A MESSAGE FROM THE
HEAD OF SCHOOL

Log In and Be Counted: Three Proven Strategies for Success

By Kendall Schroeder

Tomorrow, all across the state, schools must show the Department of Education the number of students attending their school. This day is called Count Day—a crucial moment when every student needs to log in and be counted. On Count Day, each student is required to log in and demonstrate their commitment to learning in every subject. For many, this means logging into six or seven classes, including Math (Algebra, Geometry), Language Arts (English), History/Social Studies, Science, Art, PE, or Health and World Languages. It's not an ordinary day for many students, but it's a day that defines our commitment to our way of learning.

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Success in an online school requires a unique set of skills and strategies and attending all the required classes in one way to ensure we're on the right track. However, it's more than just logging in. Here are three key tips, backed by research, to help you excel in your online learning journey.

1. Create a Structured Learning Environment
Recent research supports that a well-organized and distraction-free learning environment significantly contributes to academic success in online courses (Keser Aschenberger, F., Radinger, G., Brachtl, S. et al., 2023). This is your classroom. To achieve this:

- Designate a specific area in your home for studying and attending class. Ensure it is comfortable, well-lit, and free from distractions like your smartphone or TV.
- Set a schedule. All classes have a specific time in the online school but establishing a consistent daily routine will help keep you organized.

2. Actively Engage in Discussions and Collaborations
Participation and interaction are crucial aspects of online learning. A study by Anderson et al. (2019) found that active engagement and interactions with one's classmates (learner to learner) and teachers (learner to teacher) positively impact academic performance. Here's some suggestions on how to do it effectively:

- Participate regularly and contribute to class discussions. Engaging in academic discourse enhances comprehension and retention.
- Collaborate with your peers. If possible, form study groups or engage in collaborative projects.
- Reach out to your teachers, counselors, or advisors. Don't hesitate to ask questions or seek clarification. Establishing a strong relationship with the school can be as beneficial in online classes as it is in traditional settings.

3. Manage Your Time Wisely
Time management is a critical skill for all students but especially online learners. Consider these time management strategies:

- Use a planner. Maintain a digital or physical planner to schedule assignments, deadlines, and study sessions.
- Prioritize your tasks. Identify and tackle high-priority assignments first, ensuring that you allocate sufficient time for each.
- Try to avoid multitasking. Research has consistently shown that multitasking impairs cognitive function (Ophir et al., 2018). Focus on one task at a time for optimal learning.

Success in online classes is possible through structured learning environments, active engagement, and effective time management. By implementing these strategies, you can maximize your potential in the virtual classroom and achieve your academic goals.

Remember, Count Day is tomorrow (Wednesday, October 4). Let's log in and be counted! It's one of the most important things you can do.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your teacher or advisor.

References
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