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Title **Interactive Homework to Engage Parents with Students
on the Transition from Middle to High School**

Authors Joyce L. Epstein, Douglas J. Mac Iver, Martha A. Mac Iver, and Steven B. Sheldon
Johns Hopkins University-CSOS

Abstract

Middle grades teachers want early adolescents to take responsibility for their own learning and success in school. One way to encourage this is with *interactive homework*, which enables students to lead conversations with a parent or family partner about something interesting they are learning in class. An exploratory study tested whether eighth graders would talk with a parent about the transition to high school and about the roles parents may play to support student success in grade 9. Studies indicate that parents make the transition to high school *with* their students, but many are unsure of how to sustain age-appropriate engagement in their teen's education. We found that students were able and willing to conduct discussions on four critical issues that determine success or failure in high school: attendance, course passing, GPA, and motivation to succeed. In written comments for each assignment, students were thoughtful and hopeful about entering grade 9 and graduating from high school on time. Parents were positive about their interactions with their early adolescents. Importantly, when parents enjoyed a conversation with their students, they were significantly more likely to say that they gained insights into the importance of on-going engagement in their student's education in high school.

Key Words: Family engagement, homework, transition to high school, student-led conversations

This We Believe Characteristics of good school organizations:

- The school actively involves families in the education of their children.
- Students and teachers are engaged in active, purposeful learning.
- Educators use multiple learning and teaching approaches

Interactive Homework to Engage Parents with Students on the Transition from Middle to High School

In the middle grades, early adolescents are eager to take charge of their lives and learning, but they still need care and guidance from parents¹ and teachers. One way that teachers can meet students' need for independence and parents' need to remain involved in their children's education is with *interactive homework*. This technique asks teachers to assign homework that enables students to conduct positive conversations with a parent or family partner to demonstrate and discuss something interesting they are learning in class. An interactive assignment may focus on academic learning in math, science, and language arts (Epstein, 2017), or may encourage student-parent conversations on topics that are important for student development.

Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) supports teachers' efforts to engage all families through assignments that students conduct at home (Corno & Xu, 2004; Epstein, 2011; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2019; Patall, Cooper, & Robinson, 2008). *TIPS* activities aim to solve some important problems with homework:

- *TIPS* activities help all families become involved, not just the few who know how to discuss math, science, language arts, or other school subjects and topics.
- *TIPS* activities are conducted by the students. Students share their work, ideas, and progress with a parent or family partner. Parents are not asked to "teach" school subjects.
- *TIPS* activities include a section for students and parents to discuss how a school skill is used in the real world.
- *TIPS* activities include a section of Home-to-School Communications for parents to comment on their interactions with their children and ask questions of teachers.

Prior studies of *TIPS* interactive homework focused on family engagement with students in the elementary and middle grades in math, science, and language arts. Results across grade levels confirmed that the most dramatic effect was that significantly more parents become actively engaged with their children in discussing students' ideas and schoolwork. In all three academic subjects, *TIPS* activities increased students' and parents' positive attitudes and emotions about homework, and improved students' report card grades and/or achievement test scores (Epstein, 2011; Epstein, Simon, & Salinas, 1997; Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001, 2012; Van Voorhis 2003, 2009, 2011a, b).

Based on the results of interactive homework in academic subjects, we wanted to know if interactive homework that focused on the transition from middle to high school would capture students' and parents' interests and increase parents' understanding of the need to continue to support their early adolescents in high school.

The transition from middle to high school is a critical point in students' education. Studies conducted over several decades (Bryk, et al, 2015; Crosnoe, 2009; Falbo, Lein, & Amador, 2001; Hoover-Dempsey, Ice, & Whitacker, 2009; MacIver, Epstein, Sheldon, & Fonseca, 2015; Mac Iver, et al., 2018; Smith, 1997; Spera, 2005) confirm that:

- (1) Students who make a successful transition and adjust quickly to high school are more likely than other students to turn their attention to their classwork and learning.
- (2) Students whose parents remain engaged in their education are more likely than other students to attend school regularly, pass their courses, and graduate from high school on time with plans for postsecondary education.
- (3) Parental engagement decreases dramatically when students enter high school.

The findings suggest that it is important for parents to make the transition to high school *with* their students. Parents could be more knowledgeable guides for their children if teachers and counselors provided information on high school programs and requirements, and if they conducted age-appropriate engagement activities linked to success in high school. Students should benefit by discussing with a parent how to think about the upcoming transition and how the parent will continue to support their success in grade 9 and throughout the years of high school.

MATERIALS: *TIPS-TRANSITIONS*

Four *TIPS-Transitions* activities were developed to guide students to talk with a parent or family partner about moving on to high school. The activities focused on topics that were reported to create problems for large percentages of students in Grade 9: readiness for change; regular attendance; studying for and passing tests; and earning required credits for on-time graduation from high school (Allensworth & Easton, 2007). Figure 1 outlines the objectives of the four activities and the math and language arts skills that students must use to complete the assignments.

(Insert Figure 1)

The four *TIPS-Transitions* activities address several *This We Believe* characteristics for effective schools and successful students (National Middle School Association [NMSA], 2010). Specifically, the activities actively engage parents in their children's education as students lead discussions of important issues that they will face in high school. Interactive homework adds to teachers' repertoires of homework design. As students conduct the interactions about the transition to high school, they build critical thinking and speaking skills, and learn to respect views that may differ from their own. The activities also may strengthen early adolescents' commitment to schoolwork as they consider their responsibilities for their work and behavior in high school, and as they hear parents' pledges to support their success.

QUESTIONS

We asked two main questions about the four *TIPS-Transitions* activities:

- (1) How willing and able are students in grade 8 to talk with a parent about the looming transition to high school?
- (2) How do parents respond to students' questions about on-going engagement to support student success in grade 9?

SAMPLE

The four *TIPS-Transitions* activities were tested in four schools in a large city in South Carolina, small cities in California and Washington, and a suburb in Washington, as shown in Table 1. The schools served large percentages of students and families in economically-distressed communities. They varied socio-economically (i.e., from 57% to 100% of students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch), racially, culturally, and linguistically (i.e., from 1% to 96% Hispanic students and families).

One English teacher in each school volunteered to assign *TIPS-Transitions* activities once a week for four weeks to one class of students in grade 8 in May and June at the end of the school year prior to the transition to high school. The teachers collected 168 completed homework activities. Table 1 indicates that the teachers varied in how systematically they collected students' assignments. Across classrooms, from 18% to 86% of students returned their homework to the teacher. Up to 49 students submitted from one to four assignments to their teachers.

Teachers were guided to prepare students, assign activities, and follow up with discussions in class when the assignments were due. In this exploratory study, we did not measure whether or how well teachers followed the instructions. This may help to explain the variation in rates of homework return by students in different teachers' classrooms.

(Insert Table 1)

Students' and parents' responses to questions on each activity were examined as "paired" statements in conversation. Also, parents' comments in the Home-to-School Communications section of each activity were coded and analyzed to understand parents' responses to the interactions led by the students.

Table 2 shows that more than half of the students completing *TIPS* activities were female. Mothers were the main family partners with students on homework. Depending on the activity, from 55% to 63% of students worked with their mothers on *TIPS-Transitions*. Smaller percentages worked with siblings, others (cousins, friends, grandparents), and fathers. Some students (4% to 15%) did not identify a family partner on the *TIPS* activity.

(Insert Table 2)

RESULTS

Parents' Evaluations. At the end of each *TIPS-Transitions* activity in the section Home-to-School-Communications, parents were asked to rate three conditions:

- Was their student able to conduct the assignment? Between 91%-100% of parents reported that their students were able to conduct all four activities.
- Did they and their student enjoy the interaction? Between 72%-80% of parents reported that they and their student enjoyed Activities 1, 3, and 4. Fewer (57%) enjoyed the activity about attendance. Parents and students had strong reactions to this activity. Some parents expressed gratitude for bringing the topic to light. Others noted that the assignment “did not apply” to them because their student already had good attendance.
- Did the assignment help them think about on-going involvement in their student’s high school education? Between 80%-94% of parents reported that the activities helped them see the importance of their on-going engagement in their students’ education in high school.

Also, between 85% and 98% of parents signed the activity to signal their participation. The parents’ responses indicated that they were positive about their discussions with their children about the transition to high school.

(Insert Table 3)

Table 3 reports interesting contrasts in whether parents gained insight into the importance of their on-going engagement in their students’ education after the transition to high school. Because just about all parents reported that their students were able to conduct all of the *TIPS-Transitions* discussions, student ability did not vary much. There were no significant correlations of student ability with whether parents and students enjoyed any of the four conversations.

By contrast, the second panel of Table 3 shows that for three of the four activities, parents who reported that they enjoyed the discussions were significantly more likely than other parents to say they gained insight into the importance of their on-going engagement in their student’s education in grade 9.

8th Grade Students’ Written Reactions and Parents’ Responses

Each *TIPS-Transitions* interactive homework activity requires students to interview a parent to complete sections of the assignment. Students may conduct the discussions in the language of the family,² and write the results of their discussions in English, as they do all homework. Parents are *not* asked to read or write on *TIPS* homework, except in the section called Home-to-School Communications, where they may send a message or question to the teacher about the activity in English or in their home language. Here, we summarize a few typical reactions of students and parents to the four *TIPS-Transitions* activities, as written by the students.

Activity 1, *Go On to High School*, provided an overview for students and families of the topics to be covered in detail in the other three *TIPS-Transitions* activities (i.e., attendance, grade point average, and course passing). This activity also asked students about their interests in extra-curricular activities and dreams for college and careers.

The following are a few paired comments from students and their parents. In Activity 1, students asked parents how, in grade 9, they would help the student attain a stated goal for success. Some parents responded to the student directly (e.g., “you”); other parents answered the question as if talking to the teacher (e.g., “him,” or “her”). The comments reveal that the students and parents conducted important conversations.

Question for Student

What is your plan for regular, on-time attendance?

Miss no more than a week each semester for sick time.

Not get up late or ditch any of my classes.

I will try to sleep early so I can wake up early.

Question for Parent/Family Partner

How will you help me meet this goal?

Try to keep you healthy and assist with homework.

I will make sure to get you on time every day as I've done for the last 9 years.

I will make sure she is awake on time and make sure she goes to school on time. Schedule her appointments after school.

What is your plan to complete your homework assignments?

Set more time aside to finish homework.

To complete my homework I will do it the day I get it and not wait until the last minute.

Have all my electronics far, far away.

How will you help me meet this goal?

I need to check [the homework] agenda daily, stay on top of Skyward [Parent Portal] and ask questions.

I will answer any question you might have to the best of my knowledge.

She will give me her electronics and [I will] put them somewhere she doesn't know.

What is your plan to study for tests?

Study in advance to be more ready for tests.

Pay attention in class and try to gain knowledge by doing the homework.

Have one hour of studying.

How will you help me meet this goal?

Stay on top of the dates for tests and make sure to study in advance.

Motivate me and check on how I am doing.

We are going to decide study hours.

What is your plan to earn course credits to graduate from high school on time?

Turn more work in on time and catch up.

I will do all of my homework, and make sure I plan and pass classes.

How will you help me meet this goal?

Talk to advisor about credits and stay on schedule to pass classes.

I will try to stay super involved in her life.

What is your plan for participating in extra-curricular activities?

Get good grades to be able to do those activities.

I plan to do sports and clubs.

How will you help me meet this goal?

Help him find something that interests him and to stay on top of grades to participate in sports.

I will make sure she gets picked up safely and make sure they won't affect her grades

Students' answers to the questions in Activity 1 indicated that eighth graders are serious about their plans to succeed in high school. Asked to look ahead to grade 9, students dreamed about success, not failure. Here are typical student responses to the question, "What is your dream for the future?"

- I dream about going far in life and living a life I'm proud of and know I have done the best I could.
- I want a really good education to get many job offers I'm interested in.
- A career I might want to have in the future is to be an architect because I have a creative mind.

Among their dreams for the future, students mentioned wanting to be an animator, criminologist, business leader, OBGYN, teacher, psychologist, artist, and working in culinary arts, science, and medicine.

Family comments on Activity 1. The following were typical comments from families in the Home-to-School Communications section.

- I like this activity because it made me think ahead of helping my daughter in the future.
- My son has been thinking of this since elementary, so we are already prepared.

For all activities, some families reported the topics were new to them, and others said the discussions reinforced conversations they already had with their early adolescents. Even parents who were familiar with the topics reported that the discussions with their students were meaningful, as noted in Table 3.

Activity 2, Absences Add Up, asked students to read and discuss with a parent or family partner a bar graph connecting days absent in grade 9 with the percent of students graduating on time in grade 12. The following are a few typical paired comments from students and their family partners.

Student	Family Partner
The more you go to school [the] better chance you'll graduate.	Once you get behind the 8 ball, it just rolls over you.
<i>Which year of high school is this pulled from? 9th graders that don't graduate? Seniors?</i>	<i>Was poverty-stricken areas entered in the graph? It's taken only from people on the east coast and it's a well-know fact that people in those areas graduate less because of poverty and crime?</i>

The last student and parent (above) had questions about the graph. They were confused by the connections of attendance in grade 9 with graduation rates for the same students in grade 12. The research team reviewed this and other activities to clarify and revise questions. As with all homework assignments, students' or parents' misunderstandings should be the topic of teachers' follow up discussions and clarifications in class when the assignment is due.

Creating Fortune Cookie Messages

Activity 2 also asked students to read aloud and discuss with their family partner descriptions of three students with different patterns of attendance. Then, students created fortune cookie messages for the three students. Here are a few examples.

1. To the student with poor attendance, students wrote:

- To follow a fool's path is a folly adventure.
- If you keep missing 5 days a month, you will have a 30% chance of graduating from high school.
- Suck it up, Sally. A rainy day can mess up your hair, but that's it.

2. To the student with good attendance, students wrote:

- Hard work will pay dividends in the days to come.
- Persistence shall be rewarded.
- If you imagine it, you can achieve it!
- Decisions determine destiny.

3. To the student with borderline attendance, students wrote:

- Don't be pushed by your problems, be led by your dreams!
- You're not too cool for school.
- Attending school brings money.

“Tweet” on Attendance

Students also were asked to send a “tweet” to a national campaign to encourage good attendance.

Students wrote:

Life is a garden—dig it. You need your studies to dig the garden.

Be cool, stay in school! If you miss, you'll get dissed!

You may skip, but never forget about the little things you are putting in front of yourself in order to succeed.

Take those sick days. Your mental, emotional, and physical health is more important than school.

Family comments on Activity 2. The following were typical comments from families in the Home-to-School Communications section.

- Thank you for stressing the importance of attendance.
- We have issues when we have him miss school for appointment, so we already know the importance of being there daily.
- My student is a straight A student and as parents we make it clear what is expected of her including school attendance. However, this activity does not take into account familial issues, illness or absences that can't be helped.

Students' answers to questions in Activity 2 indicated that they were aware of the importance of good attendance for their academic progress in high school and for promotion to the next grade. Many were creative and philosophical in their advice to other students. Some expressed more nuanced opinions to explain that sometimes they were absent because they were ill or dealing with unusual circumstances.

Activity 3, *Gaining Powerful Advantage with a Good GPA*, asked students to read and discuss with a parent or family partner a bar graph connecting students' GPA at the end of grade 9 with percentages of students who did not graduate from high school, went to a 2-year college, or attended a 4-year college after high school. The following are a few typical comments from students:

- I need to make at least a B+ if I want to have a chance of getting into college.
- Warn students about having below a C average and encourage reaching B average or better.
- The graph shows that the students who got a C average most likely didn't go to a 4-year college.
- 9th graders need to earn at least 3.0 GPA in order to attend a 4-year college.

Students' responses to Activity 3 suggest that some students would benefit from a review of graph-reading skills so that they do not confuse results from one sample with "certainties" for all students. This is a teachable moment that can be addressed when the activity is discussed in class.

Students' answers to questions in Activity 3 indicated that, as they look ahead to high school, most 8th graders want to earn good grades in grade 9 and through high school. Just about all 8th graders reported that they want to go to college or to some post-high school educational program. Their comments echo national surveys of students that, historically, indicate that through grade 10, large percentages of students and families have high aspirations for their education and success in school. It is important to note that after grade 10, as students and families review the credits needed to graduate and attend college, many begin to abandon or reduce their aspirations and expectations for postsecondary education. This common change in plans linked to credit requirements requires schools to implement activities and monitor progress to help students fulfill their aspirations.

Students were asked to use the graph in Activity 3 and their discussion with a parent to write a friendly letter to their "friend Cary" to encourage him to work hard to "meet his goal of college enrollment." Here are excerpts from three students' letters:

1. "Your entire life relies on whether or not you get a degree, and if you have a C average or lower, you have less than a 40% chance of getting into a 4-year college. Please take this into consideration and put forth more effort in your work."
2. "I want to start by saying earning good grades is a major key to success and to go to college. Many kids think having bad grades is cool—which [it] is not. Two things you need to always do: First, always study for your tests. Secondly, always turn in your homework because homework is a big part of your grades. Well, that's all I want to say. Remember—stay in school and follow your dreams."

3. “I am writing to you today because I want you to know how important grades are. Kids who get a B or higher in 9th grade are more likely to go to college. If you go to college, your chances at having a good paying job are also higher. You don’t want to work flipping burgers all your life, do you? Who doesn’t like more money? So, if you work hard now, you’ll make more money and probably work less hard later.”

Parents commented:

- This was really helpful. Now my son understands how GPA works.
- It is something she has seen her sisters go through and that we emphasize.
- I'm grateful that my son is learning the importance of GPA.

Students took the letter-writing activity seriously. They wrote 4-10 sentences of advice to their hypothetical friend. Between 78% to 90% of students reported that they planned and proof read their letters by adding details and by checking spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.

Activity 4, *Destination Graduation—Stay in the Passing Lane*, asked students to read and discuss with a parent or family partner a bar graph on the relationship of course passing with on-time graduation from high school. The graph showed that, on average, failing even one course in grade 9 may reduce the likelihood of completing high school in four years. The following are a few paired comments from students and their parents.

Student

You can drop percentages of not graduating so fast with you just not passing one class.

People who fail 1 course still have a 67% of graduating.

Family Interview Question (paired with student):

The more classes you fail, the harder it is to graduate.

What is important is that kids who failed NO courses have a higher chance of graduating.

One parent was particularly interested in this activity. S/he wrote:

“I think it is interesting that only 86% of students graduate on time while passing all classes. I would think it would be higher. I would think the 14% that don't [graduate on time] probably give up or have other negative interruptions towards their graduating.”

Facebook Postings

Activity 4 also asked students to read aloud to a parent or family partner three incomplete Facebook postings from 12th grade students reporting on their high school careers. Then, the 8th graders were asked to write their own endings to the students’ postings based on their family discussions about the importance of on-time graduation from high school. Here are a few examples of how students completed the postings.

On Facebook, “Evie” wrote that she was 5 credits short and would not graduate with her friends.

The 8th graders completed her posting that started: “I regret. . .”

- . . .that I procrastinated and didn't turn my work on time.
- . . .that I did not put enough effort into school.
- . . .that I must spend another year in high school instead of going off to college.

On Facebook, “Ben” wrote that he was graduating in a few days.

The 8th graders completed his posting that started “...To me, graduating from high school. . .”

- . . . is my major goal and it's what I've strived for since the beginning.
- . . . is scary having to go out into the world from living with parents.
- . . .was twelve well spent years with friends and clubs.

On Facebook, “Avery” was giving advice to his sister who was just starting high school.

The 8th graders completed his posting that started: “My advice to my sister is. . .”

- . . . Pass all [your] freshman year classes because that's one of the most important years of high school.
- . . . Pass all your courses in 9th grade and you won't have to work as hard in senior year.
- . . . Don't slack off. Make good grades.

Cycle of Inquiry: Plan-Do-Study-Act

Cycle of Inquiry processes were applied to the development, administration, and improvement of *TIPS-Transitions*. Based on the data collected from students and parents and informal reactions from teachers, the following changes were made:

- The four activities were edited and reformatted to be clearer and more family-friendly.
- The activities were re-ordered. Activity 1 was moved to Activity 4 for students and parents to review the topics of attendance, course passing, GPA, (revised activities 1, 2, 3, respectively) and then to consider their personal goals for success in high school (revised activity 4).
- Guidelines for teachers were revised to suggest that they introduce, assign, and discuss *TIPS-Transitions* activities over four weeks in March or April (instead of May or June). This would ensure that students and parents focused on homework and plans for the future before preparations for 8th grade graduation distracted their attention. With more time, teachers and counselors could be more systematic in collecting students' homework to guide further discussions about the transition to high school.

CONCLUSIONS

Data from this exploratory study of *TIPS-Transitions* activities confirmed that interactive homework is one way for teachers to help students engage in structured conversations with a parent or family partner about their plans to succeed in high school.³ The findings address the two main questions:

- Eighth grade students in demographically diverse communities were able and willing to conduct meaningful conversations with a parent or family partner about their upcoming transition to high

school. Most students were thoughtful and, often, creative in their responses to graphs, situations, and questions about entering 9th grade and their plans to graduate from high school on time.

- Parents and other family partners were positive about their interactions with their early adolescents. Large percentages signed the section of *TIPS-Transitions* for Home-to-School Communications. When parents reported that they enjoyed an activity, they were more likely to say that they gained insights into the importance of on-going engagement in their student's education in high school.

There are two caveats about using *TIPS-Transitions*. First, teachers must prepare students to conduct discussions and interviews with a parent or family partner. Students must hear, clearly, that the teacher wants them to conduct the *TIPS-Transitions* activity in the language of the home. Students may be used to conducting homework on their own, and may skip discussions with a parent to finish quickly. With guidance from the teacher, students will be able to help parents understand that they are making the transition to high school *with* their students, and that they will continue to be engaged in their teen's education in the years ahead. Students may learn that, when they are in high school they will continue to have family support for their education.

In this exploratory study, we did not monitor or measure teachers' different approaches to homework. For example, some teachers may have guided students more explicitly than others to conduct conversations and interviews with a parent or family partner and to complete the assignments on time. The teachers' preparations with students in class may have affected which parents participated, and whether they enjoyed the interactions with their early adolescent. New studies of *TIPS-Transitions* should include measures of teachers' approaches to this new design of homework,

Second, four discussions by students with parents or family partners will not ensure student success in high school. There are other influences to consider. Students bring a history of prior achievement and motivation to learn with them to high school. High schools differ in their programs of student support and school, family, and community partnerships. Teachers vary in whether and how well they communicate with parents to keep them engaged in their teen's education. After the first few months of high school, the influence of experiences in the middle grades may fade.

Nevertheless, even a few discussions with a parent or family partner in grade 8 may help students think about how they will meet the demands for success in high school and avoid problems that may lead to failure. The discussions also may help parents consider how they will be engaged at schools and/or at home to support their children's success in high school after the transition is made, particularly in the early months of Grade 9.

Prior research suggested that a good transition and swift adjustment to a new school enables students to focus quickly on their academic work and achievements (Crosnoe, 2009). It will be important to learn if and how students benefit from discussing the transition to high school with a parent or family partner. It may be that students and parents who take time in grade 8 to talk together about high school develop a shared vision about good attendance and hard work. These interactions may differentiate between students who attend school regularly or those who are frequently absent, and between students who pass or fail their classes in the first marking period in grade 9. These early patterns of behavior may set students on a

trajectory toward promotion to grade 10 and on-time high school graduation. It also is possible that student-led discussions in grade 8 prepare parents to maintain their interest and engagement in their 9th grader's education.

Notes:

¹ In this article, the word “parent” refers to the family partner whom the student interviews to learn their views on the topics of *TIPS-Transitions* activities.

² Activities may be adapted or translated to meet school needs. Teacher should guide students to conduct the activities in the language of the home. Sections of activities may be shortened or extended. Middle grades teachers or counselors may create additional interactive homework assignments to prepare 8th grade students for the transition to high school.

³ TIPS-Transitions activities and directions for teachers are available at no cost from the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS) at Johns Hopkins University, at <http://nnps.jhucos.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/TIPS-Transitions-final-PACKET-2020.pdf>

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Author identification

Joyce L. Epstein, Ph.D., is professor of education in the School of Education at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore MD. E-mail jepstein@jhu.edu

Douglas J. Mac Iver, Ph.D., is professor of education in the School of Education at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore MD. E-mail dmaciver@jhu.edu

Martha Abele Mac Iver, Ph.D., is associate professor of education in the School of Education at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore MD. E-mail mmaciver@jhu.edu

Steven B. Sheldon, Ph.D., is associate professor of education in the School of Education at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore MD. E-mail ssheldon@jhu.edu

Tables and Figures

Figure 1. *TIPS-Transitions* to Involve Families with Students in the Transition to High School

<i>TIPS-Transitions</i> Activities	Objective for student-led conversation	Link to curriculum and students' skills
1. Ready, Set, Go! On to High School	Discuss goals, overall, for success in high school on attendance, course passing, and extra-curricular participation.	Discuss with a parent or family partner: How will you help me meet my goals to succeed in high school). Descriptive writing. Predict success in grade 9 and discuss how parent or family partner will help student meet the goals.
2. Absences Add UP	Discuss the importance of regular attendance for learning and for on-time graduation from high school.	Graph reading. Discuss data with a parent or family partner. Persuasive writing. Text and tweet advice to another student about attendance.
3. Gaining a Powerful Advantage with a Good GPA	Explain the practice in high school of creating an average over four years of the final report card grades received in all courses.	Graph reading. Discuss data with a parent or family partner. Connect report card grades in 9 th grade with the probability of graduating from high school and entering college. Persuasive writing. E-mail a friend about improving GPA to enter college. Attend to quality of writing by adding details and proofreading to check spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation.
4. Stay in the Passing Lane	Discuss the importance of passing all courses in high school.	Graph reading. Discuss data with a parent or family partner. Descriptive writing. Complete <i>Facebook</i> posts by students who are reflecting on their plans to graduate from high school.

Table 1: Participating Schools and Classes

School	Location	% of Students Eligible for Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	% Hispanic	Participating Class Size	Homework Collection Rate for Four Activities
1	Suburb WA	57	22	32	18-28%
2	Small City CA	100	96	22	55-86%
3	Small City WA	75	44	27	30-48%
4	Large City SC	92	1	20	25-60%

Table 2. Family Partners in *TIPS-Transitions* Activities

Activity	N students	% Female	% Family Partner, by Activity				
			Mother	Father	Sibling	Other Relative /Friend	Not Identified
Activity 1 GO on to HS	49	59.2	55.1	10.2	16.3	14.3	4.1
Activity 2 Attendance	41	65.9	56.1	4.9	4.9	19.5	14.6
Activity 3 GPA	40	55.0	62.5	5.0	10.0	10.0	12.5
Activity 4 Passing Lane	38	65.8	63.2	7.9	7.9	13.2	7.9

Number of *TIPS-Transitions* activities collected: 168

Table 3

Correlates of Student and Parent Enjoyment of *TIPS-Transitions* with Components

Activity	Zero-Order Correlation	
	Student and Parent Enjoyed the Activity with . . .	
	Student Ability	Parent Gained Insight Into On-Going Involvement
Activity 1 GO to HS N=49	-.074 (NS)	.673**
Activity 2 Absence N=41	.284 (NS)	.609**
Activity 3 GPA N=40	-.101 (NS)	.265 (NS)
Activity 4 Passing Lane N=38	(NA) ¹	.411*

¹ No variation on this measure: 100% of parents reported the student was able to conduct this activity, thus unrelated to measure of enjoyment.

*p<.05, **p<.01