Sophomore College Tour – August 25-27, 2026

SGS is excited to offer this annual programming as part of the back-to-school orientation week. Along with giving everyone a chance to reconnect as a class and build momentum for the year ahead, the purpose of the trip is to provide students with experience visiting and touring different types of colleges and universities. Our intent is not to encourage them to apply to the schools on our tour when they are seniors (although they may very well do so). Rather, we want students to start thinking seriously about the kinds of questions they should be asking as they search for their "best fit" schools over the next several years.

Accordingly, we have planned the tour to represent the broad range of options students can pursue: big and small, public and private, urban and rural, and religious and secular. Many students may already be familiar with some of the campuses on the tour; but all students will be visiting these schools from a new perspective – as prospective college students.

Sophomore Team Leader Mark Rickard and Director of College Counseling Joe Connolly will lead the tour along with three other faculty members. We will prepare for the tour at school on Monday, August 24 and start with a day trip in Spokane on Tuesday, August 25. We will then head out of town early Wednesday morning, August 26, for an overnight excursion to visit more schools in the region.

August 24 First Day of School – Trip Planning Meeting 1:30-2:30pm

All students will need their laptops to prepare for the tour.

August 25 Day Trip – Gonzaga

Students should arrive at school by the start of the class day at 8:20 am and expect to return to school by around 3:00pm.

August 26-27 Overnight – WSU and Whitman

Since we are leaving before regular school bus service starts, we will have two pick-up locations for our departure on Wednesday, August 26. For northside students, we will depart from SGS promptly at 7:45am and pick up southside students at 8:15am downtown by the First Presbyterian on 4th and Cedar. All students should expect to return to SGS by 5:00pm, in time for the late bus, on Thursday, August 27.

After touring WSU on Wednesday, we will travel to Walla Walla and spend the night at the Finch Hotel. On Thursday morning, we will tour Whitman College and drive home after lunch.

See below for more details and our expectations of students on the tour. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Mark Rickard at mark.rickard@sgs.org or Joe Connolly at joe.connolly@sgs.org.

Saint George's School College Tour Expectations

Our goal is to make the tour educational and enjoyable for all students. To help provide the safest and best experience possible, we ask that everyone follow these guidelines:

MEALS AND POCKET MONEY:

- **Students will need money for one dinner and one breakfast** in Walla Walla. They will have several options to choose from within walking distance of the hotel.
- **SGS will cover lunches** at the colleges on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

DRESS:

- **Please pack a warm layer and/or rain jacket.** While we expect temperatures to be comfortable during the day, nights can be cool and there's often a chance of rain. Please pack a warm layer and/or rain jacket.
- **Comfortable, closed-toed walking shoes are a must!** We will be walking a lot; no flipflops or sandals while we are touring campuses.
- **Dress "neatly casual"** – meaning, dress comfortably for the weather and in accordance with our school dress code. Please remember that we will be representing SGS and engaging with admissions officers who will remember us by our appearance and behavior. *Avoid wearing branded apparel from other schools*.

TRAVEL:

- We will travel by SGS school bus and stay at the Finch Hotel in Walla Walla for the night of Wednesday, August 26. Two students to a room, assigned by chaperones.
- Snacks (peanut free), music (w/ earbuds or airpods), books, a pillow, cards, etc. are encouraged for the bus ride.
- Bring a refillable water bottle to ensure proper hydration throughout the trip.

BEHAVIOR:

- **Punctuality** is critical to the smooth flow of this trip, as we have set appointment times and traffic to navigate for each of our college visits. When trip chaperones say that everyone needs to meet in the lobby at 8:00am, they really mean everyone *must* be in the lobby, ready to go, *by* 8:00am!
- **Polite and respectful behavior** while on college campuses and throughout the trip is a must. No personal electronic devices (phones, ear buds / airpods, etc.) are to be used during a campus tour or presentation unless to take photos with a camera-phone.

- **Students will have free time** during some meals and at the hotel on Wednesday night. We require students to be with at least one buddy for meals and free time.
- **Chaperones will conduct bed-checks/room-checks**. Curfew will be set and enforced at a reasonable hour. Students must remain in their hotel rooms after that time and respect the peace and quiet of hotel guests in neighboring rooms.
- **Random room and luggage checks** may be made throughout the duration of the trips.
- **Students must follow the rules articulated in the Student Handbook** governing student behavior. There will be no alcohol, non-prescription, or other illicit drug-use on the trip. Other behaviors deemed inappropriate will be dealt with immediately on a case-by-case basis. The chaperones will send students home for serious misconduct.
- **Prescription Medications:** Make sure to bring any necessary prescription medications. Students will be in charge of their own medications on the trip. Please contact Mark Rickard at mark.rickard@sgs.org with any questions or concerns.

SPECIAL MEETINGS:

- If students want to meet a coach or a professor, please let Mark and Joe know the time ASAP and we will try to accommodate.
- Any meetings that require a student to leave the group will need to be pre-approved in writing by that student's parent or guardian with the recognition that it might necessitate the student finding their way back to the group independently.

DISCUSS AND SIGN PERMISSION SLIP:

Please make sure you have discussed these college tour expectations with your student. By signing the permission form, you are acknowledging that you have read and discussed these expectations with your student.

On the permission form, be sure to indicate any medical conditions and medicines (prescription or over the counter) that your student has/needs. This form also serves as a "permission to treat" and emergency contact form should your student need medical attention or should we need to reach you while we are traveling.