

## Executive Function Program

### **Executive Function Defined:**

Executive function (EF) refers to one's ability to self regulate. It consists of specific higher-level processes which occur in the frontal lobe of our brains and helps us manage our resources and achieve our goals. Many specific processes have been identified and defined as parts of executive function. At Telos, we focus on seven.

### **Executive Function Skills:**

Time Management: The ability to use one's time effectively or productively.

Organization: The ability to create and maintain systems of organization in all areas of one's life.

Metacognition: Self-Awareness, awareness and understanding of one's own thought processes, problem recognition, and problem solving.

Attention: Notice taken of someone or something; the regarding of someone or something as interesting or important.

Initiation & Completion: The action or process of beginning and finishing a task.

Flexibility & Shifting: A willingness and ability to change or compromise one's beliefs, thoughts, emotions, or desires in order to improve behavior and interactions with others. Competently shifting from one activity to another. A capacity to zoom in and out between small details and the big picture.

Working Memory: The part of short-term memory that is concerned with immediate conscious perceptual and linguistic processing.

### **Executive Function Program at Telos:**

A student is referred to the EF program by his therapist and the academic advisor when he has shown genuine investment in treatment (typically around "Sun Phase"). The student, his parents, his therapist, and two of his teachers complete an assessment that specifically rates the student's abilities in each of the seven EF areas. Once enrolled, the student is assigned an EF Coach and meets with that coach four days a week for fifty minute sessions. The EF Coach plans and implements an individualized lesson specific to the needs and deficits of each student on their caseload. Students are typically enrolled for two school quarters and earn .25 elective credits per quarter while enrolled in EF coaching.

### **Executive Function Room:**

In addition to one-on-one coaching, Telos has created an EF bedroom. The executive function room is a designated dorm room for students to practice and apply the skills they have learned in the EF coaching program. The room houses four students at a time for a period of three months. While residing in the EF room, the students are solely responsible for their schedules and activities. The space itself is "EF friendly" with resources that promote organization, initiation and completion, and time management skills. Students qualify to live in the EF room if they have completed or are currently enrolled in the EF program.