



From My Heart to Yours...Kathy Tweeten, Administrator

Preparing for Success...

Success doesn't just happen. It is planned and prepared for in advance. The start of school is here. The first week of the new school year is the time to set good patterns to have a successful year. To help get off to the best start possible; I want you to consider two areas:

Getting Spiritually Prepared. The Word of God tells us to put on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6). The way that begins in any family is to start on your knees. If you need some ideas on things to pray about or Scripture verses you can pray for your child, there are many good books available. The Power of a Praying Parent, by Stormie Omartian, is one such book. I have adapted her prayer from pgs. 110-112 as an example of things to daily pray for your child during the school year.

Lord,

I pray that my child will have a deep reverence for You and Your ways. May my child hide Your Word in his (her) heart like a treasure, and seek after understanding like silver or gold. Give my child a good mind, a teachable spirit, and an ability to learn. Instill in my child a desire to attain knowledge and skill, and may he (she) have joy in the process. Above all, I pray that he (she) will be taught by You, for Your Word says that when our children are taught by You they are guaranteed peace. You have also said, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7). May he (she) never turn away from learning, but rather may my child turn to You for the knowledge he (she) needs.

I pray he (she) will respect the wisdom of his (her) parents and be willing to be taught by us. May he (she) also have the desire to be taught by the teachers You bring into his (her) life. Thank you for handpicking each one, Lord, and may they always be Godly role models from whom he (she) can easily learn. Give my child good communication with their teacher, clarity of thought, organization, good memory, and a strong learning ability.

Instill in my child's heart these truths: "Apply your heart to instruction, and your ears to words of knowledge" (Proverbs 23:12). "May the Lord give you understanding in all things" (2 Timothy 2:7). Lord, enable him (her) to experience the joy of learning more about You and Your world. Amen

Getting Physically Prepared. Now is the time to set the expectations and patterns for the school year.

1) Plan a regular, daily, designated homework time and place. A rule of thumb to determine an appropriate length of homework time is 10 minutes of designated time for every grade the child is in school (i.e. 5th grade=50 min). You may need to increase this time if your child has special needs or if this is their first year at CHA. Then schedule that time into your family's life, just like you would schedule any important appointment, five days a week ~ no exceptions. I recommend M-Th, and one time during the weekend. If your child finishes their homework before the allotted time is up, then have your child use the additional time to study for an upcoming test, work on a large assignment or project due later on, or review math facts or spelling words. Studying a little bit every day is the best way to learn new material. Also, by being consistent about the time of homework and the length of scheduled homework time, you will start to see the "feast or famine" of your child doing homework disappear. You should also have a designated homework place. Ideally the space will be within view of a parent. Create a study space that is organized and distraction free, including media free. Many children's rooms are not good places to study. The lighting can be poor and many have now become media centers including televisions, computers, CD players, DVD players, iPods, and stereo systems which are all distractions that can lengthen homework time and lessen quality of work. Also, provide the proper tools for homework success ~ a work space with good lighting, supplies, research books and resources...including the appropriate schoolbooks.

2) Consider a healthy after-school snack for your child. The ability to focus in many cases is directly linked to nutrition. Most kids come home from school and have soda and a salty snack. Move away from sugar and carbs, and get more protein (like a tuna fish sandwich), which will help them concentrate. The brain does better when it has the right nutrition.

3) Make sure your child gets plenty of rest. A set bedtime helps kids fall asleep more quickly. Suggest your child get in bed 15 minutes early to read, talk quietly with you and pray.

Kathy Tweeten

Blessings on a strong start to a fruitful year!