and much, much more. The site has been the recipient of more than 25 internet awards and receives more than 150,000 visits each month.

<http://www.ed.gov/studentaid.com> is a federal government site for student financial assistance. There is a link to the U.S. Department of Education FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Remember no completed FAFSA application during the spring semester of your senior year means NO HOPE.

<http://www.fastweb.com> is the largest on-line scholarship search service.

<http://www.GAcollege411.org> is an online, interactive tool that helps students make choices about careers, colleges, technical schools, and financial aid.

<http://www.get-recruited.com> offers students a chance to be recruited by, and perhaps be offered scholarships to attend, colleges, universities and graduate schools throughout the United States. This service is absolutely free.

<http://www.guaranteed-scholarships.com> lists and describes scholarships offered by individual colleges and universities to all enrolled students meeting the specific criteria.

<http://www.gsfc.org> provides complete HOPE program eligibility requirements and provides answers to questions about this program.

GUIDE TO ACADEMIC PORTFOLIOS

How can you:

- Show off your talents and skills
- Demonstrate what you have to offer a college or scholarship committee
- Prove your potential to succeed in the future

AND

- Have a single "go-to" resource with everything you need as you complete applications for
 - College admissions
 - Scholarships
 - Financial aid



Create an academic portfolio to save all of your important records and documents such as:

School records

At the end of each semester, save your report card, including your current and cumulative grade point average (GPA).

Health records

Most colleges will have immunization requirements you must meet for admission. Save records of your vaccinations in your academic portfolio.

Standardized test results

Add your PSAT, ACT, and/or SAT results as you receive them.

Honors, certificates, and awards

Document any special recognition you receive: honor roll, athletic achievements, citizenship awards, etc. These kinds of honors show your unique attributes.

Records of part-time and summer jobs, internships, and community service work

Records of your work and volunteerism prove that you can balance school with other things. Don't forget to document your supervisor's contact information.

Records of extracurricular activities

Document your involvement in sports, music, drama, religious activities, hobbies—anything that you enjoy outside of your classes. Include information needed to contact your coordinator or coach and list any leadership roles you held.

Writing samples and class projects

When you complete an assignment that turns out especially well, make sure to include it.

Newspaper clippings

If you appear in your local newspaper, for example for an athletic event or performance, be sure to save a clipping.

Update your academic portfolio on a regular basis, as you gather more information. The more complete it is, the more useful it will be!

FREE MONEY FOR COLLEGE A GUIDE TO SCHOLARSHIPS



There are scholarship dollars waiting for you. The time to start looking is now. Follow the tips below to get started.

⇒ Have What it Takes

Every scholarship is unique and can be awarded based on one or more of the following criteria, or any number of others not listed here!

- Academic achievements
- Athletic ability
- Musical or artistic talent
- Volunteer activities
- Income level
- Heritage or religion
- You or your parents' employer
- Hobbies or interests
- Intended major

⇒ Know Where to Look

You'll never know what scholarships are out there if you don't look.

- Ask your school counselor.
- Request information from college financial aid offices.
- Check with local sources like churches, businesses, and civic organizations.
- Do an online search at one of the following free sites:
 - Bigfuture.org
 - Zinch.com
 - Cappex.com
 - Fastaid.com
 - Studentaid.gov



GUIDE TO LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

How can you:

- Meet college and scholarship application requirements to provide letters of recommendation
- Get excellent recommendations
- Provide the information needed to obtain those letters
- Save yourself time

Use the Great Lakes Letter of Recommendation Worksheet at mygreatlakes.org/letterofrecommendation.

Complete the Letter of Recommendation Worksheet. This is your opportunity to give those writing your letters the information they need about your accomplishments, activities, and goals. Make a copy for each letter writer.


Choose the right people to write your letters. They should be adults that know you well and can write a positive recommendation. Some good choices include teachers, school counselors, coaches, clergy, or supervisors.

Give the letter writers plenty of time (at least two weeks) to write your letter, and let them know your deadline.

Provide a pre-addressed, stamped envelope to make it easy for the letter writer to forward that letter directly to the college or scholarship committee.

Attach your current high school transcripts or other records that might provide useful information to the letter writers.

Thank your letter writers. Write a short note to show your appreciation.



The **Letter of Recommendation Worksheet** offers sample topic ideas for your letter writer.

- Your strengths
- Qualities that make you a good candidate for the school or scholarship
- Specific examples of how you have displayed those qualities

AND gives you the opportunity to provide information about your:

- Accomplishments
- Activities
- Goals

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION INFORMATION SHEET

STUDENT'S NAME

STUDENT'S PHONE NUMBER

TODAY'S DATE

1. I am applying for:

2. The activities (extracurricular, hobbies, sports, church, etc.) I have been involved in over the past three years, and why they've been important to me:

3. My favorite classes in high school:

4. Awards/recognitions from high school:

5. In college I plan to study:

Appendix A- Additional information to turn in with your letter of recommendation information sheet.

Student information profile sheet

Please write legible so that I can read it

My name is _____

My email address is _____@_____

What is your biggest weakness? Why do you think so?

What is your greatest strength?

Are there any circumstances that should be mentioned or would make it easier to write the recommendation? Are there any obstacles that you have overcome?