

eBook

Building a Strong Foundation in High School

A guide for 9th and 10th grade families





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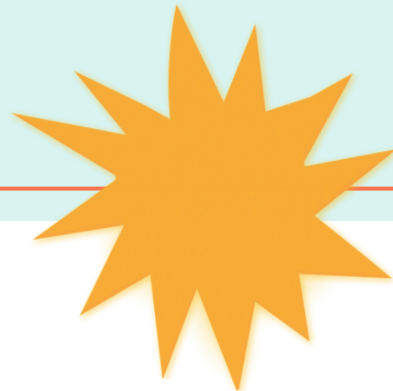




Welcome!

This eBook is designed to provide valuable guidance and support to parents of 9th and 10th graders. This crucial period plays a pivotal role in establishing a solid foundation for success in high school and beyond.

In this eBook, we will explore why these grade levels are so important and delve into various aspects such as making a smooth transition, focusing on grades, getting involved, career exploration, and using the summer months to set yourself up for a successful back to school season.





1

Why 9th and 10 grade (the foundational years) are so important





Top 6 reasons why the first two years of high school are important to your students overall success:

1

Academic Transition

Moving from middle school to high school can be a significant transition academically. The 9th and 10th grades provide an opportunity for students to adjust to the *increased academic rigor and higher expectations of high school coursework*. It's during these years that students begin to delve deeper into core subjects, laying the groundwork for more advanced studies in the later years.

2

Core Skill Development

The 9th and 10th grades often focus on building fundamental skills in subjects like mathematics, English, science, and social studies. These skills, such as *critical thinking, problem-solving, research, writing, and analysis*, serve as building blocks for success in higher-level courses. By mastering these foundational skills early on, students are better equipped to tackle more complex concepts in subsequent years.

3

Exploration of Interests

High school offers a wider range of elective courses and extracurricular activities. The 9th and 10th grades allow students to *explore different subjects, clubs, sports, and hobbies to discover their passions and interests*. This exploration can help them make informed decisions about future academic paths and potential career choices.

4

GPA and Transcript Impact

The grades earned in 9th and 10th grades can *significantly impact a student's overall GPA and academic transcript*. Colleges and universities often consider the cumulative GPA throughout high school when making admissions decisions. By performing well during these early years, students can establish a solid GPA foundation that can open doors to a broader range of opportunities in the future.

5

Personal Growth and Responsibility

High school is a time of personal growth and increasing independence. The 9th and 10th grades offer students a chance to *develop important skills like time management, organization, and self-advocacy*. By honing these skills early on, students can set themselves up for success not only in high school but also in college and beyond.

6

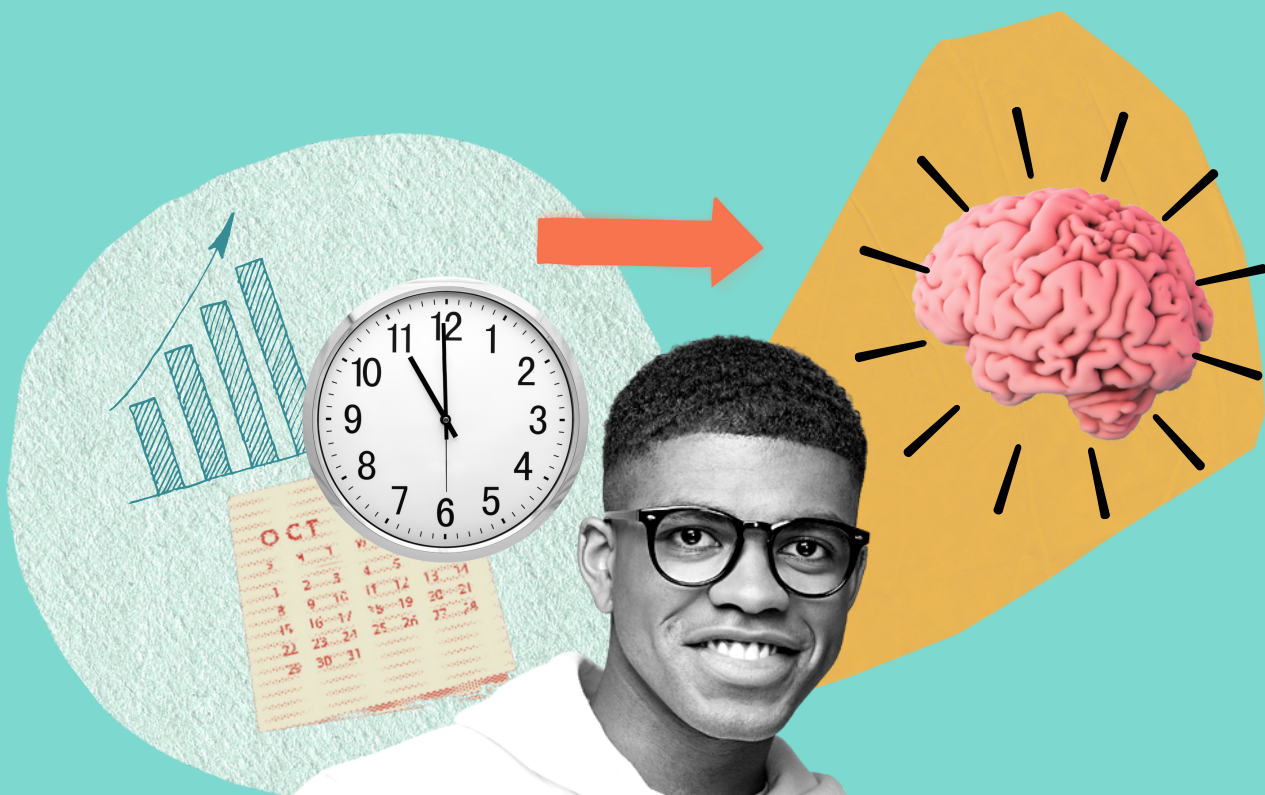
College and Career Preparation

While college may still seem distant in the 9th and 10th grades, it's important to start preparing early. These years provide an opportunity for students to *meet with guidance counselors, explore career options, and begin thinking about their future goals*. Building a strong academic foundation in high school is crucial for college admissions and scholarship opportunities.



2

Making a Smooth Transition





Learning to manage and regulate your thoughts, actions, and emotions

Transitions can be tough, but with the right support, your student can transition to high school with ease. By focusing on mastering several executive function skills, your student can succeed academically in their personal lives, especially during this transition. **Executive function skills** are cognitive abilities that are involved in managing and regulating one's thoughts, actions, and emotions. While the term, Executive Function, may be new to you, the skills will mostly likely be familiar- let's take a look!

Key Executive Function Skills

**Planning and Organization:**

My student can set goals, break tasks into smaller steps, create schedules, and prioritize activities.

**Cognitive Flexibility:**

My student can easily adapt to new situations, shift perspectives, and switch between tasks or strategies when necessary.

**Time Management:**

My student can estimate the time required for tasks, meet deadlines, and balance multiple responsibilities.

**Metacognition:**

My student has an awareness of their own thinking processes, including monitoring and evaluating their learning, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and developing effective learning strategies that work for them.

**Task Initiation:**

My student can start tasks quickly, overcome procrastination, and maintain focus on the task at hand.

**Goal-Directed Persistence:**

My student can stay motivated and persist in the face of challenges or setbacks, maintaining effort and working towards long-term goals.

**Attention and Focus:**

My student can concentrate, sustain attention, and ignore distractions, allowing them to stay engaged during lessons, studying, and completing assignments.

**Emotional Regulation:**

My student can understand and manage their emotions, cope with stress, and regulate emotional reactions to help them solve problems and make decisions.

**Working Memory:**

My student can hold and manipulate information in their mind while performing tasks, which aids in following instructions, problem-solving, and comprehending complex ideas.



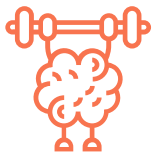
Reflect: Which of the key executive function skills above come naturally to your student? Which do they seem to struggle with? Which skills are you comfortable modeling for your student? Which do you struggle to support your student with?



Laying the groundwork for academic and personal success

Overall, strong executive function skills provide students with the cognitive tools necessary for academic success. They allow students to become more independent, efficient, and strategic learners, leading to improved performance, better study habits, and increased achievement across different subject areas.

As a parent, it's important to remember that these skills can vary among individual students, must be developed over time, and require practice and support. Providing guidance, modeling behaviors, and creating opportunities for students to practice these executive function skills will help them succeed in high school and beyond.

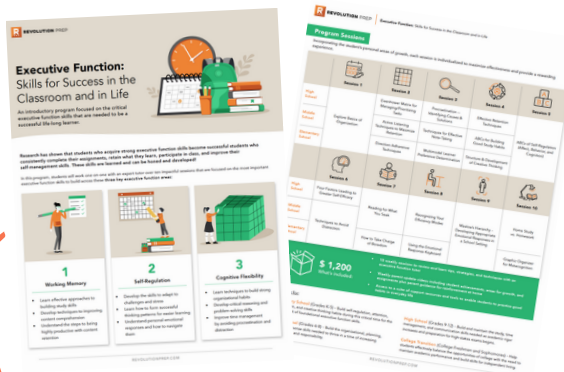


Does your student need support in building strong executive function skills?

Are executive function skills holding your student back from reaching their full potential?

Our Executive Function: Skills for Success in the Classroom and in Life introductory program pairs students with an expert tutor to work one on one through ten impactful sessions that are focused on the most important foundational executive function skills.

By incorporating your student's personal areas of growth, each session is individualized to maximize effectiveness and provide a rewarding experience. Check out the parent testimonial below:



“Our daughter had the privilege of working with Thomas, a Revolution Prep tutor, as part of the EF Program. It was a great experience. Thomas was kind, approachable and extremely knowledgeable. She could relate to him and felt heard. We have seen a marked improvement in her organizational skills and responsibility levels since she started and highly recommend the program to any prospective families.”

-Mother of a Rising Freshman



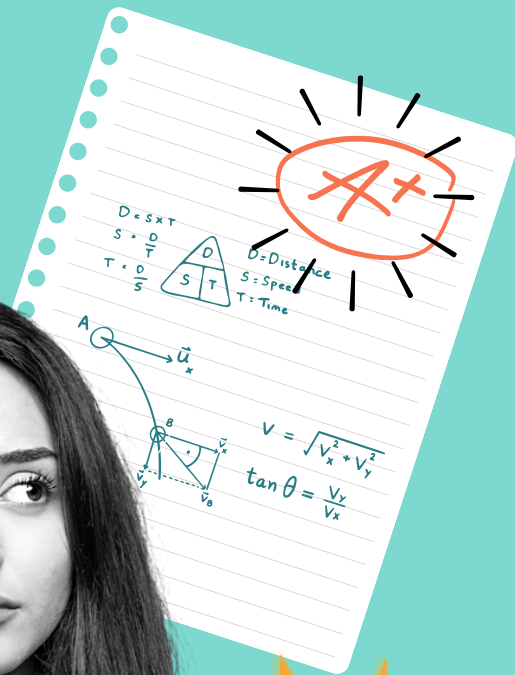
For an in-depth look at our 10-session introductory course, [click here!](#)

To speak with a Revolution Prep team member, visit: <https://www.revolutionprep.com/contact-us/>



3

The Importance of Academics





Grades matter, here's why

No matter how you slice it, grades matter, especially in the first three years of high school! A **grade point average (GPA)** is a numeric representation of a student's academic performance and is something you'll want to keep track of throughout your student's high school career. While high schools often report GPA on a 4.0 scale, where the top grade is an A and equals 4.0, scale scores vary from school to school. Be sure to ask about your school's scale score as they transition to high school!

While grades alone are not the sole determinant of your student's success, the skills that your student acquires through working towards good grades can be applied to future success. Some of these skills may include:

- strong study habits
- time management
- critical thinking
- problem-solving abilities, and more!

Top 4 Reasons why your student should focus on getting good grades

Starting your freshmen and sophomore year out with a strong academic foundation can have additional perks. Here are the top 4 reasons it's important for your student to focus on their grades over the next two years:

- 1 They set the foundation for future success:** the grades you earn during these years contribute to your cumulative GPA, which *colleges and universities often consider during the admissions process*. A strong academic foundation opens the doors to various opportunities, including scholarships, internships, and future educational pathways.
- 2 They go on your high school transcript and college applications:** when you apply to colleges and universities, they'll ask for your high school transcript, which includes your grades from all four years. *Higher grades can enhance your chances of getting accepted into competitive institutions.*
- 3 They may impact your course selection:** many high schools have *prerequisite requirements for advanced courses or specialized programs*. Excelling academically in your first two years of high school can increase your eligibility for these opportunities.
- 4 They can boost confidence levels:** getting good grades can boost your self-confidence and motivation. *As you consistently perform well, you may feel a sense of accomplishment, which can further drive your desire to excel academically.*



Reflect: Did you know that the average student has lost 1/3 of an academic year's worth of learning post-pandemic? Have you noticed your student struggling with specific academic areas post-pandemic? Do you have a plan in place to help them catch up?



Create a homework and study routine

To help set your student up for a successful academic year, work together to create a homework and study routine to stay organized and help them to manage their time effectively. Kick-start your student's homework and study routine by implementing these five tips at the start of the school year:



Establish a study schedule: Allocate specific times for studying each day. Consider your student's energy levels and personal preferences when deciding the length of their study sessions.



Create a dedicated study space: Designate a quiet, well-lit area specifically for studying. Keep it organized with the necessary materials like textbooks, computer, notebooks, pens/pencils, etc.



Prioritize tasks: have your student create a to-do list or use a planner to prioritize tasks. They can rank them based on deadlines, importance, or difficulty level.



Minimize distractions: have them set a timer for the length of their study period. Be sure they silence their phone and other electronic devices so their attention remains on the task at hand.



Use effective study techniques: encourage them to experiment with different study techniques until they find the ones that work for them. Some popular techniques include active reading, summarizing information, creating flashcards, and teaching the material to someone else.



Are you tired of fighting with your student(s) over their homework? Struggling to get them to study? We can help!

For over 20 years, Revolution Prep has supported millions of students in closing academic learning gaps, accelerating learning, and increasing students' confidence, resulting in better grades, higher test scores, and critical skills that transcend the classroom. Learn about our [academic tutoring support here!](#)



4

Getting involved

BOOK CLUB

STEM

DEBATE

SOCCER

VOLUNTEER



Clubs, extracurriculars, and leadership experiences

During the first two years of high school, it's essential for students to find a balance between academics and other aspects of their life, such as extracurricular activities, personal interests, and well-being.

There are numerous extracurricular activities that students can participate in throughout high school, and 9th and 10th grade is a great time to try new things. Extracurricular opportunities can typically be found on your school's website or in communications sent home to parents. These activities can help students explore their interests, develop new skills, and build a well-rounded profile for college applications. Be on the lookout for common extracurricular options for high school students throughout the school year, such as:

- Sports
- Clubs and organizations
- Music and performing arts
- Academic competitions
- Community service
- Community service
- Student publications
- Cultural or language clubs
- Leadership and entrepreneurship
- STEM activities



Reflect: based on your student's academic goals, what do you see as being a "just right" number of extracurricular activities? How will you check in with them to make sure they don't become overwhelmed with everything on their plate?

As a parent, you can support your student by helping them select extracurriculars that align with their interests and goals while also helping them to balance their academic workload. Remember, it's not about the number of activities your student participates in, but rather, the skills, experiences, and relationships they form along the way!

Building your support network

Building a support network is crucial for high school students as it provides emotional, academic, and social support during a period of significant growth and development. However, building a support network takes time and effort. You can support your student to be patient, open-minded, and proactive in seeking connections while encouraging them to:

- 1 Engage in extracurricular activities to meet like-minded peers and build connections based on shared passions.
- 2 Develop relationships with teachers that can lead to mentorship, academic support, and letters of recommendation for future endeavors.
- 3 Volunteer or engage in community service to give back and connect with other volunteers who share similar values.
- 4 Connect with classmates through group projects, study groups and classroom discussion, fostering a sense of belonging and community.
- 5 Be a supportive friend by being a good listener, offering support, and showing empathy to their peers.



5

College & Career Readiness

Identifying strengths and interests is an important first step for high school students as they explore potential career paths and choose relevant courses to support their goals. While your student's high school teachers, counselors, and school community will be supporting them throughout this process, there are ways you can help, too!



Identifying strengths and interests

Together, jot down a list of activities, hobbies, or personal interests your student thoroughly enjoys doing. You can help them add to their list by sharing stories from their childhood where you observed them getting lost for hours in an activity of their choosing- this usually is a sign of a natural talent or passion!

Next, help them assess their skills and talents objectively by evaluating academic subjects they excel in, extracurricular activities they participate in, and any unique talents they possess. Is your student stellar at storytelling and making people laugh? Write that down! Are they able to pick out the unique sounds of different instruments while listening to a song? Add it to the list! By now, you should have a great starting point for your child's unique strengths and interests!

Career exploration

Now, you can begin to research different **career clusters, pathways** and **careers** that align with their interests and strengths with your student. Online resources, career websites, and informational interviews with professionals can provide valuable information about various career options. We highly suggest starting with [Roadtrip Nation!](#)

As a bonus, if you have a family member, friend, or neighbor working in the field that your student is interested in, help to facilitate a connection for your child. Encourage them to set up an interview, coffee chat, job shadow, or internship opportunity to learn more about the daily tasks and responsibilities of the careers they're interested in.

Course selection

Based on the information gathered through self-reflection, skills assessment, career research, and feedback, students should identify high school courses that align with their chosen career paths. They should prioritize courses that develop relevant skills and knowledge in those fields.

Students can seek guidance from school counselors or career advisors who can provide further support in exploring career options, choosing suitable courses, and mapping out long-term educational and career plans.

By following these steps, your student can gain clarity on their strengths, interests, and career aspirations, enabling them to make informed decisions when selecting high school courses that align with their desired career paths. This process empowers students to lay a strong foundation for their future educational and professional endeavors, connecting their high school coursework to their purpose and passions!

- ➔ **Career Cluster:**
A broad grouping of related occupations
(*i.e. Education and Training*)
- ➔ **Career Pathway:**
A more focused route within a specific career cluster.
(*i.e. Teaching/Training Career Path*)
- ➔ **Careers:**
An individual occupation that is held within a specific field or industry.
(*i.e. Elementary Education Teacher*)



[Roadtrip Nation](#): we take road trips to capture empowering stories that give you the confidence and tools to find a career that matters to you.



6

How to use the summer months to plan for an effective fall

For most teenagers, high school years are marked by a variety of pressures from different directions. They often feel overwhelmed by the amount of work they need to accomplish and may experience conflicting emotions about the transition to high school. Parents, on the other hand, may observe a growing distance between themselves and their teenagers as their child begins to assert their independence. You may also notice skill gaps in your child's ability to manage time, prioritize tasks, and regulate emotions effectively.



Summer is a great time to acknowledge and address these feelings to create a conducive environment for success while planning for a strong back-to-school experience!

Practical steps for teenagers and parents to take during the summer:



Prioritize a Healthy Balance:

Encourage a balance of relaxation and stimulation during summer vacation, while emphasizing the importance of taking breaks from social media for true rest.



Read Extensively:

Encourage reading as a habit. Read a variety of books, both fiction and non-fiction, to develop vocabulary, critical thinking skills, and broaden knowledge in different subjects.



Strengthen math and science skills:

Dedicate some time to sharpen math and science skills. Solve math problems, practice science experiments at home, and explore free online resources.



Practice time management skills:

Create a schedule or planner to allocate time for different activities, including study, leisure, and extracurriculars. Give your student various tasks to complete each day and allow them the flexibility to prioritize and order the tasks as they see fit.



Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills:

Solve puzzles, riddles, or participate in escape room challenges with a group of friends to hone these skills.



Stay physically active:

Participate in summer sports, go for regular walks, or join a fitness class, staying active can enhance focus and concentration.

By following these steps, parents can proactively support their child during the summer, ensuring they are well-prepared for the challenges of the 9th and 10th grade years and setting them up for long-term success.



Download the planning workbook based on your student's upcoming grade level!



"Rising Freshmen Activity Packs" and start creating a summer action plan with your student!



"Rising Sophomore Activity Packs" and start creating a summer action plan with your student!



7

Conclusion

By understanding the importance of executive function skills, GPA, extracurricular activities, building a support network, exploring career opportunities, and effective summer planning strategies, you can guide your child toward building a strong foundation over the first two years of high school and beyond.





We at Revolution Prep, get to witness the transformation that students and their parents experience when they apply these practices in their freshmen and sophomore years every day. Check out some of their stories!



Revolution Prep -early successes

At my daughter's school, they offer a high school level Algebra 1 course for 8th graders who meet the requirements. In order to be considered for the class, interested students had to take a placement test. Due to her Revolution Prep tutoring for the ISEE test, my daughter advanced so much in math that she scored the second highest in her entire grade on the placement test!!!! She scored higher than the students who had taken pre-Algebra this year.

If you're kids are struggling, get on board now!

If you have any concerns about the quality of online tutoring, rest assured that Revolution Prep nails it! Both of my kids (middle school and high school) use Evie Blackburn for math help. She's the best tutor they have ever had. Teaching math is an art and she boils it down to simple, understandable steps that make sense. We are super satisfied with our experience and appreciate Evie and Rev Prep for their assistance in our school experience. It's been great!

We have really found the tutoring with Morgan to be fantastic!

We have really found the tutoring with Morgan to be so helpful for our son. Being a teenager, he was very reluctant at first, but Morgan was able to create a connection through his sense of humor and has helped him so much with understanding his math and physics homework. Additionally, Tessa has checked in on us and made sure everything is going well. They have both been available to talk with me when needed. We are very happy that we signed up and will certainly continue to use your company.



To learn more about Revolution Prep and the academic, executive function, test prep, and tutoring support we provide students nationwide, visit our website: <https://www.revolutionprep.com/>