

TOP TEN TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN 9th GRADE & BEYOND!!

1. GET ORGANIZED

If you are not already an organized person, now is the time to become one. You're now faced with a new school, new classes, a different schedule, and daily homework in all classes. One way to get a jump-start on being successful in high school is having an organized binder, planner, locker, and a workspace at home. Being organized allows you to put all your energy into completing an assignment, rather than wasting your time searching for it. Throughout the year I will give you tips on how to organize your binder and keep track of your work. Organization is vital to your success in high school and beyond!

2. COMPLETE QUALITY WORK & HOMEWORK

I do not assign busy or irrelevant work in my classes. Your homework always ties in directly with the lesson or unit we are studying. If you do not do your homework, you will be lost in class. The units and concepts will be much more meaningful if you have completed the corresponding homework. If you have four days to do a big homework assignment, organize and plan accordingly by breaking it up into smaller pieces. It is very easy for me to tell who rushes to complete homework because it is completed in a haphazard and careless manner. It is one thing to "turn something in" and it is quite another to submit thoughtful and superior quality work. Be aware that your grade will directly reflect the quality & effort of your work.

3. AVOID ABSENCES

High school moves along a lot faster than middle school. Missing one class means you have missed 100 minutes of instruction. I realize there are times when an excused absence is unavoidable. I will go over the system I have in place for you to make up work (see course rules and expectations). However, the easiest way to stay on top of things and not get behind is to be in class consistently. Be aware that simulations, debates, role-plays, and group presentations CANNOT be replicated outside of class! By being absent, you may be missing out on important information that is vital to understanding our current topic of study. Your goal should be to avoid unnecessary absences.

4. ESTABLISH GOOD RAPPORT

I want to encourage you to establish good relationships and rapport with your fellow students, teachers and Shorewood staff members. The relationships that you establish in school **assist you or prevent you** from earning favorable references for employment, letters of recommendations, and reliable confidants in times of need. You are in charge of building your own support system beyond your family network and your school provides a wonderful safety net and resource base for you, if you put in the effort.

5. GET EXTRA HELP

Most teachers are available before or after school to offer extra help to students. This time before or after school, as well as S.T.A.R. and lunch, are good times to ask any additional questions you may have or to get further explanations about anything you did

not understand. Don't just say, "Uh, I didn't understand this" when the assignment is being collected! Set up a time *in advance* to meet with your teacher, so the teacher can give you his/her full attention, plan accordingly, and get materials ready for you if necessary. It is your responsibility to ask for extra help and it is our job to set up a time with you to get you the extra help you need to succeed!

6. BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR LEARNING

Responsibility is a recurring theme in tips for success. You need to take responsibility for yourself and your learning. Ultimately, YOU are the one who needs to know what is going on in class and what YOU need to do to succeed in class, not your parents, not your siblings, not your counselor, YOU. Sure these people are there to help and guide you, but YOU are responsible for YOUR own learning and YOUR grade! Ask questions, stay organized, and listen.

7. GRADES MATTER NOW...A LOT

Freshman grades affect your high school transcript more than any other year, even your senior year. The grades you earn as a freshman set the stage for your cumulative GPA (grade point average) for the rest of your high school career. You'll spend the next three years of high school either working to maintain OR make up the grades you earned as a freshman. It is VERY difficult to bring up a GPA that has low scores. Grades are a representation of you and how much work you have put forth in a course. Now is a good time to start planning for your future, and plan to get good grades now, because your grades can influence your future opportunities. Remember that to graduate, you have to PASS classes to earn credit. Failing = no credit = delayed graduation!

8. GET INVOLVED AT SCHOOL

High school is definitely about learning and broadening your horizons, but it is also about meeting people and learning about yourself. Shorewood High School has an incredible array of clubs, sports, and activities for you. Do your best to learn about all these opportunities so you can build good connections with different people. There is a club or activity for everyone in this school! Get involved because research has shown that students who are involved at school are most likely to succeed in the classroom and beyond.

9. TREAT OTHERS IN THE WAY YOU WANT TO BE TREATED

This is a big school with lots of students. Everyone comes from diverse backgrounds and that is what makes Shorewood a great school. Everyone here has the right to be treated with respect and dignity. Treat others how you would want to be treated and you will succeed socially, academically, and personally. I know you have heard this saying before, but really think about how you can put it into action.

10. TAKE CARE OF YOU

One of the most important tips I can give you is to take care of yourself and stay healthy. Get enough sleep and be sure to eat decent food. Without these things your mind cannot perform at peak potential. Your body is a machine and these are the two fuel items that can make or break your success in school and beyond.