

MIGUEL JUAREZ MIDDLE SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF NEWSLETTER

Contact Information

The MJMS Support Staff members are dedicated to providing educational, behavioral, and social/emotional support to all students at Miguel Juarez Middle School.

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News from the Counselors

The goal of the counseling program at MJMS is to ensure that each student that comes through our door, whether through self-referral, teacher-referral, or through data analysis, is connected with an adult and/or resources for support.

How will we do this?

- Data collection and tracking: counselors will track and analyze behavior, attendance, and academic data to support the creation of student interventions
 - What will we do with the data?
 - Form and improve groups
 - Initiate CICO and C&C interventions
- Groups and individual counseling: group and individual counseling will be provided through a comprehensive analysis of data and observed student needs
 - How will we know if we are successful?
 - Through an analysis of pre and post group behavior data
- Providing resources: counselors will provide any necessary resources, such as academic support, outside counseling, and social/emotional aid when necessary

MAP testing took place December 10th, 11th, and 12th



News from the Social Workers

MJMS participates in the backpack food program that is run through the Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB). NIFB delivers shelf stable food to the school every week, free of charge. The food is placed into backpacks provided by NIFB, which the students then take home on Friday. The students return the backpack the following week and they will receive additional food. This backpack program is available every week throughout the school year. If this is something that would be helpful, either for a short time or throughout the school year, please contact Martha Carey, School Social Worker at 224-303-2667.

News from the Psychologist

Strategies for Supporting Homework from the School Psychologist, Denise Polak

Winter break is a great time to clean out backpacks, wash them, and replenish them with new supplies to start the new semester upon return! Check the school website and talk with your child about what supplies they need replenished for when they return to school in January - pens, pencils, highlighters, notebooks, paper, etc.

The winter months can sometimes be a tough time to maintain effort and motivation. A new year is also a great time to set some new goals for the remainder of the school year. Below are some suggestions for supporting your student in setting those goals and providing structure and routines to achieve them.

Supporting Homework

Check in with your children every day. Studies show that students who have parental assistance in completing homework spend more time on homework. Parents can help motivate their children and give them strategies for sustaining attention and combating the negative emotions often associated with homework. While some children, particularly as they get older, resist help or supervision from parents, minimally parents can ask them about homework and plans for completing it. “What do you have to do and when are you going to do it?” should be a daily mantra for parents as they help their children plan for homework.

Establish clear homework routines.

Tasks are easiest to accomplish when they are tied to specific routines. By establishing daily routines for homework completion, parents will not only make homework go more smoothly, but they will also foster a sense of order that children can apply to later life, including college and work. Setting up homework routines early in elementary school can build habits that will make it easier for children to adjust to the greater homework demands that middle school and high school present. The steps to establishing homework routines include: N Identify a location where homework will be done. N Make sure children have all the materials needed to complete homework assignments (e.g., pencils, erasers, paper, dictionary, calculator). N Decide on the best time to do homework (e.g., right after school, just before or after dinner). N Make plans for completing homework (i.e., list all the tasks to be accomplished, identify when children will begin each task, and have your children estimate how long it will take to complete each task).

Help children establish and maintain organizational systems.

Help your children keep workspaces neat and set up systems to keep track of homework assignments. Homework sessions should end with children: N Placing the homework in the appropriate folder or notebook and backpack N Cleaning off the desk or workspace so that the next homework session can begin in an orderly environment Parents may need to supervise their children during this phase of the homework routine, even after they have learned to do their homework by themselves.

Establish clear communication channels with teachers.

For some students, this may take the form of a notebook going back and forth between home and school, or having both parents and teachers sign off on assignment books to ensure children are adequately supervised at home and at school. For most students, this level of communication will not be required, but parents should take advantage of school open houses and parent–teacher conferences, not only to understand the teacher’s homework policies and practices but also as ways to communicate to their children that they consider homework an important part of their education.

Additional resources for parents from the National Education Association (NEA)

National Education Association, Help your student get the most out of homework.

Available: <http://www.nea.org/parents/homework.html>

Excerpts taken from the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) handout Homework: A Guide for Parents BY PEG DAWSON, EDD, NCSP, Seacoast Mental Health Center, Portsmouth, NH

Download the entire document:

[file:///Users/dpolak/Downloads/Homework_a_Guide_for_Parents%20\(2\).pdf](file:///Users/dpolak/Downloads/Homework_a_Guide_for_Parents%20(2).pdf)
