

Homeschool Through High School

By Kris M. Cox, Homeschool Consultant, Blogger and Speaker

The idea of homeschooling through high school can seem a little intimidating and overwhelming when you first begin to think about doing it. It's really not as hard as it seems, and with God's help, you can do it! To learn more about the benefits of homeschooling through high school, check out my blog post from Jan. 2016 on homeschooling through high school at: www.krismcox.com "Homeschooling Through High School: You CAN Do It!"

When talking with parents about homeschooling through the high school years, there are several areas that come up as concerns: making a four year educational plan, transcripts, calculating GPA's, grading, testing, PSEO, and making sure they don't miss anything they need to have their students do in those four years. To help you with some of these concerns, I've put together the following documents which you'll find here:

1. Homeschooling through high school resources and yearly suggestions
2. Record-keeping recommendations
3. Recommended course of study for the four years of high school
4. GPA calculating info
5. Grading tips
6. Separate documents:
 - a. Four year high school planning document
 - b. Diploma template
 - c. Transcript templates: subject based/school year based

If you have any questions about any of this information, please feel free to contact me at kris@krismcox.com or go to my website (www.krismcox.com) for more information on high school consultations. I'd love to help you be successful in homeschooling your teen through high school!

May God bless you and your student as you homeschool them through high school!!

Kris

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Home Schooling Through High School Resources:

MACHE- Minnesota Association of Christian Home Educators: <http://www.mache.org/>

HSLDA- Home School Legal Defense Association: <http://www.hslda.org/>

Homeschool Consulting Services: www.krismcox.com

Home School Record Keeping Options:

Edu-Track: http://www.contechsolutions.net/products/eths_pc/

HomeSchool Tracker Basic Edition (free):

http://www.homeschooltracker.com/tracker_basic.aspx (this program has been confirmed to install and work correctly on Microsoft Windows XP, 2000, 7 and 8.)

MySchoolYear.com- Homeschool Record Keeping Made Easy: <http://myschoolyear.com/> (this is \$36.00 per year, with 1 month free trial – saves EVERYTHING you need in your teen’s portfolio- very comprehensive)

Homeschool Planner by Donna Young: <http://donnayoung.org/forms/planners/hischl.htm>

Homeschool 4 year plan checklist by Donna Young:

<http://donnayoung.org/forms/planners/hsplan.htm>

V-Planner: <http://donnayoung.org/forms/> (this planner is downloadable forms. The V-Planner is on a CD-ROM and has to be purchased)

Home School Planner Plus (downloadable forms; FREE):

<http://www.thehomeschoolmom.com/gettingorganized/planner.php>

Resources for transcripts:

Everyday Education website: <http://www.everyday-education.com/home/index.shtml>

(offers “Transcripts Made Easy”; “Get a Jump Start on College” and curriculum for teaching literature and essay writing in high school.)

HSLDA Transcript Service: <http://store.hslda.org/high-school-transcript-service-p262.aspx>

Cost:\$16 for non-members/ \$12 for member

For Calculating GPA’s (online calculator): For calculating weighted GPA’s (including AP or college level courses) go to: <http://www.everyday-education.com/gpacalc/index.shtml>

“Home School, High School and Beyond: A Guide for Teens and Their Parents” – by Beverly Adams-Gordon – this is a time management, career exploration, organization and study skills course worth ½ credit and is great for 8th or 9th grade.

PSEO information and forms : google the college or university your teen wants to attend with PSEO or Dual Enrollment after name; or for Minnesota, go to the MN Dept. of Education’s website: <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/StuSuc/CollReadi/PSEO/index.html>

CLEP and AP information: <http://www.collegeboard.org>; Cheri Frame’s website for CLEP info www.creditsbeforecollege.com

Career Direct Assessments: to help with determining your child’s direction for the future. Contact Kate Milner, Career Direct consultant: <http://www.katemilner.info/>

Keeping on Track: things to do and deadlines you don’t want to miss:

9th grade:

- If you haven’t already done so, put together a tentative four year educational plan for your student
- Begin putting together student’s transcript as early as the end of the first semester (add new classes taken each year)
- CLEP testing available throughout the year/ AP testing in May
- Encourage your student to do volunteer work of some kind, especially in an area they are interested in for a career.

10th grade:

- Fall: sign up for PLAN test in local school (register early) – changes to ASPIRE in 2015
- FOR PSEO - Some students are eligible to take PSEO courses starting in 11th grade (based on their score on the PLAN test or the annual achievement test – you must send in application for PSEO program (Priority deadline: for fall semester- April 1st, Final Deadline: July 1st. For spring semester -Dec. 1st.)
- AP tests are given in May at local high schools
- CLEP testing available throughout the year
- Encourage your student to do volunteer work of some kind, especially in an area they are interested in for a career.
- Have your student do a career assessment test and take a career course of some kind (I recommend Career Direct listed above)
- Encourage your student to do volunteer work of some kind, especially in an area they are interested in for a career.
- Add completed courses to transcript

11th grade:

- PSAT test given in October in local schools (homeschool students can register to take this test, it's a pre-SAT test and also provides opportunity to be considered for a national scholarship)
- FOR PSEO: Some students are eligible to take PSEO courses starting in 11th grade (based on their score on the PLAN test or the annual achievement test – you must send in application for PSEO program (Priority deadline: for fall semester- April 1st, Final Deadline: July 1st. For spring semester -Dec. 1st.)
- College bound: Study for the ACT and/or SAT
- AP tests are given in May at local high schools (register by early March)
- CLEP testing available throughout the year
- College bound: Take ACT or SAT in spring (offered on several dates in several locations)
- Encourage your student to do volunteer work of some kind, especially in an area they are interested in for a career.
- Add completed courses to transcript

12th grade:

- College bound: Retake if needed: ACT or SAT
- College application, priority deadline is Dec. for the admission the following fall
- For military: take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test
- CLEP testing available throughout year
- For PSEO or STEP: send in application for spring semester by Dec. 1st
- AP tests are given in May at local high schools (register by March 2nd)
- If college bound: submit applications for scholarships beginning as early as the summer before the 12th grade year (websites: www.fastweb.com/, www.zinch.com, www.ScholarshipPoints.com, www.Cappex.com, www.Scholarships.com)
- Add completed courses to transcript
- Complete transcript and diploma
- Congratulations!! You did it!

Record Keeping Guide:

I. Administrative Records:

- a. Yearly calendar
- b. Daily schedule
- c. Report cards
- d. Expense Reports/Receipts
- e. Health/Immunization Records

II. Student Records:

- a. Annual test scores
- b. Any outside classes taken including grades
- c. Any other important test scores (ACT, SAT, PLAN)

III. Non-Academic Information:

- a. Travel & field trips
- b. Honors and awards
- c. Sports activities
- d. Employment
- e. Volunteer work

IV. Academic Work

- a. Bibliography of texts and materials used
- b. Samples of work
- c. Names/Addresses of outside teachers
- d. Transcript (for high school)

REQUIRED INFORMATION ON A TRANSCRIPT:

Personal Information:

- Full Name
- Birthdate
- Address
- Contact Info
- Parent's names
- NO SS# needed
- School information

Academic Record:

- Classes taken
- Credits Earned
- Final Grade
- GPA: both yearly and cumulative
- Graduation Date
- Your signature
- *Academic Summary
- *Grading Scale

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(*optional)

Recommended course of study for the four years of High school:

***** As a private school, homeschoolers set their own school's graduation requirements - these are just suggestions (from HSLDA "A Guide for Homeschooling Through High School")***

General High School plan (for students who are NOT planning to go to college):

- English 4 credits
- Math 3 credits
- History 2-3 credits
- Science 2-3 credits
- Foreign Language 2-3 credits
- Physical education 1-2 credits
- Fine arts 1-2 credits
- Electives 5 credits
- Total: 20-22 credits

General College Preparatory Plan: (for college bound students – meets many college's requirements) – check with the college of your choice for their requirements

- English 4 credits
- Math 3-4 credits
- History 3-4 credits
- Science 3-4 credits
- Foreign Language 3-4 credits
- Physical Education 1-2 credits
- Fine Arts 1-2 credits
- Electives 5 credits
- Total credits: 24-28 credits

Rigorous College Preparatory Plan: (for students planning to go to very selective schools)

- English 4+ credits
- Math 4+ credits
- History 4+ credits
- Science 4+ credits
- Foreign Language 3-4 credits
- Physical education 1-2 credits
- Fine arts 1-2 credits
- Electives 5 credits
- Total credits: 26-30 credits

Calculating a GPA Simplified:

1. List subject; grades, credits for all courses taken for that year.
2. Compute the quality points for each course (credit value multiplied by the numerical value for grade.) The most commonly used scale for calculating the quality points is the 4-point scale:
 - a. A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0
 - b. For example: Biology is 1 credit and the student received an A which is worth 4, so the quality points for that course would be $1 \times 4 = 4$.
 - c. Unweighted systems award the same credit for regular, honors and advanced placement (AP) classes. Weighted systems give a bonus for AP classes or higher level classes. A common weighted system gives an additional 1 point for AP and college level classes, making an AP or college level course A worth 5 (A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2)
 - d. Add up the total number of quality points for the year
 - e. Add the total number of credits for the year
 - f. Divide the number of quality points by the number of credits. Round to two decimal figures. That figure is your student's GPA for that year.
3. For Cumulative GPA: Add up total quality points from all four years and divide this by the total number of credits for all four years. This gives the cumulative GPA. (don't just add up individual yearly GPA's and divide by four— this won't be accurate)

Example: Year 2012-2013:

<u>Subject:</u>	<u>Credits:</u>	<u>Grade:</u>	<u>Quality points:</u>
English 10	1	B	$1 \times 3 = 3$
Biology	1	A	$1 \times 4 = 4$
US History	1	B	$1 \times 3 = 3$
Geometry	1	A	$1 \times 4 = 4$
Spanish I	1	C	$1 \times 2 = 2$
Physical Educ.	0.5	B	$0.5 \times 3 = 1.5$
Career Exploration	0.5	B	$0.5 \times 3 = 1.5$
Health	0.5	A	$0.5 \times 4 = 2$
Home Economics	0.5	B	$0.5 \times 3 = 1.5$

Total quality points = $3 + 4 + 3 + 4 + 2 + 1.5 + 1.5 + 2 + 1.5 = 22.5$

Total Credits = 7

22.5 divided by $7 = 3.21$ GPA

Grading Guidelines:

Math, Science & Foreign Languages: usually can be evaluated objectively by taking the scores from homework and tests and calculating the percentage. To find the percentage you divide the number of correct answers by the total number of questions. Wikipedia provides the following typical U.S. grading scales (However, *you* choose what your school's grading scale will be):

	"Normal" courses	Honors/AP courses
Grade	Percentage	Percentage
A	90–100	93–100
B	80–89	85–92
C	70–79	77–84
D	60–69	70–76
F	0–59	0–69

- I. **English composition, history, art, phy-ed, and electives:** These subjects are a bit more challenging to evaluate and grade. Decide ahead of time what will determine the grade. In an English composition course (for example), you may want to grade a writing assignment as follows: **Content—60%, Grammar/Mechanics—30%, Effort—10%**. I would recommend discussing how you will grade the assignment with your student—it will help him/her to know how the paper will be evaluated so they can apply themselves appropriately.

Example :

Course: English Lit and Composition

Method of Evaluation: Papers—60 % (Components: Content—60%, Grammar—30%, Effort—10%);

Tests—40 % (this example was taken from HSLDA's website-

<http://www.hsllda.org/highschool/docs/gradingguidelines.asp>)

Paper grades:

Paper #1

- Content—56 out of 60
- Grammar—30 out of 30
- Effort—5 out of 10

Total: **91%**

Paper #2

- Content—52 out of 60
- Grammar—25 out of 30
- Effort—7 out of 10

Total: **84 %**

Paper #3

- Content—51 out of 60
- Grammar—29 out of 30

- Effort—6 out of 10

Total: **86%**

Average of paper grades: $91 + 84 + 86 = 261/3 = 87\%$

Test scores: 90, 75, 88, 85

Average of test scores: $90 + 75 + 88 + 85 = 338/4 = 84.5\%$

Now, take a weighted average: Papers: $87 \times 0.6 = 52.2$

Tests: $84.5 \times 0.4 = 33.8$

Grade: $52.2 + 33.8 = 86\%$

II. A grading chart with a definition for each of the percentages and grades:

100 95 90%	89 85 80%	79 75 70%	69 65 60%	59% and below
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A	B	C	D	F
Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Needs Improvement	Poor
Exemplary	Acceptable	Not Yet Acceptable	Barely Acceptable	Unacceptable

This chart was taken from the following website: <http://www.zimmerworks.com/rubric.htm> (It also lists suggestions for grading art which include **Creativity/Originality, Effort/Perseverance, Craftsmanship/Skill/Consistency, planning and attitude**) These same concepts can be followed with any other subjects that don't have tests and papers to use for evaluation.

III. You can also weight the grades, giving a higher weight to exams and papers if you prefer.

Also, unit tests, midterms, and final exams can be weighted more heavily than a chapter test or weekly quiz. As the teacher, you determine what will be weighted more heavily. This should be communicated to your child so they know what to expect.

"The following table demonstrates how a weighted grade is calculated. The percentage in each category is multiplied by its respective weight. The sum of these contributions is the total grade percentage."

Category Name	Percentage in Category		Weight of Category	Contribution
Homework	93%	×	.30	0.279
Quiz/Test	88%	×	.50	0.440
Exam	91%	×	.20	0.182
				.901
			Total	90.1%

(The above quote and table on weighted grading were both found at <http://www.blacksdomain.com>)

They also offer an online grade calculator:

http://www.blacksdomain.com/files/Notes/WA_Calculator.php