

Have you defrosted yet? Spring is just around the corner and what better time to get organized than now!

For many students there is a strong correlation between being a good student and time management and organization; it is easier to be a good student when you are prepared for class, know where your homework is, and have all school supplies and assignments ready for the next day. Of course, with incredibly hectic lives, it is easier to *want* to be organized than to actually *be* organized. One key to achieving organization for students and families is to clear out clutter.

A great place to start is by sorting just one closet or area into the following three categories:

NEED: paper, pencils, erasers, school clothes, school shoes...these are things you use on a daily basis; just the necessities.

WANT: that pencil with the cute eraser, your favorite, gently used, 3 ring binder you've had since Kindergarten, glitter markers, gently worn flip flops in your favorite color, a favorite toy....these are things you know you do not actually need but you really love *and* have a place to store them.

DONATE/DISCARD: the 3 ring binder you've had since Kindergarten with a broken spine, non-working pens, a dollar store toy you have had since Elementary school, clothes two sizes too small....these are things you do not need, you do not have room for, or you do not use.

Once sorted, do just what the last category says. *Donate!* As the saying goes--*One man's trash is another man's treasure*. There are multiple local thrift stores, or online groups, such as Freecycle.org, which make it easy to get rid of unwanted items. When donating, keep the school in mind, too! Teachers always need useable school supplies for classroom projects and students in need. The Families in Transition program can also usually use gently used coats, hats, gloves, and backpacks for students in need.

Many people are also overwhelmed by the theoretical cost of organizing; magazines display organizational containers which are pretty to look at but cost a fortune. It may be helpful to take a moment to see what household items can be upcycled. Cardboard cereal boxes may be cut into magazine files; what a great place to store papers from the backpack till an adult can review them. Clean aluminum cans may be turned into pencil and pen holders; never go searching for a pencil again. An oatmeal cylinder easily organizes hair accessories; mornings are less rushed when a brush or elastic can be found. Clean yogurt containers corral small items; those pesky erasers will never be caught in the vacuum again!

Organization may seem overwhelming but the benefits outweigh the effort. The SSMS PTSA stays organized with an online calendar, a Facebook, a Twitter feed, and a website to help keep members informed and involved. Join us, Like us, tweet us, link to us, or email us....we're here to keep you involved, advocate for student success, & make South Seminole Middle school great.

PTSA would like to congratulate the following students for earning Reflections Honorable Mentions: JORDAN TWEEDIE-PHOTOGRAPHY AND LITERATURE, SHANNON FITZPATRICK-PHOTOGRAPHY, AND VERONICA CARCASONA-LITERATURE.