



Helpful Hints for Transitioning to High School

From Veteran Winchester High School Parents

The beginning of high school is both exciting and a little stressful for students and parents alike. We have compiled some helpful hints from veteran WHS parents to help ease your transition. These are just some ideas to consider, which may or may not apply to your particularly student. It is also a work in progress (like our kids!) and we would love to hear from you, as your student continues through high school, if you have any tips to share. (parenttoparentwinchester.org)

Regarding school....

If your child has had difficulty with transitioning in the past.....expect difficulty for the first few weeks of high school....A few days before school starts, walk around the school with your student to get acclimated...if he/she doesn't want to go with parent, ask older friend.

Make an appointment for you and your child to meet with his/her guidance counselor every year. It is good to build a relationship with your guidance counselor, especially since the counselors need to make a recommendation to colleges for your student senior year.

Keep in touch with your child's teacher through e-mail if there are any concerns at all. Most teachers seem to appreciate that there's someone at home paying attention. If your student is having trouble with a subject or subjects, encourage him/her to contact the teacher directly. If they are reluctant to do so, you should contact them. Most teachers are there before or after school and most welcome the opportunity to help your child.

The Guidance Dept. has a list of tutors available. There are also upper-class honors students available to offer assistance.

Be sure to get on the high school's e-mail list and read the monthly PFA newsletter thoroughly. Also get on the list to receive daily announcements by e-mail. Kids can't always hear the announcements and it keeps you in the loop as well.



Encourage your child to get involved, for example, Connect & Commit meets every Tuesday night; this club is open to everyone and kids are welcome to participate on drop-in basis. There are some sports that are open to all and don't cut.

Encourage your child to attend school functions, sporting events and develop school spirit. Sometimes this takes time, but it is good to always encourage.

The more involved you are as a parent, the more involved your student will tend to be.

It is best to keep the kids busy after school with sports, volunteering, working out, work (but not a job that cuts into study or participating in school functions). Feeling a part of the school is a big part of being happy at school.

If your kids are playing a sport, stay current with physicals and have a copy on hand to submit.

Sports schedules are available on the school website. Help your child plan ahead for studying. Sometimes they can be gone for 4-5 hours after school when they travel to other towns.

Life outside of school....

Kids need more sleep than they think. Be diligent about getting them to bed at a reasonable time on school nights. "We don't allow TV during the week, but my kids tape their favorite shows and save them up for the weekend."

Lots of parents have already been told it's best to keep computers out of their kid's bedrooms. In addition, cell phones should not be kept in their bedroom charging overnight. A lot of conversation and texting happens when you think they're sleeping. Have a central docking area for phone charging.

As the kids get older, it's hard to keep up with new friends. Try to create a space where the kids can chill and hang out together. If you have snacks and drinks available, even better. "We keep simple foods in the house for the kids to throw on the grill."

Balancing academics, athletics, clubs, community service and/or job can be challenging. Pick your battles and maybe ignore the messy room.



You will not be able to predict when your child will decide to experiment with risky behavior. It is best to assume that it will start first thing. I have told my children “I’m going to assume that every time you walk out of the house, you could possibly make a bad decision, so EVERY time you walk in the house, I’ll be paying attention.”

Avoid sleepovers and especially last minute sleepovers. Even in the best circumstances with parents paying attention, the kids get no sleep and won’t start the week off rested and ready to study.

As parents, it is best to stay close to home on weekends and NEVER leave student home without proper supervision for the weekend.

When kids tell you they’re going to someone’s house, make them call you when they get there and talk to the parents. If parents aren’t there, pick the kids up immediately. This of course changes when they get their license and they tell you they’re going to the “99” for food – you really have no way of knowing.... As they get older and can move around more independently, it’s harder to keep track of them. Establish a system of checking in by phone. You can have them call from the home they are supposed to be at and use caller ID to double check.

Many parents feel that letting kids go to someone’s house unsupervised is okay during the daytime. Studies have shown that the most common time for students to participate in risky behavior is between the hours of 3PM-6PM, while parents are still at work.

Try to find the right time to regularly check in with your child about school and classes. Some kids are talkative in the car, some at bedtime, some at the dinner table or out to dinner. The more routine this kind of dialogue becomes, the easier it will be for you child to talk with you about problems.

Believe it or not, Senior Year comes much quicker than you think! You will be amazed at what can happen in four years!!

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