

Preparing for High School and Beyond



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This summer, my oldest is preparing to enter her 8th grade year of school. While it is certainly a milestone year and we will celebrate the end of the middle school years, we don't want high school to arrive and then be caught off guard that we weren't prepared! So, even while one stage in life ends, we are looking forward to the next. This summer, we are getting her prepared to know what to expect for high school and beyond.

Remediation

Our first step is to look back and think about her weaknesses. Looking at her educational path, are there areas that may need more review or support? Will she need more repetition in an academic area so she doesn't lose skills over the summer and be a victim of the "summer slide"?

One simple and cost-effective way to keep up with skills review is to purchase a workbook for self-study. It will require a bit of self-discipline to do daily exercises, but we figure it's more relaxing to do something self-paced that does

not require technology. Yes, we need a break from online distance learning!

We are also open to finding online classes that will offer more support that we cannot offer at home. Added bonuses are that she will broaden her horizons by learning from an instructor outside of her local school and be able to connect with new friends in an online class format. These experiences are still valuable.

Preparation

Since high school will be a new experience for her, one thing we can do to take the fear out of the unknown is to have her research what high school will be like. We will have her explore her local high school's website so she can be introduced to the school staff, academic programs, and student services and clubs. She'll be able to take note of programs, clubs, and sports in which she might want to participate. We'll have her look at graduation requirements and options for electives. She can also ask her high school friends for their personal experiences or ask friends with high school siblings for their opinions about high school life. While we're at it, we might have her take a look at colleges online too.

Expectation

In order for our daughter to have a clear vision of where she's going, we are going to have her write down a few goals she wants to achieve by the end of 8th grade and a few goals she wants to achieve by the end of high school. Each of those goals should include a couple of action items. These may be general goals now, but there's always the opportunity to refine them periodically as we go along her academic journey.

Here's an example:

Goal: Make the 8th Grade basketball team

Action Items: jog or jump rope to maintain stamina, look up Youtube videos and do daily practice drills, etc.

Goal: Get into veterinary school

Action Items: volunteer at a local animal shelter, take more science elective classes in high school, maintain a 3.5 GPA, etc.

These plans aren't set in stone, so to speak, but it will help set some expectations that she needs to put some thought and effort into to accomplish her goals. What are some things you and your family do to prepare your kids for the future?

Cheers,

Jaime

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