



## Helping Middle School Students Make the Transition into High School.

Young adolescents entering high school look forward to having more choices and making new and more friends; however, they also are concerned about being picked on and teased by older students, having harder work, making lower grades, and getting lost in a larger, unfamiliar school.

As young adolescents make the transition into high school, many experience a decline in grades and attendance; they view themselves more negatively and experience an increased need for friendships; and by the end of 10th grade, as many as 6% drop out of school. For middle school students, including those who have been labeled "gifted" or "high-achieving," the transition into high school can be an unpleasant experience.

### PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The importance of parents being involved in their young adolescent students' transition from middle to high school can hardly be overestimated. When parents are involved in their student's transition to high school, they tend to stay involved in their child's school experiences and when parents are involved in their child's high school experiences, students have higher achievement, are better adjusted, and are less likely to drop out of school.

Parent involvement in the transition process to high school can be accomplished through a variety of activities.

- Participate in a conference (preferably at the middle school) with your child and the high school counselor to discuss course work and schedules
- Visit the high school with their child in the spring or in the fall
- Spend a day at the high school to help you understand what your child's life will be like

Remember that parents of students who are already in high school are an excellent and may also be able to give you additional ideas and support to be more involved in school activities. At the middle school level, teachers and administrators can inform you about transition activities. Perhaps more importantly, if you work to keep involved in your child's education and school activities during the middle school years so that they are comfortable "coming to school" and confident that their involvement makes a difference in their child's academic success.

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