



# Upper School Family Resources

This document is intended to serve as a library of guides, articles, and other tips and recommendations to help Nova's parents and community support their students and partner with our teachers and staff to help make their Upper School experience as successful as possible. We welcome your feedback and suggestions, please contact Mr. Pelofske with any questions - and we welcome your presence at our Upper School Parent Advisory meetings (every other month on Tuesdays from 4-5pm).

## Who to Contact with Questions or Concerns?

If you have a question about a class, its assignment(s), or scores on graded work - **contact the classroom teacher first**. They can best answer questions about assignments, class materials, scores/grading questions, and anything that's been talked about in class. \*\*\*It's a big adjustment keeping track of 7+ teachers compared to elementary school, so print a copy of your student's schedule so you can keep a record of who teaches what.

This is a link to a document with all the teachers' Office Hours and their email links. [Upper School Teacher Emails](#) \*\*\**If your student has an IEP or 504 plan, and you have questions about the accommodations and/or modifications being followed in the classroom, please contact the teacher first to discuss, as well as your student's case manager for more details.*

If you have a technology question or issue and the teacher isn't able to solve it for you - contact Ms. Maciej ([mmaciej@novaclassical.org](mailto:mmaciej@novaclassical.org)).

If you have questions about a student schedule, or concerns about things that make it harder to succeed in school (stress, anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, etc.) - we encourage students and families to contact our counselors [Ms. Cranberg](#) (grades K-8) and/or [Mr. Shuman](#) (grades 9-12). They have also provided resources through their link to the [Counselor's page](#) on the Nova website.

If you've reached out to a teacher and you haven't gotten a response **within 2 working days** - please contact Mr. Pelofske ([mpelofske@novaclassical.org](mailto:mpelofske@novaclassical.org)). \*\*\*Please know we encourage you to reach out to teachers again, just in case they may have missed your email. With ~130 or more students and parents communicating by email - sometimes an email can get lost in the shuffle!

## **General Tips for starting the School Year**

- **Feeling anxious or nervous is ok, and can be a good thing! It shows you care about what's ahead.**
  - It's going to be OK - we're here to help!
  - Your friends and peers might not show it on the outside, but everyone's feeling and going through their own stresses, worries, and adjustments too. Just like your locker combo - things will start to "click" sooner than you realize, especially if you keep consistent!
- **Getting back to the routine of being in-school and going from class to class can feel a bit daunting...for students and teachers alike!**
  - Adjusting to a 7-period schedule, and having different teachers each hour is a big change from how we've had to do school for the last year and a half.
  - Each teacher works closely with their classes to keep them on track with their classwork and organization, as well as how they support one another outside the classroom.
  - Reach out to your teachers to talk about how things are going BEFORE you fall behind - to save yourself a lot of stress later.
- **Organization is key to feeling and being successful!**
  - It is common for students to have ups and downs with their organization and managing due dates for work. Adolescents go through a lot of development, and "executive function" can be harder at times.
  - No two students (or even siblings) will have the exact same system to organize their things or work.
  - The student can, and should, be creating their organization routine. They'll need to be the one keeping up with their workload and making sure it's working for them.
  - If you can find what you need when you need it, that's a good sign your system is working.
- **It's good to talk to and share about how you're doing with your friends and peers.**
  - Middle school and high school can be a self-conscious time - and friends have a much greater influence than they did before.
  - It's important to be careful about what you say to other people, especially if it's something a friend or peer has shared with you. Trust is earned, and is very hard to rebuild. The things you say, write, or share online or with your personal accounts don't every completely "go away" so be sure you would feel ok having those messages read back to you in the future.
  - If you think someone might be in danger, for themselves or for others, it's important you tell a trusted adult right away (counselor, principal, teacher/staff member, parent, etc.)
  - DON'T share your locker combination or passwords to your accounts to your friends!!!

## **Tips for Academics and Organization**

[The Organized Student](#) by Donna Goldberg is a great book and resource for helping students and parents develop a system that works for them, as well as how to adapt it as they continue through school. Here are a few documents that are based on the book, emphasizing key tips and strategies around organization.

[The Organized Student: Chapter Summaries](#) (document)

[The Organized Student: Example Parent Guide](#) (pdf)

Here's a few articles on setting up a Home Learning space you may find useful as well.

- [Washington Post: Creating Home Learning Space](#)
- [NY Times: How to Set Up a Remote Learning Space](#)

Write out your daily schedule - post it where you can see it where you're learning.

Include a note on which day(s) your class meets online (livestream lessons)

[Tips for Partnering with Teachers](#)

[Helping your child succeed at school \(article\)](#)

## **Tips for Social and Emotional Well-Being**

[Nova Classical Academy - Counseling Page](#)

[Coping with Social Anxiety During Social Distancing](#)

[Teaching Social Skills at Home](#)

[Site: "Change to Chill" \(Stress and Anxiety Information\)](#)

[For Families - Helping Children Handle Stress](#)

[For Teens - A Personal Guide for Managing Stress](#)

[For Teens - Creating Your Personal Stress Management Plan](#)

[How to get your teen to talk to you more openly.](#)

[4 tips on how to get my teenager to talk to me.](#)

[Dating during the Pandemic \(healthy relationships for teens\)](#)

## **Friends & Classmates: Interacting Online**

All communications and materials on Nova's accounts can be monitored and reviewed. Students must abide by the Technology Use Agreement regarding appropriate use of school devices and communications.

- Be thoughtful about what you say to others on social media. Online messages never truly "go away" and can easily be shared or misrepresented without your knowledge or permission. Some helpful tips to think about when using social media include:
  - Don't share passwords or personal/identifying information - especially belonging to other people.
  - Before you send a text or post a message, think to yourself:
    - *Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind?*
    - If you answer no to any of these questions, then it's best to not say anything at all.
  - Report inappropriate or harmful posts or content. Tell a parent or trusted adult if you think you or someone else may be harmed or in danger.



- Here's a more detailed guide with recommendations for students and parents on what to do to help stop [cyberbullying](#).
- This [page](#) from Security.org has a helpful video for parents on the prevalence of cyberbullying and steps they can take to help support their student(s) as well.
- [Pacer.org](#) coordinates National Unity Day, recognizing efforts to stop bullying across the country, and the federal government's page on bullying can be found here: <https://www.stopbullying.gov/videos-social-media>.

## **Tips for Google Classroom and Technology**

[Using Gmail and Calendar Tutorial](#) (shared by Ms. Ross)

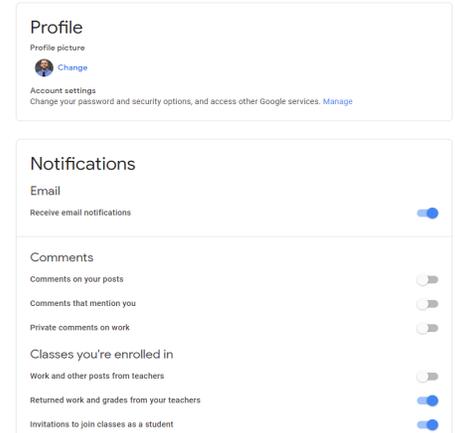
[Google Classroom Tutorial](#) (shared by Ms. Strand)

**When in Google Classroom:** You can also click on the “Hamburger” in the upper left corner, then scroll down to “Settings” to change which types of emails come to your inbox (you'll see “Profile” at the top of this setting page.

**\*WARNING!** If you unselect some of these options, you run the risk of missing out on an important email or message later on!

[Accessing "Calendar" Through Google Classroom](#)

[Accessing Infinite Campus as a Parent](#)



[General Tech Tips for students Slides](#)

[Adding a screenshot to Google Classroom](#)

[Email Etiquette - Info Slides \(created by Ms. Maciej\)](#)

[Google Classroom Tips for Students](#)

[Zoom out window in chrome](#)

[How to use Zoom \(student version\)](#)

[Tips for students on writing emails](#)

[Viewing feedback on Google Forms](#)

\*\*\*Parents can receive Classroom email summaries for their student's Google Classroom(s). Directions on how to set this up can be found in this [link](#). You will need ONE teacher to invite you from their Google Classroom for the initial set up.

### **Help!!! My student is so distracted by Youtube!!!**

We rely on access to Youtube because of the many educational videos and resources, along with teachers posting recorded videos of their lessons - so we can't simply block or limit youtube as a whole. We also aren't able to remove the “recommended videos” section that comes with the app - but here are some links and tools you can consider in helping guide your student in better managing their distractions that come with Youtube (and technology as a whole).

[How to Deal with Your Teen's Youtube Addiction](#)

[Homework and Reducing Distractions](#)

[Tools to Help Kids Stay Focused During Distanced Learning](#)

[Tips: How to Remove Youtube Recommendations](#)

A Chrome extension some parents have mentioned trying in the past: [Unhook - Chrome extension](#)

There will certainly be more updates and adjustments as the year gets underway. Please share any questions or concerns with a teacher, staff member, or the principal so we can support you as best as possible. Good luck, and make this a great school year!