Systems Check

Directions for Students and Parents:
Every week or two, you should "overhaul" your systems until they become **habit**. It can take a couple of hours, but will save you a ton of time and energy in the end. Let your parents help you, especially at the beginning of a semester, halfway through a semester and 2 weeks before the end of a semester. Here are the types of questions to examine. Be honest with yourself, take your time to be <u>thorough</u>, and this will pay off BIG TIME.

Backpack System Overhaul (10 minutes)
Basic backpack philosophy - regularly get rid of stuff you don't need, go through stuff with a fine toothed comb so you don't miss anything, have homes for everything, overhaul it weekly.
-Take <u>everything</u> out of every single pocket. Parents, I always ask, "is there anything personal that you don't want me to see?" If there is, I give them a moment to deal with that privately.
-Go through every item, 1 by 1. If it's trash, put it in a trash pile. If it's recyclable, put it in a recycle pile. If it should go in a folder, put it in. If it needs to be dealt with, put it in a "deal with" pile (homework that needs to be done or turned in, checks to turn in, etc).
-Make sure your name is on everything. Just do it.
-Go through every paper in every folder, even if you think you have everything in the right place. Even if you think you need everything in there.
-Put supplies, that you actually use, back into the backpack in it's "home". Where is the best place for that thing?
-Put folders and books back in a logical order/place.

Planner System Frontload (30 minutes)
I recommend using a monthly planner.
-Tear out every single page that you will never use. This will leave you with a monthly planner that has about 11 pages in it.
-Now frontload the planner.
-Take a printout of your school's yearlong calendar, read it carefully and get everything relevant into your planner.
-With a hi-liter, box out every single day you do not have school.
-Ask your parents about important recurring appointments, practices, birthdays, travel or anything else that a mature person would have in a planner.

-Look at your syllabi and teacher's websites to enter all relevant dates. These often include dates for papers, projects, finals, etc..
-What short-term planning do you need to do? What is coming up today or this week?

Check Grades (5 minutes)
-Bookmark your grade program
-Check it a few times a week
-Make a list of every missing, late, incomplete or low score that needs to be addressed
-Address it. Finish and turn it in, email teacher to communicate about it, etc. Be proactive. NEVER say, "the teacher won't give me credit" or anything similar, just finish it and get it into their mailbox asap. Trust me.

Computer Optimization (10 minutes)
-Set up browser to open all relevant pages automatically: Grade program, Calendar, Email program, Google Docs, etc.
-Bookmark all teacher sites and check regularly
-Check and respond to email regularly. Get to inbox 0 weekly. Unsubscribe from junk.

SSS Optimization (30 minutes)
Basic philosophy is that optimization will empower you to study smarter not harder.
-Find the best place possible for you to focus on schoolwork this year. This is your Sacred Study Space
-Remove all distractions
-Enhance the area with optimal lighting, sound, etc.
-Have relevant supplies within reach (in other words, you should not have to get up to find a stapler in the middle of study time because it is an unnecessary interruption to your flow. You should always have one in your area)

Work flow/routine
Design a routine for your workflow
Print it and post it
Use it
Ex:
1. Clean SSS.
2. Check planner and grades.
3. Make a prioritized list for tonight.
4. Begin focus time. Do top priority first.

Stress
What are my top sources of stress?
What can I do to minimize their impact?
What helps me have less stress and more peace of mind?
How can I maximize that?
What can I reframe?
Breathe, meditate.

Family and friends
What would help me have healthier relationships? What needs to be addressed?

Beliefs
What beliefs hold me back? How can I change my beliefs so they help me reach my goals more effectively?

Self-care
How well am I taking care of myself? Exercise? Sleep? Nutrition? What action plans would help?

Printable Systems Checklist

Here is a printable checklist you can use to do a "quick" check. I use these all the time with students, and it covers the bases. It can be often be done in 15 min once a week.

Systems checklist: **Backpack?** Overhaul, papers, folders **Planner?** Update long and short term **Grades?** Online? **Computer optimization?** Tabs, pins, calendar, tasks **SSS?** **Study routine/work flow?** Tight? Manageable? **Stress & overwhelm sources?** Minimize, reframe, breathe **Family, friends?** Relationships **Self-care?** Nutrition, sleep, exercise, other **Beliefs?** Limiting? Abundance? Growth or fixed mindset. Self-talk, defaults, reframe.	**Systems checklist:** **Backpack?** Overhaul, papers, folders **Planner?** Update long and short term **Grades?** Online? **Computer optimization?** Tabs, pins, calendar, tasks **SSS?** **Study routine/work flow?** Tight? Manageable? **Stress & overwhelm sources?** Minimize, reframe, breathe **Family, friends?** Relationships **Self-care?** Nutrition, sleep, exercise, other **Beliefs?** Limiting? Abundance? Growth or fixed mindset. Self-talk, defaults, reframe.
Systems checklist: **Backpack?** Overhaul, papers, folders **Planner?** Update long and short term **Grades?** Online? **Computer optimization?** Tabs, pins, calendar, tasks **SSS?** **Study routine/work flow?** Tight? Manageable? **Stress & overwhelm sources?** Minimize, reframe, breathe **Family, friends?** Relationships **Self-care?** Nutrition, sleep, exercise, other **Beliefs?** Limiting? Abundance? Growth or fixed mindset. Self-talk, defaults, reframe.	**Systems checklist:** **Backpack?** Overhaul, papers, folders **Planner?** Update long and short term **Grades?** Online? **Computer optimization?** Tabs, pins, calendar, tasks **SSS?** **Study routine/work flow?** Tight? Manageable? **Stress & overwhelm sources?** Minimize, reframe, breathe **Family, friends?** Relationships **Self-care?** Nutrition, sleep, exercise, other **Beliefs?** Limiting? Abundance? Growth or fixed mindset. Self-talk, defaults, reframe.