



TUESDAY TELEGRAPH NEWS FROM THE COUNSELING OFFICE September 15, 2026

Bell Schedule Reminder!

Just a reminder that Wednesday will be a full day – Monday/Friday bell schedule – and Friday will be a Wednesday/X-block schedule!

Seniors - Class of 2027

National Merit Scholarship Program Honorees for the Class of 2027



Pope High School is incredibly proud to announce that 14 outstanding members of the class of 2027 have been recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Program! These exceptional Greyhounds are being honored for their top-tier academic performance on the October 2025 PSAT. The National Merit Scholarship Program is an annual academic competition that began back in 1955. It is run by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, a non-profit organization that operates entirely without government assistance. Every year, over 1.2 million high school juniors enter this program simply by taking the PSAT, but only approximately 34,000 of those nation-wide are recognized for their performance.

National Merit Commended Students scored in the top 4% on the October 2025 PSAT of all juniors nationwide (only 34,000 students total). They do not go on in the National Merit Finalist competition but may still be selected for corporate sponsored scholarships later in the spring.

National Merit Semifinalists represent the top 16,000 students, which is less than 1% of all high school seniors in the US. To be considered for Finalist recognition, Semifinalists will submit a detailed scholarship application and earn an SAT or ACT score that confirms their excellent PSAT performance. The scholarship opportunities for National

Merit Finalists can be significant. About 150 corporations will provide over 800 corporate-sponsored awards. On top of that, about 150 colleges and universities are expected to fund some 3,600 college-sponsored Merit Scholarships for Finalists who attend their schools. These final awards will be announced this coming spring.

We held a reception for our recognized students and their parents on Wednesday, September 9th. The entire Pope community congratulates these spectacular students, and we wish **John Law** and **Sarah Blackwell** the best of luck as they advance in the competition.

From left to right:

John Law - **National Merit Semifinalist**
Jonathan Howell - Commended Student
Yashvi Gandhi - Commended Student
William Biorn - Commended Student
Ansley Kuzma - Commended Student
Michael Friedman - Commended Student
Joseph Niemi - Commended Student
Matthew Niemi - Commended Student
Ramith Varakantum - Commended Student
Logan Thigpen - Commended Student
Declan Culbertson - Commended Student
Erin Wilson - Commended Student
Sarah Blackwell - **National Merit Semifinalist**

Not Pictured:

Ada Kopach - Commended Student

Wednesday Workshops!

Seniors! Have questions on using SchoolLinks? Need help requesting recommendations or working on your Common App? Need to follow up on a FutureFocus topic? Stop by the Counseling Office to pick up a pass to join the Counselors during your lunch period. **They will be available ONE MORE WEDNESDAY (tomorrow, 9/16) to answer your questions.** Meet them in the Professional Development room in the Learning Commons during your lunch period to get some help. Don't forget to pick up a pass in the Counseling Office to be able to attend!

Financial Aid Night Recap

We had an excellent presentation last night from Anna Roberts O'Brien, our GSFC representative, who provided a wealth of information about the financial aid process, including information about federal aid, FAFSA, HOPE Programs, and so much more. She has graciously shared her [presentation](#) with us for those who weren't able to attend, as well as those who want to go back through the information; this is posted on our [Counseling website](#). If you'd like additional assistance, Anna is available for consultations about financial aid, FAFSA, and more. You can reach out to her by email - aroberts@gsfc.org, phone/text 404.706.1550, or schedule a 30-minute appointment directly through her Bookings link, found here <https://www.gafutures.org/about-us/outreach/meet-your-gsfc-outreach-representative/anna-obrien/>. Anna's consultations are free as a service provided by the Georgia-sponsored higher education finance agency, the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC). A reminder – the FAFSA opens for graduating seniors on **October 1**, and you'll need to complete the **2027-2028 FAFSA** for students who will be starting college in Fall 2027!

United States Presidential Scholar Program

Each year, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program honors some of our nation's most exceptional high school seniors who shine through academic achievement, artistic talent, and career and technical excellence. Established by executive order in 1964, the program has grown to recognize up to 161 students annually, celebrating those whose accomplishments reflect the highest ideals of scholarship, creativity, and leadership.

The 2027 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program application window closes on November 1st at 5 pm. High school seniors may apply, provided they meet all program qualifications. The application, program criteria, and

informational brochures are on the Excellence Recognitions PSP webpage at [U.S. Presidential Scholar – Georgia Department of Education](#).

Application Link: [2027 PSP Application](#)

Verification Forms: [Click Here](#)

Student Application Guidance: [Click Here](#)

Scholarship Opportunities

Watch this space for important scholarship information! Various opportunities will be highlighted in the Tuesday Telegraph but thousands of scholarships are also posted in SchoolLinks and can be found on the [Pope School Counseling](#) website. Later this semester we will be sharing scholarship opportunities where there are guaranteed to be Pope winners! Also, check out this great website to find out [which colleges offer free tuition!](#)

Information for All Grades

Junior Advisement has Started!

During Junior year, families and students are invited to meet with their counselor for an individual 30-minute advisement session regarding remaining graduation requirements and post-secondary plans. You are now able to sign up for a **Junior Advisement Appointment** with your student's counselor. **The bulk of the appointment slots run from Tuesday, September 29 through mid-December. However, there are also some available appointments in early September.** Please click on the link next to your assigned alpha counselor to take you directly to a Bookings page and follow the instructions. **We encourage you to book a time that coincides with your student's lunch or maybe an elective period if possible.** Students will be responsible for making up any work that is missed. We look forward to meeting with you. If you missed the Junior Parent Meeting, you can find the presentation at www.popeschoolcounseling.com/11th-grade/. **As a reminder, please bring a copy of your student's Social Security card to the meeting. This will be helpful in allowing you and your student to gain access to their personal HOPE Scholarship information. Additionally, please be sure to park in a VISITOR parking spot or there is a risk that you will get a ticket if you park in a student/teacher parking spot.**

Anna Leathers (A – D):

<https://outlook.office.com/book/Classof2028JuniorAdvisementAnnaLeathersAD@cobbk12org.onmicrosoft.com/?ismsaljsauthenabed>

Leslie Shearstone (E – K):

<https://outlook.office.com/book/JuniorAdvisementClassof2028LeslieShearstoneEK@cobbk12org.onmicrosoft.com/?ismsaljsauthenabed>

Cheryl Gully (L–Q):

<https://outlook.office.com/book/JuniorAdvisementClassof2028MsGullyLQ@cobbk12org.onmicrosoft.com/?ismsaljsauthenabed>

Jamie Hamrick (R – Z):

<https://outlook.office.com/book/Classof2027JuniorAdvisementMrsHamrickRZCopy@cobbk12org.onmicrosoft.com/?ismsaljsauthenabed>

College Planning Timelines for all Grades – GAFutures

Did you know that GAFutures has college planning timelines for every grade level? We understand the process of knowing what to do when can be overwhelming. Check out these resources for step-by-step guides about how to methodically approach planning for college <https://www.gafutures.org/college-planning/college-decision-guide/college-planning-timeline/>.

Pope's Dual Enrollment Information Night – Presentation Posted

If you missed last week's Dual Enrollment meeting, the [presentation](#) has been posted on our website. REMEMBER, parent AND student must complete the test and attendance log found at the end of the presentation if you plan to take dual enrollment classes next school year (or over the summer!). If you have any questions, please reach out to your counselor!

Sophomore Classroom Counseling Lessons and Family Events

Counselors are going into 10th grade English classes to have sophomores complete their two state required tasks and discuss the following topics:

- Complete Brain Flex career assessment in SchoolLinks (state required task)
- Dual Enrollment - complete the Dual Enrollment Survey in SchoolLinks (state required task)
- What are my options after high school?
- HOPE Scholarship and HOPE Grant (funding for Georgia Technical Colleges and Universities)
- GAFutures.org career and college planning website (where they can see their HOPE GPA calculation)
- PSAT/SAT/ACT overview

Then in February, we will return to sophomore classes to discuss:

- Graduation Requirements and promotion rules
- Updating their Individualized College and Career Plan (ICCP)
- Course registration information for the 2027-28 school year

SAVE THE DATES: 10th Grade Family Events

All sophomores will be participating in the **PSAT/NMSQT the morning of Thursday, October 15th**. The fee for this test has been paid for by the state of Georgia for all 10th graders. Students should receive their PSAT results electronically via their College Board Big Futures account in early November. We will have a **PSAT Results and College Testing Information meeting, followed by a Sophomore Family Meeting Monday, November 9th starting at 7:00 pm in the PAC.**

Leading into course registration for next year, we will host a **Family Course Registration Information Night on Thursday, February 4th at 7:00 pm in the PAC.** This meeting is for current 9th, 10th and 11th grade families looking for additional guidance and insight into the course registration and planning process. We will share information that will help you and your child plan a challenging but balanced approach to course selections. School Counselors will be available in the PAC lobby after the presentation to answer additional questions you/your child may have about their course selection.

Pope College Fair – October 7



Save the date for Pope's next College Fair! Join us in the Aux Gym during x-block on **Wednesday, October 7th (2:10-2:50)**. See the flyer to see who will be attending.

Probe College Fair – October 13

Head over to **Marietta High School** for their Probe College Fair on **Tuesday, October 13th (6-7:30 pm)**. They will host over 50 colleges and universities in their Gym! Scan the QR code in the flyer to register.



Register for the Fall 2026 Georgia Probe College Tour

August 18 - November 19

RegisterProbe.com



Connect with college representatives and ask them questions about your major, admissions, scholarships, and more!

UGA to Visit Pope October 14

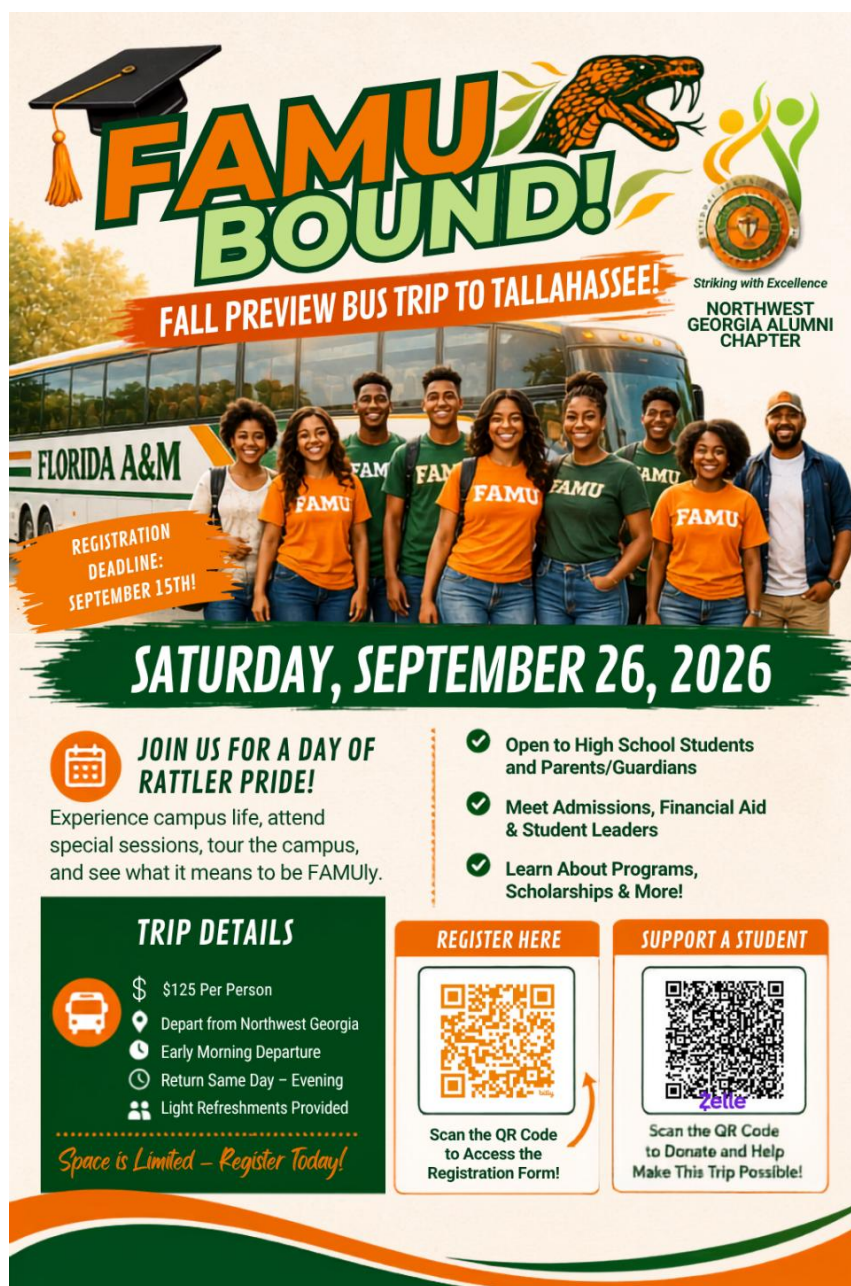


**UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA**

Landon Leiker, the UGA Admissions Counselor for Cobb County, will be at Pope on **Wednesday, October 14th during x-block** to give a presentation to ALL students interested in learning more about University of Georgia. More details will be available as we get closer to the event.

Visit Florida A&M University

The Northwest Georgia Chapter of the FAMU Alumni Association is hosting a trip to the university for prospective high school students to learn more about academics, admissions and student life. The chartered bus trip will be on **September 26th**, and the **registration deadline is TODAY, September 15th**. See the flyer for more information.



FAMU BOUND!
FALL PREVIEW BUS TRIP TO TALLAHASSEE!

Striking with Excellence
NORTHWEST GEORGIA ALUMNI CHAPTER

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 15TH!

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

JOIN US FOR A DAY OF RATTLER PRIDE!
Experience campus life, attend special sessions, tour the campus, and see what it means to be FAMUly.

- Open to High School Students and Parents/Guardians
- Meet Admissions, Financial Aid & Student Leaders
- Learn About Programs, Scholarships & More!

TRIP DETAILS

- \$125 Per Person
- Depart from Northwest Georgia
- Early Morning Departure
- Return Same Day - Evening
- Light Refreshments Provided

Space is Limited - Register Today!

REGISTER HERE

Scan the QR Code to Access the Registration Form!

SUPPORT A STUDENT

Scan the QR Code to Donate and Help Make This Trip Possible!

ASVAB Opportunity for 11th and 12th Graders



Pope will be offering the **ASVAB Career Exploration Program (CEP)** the morning of **Thursday, October 15th** to **any interested juniors *not participating in the PSAT*, and any interested seniors**. The ASVAB is the assessment needed for [military enlistment](#), but this program also provides students with a free highly researched and reliable career assessment that helps them explore careers and plan their futures. For an overview of the ASVAB, please click [HERE](#).

Participation in the ASVAB does not obligate a student to talk with military recruiters or consider a military career, and scores are not shared with recruiters.

Interested 11th and 12th graders must **sign up before October 9th** to participate. Scan the QR code to register. The test is administered digitally, so be sure to bring your charged CCSD issued laptop that morning. Location of testing is TBD. Stop by the Counseling Office if you have questions.



2027 Emerging Innovator Awards

Are you making an impact in your school or community? Apply for the [2027 Emerging Innovator Awards](https://hornentr.com/EIAapply) for the chance to be recognized as one of the **top 100 high school changemakers worldwide**. Honorees receive global recognition, an invitation to the Limitless World Summit, and the chance to compete for a **\$40,000 prize pool** in cash and scholarships. Apply by **October 1st**: hornentr.com/EIAapply

Revolution Prep – PSAT Prep

Follow along with Revolution Prep's PSAT 1, 2, 3 – Learn It, Take It, Interpret It. [Sign up](#) for this FREE resource!

 **REVOLUTION PREP**

FREE FOR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

PSAT 1, 2, 3



Where the PSAT fits

Three official tests, years apart. Each one does something different.

9 TH AND 10 TH GRADE	11 TH GRADE	11 TH AND 12 TH GRADE
Official PSAT Lowstakes. Minimal preparation required, and colleges never see the score.	Official PSAT/NMSQT The National Merit Qualifying Test, may be worth preparing for.	Official SAT or ACT The only scores colleges see, and only the ones you choose to send.

PRACTICE WITH REVOLUTION PREP Free, full-length unofficial practice exams before any of these. Scores never go to colleges.

1 LEARN IT

A free one-hour PSAT 101 session, online. The digital adaptive format, how scoring works, timings, and what test day actually feels like.

SESSIONS
Sun, Sep 13
Sun, Sep 27
4:00 PM PT / 7:00 PM ET

2 TAKE IT

A free full-length practice exam, live proctored online, in the same digital adaptive format College Board uses. Extended time supported. Self-proctored any time. Scan below for additional dates.

EXAM DATES
Sat, Aug 29
Sat, Sep 12
Sat, Sep 19
9:00 AM PT / 12:00 PM ET

3 INTERPRET IT

Score Report+ lands as soon as you finish, plus a free review with a Revolution Prep advisor to turn it into a testing timeline. Then join our webinar to plan your path forward.

PSAT/NMSQT: NOW WHAT?
Thu, Nov 5
Tue, Nov 17
Times vary | Recording provided

Score Report+ Section-by-section detail, pacing insights, official-style percentiles, and the three highest-impact areas to work on next.



ONE LINK. ALL THREE STEPS.
revolutionprep.com/hs/psat/123
Scan or visit to see every date, register, and find what fits your schedule.
Questions? Contact us: answers@revolutionprep.com | (877) 738-7737

Shared with our school community as a free resource.
Program provided at no cost by Revolution Prep.

PSAT/NMSQT is a registered trademark of the College Board, which was not involved in the production of and does not endorse this program.

Applerouth's PSAT Prep

Applerouth's annual PSAT workshop/practice test event is back! This is a great way for students to prep for the PSAT (for free)! See the flyer to sign up for free online strategy sessions and practice tests.



**applerouth**

PSAT PATHWAYS

Turn the PSAT Into a Testing Strategy

Free online strategy session + practice test

1 STEP 1: Choose a 90-Minute PSAT Strategy Session



SEP 19	9:00 am CT 10:00 am ET
SEP 23	6:00 pm CT 7:00 pm ET
SEP 29	6:00 pm CT 7:00 pm ET
OCT 1	6:00 pm CT 7:00 pm ET

All sessions held via Zoom

2 STEP 2: Take an Online PSAT Practice Test

	SEP 26-27	OCT 3-4
ET	9am 12pm 3pm	9am 12pm 3pm
CT	8am 11am 2pm	8am 11am 2pm

Applerouth's free PSAT Pathways program offers:



A 90-Minute Workshop:

Expert guidance on Math, Reading, and Writing with test-taking strategies.



A Pressure-Free Practice Test:

Practice exam to familiarize students with the test format.



A Detailed Score Report:

Personalized roadmap, boosting students' confidence as they prepare for the PSAT and beyond.



REGISTER NOW!

applerouth.com/psat-pathways

Scan the QR code to register!



www.applerouth.com



info@applerouth.com



866-789-7737



Pope School Counseling Website

Have you visited the [Pope School Counseling website](#)? You can find lots of useful information including [grade specific presentations](#), [tutoring help](#), [personal support](#), [ACT/SAT/CLT testing information](#), [scholarship and financial aid resources](#), the weekly [Tuesday Telegraphs](#) from this school year, and so much more!



Back Row: Karen Anderson (Clerk), Leslie Shearstone (E-K), Lisa Squier (Records), Pam Kretzmer (Social Worker)
Front Row: Jamie Hamrick (R-Z), Cheryl Gully (L-Q), Anna Leathers (A-D), Andi Hodgkin (504s)

Have a great fall break, Greyhounds! We'll be back in your inbox on September 29th!

CONTACT US

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Pope Counseling Website:
<https://www.popeschoolcounseling.com/>

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Facebook at Pope High School Counseling Department**