

# Help with education

If all went as planned, your children are back in school and your family is on its way to what is hoped will be a great school year. The area's public, private and church-sponsored schools are back in session.

There's no more important duty to our children and their future than the work of great teachers and involved parents; and make no mistake, it takes both. Students with parents seriously involved in their education very likely will do well.

One of the biggest problems for our schools is that too many parents — sometimes for legitimate reasons — are not involved enough. Schools are not meant to be education factories where we insert children into kindergarten and then wait for an educated teenager to emerge.

Education is a long process and requires a tremendous amount of work and commitment from parents and teachers as well as students.

However, when students are not performing at their best, it's often a failure of the wider education system which includes parents whose responsibility it is to not just have their children prepared to learn each day, but also reinforce and supplement classroom learning.

Schools should be giving parents a good feel for what they can do at home. Parents, if at all possible, should endeavor to set up an area for school work. At school, libraries, after-school programs and colleges, students have designated work areas. Setting up a specific area at home in which to study can be of great help to students.

Creating a dedicated learning space, no matter how small, is an outward sign to children and adults alike that the family takes education seriously.

Of course, there are homes where that can be difficult. That's where churches, community groups and other organizations can step in with after-school programs, many of which are available in Bell County — not just baby sitting or games but intensive study and tutoring time.

If parents or guardians are not in a position to routinely offer such support, then perhaps a mentor or a tutor at an afterschool program can. Temple ISD has the Wildcat Mentors program adults may volunteer for. Whatever the obstacles, there is simply no substitute for a responsible adult's involvement in education outside of school to ensure the learning continues.

There are big expectations for all concerned as school starts, but it will truly take a team effort for our schools and our students to meet their full potential and the after hours, at home of piece of their education is essential.

Without such support in place, all our futures will be in doubt.