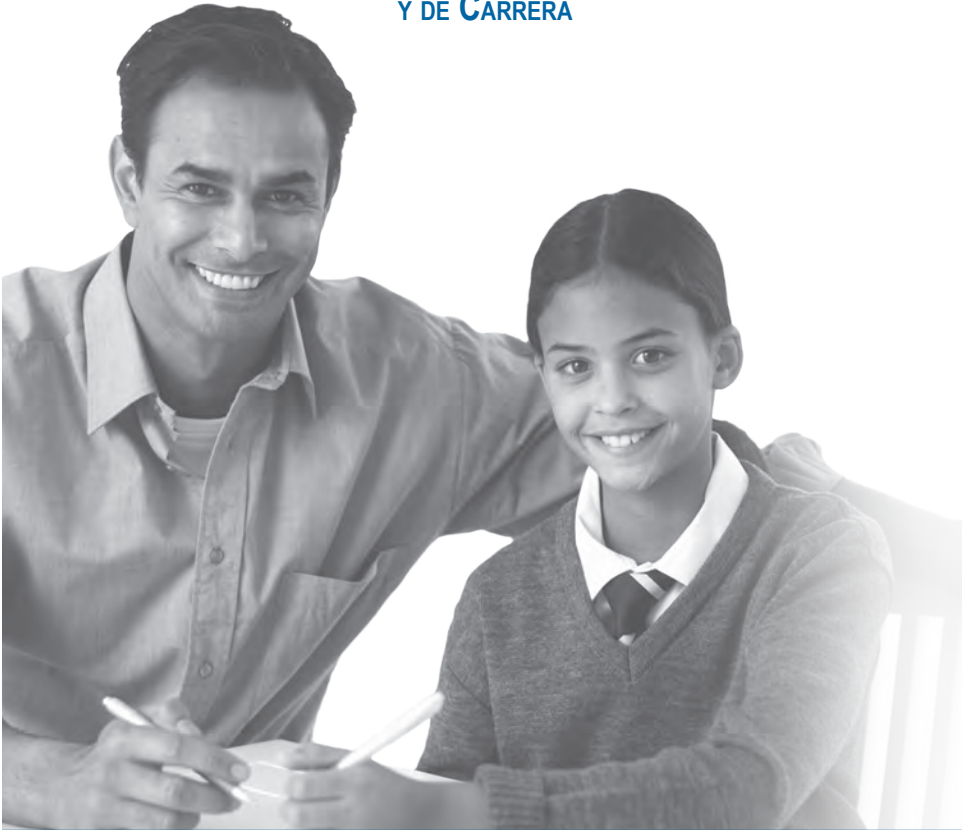


Helping Your Student Transition to High School

Ayudando a Su Estudiante en su Transición a la Preparatoria

LAYING A FOUNDATION FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

SENTANDO LAS BASES PARA LA PREPARACIÓN UNIVERSITARIA
Y DE CARRERA



Helpful Information for Parents of
Eighth- and Ninth-Grade Students

Información Útil para los Padres de
Estudiantes de Octavo y Noveno Grado



About This Guide

This guide was designed by the Alliance for College Readiness, a partnership between Elgin Community College and Community Unit Districts 300, 301, 303, and U-46. Our goal is to improve all students' academic success, increase the college-going rate, and improve students' college and career readiness. We hope this guide will help you begin planning, right now, for your student's success after high school.



How to Prepare Your Eighth-Grade Student for High School and Beyond

ENCOURAGE YOUR STUDENT TO READ.

Reading is a critical skill for all students. As they progress through school, they must read and comprehend increasingly challenging textbooks. How can you help?

- Encourage your student to read a variety of materials including fiction, non-fiction, newspapers, magazines, short stories, and novels.
- Make sure you have books and magazines in your home to read.
- Take your student to the library.
- Let your children see you reading for information and pleasure on a regular basis.

ENCOURAGE YOUR STUDENT TO WORK HARD IN MATH, STAY UP TO DATE WITH HOMEWORK, AND ASK FOR EXTRA ASSISTANCE FROM THE TEACHER WHEN NEEDED.

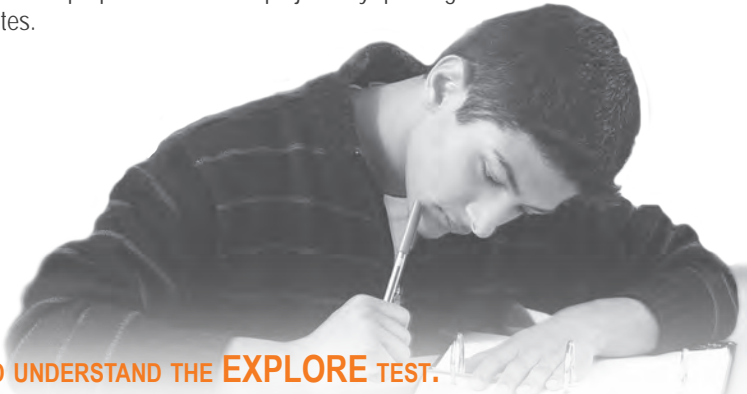
Algebra I gives students the basic building blocks for all future math and many science courses. Even if you don't understand the concepts your student is studying, you can still encourage success.

- Throughout the school year, ask about your student's grades in math.
- Set aside regular time in the evenings for your student to do homework and study for tests.
- Attend parent conferences, and follow up with your student.
- Talk about ways you use mathematics in your own job and at home (i.e. paying bills, managing a bank account, etc.).

HELP YOUR STUDENT DEVELOP THE GOOD HABITS THEY WILL NEED IN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE.

Earning good grades starting as high school freshmen puts students on the track for college and career success. Even if your child plans to start a career after high school, a 2006 report by ACT notes that students entering the workforce need similar academic skills as students entering colleges. (act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/readinessbrief.pdf)

- Model time-management by showing your children how you keep track of important deadlines and due dates.
- Help your student develop schedules and calendars to track their homework, activities, and other responsibilities.
- Help students prepare for test and projects by quizzing them from their notes.



PLAN FOR AND UNDERSTAND THE EXPLORE TEST.

The EXPLORE test is the first of three important tests that your student will take over the next four years. Both the EXPLORE and PLAN tests predict students' success on and introduce the framework of the ACT test, which many colleges use when accepting new students. Taking the EXPLORE test seriously will result in accurate scores, allowing your high school to place your student into the classes that will best prepare her or him for college and career needs.

- Find out the dates for the EXPLORE test.
- Talk to your student about the test and its importance.
- Find out what your student's scores mean.
- Talk to your student about the strengths and weaknesses indicated by his or her scores.

PLAN FOR COLLEGE EXPENSES.

The longer you wait to think about the cost of college, the less time you will have to make important decisions and seek assistance.

- Visit the College Board's website to predict college costs: apps.collegeboard.com/fincalc/college_cost.jsp.
- Don't assume that college is too expensive. Learn everything you can about scholarships and financial aid.
- Remind your student that grades, community service, and participation in school activities can help him or her qualify for scholarships.

How to Prepare Your Ninth-Grade Student for Success in High School and Beyond

MAKE SURE YOUR STUDENT SETS ASIDE TIME EVERY NIGHT FOR HOMEWORK AND STUDYING.

Defining a set “study time” is a critical skill for college success.

- Encourage time in the evenings to do homework and study for tests.
- Show your student how to break down large assignments into manageable pieces that can be tackled over several days.
- Talk about ways you manage your own time and how you choose your priorities.

HELP YOUR STUDENT TO DEVELOP PLANNING SKILLS AND PRACTICE USING A STUDENT PLANNER.

High school and college success requires thinking ahead and using other important self-management skills like remembering to do homework and having all supplies and books for class each day.

- Encourage your student to pack for school the night before.
- Model use of calendars and planners by scheduling family events and responsibilities in a centrally visible location.
- Encourage your student to follow a routine for completing and saving school work. “Everything in its place” helps assignments get to school on time and in one piece.

STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR HIGH SCHOOL, AND WORK AS A PARTNER IN YOUR STUDENT’S SUCCESS.

You’re a team, and great teamwork starts with communication.

- Attend high school parent information meetings and check the school website regularly for valuable updates and information.
- Follow up with your student after parent meetings.
- Regularly ask your student questions about teachers, classes, and activities.



PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR STUDENT'S GRADES.

Each high school grade your student earns is computed into a grade point average (GPA) that potential colleges, trade schools, and employers will ask to see.

- Help your student understand that she or he needs to remember and build on what he or she learns from class to class and year to year.
- Since many teachers maintain course websites and online grade books, make sure you know how to access these sites and check them regularly.
- Follow up with your students when they earn low grades. Do they know what they did wrong? Do they know how to do better next time? Encourage students to seek help from teachers and tutors. Intervene EARLY when grades are low.

SUPPORT YOUR STUDENT'S INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.

Taking part in a play or model United Nations or cross country can help students develop leadership skills and confidence that will help them in college and the workplace.

- Encourage your student to explore her or his interests.
- Suggest activities that can challenge your child.
- Attend student performances and activities, and provide positive encouragement.

CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE YOUR STUDENT TO READ.

The more a student reads, the easier reading will become. In addition to the tips you used in eighth grade, try these new tactics to encourage your student.

- Consider reading the books your child has read. You'll have something to share.
- Ask your student questions about the books they are reading for school. Can she or he tell you the plot? Does anything about the book connect to your own family life?



Encouragement and Help Is All Around

CHECK OUT THESE ONLINE RESOURCES.
(AND SHARE THEM WITH YOUR STUDENT.)



careercruising.com

Career Cruising is an online career guidance website. Schools pay for registration. The site provides information on a number of college and career topics, from the military, to apprenticeships, to colleges. Available in Spanish.

collegeboard.com and act.org/path/parent

These are sites from the major testing services. They have information for parents, including tests, college search, scholarships, and majors. Available in Spanish.

collegeillinois.org

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission website's goal is "Making college accessible and affordable for all Illinois students." Available in Spanish.

aie.org

The Adventures in Education (AIE) website is sponsored by the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation. Its goal is to "help students plan and complete their journey through higher education." The site offers many resources. Available in Spanish.

careercornerstone.org

The Sloan Career Cornerstone is a nonprofit website with information about careers in science, math, engineering, and technology.

pta.org/446.htm

This link takes you to the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) page on student success.

A U.S. Department of Education report suggests that students with involved parents, no matter what their income or background, are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores;
- Pass their classes, earn credits, and be promoted;
- Attend school regularly; and
- Graduate and go on to postsecondary education.

Un informe de U.S. Department of Education sugiere que los estudiantes con los padres que se involucran, sin importar sus ingresos o sus antecedentes, son más propensos a:

- Obtener calificaciones y resultados de exámenes más altos;
- Pasar sus clases, obtener créditos, y ser promovidos;
- Asistir a la escuela con regularidad; y
- Graduarse y continuar con una educación superior.



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