

BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPORT FOR ON-LINE CLASSROOMS

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Since we are returning to on-line learning for the near future (we hope) and after spending the last 5 months supporting students with distance learning, here are a few items to consider before the school year really begins to commence:

1. Students need to be aware that, more than ever before, they must use those advocacy muscles and ask for teacher support when they feel confused or overwhelmed. Emails that are copied to their parents are a good beginning. And if there are virtual office hours, use them!
2. Review your virtual classroom. You might have cobbled together a space to do your schoolwork in March, but perhaps you need to rethink where you are going to do most of your work this school year. Things to consider:
 - a. Is there enough light to see your screen?
 - b. Is there a glare that is interfering with clear visibility?
 - c. Is there enough ventilation so that you are not getting warm or feeling stuffy?
 - d. Is the area around your workstation cluttered? If yes, this can make you feel overwhelmed without you even knowing it.
 - e. Do you have a calendar with your assignments somewhere visible?
 - f. Do you have a schedule that is easily accessible?
 - g. Is the Wi-Fi bandwidth strong enough where you are?
 - h. Are you ergonomically well-situated so that you are not straining your neck or back to use your computer? 90 degrees for your back and your legs is optimal.
3. You should have a list of passwords and teacher emails conveniently located.
4. You should also identify one *GOOD* student in each class that you can call or email if you need some clarification and cannot get it from your teacher.
5. You should have all school supplies, such as books, calculator, dictionary, printing paper, pens, and pencils nearby.
6. Keep in mind that if the weather is cooperating, you might do some of your sessions or some of your reading outside to break-up the day.

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7. If working asynchronously, you might play around with your schedule to find the best way to tackle your homework and studying. Some students prefer to spend one day on each subject. Some students prefer to work on every subject every day but limit their time for each session. Figure-out if you like to work in depth or are more of a transition shifter.
8. If your parents are involved in your day, then write a schedule of your school day into your smart phone and share the schedule with a parent, so there is some accountability for your time.
9. **Two Final Thoughts:**
 - a. **Schedules are important - times to get-up and times to work and times to go to sleep need to be implemented. This takes discipline - the same discipline you will need in college, professional school, and work!**
 - b. **You are spending vast amounts of time staring at a computer screen each day. Give your eyes and your body frequent rests. Do not forget about staying physically active... and think long and hard about spending extra time looking at that screen to play video games!**