Islander Middle School

COUNSELOR CONNECTION

TRIMESTER 2 DECEMBER 2024

Your IMS Counseling Team

IMS Counselors:
Dru Klein (A-G)
Janet Goldstein (H-O)
Jayna Dash (P-Z)

Mercer Island Youth & Family Services Counselors:
Harry Brown
Cara Graham

A Season of Gratitude

As we embrace the holiday season, we want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude for your support and involvement in our school community. This time of year is ideal for reflecting on what we appreciate, particularly the warmth of our homes and the connections we share with one another. In the wake of the wind storm and as we move forward after Thanksgiving, we hope you find ongoing opportunities to pause and consider all the good in our lives.

We encourage you to engage in various family activities that nurture gratitude at home. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Thankful Dinner Discussions:** During family meals, make it a tradition to share what each person is thankful for. This can spark meaningful conversations and strengthen family ties.
- **Gratitude Jar:** Create a gratitude jar where every family member can write down notes of appreciation and add them throughout the month. At the end of the season, read them together to reflect on your collective blessings.
- **Acts of Kindness:** Encourage family members to perform acts of kindness for others, whether it's helping a neighbor or volunteering in the community. Discuss the impact of these actions and how they make you feel.
- **Thank You Letters:** Encourage your children to write thank-you letters to people who have made a difference in their lives. This practice fosters appreciation and strengthens relationships.

Here on Mercer Island and at IMS, we have much to be grateful for. We appreciate all that you do to support your child's education. We wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season filled with love and gratitude!

Setting Goals

As we start the second trimester,

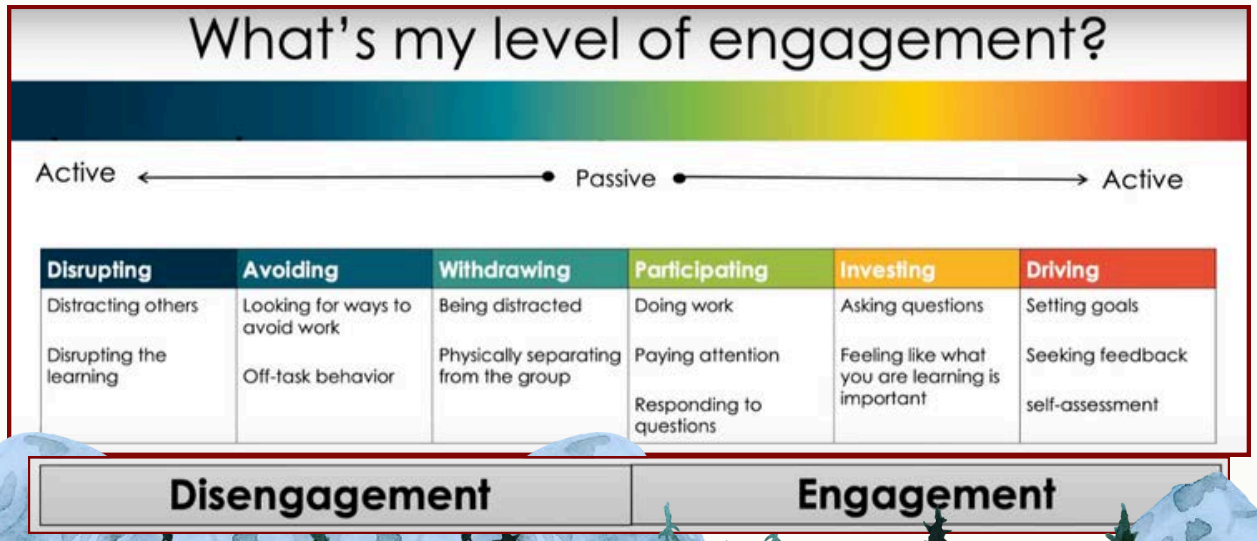
this is an excellent opportunity for students to engage in self-reflection regarding their academic performance.

Encourage your student to consider what they believe went well in the first trimester and then identify one or two areas where they wish to improve for the new term!

Self-Reflection and the Continuum of Engagement

It is helpful to remind students that learning is a continuous journey, and setting goals is a part of this process. Emphasize the importance of establishing measurable and achievable objectives.

In classes, students are utilizing a continuum of engagement to self-assess their learning in class. This approach allows them to reflect on their level of participation and involvement in their educational activities. You can use this same language at home when helping your students complete school practice or home tasks.



Show Yourself Some Gratitude!

Parenting can be both rewarding and challenging, and it's easy to feel overwhelmed or critical of yourself when things don't go as planned. Practicing self-compassion can help! Self-compassion means treating yourself with the same kindness and understanding that you would offer a close friend. Instead of dwelling on mistakes, acknowledge that parenting is a learning process and that no one gets it right all the time. By being gentle with yourself, you model resilience and emotional well-being for your children, teaching them that imperfection is part of being human. Remember, a little self-kindness goes a long way—for you and your family.

NEW Lunch Group!

Boys Group on Tuesdays during lunch with Mr. Brown is an opportunity to meet new people and have a fun break during the school day. This is a weekly drop-in group for gaming and activities. No sign up needed just come to room 113 at the start of lunch. Bring your own lunch. Popcorn and treats provided.

ATTENTION 8TH GRADE FAMILIES!

Heads up! Upon our return from winter break, we will begin the process of preparing our 8th graders for their transition to 9th grade. The High School Counseling Department will be providing 8th graders and their parents with a wealth of information regarding course selection and registration procedures. Please keep an eye out for this important information. Additionally, our IMS counseling team will be pushing into classes to do a career exploration lesson to help get students excited about life beyond Middle School.

https://ims.mercerislandschools.org/academicsprograms/counseling-services