

Parental Involvement as Students Transition from Middle to High School

Research has shown that student-involvement in after-school activities positively affects a student's attitude toward school. Parental involvement is also an essential component that helps students maximize the likelihood of their success.

Here are some ways to get involved:

- Encourage your child to share his or her feelings. Acknowledge that starting high school can be simultaneously challenging but exciting.
- Stay involved with your child by monitoring his or her homework, school attendance, and peer involvement.
- Ask your child questions. Be interested. Refrain from all attempts to engage your child in conversation immediately upon seeing him or her. Give them a chance to decompress after a day's work.
- The moment you become aware of potential problems that your child may be experiencing find out the best course of action to help your child resolve the problem. Ask your child what might help, talk to a school counselor, and talk to other parents.
- Advocate for your child, especially when your child faces challenges. If you are not sure how to do this, contact your child's school counselor for suggestions.
- Support homework and learning at home. Monitor your child's homework. Ask your child's teachers for ideas on how to do this type of monitoring.
- Find ways to get your child involved in a positive social network through the school's extra-curricular activities, your church's youth groups, and through community youth development programs. If your child does get involved in one of these activities, make sure that you show interest and stay connected.
- Ask your child's school to let you know about the available opportunities for involvement. Find out how you can take an active role doing something at your comfort level.
- If you identify barriers to becoming involved, let Mr. Williams know and see if he can make changes.
- Try hard to attend any parental activities offered by your school. Ask another family member to attend if you cannot be there. If you do not seem to be getting notices about activities, make sure you check the school's website on a regular basis to find out what is going on for parents. You should also confirm that the school has your current phone number and email address so you can receive automated messages.
- Join the 9th Grade Center's parental meetings.

Parental involvement is important to children's academic success. Remember you were your child's first and best teacher, continue to be a role model, and be a partner in their education!

Sources:

Baker, A.J. Parent Involvement for the Middle Level Years: Recommendations for Schools. *Schools in the Middle*, May 2000. Jones, R. Involving Parents is a Whole New Game: Be Sure You Win! *Education Digest*, November 2001. Michigan PTSA, www.michiganpta.org
National PTA, www.pta.org/parentinvolvement
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