

NEWSLETTER 07 - FORMAT

- 1 Editorial
- 2 Official Notice
- 3 Reminder
- 4 Readers letter/article
- 5 Editorial Committee

EDITORIAL

”It could raise your child’s IQ by seven points in six months, slash most children’s hyperactivity and concentration problems in a month and, if widely adopted, solve South Africa’s skills crisis, reverse the crime wave, cut many chronic illnesses in half – and even energise the economy ... Pupils at Crawford and St Stithians primary schools were given lunchbox menu options from baby carrots, tuna and slow sugar-release, low GI (glycaemic index) bread to apple quarters dunked in peanut butter. Holford hit the headlines in the UK last month for dramatic turning around the results of two schools by educating parents on healthy cooking, changing kids lunches, and adding two cheap pills to each lunch ... In an independent study, children given fish-oil supplements gained nine months of reading ability” (Sunday Times, 18 February 2007)

I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the Learning Brain Expo in July 2006 in Florida USA. This Conference is an annual conference organized by the Jensen Organisation.

I was totally ‘blown away’ by the experiences and content of the conference – it was almost too much to handle in one ‘sitting’ and I’m definitely planning to attend more of these conferences in the future.

The ‘brain’ behind these conferences is Eric Jensen. The main focus of the conference was latest Neuroscience discoveries and how it can be translated to positively affect teaching and learning.

I have come back to South Africa with a determination to make my school a brain-based school. I discovered that brain-based learning is an approach not a new system, it is based on the way current research in neuroscience suggests how the brain naturally learns. It is a first ever biologically driven framework for learning (It links age group with how often the child needs to process what they’ve learnt, etc.). Conclusions are tentative and subject to updating (It is a start, not a recipe or an ONLY way).

I’ve started taking ‘baby steps’ to implement brain-based teaching and learning at Sunlands. We still have a long way to go and I’m still uncertain about some things BUT I’m convinced that this is the ‘way to go’.

Some things that have changed at Sunlands:

- We are emphasizing the role of water in our diet
- We have changed our tuck shop system – a nutritionist has run workshop for our children and parents to ensure healthier lifestyles
- We have introduced a snack-break to increase glucose levels
- We are implementing brain-friendly strategies and activities to boost attention
- We are exploring research-based gender differences and how they affect teaching.

If you want to know more about brain-based teaching, I can recommend Eric Jensen’s book ‘Teaching with the brain in Mind’ or visit the numerous websites on brain-based learning/teaching. (Editorial Committee and Mrs A Van Heerden).

OFFICIAL NOTICE FROM CIRCUIT MANAGER

Last week I attended a very interesting work session on inclusion using the concepts of an “Inclusion Index” to help schools becoming inclusive schools. As you are all aware the Western Cape Education Department has an official policy on inclusion.

The Index “adopts a view of inclusion as a principled approach to education and society; inclusion is essentially about putting values into action. We see such values as concerned with equity, or fairness, participation, community, respect for diversity, compassion, rights and sustainability” (Rustemier & Booth, Learning about the Index in use).

The planning framework provided by the Index include the following,

- Creating inclusive cultures (building community and establishing values)
- Producing inclusive policies (developing the school for all and organizing support for all)
- Evolving inclusive practices (orchestrating learning and mobilizing resources)

REMINDER

Date	Time	Topic	Venue
01/03/07	08h00-12h00 12h00-16h00	Morgenson-SDP Voorspoed-SDP	School
05/03/07	08h00-12h00 12h00-16h00	Parkfields-SDP Windsor Prep-SDP	School – postponed until 14/03/07
06/03/07	Meeting postponed	until 27/03/07	
06/03/07	Principals to attend	Language Transformation meeting at York Rd – Notice from C/A	York Rd
08/03/07	SDP cancelled till	further notice	

12/03/07	08h00-12h00 12h00-16h00	Belmor-SDP Newfields-SDP	School
13/03/07	14h00-16h00	HPEC	TBA
13/03/07	08h00-12h00	Isilimela-SDP	School (new date)
15/03/07	08h00-12h00 12h00-16h00	Mountview-SDP Rylands H-SDP	School
19/03/07	SDP cancelled till	further notice	
22/03/07	08h30-15h30	WSE – notice from Clive	Kenwyn
22/03/07	Editorial meeting	postponed 28/03/07	
26/03/07	08h00-12h00 12h00-16h00	Kenwyn-SDP Sunlands-SDP	School
27/03/07	14h00-17h00	Principals Meeting	Oaklands H/S
30/03/07		Absenteeism record	submitted

LETTERS/ARTICLE FROM READERS

Readers (schools in circuit 5) are yet again encouraged and urged to forward their letters of comments and articles to the editorial committee for consideration and publication.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Mr Isaacs-Summit P/S (Editor-in-chief), Mr Daniels-Circuit Manager, Mr Dollie-Oaklands H/S, Mr Peta-Moshesh P/S, Mr Rajkumar-Starling P/S

(include C/M photo)

DO NOT FORGET – NEXT MEETING ON 28/03/07 – DECIDE ON VENUE AND LET ME KNOW