

GEAR UP – McKnight Middle School



High School & Beyond Planning — News & Information

OCTOBER – NOVEMBER

FOR FAMILIES OF 7TH GRADE

Navigating 7th grade

Middle school is a time of emotional, physical, social and academic changes. Your child is learning and developing skills that will make it easier to adjust to the challenges of high school and beyond.

Research shows that teens do better in school when their families are involved in their lives in and out of school. Here are some things you can do to help your child adjust to middle school:

- Discuss any concerns that your child may have before starting middle school.
- Talk to your child about the physical and social changes and social pressures that often occur.
- Encourage your child to take challenging classes. Ask your child's teachers or guidance counselor if these classes will help your child be competitive in high school and beyond.

Also, talk to your students to determine...

- Has good study habits?
- Reads what is necessary to complete an assignment?
- Hands in assignments on time?
- Prepares ahead of time for assignments and tests instead of cramming at the last minute?
- Has the resources needed to complete assignments or knows where to find what is needed? If not, ask a teacher or counselor for help.



School Contact Information:
1200 Edmonds Ave NE
Renton, WA 98056
425-204-3600

GEAR UP
Coordinator:
Hong-Yen Chau
425-204-6286

GEAR UP
Teacher/Mentor:
Jessi Traugher
425-204-3729

GEAR UP Tutors:
Sharon Joshua
Tammy Akamine

Mon, Tues, Thurs:
2:40-4:00 pm

Did You Know?

The high school graduation rate for College Bound students in the Class of 2015 was 75 percent. The rate for eligible students who did not apply for the program was 62 percent.

Myth Buster

MYTH: College is only a four-year degree with classes taken on campus.

REALITY: There are many options for students after high school, including apprenticeships, on-the-job training programs, community college certificates, two-year degrees, and four-year degrees.

The term *college* includes all of these things. College is also the key to good jobs. In less than two years, nearly 75 percent of jobs in Washington will require some kind of education beyond high school.

Because college is a crucial stepping-stone to a good career, it's important that families plan ahead.



Student Checklist

- Start a calendar.** Record and track important school dates and deadlines. Find a system that works for you and stick with it.
- Set easy-to-reach goals.** Working toward a goal helps keep you motivated. Try listing a few things you've been meaning to do and write down the steps needed to finish them. Check off each step as you complete it.
- Think about college as an important part of your future.** Discuss your thoughts and ideas with your family and with people at school.
- Start saving** for college, if you haven't already.
- Take challenging and interesting classes** to prepare for high school.

Family Checklist

- Read up.** Read these monthly newsletters and go over them with your child.
- Set goals.** Help your child set goals for the year. Working toward specific goals will help your child stay motivated and focused.
- Check in.** Make a plan to check in regularly about schoolwork. If you keep up with your child's tests, papers, and homework assignments, you can celebrate successes and head off problems as a team. Find out about your child's grades, assignments, and attendance on the school's online system (like Skyward). If you don't know how to access this system, contact your child's counselor for assistance.
- Talk to the school.** Attend parent-teacher conferences, open houses and other events at the school to stay connected with teachers and school staff.
- Continue saving** for your child's college education.
- Stay in contact with your child's teachers and counselor** so that they can let you know about any changes in your child's behavior or schoolwork.
- Keep an eye on your child's grades** and help find tutoring if necessary.

Myth Buster

MYTH: You can't apply for scholarships until senior year.

REALITY: Wrong! If you wait until senior year to start searching and applying for scholarships, you're already three years behind the curve.

Many scholarships are actually open to students 13 years and older (and some even younger!). For example, students need to apply for the College Bound Scholarship before the end of 8th grade.

When it comes to scholarships, there's only one thing you really need to remember — the more often you apply, the more chances you have to win.

Check out theWashBoard.org. It matches Washington students with scholarships!



College Bound Scholarship

Your child may be eligible to sign up for the College Bound Scholarship! This early promise of financial aid is funded by the state of Washington to encourage students to dream big and continue their education after high school.

What does the scholarship pay for?

College Bound combines with other state financial aid to cover the average tuition (at comparable public colleges), some fees, and a small book allowance. It is not a "full-ride" scholarship. Other college costs--such as room and board, transportation, and personal expenses--will be the student and family's responsibility. These could be covered by a combination of the family's funds and federal grants, loans, scholarships, and work-study.

Who is eligible to apply?

Any 7th or 8th grade student who meets one or more of the following requirements is eligible to apply:

- Their family meets the income requirements as listed in the brochure or on www.collegebound.wa.gov.
- They are a foster youth or a dependent of the state.
- Their family receives basic food or TANF benefits.

How can my child sign up?

[Apply Online](#) (available in English and Spanish).

Remember, the deadline to apply for College Bound is **June 30** at the end of a student's 8th grade year. Students only have to apply once even if they move or change schools in Washington.

To learn more, visit www.collegebound.wa.gov, call 888-535-0747 (Option 1), or email collegebound@wsac.wa.gov.

Myth Buster

MYTH: If I'm not a legal U.S. citizen or resident, I cannot get into or afford college.

REALITY: Washington State allows undocumented students or DREAMers, to pay in-state tuition if they go to a public college or university in Washington. You may hear this referred to by college staff or your high school counselor as HB 1079.

Additionally, there are many scholarships to support these students. DREAMers can also apply for state financial aid if they meet eligibility requirements.

For more info, go to:
www.readysetgrad.org/residency-citizenship

Keeping Your Options Open

There are many different ways to continue education beyond high school. Most family-wage jobs require education or training after high school. Just one year of education or training after high school can increase lifetime earnings. On average, college graduates have more jobs to choose from and have lower rates of unemployment than high school graduates. The type of career your child is interested in pursuing will help determine what type of degree and school to explore.

Many colleges typically offer four kinds of degrees: two-year (or associate), undergraduate (or bachelor's), graduate (or master's), and doctoral or professional degrees. Here are some examples:

Career	Type of Education	# of Years	Degree	School
Warehouse Worker	Apprenticeship	2	Journey-Level Certificate	Bucher Aerospace Corporation, Everett
Licensed Practical Nurse	Community College	2	Associate	South Puget Sound Community College
Graphic Designer	Public University	4	Bachelor's	Central Washington University
	Private College or University			Gonzaga University

Did You Know?

Community colleges are the most common type of two-year college. They offer many types of educational programs, including those that lead to associate degrees and certificates. Certificates and some types of associate degrees focus on career readiness. Other types of associate degrees are good preparation for study at a four-year college, where graduates can earn a bachelor's degree.

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Parent Teacher Conferences:
 - o November 25: 12-4 pm
 - o November 26: 1-4pm, 5-7pm
- Thanksgiving Break (no school)
 - o November 27 & 28
- Professional Teacher Day
 - o December 2 (no school)
- CARE Night
 - o December 10, 5:30-7:30pm
- Winter Break (no school)
 - o December 23-January 3

Afterschool Activities: 2:40-4pm

Mondays	Tuesdays	Thursdays
Dance Club	Board Game Club	Latino Club
Garden Club	Gay Straight Alliance	TechBridge Girls
GEAR UP Tutors	GEAR UP Tutors	GEAR UP Tutors
Robotics	STEAM Club	
	Afterschool Across the Street	Afterschool Across the Street
Sports: Basketball (Boys & Girls)		

Student Checklist

- Think about what you'd like to do when you grow up.
- Learn about career possibilities.
- Read something every day: newspapers, blogs, books, or magazines.
- Talk with your family and your advisor about your goals and dreams.

Family Checklist

- Talk about extracurricular activities. Getting involved in clubs and other groups is a great way for your child to identify interests and feel more engaged in school.
- Come up with fun reading ideas. If your family makes reading enjoyable, it can become a daily habit.
- Visit a nearby college together. If you live near a college, look for upcoming events on campus that are open to the community. Or just tour the campus. Just being on a campus may get your child interested in college.

7th Grade Counselor:
Cathy Sheridan



GEAR UP Teacher/Mentor
& Coordinator:
Jessi Traugher & Hong-Yen Chau



GEAR UP Tutors:
Tammy Akamine &
Sharon Joshua

