

READY FOR

HIGH SCHOOL

**Activities to help
you get high
school started
off right**



Know your school

To get high school off to a good start, learn as much as you can about your school. From attendance policies to where you can go for help, there's a lot you need to know.

How much do you know?

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I know what to do if I come to school late. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I understand my school's attendance policies. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I know the rules I need to follow. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I understand my school's dress code. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I have been to our school's website. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I understand my school's cell phone policy. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I have important dates (holidays, test dates, etc.) written in my planner and/or calendar. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Give yourself 2 points for each Yes answer. **Your Score** _____

If your score is 14, congratulations. If you answered "no" to any item, learn what you need to know.

Know where to go for help

- ▶ Your counselor's name _____

- ▶ Where is your counselor's office? _____
- ▶ How do you make an appointment with your counselor? _____

- ▶ Your principal's name _____

Evaluate your skills

All of your freshman grades will be on your permanent high school record, so your grades this year are very important. Having good academic skills will help you earn the grades you want.

The most successful students are strong in each of the skill areas listed below. Consider your skills and put a check mark in the column that best describes how you think you're doing in each skill area.

	Very good	OK	Not great
Organization	_____	_____	_____
Time management	_____	_____	_____
Homework	_____	_____	_____
Class participation	_____	_____	_____
Taking notes	_____	_____	_____
Preparing for tests	_____	_____	_____
Taking tests	_____	_____	_____

▶ Which one of these areas do you want to improve the most? _____

▶ What can you do to improve it? _____

Being in school every day is especially important in high school. The more you miss, the harder it is to succeed in your classes. How would you describe your school attendance up to now?

almost perfect very good fair poor

▶ If you marked "fair" or "poor," how can you improve your attendance?

Set goals

Goals give you focus, direction, and purpose. Having a goal also helps you develop a plan. Now is the perfect time to set goals for this year—and beyond!

Set short-term and long-term SMART goals

While goals can be short-term (get at least a B on your next math test) or long-term (graduate with a 3.0 GPA), every goal should be **SMART**: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound.

- ▶ Set a **short-term academic goal** for the start of high school. _____

What will you do to help you achieve this goal? _____

Is it a SMART goal? Check the boxes. S M A R T

- ▶ Set a **short-term personal goal** for the start of high school. _____

What will you do to help you achieve this goal? _____

Is it a SMART goal? Check the boxes. S M A R T

- ▶ Set a **long-term goal** to work on throughout high school and beyond. This can be an academic, personal, or career goal. _____

What will you do to help you achieve this goal? _____

Is it a SMART goal? Check the boxes. S M A R T

Develop a growth mindset

Sometimes your successes and failures are defined by how you look at them—and by the mindset you have. Having the right mindset as you start high school will put you on the path to success.

A **fixed mindset** is the belief that you either are or aren't capable of something. A **growth mindset**, on the other hand, means you believe that with effort, you can develop and improve any ability or skill.

Which mindset do each of these statements indicate?

Fixed Growth

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | No one in my family is good at that. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I'm going to figure this out. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | This is too hard for me. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I'd really like to get better at this. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I'll never be able to do it. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My brain doesn't work that way. |

Think about a tough situation you are dealing with now. Write down a fixed mindset way to look at it, and a growth mindset way to look at it.

Fixed Mindset _____

Growth Mindset _____

Believe in the power of “yet.”

When you're frustrated or you can't do something, adding the word “yet” reminds you to keep at it. See the difference?

I don't understand it.

I don't understand it yet.

Be tech smart

While technology can add a lot to your life, it can also have some negative effects, especially on things that truly matter—like your relationships and your future.

Think about your technology use

Like most people your age, you probably use technology a lot. Answer the following questions about how you use technology—and about how it might be affecting you.

Check the things you do every day.

- | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> browse social media | <input type="checkbox"/> play video games | <input type="checkbox"/> watch videos |
| <input type="checkbox"/> listen to music | <input type="checkbox"/> watch TV | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ |

Do you think you spend too much time using technology? yes no

Why or why not? _____

Research shows that social media is having some negative effects on the mental health of teens. How is social media affecting your mental health?

Take time to unplug

Counterbalance your technology use by periodically unplugging. Don't just mute phone—have times when you completely unplug.

What are some things you like to do that don't involve technology?

Take care of your mental health

Mental health refers to your social, emotional, and psychological well-being. While your mental health can be impacted by some things you can't control, you can control how well you look after it.

Stay calm and stress-free

Your first year of high school can be stressful. Having ways to stay relaxed and calm will help you deal with stress, and have a great 9th grade year.

There are many different ways to relax and be calm. You just have to find what works for you.

Which of the following make you feel calm? (Check all that apply.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> listening to music | <input type="checkbox"/> taking a walk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> reading a book | <input type="checkbox"/> playing with a pet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sitting alone in my room | <input type="checkbox"/> taking a bath |
| <input type="checkbox"/> watching TV | <input type="checkbox"/> being in nature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> working out | <input type="checkbox"/> writing down my thoughts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | |

Have a plan

Write three ways you are going to take care of your mental health this year.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Make new friends

Having friends makes coming to school a lot more interesting and fun. Friends like you for who you are, and they are there to help you when you need it.

What makes a good friend?

Friendships should lift you up and make your life more enjoyable. However, sometimes friendships can be stressful—or even harmful. How do you know if someone’s friendship is making your life better or worse?

Check the box that shows the kind of friend each statement describes.

	Good friend	Not a good friend
1. someone with whom you can share your true feelings without fear of being judged	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. someone who brings a lot of drama into your life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. someone who pressures you to do things you don’t want to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. someone who actively listens to you	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. someone you feel comfortable being yourself around	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. someone who talks badly about other friends behind their backs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

▶ What can you do to be a better friend? _____

▶ What social aspects of high school are you most looking forward to?
