Parent Focus Article

WEEK 6

Middle – Note Taking
Senior – Note Taking in Class

Learning Goals - at the end of this week your child should have:

- A willingness to explore other ways to take notes other than just writing and understanding the best ways to use their dominant Multiple Intelligences and best learning styles.
- An understanding of how to gather information through all of their senses and a heightened sense of curiosity to be information seekers and knowledge creators, like scientists.
- A proactive attitude to use the weekly Habits of Mind and Thinking Tools to strive, thrive and flourish in their living, learning and thinking.

Value for Life – Consistency

Identify three positive behaviours which show Consistency at home, then at school and then in the community.

Wellbeing Focus

Note Taking should be much more than purely writing. To cultivate students’ resourcefulness as a habit, we should encourage them to gather information by hearing, seeing, feeling and recording it using their dominant Multiple Intelligence and preferred Learning Style. Drawing idea maps, using thinking tools, making lists, creating flowcharts, using abbreviations are all effective methods of taking notes.

When writing and taking notes in class, many students adopt the approach of trying to write down everything that the teacher says and consequently find great difficulty keeping up. This puts them under pressure and tests their resiliency to stay focussed and engaged. This may lead to unwanted anxiety and their learning and understanding suffers. This approach is a non thinking transfer of knowledge; no learning, just filling the bucket.

Pre-reading the material to be covered in class is an excellent strategy that ensures students have a connection with it before they commence taking notes.

Learning to listen and reading body language are key habits in life and learning. The 80/20 Principle is an effective listening and note taking technique that will benefit students. It involves listening attentively for 80% of the time and writing/ recording/ drawing for 20% of the time. Encouraging students to question what they are listening to, lights the fire in their brains to start looking for connections to previously learnt material; their brains are engaged in exploring and searching for meaning – real learning.

In order to learn effectively, students must develop effective scavenging habits of gathering what they need to know through all of their senses. Coaching and mentoring students in finding their personal best ways of learning will enable them to strive, thrive and flourish.

Encouraging and introducing students to an array of note taking ‘gathering’ strategies will see their learning efforts well rewarded.

“He listens well who takes notes.” Dante Alighieri