

SUMMER 2025 NEWSLETTER

MCNEAL SAMS
COLLEGE CONSULTING



WHO WE ARE

McNeal Sams College Consulting provides expert, personalized guidance to students and families throughout the college admissions process. With decades of experience in counseling, admissions and career services, our team helps students identify best-fit schools and build strong, strategic applications.

WELCOME CLASS OF 2026

You are now in your senior year! We hope you are stepping into this year with energy and confidence. The choices you make in the coming months will shape your college path, so be intentional with your time.

SAT AND ACT READING PREP

Did you know that regularly reading can help you in the Reading sections of both the ACT and SAT? Our partners at ArborBridge have put together a [recommended reading list](#) to help boost your confidence - and hopefully, your score!

IMPORTANT DATES

- Aug. 1** - Common App opens
- Aug. 8** - Registration deadline for SAT on Aug. 23
- Aug. 12** - Late registration deadline for SAT on Aug. 23
- Aug. 19** - Late registration deadline for ACT on Sept. 6
- Aug. 29** - Registration deadline for SAT on Sept. 13
- Sept. 1** - Labor Day
- Sept. 2** - Late registration deadline for SAT on Sept. 13

START STRONG: YOUR ROADMAP TO A SUCCESSFUL YEAR



As summer comes to an end, we at McNeal Sams believe in planning ahead and planning well. This is the time to set goals, map out your milestones, and take steps that will carry you confidently into the school year, and if you are a senior, through the college application season.

Seniors, we know you have been busy this summer preparing for application season. You are entering the height of that season now. The Common Application, and many other applications, are open. Your McNeal Sams consultant is ready to help you navigate the scope of work ahead of you. Make sure you schedule an appointment to review the list of schools you will apply to and the requirements for each application.

Everyone else, whether you are starting your high school career as a freshman or entering your junior year, you can benefit from these tips for making the most of your experience. And as an added bonus, these tips are just as applicable to success in college!

- Academics:
 - Prioritize studying
 - Seek help when needed
 - Participate in class
 - Develop good study habits

- Extracurricular Activities:
 - Explore your interests
 - Develop new skills
 - Make new friends
- Relationships:
 - Build positive relationships with teachers
 - Connect with peers
 - Be respectful and kind
- Self-Care:
 - Prioritize your physical and mental health
 - Take breaks
 - Be kind to yourself
 - Embrace failure as a learning opportunity.
 - Enjoy the experience

No matter where you are in your journey, remember we are here to support you. Connect with your consultant:

- **Cornelia "Nelie" McNeal**, nelie@mcnealsams.com
- **Jeanie Grimm**, jeanie@mcnealsams.com
- **Susan Lutz**, susan@mcnealsams.com
- **Ann McCurties**, ann@mcnealsams.com
- **Barbara Sams**, barbara@mcnealsams.com
- **Elizabeth Schnell**, elizabeth@mcnealsams.com

This is an exciting time! Start strong. Stay on track. And most importantly, know we're cheering you on every step of the way.



AUGUST TO-DO LIST

Seniors - Class of 2026

- Schedule a meeting with your college consultant. We want to make sure you are well on your way to finalizing the list of schools to which you will apply AND understand what has to be done by when for each school.
- Schedule a meeting with your high school college counselor. There are to complete in order for your school to support your application process. Make sure you know your school's procedures.
- Request letters of recommendation from at least two teachers now. Be considerate of your teachers' time. Give them plenty of time to work on your letter.

Juniors - Class of 2027

- Schedule a meeting with your college consultant. We want to ensure you enter your junior year prepared to meet with the college admission representatives who visit your school and that you know what else to expect this fall.

- Prepare to sit for the PSAT in October. You may have already taken a PSAT as a sophomore. This year the PSAT is also the qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship Program. We also suggest you take a practice ACT this fall; November is an ideal time. If your school is not offering one, let your counselor know. We can arrange for you to take one.

Sophomores and Freshmen - Classes of 2028 and 2029

- Set goals for what you want to achieve this year and create an action plan. Not sure where to start? Make an appointment with your McNeal Sams consultant.
- Register to sit for the PSAT in October, if it is offered at your school. The test is a "practice" SAT. No need to prepare or stress. This test allows you to become familiar with the test and learn what areas you may need to work on for future tests.

DID YOU KNOW?

- We are now active on social media! Follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [Threads](#).
- You can access FREE ArborBridge testing resources through CustomCollegePlan. These resources cover the ACT, SAT and much more. Speak with your MSCC counselor to get started.

