For many freshmen, there are many things that can be expected for when they start high school, but the results from the first few weeks are often quite different than the initial perception that are displayed in the media. One incoming freshman, Andrea Martinez, found freshman year to be very intimidating at first. “My first week in high school was very confusing for me. I was scared of a new school and new teachers.”

Lords Garcia-Meza, a counselor at Kennedy, remarked on the common experience each generation of freshmen face when beginning their first year of high school. “It’s nerve-wracking, it’s new, it’s unknown territory for them.” The media is a factor that plays into expectations due to many high school fictions including Mean Girls, High School Musical, The Breakfast Club, and 16 Candles. These are examples of what high schools would typically focus on such as cliques and class superiority. Martinez explains how she thought it would be. “Honestly I thought it was going to be like one of those cheesy movies like High School Musical or Mean Girls.” Anthony Bautista, another freshman, thought high school would be something like the movies as well.

Another high school freshman was Abbigayle Thompson, and she actually didn’t think much of it. “I felt like it was just like any other school,” she remarked. However, her time at Kennedy in these first few weeks have been better than she thought. “At first it was kind of awkward. I didn’t know anyone, but it’s gotten better. I got to meet new people and made more friends.”

When senior Denise Gonzalez came to Kennedy three years ago, she expected a lot of fun things to occur including the football games and being with lots of friends. Now, in retrospect, she looks back and her expectations were met, so she advises freshmen to relax. Needles to say some expectations can be met or not met when first entering high school depending on the person.

The media isn’t the only one affecting many incoming or future freshman opinion on high school. Bautista mentioned that his friends also influenced his opinion. Both were very satisfied about their time here so far, and their expectations were met very well in their separate opinion. Freshmen learned that high school isn’t what they thought it would be based on what the media portrayed it as. They learned to form their own opinions based on real life experiences.

New Kennedy freshmen are looking forward to a great high school experience, and part of that experience is sports. Incoming Kennedy freshman Andres Rodriguez said, “Coming into high school, sports is a big deal; it has always been a big deal in my life, and one sport I am truly looking forward to is football.” He mentioned that football is a big sport in general. Especially in high school because the environment that it builds through the school and within the students is a great one. Kennedy students are looking forward to the upcoming football season, especially after picking up a win in last Friday’s game on 9-14-15. Coming in as a freshman, many new students are looking forward to tryouts in order to represent Kennedy in a good manner on the field or court. Many students don’t go to Kennedy sports games to support Kennedy students. Rodriguez believes that students have to support the school in any manner they can, if Kennedy students don’t, then who will? “These are our students and our team; we need to be there to support them.”

As senior year arrives, students are looking to get a head start on college by taking the necessary requirements to get ready for the future. Senior Saul Ravalcaba, a student heading to college, is preparing himself by joining clubs, volunteering, and working. Ravalcaba faced many obstacles. He has been finding colleges that can provide him financial aid to fund his college education. He plans to attend a university. In the meantime, he has been doing a lot of volunteering at his local hospital and working with his father at a mechanic shop.

With a tight schedule he still manages to make time for his academics and get good grades. Taking AP classes has taken a big part of his academics. He has taken AP classes for junior year. AP classes save expenses, help secure a second major, and skip introductory classes. This can place students like Ravalcaba on a higher level of college classes. This gives a more opened schedule to do a major or minor, and any other classes of their personal interest. Students who actually take a class at a local college will receive high school and college credit. It also gives students an experience of what college will be like. Senior Fatima Soriano admits, “AP classes can get hard, but the hard work pays off, and I don’t regret taking them. It has developed me as a person and prepared me for college.” Soriano has now built up the skills she’ll need for her college years. With the experience she has, it’s possible that Soriano will improve on how to handle challenging issues. She knows now what to expect for college, and it has helped build confidence.

Not only are the SAT and ACT scores important, but high school grades are too. Esther Esperanza states, “I plan on staying on top of things and to not procrastinate. My goal is to pass the AP Exams, take SAT, and get a scholarship.” As a junior in high school, Suarez has already planned to get this head start in college.

College is a very important factor in these students’ lives because it gives them a foundation of how their future and career will be shaped. They have been sacrificing their time with their friends and family in order to be taking steps to get into college. No matter what the situation is, they are still finding a way to get the necessary requirements. They are currently going through these obstacles in order to go to college. Being involved in many extracurricular activities can likely increase their chances of getting into the college they wish to go to.