



Class of 2023 Parents and Guardians,

The Graduate Tacoma Community would like to welcome you to the start of high school! This **College and Career Toolkit** and **Graduation Folder** is designed to share practical resources to support your student's success on their path through high school and on to college and/or career. Your student can use this **Graduation Folder** to begin compiling examples of their "best works" as they begin to build a resume that they can use for job, internship, scholarship, and college applications. You and your student will receive a **College and Career Toolkit** each year of high school, filled with helpful steps and resources to help your student stay on track for graduation and plan for college and/or career. You are not alone and the Graduate Tacoma Community is here to help.

Use the list of **College and Career Guidance Specialists** on the back of this letter to connect to support for financial aid, college and scholarship applications, internships, apprenticeships, certifications, and much more. Use the **Checklist** below for key steps to support your student's success.

Wishing you a successful start to you and your student this year.

In Support and Connection,

The Graduate Tacoma Community

## Top 5 Ways to Support Your Student

- Encourage** your student by believing in their abilities, setting high expectations, helping them problem-solve and overcome obstacles, and discussing college and career plans early together as a family.
- Support** your student by checking on grades and academic progress regularly. You can use the TPS Home Access Center at [Tacoma.k12.wa.us](http://Tacoma.k12.wa.us) and contact your high-school counselor for help.
- Connect** your student to the college and career support staff at their high school. Visit your student's career center for guidance on college and career planning.
- Make Sure Your Student Attends School Daily.** Consistent school attendance is critical for high school graduation and college and career opportunities.
- Explore** college and career options with your student both online and in-person by visiting local college campuses. Tacoma has many two- and four-year options to choose from. Visit [Plan4College.ME](http://Plan4College.ME) to learn more about your options.

## College and Career Guidance Specialists

Your high school's College and Career Guidance Specialists can answer additional questions, and many schools also have very knowledgeable college support staff. Don't hesitate to seek help. Employers and colleges highly value "self-advocacy" or your ability to speak up for yourself.

Here is their contact information:

<b>FOSS, OAKLAND, WILLIE STEWART ACADEMY</b> ]		Juanita Cantrell-Jeffreys..... 253.571.7358 ..... jjeffre@tacoma.k12.wa.us
<b>IDEA</b> ]		Kainoa Higgins, Co-Director... 253.571.5600 .... khiggin@tacoma.k12.wa.us
<b>LINCOLN</b> ]		Jamila Jones ..... 253.571.6659 ..... jjones5@tacoma.k12.wa.us
<b>MOUNT TAHOMA</b> ]		Glen Burden ..... 253.571.3823 ..... gburden@tacoma.k12.wa.us
<b>SAMI</b> ]		Liz Minks, Co-Director ..... 253.571.2300 .... lminks@tacoma.k12.wa.us
<b>STADIUM</b> ]		Brandi Junderson ..... 253.571.3153 ..... bjunder@tacoma.k12.wa.us
<b>SOTA</b> ]		Bliss King, Co-Director ..... 253.571.7900 ..... bking2@tacoma.k12.wa.us
<b>WILSON</b> ]		Nancy Sprick ..... 253.571.6148 ..... nsprick@tacoma.k12.wa.us

Follow  @GraduateTacoma and visit [Plan4College.ME](https://www.plan4college.me)

for more events and resources for college and career support, or contact [info@GraduateTacoma.org](mailto:info@GraduateTacoma.org) or 253-272-1600.

**Your future starts here!**  
**The Graduate Tacoma Community is here to help!**

CLASS OF 2023:



# Your Future Starts Here!

This Graduation Folder Belongs to \_\_\_\_\_

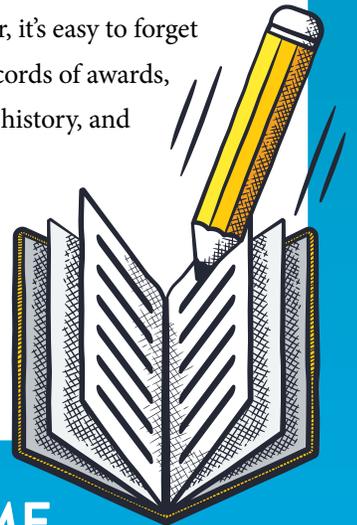


## Imagine Your Future!

**Welcome to high school!** Graduation, college, and career may seem very far away, but now is actually the best time to make sure that you are on track to graduate with the **class of 2023!** Freshman year is an important building block in your high school career.

Start off strong by setting goals, earning good grades, attending school daily, getting involved in your school and community, and connecting to resources and mentors. Here's a short checklist to get your started. **Your future begins now!**

- Visit your high school's college and career center.** Meet your college and career guidance specialist, and start exploring your future interests by completing your Career Matchmaker assessment at *CareerCruising.com*.
- Use this folder to start keeping a record of your best works.** By the time you are a senior, it's easy to forget some of the things you did as a freshman, so begin building your resume now. Include records of awards, certifications, scholarships, recommendation letters, favorite papers, volunteer and work history, and extracurricular activities such as sports and clubs.
- Set SMART goals for success.** SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. Write them down and post them where you can see them daily; share them with a friend, family member, or mentor so that they can support you. Use the list inside this folder as a guide and add your own goals.



Follow  @GraduateTacoma and visit [Plan4College.ME](http://Plan4College.ME)

## 5 SMART Goals to Complete by June:

**S**PECIFIC

**M**EASURABLE

**A**TTAINABLE

**R**EALISTIC

**T**IMELY

- 1. **JOIN** at least one club or extracurricular activity in your school or community.
- 2. **VISIT** the career center and meet your college and career guidance specialist.
- 3. **INTRODUCE** yourself to your school counselor.
- 4. **VOLUNTEER** at least ten hours of service with an organization of interest.
- 5. **ATTEND** at least one college or career fair, or visit one of the many two- and four-year colleges, universities, and technical schools in the Puget Sound region.

# SMART!

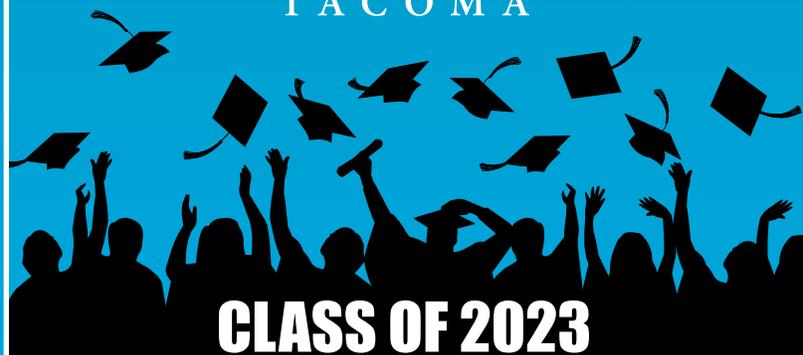
## Graduation Folder

### Keep Your Best Works Together:

- AWARDS/CERTIFICATIONS
- SCHOLARSHIPS
- RECOMMENDATION LETTERS
- FAVORITE PAPERS
- VOLUNTEER/WORK HISTORY
- EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

I will

  
**GRADUATE!**  
TACOMA



# Your Future Starts Here!

## Start Off Strong! Grades Matter!

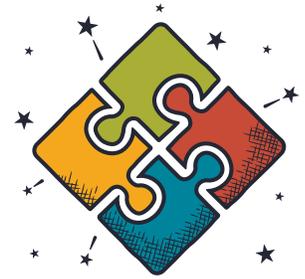


Starting with your freshman year courses, you will begin building your **High School Transcript**, the four-year record of your classes and grades. Your transcript will show your cumulative **GPA (Grade Point Average) measured on a 4.0 scale**. One of the most important steps you can take for your future is to maintain a strong GPA for all four years in challenging, college- and career-ready courses.

- Meet with your high school counselor** and make sure you are taking all of the courses that will meet graduation requirements. Get to know your counselor so that he or she can advocate for you and help you plan for your future.
- Stay focused and organized in your classes.** Use a daily planner, calendar, or electronic organizer to plan ahead and keep track of assignments and homework. You can earn higher grades by turning in all completed assignments on time.
- Check your grades online and keep your parents or guardians informed about your academic goals.** They can support you by checking online grades at the Tacoma Public Schools Home Access Center ([Tacoma.k12.wa.us](http://Tacoma.k12.wa.us)) and attending your high school's fall open house and parent-student conferences.

**TIP!** Did you know that taking focused notes and reviewing them regularly can help you boost your memory and improve test scores? Follow the 10/24/7+ Rule and review your notes 10 minutes later, 24 hours later, 7 days later, and regularly after that. See [AVID.org/resources](http://AVID.org/resources) for more study tips.

## Get Involved and Connected!



Get involved in something you really care about, or that you want to learn more about. Don't be afraid to try something new! Participation in clubs, sports, and extracurricular activities is an important part of building skills, exploring careers, finding friends, and developing your resume. It also connects you to mentors who can support you throughout your high school experience. Reach out and get connected!

- Find a mentor who can support you.** Talk to your counselor about the programs in your building, such as TRIO, the HERO Program, AVID, and Achievers. All of these programs provide academic and college support for eligible students.
- Take advantage of available resources at your high school** for tutoring, homework help, college mentoring, internships, and library hours. See your counselor for help.
- Start building relationships with teachers, coaches, advisors, and employers.** These mentors will help guide you and will be able to write strong recommendation letters for you in the future for college, scholarship, apprenticeship, and job applications.

**TIP!** Did you know that the College Bound Scholarship provides tuition for two- and four-year colleges and technical schools? Are you a College Bound Scholar? See your counselor to find out!



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT.....

 [@GraduateTacoma](https://www.instagram.com/GraduateTacoma)  
[Plan4College.ME](http://Plan4College.ME)



Every Child. One Community. Cradle to Career.

