

EXPECT SUCCESS



WELCOME BACK TO A “NEW” SCHOOL YEAR

*“New month. New beginning. New mindset. New focus.
New start. New intentions. New results.”*



As I watched the school construction projects slowly unfold throughout the summer, I couldn't help but think “what's old is new again.” It is amazing what a difference remodeling spaces and adding new furnishings can make to an old space. When viewed as a whole, it gives the middle/high school a fresh look to the new year, and based on first glances by the middle and high school students, they are excited about it too!

I have always liked the start of the school year-even as a kid. I remember taking the much anticipated annual school shopping trip (which was an hour north to the nearest mall) to pick out new clothes and shoes. I would ponder what fashion style I wanted to take on for the school year. Remember “duck” shoes and clogs? I even went through the outdoor phase with hiking boots and sweaters. Then, I would contemplate a new organizational method to keep my classes straight. Should I buy single subject notebooks for each class or three-subject notebooks so I can stop at my locker less often? Should I put my morning supplies on the top and afternoon supplies on the bottom? In essence, the start of the school year for kids is like the start of the New Year for adults. It offers a chance for new beginnings and new intentions and often a set of “new school year” resolutions.

Just like the kids, the staff frequently look at the new school year in a similar light. We return filled with new ideas, maybe a new theme or new room arrangement, new bulletin boards and new decorations. (And because most of us like to shop, some new school clothes too!) Each new school year provides an opportunity for new beginnings and new intentions, both for ourselves and for our students.

Here are some tips for helping your child get off to a great start of new beginnings with a new mindset, new focus, and new intentions which will lead to successful results. Welcome back!

1. **Come to Expect Success Night on August 30th-** At the elementary school, your child has the chance to meet his teachers, look around the classroom and find his cubby. Older students will be able to get their lockers organized and hear about their new courses. Most important for parents is the opportunity to meet the teachers so you can put a face to the name once the school year begins. Plus, we have cool gifts for the kids and each family gets a pass to attend one sporting event!
2. **Ease Into a School Routine-** Switching from a summer to a school schedule can be stressful for everyone in the household. Avoid first-day-of-school mayhem by practicing your routine a few days in advance. Set the alarm clock, go through your morning rituals, and get in the car or to the bus stop on time. Routines help children feel comfortable, and establishing a solid school routine will make the first day of school go much smoother. *(taken from PBS Parents)*
3. **Establish Homework Rules-** Kids often perceive homework completion to be as important as their parents' expectations for getting it done. Establishing rules about homework sets clear expectations. First, set the expectation that homework is not optional, it is a must-do. Second, decide when and where. For younger children, it works best for the parent to decide. It could be the kitchen table, right after supper or maybe it is easiest to get done right after school. For older students, letting them help decide can foster independence. Kids often want to retreat to their bedrooms, which can be a good location as long as you make a point to check in. Consider the distractions as well. TV on or off? Cell phone on the counter or with them? Quiet or background noise? Setting the expectations at the beginning of the year can pave the way for the coming months.
4. **Set Sleep Goals-** Research continues to show the significant benefits of sleep for our brains and our bodies. Growing kids need good sleep, especially at the younger grades. Set a bedtime that allows for at least 8 hours of sleep (and stick to it). There will be nights this doesn't work out, but when a bedtime is set it helps get everyone back on track the next night. Once older students get involved in school activities, it can be very difficult for them to get ample sleep time. It is still worthy to establish a bedtime including a time to turn off their electronics. Cell phones have become one of the biggest sleep disruptions for teens (and adults). Teach them the importance of “turn off” time.
5. **Attend Parent Teacher Conferences-** This seems a given at the elementary level, but often dwindles by middle school and high school. Yes, there are many ways that parents and teachers communicate now via technology whether it is through email or checking grades on Skyward. However, making it a point to attend conferences sends a message to your child that their education is important. It is a quick 15 minutes and, once you are here, it gives you a great opportunity to check out their desk or ask them to show you what's in their locker. 😊
6. **Enjoy Free School Events-** There are many free school events throughout the year in both buildings. Take advantage of staying involved in school by attending the Outdoor Walks, Family Fitness Nights, Math Night, Literacy Night or some “free” sporting events. Watch your emails for upcoming events, especially the “freebies.” It promotes healthy choices and school spirit. Plus, who doesn't like free entertainment!