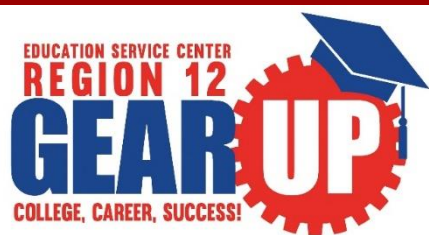


# Killeen High School GEAR UP Newsletter



## School Information:

Killeen High School  
500 N 38th St,  
Killeen, TX 76543

### GEAR UP Facilitator

9<sup>th</sup> Grade Facilitator:  
Julie McPherson  
254-541-8235  
julie.mcpherson@killeenisd.org

I am located upstairs in  
Room 702 (Near the  
auditorium)



### KHS Principal:

Kara Trevino

## Ninth Grade Matters

Ninth grade is a key year for students both academically and socially. Freshman year is essential in deciding whether a student drops out or stays in school. The transition from middle school can be challenging—harder classes with higher stakes, new social pressures, changing friend groups, and a desire to assert independence and become their own person.

High school is a new environment with a lot more freedom and more homework. It is not uncommon to see a drop in grades. The possibility of developing bad habits such as skipping class can also grow especially if a student is struggling.

Three signs—**attendance**, **behavior**, and **course performance**—are believed to be the most accurate way to predict the likelihood to either quit school or complete it.

The biggest risk factor for failing ninth grade is the number of absences during the first 30 days. Missing more than ten percent is cause for concern. First-year high-school students are 'on track' if they earn at least five full year course credits, and have received no more than one F per semester. Students who fail more than one core class in their freshman year are more likely to drop out of high school without graduating.

How is your child doing? Supporting your teen through this important year is critical. Share ways to beat the beginning high school blues with your teen, like going to school (if you're not in class, you can't learn!), getting involved in school activities and clubs, asking for help if you need it, and having older students and adults serve as mentors.

## DID YOU KNOW?

By 9th grade, regular attendance is a better predictor of graduation rates than 8th grade test scores.

# Upcoming Events and Announcements

## Myth Buster

- **September 23-27:** GEAR UP Week (Multiple Activities)
  - **September 23:** GEAR UP Parent Night (Information on GEAR UP and Saving money for college; Starts at 6:00 PM)
  - **September 25:** A'ric Jackson Guest speaker for all 9<sup>th</sup> graders
  - **September 26:** Photobooth during lunches
  - **September 26:** Wear your college t-shirt!
  - **September 27:** Temple College Field Trip permission slips due!
- October 3: Temple College Visit
- October 9: Central Texas College Visit

### GEAR UP Social Media

Like us on Facebook: GEAR UP Killeen ISD

Follow us on Twitter @ R12GearUp

Follow us on Instagram: r12gearup

**MYTH:** Your child can't get into a selective college if she or he did poorly in ninth and tenth grade.

**REALITY:** Colleges look for improvement in performance as a sign that your child can and will do the work.

In fact, a vast improvement as a junior and senior indicates to a college that a student has settled down and is serious about school. However, your teen shouldn't expect to catch up for three poor years in one good semester as a senior.

### Student Checklist

- Involve your family.** If your family members haven't been to college themselves, they may think they can't help you with college planning. That's not true. They know you well and can help you make good choices. Have your family members work with your teachers and school counselors to get you on the path to college.
- Study and read every day.** People who read more know more. This habit will pay off when you take tests with timed reading sections, like college admission tests.
- Get involved.** Getting ready for college isn't all work. Find something you really like doing, and then dive into it.

### Family Checklist

- 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 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.

