

ONE-PAGE OWNERSHIP TRANSFER CHECKLIST

# The Retirement Plan

Four weeks to hand the homework job back to your student. **Print this, put it on the refrigerator, and check off each stage as you go.** Page 2 has the exact words to say and what to do when something slips.

## STEP 1 Before you start

DO THESE FIRST

- ☐ **Say it out loud.** A handoff your student does not know about reads as abandonment. One sentence does it: "Starting this month I am handing the homework job over to you. Here is how it will work."
- ☐ **Decide your three rules and post them where everyone can see them.** When homework happens, where it happens, and where the phone lives during it. A wall calendar or whiteboard works. These three stay yours. The work becomes theirs.
- ☐ **Turn off real-time parent portal alerts** and pick one day a week to look. Notifications on every entered grade pull you back into daily monitoring without a decision ever being made.
- ☐ **Read your district's current phone policy first.** Connecticut and New York districts both changed theirs recently, and a home rule that contradicts the school day undercuts you.

## STEP 2 The four-week handoff

CHECK EACH WEEK OFF

### WEEK 1

#### Narrate, do not do

Keep your current level of help. Say what you are doing out loud as you do it. You are showing them the job before you hand it over.

☐ DONE

### WEEK 2

#### They drive, you sit in

Your student checks the portal, writes the plan, sets the schedule. You watch and stay quiet. Correct nothing that will not cause real damage.

☐ DONE

### WEEK 3

#### They drive, you check the mirror

No daily involvement. One mid-week glance at the portal that you do not comment on unless something is genuinely off track.

☐ DONE

### WEEK 4

#### Weekly check-in only

The weekly conversation is now the entire system. You have retired from the homework police. Keep the three rules. Drop the rest.

☐ DONE

## STEP 3 The weekly check-in

SUNDAY WORKS FOR MOST FAMILIES

### Three questions. That is the whole system.

TEN MINUTES, ONCE A WEEK

1.

What is due this week?

2.

What is going to be hard?

3.

What do you need from me?

## STEP 4 Know your target

MATCH THE HANDOFF TO SKILL, NOT BIRTHDAY

| GRADE | YOUR STUDENT OWNS                                                          | YOU STILL OWN                                                       | CHECK IN                  |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 6–7   | Writing assignments in a planner, starting work without a reminder         | The schedule, the workspace, the phone rule, portal monitoring      | Briefly, daily            |
| 8–9   | Planning multi-day projects, tracking their own due dates                  | The weekly structure, help when asked, the big-picture grade view   | Two or three times a week |
| 10–11 | Full calendar ownership, breaking down long assignments, emailing teachers | Deadlines that affect the family, the testing timeline, crisis only | Weekly                    |
| 12    | Everything academic, including advocating for themselves with teachers     | Nothing academic. College logistics only.                           | Monthly or on request     |

**If your junior still needs daily reminders to start homework, address that gap now.** College removes the reminder system entirely, and the first semester is an expensive place to learn the job.

## SCRIPTS What to say in each stage

USE THESE WORDS

### WEEK 1 • NARRATE

*"I am checking the portal now. I am looking for anything missing and anything due in the next week."*

Say it out loud every time. You are teaching a process, not delivering a verdict.

### WEEK 3 • CHECK THE MIRROR

*"I looked at the portal Wednesday. Nothing I need to bring up."*

Saying this when everything is fine is what makes the weekly check-in feel safe.

### WEEK 2 • SIT IN

*"You run it this week. I am here if you want me, and I am not going to jump in."*

The hardest week for parents. Let small errors stand. Only step in for real damage.

### WEEK 4 • RETIRED

*"Sounds like you have a plan. Tell me if you need me."*

You have kept the relationship and handed back the job. That is the whole goal.

## TROUBLESHOOTING When something slips

MATCH THE RESPONSE TO THE SIZE

### One missed assignment

**Say nothing.** Let them find it in the portal themselves. A missed assignment in September costs almost nothing, and the lesson is cheap at this price.

### Two or three in one week

**Bring it to the weekly check-in as a question, not a verdict.** "I saw three missing. What happened?" Then stop talking and let them answer.

### A pattern past three weeks

**The system is the problem, not the effort.** Change the plan or bring in help. More monitoring will not fix a missing skill.

**Expect a dip early on.** Grades often slide a little once you stop catching everything, and that dip is the transfer working. Most students steady out once they feel the consequence themselves. A dip that keeps going is information, not failure: it usually means a specific skill is missing, most often planning or getting started.

## ADHD Adjustments

- ☐ **Run one stage behind** the grade-level targets on page 1. That is normal and it is not a setback.
- ☐ **Keep the visible plan permanently.** The wall calendar or whiteboard does not get retired with you.
- ☐ **Check in twice a week** rather than once, at the same times each week.
- ☐ **Stretch the handoff** across six to eight weeks instead of four.
- ☐ **Independence is still the goal.** Only the timeline is different.

## SIGNALS When to ask for help

- ☐ **The handoff stalls past six weeks** with no change in the pattern.
- ☐ **Effort is real and results are not.** Your child is working and the grades still slip.
- ☐ **Every conversation about school ends in a fight.** The relationship cost is now higher than the academic cost.
- ☐ **They understand the material** and still cannot start, plan, or finish.
- ☐ **Subject tutoring already happened** and the same problems came back the next unit.

## LOG Four weeks, four lines

FILL THIS IN AS YOU GO

| WEEK | DATES | WHAT WENT WELL | WHAT SLIPPED | WHAT I CHANGED |
|------|-------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| 1    |       |                |              |                |
| 2    |       |                |              |                |
| 3    |       |                |              |                |
| 4    |       |                |              |                |

**Subject tutoring fixes a chapter. Executive function coaching fixes the system that keeps producing the problem.** S4 has taught organizing, note-taking, time management, test preparation, and executive function strategies to middle school, high school, and college students in Fairfield and Westchester counties since 2010.

## Talk to us about your student

Michelle Sagalyn, President · Michelle@S4StudySkills.com · 203-307-5455  
P.O. Box 644, Southport, CT 06890 · SuccessfulStudySkills4Students.com

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