

9th
10th
Grades

eBook

**Building a Strong
Foundation
in High School**



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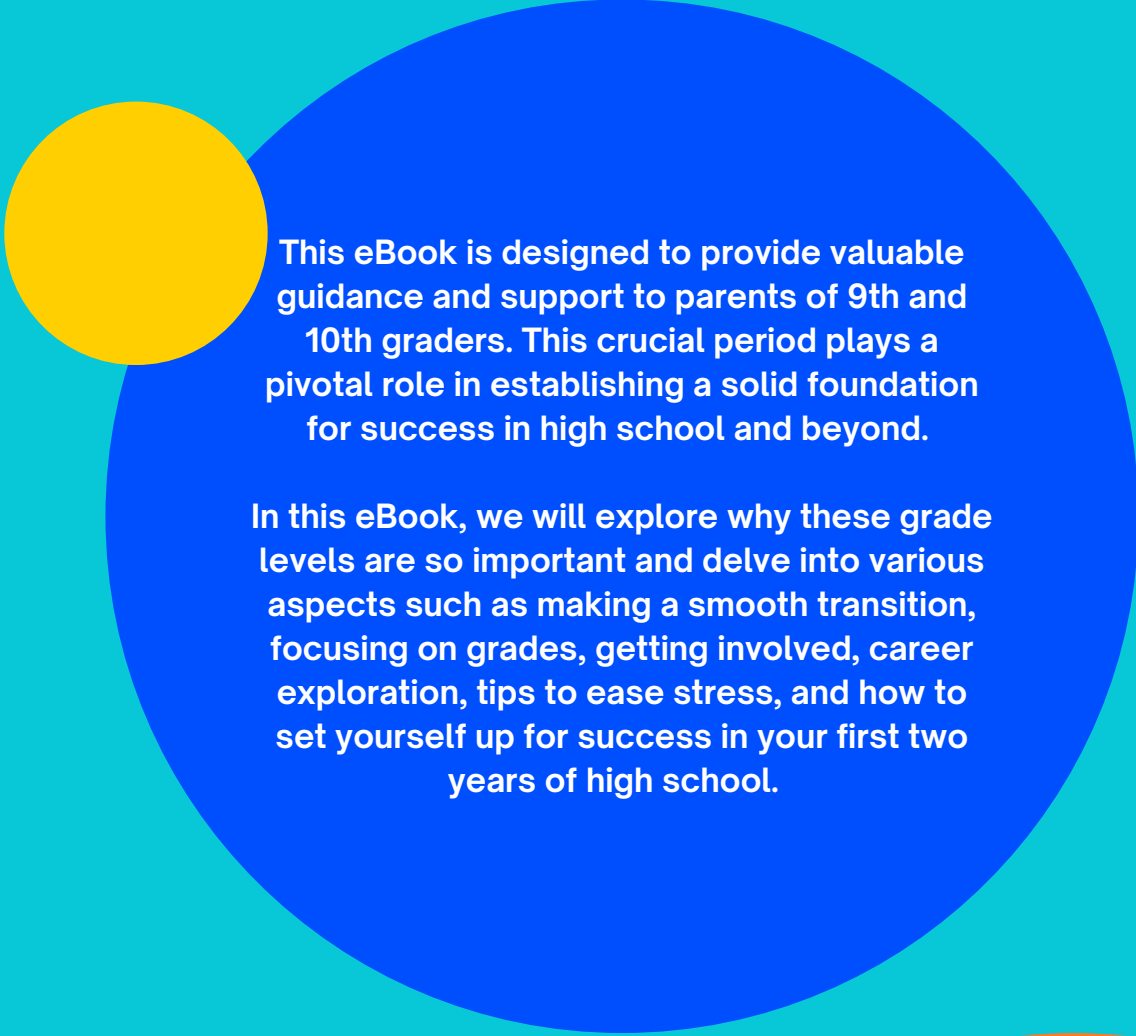
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Welcome!



This eBook is designed to provide valuable guidance and support to parents of 9th and 10th graders. This crucial period plays a pivotal role in establishing a solid foundation for success in high school and beyond.

In this eBook, we will explore why these grade levels are so important and delve into various aspects such as making a smooth transition, focusing on grades, getting involved, career exploration, tips to ease stress, and how to set yourself up for success in your first two years of high school.





1

Why 9th and 10 grade (the foundational years) are so important

Let's face it, things have changed drastically since we were in high school, and being able to support your child in navigating the first two years can be tricky- here's what you should focus on!



The first two years of high school

Top six reasons why the first two years of high school are important to your student's overall success:

1

Academic transition

Moving from middle school to high school can be a significant transition academically. The 9th and 10th grades provide an opportunity for students to adjust to the **increased academic rigor and higher expectations of high school coursework**. It's during these years that students begin to delve deeper into core subjects, laying the groundwork for more advanced studies in the later years.

2

Core skill development

The 9th and 10th grades often focus on building fundamental skills in subjects like mathematics, English, science, and social studies. These skills, such as **critical thinking, problem-solving, research, writing, and analysis**, serve as building blocks for success in higher-level courses. By mastering these foundational skills early on, students are better equipped to tackle more complex concepts in subsequent years.

3

Exploration of interests

High school offers a wider range of elective courses and extracurricular activities. The 9th and 10th grades allow students to **explore different subjects, clubs, sports, and hobbies to discover their passions and interests**. This exploration can help them make informed decisions about future academic paths and potential career choices.

4

GPA and transcript impact

The grades earned in 9th and 10th grades can **significantly impact a student's overall GPA and academic transcript**. Colleges and universities often consider the cumulative GPA throughout high school when making admissions decisions. By performing well during these early years, students can establish a solid GPA foundation that can open doors to a broader range of opportunities in the future.

5

Personal growth and responsibility

High school is a time of personal growth and increasing independence. The 9th and 10th grades offer students a chance to **develop important skills like time management, organization, and self-advocacy**. By honing these skills early on, students can set themselves up for success not only in high school but also in college and beyond.

6

College and career preparation

While college may still seem distant in the 9th and 10th grades, it's important to start preparing early. These years provide an opportunity for students to **meet with guidance counselors, explore career options, and begin thinking about their future goals**. Building a strong academic foundation in high school is crucial for college admissions and scholarship opportunities.



Reflect: How have things changed since you were in high school? What seems to be the same? Share these experiences with your child to open the door for conversation! As an added bonus, take them on a tour of your school (if you're local) or pull up photos of you with your friends!

Freshmen vs. sophomore year in high school

What to expect your child's **freshmen** year of high school

This first year of high school is a big step up for most students. Classes are harder, there's more responsibility, and the grades your child earns freshman year will count for college admissions. They may also try out clubs, sports, and other extracurriculars, which means **focusing on managing their time** is now way more important than in 8th grade.

Another big change as they embark on high school is the **level of accountability and self-advocacy** needed to succeed. It's the right time for them to get comfortable with their available resources, including their teachers, peers, and other mentors and coaches outside of the classroom. When they get stuck, they should take that first step to reach out – which means learning how to write a clear email or planning ahead to visit their teacher's classroom after school or during lunch.

What to focus on this year:

- 1 Support your child in getting the best grades they can
- 2 Encourage your child to try our new clubs, sports, and activities
- 3 Help your child build a study skills and organization foundation
- 4 Work with your counselor to plan the pathway for the years to come

What to anticipate in your child's **sophomore** year of high school

Your child has adjusted to life in high school and survived through—and hopefully thrived in—their freshman year. Whatever their performance in classes, they've got a chance to **continue to achieve important grades** in classwork that's a notch more challenging than last year. For many students, sophomore year brings their first AP or IB classwork, which is a whole new level of difficulty.

It's still not too late to try new things, but ideally, **they've started to hone in on their purpose as learners and the activities, sports, and interests that mean the most to them**. Sophomore year is a great time for students to lean further into these things, picking up leadership roles, trying out for competitions or other distinctions, and building connections with other like-minded students. The pathway to college application season will start to ramp up at the end of this year, and they may consider starting to visit and learn more about prospective universities.

What to focus on this year:

- 1 Keep the focus on achieving strong grades
- 2 Go deeper with their extracurriculars by looking for leadership opportunities
- 3 Help your child build out their support network in preparation for rigorous coursework
- 4 Explore your students strengths and interests and career opportunities that align with them



2

Making a smooth transition

Transitions can be tough. But with the right support and expertise, they don't have to be!



Learning to manage and regulate your thoughts, actions, and emotions

Transitions can be tough, but with the right support and by mastering skills like prioritization, time management, and organization, your student can succeed academically and personally throughout their first two years in high school. These **executive function** skills are cognitive processes that allow people to **plan, organize, make decisions, pay attention, and regulate behavior**. Research suggests that executive functions are essential for students to succeed in school and for adults to succeed in later life. While the term, *Executive Function*, may be new to you, the skills will mostly likely be familiar- let's take a look!

Key executive function skills



Planning and organization:

My student can set goals, break tasks into smaller steps, create schedules, and prioritize activities.



Cognitive flexibility:

My student can easily adapt to new situations, shift perspectives, and switch between tasks or strategies when necessary.



Time management:

My student can estimate the time required for tasks, meet deadlines, and balance multiple responsibilities.



Metacognition:

My student has an awareness of their own thinking processes, including monitoring and evaluating their learning, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and developing effective learning strategies that work for them.



Task initiation:

My student can start tasks quickly, overcome procrastination, and maintain focus on the task at hand.



Goal-directed persistence:

My student can stay motivated and persist in the face of challenges or setbacks, maintaining effort and working towards long-term goals.



Attention and focus:

My student can concentrate, sustain attention, and ignore distractions, allowing them to stay engaged during lessons, studying, and completing assignments.



Emotional Regulation:

My student can understand and manage their emotions, cope with stress, and regulate emotional reactions to help them solve problems and make decisions.



Working memory:

My student can hold and manipulate information in their mind while performing tasks, which aids in following instructions, problem-solving, and comprehending complex ideas.



Reflect: Which of the key executive function skills above *come naturally to your student*? Which do they seem to *struggle with*? Which skills are you *comfortable modeling* for your student? Which do you *struggle* to support your student with?



Laying the groundwork for academic and personal success

Strong executive function skills provide students with the cognitive tools necessary for academic success. They allow students to become more independent, efficient, and strategic learners, leading to **improved performance, better study habits, and increased achievement across different subject areas.**

As a parent, it's important to remember that these skills can vary among individual students, must be developed over time, and require practice and support. Providing guidance, modeling behaviors, and creating opportunities for students to practice these executive function skills will help them succeed in high school and beyond.

Does your student need support in building strong executive function skills?

Are executive function skills holding your student back from reaching their full potential? Our **Executive Function: Skills for Success in the Classroom and in Life** introductory program pairs students with an expert tutor to work one-on-one through ten impactful sessions focused on the most important foundational executive function skills.

By incorporating your student's personal areas of growth, **each session is individualized** to maximize effectiveness and provide a rewarding experience. Check out the parent testimonial:



For an in-depth look at our 10-session introductory course

[CLICK HERE](#)



Free family webinar

Interested in learning how to support your student build executive function skills at home? Sign up to our webinar; **How Executive Function Skills Improve Grades & Lower Stress.**

[SAVE YOUR SEAT](#)



“Our daughter had the privilege of working with Thomas, a Revolution Prep tutor, as part of the EF Program. It was a great experience. Thomas was kind, approachable and extremely knowledgeable. She could relate to him and felt heard. We have seen a marked improvement in her organizational skills and responsibility levels since she started and highly recommend the program to any prospective families.”

-Mother of a rising freshman



Want to speak with a Revolution Prep team member to learn more? [CLICK HERE](#)



3

The importance of academics

Apart from enhancing chances of getting into competitive colleges, getting good grades can increase a student's confidence and satisfaction with a job well done.



Grades matter, here's why

No matter how you slice it, ***grades matter, especially in the first three years of high school!***

A **Grade Point Average (GPA)** is a numeric representation of a student's academic performance and is something you'll want to keep track of throughout your student's high school career. While high schools often report GPA on a 4.0 scale, where the top grade is an A and equals 4.0, scale scores vary from school to school. Be sure to ask about your school's scale score as they transition to high school!

While grades alone are not the sole determinant of your student's success, the skills that your student acquires through working towards good grades can be applied to future success.

Some of these skills may include:

- **Strong study habits**
- **Critical thinking**
- **Time management**
- **Problem-solving abilities, and more!**

Top four reasons why your student should focus on getting good grades

Starting your freshmen and sophomore year out with a strong academic foundation can have additional perks. Here are the top four reasons it's important for your student to focus on their grades over the next two years:

1

They set the foundation for future success: the grades you earn during these years contribute to your cumulative GPA, which ***colleges and universities often consider during the admissions process***. A strong academic foundation opens the doors to various opportunities, including scholarships, internships, and future educational pathways.

2

They go on your high school transcript and college applications: when you apply to colleges and universities, they'll ask for your high school transcript, which includes your grades from all four years. ***Higher grades can enhance your chances of getting accepted into competitive institutions***.

3

They may impact your course selection: many high schools have ***prerequisite requirements for advanced courses or specialized programs***. Excelling academically in your first two years of high school can increase your eligibility for these opportunities.

4

They can boost confidence levels: getting good grades can boost your self-confidence and motivation. As you consistently perform well, you may ***feel a sense of accomplishment***, which can further drive your desire to excel academically.



Reflect: Did you know that the average student has *lost 1/3 of an academic year's worth of learning post-pandemic*? Have you noticed your *student struggling* with specific academic areas or concepts over the past few years? Do you *have a plan* in place to help them catch up?

Free academic webinars

Looking for additional ways to support your student in building a solid academic foundation in and out of the classroom? Check out our free family webinars with ***topics ranging from closing math academic gaps, ways to engage high-performers, supporting students with learning differences, plus many more!***

[CLICK HERE](#)

Create a homework & study routine

Kick-start your student's homework and study routine by implementing these **five tips at the start of the school year**:

- 1 Establish a study schedule:**
Allocate specific times for studying each day. Consider your student's **energy levels and personal preferences** when deciding the length of their study sessions.
- 2 Create a dedicated study space:**
Designate a quiet, well-lit area specifically for studying. Keep it **organized with the necessary materials** like textbooks, computer, notebooks, pens/pencils, etc.
- 3 Prioritize tasks:**
Have your student **create a to-do list or use a planner to prioritize tasks**. They can rank them based on deadlines, importance, or difficulty level.
- 4 Minimize distractions:**
Have them **set a timer** for the length of their study period. Be sure they **silence their phone and other electronic devices** so their attention remains on the task at hand.
- 5 Use effective study techniques:**
Encourage them to experiment with different study techniques until they **find the ones that work for them**. Some popular techniques include active reading, summarizing information, creating flashcards, and teaching the material to someone else.



Reflect: When you're trying to get work done or do your best thinking, what type of environment do you need to be in? What do you do when your mind wanders? When you just don't feel like doing something? Talk to your child about what you do to set yourself up for success as they build their routine!



Does your student's GPA need a boost? Are you simply tired of fighting with them over their homework or to study for that upcoming test? We can help!

For over 20 years, Revolution Prep has supported millions of students in closing academic learning gaps, accelerating learning, and increasing students' confidence, resulting in better grades, higher test scores, and critical skills that transcend the classroom. Learn about our **academic tutoring support here!**



4

Getting involved

High school is not only about grades. Seeking ways to get involved- whether that be in sports, clubs, or volunteer work- extracurriculars help you build your support network while doing things you enjoy.

BOOK CLUB

SOCCER

STEM

DEBATE



Clubs, extracurriculars, and leadership experiences

During the first two years of high school, it's essential for students to **find a balance** between academics and other aspects of their life, such as extracurricular activities, personal interests, and well-being.

Students can participate in numerous extracurricular activities throughout high school, and 9th and 10th grades are a great time to try new things. Extracurricular opportunities can typically be found on your school's website or in communications sent home to parents. These activities can **help students explore their interests, develop new skills, and build a well-rounded profile for college applications**. Be on the lookout for common extracurricular options for high school students throughout the school year, such as:

- Sports
- Clubs and organizations
- Music and performing arts
- Academic competitions
- Community service
- Community service
- Student publications
- Cultural or language clubs
- Leadership and entrepreneurship
- STEM activities



Reflect: based on your student's academic goals, what do you see as a "just right" number of extracurricular activities during their first two high school years? What's too many? How will you check in with them to make sure they don't become overwhelmed with everything on their plate?

As a parent, you can support your student by helping them select extracurriculars that align with their interests and goals while also helping them to balance their academic workload. Remember, it's **not about the number** of activities your student participates in, but rather, depth of the skills, experiences, and relationships they form along the way!

Building your support network

Building a support network is crucial for high school students as it provides emotional, academic, and social support during a period of significant growth and development. However, building a support network takes time and effort. You can support your student to **be patient, open-minded, and proactive** in seeking connections while encouraging them to:

- 1 Engage in extracurricular activities** to meet like-minded peers and build connections based on shared passions.
- 2 Develop relationships with teachers** that can lead to mentorship, academic support, and letters of recommendation for future endeavors.
- 3 Volunteer or engage in community service** to give back and connect with other volunteers who share similar values.
- 4 Connect with classmates** through group projects, study groups and classroom discussion, fostering a sense of belonging and community.
- 5 Be a supportive friend** by being a good listener, offering support, and showing empathy to their peers.



5

College and career readiness

Identifying strengths and interests is an important first step for high school students as they explore potential career paths and choose relevant courses to support their goals. While your student's high school teachers, counselors, and school community will be supporting them throughout this process, there are ways you can help, too!



Identifying strengths and interests

Together, **jot down a list of activities, hobbies, or personal interests** your student thoroughly enjoys doing. You can help them add to their list by sharing stories from their childhood where you observed them getting lost for hours in an activity of their choosing- this usually is a sign of a natural talent or passion!

Next, **help them objectively assess their skills and talents** by evaluating academic subjects they excel in, extracurricular activities they participate in, and any unique talents they possess. Is your student stellar at storytelling and making people laugh? Write that down! Are they able to pick out the unique sounds of different instruments while listening to a song? Add it to the list! By now, you should have a great starting point for your child's unique strengths and interests!

Career exploration

Now, you can begin to research different career clusters, pathways and careers that align with their interests and strengths. Online resources, career websites, and informational interviews with professionals can provide valuable information about various career options. We highly suggest starting with Roadtrip Nation!

As a bonus, if you have a family member, friend, or neighbor working in the field that your student is interested in, help to facilitate a connection for your child. Encourage them to set up an interview, coffee chat, job shadow, or internship opportunity to learn more about the daily tasks and responsibilities of the careers they're interested in.

- 1 Career cluster:**
A broad grouping of related occupations
(i.e. Education and Training)
- 2 Career pathways:**
A more focused route within a specific career cluster.
(i.e. Teaching/Training Career Path)
- 3 Careers:**
An individual occupation that is held within a specific field or industry. (i.e. Elementary Education Teacher)

**ROADTRIP
NATION**[CLICK HERE](#)

We take road trips to capture empowering stories that give you the confidence and tools to find a career that matters to you.

Course selection

Based on the information gathered through self-reflection, skills assessments, career research, and feedback, you'll want to help your student identify high school courses that align with their chosen career paths. They should prioritize courses that develop relevant skills and knowledge in those fields.

Students should **seek guidance from school counselors or career advisors at school** who can provide further support in exploring career options, choosing suitable courses, and mapping out long-term educational and career plans.

By following these steps, your student can gain clarity on their strengths, interests, and career aspirations, enabling them to make informed decisions when selecting high school courses that align with their desired career paths. This process empowers students to lay a strong foundation for their future educational and professional endeavors, **connecting their high school coursework to their purpose and passions!**



Reflect: It's natural to find yourself disappointed that your child may not follow your desired career path for them. So, how do we balance our wishes and dreams with those of our kids? Read this [parenting article](#) to learn how!



6

Coping with school stressors

Over 75% of teenagers report feeling stressed throughout the school year, especially when prepping for large projects and upcoming tests. Help your child understand that learning more about what stress means for their body and mind is key to reducing its harmful effects.



The definition of stress...

The way your child is feeling comes from caring about how well they do, which is awesome. That **stress can create a lot of positive responses**: it causes your child’s mind to focus, heightens their senses, increases their motivation, and mobilizes their energy to get work done.

On the flip side, if they don’t control the stress response, it can result in **elevated levels of the hormone cortisol**, which causes all kinds of bad effects on their body and mind over time.

"It's what arises when something we care about is at stake."
 – Dr. Kelly McGonigal

Here are five quick tips to help your child harness the positive effects of stress, and control the negative ones:

- 1** **Make sure they get regular physical exercise** – and doing it outside in nature is especially beneficial for improving their stress response.
- 2** **When they feel stressed, have them do a quick breathing routine** – it’s as simple as three deep abdominal breaths, slowly exhaling.
- 3** **Acknowledge and utilize stress** – when their brain starts to think of stress as a normal and expected part of caring about things, they’ll start feeling less negative impact from it.
- 4** **Encourage them to volunteer and help others** – recent research shows that people who spend some of their time volunteering, or helping others, feel less negative impact from stress.
- 5** **Have them think of a friend’s resilience** – this is a neat trick where they think about a friend or family member who’s dealing with bigger challenges than they are—and the fact that they’ve made it through.

Resources for teens to help manage stress

	<p>A <i>guided meditation</i> with the jellyfish of the Monterey Bay Aquarium.</p>	<p>WATCH VIDEO</p>
	<p>A bi-weekly free, drop-in, 30-minute <i>guided meditation</i> session.</p>	<p>LISTEN TO PODCAST</p>
	<p>A <i>journal prompt</i> to understand more about the personal capacity to manage stress.</p>	<p>DOWNLOAD PDF</p>
	<p><i>Easy movements</i> for short breaks at their desk – an essential daily reminder to print out!</p>	<p>VIDEO LIBRARY</p>
	<p>A 6-hour <i>calming playlist</i>, "Isle of Calm," to help your child to breathe and relax.</p>	<p>LISTEN TO MUSIC</p>



Reflect: How do you unwind after a long, stressful day or cope with the pressure of meeting a deadline while juggling your home life? Be sure to talk to your child about what you do to unwind while supporting them in finding their ways, too!



7

We're here to help!

Revolution Prep's expert tutors take a personalized approach to help students achieve their academic, executive functioning, testing, and college-readiness goals with as little stress as possible.





Better results. Faster.



Better grades, better scores, less stress. How Revolution Prep can help your family:

Academic tutoring K-12

We provide customized 1-on-1 tutoring support in over 100 subjects for students at any level, from closing foundational skill gaps to supporting AP and IB courses.

Starting at \$69/hr.*

Test prep for high-stakes exams

We can help you work towards your ideal score on the SAT, ACT, PSAT/NMSQT, and AP exams with individualized test prep support. **Starting at \$99/hr.***

Executive function tutoring

We can improve the skills your student needs to thrive in school and life, including time management, cognitive flexibility, and advanced problem-solving, with our Intro to executive function course or private tutoring. **Starting at \$99/hr.***

Multi-subject tutoring **MOST POPULAR**

Need support in a few different areas? We can build a customized program that elevates your student's strengths and addresses the gaps. Everything they need and nothing they don't. **Starting at \$69/hr.***

On-demand homework help

Get unlimited drop-in homework support from our expert professional tutors seven days a week for any of your classes, including SAT and ACT prep. **\$99/month***



Premium learning outcomes with less stress.

We take a revolutionary approach to getting results. Our unique methodology paired with world-class learning specialists helps your student rapidly achieve their goals today and gain the skills to succeed tomorrow. All on your schedule.



20+ years of getting students results



Professional educators and research-backed methodology



100+ academic, test prep, and learning skills offered

Want to learn more about our programs?

Scan this QR code



OR visit: www.revolutionprep.com/programs/

*Worried about payment? No sweat. Come talk to us about our financial aid programs.



The Revolution difference

Over the last 20 years, we've helped over 100,000 families successfully navigate the school journey and achieve their goals with a combination of research-backed methodology and an exceptional team of learning specialists.

Skilled faculty + Revolution Methodology

The Revolution Methodology is all about elevating a student's level of subject matter expertise and executive function skills while instilling a growth mindset at the same time. The result is students who are confident learners in both school and beyond.

Our skilled faculty create a personalized curriculum for your student that spends time on the things that drive outcomes the fastest - and saves time on anything your student doesn't need.

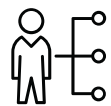
What you can expect:

From start to end, your dedicated Academic Advisor will be there to guide you in every step of the way, ensuring you get the most out of your program.



Diagnose opportunities

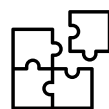
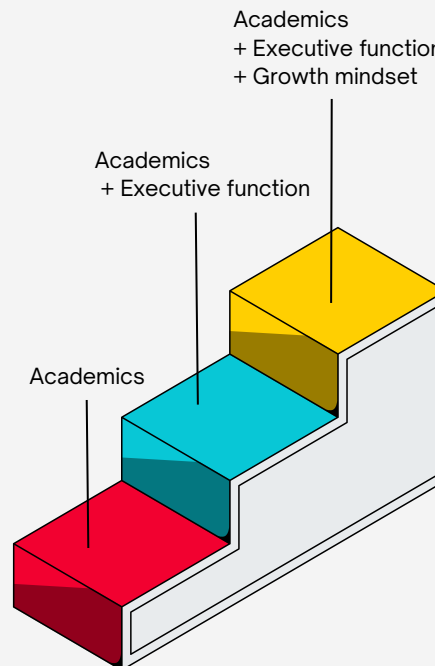
Speak with an Academic Advisor to diagnose your student's strengths and growth opportunities to set program goals.



Create a custom plan

With your team, build your students' individualized learning plan tailored to their goals, focus areas, and busy schedule.

Give your student the boost they need to become a better learner and achieve results faster



Build your dream team

Work with your Academic Advisor to find the perfect tutor or (tutoring team) based on subject matter expertise, personality, and schedule.



Track goal progress

Receive weekly video updates and monthly check-in calls with your student's tutor to monitor progress towards goals and make adjustments as needed



Speak with a Revolution Prep Advisor to learn more!

Set up a free consultation with your Revolution Prep Academic Advisor. Scan the QR code to learn more about how we can help you get (and stay) ahead this year.

OR visit our website: www.revolutionprep.com/contact-us/





Conclusion

By understanding the importance of course rigor, GPA, standardized testing, extracurricular activities, college and career readiness, and effective stress mitigation techniques, parents can guide their children toward success in college admissions and beyond.

We at Revolution Prep get to witness the transformation that students experience when they apply these practices in their freshmen and sophomore years every day.





Revolution Prep – early successes

At my daughter's school, they offer a high school level Algebra 1 course for 8th graders who meet the requirements. In order to be considered for the class, interested students had to take a placement test. Due to her Revolution Prep tutoring for the ISEE test, my daughter advanced so much in math that she scored the second highest in her entire grade on the placement test!!!! She scored higher than the students who had taken pre-Algebra this year.



If you're kids are struggling, get on board now!

If you have any concerns about the quality of online tutoring, rest assured that Revolution Prep nails it! Both of my kids (middle school and high school) use Evie Blackburn for math help. She's the best tutor they have ever had. Teaching math is an art and she boils it down to simple, understandable steps that make sense. We are super satisfied with our experience and appreciate Evie and Rev Prep for their assistance in our school experience. It's been great!



We have really found the tutoring with Morgan to be fantastic!

We have really found the tutoring with Morgan to be so helpful for our son. Being a teenager, he was very reluctant at first, but Morgan was able to create a connection through his sense of humor and has helped him so much with understanding his math and physics homework. Additionally, Tessa has checked in on us and made sure everything is going well. They have both been available to talk with me when needed. We are very happy that we signed up and will certainly continue to use your company.