Strategies for Academic Success

Managing time

- Use time management techniques such as the use of checklists, prioritized "To Do" lists, and prioritizing assignments.
- Estimate how long a task will take and then check on the accuracy of your estimate.
- Plan for more time to do a project that you think you will need.
- Break long assignments into chunks with time frames for completing each chunk.
- Establish intermediate deadlines for big projects with your teacher and show her the project at these deadlines.
- Write the due date on the top of each assignment in a brightly colored marker.
- Using a visual timer to help the student understand time constraints.

Managing work

- Use a checklist to guide the student through an independent assignment. Include items such as: get out pencil and paper, put name on paper, put due date on paper, read directions, ask teacher to further explain if needed, do work, put work away in note-book in appropriate section (e.g., to do tonight, to do this week), write assignment on assignment sheet, get teacher to sign, take home and complete work.
- Using a written (visual) schedule to keep the student focused and "on task" so that he or she can complete tasks as independently as possible.
- Give written directions whenever possible (dry erase boards, index cards, etc.) rather than verbal directions which can sometimes go in one ear and out the other.

Managing materials

- Leave a large supply of pencils/pens in the classroom or area where homework will be completed.
- (For younger students) Have one notebook in which all assignments are recorded. (For older students) Use a three-ring binder with organized sections enclosed by a zipper. Headings could include "Assignments Due/Date," "To Do Tonight," "Ongoing Work." Use dividers in the notebook that are color-coded (e.g., Red for assignments that must be done right away, yellow for those due at the end of the week, etc.).
- Color code materials. Cover the textbook for one course in the same color as the notebook for that course. Use the same color coding to prioritize assignments.
- Establish a daily routine for school organization and include a written version of it in the notebook (e.g., turn in homework at the beginning of classes, get out paper/text/pen and check blackboard for assignment, prepare to leave class three minutes before it ends—pack books, papers, etc., turn in assignment book for checking and initialing at the end of each day, etc.). Use this same approach at home (e.g., do homework at a certain time, have parent initial homework, clean out book bag, check for necessary supplies for school).