

# AMS NEWSLETTER

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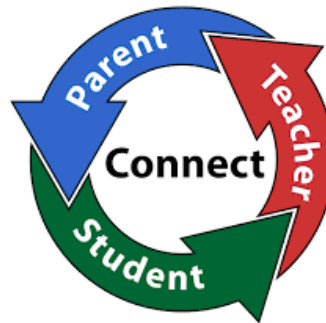
## A PARENT'S GUIDE TO WORKING WITH TEACHERS AT PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are essential opportunities for parents and teachers to share information as well as develop a positive working relationship. Your regular attendance at these conferences also demonstrates to your child your commitment to education as well as to the school.

Conferences typically consist of the teacher discussing your child's academic performance, providing examples of class work, and answering questions. This type of conference is helpful for parents who have been talking with the teacher or have few concerns. For some parents, however, it may not be sufficient for answering all of their ques-

tions. If so, request a follow-up conference when more time will be available.

- Talk with your child before the conference. Find out if your child has any concerns about the school. Ask specific questions such as: Are there any subjects causing you problems? Do you understand the homework? Can you see the board adequately? What subjects do you like?
- Write down your questions and concerns. You may want to ask some of the questions listed on page 2. Arrange your questions in order of importance.



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PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE  
NOVEMBER 10, 2016  
5:30 P.M. TO 7:30 P.M.

## SUGGESTED QUESTIONS AT PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

Given the importance of on-going communication, you may wish to begin a meeting by determining the best ways to reach the teacher...note, phone, email.

### About Classwork and Homework:

- What are my child's academic strengths and weaknesses?
- When are tests given? How is he/she doing on tests and quizzes?
- What is the homework routine? How much time should my child spend on homework? What role do you expect me to play with homework?

### About Motivation and Learning:

- Is my child putting forth good effort in class?

- Does he/she participate in class discussions?
- Does he/she work well independently?
- Are there any signs of a learning or other disability? If so, should my child be considered for additional testing or special instruction?
- Does my child show evidence of special talents? If so, what can be done to promote this ability?

### About Social Skills and Behavior:

- How does my child get along with his/her classmates?
- Does my child seem anxious about any aspect of school?

- Are there any behavior problems? Have you seen any sudden changes in his/her behavior or mood?

### Other Possible Questions:

- Are there school programs which my child can benefit from (for example, an enrichment program, after-school tutoring)?
- Are there any skills in need of reinforcement? What can we do to help my child at home?

## WHAT DO I DO AFTER THE CONFERENCE?

- **Send a follow-up message.** If you and the teacher agreed on some plan of action, convey in your note that you are hopeful that this plan will yield results.
- **Talk with your child.** Your child will no doubt be eager to hear what you discussed at the conference. Tell your child what you think is appropriate for him/her to hear. Highlight the positive about the teacher. In discussing problem areas suggest specific ways your child can improve, but avoid a critical tone. Inform your child of any changes the teacher will be making and let him/her know that you support these changes. Your child needs to see you and the teacher as a "team."
- **Follow-up with the teacher.** If the teacher described some concerns at the meeting, check with him/her a couple of weeks later to see if there has been progress. Keep the lines of communication open.
- Please use **POWERSCHOOL** as a means of effective communication between you, your child, and your child's teachers.

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS FOR PARENTS

- Regular school attendance is essential to success. Other than when he/she is sick, your child must attend school each and every day.
- AMS has "Codes of Conduct." Become familiar with these rules as well as the consequences for breaking them. Review them with your child.
- AMS not only prepares report cards, your child also receives Progress Reports. Read these reports carefully, review them with your child and contact the teacher if you have any concerns about your child's lack of progress.
- In addition to the teacher's tests and quizzes, New York administers state tests to measure student progress in reading, math and other subject areas. Be aware of when

these tests are given and how they are used to help your child.



## POWERSCHOOL: BE PROACTIVE. NOT REACTIVE

AMS understands the busy lives parents have. That is why, we decided to add PowerSchool as a means to foster effective communication between the school and parents.

PowerSchool is a web-based student information center that provides a full range of features families are able to access on their desktop or the mobile phone (the school code is KNTR if downloading on your phone).

PowerSchool allows families to view their child's grades and attendance no matter where they are.

Please be sure to receive your Access ID and Access Password. If you are a returning parent, your Access ID and Access Password is the same as last year's.

Contact Ms. Hudson's office to receive your PowerSchool information.



## IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

- November 8th; No School, Election Day
- November 10th; Parent-Teacher Conference 5:30 p.m. To 7:30 p.m.
- November 11th; No School, Veteran's Day
- November 24th and 25th: No School, Thanksgiving



## GET INVOLVED

The Office of Community Engagement and Alumni Relations has created multiple ways for families to get involved. Exemplifying the definition of "Thought Partners" we know and understand that parent involvement is essential to student success.

Here are ways for you to be involved:

1. Be a Contributing Writer to the AMS Newsletter
2. Volunteer at school-wide and community events
3. Join the FSO Leadership Cabinet
4. Join the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI)

\*Ask Ms. Hudson for details

## IS YOUR SPOUSE HAVING A MIDLIFE CRISIS?

*CONTRIBUTING WRITER: MS. H. WALKER, 9TH GRADE PARENT & MEMBER OF FSO LEADERSHIP CABINET*

### What is a Midlife Crisis?

Someone once said to me, "If it weren't so cliché, I'd think I was having a [midlife crisis](#)." Nothing is cliché or trite about a [midlife crisis](#). If you talk to middle-aged men and women who have experienced [divorce](#), you will find that many of them will tell you their spouse changed overnight and became someone who discarded all that was once important to him for a new life that was all about what he wanted.

A [midlife crisis](#) is experienced between the ages of 40 and 60. It was first identified by the psychologist Carl Jung and is a normal part of the maturing process. Most people will experience some form of emotional transition during that time of life. A transition that might cause them to take stock in where they are in life and make some needed adjustments to the way they live their life. Most seem to come through the process smoothly without making major life changes.

### Those who go into a midlife crisis might experience a range of feelings such as:

- Unhappiness with life and the lifestyle that may have provided them with happiness for many years.
- Boredom with people and things that may have been of interest to them before.
- Feeling a need for adventure and change.
- Confusion about who they are and where they are going.
- Anger at their spouse and blame for feeling tied down.
- Unable to make decisions about where they want to go with their life.
- Doubt that they ever loved their spouse and resentment over the marriage.
- A desire for a new and passionate, intimate relationship.

Most people who have a difficult time during midlife and go into crisis mode do so because of external factors. They may be experiencing stress in their life that makes the transition more difficult or they may have childhood issue that were never dealt with that come to the surface during this time.

### Three external factors that may cause midlife to be problematic for some people are:

#### 1. [Debt](#):

It is easier to accumulate debt due to the availability of [credit](#) cards and loans. We are bombarded by credit card companies and it is easy to find yourself with large balances owed. We live in a society where it is commonplace to be living above our means. Finding yourself middle aged, in debt and facing retirement can add stress to an already [stressful time in life](#). A normal reaction would be to seek help from a debt management company or consolidate your loans. A person who is finding it difficult emotionally during midlife might find it easier to walk away from their family in order to rid himself of what he feels is the cause of all the debt.

# MIDLIFE CRISIS CONT'D

## 2. *Significant Loss:*

The death of a parent or family member can cause grief, which is difficult enough to come to terms with, without having to also cope with the feelings of a midlife transition. Put the loss of a loved one with the feelings that accompany midlife and the whole process becomes bewildering and overwhelming.

## 3. *Avoidant Personality:*

If a person has a tendency to avoid conflict in their personal relationships, suffers from feelings of inadequacy, are emotionally distant and has low self-esteem they will find midlife transition harder to navigate. This personality type has a deep fear of feeling shame and rejection. Such feelings will keep them from seeking help should their emotions become overwhelming. More than likely, they will run from their problems instead of trying to find solutions to them. It's this personality type that normally ends up in divorce [court](#) during midlife.

Whether there are external factors that make the process more difficult or not, there is an internal process that is gone through. If a person lacks understanding of the process, he may find himself making irrational decisions he may later regret such as leaving a job, divorcing his spouse and throwing away the security that he built during the first part of his life.

# IMPORTANT SENIOR DATES

## November 2016

- 11/10: College Trip: SUNY Oswego
- 11/18 College Trip: Skidmore College and SUNY Adirondack
- 11/22 College Trip: Syracuse University and Onondaga (TBD)
- **11/23 SUNY Application Due**

## December 2016

- 12/1 CUNY Macaulay Honors Deadline
- 12/2 College Trip: SUNY Cortland and Tompkins Cortland Community College
- **12/16 All College Applications Due**
- 12/21 Financial Aid Application Deadline

Parents please make sure you are in constant communication with Ms. N. McHugh; AMS College and Career Counselor and Mr. S. Beard; 12th Grade Counselor

## AMS

99 Terrace View Avenue  
Bronx, New York 10463

Phone: (718)817-7683 ext 1503  
Fax: (718)817-7685  
Email: Shudson31@charter.newvisions.org

We're on the Web  
[www.newvisions.org/ams](http://www.newvisions.org/ams)

### *A Message from Ms. Hudson*

*Associate Director of Community Engagement and Alumni  
Relations*

Now that you have read the November 2016 AMS

Newsletter, please be sure to:

1. Attend Parent-Teacher Conference
2. Obtain your PowerSchool Access ID and Password
3. Contact my office if you are not receiving mail, emails, or automated phone calls
4. Volunteer
5. Become a Contributing Writer
6. Join the FSO Leadership Cabinet
7. Remain UPDATED, INVOLVED, and ENGAGED!

## DID YOU MOVE?

If you moved, please submit proof of address to the Main Office. Proof of address can be any utility bill.

Failure to submit proof of address will result in you not receiving any school mailings.

Also, please provide Ms. Hudson with your email address so you can always be in the know!

