The Central Valley Chronicle

November 2026

CENTRAL VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

INSTILLING PRIDE, INSPIRING OTHERS

MS. VLACH'S

COUGAR CONNECTION

2026-2027

First Quarter Reflections: Building a Culture of Values at Central Valley

As we wrap up the first quarter, we celebrate our Honor Roll students' accomplishments and recognize the hard work, growth, and commitment of all Central Valley students. From the classroom to extracurricular activities, our students continue to represent Central Valley with pride.

At our first-quarter assembly, we began a conversation about values and how they shape who we are, the decisions we make, and the culture we create. Students participated in a hands-on challenge to build a marshmallow launcher and launch a marshmallow as far as possible. While each group worked toward the same goal, their designs, approaches, and decisions varied. The activity showed how a mission gives us a common purpose, while our values guide our choices and how we work together to accomplish it. Just as each group approached the challenge differently, our individual values influence how we solve problems, overcome obstacles, and contribute to a shared goal.

This conversation builds upon work our teachers began during professional development earlier this year, when they reflected on the values they believe are most important to our school and the learning environment we want to create. Moving forward, we will combine student and staff perspectives to identify shared values that will help define and strengthen Central Valley's culture. By including student voices alongside teacher input, we hope to build a stronger sense of ownership, connection, and shared responsibility. Ultimately, our values should serve as the foundation for how we work together to fulfill Central Valley's mission of providing opportunities for all students to experience, explore, and expand as they become successful citizens. Our goal is to ensure these values are not simply words on a wall, but principles reflected in our daily actions, relationships, and decisions.

Finally, thank you again to our staff, parents, and community members for your unwavering support as our students continue to grow and excel in academics, the arts, and athletics. As we move further into the school year, we recognize that success is about more than awards and accomplishments. It is built through consistent effort, shared values, positive relationships, and a commitment to one another.

November

Central Valley Elementary NEWSLETTER

WE ARE THE COUGARS

Instilling Pride, Inspiring Others!

From the Principal

Learning is essential to everyone, and teachers are a central piece of that puzzle at CVE! Central Valley Elementary students and staff are making learning fun in both reading and writing classes. As a principal, it is exciting to see the care that our staff takes in allowing the language arts to come alive.

We celebrate Adi Wood and her 5th grade classroom as they brought the book "**Matilda**" to life! Students and staff dressed up, classes were "Matilda" themed, and they even rejoiced with a giant chocolate cake!

Our third-grade classrooms reveled in the "spooky" season by writing descriptive, scary stories focusing on word choice! The culmination of their writing project was an eerie afternoon reading session, when the third graders read their stories to the class in the dark with a flashlight!!! What excellent examples of learning at CVE!

Families, please continue to encourage your child to read and create at home with fun activities. It could be a supper-time finish-the-story around the table or a quick book before bed. The time you spend creating or reading stories with your children is priceless and helps their brains continue to grow!

Together, we're Instilling Pride, Inspiring Others!

♡ Mrs. Krista Sipes

READ
CREATE
LEARN
GROW
BELONG

Upcoming Events

11/1	**Daylight Saving Time!** Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour!
11/11	**CVE Veterans' Day Program** 2:00 PM
11/13	**Staff Professional Development** No Student Day
11/14	**Girls Night Out**
11/20	**Cougar Community Recognition**
11/25	**1:30 Out** Thanksgiving Break Begins
11/26	**No School**
11/27	**No School**

At CVE, we invest in literacy! ♡

Central Valley Elementary teachers are becoming Science of Reading Trained!

What is the Science of Reading?

The Science of Reading is a body of research that shows how the brain learns to read. It identifies the key skills students need — such as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension — and provides evidence-based teaching strategies to help all students become successful readers.

Why We Read

- BUILDS KNOWLEDGE
- STRENGTHENS VOCABULARY
- SPARKS IMAGINATION
- IMPROVES FOCUS
- PREPARES FOR THE FUTURE

- Children who read regularly have **stronger vocabulary skills** and higher academic achievement.
- Reading helps build background knowledge, which supports learning in all subject areas.
- Students who are strong readers are **more** likely to be successful in school and beyond.
- Read-alouds support listening skills, empathy, and social-emotional growth.

READ TODAY
A BRIGHTER
TOMORROW ♡

♡ Sources: National Center for Improving Literacy (https://improve-literacy.org) | Reading Rockets (https://www.readingrockets.org) | American Academy of Pediatrics (https://publications.aap.org) ♡

Scholastic Bowl

you've got questions, we've got answers.

Mrs. Sarah Hansen, Coach

On October 14th, our Junior High Scholastic Team, made up of 7th and 8th grade students, traveled to Spalding Academy to compete in the Scholastic Contest. Our students represented Central Valley well and had several outstanding performances!

Our Quiz Bowl team advanced to the quarterfinals, while Chase Jensen earned a spot in the oral round of the Spelling Contest.



Wyatt Hansen, Owen Andersen and Zethan Wolf (team captain) compete at Quiz Bowl in Spalding



Chase Jensen

Several students also earned individual honors:



Hadlee Buettner
1st Place
7th Grade Health



Mason Shoemaker
4th Place
8th Grade Health







Becca Bauld
4th Place
7th Grade English



Congratulations to all of our Junior High Scholastic Team members for their hard work and accomplishments! We are proud of the way they represented Central Valley!

Way to Go!

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Central Valley FFA thanks the following for helping make Feed The Farmer possible.

Pillen Family Farms
Mrs. Kennedy and CV FCS Classes
Farm Credit Services of America
Greeley Country Market
Henderson State Bank
Lesley and Dusty Dugan
Howard County Medical Center
McManus Dirt Work
Champion Seed

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US MAKE THIS POSSIBLE!

















FFA Members getting meals ready for Feed the Farmers. They fed around 175 farmers!!



CAREER ACADEMY

In the Career Academy, we are growing lettuce. The cooks prepare the lettuce to put on the salad bar for the students and staff.

Claire O'Connor is our main gardener this year. She helps with planting the seeds and transplanting the seedlings into the garden tower. Claire also checks the water for balanced PH and adds water when needed. She also harvests the lettuce and delivers it to the kitchen. The life cycle of the lettuce is completely supervised by the Career Academy and Claire.



Early Development Network

Babies Can't Wait

The Early Development Network provides early intervention services for families with children birth to age three with developmental delays and/or health care needs. Our program connects families with needed services and provides ongoing support. EDN has caring and professional Services Coordinators to serve families with an individualized and strengths-based focus. These services are free to families, and we welcome anyone who may have questions or concerns.

If you are concerned about a child's development or know someone who are please call EDN (308)237-2280 at ESU 10 for services in Region 10 or 1(888)806-6287 for referrals throughout

Nebraska. If you are unsure which EDN office serves your area, please call (308) 237-2280 and we are happy to assist you in finding your best contact person.

To learn more about our program please visit esu10.org and choose the EDN tab in English or Spanish or visit edn.ne.gov.



Mrs. Angela Boyce, Central Valley Librarian

Fall is a busy time in the library. Thank you to all who visited the Scholastic Book Fair! It was very successful again this year. Our elementary students have new books to read and enjoy in their homes. The school earns Scholastic Dollars, which are used to add books to the libraries.

Sora

Sora is an online reading app students can use on their devices, iPad, Kindle or phone. When using Sora on Chromebooks and computers, students should go to the school website. The parents and students tab, elementary or high school library links. Now click on Sora. Next, it says find my school, our school's name is NOT there. Choose Educational Service Unit 10 District. Sometimes you will need to choose this twice. Now, type in your school email and then enter. Second through eighth grade can use their lunch code @cvps as their password to check out a book. This will take practice to use, but it is access to ebooks and audiobooks. If you are a student waiting to read a certain book this gives you an extra copy. The ebook is checked out like a real book. You only have access to it for two weeks. If you finish early, you should return the ebook, so others can read it. If you are using a Kindle, you need to check it out on a computer and send it to the Kindle to read it. There is a Sora app that can be downloaded on devices. When searching for our school, please choose Educational Service Unit 10 or Nebraska's Shared Collection.

Golden Sower Books

The Golden Sower Contest is Nebraska's state contest, and the winners are chosen by students. Librarians across the state pick ten books for each category. There are now four different categories for students to vote in. There is a picture book, a chapter book and a novel list for middle school and high school, each containing ten books.

Students interested in voting need to read four books off the same list by April. Students interested in voting on their favorite book need to let Mrs. Boyce know. This is your opportunity to have a voice and nominate your favorite book. The Golden Sower books are available in our libraries.





Central Valley One-Act Kicks Off Season at Elm Creek Festival!

The Central Valley One-Act team officially kicked off its 2026 season on Monday, October 19, with a trip to the Elm Creek Early Bird One-Act Festival! The Cougars had a great first showing of their production, Witness: Be the Light. While there were a few opening-performance flubs, the cast and crew brought their hard work and dedication to the stage. The festival provided a wonderful opportunity to receive valuable feedback from the judges, and the 40-member team is already putting those critiques to work! With some exciting changes and improvements underway, the Cougars are eager to see how their production continues to grow throughout the season.

Congratulations to the following students who received Acting Honors at Elm Creek:

- William Pokorny
- Laretta Davis
- Aubrey Winter
- Bentleigh Dugan
- Ethan Lobner
- Caden Straka

Up Next for the Cougars!

The team will take the stage again on Monday, November 2, in Ord, at 12:45 p.m.

The community is also invited to the Central Valley One-Act Public Performance on Tuesday, November 17, in Greeley! We can't wait for everyone to see what this talented group has been working on!

A heartfelt thank-you goes out to the families, teachers, school staff, and community members who have supported this production. From helping with sets and props to offering encouragement along the way, your support makes these opportunities possible for our students. This is just the beginning of what promises to be an exciting season for Central Valley One-Act. We are proud of our Cougars and can't wait to see how far they grow!







14

NOVEMBER

2026

Girls' Night OUT



HOSTED BY THE

CENTRAL VALLEY
CLASSES OF 2028 & 2033

6:00-8:30 PM

CV ELEMENTARY GYM

303 N. INDIAN STREET-SCOTIA, NE

This year marks the 17th annual Girls' Night Out — a cherished tradition that brings together our communities, local vendors, parents, and supporters for an evening of fun, fellowship, and fundraising. We are incredibly grateful for everyone who has contributed over the years to make this event such a success.

Thanks to the generosity of our guests and sponsors, Girls' Night Out has helped send several classes to Washington, DC. The impact of your support continues to reach far beyond this event, giving our students the opportunity to experience our nation's capital in an unforgettable way.

We look forward to hosting our communities once again for a night that celebrates connection, local business, and shared purpose. Thank you for being part of this incredible tradition and for continuing to make Girls' Night Out such a special event year after year.

MAKE THIS YEAR UNFORGETTABLE.

THE YEAR. THE MEMORIES. THE STORY.

2026-2027 YEARBOOK

Big moments. Everyday memories. All in one book.



ORDER YOUR YEARBOOK TODAY!

Scan the QR code to purchase.

yearbookforever.com

Questions? Contact Jodie Thies

308-428-3145

jodie.thies@centralvps.org

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
November 2026

Helping Children Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

Let your child see you reading often for all kinds of reasons

Your child is always watching and learning from you—even when it doesn't seem like it. So when you demonstrate the many reasons reading is useful in your life, your child learns it is a skill worth having.



To help your elementary schooler develop the reading habit, read often yourself and discuss why you are doing it. Show that reading helps you:

- **Relax and have a good time.** Say that reading is entertaining, and not just something for school or work.
- **Figure things out.** Explain that you are reading a manual to find out how to program the new coffee maker, or a weather report to decide what to wear. Show your child how you read a recipe to make sure you have the ingredients you need before you start cooking.
- **Learn new things.** Say, "I'm trying to learn more about AI because we want to use it at work. This article explains how other businesses use it."
- **Take boredom out of waiting.** Bring something to read everywhere you go. Ignore TV screens in waiting rooms and pull out your reading. Play audiobooks on long car trips.
- **Enrich conversations** and relationships. When you read something interesting, read a tidbit aloud. Share an article your child might like.

Address behavior with three Ps

When it comes to behavior problems, many families wait until *after* their child misbehaves to take action. But preventing problem behavior in the first place is much more effective. Here is a three-step system for doing it:

1. **Predict.** Think about a behavior you would like to change. Perhaps your child usually takes so long to get out of bed and get ready that mornings are hectic. Is your child tired in the morning from staying up too late at night? An earlier bedtime could change that. Is your child taking too much time trying to get organized for school? Packing up the night before is the answer.
2. **Prepare.** Since you can predict the behavior, you can also think of ways to prevent it. Instead of waiting until your child dawdles down to breakfast, brainstorm about ways to avoid the late start.
3. **Practice.** Help your child practice the prevention strategies until they are routine. Then, offer praise for getting ready on time!

Don't hesitate—engage!

Each child is unique. But *all* families can participate in their children's education in beneficial ways. Dive in and engage:

- **At home.** Talk with your child every day about school. Encourage daily reading. Try new things together.
- **At school.** Attend events for families. Ask teachers how you can support your child's learning. If needed, ask for an interpreter or translated documents.
- **In the community.** Meet other families. Share ideas for helping the school meet needs.

Make it easy to recall rules

Creating catchy phrases that link rules with their consequences can help your child remember them. For example:

- **Leave it out and you go without.** Belongings not put away properly go into time-out for a week.
- **Play nice or think twice.** Fighting siblings will have to take a time out to think about their actions.

Help your child step up

How should you respond when grades are disappointing? Stay calm, and set your child up to make improvements. Here's how:



1. **Ask questions** about grades, such as: *Do you think they reflect your work? Do you understand the lessons? What could you do differently?*
2. **Consult the teacher.** Is your child having issues in class? What resources are available for help?
3. **Offer support.** Suggest ways to find help or look for answers instead of giving up.

Copyright © 2026, The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc. www.parent-institute.com

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Helping Children Learn®
Tips Families Can Use to Help Children Do Better in School November 2026

Q&A How do I stop a weight issue from being a school issue?

Q: My child is quite overweight. We are working with a doctor, and are improving our diet at home. But my child has almost no friends at school and doesn't want to go. What can I do?



A: More than one-third of children in the U.S. are overweight. And unfortunately, many have problems in school. Studies show that weight-based bullying is more common than other types of bullying. Many children don't speak up in class because they fear being made fun of. They are also more likely to spend time by themselves in less active pursuits.

To help turn things around for your child:

- **Affirm all the positive reasons** your child is a person of value.
- **Tell the teacher** what your child is going through. The teacher can watch for teasing and may have ideas about other ways to help.
- **Emphasize health** rather than a number on the scale. Focus on establishing habits that help your child feel healthy and strong.
- **Follow the doctor's guidelines.** But avoid turning into the "food police" for your child. Make healthy diet changes for the whole family.
- **Make fitness a family priority.** Plan active weekend activities like hiking or kicking a ball around.

Parent Quiz Are you modeling attentive listening?

Listening is an important learning skill. Your child will need to listen to absorb new information and to communicate effectively. Are you teaching your child to listen by example? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Do you pay** undivided attention when your child is talking to you? If you're busy, do you say when you will be able to listen?
2. **Do you allow** your child time to put thoughts into words and continue to listen patiently?
3. **Do you let** your child finish speaking without interrupting, and ask your child not to interrupt you, either?
4. **Do you restate** what your child says to confirm understanding?
5. **Do you "listen"** to your child's behavior? A child who is acting up is communicating a need.

How well are you doing?

More yes *answers mean you are helping your child sharpen listening skills. For each* no, *try that idea.*

"When you talk, you are only repeating what you already know. But when you listen, you may learn something new."
—The Dalai Lama

Put geography on the map

Help your child celebrate Geography Awareness Week (November 16-20) with these learning activities:

- **Locate places** in the news on a world map. Together, learn some facts about the locations and the people who live there.
- **Explore local geography.** Help your child find out why your town is located where it is, and what connects it to the rest of the world (roads, rail, rivers, etc.).
- **Make maps.** Have your child map the route from home to school, a store or a friend's house. Then, follow the maps.



Ask questions when math problems get sticky

When your elementary schooler is stuck on a math problem, asking questions can help your child think it through. You can ask:

- *What do the directions say?*
- *What words don't you understand?*
- *What do you already know that can help?*
- *Would it help to draw a diagram?*
- *Can you find an explanation in your book?*

Encourage deeper thinking

Your elementary schooler will be expected to think, evaluate and reason in all grades. To develop these skills, ask your child to:

- **Identify patterns.** What does your child see in that spider web, for example?
- **Evaluate performance.** Ask, "What did you do well? What would you change next time?"
- **Explain reasoning.** Why did your child take a particular action?
- **Look for different ways** to solve a problem.

Helping Children Learn®
Published in English and Spanish, September through May.
Publisher: Doris McLaughlin.
Publisher Emeritus: John H. Wherry, Ed.D.
Editor: Alison McLean.
Translations Editor: Victoria Gaviola.
Copyright © 2026, The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc.
P.O. Box 7474, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7474
1-800-756-5525 • www.parent-institute.com

Copyright © 2026, The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc. www.parent-institute.com

MIDDLE SCHOOL
November 2026
Helping Students Learn®
Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School
Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

Help your middle schooler begin planning for a bright future



Life after high school is years away, but middle school is the right time for your child to begin thinking and planning for it. Over the next several years, your child will have choices to make that can affect options for higher education and careers.

To help your child consider the future, discuss:

- **Interests.** Ask your child, "What do you enjoy doing or learning about? Do you have a dream job?" Whether your student is interested in finance, fashion design or a skilled trade, it will likely involve education or training beyond high school. Help your child find out about available programs, their requirements and the application process.
- **Possibilities.** There are too many careers to count, and odds are your child hasn't heard of many of them. Go online together to learn about jobs in fields of interest. The Occupational Outlook Handbook from the Department of Labor is a great place to start.
- **Goal setting.** What does your child hope to be in 10 years? A dental technician, a college graduate, a military pilot? Talk about what your middle schooler can do now to reach those goals, such as working harder in math or choosing higher level classes. It's OK if your child's dreams change over time—setting new goals can keep motivation flowing.

Reach out to reading allies at school

You have allies at school who can help you help your child become a more active and confident reader. Here are some ways to get help from your student's teachers, the school and your community in this important task:

- **Ask teachers** for suggestions. Your child's teachers may be able to tell you about books and series other middle schoolers enjoy. They can recommend authors and suggest titles your child can look for in the school library.
- **Visit book fairs.** If the school sponsors a book fair, encourage your child to go and spend some time looking through the books. Have your child write down titles that look appealing. Then you can either buy one or borrow one from the library.
- **Enlist school friends.** Make a contract with your child and a couple of school friends: If they all read the same book and tell you about it, you'll have them over for a movie night, complete with snacks of their choice.

Offer math test success tips



Some middle schoolers aren't sure how to study for math tests. To boost results, suggest that your child:

- **Practice by redoing** problems from assignments and quizzes.
- **Write formulas** on flash cards, then memorize them.

On test day, remind your child to:

- **Write down memorized formulas** on the top of the test before starting.
- **Read directions carefully** and show all work.
- **Double-check work** for careless errors.

Pull the plug on back talk

Middle schoolers are at an age when they begin to question and challenge authority. They also hear rude and mocking language everywhere. To tame back talk from your child, model respectful communication.

Speak with the courtesy you expect your middle schooler to show others. If your child responds with back talk, say, "You are allowed to be upset with me, but you are not allowed to be rude to me." Then, restate your child's point to demonstrate how to express feelings appropriately.

Ease stress to aid learning

If managing academics and adolescence has your child feeling overwhelmed, suggest some stress-busters. Recommend that your middle schooler:



- **Breathe** deeply.
- **Relax** with a hobby.
- **Write** in a journal.
- **Stretch** for a few minutes.

Copyright © 2026, The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc. www.parent-institute.com

MIDDLE SCHOOL
Helping Students Learn®
Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School November 2026

Q&A How can I help my child keep up when we are away?

Q: Our family will be traveling for the holidays next month, and my child will have to miss a week of school. What should we do so my child doesn't get behind?



A: Missing school creates challenges for students. If you can't change your plans to fit traveling into the winter break, take these steps to show that learning is still a priority and help your child stay on track:

1. **Reach out to teachers** well in advance. Explain your situation, and ask if your child can get started now on readings or assignments planned for that time. Ask if there is a way your child can participate in classes remotely. While schools aren't able to accommodate all requests, the teachers will appreciate having advance notice.
2. **Emphasize learning during your trip.** Explore museums or cultural attractions and discuss them as a family. Try to immerse your child in educational activities that are not available at home.
3. **Plan time for reading, writing and studying.** Schedule daily time for your child to read for pleasure, write about your activities and solve some practice math problems.

Parent Quiz Do you promote working with teachers?

Your child may prefer some teachers to others. But to do well in school, it's necessary to work productively with each of them. Are you helping your child have positive interactions with teachers? Answer *yes* or *no* below:

1. **Do you explain** that being polite to teachers is part of a student's responsibility?
2. **Do you emphasize** that liking teachers isn't necessary to learn from them?
3. **Do you help** your child figure out possible reasons for having issues in a class?
4. **Do you encourage** your child to talk to teachers and try to work out issues that arise?
5. **Do you contact** the teacher if your child is unable to work through an issue independently?

How well are you doing?

More yes *answers mean you are helping your child work with teachers effectively. For each* no, *try that idea.*

"Teaching is more than imparting knowledge; it is inspiring change. Learning is more than absorbing facts; it is acquiring understanding."
—William Arthur Ward

Foster essential tech skills



Being "tech-savvy" takes more than knowing how to code or use an app. Other factors—which help in all subjects—are necessary, too. Help your child develop:

- **Judgment.** Knowing how to tell if online information is accurate or relevant is vital. Help your child consider: *Does this present facts or opinions? Is this information up to date? Can I confirm it elsewhere?*
- **Planning.** How will your child use, display or present results?
- **Problem-solving.** Suggest things your child can try if something isn't working.

Engage and your child wins

When you get involved at school, three things happen that have a positive impact on your middle schooler's experience:

1. **You gain** deeper knowledge of the school and how it operates.
2. **You learn** whom to call with questions or concerns.
3. **The school gains** an understanding of your family and your student's needs.

Inspire your child to persist

Persistence and determination help make completing large projects and overcoming challenges seem achievable. To encourage your child to apply them to schoolwork:

- **Praise progress.** "You're really coming along with that. You'll have it done soon!"
- **Suggest self-talk.** Saying things like "I know I can do a great job on this" can motivate your child to put in the effort.
- **Lead the way.** Pick a chore you've been putting off. Say, "Today I am going to get this finished." Then, follow through.

Source: M. Borba, *Parents Do Make a Difference*, Jossy-Bass.

Helping Students Learn®
Published in English and Spanish, September through May.
Publisher: Doris McLaughlin.
Publisher Emeritus: John H. Wherry, Ed.D.
Editor: Alison McLean.
Translations Editor: Victoria Gaviola.
Copyright © 2026, The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc.
P.O. Box 7474, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7474
1-800-756-5525 • www.parent-institute.com

Copyright © 2026, The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc. www.parent-institute.com

HIGH SCHOOL
November 2026

Helping Students Learn®

Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10

Help your teen use a five-step process to boost writing quality



In an age when AI can write convincing papers, your teen may wonder why developing writing skills matters. It's simple: Learning to write well will help your teen strengthen thinking and communication skills—which are essential for academic and career success.

Review this five-step writing process with your teen:

1. **Brainstorm.** Spend 10 minutes writing down all known facts about the topic.
2. **Research.** Gather credible sources (a librarian can help) to acquire in-depth knowledge of the topic and find facts, quotes and other details that support the points your teen wants to make.
3. **Outline.** Teens often dislike this step, but it helps to organize ideas and evidence into logical order. The traditional numbers-and-letters format works for some teens. Others prefer a series of connected circles.
4. **Write multiple drafts.** The first draft is for getting ideas down, without worrying about being perfect. After a break, look at it with fresh eyes and decide how to clarify and improve the next draft.
5. **Proofread.** Look over the final draft carefully and correct spelling and grammatical errors.

Source: S. Graham and K. Sandmel, "The Process Writing Approach: A Meta-analysis" *The Journal of Educational Research*, Taylor & Francis.

Suggest forming a serious study group

When it comes to studying in a challenging class or prepping for a test, your teen may not have to do it alone. In a study group, your teen can share strengths, get help with weaknesses and gain practice working with peers.

The key is for your teen to form a study group in which the members *really* study. Have your student follow these guidelines:

- **Choose four to six members** who are serious about studying and want to do well in school. Close friends may not be the best choice unless they are skilled at prioritizing study over socializing.
- **Divide the work.** Assign parts of the material to the members that do them well. Then they can explain their sections to the group.
- **Stick to a schedule** and select a leader for each meeting (rotate this position). The leader's job is to keep the studying on track and prevent one person from dominating the discussion.

Stomp out cyberbullying



Cyberbullying negatively affects mental health—and more than half of teens in a recent survey said they had experienced it. Tell your teen that bullying is always wrong, no matter what form it takes. Then, ask your teen to:

- **Tell you about incidents** of online bullying.
- **Keep records** of bullying emails or posts, but never respond to them.
- **Unfollow or block** people who post negative things about others.

Source: "2025 Cyberbullying Data," Cyberbullying Research Center.

Offer patient guidance

Your teen is busy exploring new interests and ideas and trying to expand horizons and navigate changes in the world. To support these efforts:

- **Be patient** with your teen. Discuss new interests and choose battles carefully.
- **Discuss possible outcomes** of actions.
- **Ask questions** to guide your teen to think things through.

Boost motivation to learn

Motivation drives everything from academic achievement to personal development. To foster motivation to learn in your teen:



1. **Point out** connections between schoolwork and your teen's goals.
2. **Share** time management and other study strategies, but let your teen put them to use.
3. **Talk through** school issues without taking responsibility for solving them. Help your teen identify solutions rather than imposing them.

Copyright © 2026, The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc. www.parent-institute.com

HIGH SCHOOL
Helping Students Learn®
Tips Families Can Use to Help Students Do Better in School November 2026

Q&A How much help should I give with schoolwork?

Q: We're months into the school year and my ninth grader is still asking for my help with assignments. Should I still be helping with homework in high school?



A: Staying involved with your teen's education in high school is important. But rather than helping your student *do* assignments, shift to supporting your teen's efforts to do them independently.

You can do this by offering structure and encouragement. Here's how:

- **Help your teen schedule** a regular daily homework and study time.
- **Demonstrate that learning** is a family priority. Have family members do quiet activities while your teen does schoolwork. At other times, discuss books and news items with together. Watch educational shows and talk about what you are learning.
- **Ask about what your teen is studying.** You might ask, "Do you find anything about this topic surprising?" or "Have you done anything like this before?"
- **Strategize together.** If your teen isn't sure how to approach a large project, for example, brainstorm the process step by step.
- **Notice and praise progress and effort.** When your teen is tackling a challenging assignment, say you know your student can handle it.

Parent Quiz Do you promote learning from mistakes?

Your teen is human and will make mistakes. What really matters is what your teen does next. Are you teaching your student to treat mistakes as learning opportunities? Answer *yes* or *no* to the questions below:

1. **Do you teach** your teen to admit mistakes and set an example by admitting your own?
2. **Do you stay** calm and make it clear your teen can discuss errors without fear of upsetting you?
3. **Do you ask** what a mistake has taught your teen? How will your teen avoid it in the future?
4. **Do you tell** your teen about some of the lessons you have learned from your mistakes?
5. **Do you remind** your teen that it isn't necessary to dwell on mistakes? After learning from them, your teen can move on.

How well are you doing?

More yes *answers mean you are showing your teen how to learn and do better after mistakes. For each* no, *try that idea.*

"You must be big enough to admit your mistakes, smart enough to learn from them and strong enough to correct them."
—John C. Maxwell

Encourage your teen to put thanks in writing



Writing in a "gratitude journal" for a few minutes each week can have a positive impact on students' grades and engagement at school. To get your teen started, suggest topics such as:

- **A personality trait** your teen is proud to have.
- **A recent opportunity** that was rewarding.
- **Something wonderful** that happened to your teen or a friend.

Source: G. Bono, "Gratitude Practices at School That Work (and Why Some Don't)," EducationWeek.

Teens still need parenting

Your high school student may look like an adult. But your teen is not your peer, and you are still in charge. To maintain authority and avoid falling into the friend trap:

- **Insist on respectful behavior** toward you and other adults. Don't continue a conversation if your teen is being rude.
- **Make decisions** based on what is best for your teen, rather than to please or seem like a cool parent or "one of the kids."

Keep thinking skills sharp

Active, analytical thinking is essential for learning. To keep thinking skills ready for action, regularly ask your teen to:

- **Explain situations,** examples and problems in detail. Your teen will need to know vocabulary and express ideas clearly.
- **Verify information.** After reading something online, ask your teen to find credible sources to double-check facts.
- **Consider all sides** of an issue. Ask your teen to defend opposing viewpoints with equal dedication.

Helping Students Learn®
Published in English and Spanish, September through May.
Publisher: Doris McLaughlin.
Publisher Emeritus: John H. Wherry, Ed.D.
Editor: Alison McLean.
Translations Editor: Victoria Gaviola.
Copyright © 2026, The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc.
P.O. Box 7474, Fairfax Station, VA 22039-7474
1-800-756-5525 • www.parent-institute.com

Copyright © 2026, The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc. www.parent-institute.com

Elementary School

Daily Learning Planner

Ideas families can use to help children do well in school

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10



THE PARENT INSTITUTE®

November 2026

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Children Do Well in School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

1. Let your child see you reading for different reasons: for pleasure, for information, to learn something new.
2. Help your child set a reading goal for this month.
3. Ask your child to teach you about a concept in an assignment. Teaching reinforces learning.
4. In the car, say a number between one and 10. Who can spot a license plate with numbers that add up to the number you called out?
5. Is your child behaving well? Be sure to say how proud this makes you.
6. It's the birthday of James Naismith, inventor of basketball, who was born in 1861. Find a court and shoot some hoops with your child.
7. Teach your child to write down assignments, tests dates and school activities on your family calendar.
8. Bring a calculator with you when you shop. Have your child to keep a running tally of purchases.
9. This week, help your child keep track of time spent reading for pleasure each day and calculate the average.
10. Make a school project kit with your child. Include glue, tape, craft sticks, colored paper, etc. This can reduce frantic, last-minute shopping trips.
11. Start a kitchen band. Use spoons, pans and lids for instruments. March around the house together.
12. Take an online trip with your child to another continent. Watch travel videos and read about interesting places.
13. Make up new compound words for familiar things together. Perhaps your cat is a *purrcuddler*.
14. Today is the birthday of Claude Monet, a French Impressionist painter. Look at pictures of his art with your child, then paint your own.
15. At dinner, have everyone compliment each person at the table.
16. Help your child rehearse things to say if feeling pressured by a friend or classmate to cheat.
17. Have your child make a list of things in a category—such as colors—then put them into alphabetical order.
18. Plan a reading dinner. Have everyone bring a book to the table, and take turns reading aloud.
19. Play tic-tac-toe with your child.
20. Encourage your child to write a thank-you note to someone who has been helpful or a positive influence.
21. Have all family members pitch in for a half-hour "blitz" of house cleaning. It teaches that everyone has a responsibility to help the family.
22. Teach your child to make a healthy snack. Enjoy it together.
23. Talk to your child about the proper ways to handle trash. Where should it go? What can be reused or recycled?
24. Let your child pick the book you will read together today.
25. Look for ways to volunteer as a family. Let your child help decide what to do.
26. Make a paper cornucopia with your child. Fill it with a list of all the things that make your family grateful.
27. Ask your child to tell you a bedtime story tonight.
28. Visit the library with your child. Check out a book about oceans.
29. Have your child read to you as you're cleaning up after a meal. Or, you read while your child cleans up!
30. Make your child laugh! Tell a joke, read a funny story or poem, sing a silly song or draw a cartoon.

Copyright © 2026 The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc. • May be reproduced only as licensed by *Parents make the difference!*® and *Helping Children Learn*® newsletters • 1-800-756-5525

Middle School

Daily Learning Planner

Ideas families can use to help students do well in school

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10



THE PARENT INSTITUTE®

November 2026

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Students Do Well in School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

1. Have your child play a favorite song. Listen to the lyrics and discuss what you hear.
2. Review the consequences for breaking family rules. Understanding consequences in advance can discourage kids from misbehaving.
3. Challenge your child to run a 30-yard dash. Time the run and encourage your middle schooler to keep practicing to get faster.
4. Help your child set a specific goal and plan steps to take to reach it.
5. Review what your child should do in case of a fire in your home.
6. Each evening, have your child place items that go back to school by the door. This prevents frantic searches in the morning.
7. Talk with your middle schooler about one of your values. Family opinions do matter to kids.
8. Look at a newspaper with your child. Discuss which articles look interesting and read one together.
9. Say "I love you" to your child at least twice a day. Before and after school are ideal times.
10. Make a list of healthy breakfast-on-the-go foods your child can grab on the way out the door before school.
11. Have your child help you research a major family purchase. List important features and ask your child to find the best deal.
12. Make eye contact while your child talks to you. This shows that you're paying attention.
13. Ask your middle schooler to think of several places where it would be interesting to volunteer. Have your child call each to ask for information.
14. Go to the library with your child. Each of you check out a book.
15. Ask what qualities your child looks for in a friend.
16. Talk with your child about whether classes are challenging enough.
17. Give your child some graph paper to use when doing math. It helps students keep columns of numbers neat.
18. Take your child to a high school sporting event. Talk about your middle schooler's goals for high school.
19. Talk with your child about the pros and cons of social media use. Monitor your child's activities online often.
20. Ask your child's opinion about something, and what led to it. Listen respectfully before sharing your own opinion.
21. Brainstorm ideas together for a delicious new flavor of ice cream.
22. Ask your child, "How is your life outside of school going?"
23. Play a memory game with your child. Try to remember the things you each did the day before yesterday.
24. Notice things that cause your child stress. Discuss ways to ease stress, such as exercise, deep breathing and talking problems through.
25. Choose a movie based on a book. Read the book as a family, then watch the film.
26. At dinner, have family members take turns naming three things they are thankful for.
27. Talk about stereotypes with your child. Discuss why they're unfair.
28. Take a look at your child's study spot. Is the space organized and free of distractions?
29. Encourage your child to make daily to-do lists. After completing each item, your student should check it off.
30. Ask your child a specific question about school, such as "Which class is your favorite?"

Copyright © 2026 The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc. • May be reproduced only as licensed by *Parents still make the difference!*® and *Helping Students Learn*® newsletters • 1-800-756-5525

High School

Daily Learning Planner

Ideas parents can use to help students do well in school

Title I-Educational Service Unit 10



THE PARENT INSTITUTE®

November 2026

Daily Learning Planner: Ideas Families Can Use to Help Students Do Well in School—Try a New Idea Every Day!

1. Help your teen make a budget for the month, including plans for unexpected expenses.
2. When you hear your teen's wake-up alarm, walk past the bedroom and say a cheerful "Good morning." An upbeat mood is contagious.
3. Check in with the school about your teen's attendance. Make sure your student is showing up to all classes.
4. Say "no" to unchaperoned parties, even if "everyone is doing it."
5. Memorize something with your teen today. Try a poem or a quotation.
6. Hear a compliment about your teen? Be sure to pass it on. Teens need positive reinforcement.
7. Model fairness. Judge your teen's friends by their actions, not their clothes.
8. Encourage your teen to visit the school's college and career center this week and explore the resources available.
9. Remind your teen that mistakes are not the end of the world. They are the beginning of learning.
10. Help your teen make the connection between rights and responsibilities—rights come with responsibilities attached.
11. Is your home "teen friendly"? Ask your teen what you could do to make it a place where friends would like to come.
12. Work on a number or logic puzzle with your teen.
13. When your teen is upset and you aren't connecting, say, "Help me understand."
14. Is your teen a reluctant reader? Ask a librarian to suggest a book that ties in with a popular movie.
15. Make a to-do list with your teen and put tasks in order of priority.
16. With your teen, check out the "front page" stories of a variety of local and national news outlets. Compare and contrast the coverage.
17. Encourage your teen to use graph paper when working with columns of numbers. It reduces careless math errors.
18. Make flash cards with your teen. They are an effective tool for studying vocabulary words, science concepts, etc.
19. Encourage your teen to use small chunks of free time to study or review.
20. Is your teen's room messy? Set the timer for a 15-minute pick-up blitz before your student goes out with friends.
21. Find an interesting word in the dictionary. Challenge the entire family to use it as often as possible today.
22. Teens can prepare for success in the workplace while in high school. Check out the school's career and technical training classes.
23. Look at ads with your teen. Which statements about the products are facts? Which ones are opinions?
24. Ask your teen, "How is your life outside of school?"
25. Declare this an Acts of Kindness Day. Make a special effort to be kind to one another. It may become a habit!
26. Have family members make gratitude lists. Share your lists at dinner.
27. Give family members marshmallows and uncooked spaghetti. See who can build the tallest tower.
28. Make tonight Teens' Night in the Kitchen. Your teen will learn to cook, communicate and cooperate!
29. Remind your teen of the long-term benefits of achieving in school.
30. Avoid giving your teen compliments that really aren't—"You'd be great if only … ."

Copyright © 2026 The Parent Institute®, a division of PaperClip Media, Inc. • May be reproduced only as licensed by *Parents still make the difference!*® and *Helping Students Learn*® newsletters • 1-800-756-5525