

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to let you know how much Gateway Tech High School has changed the lives of my family. My son was diagnosed with Autism as a child. He is very high functioning but has struggled socially his whole life. School has been a nightmare since the first day of kindergarten. My phone rang almost daily with teachers and school administrators calling me to talk about his behavior problems. Sometimes he would be seeking negative attention in class, sometimes he was running and hiding, but mostly he would refuse to do his work. There was not an appropriate setting for him. He was so anxious at school that it was a struggle just getting him the school doors. My life revolved around trying to make him successful in a school setting. I eventually tried homeschooling and online public schools. He was unsuccessful with this also because of the lack of structure and my work schedule. Finally, as a last resort, we found Gateway Tech. Oh my goodness how our lives changed. My son is now doing well in school in ALL areas. He is making good grades and making friends for the first time in his life. He is becoming more confident in everything he does now. He stands taller and holds his head up with a smile when he walks now. He used to walk with his head at a downward angle and would have a nervous look on his face. As a mother, this means the world to me. I realize that this is mostly social things I am talking about. But that has spilled over into everything he does. He is not afraid of failure anymore, because he is successful at so much now. I truly believe this is a direct result of the learning environment at Gateway Tech. I am so pleased with the school and the teachers that I have recently moved my 9th grade son who was failing all core subjects at ____ High School to Gateway Tech. He has ADHD and Auditory Processing Disorder. He is also doing well at Gateway Tech. As an educator, I believe education is one of the most important things you can give a child. But for my boys, traditional public school was not the answer for them. Gateway Tech High School is the answer. I am so thankful to have this as an option for their education.

Gateway Tech Parent

Dear Ms. Stevenson,

We just wanted to let you know how happy we are with Gateway Tech High School program here in Georgetown.

Our son will finish his senior year in high school much sooner than what we expected. With this present available program/model, he will not only finish high school earlier compared to the normal high school model, he is at the same time also currently enrolled at ACC taking college classes. We regret that we were not aware of the technical school model sooner. Our son could have finished high school much earlier and could have taken more college classes before he graduated. This helps makes his overall college fees much cheaper and affordable.

Our children can fully benefit from this model and at the same time hopefully these students will take the opportunity to take early college classes.

Gateway Tech Parent

To Whom It May Concern:

When my daughter was a freshman at _____ High School, I received calls from the nurse there daily. She had severe anxiety and suffered from panic attacks. Although she was a good student, she had a difficult time adjusting to being in such a large school with so many people. As a result of all the time she spent in the nurse's office, her grades began to fall. She began having to go to school early or stay late just to stay caught up.

Halfway through her freshman year, we made the decision to move her to Gateway Tech. Our son had gone there and was successful, so we thought we would try it out for our daughter. The decision has changed her life. She is

maintaining a high B average, and she enjoys going to school every day. She recently began taking courses at ACC for dual credit and she is doing quite well. She is looking forward to being the first Distinguished Achievement Program graduate from Gateway Tech. The small class size and positive attention she receives at Gateway Tech has turned her from a drop-out risk to a well-prepared college-bound student.

Gateway Tech Parent

To Whom It May Concern:

My son attends Gateway Tech High School. We chose in the 1st grade to hold him back a grade because we felt that he would benefit from an extra year academically. In 3rd grade he was diagnosed with dyslexia. After many years of hard work and with a lot of assistance from the school district, our son was doing extremely well in his studies. As he progressed into high school he found himself with extra-curricular interests that were outside of what the public school system had to offer. Joshua was becoming very mature and the thought of graduating at 19 years of age was exhausting him with the idea that he was ready for college life and to move with his studies. After careful consideration we decided that Gateway Tech High School was an excellent alternative for him. Not only would he be allowed to accelerate in his academics, and there graduate at the appropriate age, but it would also afford him an opportunity to work and spend time in a sport that has helped him with every aspect of his life. Our son has an excellent work ethic and has developed a great skill of time-management because of the online courses offered through Gateway Tech. We are extremely pleased with the outcome of his experience with Gateway and feel that without this opportunity, he may have lost interest in his studies and possibly not done as well. He will have automatic acceptance in Texas universities because of his placement in his graduating class. Gateway Tech has been a wonderful opportunity for our son and we sincerely appreciate everything that the school has offered him.

Gateway Tech Parent

To Whom It May Concern:

My daughter graduated from Gateway Tech High School last year. She has psychological issues that occasionally require in-patient treatment. My daughter never would have been able to keep up with school work in a traditional high school setting. Not only did she graduate but she did so with wonderful grades and TAKS scores a year and a half earlier than she would have if she stayed in a traditional setting.

My son is a junior at Gateway Tech. Until this year he attended the local high school. He has always struggled to keep B-C averages but last year he began failing classes. By the end of his sophomore year he had not earned many credits at all. Since admission to Gateway Tech he is passing classes again. I truly believe that my son was at risk of dropping out if I had kept him in the traditional high school.

Gateway Tech Parent

Ms. Stevenson,

I just wanted to let you know how appreciative and grateful our family is for Gateway Tech School. Before Gateway Tech our daughter had not been very successful at a traditional school. We encountered many obstacles and problems at traditional schools due to her being diagnosed as ADHD. We searched for alternatives and found very little options in our area. Thankfully we found Gateway and a spot was available. Initially because of the long commute from our home in Hutto to the school in Georgetown we had planned to just try out the program but after our daughter started to succeed we decided to continue despite the commute.

We are willing to continue at Gateway because of several reasons. First and foremost our daughter is successful at Gateway. We also feel that the program is effective for students like her. Because of her ADHD she requires a shorter school day and lots of redirection. The online lessons and instruction are perfect for her and her situation. The structure of the school day and the instruction provided is challenging, keeps her interested, on task and teaches her the information she needs to graduate. When she started at Gateway she was substantially behind but after hard work she was able to pull ahead. Another reason we have been so happy with Gateway Tech is how positive the teachers and administrators are with her. She feels encouraged and accepted at Gateway. She is praised for her success and held accountable for her mistakes. Many times at traditional schools these are often overlooked just due to the size of the classrooms and the chaos it brings. Lastly, as parents we are grateful that we don't have to sacrifice a quality education in exchange for a program that meets her needs. The combination of online and teacher instruction is perfect. Our daughter is very smart and is able to breeze through parts of the material, yet when she does need additional help the teachers are available to help explain what she needs.

We would recommend Gateway Tech to any parent and we urge the Gateway School administration to continue the program and make it available to as many students as possible.

Thank you so much for providing students and their families an opportunity for educational success!

Gateway Tech Parent

To Whom It May Concern:

My son has been going to Gateway Technical school since the beginning of the year. He transferred in from _____ High School where he found himself lost and frustrated. We decided to visit Gateway Tech and see what it was about and the day we left there he was sold to move schools. He has excelled since he has been at Gateway. His grades were suffering terribly before and we were concerned about him. Now he is a happy kid with good grades and loves Gateway as well as the atmosphere. I also enjoy the personable people that work at Gateway. This is a great school and I would recommend it to anyone.

Gateway Tech Parent

Ms. Stevenson,

I just wanted to let you know how happy we are that our son is doing so well at Gateway Tech.

The beginning of his freshman year we transferred him to Gateway Tech due to grades and needing more structure. Since he has been at Gateway Tech he has done nothing but excel. I cannot tell you how long we looked for an education program like Gateway Tech. He really likes going to school. He is completing his

assignments and sees how well he is doing after each assignment which is very rewarding for him. If he continues on his current path, he could possibly graduate early. Starting in his junior year he can start taking classes for college credits through the current program. His dream is to play baseball in college and having basic college credits would be a plus for him.

We feel very fortunate to have found Gateway Tech. We believe it is a very good education program and feel that he would not have excelled in public school like he has at Gateway Tech.

Gateway Tech Parent

Mrs. Stevenson,

Since our daughter has joined Gateway she concentrates better on her work. With this environment she has improved greatly. She now has better expectations of herself and has goals for her future. She is very happy at Gateway.

Gateway Tech Parent

Ms. Stevenson,

I would like to provide you with feedback on our experiences with our child while attending Gateway Tech. School has been a challenge for our son from the very beginning and not until we discovered and enrolled him in Gateway did we really have any hope of graduation for him. The traditional model of education where a student attends a class and listens to a teacher lecture and is assigned homework and studies for exams simply doesn't work for him. My husband and I wanted that model to work for all three of our kids, but over the years we reached a point that we had to find other options. The path he was on would probably have ended with him dropping out of high school and we all know the future that would present for him. The sad part is that he is extremely intelligent but that standard model of education did not work for him. We are grateful that Gateway is in our community so our child has a chance to attain his high school diploma and go onto college. Even now plans to attend Austin Community College in the fall of 2014 and pursue his degree there and then transfer to a university. Without Gateway that probably would not be possible.

Gateway allows him structure but at the same time flexibility with a staff that is there to support and foster his educational growth. If he is stuck in a certain area of learning, instead of the class moving forward he can allow some time to seek help, review and then move forward when he feels confident he understands the material. He reports to us he has excelled with this learning model and is proud of his accomplishments. This learning environment works well for him and we have only praise and accolades for the staff and Gateway.

Gateway Tech Parent

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Gateway Tech Program. I truly believe if it hadn't been for this program neither of my girls would have graduated from high school. Today both of my daughters are enrolled at ACC.

My oldest daughter had struggled through school since the 2nd grade. Even with lots of encouragement and extra tutoring throughout her entire school career, it was a struggle for her every single day. Once she reached 10th grade, _____ H.S. was leaving my daughter behind. There was a huge difference in how my daughter who was not in AP classes was being treated. Movies were being watched and she was painting her nails in class. Not an ideal situation for ensuring learning. On top of all of the fighting for my daughter, we had bullying that was occurring and the campus police could not guarantee my daughter's safety. I withdrew my daughter and she attended _____ H.S for a short time.

Then a miracle came to Georgetown and it was in the form of a charter school called Gateway, I went to the public meetings that were held. My daughter was one of the first students who attended the Gateway Tech program as this was the only thing available for her which turned out to be a blessing. I think during this transition my daughter was really thinking about quitting school, she had taken on a full time job which she was able to continue while going to school, because it was flexible enough to allow her to go to school in the mornings and work in the afternoons. She had no homework and because it was self paced this allowed her to have good outcomes. For once in her school career she was having positive feedback from the work she was putting into her schooling. My daughter's self esteem blossomed within this environment. Gateway was a perfect solution to a potentially lost child who "was being left behind".

Now for my second child, who didn't struggle in school like my first but as she got older she wanted out of school quicker. So once again we went to Gateway and talked with the administrator. They were full but she made an exception for my daughter who just graduated in January, 2013, one semester early. As I mentioned earlier she is also enrolled in her first semester at ACC. This program allowed her to also work while going to school, which was a blessing in itself. Her entering the workforce has been a lesson that none of us can teach, but if she had quit school she would be left in menial jobs at minimum wage for the rest of her life.

I cannot tell you how important this program was to both my children and to me. I know that this type of program is needed for the nontraditional children out there. I thank my lucky stars each day for Gateway, because I'm not sure where my children would be right now, but I can almost guarantee that they would not be in college moving onto the next stage in their life.

Gateway Tech Parent