Dear Parents and Caregivers

Last Wednesday, Donita Sullivan, Matthew Hannah, Kellie Pursell, Sharon Mulvihill and I attended the day seminar titled ‘Visible Learning’ conducted by Professor John Hattie, Deb Masters and Lee Collie.

In 2009, John Hattie published his now internationally acclaimed research – a synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to student achievement. Hattie’s research represents the largest ever evidence-based research into what actually works best in schools to improve learning. 150 influences on achievement have been ranked using effect size which is calculated by subtracting the average pre-test score from the average post-test and dividing the result by the spread (standard deviation).

An effect size (ES) of 0.4 is average or typical and represents the minimum we should expect. Hattie explains that if we are not achieving (at least) this effect size for a year’s learning, then things need to change. Effect size can be calculated for whole group results as well as for individual students. More about this in relation to Stella Maris results next week. This week I will address the outcomes of Hattie’s research - what influences, strategies, programs work more effectively than others.

In a nutshell, Hattie’s research concludes that ‘the things that have the most significant impact on student achievement are all about making learning visible (and explicit) to students.’ Influences such as student expectations (ES 1.44), providing formative evaluation (0.9), focussed and purposeful classroom discussion (0.8) providing quality feedback (0.75), using concept mapping (0.6), providing worked examples (0.57) and peer tutoring (0.55) are some of the strategies that support significant improvement in student achievement.

Some of the things that do not have a significant effect upon student achievement include matching instruction to learning styles (0.17), web-based learning (0.18), class size (0.21), individualized instruction (0.22) and ability grouping for gifted students (0.3). Although these represent examples of strategies that produce a less than average improvement, the following influences have a more serious negative effect on improvement: frequent moving of schools (-0.34), television (-0.18) and repeating a grade (-0.13). This research, no doubt, helps debunk many of the myths that have grown up around the effectiveness of many of these strategies. The research also helps schools focus on strategies that offer ‘more value for time and effort.’

Professor Hattie also goes to great lengths to emphasise that we should be doing all we can to press the point with students that achievement is linked to effort, rather than ability. This makes all the sense in the world, given that emphasising the importance of ability leaves many students (those who believe they have less ability) without much hope and some students (those who believe or have been repeatedly told that they are gifted) with the idea that effort is not required because their intelligence or ability is enough. We all know that neither is true. Within our own experience we can find examples of those considered the most academically talented who have failed to lead successful, happy lives and those whose school results were average but whose effort and determination paid off handsomely in the end.

Emphasising effort as a key determinant for achievement makes all the difference because our effort is within the control of each of us. Over the last 40 years I have frequently shared the quote from the writings of William James, ‘Effort is the one thing we can truly call our own.’ I strongly believe that by emphasising improvement made over time rather than hailing the highest score as the pinnacle of success, we empower all students, regardless of where they lie on the ability spectrum, to strive and to realise their potential as life-long learners. This change in focus also moves students away from worrying about what others are doing, and hence from comparison, and helps them concentrate upon what is within their locus of control – their individual effort.

So what does this all mean for teachers and students right now? Well I think the future is very bright. We now know where to concentrate our efforts and have a much clearer picture of what learning should look like to maximise improvement for everyone. More next week.

Have a great week everyone.  Glenda

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6 March 2012

Term 1 Week 7

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We need your help - Dear Parents, for a number of weeks now, we have had one of our female students stuffing items of lunch into the toilet, thus causing serious blockage problems which inconvenience other students and also cost us a fortune in plumbing. We have spoken with the girls about this to no effect. We now need your assistance as we believe we have someone who is in need of help, as this behaviour is persistent and not usual. Food items that are regularly found shoved into the toilet are red apples, rolls wrapped in gladwrap or alfoil, crackers and cheese. If you recognise that this could be your daughter, we would appreciate it if you could ask a few timely questions. We are not interested in naming and shaming the student; we simply need the behaviour to stop and the student to get help should it be needed. Thank you for your assistance.

Uniform Spot - As usual (unfortunately) the lost property box is full of items of clothing especially hats and lunch boxes. When NAMED, we can return items to their owners. The lost property box can be found beside the steps, near the year 7 rooms in A block.
District Swimming Report - Congratulations to our 15 member team. Selected in the Coastal District Team to compete at the Regional Titles on the 8th March are: Mackenzie Harris; William Martin; Liam Parker and Shaye Travers. Mackenzie Harris was placed 1st in 10 events, breaking several records. Stella Maris School was placed 2nd behind Mt Creek in the number of points scored overall. A huge performance and all Stella Maris competitors modelled exceptional behaviour throughout the day.

CONGRATULATIONS ALL!

Garden News
Come join our Stella Garden Club!
Starting this Tuesday at lunchtime we will be starting our Stella Maris Garden Club! Our aim is to provide an opportunity for the children not directly involved in the garden program to get outside and involved in the garden area. It will run every Tuesday at lunch, starting when the play bell goes. So, if your child or yourself are interested, meet us down there for some great activities. The children will be required to wear their hat, bring a water bottle and have the commitment needed to create a good working group. Di Harris and Lynsey Martin (teacher of 5A) will be down there supervising and setting up all the activities. We really would love to have some parents involved as well if anyone is interested. Please contact me at ljmartin@bne.catholic.edu.au or ring directly at the front office for further information.

Foot Steps
A program for children who have undergone major changes due to separation and divorce.

When is it happening?
Term two 2012 - to be run over five weeks
Starting Tues 17th April – Finishing Tues 15th of May. 3:30pm-5:00pm
Who’s it for?
Children’s age group for this Workshop are 7-8 years old.
Where?
Foundations: Suite 19 Plaza Home Centre 27 Evans Street Maroochydore (cnr Millwell rd)
Please register ASAP. To register your interest please contact Michelle at Foundations on 07 54437207 or Keri at Centacare on 07 5430 9300.

What to Expect Foot Steps is a fun, educative, peer support program that is designed to help children come to a better understanding of the separation of their parents, and also to help them adjust and adapt to the significant changes in their family.

Siena Catholic College
Year 8 Enrolment for 2013
On Thursday, College Principal, Mr Graeme Hight, and the Siena College Captains will speak to the Year 7 class at Stella Maris and hand out Enrolment Application packs to students. Packs will be left for students who are absent. The contents outline the necessary steps for parents to take if they wish their son / daughter to be considered for Year 8 at the College in 2013. Parents are reminded of the Information Sessions being held at the College on either Sunday 11 March or Monday 12 March. Please contact the College office either by email ssippydowns@bne.catholic.edu.au or phone 5476 6100 to register – this is for catering purposes. Applications are invited from Monday 12 March 2012. Enrolment interviews will commence late Term 1 and will extend into Term 2.

Dear Parents/Caregivers,

We focus our hearts, minds and spirits this Lent on the example of Jesus who invited his friends, Peter, James and John to enter into the spiritual realm up on the mountain. We turn our hearts more toward God, who invites us to listen to Jesus. In doing so we are invited to be more loving and more charitable toward our neighbours. In promoting Project Compassion throughout the school community for the whole of Lent, we are calling each person to make a small sacrifice for the good of others who are in unfortunate circumstance – without access to water, food or education. If you value the gift of these things, then you know how important they are to sustain life and hope. In making small sacrifices – even a couple of dollars – together we can make significant change in someone’s life.

Virtue of the fortnight: Generosity is giving to others something that is of value to us. It is a quality of the spirit that calls us to share what we have. We also allow others to give to us – sometimes even more difficult for some people. Every gift is doubly blessed, bringing joy to the giver and the receiver. Generosity helps us to give time and attention to the feelings, needs and views of those around us. It springs from a sense of abundance and gratitude for the limitless richness of life. We give cheerfully without expecting anything in return. We are receptive to blessings. Generosity encourages us to share in the bounty that has been given to us.

In practising Generosity:

✓ I am thoughtful about the needs of others;
✓ I notice when someone needs help;
✓ I am a cheerful giver;
✓ I give freely without hope of reward;
✓ I listen to others with openness and receptivity;
✓ I am willing to make sacrifices for others;
✓ I willingly receive all the bounties life offers.

The following quote goes right to the heart of the matter in naming the virtue of Generosity as a guide to our offerings:

The fragrance always remains in the hand that gives the rose.”

MAHATMA GHANDI

REMINDER:
It is in this spirit of Generosity that the Care Pantry was formed to help those in our own community who are suffering through ill health, etc. There is a CARE PANTRY MEETING in CHAPEL this FRIDAY 9TH MARCH at 9.00am for a short meeting before Morning Tea, followed by a cooking session in the kitchen. Please bring along your favourite recipe and ingredients to share your ideas with others and have a wonderful cook-up for the Care Pantry. It would be helpful if you could bring along saucepans or frying pan and utensils needed for your recipe. Thank you to all who make a contribution to the Stella Maris Care Pantry.

God bless,
Judith.

St John’s College, Nambour
Year 8 2013 Enrolment Interviews
For your information:
• A Parent Information Evening will be held on Wednesday 21 March at 7pm at St John’s College in the Multi-Purpose Centre.
• Enrolment interviews will be held from Thursday 19 April to Tuesday 24 April.

At St John’s College we provide quality education in an environment that nurtures children in their Catholic faith.
MUSIC NOTES

QUOTE OF THE WEEK
“Bach gave us God’s word. Mozart gave us God’s laughter. Beethoven gave us God’s fire. God gave us Music that we might pray without words.”
~ quote from outside an opera house ~

TIP OF THE WEEK
Always practise hard sections of music very slowly and gradually get faster. If you can’t play slowly, you definitely can’t play fast!!

CLASSROOM NEWS
Year 4 – we have been looking at the rhythm fundamentals of music, relating these rhythms to our knowledge of Maths.

TEN FACTS ABOUT SCHOOL MUSIC
Continuing from last week, the following is the third fact about music education.

3. Learning music helps under-performing students improve.
US researchers found that young children aged 5-7 who had been lagging behind at school had caught up with their peers in reading and were ahead in Maths after seven months of music lessons. The children’s classroom attitudes and behavior improved too.

If you have queries regarding anything musical – please feel free to catch up with us before or after school, by contacting us in writing or via email.

Musically Yours,

Inez Durrer
Classroom Music Specialist
idurrer@bne.catholic.edu.au

Todd Wynyard
Instrumental Music Coordinator
twynyard@bne.catholic.edu.au

Tasting Success
Good Luck to Annabelle Kelly who will compete in the State Nipper titles to be held at Maroochydore next weekend. Her events are Swim Teams and Iron Woman.

ALL THE BEST ANNABELLE!

P&F News

P&F Welcome BBQ Sunday 11th March 2pm – 5pm
The Parents & Friends Committee would like to personally welcome ALL Stella Maris families (new & existing) and to celebrate as a school community the commence-ment of the 2012 school year.

* Free Sausage Sizzle provided
* Water & Soft drinks available for sale
* EVO Oilles & other Beverages
* Great entertainment for the kids
* Fantastic live music provided by DE Fi (Aka: Our beloved teacher Mr Quinn and his hardware Fish)
* Raffles & Great Prizes

We look forward to seeing you there……

Please return your RSVP form for catering purposes.

Sport News

1. Sunshine Coast Region Primary Golf Team
Trials will be held at Horton Park Golf Club on Friday 23rd March. Nomi- nations MUST be received by Monday 12th March. Please see Mrs Till for a permission note and more information

2. Coastal District U12 Rugby League Trials
Trials will be held on Wednesday 21st March and Wednesday 28th March at Caloundra Sharks Junior Rugby League Grounds Caloundra. Please see Mrs Till for a permission note and more information

Principal’s Awards
8th March 2012


Uniform Shop

Uniform Shop Hours
Monday 8.00am - 10.00am
Wednesday 10.15am - 3.15pm
Thursday 8.00am - 1.00pm

Keep smiling! Leanne Dowe Uniform Convenor

Tuckshop News...

REMINDER THAT ALL FROZEN PRODUCTS ORDERED MUST BE COLLECTED FROM THE TUCKSHOP. PLEASE DO NOT ORDER ICE BLOCKS THROUGH THE BAG SYSTEM. REFER TO TUCKSHOP MENU.

Ingredients Roster

Wed 07/03 Thurs 08/03 Fri 09/03 Mon 12/03 Tues 13/03
A Schofield D Vann L Martin K Hardner H Person
N MacMinn F Johanssen A Van Dalen A Carolan N Michael

Week Ending 9 March A Brown, A Brunswick, T Carmody, G Chamberlain, R Clements, J Collins, A Currie, L Dowe, T Duggan, F Ellis, E Gerbo, L Gerbo, K Kapolos, L Robbie, M Damaggio, J Fuller, K Kretzer, B Baillie, K Purssell,
Fearful of Your Child’s Acting-Out Behaviour.

Afraid of your child’s behaviour? It’s important to understand that this fear undermines your authority as a parent. It’s hard to set limits successfully when you’re afraid.

You lose more of your authority each time you give in after your child has acted out. And as soon as your child realizes that, you’ll only have the authority he/she gives you! You may get them to bed on time, they may eat their dinner and get ready for school, but those will be the things they have allowed you to have authority over.

These kids tend to gravitate toward a “no accountability” way of life, where “no accountability” equals “no authority.” And in order for your child’s system to work for them, they have to keep all the authorities around them in check. Soon this becomes one of the child’s primary goals in life.

So while you may be afraid your child is going to throw a tantrum, don’t let that fear derail your decision to be firm. Remember, it’s not what you’re afraid of, it’s how much power you give that fear. I don’t know if people truly ever master their fears, but I think that over time, the fear of your child acting out will have less power over you if you stick to a game plan of setting limits and holding your child accountable.

By the way, when you decide that you’re going to start dealing with your child’s pattern of acting out behaviour differently, first of all, get ready for a struggle. Your child is not going to believe it; in fact, he or she is going to think that if he just tantrums a little harder or a little more, you’ll give in. That’s because you’ve given in for so long; you’ve trained them how to treat you. Some of us train our kids to treat us respectfully. Others of us train our kids to act out more in order to get their way.

Christine Craig (Guidance Counsellor)
email: craig@bne.catholic.edu.au