

My husband and I noticed our daughter having difficulties in mainstream school towards the end of her 6th grade year. She was diagnosed with ADD as well as anxiety several years ago and while her teachers were wonderful and caring, it was becoming a struggle for her to concentrate and stay on task in each class. Not two months into her 7th grade year found us struggling even more; not only with academics, but with peer issues as well. We were looking into different options, including homeschooling and charter, when ATLAS Academy was recommended by our daughter's grade school principal. After speaking with Mr. Salinger on the phone for over an hour, I was convinced that this program was definitely worth a more in-depth look. My husband, daughter and I met with Mr. Salinger and immediately felt that it would be a good fit. The program is web based, so there isn't that mountain of textbooks associated with middle/high school and allows each student to work during a time of day that is best for them. I am especially grateful for the fact that my daughter can fidget/wiggle/dance through a lesson, instead of being told to "sit still and pay attention!!" or "quit fidgeting!!". The opportunity to learn without the distraction of fellow students along with the ability to learn from mistakes on an exam is priceless. Also, the fact that she remains a WPUSD student is a huge bonus, as it allows her access to the extra-curricular sports and activities through the district. I would caution new students/families to ATLAS in regard to the self-motivation and responsibility, though. This program is excellent but requires dedication on the student's part, to make sure they are staying on track, forming excellent study habits and learning as much as possible, which I feel is an essential tool both through school (no matter how far they choose to continue their education) and life. Tutors are available almost every day of the week if needed, which is a huge relief when an assignment/lesson is not understood. In addition to the academics, Mr. Salinger is an avid outdoor person and willingly (yes, willingly!!) takes groups of students on outdoor education trips throughout the year. My daughter is beyond excited to continue this program and to also experience the outdoor leadership opportunities!!