High School Transition Tips for Parents

Getting Involved
- Attend orientation programs for incoming freshmen and their families.
- Participate in school tours.
- Become familiar with the student handbook and the school website.
- Discuss with your child who to talk to or where to go to solve problems that crop up in the first few days.
- Meet teachers during back-to-school nights.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences.

Choosing Courses
- Start to talk now with your child about his options for the future. Remind him that college, vocational training, and taking a job after graduation are all viable choices.
- Review the course requirements for high school graduation and sketch out a plan to fulfill the requirements.
- Choose courses that leave the most post-high school options open.
- Encourage your child to use electives to explore his interests and expand his experiences.

Monitoring the IEP
- Before the end of 8th grade, schedule an IEP meeting with middle school and high school representatives. Discuss current accommodations and any special transition support needed.
- Review the IEP with your child and discuss with him how accommodations are working; adjust as necessary.

Supporting Academics
- Evaluate your student’s organizational skills and strategies. Work with your child to set up new systems and support him until habits develop.
- Set up a structured time and place for homework and study.
- Encourage your student to keep on top of his workload by using a planner.
- Become familiar with support services offered at the school, such as tutors or study groups.
- Help your student practice excellent study skills (See: http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?r=878) and test-taking strategies. (See: http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?r=375)

Encouraging Social and Extracurricular Activities
- Encourage your child to join activities which are compatible with his interests and talents.
- Enable your child to join in social activities: “I see there’s a football game Friday. I can drive you and your friends to the game.”
- Encourage your student to choose friends based on compatibility rather than popularity.
- Welcome his friends into your home so you can get to know them.

For more information on this topic, see our related article: “Helping Your Middle-School Child Make the Transition to High School,” available at: http://www.schwablearning.org/articles.asp?r=1108.