

# High School Parent Guidebook

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*“There are two great things that you can give your children:  
one is roots, the other is wings.” Hodding Carter*

## Extracurricular Activities

Studies show that students who are involved in extracurricular activities enjoy school more, and they do better academically. Fortunately, most high schools have a variety of clubs, teams, and organizations that students can join.

All high schools offer some, if not all, of the following: speech and drama programs, athletic teams, clubs, service organizations, and music programs. Encourage your child to get involved in at least two or three school-related activities.

*“We want students to be involved in activities; however, sometimes we see students who are overcommitted. These students are trying to do too much and they’re stressed out. Students need to realize that quality is much more important than quantity.” Kathi Miller, counselor*



## Eligibility Requirements

In addition to state eligibility requirements, many high schools have their own requirements that students must meet before they can play a sport. For example, athletes may be required to maintain a minimum grade point average.

At many high schools, eligibility requirements also apply to students who participate in activities such as cheerleading and student government. If you have questions on eligibility, check your school’s handbook, talk to the athletic director, or see the school counselor.

## Summer School

Going to summer school can be a great way for students to earn credits toward graduation. It’s also a good way for students to lighten their class load during the regular school year.

Students who are short on credits, or who have failed a required course, should go to summer school whenever possible. This will help keep them on track for graduation.

If you think summer school may be appropriate for your child, get information on the dates, costs, and the courses offered. For information and advice, talk to your child’s counselor.

## SUMMARY

# Information Parents Need to Have

- ▶ School calendar
- ▶ Attendance policies
- ▶ Graduation requirements
- ▶ State testing information
- ▶ Academic requirements for each grade level
- ▶ Required and elective courses by grade level
- ▶ Information on the scheduling process
- ▶ School rules / Code of conduct
- ▶ Information on extracurricular activities
- ▶ Eligibility requirements
- ▶ Summer school options
- ▶ How to contact your child's counselor



*If you need information or have questions on any of the above, check your school's website, call the high school office, or contact your child's counselor.*



# The Academic Record

*Parents need to know and understand the information that's included in their child's academic record. Parents also need to understand the following terms: GPA, class rank, four-year plan, and transcript.*

## Grade Point Average (GPA)

A student's grade point average, or GPA, is an indicator of how well that student is performing in school.

A GPA is simply the average of a student's semester (or end of term) grades, starting with the freshman year. Because colleges use GPAs to help them decide who to accept, having a high GPA can be very important for college bound students.

Although there are variations, most high schools use a 4.0 scale in which an A=4, B=3, C=2, and D=1. Students with all As have a 4.0 grade point average. Students who have Bs in half their courses and Cs in the other half have a 2.5 GPA.

Many schools have "weighted grades" for honors, AP (Advanced Placement), and/or IB (International Baccalaureate) courses. If a school has weighted grades, then a grade in a weighted course is worth more than it is in a non-weighted course. For example, an A in an honors course might be worth five points instead of the usual four points. *Regardless of the method used, the higher the grades, the higher the GPA.*

In order to understand how your school figures GPAs, you need to know if your school uses quarter, semester, or end-of-year grades. If your school has weighted grades, you also need to know how these grades are used in determining a student's GPA.

*"I'm trying to bring my grade point average up this year so that I can get into college. But when you're a junior, it's really hard to bring your GPA up. I wish I would have paid more attention to my grades earlier." Jeremy Montgomery, junior*

# Sample Transcript

## TRANSCRIPT OF CREDITS CENTER HIGH SCHOOL

860 S. Bradley St., Dayton, Ohio 45421

Telephone (937)255-5555

Transcript for: John H. Woods Birth Date: 6-17-93  Y  M  F

City: Dayton, Ohio State: Ohio Zip: 45426 Phone: 8-20-07

Parent/Guardian: Mrs. and Mr. Woods Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Status:  Freshman  Sophomore  Junior  Senior  Transfer

Student's three grade point average of 2.457 based on a four point scale

Student's previous school: \_\_\_\_\_ Graduated: 6-3-11

AP/IB courses are indicated by the number of credits earned in parentheses at the end of the course name.

| 9                        | Sem | Sem | Yr | Cr       |
|--------------------------|-----|-----|----|----------|
| English I                | B   | B   | B  | 1.00     |
| Geometry II              | U   | A-  | A  | 1.00     |
| Earth Science            | B+  | A   | A  | 1.00     |
| Spanish I                | A   | B   | A  | 1.00     |
| Keyboarding              | A   | A   | A  | 0.50     |
| Health                   | A   | A   | A  | 0.50     |
| Physical Education       | A   | A   | A  | 0.25     |
| Music                    | A   | A   | A  | 0.50     |
| Spanish I (grades 7 & 8) |     |     |    | 4.00- NC |
| Spanish II (grade 8)     |     |     |    | 3.00- NC |

| 10                     | Sem | Sem | Yr | Cr |
|------------------------|-----|-----|----|----|
| English II             | B   | A   | A  | -  |
| Journalism (Newspaper) | B   | A   | A  | -  |
| World History          | B+  | A   | A  | -  |
| Aggriculture           | A   | A   | A  | -  |
| Biology                | A   | A   | A  | -  |
| Spanish II             | A   | A   | A  | -  |
| Economics              | A   | A   | A  | -  |
| Graphic Arts I         | A   | A   | A  | -  |

| 11                      | Sem | Sem | Yr | Cr   |
|-------------------------|-----|-----|----|------|
| English III             | B   | B   | B  | 1.00 |
| Trigonometry/Algebra II | A   | B   | B  | 1.00 |
| American History        | A   | A   | A  | 1.00 |
| Spanish III             | B   | B   | B  | 1.00 |
| Chemistry               | B+  | C+  | B  | 1.00 |
| Journalism (Yearbook)   | A   | A   | A  | 1.00 |

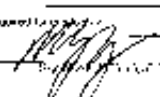
| 12              | Sem | Sem | Yr | Cr |
|-----------------|-----|-----|----|----|
| English IV      | B   | B   | B  | -  |
| Calculus AP     | C   | C   | C  | -  |
| Physics         | B   | B   | B  | -  |
| Spanish IV      | A   | B+  | A  | -  |
| Public Speaking | A   | A   | A  | -  |
| Government      | A   | A   | A  | -  |

### TEST RECORD

| LAST              | FIRST | M.I.       |       |       |       |
|-------------------|-------|------------|-------|-------|-------|
| WOODS             | JOHN  | H.         |       |       |       |
| TEST DATE         | GRADE | SAT CR     | SAT M | SAT W | SAT R |
|                   | 11    | 550        | 600   | 600   |       |
| SAT Program       |       | 62         |       |       |       |
| The College Board |       | SAT I (CR) |       |       |       |

| WOODS JOHN H.                     | DATE TESTED | TEST CENTER | SECTION  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
|                                   |             |             |          |
| <b>ACT Assessment*</b>            |             |             |          |
| ENGLISH                           | SCIENCE     | READING     | WRITING  |
| 15                                | 23          | 23          | 23       |
| SCORES                            |             | 35          | 34       |
| PERCENTILE (IN-STATE/NAT'L/INT'L) |             | 59          |          |
|                                   |             | <b>ACT</b>  | NATIONAL |

Grade 9-12: 1.00-1.00, 1.00-1.00, 1.00-1.00, 1.00-1.00  
 AP/IB courses are indicated by the number of credits earned in parentheses at the end of the course name.  
 \*AP/IB courses are indicated by the number of credits earned in parentheses at the end of the course name.  
 \*\*AP/IB courses are indicated by the number of credits earned in parentheses at the end of the course name.

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Credits earned: \_\_\_\_\_  


*When a student becomes a freshman, everything starts to "count."  
 All freshman courses, grades, and credits will be on the student's transcript, and freshman grades will be used to determine the student's GPA.*



# Help Your Child Succeed

*High school students need their parents to be interested and involved in their academic progress. This section will go over several things that you can do to help your child succeed in school.*

## **Provide a good place to study**

Students need a regular place to study that's quiet, well-lit, and comfortable. It should have a surface for writing and be equipped with paper, pencils, pens, calculator, dictionary, etc.

## **Help your child set academic goals**

At the beginning of each grading period, help your child determine what grade he/she should be able to earn in each course. Setting realistic goals will let your child know what your expectations are. Goals also give your child something positive to work towards.

## **Use rewards and consequences**

Being offered a reward for a specific achievement can be very motivating for some students. Try using a reward when you want to encourage a change in attendance, effort, or behavior. Eventually, doing well will be its own reward.

As for consequences, students need to understand that in school, and in life, there are consequences for poor performance and/or bad behavior. Consequences are most effective when they are reasonable and logical. For example, a reasonable and logical consequence for routinely being late to school might be a revised nighttime schedule (e.g., no TV, computer, or phone calls after 9:30).

For most students, a parent's approval is still very important. Make it a point to recognize extra effort and to acknowledge each academic success, even if it's just a good grade on a quiz.

## Attend all parent programs

Most high schools have an orientation or open house sometime during the year. These programs give parents the opportunity to see the school, meet their children's teachers, and learn something about the courses their children are taking.



When you attend an orientation, open house, or parent meeting, you learn valuable information about your child's school. You also show your child that education is important, and that you are interested in his/her academic progress.

**Attendance is the  
number one school  
success factor!**

## Insist on daily attendance

When students miss school, they miss lectures, notes, class discussions, assignments, quizzes, and tests. It doesn't matter how conscientious students are about making up their work, they can never make up all of what they miss, even if they're absent for only a day or two.

Parents who allow their children to miss school on days when they aren't ill send a message that school isn't really that important. If your child doesn't want to go to school, or if you're seeing a pattern of excuses to miss school, talk to your child or to your child's counselor.

## See all midterm reports and report cards

In addition to report cards, many high schools also provide students with progress reports, interim reports, or midterm grades. Expect to see a midterm report halfway through the term, and expect to see a report card within 7-10 days after the grading period ends.

If you don't see a midterm report or report card, call the school immediately and ask for a copy. *Do not just assume that someone will call you if there's a problem.*

Many schools today put student grades online. This makes it easy for parents to monitor their child's academic progress. If your child's grades are available online, check them regularly.

## Help with time management

Most high school students have a significant amount of homework. Many also have extracurricular activities, part-time jobs, and responsibilities at home. In order for high school students to keep up with their schoolwork, activities, and other responsibilities, they need to develop good time-management skills.

Talk to your child about the importance of having good time management skills, and encourage your child to use any “free time” during the school day to start on homework. Also encourage your child to get in the habit of creating a daily study plan. This study plan will, of course, vary from day to day depending on the time available and the amount of homework that needs to be done.

## Deal effectively with homework

High school students must be responsible for keeping track of their assignments, completing their assignments accurately, and turning them in on time. Of course, not all students take this responsibility as seriously as they should.



When students routinely don't do their homework, parents often become frustrated and upset. Many students, unfortunately, see any parental concern or questioning as nagging. While parents don't want to argue about homework, most parents don't feel that they can just stand by and do nothing. In these situations, it is possible for parents to unintentionally turn the completion of homework into *their* problem.

If your child is not doing his/her homework, you first need to talk to your child to make sure that the homework isn't too difficult, or that there isn't some other problem with the class. You then need to come up with a plan in which the completion of homework becomes your child's responsibility, and if it's not completed, your child's problem.

On the following page is an example of how one parent made the completion of homework the student's responsibility.

*Jenna is a high school freshman who received a low mid-term grade in her English class. Her father contacted her teacher and found out that Jenna hadn't turned in several of her homework assignments.*

*Instead of getting angry, Jenna's father calmly explained to his daughter that she would be expected to turn in all future homework assignments. He then told her what the consequences would be if she missed another assignment.*

*Jenna's father explained that he would check back with her English teacher in two weeks. If he got a good report, he would check with her teacher again in another four weeks. If he found out that Jenna had missed one or more assignments, then she would have to face the consequences they discussed, and another two week period would begin.*

In this scenario, the responsibility for doing homework has been given to the student, where it belongs. Of course, for this approach to work, the father must follow through with contacting the teacher and, if necessary, impose the consequences (restrictions on watching TV, phone calls, social activities, etc.).

*Students and situations are different, and parents must find their own way to deal with the issue of homework. Parents must, however, make homework their child's responsibility.*

## **Listen**

Talk to your child about what's happening in school and be a good listener. Pay attention not only to the words your child uses, but also to your child's body language, attitude, and mood.

Parents who have a difficult time talking with their teenager often find that it's easier to talk when they're doing something they both enjoy. Make time for one-on-one activities like cooking, shopping, taking a walk, working on a car, or watching a game. These are great ways to spend quality time with your child, and they provide excellent opportunities for conversation.

