

GEAR UP – MCKNIGHT MIDDLE SCHOOL

High School & Beyond Planning — News & Information



OCTOBER – NOVEMBER

FOR FAMILIES OF 8TH GRADE

Why College? Education Makes Life Better

- **More job satisfaction.** Individuals with a college degree are more likely to rate their work as important or very important.
- **More money.** Individuals with a college degree earn an average of \$22,000 more per year than those with only a high school diploma.
- **Less unemployment.** Someone with a four-year degree is much less likely to be unemployed than someone with only a high school diploma.
- **More benefits.** Jobs that require a college degree are more likely to offer health insurance and retirement plans.
- **Better health.** College graduates are more likely to exercise and report better health.
- **More likely to vote.** Thirty percent more college graduates voted in the 2008 election than those with only a high school diploma.
- **Volunteer more.** College graduates are twenty percent more likely to volunteer in their communities.
- **Live longer.** People with a college degree live almost nine years longer than those without a high school diploma.



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

Myth Buster

MYTH: The cost of college is so high it's not even an option anymore.

REALITY: Washington has ranked first in the nation in the level of need-based financial aid per undergraduate enrollments for the last three academic years.

Cost doesn't have to be a barrier to attending college. There is money available to help.

Did You Know?

While 95 percent of the human brain has developed by the age of six, scientists report that the greatest spurts of growth after infancy occur just around adolescence.

Myth Buster

MYTH: Students only attend community college because they can't get into a four-year university.

REALITY: There are many reasons students attend community colleges instead of four-year colleges.

Cost is one of the biggest incentives, since community college is usually more affordable. Many students choose to take core classes at a community college and then transfer to a four-year university. Also, many students choose to live at home to save money on housing costs. Class schedules can be more flexible, as well, so students can work more hours.

It is important to consider support services, graduation rates, and costs and costs to determine which school is the best fit. Do your research.

Student Checklist

- Try a new activity.** Now is a great time to try something new, whether it's a sport, a club, or volunteer work.
- Ask for help with schoolwork.** If you start to feel shaky in a subject, seek out tutoring. If you wait until you get a bad grade on a paper or big test, you may fall behind.
- Establish a routine for study.** Find a comfortable spot with minimal distractions.
- Learn about the differences** between doing homework, reviewing homework, and studying for quizzes and exams.

Family Checklist

- Offer encouragement.** Encourage your child to do well in school and explore outside interests in sports, clubs, and volunteer work.
- Review the school calendar together.** Note important dates and put them in a shared online calendar or in an easy-to-view place, such as a bulletin board in your kitchen.
- 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.
- Emphasize the importance of school** with your actions and your words.
- Respect** your teen's efforts.
- Attend** school activities if possible.

Did You Know?

When students improve their attendance rates, they improve their academic prospects and chances for graduating.

Myth Buster

MYTH: My child didn't sign up for the College Bound Scholarship last year, and now it is too late to sign up.

REALITY: Students may be eligible if:

- They are in 7th or 8th grade.
- Their family meets the income requirements as listed in the brochure, flyer, or on www.collegebound.wa.gov.
- They have been a foster youth or a dependent of the state.
- Their family receives basic food or TANF benefits.

Apply online or print an application form.

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

To learn more, please go to the website:

www.collegebound.wa.gov



Planning for High School

A step that you can take now to help your child prepare for high school is to learn what your child's class schedule could be like and find out which courses colleges expect students to have taken.

One difference between middle school, or junior high, and high school is *prerequisite courses*. A prerequisite is a course that must be taken before another course. For example, students take math classes in a specific order.

Another difference is that almost all your child's middle school courses so far have been required courses. In high school, students must pass certain required courses in order to graduate. They will also be able to choose from a variety of *elective* courses, which can help students meet higher education requirements, follow their personal interests, or develop specific skills.

The courses your teen takes in middle school will lay the foundation for high school. When students have a strong education foundation at this level, they will be competitive in high school and more likely to have the necessary skills to be successful in higher education.

Later in the year, you will learn more about what types of classes your child should take in order to meet graduation requirements, pursue their dreams, and become college and career ready.

Student Checklist

- Turn your interests into careers.** List your hobbies and talents. Then match up the things on your list with different opportunities.

Family Checklist

- Explore careers and college programs.** Talk to your student about different careers they might be interested in and what education they might need.
- Continue learning about college readiness and the benefits of college.** Keep reading these newsletters, attend events at the school, and check out online resources like www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org and www.knowhow2go.com, which have information specifically for parents.

Study Skills & Homework Help

Few students love homework, but it does serve several purposes:

- Reinforce what they've learned during the day.
- Build study habits that are essential in college.
- Prepare for their classes.
- Get a sense of progress.



8th Grade Counselor:
Keira Edwards

Homework is one of the first places many students fall behind. Help your children get the most out of homework by teaching them to talk to their teachers and counselors. Encourage them and let them know that it is okay to ask questions if the assignment is unclear and to ask for help if needed.

Homework takes organization. You can help your child learn to:

- Keep a planner with all assignments and deadlines.
- Create a quiet space and schedule time for homework.
- Gather materials needed for the homework task.
- Turn in completed assignments on time.



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

Homework also requires focus, persistence, and determination. You can help your children problem-solve what gets in the way and remind them to take a short break when frustrated.

Homework demands time management. You can help your child learn to prioritize homework tasks by importance and deadline.

When students put their attention and effort to homework, they learn habits that will help them in college and beyond.



GEAR UP Tutors:
Tammy Akamine &
Sharon Joshua

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)		