College may seem a long way off, but it’s not too early to start planning.

**Freshman Year**

☐ As soon as you can, meet with your counselor to begin talking about colleges, possible career goals, high school curriculum and extracurricular activities.

☐ Make sure you are enrolled in the appropriate college-preparatory or tech-prep courses.

☐ Take the most challenging courses offered at your high school.

☐ Get off to a good start with your grades. The grades you earn in ninth grade will be included in your final high school GPA and class rank.

☐ College might seem a long way off now, but grades really do count toward college admission and scholarships.

☐ Explore your interests and possible careers. Take advantage of Career Day opportunities.

☐ Get involved in extracurricular activities (both school and non-school-sponsored).

☐ Talk to your parents about planning for college expenses. Continue or begin a savings plan for college.

☐ Look at the college information available in your counselor’s office and school and public libraries. Use the Internet to check out college Web sites.

☐ Tour a nearby college, if possible. Visit relatives or friends who live on or near a college campus. Check out the dorms, go to the library or student center, and get a feel for college life.

☐ Consider taking a world language.

☐ Make reading for pleasure a daily habit

☐ Take advantage of summer and remain productive in extracurricular activities.

☐ Begin researching and taking notes on colleges to gain knowledge to be used later.

☐ Practice writing in the first person. This skill is necessary when writing college essays. Keep a journal.

☐ Pay attention to important announcements and opportunities via email.