

We hope that the following information will assist you in helping your child be successful in high school. The following are tips that we have found to be helpful in the growth and development of kids academically, behaviorally, socially and their overall character and responsibility. I hope that this helps you as you are navigating high school with your child. Please understand that we are just trying to give ideas, promote thought, and not dictate how you guide and parent your child. This is just another tool to have in your toolbox as you try to navigate some of the most challenging years as a parent. Know that we have more ideas to offer so feel free to contact a counselor or administrator if you need assistance or just need to talk through a challenge. We are here to help.

Common Ideas:

Attendance: The most important part of high school. Just as the old saying goes, “showing up is half the battle.” Student’s success increases tremendously when they are just present at school.

Accountability: Hold your child accountable for their academic performance and their behavior. If your child’s grades are not appropriate, have a conversation with them and develop a plan on how to ask for help, where to go to get help, and how you can help them. If the behavior of your child is not appropriate, support the consequences (natural or imposed) and even have additional consequences at home (i.e. the phone is their lifeline, Remember you are the parent and you are in control). Having conversations about expectations and discussing challenges gives you the opportunity to demonstrate positive problem solving so your child develops their abilities.

Responsibility: Hold your child responsible for their actions. They need to be prepared for class and remember projects, lunch, etc. on their own without being told. If they forget something, there are consequences or they will figure out a solution. Do not bail them out. You will not be there in a few years and they need to learn how to deal with situations.

Effort: All we can ask as parents and a school is for kids to give their best effort. If you are seeing the effort, we can adjust expectations and supply assistance when needed.

Perseverance: We work to challenge and push our students. Many will struggle at times. It is important that students work through challenges and do not give up. Quitting is the easy thing to do; continuing to try is where the greatest growth and learning takes place. No matter the situation, we need to teach our kids never to give up when it comes to work, education, etc.

Homework: This is a vital part of the learning process. Help them determine an appropriate atmosphere (location) and time to do homework each day. It is important that it is distraction free from the phone. Sometimes music and soft background noise helps some and others it does not. Help your child determine what works for them and have a great plan.

Study: Assessments are a major part of the learning process and most of a student’s grade depends heavily on their performance on assessments. Many of the kids have not had to truly study. You may need to help guide them and show them different tools that they can use. Study with them, it creates a great bond and relationship and learning improves.

Grade Level Helpful Hints

Parenting is hard. We hope that some of this will give you an idea or reminders/hints on how to help your child progress through each grade level of high school.

Freshmen – Guide a good amount. Let them voice their opinion and have discussions about courses to take, levels for the courses, and how they want to approach homework and studying but in the end, they are not where they need to be maturity wise. Guide them and help them make good decisions or help manage those decisions. They still need guidance in decision-making but need to see the process you go through so that they can learn how to make decisions on their own. Talk them through your process. Examples: courses to take, studying, time management, organization, etc. Easy way of saying it: You control most things but they have active participation in the thought process.

Sophomores – A change starts to occur. The process involves more of the child making the decisions with parent oversight. They need to explain what they want to do and how they reach that decision (the logic). The parent listens and approves the choices. The parent provides support and encourages them even if it is not going well. Let them learn from some bad (but safe) choices to enhance learning. Let them fall some but help them figure out how to pick themselves back up and move forward. Conversations occur about what courses to take, study needs, time management, basic social and school decision, etc. Parents should be having conversations about school/social process and making sure, they have a good plan (sometimes you will not like the plan or agree but letting them try it their way is a great way for them to learn). Constant supervision of performance is still necessary so you can intervene with your child and help them determine positive solutions. Very much a partnership. Easy way of saying it: Child guides the decisions with parent support, guidance, and suggestions.

Juniors – It is time to start letting the child be more independent. Discussions still occur about school, organization, courses, social activities and performance, but the child is taking it all over. The child needs to make the plan and present it to you and you listen and ask clarifying questions but let them do it their way even if you know it will not be successful. Struggling or failure in some task maximizes the learning experience. Check up on grades and ask questions more along the line of how is “X” class going when you know that they are struggling. Let them solve it. You have demonstrated it and guided them, now they need to take control and be more responsible for the entire process. Easy way of saying it: The child gets to make the decisions and validate their process with the parent but I am still watching closely.

Seniors – Almost there! They should now be in total control. They should set up their routines, schedule, and manage all of school and social activities (social still needs your supervision and approval). This does not mean you are hands off. You still check up on them but they need to do the work and handle the outcomes whatever they may be. They will be completely on their own the next year and they need to be ready. There are still rules and consequences but work to make, as many be natural as possible by being very clear in your expectations in all areas. Easy way of saying it: The child’s decisions are theirs and they need to own them but I, as the parent, am going to keep them safe.

Child/Parent Helpful Tips

Do not make excuses. Not matter the issue, circumstances, or disability. Everyone has issues and challenges. The successful person learns how to navigate through or around obstacles. Help your child learn how to problem solve and not make excuses of why something cannot happen or why they cannot be successful. Effort makes up for many shortcomings.

Student, be involved: Your child needs to be involved in school activities and/or clubs. They need to attend events and show their support. They need to participate in theme days, pep rally, dances, etc. It is part of the high school experience and it helps them develop the skills needed to navigate life.

Parent, be involved: Be involved in the PTO, a booster club, meet the teacher, events, etc. They are watching. If you are there, they know it and appreciate it. It helps them understand the importance of school, learning and what they are doing. It also gives you an idea of whom they are around and the decisions they are making. Enjoy high school too. It is a lot of fun!

Communication: Have conversations everyday about school. Know what is going on.

Communication II: Have conversations about what they are doing outside of school. Know their friends and their activities. Know the parents of the other kids that they are hanging out with and know that it is safe. Remember, you need to know what is going on so you can make sure they are safe. Look at text messages, social media, “clean” their room thoroughly! Know what is happening to avoid issues or intervene early (especially if it relates to vapes, alcohol, sex, etc.)

Limited English Language Learners: Work to use English, as much as possible, at home. You will learn more yourself and it will set up your child to be more successful. The more that is being practiced, the faster they will learn English. It also helps build a great relationship between you and your child and shows the importance of education.

Help: Seek help, advice, or guidance from those that deal with kids every day or have been through a similar experience before. We can help.

We hope that this helps. Please reach out to a counselor or assistant principal if you need ideas or resources. We are happy to help.

With Cavalier Pride