COLLEGE PLANNING
for 9th graders

1. **Create a four-year high school plan.**
   - Make sure you know which high school courses are required by colleges.
   - Work to your potential. These grades count in your high school GPA!
   - Get to know the levels of courses offered at ESD, and identify the courses in which you may want to enroll at the advanced or honors level.

2. **Start thinking about life after high school.**
   - What types of jobs might interest you?
   - Identify some interests at school and outside of school.
   - Take notice of careers you come into contact with. Shadow a parent or family friend at work.

3. **Participate in extracurricular activities.**
   - Explore your interest in a sport, school club, music, art, or drama group, or volunteer activity.
   - Remember that colleges would rather see real involvement and **leadership** in a *few* activities instead of light participation in *many*.
   - If you're interested in playing sports in college, research the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) eligibility requirements. The NCAA requires completion of certain core courses. Learn more about the requirements at www.ncaa.org.

4. **Explore summer opportunities.**
   - Look for a job, internship, or volunteer position that will help you learn about a field of interest.
   - If on vacation near a college campus, drive or walk through just to get the feel of the campus (ex: large vs. small, public vs. private).

5. **Test preparation**
   - The most important thing you can do this year to increase standardized test scores is to increase your vocabulary by reading.
   - Consider taking SAT Subject Tests for any subject that you studied freshman year at the honors level, right after your final exam – while the knowledge is still fresh!

6. **Start exploring Naviance.**
   - Go to: www.connection.naviance.com/esdallas
   - Your username is your ESD email address. *(If you don't remember your password, just click,* "forgot your password?" *Enter your ESD email address on the next screen.)*
   - Start a list of **"colleges I'm thinking about"** to receive important emails about fall college rep visits to ESD.
   - Explore *scattergrams* and *college compare* functions to see how ESD students stack up.