

TEN THINGS EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW TO ENSURE THEIR CHILD RECEIVES AN EXCELLENT EDUCATION

1. **Know** what goes on at your child's school. Read the materials that come home and attend the parent nights. Talk to your child daily about what happened in school that day.
2. **Know** how to interpret test scores. Read the test reports when they are sent home and ask the school questions about things you do not understand (contact the guidance counselor or the testing coordinator). Find out how your child's test score will affect his access to opportunities and what you can do to help improve your child's performance. Know the difference between a percentile score and a raw score.
3. **Know** whom to contact if you have questions. Typically you can contact your child's teachers if you have questions about what goes on in the classroom, the principal if you have questions about discipline or school-wide policies, the guidance counselor if you have questions about testing, services, course registrations, or resources, the food service manager if you have questions about the food, and the main office secretaries if you have general questions. If these people cannot help you, find out who can. Another good resource is the county or district website.
4. **Know** what resources are available for your child both in school and in the surrounding community. Contact your school's guidance counselor, or see if there is a social worker attached to the school. Again, the school system website also has a wealth of resources.
5. **Know** the principal. Meet the principal personally and send the principal notes of encouragement throughout the year. Be sure to greet the principal personally at school events. That way, if you later have a question or concern, the principal will know who you are.
6. **Know** other parents and talk with them regularly. Other parents are great resources and can share tips and experiences. Also, if you cannot attend PTSA meetings, remain in touch with a parent who does.
7. **Know** your child's friends. Pay attention to whom your child associates with and get to know their families.
8. **Know** the course offerings and sequence. Know what is required for each course. If you want your child to take an AP course in high school for example, be aware of what courses he/she needs to take in elementary and middle school in order to be eligible for the AP course.
9. **Know** your child's teachers. Send them a note once per quarter to check in and see how your child is doing. In this way, you can keep on top of your child's performance. If they do something thoughtful for your child, send them a note thanking them.
10. **Know** your child's capabilities and limitations. Compare your observations with those of the teachers. In this way, you are better prepared to help your child capitalize on his/her strengths, overcome any limitations and be more successful.