

Checklist for Migrant Educators: Introduction to High School for Incoming 9th Graders
A tool to guide and support discussions with students and families in preparation for 9th grade.

Key

 Resource

 Talking point(s)

Calendar Reminders

Winter (8th grade)	Spring (8th grade)	Summer (Between 8th & 9th)	Fall (9th grade)
Identify current 8th grade students in caseload who are on track to graduate and move up to 9th grade.	Check with schools and Guidance Counselors about HS preparation activities (open house, tours, meetings); Gather and input school specific information in the <i>Your School</i> table below.	Arrange sessions with students and families. Use this checklist and the coordinating Family Resource document. When possible, arrange opportunities for positive peer-to-peer networking.	When possible, support students in-person on the first day of school (<i>especially those buildings with no other migrant students or families</i>)

Share Encouraging Thoughts with Students

 Spread positive vibes, build the momentum: You’ve got this, and we will make sure you have what you need to be successful from day one!

 I am here for you! I WILL follow up with you to check in!

- Migrant Educator role: Make sure students know how to ask you questions and get in touch.
- Ask students: How are you feeling about starting high school? Talk through any fears they may have like homework load, Regents exams, not knowing anyone, potentially being the only person who looks like them, and/or sitting alone at the lunch table.

 How to get the most out of high school and get students thinking BIG and setting goals (academic, extracurriculars).

 [Goal-Setting with Adolescent Students: Collected Ideas from the Field](#)



Your School <i>The coordinating Family Resource document contains this table on page 1 (English & Spanish), but without the Educator talking points and examples. Students and families can fill in their copy as you work with them for what is relevant for them and their districts.</i>		
Circle Your Grade in High School ★ Describe grade levels	Freshman (9 th)	Junior (11 th)
	Sophomore (10 th)	Senior (12 th)
School Building/Name of High School		
District		
School Website ★ Many school resources can be found on the school’s website and in the parent/guardian portal. ★ Is there a “Who Should I Talk to About” list on the website? Example: Livingston Manor Central School District Parent Information		
		
★ Activity Idea: Have a scavenger hunt on the school’s website: <input type="checkbox"/> Directory/Teacher Information <input type="checkbox"/> Dress Code <input type="checkbox"/> Map <input type="checkbox"/> Homework help <input type="checkbox"/> Calendar ★ Find the school calendar, so that you know when your child has holidays or other days off from school. There are other important dates listed as well. <input type="checkbox"/> Parent portal: Sign in and look around! <input type="checkbox"/> Class Schedule and Class Supplies List <input type="checkbox"/> Grades		
Parent/Homework Portals and/or School App (for installing on cell phone) <i>This row overlaps the above talking points for the School Website row above. It appears on the family copy as a separate row.</i> ★ A portal is a website and usually requires you to sign		

<p>in, as it contains information specific to you. If the school has an app for your phone, it will be convenient for finding information about your student.</p> <p>★ Show how to switch to another language.</p>	
<p>Where to find teacher contact information (On the school website or app) <i>This row overlaps the above talking points for the School Website row above. It appears on the family copy as a separate row.</i></p>	
<p>Main Office Phone/Email</p>	
<p>Student’s District Email</p>	
<p>After school homework help ★ If unknown, find out who to ask.</p>	
<p>School Walk Through Tour the building and identify key rooms and places: Locker, Bathrooms, Nurse, Office, Library, Guidance Office, Cafeteria, Homeroom. Point out classrooms based on student schedules. Check for bilingual signs around the building.</p>	<p>Scheduled for: _____ <i>(If an onsite school visit is not possible, review and discuss the building layout.)</i></p>

Educators: The space below is intentionally blank, so that you can add your own reminders and notes as needed.

Building A Personal Support System

The coordinating Family Resource document contains this table on **page 2 of the English copy, (pp. 2-3 for the Spanish copy)** but without the Educator talking points. Students and families can fill in their copy as you work with them, as applicable.

★ Discuss the importance of building relationships. If possible, coordinate times for students to meet key people before school starts.

Person	Name(s) / Contact Info.
Migrant Educator	
Homeroom Teacher and Other Teachers	
Student Support Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance Counselor • Special Education • Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) Coordinator • School Resource Officer (SRO) • Other 	
ESL/ENL Teacher(s) ★ This is a space for you! ★ Find/Introduce others who speak the student’s home language. Educators notice that students do better when they have someone at school who can speak to them in their home language.	
School Nurse ★ Go to the nurse for... ★ Feminine hygiene items available here.	
School Administrator(s) [Principal, Assistant Principal]	
A Caring Adult (for help with anything) ★ We want students to feel safe and empowered at school. Take this opportunity to discuss “fitting in” and topics of bullying prevention/awareness.	
Peer Mentor(s) ★ Encourage students to pair up with a peer in their school. Information and peer support are key. Give students an activity to work on together. The peer could possibly be an exchange student, a student in the ENL class, a SOMLA graduate another student in your caseload or another Educator’s.	

Daily Schedule and Bus Transportation

★ Be informed about the daily schedule!

The coordinating Family Resource document has this activity on **page 3 (English & Spanish)**. Students and families can fill in their copy as you work with them, as applicable.

Time to be ready to leave my house in the morning..... _____

Bus pick-up time..... _____

Name of bus driver..... _____

Student arrival time if walking or have an alternate ride to school (other than the bus)..... _____

School doors open at..... _____

Classes start at..... _____

School dismissal time..... _____

Key Words/Phrases for Students to Use in School

The coordinating Family Resource document contains this table on **page 3 (English) and page 4 (Spanish)**. Idea: Brainstorm words and phrases with students and families. They can write on their copy as you work with them.

Fill this in as you think of words and phrases.
Example: May I go to the bathroom?

★ Topic Areas for Discussion and Awareness

NYS-MEP Educators and the Statewide Support Team brainstormed these lists of topics. Add your ideas and notes in the spaces below each category. These talking points flex based on what is relevant to your student/family.

Schedule/Planning

- Getting up on time
- Riding the bus
- Building doors to use
- Class schedule and bell times
- Class Supply List
- Locker tips (practice opening padlock)
- Lunch/Free Lunch Program
- “PE” (Gym) class
- Summer Reading, if required

Procedural

- Issuance of ID cards
- Attendance policies: importance of attending every day unless sick.
- Parent/guardian notes: Early dismissal, Late arrival, Vacation, Parents signing students out.
- Hall pass
- Code of Conduct/School Handbook (Dress code, Behavioral Expectations)
- Immunization and physical requirements
- Compare/contrast schools in the USA and home country

Safety and Protocols (What to Expect)

- School emergency notifications: email, voice mail, texts
- Building Security: What exists, what protocols are in place? (ex: metal detectors)
- Fire drills
- Evacuation drills
- Banned items
- Responding to harassment and bullying

Technology

- Some districts assign devices, like a Chromebook or tablet.
- Many schools assign district emails to students.
- Logging into school platforms like Google Classroom
- Accessing, completing, and submitting assignments
- Technology contract/Responsible use of technology

Academics

Diploma Requirements and Graduation Pathways

- NY is different from other states.
- Breakdown what a credit is and how to think about credits by year.
- EVERYTHING counts in high school. Successfully completing your courses is important.
- Let students know what happens if they do not accrue enough credits and/or do not successfully complete all exams by the end of 12th grade.
- Explain the importance of attendance.
- Academics overall can lend itself the opportunity to have conversations about goal setting, graduation planning, and college entrance expectations.
- Talk about testing overall and related to course requirements and State assessments.
- Some schools assess transcripts from other countries and hold students back or stack their schedules to catch them up to graduate on time. (Students may not understand why and this can be hard on them.)

 Scan the QR code(s) to view New York State Graduation Requirements:



English



Spanish



Report cards: What they are, frequency, and delivery method.

Define Electives: Interests outside of your core classes.

Physical Education

Extracurricular/Other School Activities and Functions

- Field Trips - Examples, Protocol
- School pictures
- Prom/Dances
- Sports/Clubs (Late bus available?)
- What is the mascot?
- Open Houses, Go to the district events!
- MEP extracurriculars: SOMLA, virtual student events, spring scholarships

Parent/Guardian Tips

*The sound bites below are not intended to be a script. They **are** included in the family resource document as well, starting on **page 4 (English) and page 5 (Spanish)**. Some tips apply and others may not, depending on the student/family and the time of the year. Choose which tips to talk about and expand upon them as you wish. Add your own ideas as well!*

Communication Is Key!

★ Be an involved parent/guardian of your high school student! Studies show that children whose parents/guardians are engaged in their education have higher grades, better behavior, and improved social skills.

★ **NYS-MEP State PAC Parent Advice** – “Go to every orientation program the school offers before school starts.”

★ If you need to pick up your child(ren) early for a doctor’s appointment or other reason, you must sign them out.

★ Make sure you fully understand the information that is sent home from school. If it is not translated, ask for help.

★ You may request interpretation services and materials to be translated by the school. Do this in writing at the beginning of each school year. Your home language communication preferences can be initiated by you.

★ Parent teacher conferences are times to meet one on one with your child’s teacher(s). You can request these at any time and occasionally the school will offer a time to meet as well.

★ **NYS-MEP State PAC Parent Advice** – “Keep in touch with the teachers.”

★ Field trips happen occasionally. These are times when students leave the school grounds for a special learning experience. A permission slip may be required, in which case, one will be sent home via email or a paper copy. Your signature is required on the permission slip if you would like your child to participate in the field trip.

★ If you do not have an email account already, talk to your child’s Migrant Educator and ask for help to set one up. Many times, communication from the school is sent via email. Email is a good way to communicate your questions or concerns with your child’s teacher, the main office, or other person at school.

★ Attendance is expected in school every day unless your child is sick. Send a note for every absence. Many times, attendance counts toward your student’s grade.

★ High schools have a different schedule when the State Regents Exams are given. Students need to attend on the days they are scheduled to take a State Regents Exam.

Set your Child Up for Success In High School!

★ **NYS-MEP State PAC Parent Advice** – “Go through the school website with older students to find resources and people to help them.”

★ **NYS-MEP State PAC Parent Advice** – “Teach older children to self-advocate for their own needs.”

★ **NYS-MEP State PAC Parent Advice** – “Give your child the confidence to let someone else help them.”

★ Your child qualifies for free lunch (and breakfast) at school. (If the student is Continuation of Services (COS), then the family will need to complete the school’s application to see if they qualify.)

★ Review the school’s behavior expectations and discipline procedures (Student Handbook, Code of Conduct). Is a translated copy available?

★ **NYS-MEP State PAC Parent Advice** – “Talk with your child about how the other students are their classmates and need to treat each other with respect, but not everyone is their friend.”

★ **NYS-MEP State PAC Parent Advice** – “Check in with your children – older students are in a difficult stage with so many changes.”

 [2023 Immunizations Requirements \(English\) from NYS Health Department](#)

***This link is not included in the family resource.**



Supporting Your Student with Homework!

★ Access to the internet may be needed to complete homework. It is also helpful for communication with the school.

★ Sometimes there are summer reading requirements for students to complete before school starts in September. Find out about the summer reading requirements, if any.

★ Textbooks and sometimes computers or other devices are loaned to students for several classes in high school. They must be returned in good condition.

★ Students can use the library at school. This is often a good quiet place to do homework.

 **Homework: Challenges and Strategies that Work.** [This handout](#) captures the experiences with homework, as shared by parents on our Statewide Parent Advisory Council in 2022.



English



Spanish

Other Resources for Educators to Explore

[NYS RBERN](#): Scroll to the section titled, "Immigrant and Newcomer Information."

- School Information for Parents Brochure
- Starting School in the United States: A guide for Newcomer Students' Families

[NYS-MEP Parent & Family Library: Working with Schools](#)

- Key People in Schools
- Schools in the United States - What Parents Need to Know

NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

- [School Information for Parents](#)

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Intended Use/Outcomes

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The Checklist for Migrant Educators and the coordinating Family Resource handouts are:

- intended to be used as tools to assist Migrant Educators and METS offices in having supportive discussions with students and families in preparation for 9th grade;
- not exhaustive, as each NYS-MEP student's situation is unique;
- intended to supplement school district programming in relation to HS orientation;
- intentionally provided as Pdf and Word documents, so that users may tailor the documents and add their own ideas; *Note:* The Family Resource handout is formatted as a blank version of the Educator Checklist, without all the Educator notes, and intended for students and families to follow along and write as the Educator facilitates the conversation using the Educator Checklist.

As you use this document and the accompanying Family Resource, we would appreciate your comments and feedback for future iterations. This type of resource is constantly evolving! Please reach out with questions and/or comments to Jennifer Verdugo:

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Ensuring Successful Student Transitions from the Middle Grades to High School

Background

The 9th grade year is critical to students' success in high school, with the influence of a broader number of peers (both positive and negative); the potential of developing bad habits such as skipping class; and entry into a larger, sometimes seemingly less caring, environment can all impact how students react.

What does the research say?

Predictors of failure in high school:	Predictors of success in high school:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each course failed in 8th grade increases the odds of non-promotion from 9th to 10th grade by 16%.² • Students who are 15 years or older when they enter high school are at a greater risk of non-promotion, even controlling for previous academic achievement and attendance.³ • Although 8th-grade test scores are good predictors of students' likelihood to do well in high school courses, course attendance is eight times more predictive of course failure in the freshman year.⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each additional percentage point increase in attendance decreases the odds of repeating 9th grade by 5%.⁵ • Higher-achieving students are considerably less likely to experience non-promotion in 9th grade.⁶ • The higher the number of credits a student attempts in 9th grade, the lower the odds of not being promoted to 10th grade.⁷ • Students attend class more often when they have strong relationships with their teachers, and when they see school and their coursework as relevant and important to their future.⁸

Citations:

¹ Keeping Students Moving Forward on the Journey From the Middle Grades Into High School, Southern Regional Education Board, October 2015 Url: https://www.sreb.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/09e04_keeping_middle_grades.pdf?1459965908

² An Extreme Degree of Difficulty: The Educational Demographics of Urban Neighborhood High Schools, Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 2006 Url: <https://repository.upenn.edu/entities/publication/bdf6539f-1516-41f0-b0e5-65f842d18ba8>

³ Ibid

⁴ What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools, Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, July 2012 Url: <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/publications/what-matters-staying-track-and-graduating-chicago-public-schools-focus-english-language>

⁵ An Extreme Degree of Difficulty: The Educational Demographics of Urban Neighborhood High Schools,, Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk, 2006

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

⁸ What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools, Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, July 2012 Url: <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/publications/what-matters-staying-track-and-graduating-chicago-public-schools-focus-english-language>

⁹ Robert Cooper and Suzanne Markoe-Hayes, Improving the Educational Possibilities of Urban High School Students as They Transition from 8th to 9th Grade, University of California All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity, September 2005 Url: <https://ucaccord.gseis.ucla.edu/publications/pdf/pb-013-0905.pdf/view>

¹⁰ What Matters for Staying On-Track and Graduating in Chicago Public High Schools, Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago, July 2007

¹¹ Robert Cooper and Suzanne Markoe-Hayes, Improving the Educational Possibilities of Urban High School Students as They Transition from 8th to 9th Grade, University of California All Campus Consortium on Research for Diversity, September 2005 Url: <https://ucaccord.gseis.ucla.edu/publications/pdf/pb-013-0905.pdf/view>