



The mission of the International School of Monterey is to educate all children toward becoming conscientious, compassionate, and responsible citizens of the world.

Strategies for Success: School Preparedness & Tardy Solution Tips

In an effort to assist ISM to meet educational Truancy Abatement Program compliance, as mandated by the District Attorney Office of Monterey County California, it is imperative for parents /guardians to ensure that their child/children arrive to the ISM school campus, be in their classroom seats and be ready to learn, promptly at 8:00 a.m. each school day. The following Strategies for Success are provided as helpful suggestions to assist ISM families and their students to arrive to school on time.

The easiest strategy is to **always prepare the evening before** each school day and to:

- Simplify what is done in the morning
- Review family system routines/guidelines with students and parents together.
 - Schedule routines/guidelines for the night before school days.
 - Schedule routines/guidelines for the morning of school days.
 - Make and post visual 'To Do' lists to assist students with daily routines.
 - Know how much time routines and getting ready actually take.

The Evening Before School

- Uniforms
 - Lay out uniform and shoes each night before each school day (include socks, underwear, shirt, slacks/skirt/dress, hair/other accessories, sweater, PE uniform, jacket, hat, umbrella, etc.).
- Academic Materials / Backpacks / Book Bags
 - Each evening, ensure that all homework/study work is placed in the appropriate folder(s), immediately after completing homework and placed in the backpack/book bag.
 - Place the backpack/book bag by the front (or exit) door the evening before.
- Lunch and snacks
 - Prepare and pack lunches and snacks each evening before school days (include all drinks and money for field trips as necessary).
 - Completely pack lunch bags.
 - Have one particular spot where the lunch is to be placed each evening and collected in the morning, like a certain refrigerator shelf.
 - If money is needed for a field trip, have it ready the night before in a safe location.
- Sleep
 - Set a bedtime at the same time each evening before school days, allowing plenty of time for sleep. According to the National Sleep Foundation Website:
 - School-age children (5-10 years old) need 10-11 hours of sleep a night.
 - Teenagers (11-17 years old) need 8.5-9.25 hours of sleep a night.
 - If waking up is difficult, perhaps additional sleep time is needed.

In The Morning

- Alarm Clocks
 - Have clocks visible to ensure timely preparedness and departure time.
 - Use alarm clocks to wake up on time.
 - Make family agreements to 'get up' as soon as the alarm goes off, regardless of how tired one may feel. An alarm is set for a reason – as a final reminder.
 - Wake up and get out of bed with plenty of time to complete morning routines, eat breakfast, and leave by the scheduled departure time.
 - Consider setting a 'walk-out' alarm to walk out of the house and leave for school.
 - Have an 'absolute ready' departure time to walk out the door.
 - Stick to the departure time each day - no matter what.
- Personal Care
 - Consider taking baths and showers the evening before.
 - Know how much time is required each morning to get ready (brushing teeth, brushing hair, grooming, getting dressed, etc.).
- Breakfast
 - Allow plenty of time to eat a healthy breakfast. This is the most important meal each day.

School Arrival Time

- The 15 Minute Rule
 - Base school arrival (driving, bicycling, walking) time on the actual time it takes to get to the campus in traffic, while allowing:
 - A daily arrival time on campus of 15 minutes before classes begin. Setting standard departure/arrival guidelines are easier for everyone to remember.
 - The 15-minute rule may benefit unforeseen/minor traffic concerns.
 - Allow additional time for known traffic concerns (road work, accidents, roadside fires, weather conditions, etc.)
 - It is helpful to have a 'rainy day' departure/pick up time that is a standard time (if it is raining, add 10 minutes or more to the 'normal' departure time).

Car Pools

- Car Pool Drivers:
 - Schedule an 'absolute ready' pick up time for all students in the car pool, allowing time for all students to arrive 15 minutes before class begins. This allows adequate time for parking, gathering book bags and projects from vehicle, and walking to classrooms.
 - Request a commitment from parents to meet the 'absolute' scheduled/agreed pick up time.
 - Notify parents of the rainy-days departure time.
 - Call parents in advance, (evening before or morning before leaving) if there will be a change other than the normal pick up time and/or the rainy day pick up time.
 - Make alternative arrangements if you are unable to drive.
 - Make concrete agreements with parents of car pool students.
 - Make a schedule and provide it to all drivers and families in the car pool.
 - Honor all agreements.
 - Honor scheduled pick up times.
 - Exchange telephone numbers.
 - Parents should contact the car pool driver if their student/s will not be attending school (the evening before or early in the morning).

Truancy Abatement Program / Legal Educational Attendance Obligations*

- The International School of Monterey must comply with the Monterey County District Attorney Truancy Abatement Program for each enrolled student. The Truancy Abatement Program states:

“A student may initially be identified as a truant if, within one school year, the student it:

- Absent 3 or more full days without valid excuse.

OR - Tardy or absent for more than 30 minutes without valid excuse on 3 occasions.

OR - Any combination of 3 or more of the above.”

- A conscientious effort is made by ISM personnel to meet with the parents/guardians and the student to discuss Truancy concerns.
 - Once ISM has reported Truancy to the District Attorney's office, a Truancy Abatement Officer will follow through with the parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Responsibilities
 - Each parent and/or guardian has a legal responsibility to ensure that students arrive to school with ample time for the student to be in their seat and ready to begin the instructional school day on time, which is 8:00 a.m. Classroom doors open at 7:53 a.m. for students to enter classrooms and be in their seats ready for instructions at 8:00 a.m.
- Tardiness
 - All tardy incidents that are 30 minutes or more are processed according to the Truancy Abatement Program.
 - All tardy incidents less than 30 minutes are processed according to the ISM school procedures.
 - Meetings with the Principal may be required dependent on the number of tardy incidents.
 - Legal Excuses for being Tardy or Absent from School:
 - Student is ill
 - Impassable roads
 - Legal appointments
- Appointments
 - Physicians (dental, ophthalmologist, therapists, personal counselors, etc.)
 - Parents are requested to provide the school with a note from the attending physicians office each time their student is tardy and/or taken out of school due to an appointment, immediately following the student's return.
 - Attending physicians/office personnel will provide a note for the school, on office stationary, upon a parent/guardian request.
 - A student that is removed from/taken out of school for 30 minutes or more, prior to the end of the scheduled school day, is considered truant, unless compliance is met within the Truancy Abatement Program guidelines.
 - A physician's note is requested for students attending afternoon appointments.
- Absences
 - Parents are requested to provide a physician's note when a student is absent.
 - Students that are taken out of school (vacations and/or days out) during scheduled calendar school days are considered truant and are reported to the Truancy Abatement Office.
 - Parents/guardians may not allow a student to miss scheduled school days with out a valid excuse, or without written permission from the ISM Director and/or Principal.