

The image features a large, stylized number '10' in the background. The '1' is composed of a light green vertical bar on the left and a blue vertical bar on the right. The '0' is a large green circle. A horizontal bar with a yellow left half and a red right half crosses the middle of the '10'. The text '10th Grade' is centered on this bar. A large, light gray watermark with the word 'DRAFT' is oriented diagonally across the entire image.

**10th Grade**

**Student Guidebook**



Dear 10th Graders,

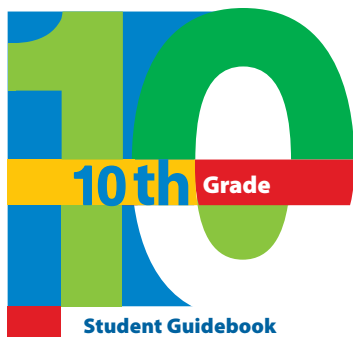
Congratulations! You finished your first year. 10th grade is now about putting the lessons you learned in the 9th grade into action—and working to become the kind of student and person you want to be.

This year, continue to do the things you did well in the 9th grade, and improve on the things you may have struggled with. Ask for help when you need it, and know that as your classes get harder, you will need to work harder.

If you use this year to build on your freshman year successes, and you give your best effort every day, you're sure to have a successful year!

Seth Rockman





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# learn from last year's mistakes

**Hopefully you made some mistakes in the 9th grade. Yes, you read that right!**

**The mistakes you made last year can help you grow—but only if you take the time to stop, think, and learn from them.**

Maybe you didn't study as much as you should have and your grades weren't so great. Maybe you made friends with some kids who didn't care that much about school, and perhaps even got into some trouble. Maybe you spent way too much time on your phone and not enough time with your books, or doing things with your family and friends. Whatever your mistakes were, it's important that you learn from them.

**10th grade is about building on the successes you had in the 9th grade, and fixing the mistakes you made.**

If you don't fix those mistakes, you run the risk of having a year that isn't as good as it could be. But if you do reflect on last year and commit to making the best choices possible, you'll be on track to have an awesome year!





# step it up

What is the one thing that differentiates a good student from a great student? A good worker from a great worker?

## Work Ethic!

**Having a strong work ethic makes all the difference—and now is the time for you to develop and improve *your* work ethic.**

### Having a good work ethic means that...

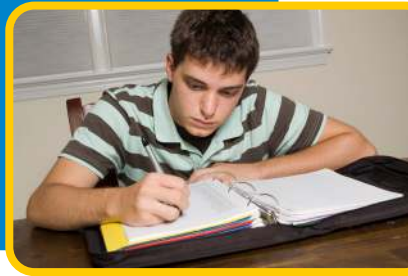
- ▶ you get the job done and you do it well, no matter how boring or challenging it is.
- ▶ you don't make excuses, and you don't blame other people or the circumstances for your lack of success.
- ▶ whether it's a school assignment, chore at home, or task you need to complete at a job, you do what needs to be done to the best of your ability—and you work at it until it's completed.
- ▶ you take pride in your work.

**And the rewards for a strong work ethic?**  
**The respect of others. Greater opportunities.**  
**Personal pride. Better grades.**

*Decide now that this is the year you're going to work on being the kind of student teachers and colleges want, and the kind of person that others can count on to do their best.*



# up your skills



High school is about being with friends, getting involved in activities, and growing as a person. But first and foremost, high school is about succeeding in your classes and getting a good education.

## To succeed in your classes, work on the following:

- ▶ **Organization** – keeping your life and your stuff organized  
*Use a planner to keep track of assignments. Create To Do lists.*
- ▶ **Time Management** – using your time wisely  
*Use extra time in class to start on homework. Have routines.*
- ▶ **Homework** – doing all of your homework, and doing it well  
*Make homework a part of your daily routine.*
- ▶ **Class Participation** – asking and answering questions in class  
*Raise your hand often, and participate in discussions.*
- ▶ **Taking Notes** – writing down the information you need to know  
*Listen carefully. Write down key points. Review your notes nightly.*
- ▶ **Reading to Learn** – being able to remember what you read  
*Read as slowly as you need to in order to understand what you read.*
- ▶ **Preparing for Tests** – knowing how to study effectively for tests  
*Start early. Create flash cards. Study your notes and handouts.*
- ▶ **Taking Tests** – using effective test-taking strategies  
*Stay calm. Make a plan. Use all of the time you're given.*



***You don't need to be a genius to do well in school, but you do need to have good academic skills. And the more difficult your classes are, the more important these skills become.***

# think about how you are doing



Now that you have a year of high school under your belt, this is a good time to think about how you're doing, and which of your skills needs improving. **Put a check mark in the column that best describes how you think you are doing in each area.**

|                     | VERY GOOD                | GOOD                     | NEEDS IMPROVEMENT        |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Organization        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Time Management     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Attendance          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Homework            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Class Participation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Taking Notes        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Reading to Learn    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Preparing for Tests | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Taking Tests        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Circle the two areas you'd most like to improve.

What can you do to improve in each of these areas?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*If you need help improving any of your academic skills, talk to a teacher or go see your counselor. Don't wait—ask for help.  
As your academic skills improve, so will your grades!*

# make a **high** **school plan**



## Choosing courses that are right for you is the first step to academic success.

When you graduate, you don't want to look back and realize that you didn't take the courses you needed, or would like to have taken. To ensure this doesn't happen, make a High School Plan.

*Write down the courses you're taking this year, and the classes you plan to take during your junior and senior years. As you think about what courses you want to take, consider graduation requirements, college recommended courses, your career goals, and your interests.*

10th Grade Classes

11th Grade Classes

12th Grade Classes

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*If you have questions about the courses you're taking or plan to take, see your counselor.*



# get more involved



Now that you're getting the hang of high school, consider getting more involved in school activities. Whether it's a sports team, homecoming committee, club, or having a part in the school play, extracurricular activities provide tons of opportunities to have fun, make friends, and become a more interesting person.

## Getting involved in school activities gives you the opportunity to:

- ▶ spend time with friends and meet new people.
- ▶ expand your horizons and try something new.
- ▶ develop your skills, talents, and interests.
- ▶ do something meaningful with your free time.
- ▶ have activities to put on college and job applications.
- ▶ have lots of fun!

*Students who are involved in school activities tend to do better academically and they enjoy school more. So, take a chance, find something interesting, and give it a try.*

*Look for ways to be an active member of your school community. Go to the games, dances, music and theatre performances. Help out a teacher. Introduce yourself to a new student.*

*High school is like anything else. The more you put into it, the more you get out of it.*

# be smart with technology

**You probably spend a fair amount of time using technology, whether it's doing research for a paper, texting a friend, or scrolling through social media.**

And you've probably heard lots of warnings about the dangers of technology use—from cyberbullying to internet addiction. The truth is, technology is neither good nor bad, safe or unsafe. It's what you make it.

## **So, be smart with technology.**

- ▶ Don't send or post anything you wouldn't want your family, teachers, college admissions officers, or future employers to see. You can never get it back.
- ▶ Limit the time you spend on your phone and computer so you have time for things like homework, family, and hanging out with friends.
- ▶ To get a good night's sleep, turn off all devices an hour before you go to bed, and put your phone in another room to charge.
- ▶ Ask yourself if what you're doing online is making you feel better, or worse. Less stressed, or more. Closer to others, or more isolated. If what you're doing isn't making your life better, maybe it's time to make some changes.



***Enjoy your technology, use it responsibly, think before you send, and as often as you can—look up from your screen. The greatest moments of your life can only be experienced if you're in the world, with others, appreciating all of the challenges and joys that life can bring.***

# make good choices



**In high school, you have to make a lot of choices, and not all of them are about which classes to take or what club to join.**

You and your friends are probably close to getting your driver's license (and having more freedom away from adults). Of course, with additional freedom and independence come additional responsibilities.

**Even if you've heard these warnings before (and probably will hear them again), they bear repeating:**

- ▶ Say no to tobacco, drugs, alcohol, and e-cigarettes. Use a parent as an excuse if you need to. (*"No thanks, my mom would ground me forever if..."*)
- ▶ Never get in a car with someone who's been drinking or using drugs. If your only ride is under the influence, call someone to pick you up—a friend, sibling, or parent. They will be grateful you made the decision to keep yourself safe.
- ▶ Remember, making good choices doesn't make you "uncool," and it won't make others not want to be your friend. And if it does, those people were the wrong friends anyway.

*Before you act, think about who you are and who you want to be—and take a moment to ask yourself, "Am I being true to myself?"*

# keep family ties strong



You may now feel like you can handle more on your own, and that you don't need your family as much. But as you grow, change, and experience new things, remember that **there is nothing more important and valuable than the support of your family.**

Whether you were born into your family, adopted into it, or raised by people other than your biological parents, your primary support system is your "family." And it's important that you maintain as healthy a connection with them as possible, even as you start to do more for yourself.

## Here are some tips for developing and maintaining strong connections with your family.

- 1. Unplug.** Talk to each other, do things together, and just spend time hanging out—without your phone in your hand.
- 2. Introduce your friends.** When you leave home, tell your family who you're going to be with and where you are going.
- 3. Talk about small stuff.** Talk to your family about what's going on at school, show interest in what they are doing, and every now and then, ask for their advice.
- 4. When you do disagree...**listen and try to understand their perspective. Know that their actions stem from their concern and love for you.

*Friends and classmates come and go,  
but family relationships last a lifetime.*

# take **care** of your **mind & body**

**As the demands in your life increase, it's important to take care of yourself. That means staying healthy and learning how to deal with stress.**

You're likely well aware of the importance of getting plenty of sleep, eating healthy food, and exercising. But as you gain more freedom over your choices (your diet, how you spend your time, etc.), it's important that you make your health and wellness a priority.

- ▶ Go to bed early enough to ensure that you get at least eight hours of sleep every night. This is very important.
- ▶ Carry healthy snacks with you (fruit, nuts, veggies) to help avoid eating vending machine snacks.
- ▶ Do something physical every day, even if it's just taking a walk



## **And when you're feeling stressed out...**

- ▶ Spend time with your family and friends and talk to them about what's going on. Talking helps you sort things out.
- ▶ Try to figure out what you can do to make your life less stressful. Think about what you can change or put off until later.
- ▶ Do things that help you feel calm and relaxed (e.g., listen to music, take a walk, read a book, take a hot bath).

***Now is the time to develop habits that will lead to a healthy body and a clear, alert mind. This is your body, and you want to treat it well.***

# build healthy relationships

Having positive connections with others is extremely important to your health and well-being. Whether it's family, friends, or romantic relationships, make sure the connections in your life are healthy and positive.

## In a healthy relationship, you:

- ▶ respect and trust one another.
- ▶ celebrate each other's successes and joys.
- ▶ feel safe sharing personal or private information.
- ▶ are available when the other needs help.



## Unfortunately, not all relationships are healthy.

Consider ending a relationship that has any of the following characteristics:

- ▶ you feel pressure to change or to do things you don't want to do.
- ▶ you question whether or not the other person has your best interests at heart.
- ▶ you don't trust the other person.
- ▶ you disagree and argue a lot.

*If you're unsure whether or not a relationship is good for you, ask yourself if this person brings more drama or peace to your life, or if you feel better or worse about yourself when you're with this person.*

*Surround yourself with people who respect and support you!*

# think about your future



Whether you're planning to go to college or you're still not sure what you want to do after you graduate, now is the time to think about your future.

There will be specific things you'll need to do during your junior and senior years to prepare for life after high school. But as a sophomore, you have time to think about and explore your career and education options.

## Take advantage of this time!

- ▶ Think about your skills, interests, and values in terms of what career fields and/or college majors you'd like to consider.
- ▶ If you know you want to go to college, start thinking about what kind of college would be a good fit for you. Do you want to go to a two-year or four-year college? Are location, size, or cost important to you?
- ▶ If you're not sure what you want to do after high school, it's even more important to start considering your options. If not college, what? Career or trade school? The military? An apprenticeship? A full-time job?

*Talk to your family, teachers, and school counselor about your career and education choices, and do some online research. But don't close any doors yet. This is the year to explore all of your options!*

***So that you can have a future full of possibilities, work hard this year and try to get the most out of your classes. You want to be able to start your junior year with confidence—and finish high school strong.***

# 10

## 10th Grade

### Student Guidebook

**This booklet is filled with helpful tips and expert advice on how you can have a sensational sophomore year!**



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