The beginning of 9th grade is an exciting time. Your child may be making new friends and becoming more independent. But your child still needs your help and involvement. Here are some things you can do together to succeed this year.

**SUMMER**
- Visit a college campus together. It’s a great way to get your child excited about college. Learn more about how you and your child can [prepare for a campus visit](#).
- Come up with fun reading ideas. Look for magazines or newspapers your child may like and talk about the books you loved reading when you were your child’s age. If your family makes reading enjoyable, it can become a daily habit.
- Show your child how to explore career interests. He or she can make a list of interests, talents and favorite activities and start matching them with occupations. Learn how students can use websites like [UtahFutures](#) and [O*NET](#) to explore careers.
- Get the facts about what college costs. You may be surprised at how affordable higher education can be. Start by reading [Understanding College Costs](#).

**FALL**
- Help your child set goals for the year. Working toward specific goals will help your child stay motivated and focused.
- Review the school & GEAR UP calendars together. Note important dates and put them in a shared online calendar or in an easy-to-view place, such as a refrigerator. Check out GEAR UP’s website for upcoming events.
- Make a plan to check in regularly about schoolwork. Using your myDSD or MyWeber account, you can keep up with your child’s tests, papers and homework assignments, and celebrate successes and address problems as a team. Get [homework tips](#) for your child and find ways to help them overcome test anxiety and improve their academic skill set.
- Talk about extracurricular activities. Getting involved in GEAR UP, clubs, and other groups is a great way for your child to identify interests and feel more engaged in school. Read more about the benefits of extracurriculars, find out how to get involved in GEAR UP, and help your child create a scholarship resume.
- Set up an appointment for you and your child to meet with their school counselor and GEAR UP advisor. Talk about college and career options, discuss how to earn college credit in high school, and learn about the most-appropriate classes your child should take. Find out who the GEAR UP advisor at your school is.

**WINTER**
- Start thinking about financial aid. It’s not too early to look into types of aid that could help you cover college costs. Start by reading [7 Things You Need to Know About Financial Aid](#).
- Learn what you can do to help your child prepare to apply for the Regents’ Scholarship. Recipients of this scholarship earn a degree at double the rate of their peers. To be eligible, students must meet all scholarship requirements beginning in 9th grade.
- Discuss next year’s classes. Make sure your child is challenging him- or herself — and taking the courses college admission officers expect to see. Learn more about the high school classes that colleges look for.
SPRING

☐ Have your child apply for the StepUp to College Costs Scholarship for 8th and 9th graders. Scholarships are an important tool for paying for college. It’s never too early to start applying for scholarships.

☐ Help your child start a college list. Visit College Search Step-by-Step together to get tips on starting a college search and figuring out what matters most to your child when choosing a college.

☐ See how much you need to save for college. Use the College Savings Calculator to get an idea of where you are compared with your savings goal.

☐ Learn how your child can earn college credit in high school. Students who take and succeed in college classes such as Concurrent Enrollment (CE) or Advanced Placement (AP) can save time and money by earning college credit before graduating from high school.

☐ Help your child make summer plans that include participating in GEAR UP activities. Summer is a great time to explore interests and learn new skills — and colleges look for students who pursue meaningful summer activities. Find out ways your child can stay motivated this summer and get involved in GEAR UP activities.

☐ Help your child open a college savings account. Students can open an account to start saving for college. Learn more at my529.org. If you already have a saving account, contribute what you can to it.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

GEAR UP is here to assist Undocumented Students with or without Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) in every way possible, and are committed to their success. You and your student should meet with your GEAR UP advisor regularly to find out how to apply for colleges and what scholarships are available to them, and refer to the guidelines and resources below.

☐ Applying for College. Utah House Bill 144 allows qualifying undocumented students to pay the same tuition as Utah residents do at any Utah college or university. Those who meet the requirements of HB 144 must print and fill out the Non-Resident Tuition Exemption Affidavit and submit it to the admission office of the Utah college they wish to attend. Affidavits and instructions can be found on each college’s website by searching for the term “HB-144 affidavit.”

☐ Encourage your child to take college classes in high school. Students who take and succeed in college classes such as Concurrent Enrollment (CE) or Advanced Placement (AP) can save time and money by earning college credit before graduating from high school.

☐ Paying for College. Dreamers can apply for scholarships to help pay for college. To learn more about what scholarships are available for undocumented, DACA, and non-FAFSA eligible students, talk to your GEAR UP advisor and visit the Undocumented Student Resources web pages for Weber State University, Salt Lake Community College, University of Utah, and StepUpUtah

☐ Additional Resources: Dreamers Road Map, Educate Utah, My Undocumented Life