

Totally
Cool
Elementary
School

By KKB

Know What to Expect

Students are more successful when they know what to expect. In the upper elementary grades, expect to find the following:

New Teachers and Changing Classes

Students often have more than one teacher in the upper elementary grades. They study many different subjects and sometimes they change classes.

Clubs, Activities and After-School Programs

There are more activities and some of the may be before or after school. Students must have parent permission to participate in them. The activities are fun and a great way to make new friends and learn new skills that will be helpful both in and outside of school.

More Independence and More Responsibility

Students have more freedom and more choices in the upper elementary grades. They are also expected to be more responsible and trustworthy.

Harder Classes

The school work is often more difficult and there's usually more homework—so plan your time wisely. Students are also expected to be able to work independently and as a team.

"We're studying some really cool stuff n school now. I just finished my social studies project on volcanoes. I had to do a paper, oral report and I even got to make a volcano."

Know Your School

Now that you are older, you need to take responsibility for knowing what's going on in your school.

Student Handbook

We have a student handbook that has important information about your school. A student handbook explains the school rules. It also goes over lots of other things that students need to know.

Make sure that you keep your handbook and agenda book in a safe place. The agenda book you will need to carry to school with you every day and use it to keep track of assignments, tests, and other important dates. You can use the handbook when you want information about a school rule or the discipline plan, the dress code, your school's attendance policies, etc.

School Calendar

Your school is a very busy place. Special events and activities for all the school in the district take place almost every day. The school district puts out a calendar for your convenience to help you keep track of these events. Using the school calendar will help you and your parents can plan ahead to attend or for family vacations so that you don't miss anything important at school. It also shows the dates for Parent/Teacher conferences, PTA meetings and activities.

At the beginning of the school year, go over the school calendar with your parents. Put all of the important dates and events on your calendar at home so you don't miss anything fun.

Web Site

The school web site is: www.usd262.net and it can be used to find out information too. Some teachers and counselors have links to their pages on the school web site that will be useful for you. The site will tell you what is new and what's going on at school. It may also have information about your classes and your teachers. Your parents can sign up to get on the school information site also—they must show photo identification and get a password in the school office.

Attendance and Tardy Policies

Every school has certain things that students must do if they are absent or late to school. Find out what your school wants you to do. Does a parent need to call the school? Do you need to bring in a note from a parent or a doctor? What should you do if you're late? Know the answers to these questions before you are absent or tardy.

If you are absent, you need to make up the work that you missed. So that you don't get too far behind, ask the teacher for make-up work the first day you are back to school, call a classmate to find out what assignments you missed. If you have a planned absence, talk to the teacher in advance and get your homework to take with you. Ask if a parent or friend can pick up assignments and bring them home to you.

"I try to never miss school. It's just too hard to make everything up. It is fun to get the Perfect Attendance Award at the end of the year too."

Code of Conduct/School discipline Rules

In order to have a great place for students to learn, schools need to have rules to keep everyone safe. All schools have their own rules about what students can and cannot do these rules will be listed in your student

handbook. *All schools have rules that say "No Weapons, Drugs, Violence, Smoking, Alcohol, or Bullying allowed at school."*

Most students understand the importance of school rules and they follow them. Students who break the rules are usually given some kind of punishment.

If you break a rule, a teacher or principal may take away your recess time, have you stay after school, or make you go to Saturday School—middle and high school only. Students who do something very bad are sometimes suspended. This means that they are not allowed to come back to school for awhile.

All students need to work together in order to make their school a safe place to learn. If another student does anything that puts you or someone else in danger, tell a teacher, principal or counselor right away.

Principals, teachers and counselors make rules so their school will run smoothly and safely. But it is the students of good character who make their school a great place to be and to learn!

"Most school rules are just common sense", said Marissa. John said, "School rules are no big deal. Just follow them."

Where to Go for Help.

Your school is full of caring people. If you look around your school, you'll find teachers, principals, and counselors. You'll also see librarians, tutors, para-helpers, and secretaries—all these people want you to learn the most you can and have a fun and safe year, they are all there to help you.

If you are having trouble learning something, or if a subject seems too hard, talk to your teacher and ask for help. Maybe you need to get a tutor; your counselor can help with that,

Tell your parents right away if you are having trouble with a subject, so wait for a bad grade to surprise them. Let them know if there is a problem with another student or a teacher. Your parents love you and they want to help—be sure to talk to them every day about what is happening at school.

"I was having a lot of trouble with math and fractions and division. I asked my teacher for help and she worked with me after school. Now I understand how to do them and I'm getting a good grade in math."

"There was a boy who was bothering me. I asked one of my teachers how to handle it. She helped me and then sent me to see the counselor to work out the problem and now I am friends with the other student."

Be In School Every Day

To do well in school, you must have good attendance!

When you miss school, you miss class discussions and notes. You also miss homework, quizzes and tests. It doesn't matter how good you are about making up your work. You can never make up everything you miss. This is true even if you are out of school for only one day. *You just need to be in school every day to get good grades!*

If you are absent you are responsible for finding out what you missed and making up the work. If you missed a quiz or a test, you need to talk to the teacher and set a time to go in to make it up.

Teachers are very busy during class time. See each teacher before or after class to find out what you missed. Then, you must do your make-up work in the next two days for it to be counted on time. Remember, if you know ahead of time that you are going to be absent—get assignments in advance.

"I hate to miss school because I don't know what is going on."

Know How to Get Good Grades

If you do all these things, you are sure to get good grades.

Be Organized

- Use a student planner/agenda book to keep track of assignments.
- Have a separate folder for each class—different color ones work best.
- Have the phone numbers for classmates so that you have someone to call if you have a question about homework.
- Keep your desk and backpack clean and neat so you can find everything.
- Get everything ready for the next day before you go to bed—put your backpack by the front door.

Manage Your Time Well

- Use free time in school to start on your homework.
- Check your planner/agenda to make sure you take everything home you need to do all your homework.
- After school each day, look at your homework and plan to do the work right after school.
- NO TV, RADIO, OR GAMES UNTIL ALL HOMEWORK IS COMPLETED!

Be Successful in Class

- Be in school, on time, every day.
- Always have all supplies and everything you need with you.
- Participate in class when the teacher calls on you.
- Treat others with respect.
- Always do your homework.

Take Notes and Organize Handouts

- Pay attention in class.
- Listen to the teachers.
- Copy notes your teacher writes on the board or overhead.
- Take notes that are easy to read.
- Organize your handouts in the folder for the class they go with.
- Go over your notes and handouts as soon as possible after school to study.
- If you're absent, get copies of the notes and handouts you missed.

Know How to Read a Textbook

- Before you start to read an assignment, look over the headings and the words in **bold** or *italic* print.
- Read the assignment all the way through
- When you're done reading, review what you've read.

Study Smart

- Be sure to take everything home that you will need at the end of the school day.
- Find a good quiet place to study.
- Organize your study time and place.
- Allow more time for homework that you think you will need.
- *Ask your parents for help if you need it.*

"Before I start my homework, I figure out what I have to do and what order I'm going to do it in." Kane

Be a smart Test Taker

- Before you answer any questions, look over the test and make a plan—do the easy part first.
- Don't spend too much time on one questions or problem.
- Mark the questions you want to come back to by putting a little "x" in the margin.
- Check all your answers before you turn in the test.
- Use all of the time you are given to check your work and Do Your Best!

Cheating

Some students think that it's not a big deal to cheat. Cheating is a **BIG DEAL** and it is **WRONG!** If you cheat, you can get into a lot of trouble. Your teacher and your parents will also be disappointed in you. Your grade will become an "F" if you get caught.

What is Cheating?

- Copying someone else's work instead of doing your own work.
- Not being honest when grading papers in class.
- Pretending someone else's work is your own—plagiarism.
- Giving someone your paper to copy.
- Not admitting to a grading mistake.
- Copying something work for work, even from the internet.—plagiarism will earn you an "F".

The Internet

In the upper elementary grades, you need to do research for reports and projects. The Internet is a great place to gather information, but you must be careful... Some of the information on the Internet is incorrect—so check your sources.

Only use the Internet if you know that you have permission from your teacher and a parent. Then make sure that the information you use is correct. If you have a question, ask your teacher or librarian for help.

At home, you can use the Internet for fun. You can play games and watch videos. You need to have permission from a parent. Be certain you NEVER put any personal information or pictures on the Internet—they will be there forever, and anyone can see them.

Here are some Internet SAFETY TIPS.

- Don't give your name, address, telephone number, or school name to anyone.
- Remember that people online may not be who they say they are—they can lie about age and all kinds of things to get personal information from you.
- Don't give your Password to anyone!
- If you come across anything that makes you feel uncomfortable, tell your parents. They love you and want you to be safe.
- NEVER say MEAN things about anyone online—even if you are joking or teasing it will come back to haunt you later!

Never put anything on the Internet that you wouldn't want your parents or teachers to read and know! Remember—once it is on the internet—it is there forever—even when you delete someone else can still retrieve it and use it to prevent you from achieving your dreams and goals down the road in your future!

Set Goals

It's important for people of all ages to have goals.

What kind of dreams do you have for your life? Do you dream about getting good grades? Going to college? Playing well in an athletic game? Having a great job and career when you grow up?

The best way to help make your dreams come true is to set goals and make a plan to achieve them. If you're not in the habit of setting goals for yourself, now is the time to start.

Set Short-Term and Long-Term Goals

Long-term goals take a long time to reach. They might take weeks, months or even years to achieve.

Short-Term goals are goals that you can reach in a short period of time. Sometimes short-term goals help you achieve your long-term goals.

Examples of short-term goals:

Get a B on my next math test

Read a chapter of my book tonight.

Examples of long-term goals:

Get all A's and B's on my report cards all year.

Go to college and become a lawyer.

Set Goals that are Specific, Measurable and Realistic

- Not-Specific—I will do better in math
- Specific—I will get a B in math this quarter.
- Not measurable—I won't be so shy in class.
- Specific—I will raise my hand at least three times today.
- Not realistic--Even though I usually get all C's on my report card, I will get straight A's this time.

- Realistic—I usually get all C's on my report card. On my next report card, I will get at least two B's.

Set Both School and Personal Goals

At the beginning of the grading period, think about your classes. Then figure out what grade you think you can get in each class. These will be your school goals.

At the end of the grading period, congratulate yourself if you were able to meet your goals. If you didn't achieve your goals, try to figure out why. Then set new goals for the next grading period.

Also set one or two personal goals for yourself. For example, one of your goals might be to practice the piano for an hour every day for one month. Come up with at least one thing that you want to accomplish that doesn't involve grades.