
I N S I G H T S

FOR FAMILIES



Help Your Child Succeed in School



**January
2018**

INSIGHTS FOR FAMILIES is provided by your child's school in recognition of your role as a partner in education. Insights is produced by Marcia Latta, communications consultant.

It's a good practice for students and their parents to reflect on school success and review areas to improve to achieve greater school success. The new year is a good time to review how school is going at the halfway mark.

Students need family support all year. A mid-point review is a helpful way to make adjustments that will also benefit students during spring standardized testing. There is still plenty of time to finish the school year strong.

Parents' role in school success

Parent involvement has a direct impact on student academic achievement. Review the following tips from the Learning Community to ensure that you are helping your child reach his or her potential:

Teacher expectations:

- Develop a routine or a specific time for homework. Set a time when you are available to help or listen.
- Avoid tardies and absences. Make sure that your child is at school on time every day possible. Missing school has an enormous impact on student achievement.
- Make sure your child eats a healthy breakfast each day and gets adequate sleep each night.
- Be a positive role model and demonstrate interest in reading and learning.

Talk to your child about her day. Consider these conversation starters:

- Tell me about the best part of your day.
- What was the hardest thing you had to do today?
- Tell me about what you read in class.
- Who did you play with/hang out with today? What did you do? What's the biggest difference between this year and last year?
- What rules are different at school than at home? Do you think they're fair?
- Who did you sit with at lunch?
- Can you show me something you learned or did today?

Homework help:

- Provide quiet study time in a well-lit place.
- Be available to encourage, praise, advise, and supervise.
- Monitor your child's understanding of concepts and skills. Check work for accuracy, neatness, and completeness.
- Cooperate with and be supportive of the child's teacher. Communicate with the teacher if you have concerns about your child.

(Over)

- Don't do the child's homework for him or her.
- Don't make excuses or allow the child to make excuses for incomplete or sloppy work.
- Don't change, criticize, or belittle a teacher's assignments. If there's a problem, talk to the teacher.
- Don't allow the child to skip an assignment he/she doesn't like.
- Don't fill the child's life with so many non-school activities there is no time left for homework or play.

<http://bit.ly/2FWV2Cp>

Academic guides for parents

It is not easy to help your child in school if you don't know what they are learning and how they are progressing. The National PTA has published a Parents' Guide to Student Success for each grade level. "These guides, based on Common Core standards, were developed by teachers, parents and education experts to provide clear, consistent expectations for what students should be learning at each grade in order to be prepared for college and career."

There is an overview guide for all grades and grade-specific guides for grades kindergarten through grade eight and high school English, language arts/literacy and mathematics.

The guides include:

- Key items children should be learning in English language arts and mathematics in each grade, once Common Core Standards are fully implemented.
- Activities that parents can do at home to support their child's learning.
- Methods for helping parents build stronger relationships with their child's teacher.
- Tips for planning for college and career (high school only).

Find all guides in both English and Spanish on the National PTA website: www.pta.org/home/family-resources/Parents-Guides-to-Student-Success.

Tips for helping your child during testing

The National PTA also has tips to help you help your child prepare for standardized tests. These tests, usually administered in spring, can be stressful but are an important educational requirement. Recommendations for helping your child are not much different than helping with homework. Find information at <http://bit.ly/2FS83Np>.

- Don't judge your child's abilities based on a single test score. Any given test provides limited information about what your child knows and is able to do. And many things can influence how your child does on a test.
- Help your child avoid test anxiety. Students with anxiety can become self-critical and lose confidence in their abilities. With any test, encourage your child to plan ahead, start studying in advance and ask the teacher questions if they don't understand the material or what the test will cover.
- After a tough test, sit down with your child to review areas where they had difficulty.