

Educationally Speaking  
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Education today is very much dominated by assessments (tests and quizzes) to determine the degree of student learning. These assessments can be used to monitor student progress (formative) or be summative in determining a student's grade for a unit or a semester. Typically, there is a connection between the two. Students who do well on the formative assessments will typically also do well on the summative assessments. Poor formative results are indicators of poor summative assessments.

With this in mind, though school has been in session for only a brief time, let's do a formative assessment and use the results to determine the likelihood of success for the school year.

1. Has your student attended all classes on time? Regular, on-time attendance is a leading contributor to high achievement.
2. Has your student completed all classroom and homework assignments and turned them in? Students who complete and submit all class work and homework are more successful than those who do not.
3. As a parent, have you assumed the answer to questions 1 and 2 are yes, taken your student's word for it, or checked with teachers and the school to verify attendance and work completion? Trust, but verifying will contribute significantly to your student's success. Parents who show their love by verifying the words and actions of their students will be better able to commend their students for their faithfulness and truthfulness or will be better able to intervene with their students so that honesty and commitment to success in school are priorities.

Here's the grading scale to see how the year is progressing. If the answer to all three questions is yes, both your student and you are off to a good start and continued success should be expected. If your answer to question 3 is yes and you do verify your student's attendance and academic performance, there is a high likelihood of your student's success.

Negative responses to the three questions won't be at the performance level we want for our students and parents. But there is good news. This is only a formative test one week into the school year. I would encourage you as parents to take this quiz at least once every one or two weeks. A passing score will be significant evidence that your student and you are on track for a successful 2009-2010 school year.

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