

Ninth Grade Backpack

Introduction

Welcome, ninth grade students to Watertown High School! Over the next four years, we will do all that we can to give you a rewarding high school experience and help you reach for a brighter tomorrow! Success in high school is a partnership between our school and your family, but you are at the center. Aim for your very best success, and we'll be there to help you reach it!

Our high school lives by five core values that together spell the word "reach." We invite you to make these values your own as we reach together to be the best school we can be.

- We RESPECT each other, and we respect ourselves.
- We are EMPOWERED to grow and pursue our dreams.
- We ACHIEVE as students and as well-rounded individuals.
- We aspire to CREATE something new from our knowledge and experiences.
- We HONOR our rights and responsibilities as members of this community.

This virtual backpack contains instructions on your summer assignments and advice on how to succeed in high school. In addition to reading through the backpack, you should bookmark the WHS website. (<http://watertown.k12.ma.us/whs>) The site has weekly updates throughout the school year, links to all departmental websites, the headmaster's blog, and copies of the student handbook and program of studies.

Student Expectations

Very successful students are almost always present and on time, make up everything they miss, come to class with all their work done and their supplies ready, and ask questions when they're stuck.

High school is the last stop in your public education, and it's a big step up in responsibility from middle school. In high school,

- 1) You need to manage your own time and education more.
 - You want to be busy in high school, taking challenging activities and getting involved in sports, performances, or clubs. But you'll also have more homework. Do your homework early and often. Staying each day after school in the library, or keeping up with all assignments at home, will be important to your success in high school.
 - You'll have some choices in the classes you take and how well you succeed in those classes. Earning A's and B's all the time is your ticket to your choice of a college education or career training program, with financial assistance. Earn lower grades, and you won't have as many options after high school.
- 2) You need to manage your attendance more.
 - You need to get yourself on time to each of your six classes, each day of the school year. You have four minutes between your classes. No one will walk you there or make sure you're on time except yourself!
 - Frequent lateness to class or unexcused absences means you will lose credits for that class, making it harder for you to move on-time from grade to grade, graduate on time, and be accepted to college!

- If your absence from class is unexcused, you won't be able to make up the work you missed.
 - If you must miss class due to illness or other legitimate reason, make sure your parent or guardian sends a note ahead of time or calls the school the morning you are out.
- 3) You need to manage your behavior more.
- Develop good relationships with your teachers, guidance counselor, and school administrators. Try to let them get to know you and try to get to know them. You'll want their good words on your behalf down the line, and their trust in you goes a long way if difficulties arise for you in high school.
 - A school discipline record can create problems for you. Know your student handbook, and do the right thing at all times, in and out of school!

Supplies

- Five three-ring binders or spiral notebooks with pockets and at least 100 pages of paper. Some classes require their own two-to-three inch three-ring binders.
- A Flash drive for saving documents from the computer.
- Pencils and pens.
- A time and place for doing your homework each day

For high school math, you'll want a good calculator. The Texas Instruments "TI 30 XS Multiview" is our recommended model. For students hoping to take honors math classes, by sophomore year, you'll need the Texas Instruments "TI-84+" or "TI-84+ Silver Edition." You can buy that now or wait until sophomore year.

Summer Assignments

All English and social studies, and some math, classes have summer assignments you need to complete before the first day of school. Links to all summer assignments will be posted on the Watertown High School website (<http://watertown.k12.ma.us/whs>) before the last day of school. Any handouts will be available in the WHS Guidance office during the summer as well. Completing your summer assignments to the best of your ability helps set you up for success in the first week of classes.

English Class

All students read *Ghosts of War: The True Story of a 19-Year-Old GI*, by Ryan Smithson. Honors students also read *The Book Thief*, by Marcus Zusak.

Social Studies Class

Students are to visit one of the four following sites over the summer and do the corresponding assignments design for that site. Honors students have additional readings. (See website and packet.)

Math Class

All geometry students have a packet that will be passed out and available on the WHS website. Other students do not have a summer assignment but are highly encouraged to practice their math skills over the summer.