

COUNSELOR CONNECTION

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The “Home” Stretch

Hello IMS parents! We hope you are enjoying the sunshine, that last week gave you a chance to take a bit of a “break” and now you and your students are ready for a reset. By now you should be well aware that this coming Monday marks the beginning of the third trimester and the onset of mandatory online learning. Our IMS team has been working hard getting organized and ready for this last trimester. Our counseling team is especially tuned in to how difficult the news requiring us to stay at home for the rest of the school year has been for our students, who miss their friends, teachers and routines. We can relate; we miss seeing our students in the hallways and lunchroom every day. Zoom calls are helping, but we recognize that it’s not the same. The most important thing to remember is that we are **ALL IN THIS TOGETHER**. That said, we have some great information included this edition, specially about organization and motivation. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out to us with questions, concerns, or simply to say hello. We are just an email away. We appreciate your partnership and wish you all the best as you help prepare your student for the home stretch.

REMINDERS:

- If you haven’t registered for next year’s electives, please do that **ASAP!** Check out the Registration section of the IMS website for more specific details, instructions and a newly added FAQ document. Email Counselors with questions.
- Trimester 3 will begin on **Monday, April, 20th.** Beginning on this date, online learning will become **required**. Students will be expected to visit Schoology daily for updates and assignments from teachers.



THIRD TRIMESTER BEGINS APRIL 20th, 2020

Monday, April 20th marks the beginning of the third trimester.

Students will be expected to be present for teachers office hours and to do their assigned work. More information will be forthcoming regarding grading. Questions about plans for online learning can be directed to classroom teachers and/or to the Counselors. Let us know if you and your student are experiencing any difficulties. We are always happy to help however we can.

MOTIVATION

We have heard from a number of you that you are experiencing challenges related to motivating your student(s). We are hopeful that with the onset of the new trimester, students will step up and realize that even though it looks different now, online schooling is how it is going to be for the duration of the year. Here are some strategies for how to tackle the tough issue of motivation.

Develop routines and structure: Establishing clear routines in family life eliminates the majority of conflicts. Routines and structure play a crucial role in developing motivation for your child. To create an online learning routine, it's a good idea to set up a small part of the house as a study area. Also, remember to build in breaks.

Give your child a sense of control: By empowering your children, they'll develop a sense of autonomy and responsibility. This will help your children develop their ability to motivate themselves. Ultimately, they will know that they alone are responsible for making sure their homework gets done. Another way to foster control is providing your child with reasonable choices.

Empathize with your children and practice active listening: What teens need most is not to *understand*; they need to *feel understood*. When they feel understood, it creates a space where they feel safe. This environment of feeling understood helps them become more open to looking at the problem in a new light.

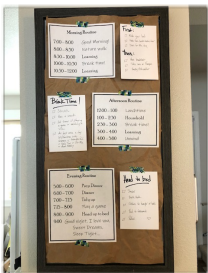
Encouragement rather than praise: Research shows that encouragement has a bigger effect than praise on a child's motivation. Encouragement helps them believe in themselves, e.g. "It looks like you enjoyed solving that math problem." Praise is a form of judgment that makes your child indirectly more dependent on you, e.g. "You're so good at math!" The big difference is that words of praise lead the child to rely on your assessment of their accomplishments; while words of encouragement lead to positive assessments of themselves.

Grace, understanding and resiliency: Encouraging resilience is one of the best things parents can do for their children. Resilient children are ready for whatever life throws at them. Mistakes will happen. You and your children will have good days and bad. This situation is hard on everyone, so offer yourself and your children grace if the day doesn't go as planned.

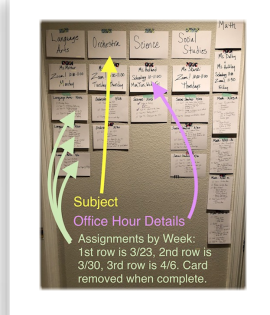
Ask your child what keeps them motivated: They can independently discover what keeps them stay motivated to complete their own school work. Try to honor what motivates your child and help them move toward their own goals.

ORGANIZATION

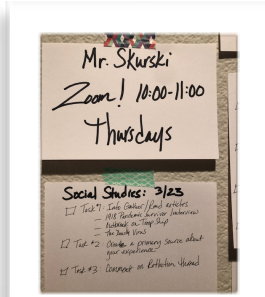
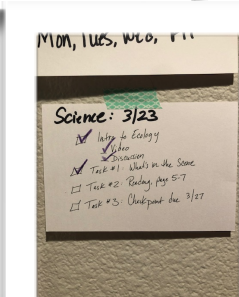
Some of you may have seen these tips on social media outlets, but one of our IMS parents (Rachel Hood) has done an amazing job helping set her student up for success. Here are a few photos for inspiration!



Consider having visuals for your student(s)



Consider giving each class a heading. Students can choose the order they want to complete their task for the day.



Maybe your student has multiple tasks on one card. They must complete 2-3 cards one day. After each card, they get a break and can do a "choice" activity.