



Collegiate Girls' High School

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TERM 1 NEWSLETTER – 31 MARCH 2023



PRINCIPAL'S REMARKS

Upon the reopening of schools this year, I reported in the "Start of Term One Newsletter" and at the first assembly, of my meeting a Collegiate Old Girl in the holiday at her retirement home in Gauteng. Dulcie Floweday née Roberts, who matriculated in 1936 from Collegiate was 103 at the time. Dulcie still spoke fondly of Collegiate and remembered her time at the school well. I made the connection to our PERMA philosophy underpinning the school's activities and spoke of the Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment of this fine Old Girl.

In the last week of term in the Monday Assembly, we observed a moment of silence for Dulcie, Old Girl of the College, who passed away at 104. Dulcie's life reminds us all of that which matters, which is connectivity and positivity, and we celebrate a life well lived.

Donna Jackson Nakazawa presented a webinar for the International Coalition of Learners' Schools. She referenced the February CDC report which stated, "America's teen learners are engulfed in a growing wave of sadness, violence and trauma." We need to realise that teen learners need positivity and encouragement more than ever. The opposite of trauma is connection, explained Donna.

It is my belief that connections made in the classroom or at extra-murals are vital to the emotional wellbeing of our learners and I encourage mass participation next term. I also pay tribute to every teacher and adult who are the magic mentors who make the difference between sadness and a PERMA philosophy.

PERMA infused all our activities this term, on the sports fields, in the classrooms, in the cultural sphere and in our engagement with our community with various outreaches.

The news of the term can be viewed at <https://www.collegiatehigh.co.za/news>.

As the hallways now grow silent and the school doors close on Term One, I wish all the sporting teams safe travels and sporting enjoyment at their various festivals. May those who are observing the holy month of Ramadaan and those who entering the Christian Holy Week leading up to Easter Sunday, be filled with peace and spiritual renewal as they contemplate their respective faiths.

*Yours sincerely,
Mrs Louise Erasmus*

PARENT TEACHER MEETING

Once you have reviewed your daughter's report, we trust that you will discuss your daughter's progress with her. We are pleased with the academic progress that our learners have made with many excelling in various subjects. However, if there are areas of concern in certain subjects, we encourage you to discuss these concerns with the particular subject teacher. There is an opportunity to do so, in person, on the evening of **Thursday, 13 April 2023 between 16h30 and 18h10.**

You will need to book a time-slot with the teacher(s) you wish to see. Furthermore, we can only accommodate one parent per learner per slot. Consultations are limited to five minutes with five minutes between slots. Please find the link below to the booking form and instructions on how to make the bookings. You will need to know the name(s) of your daughter's teacher(s) of the particular subject(s) about which you are concerned. Please note, that as time-slots are limited, you might not be able to see a particular teacher if all slots have already been booked. You are then encouraged to contact the teacher via email to set up a meeting or telephone call during

the week. We will not be able to accommodate you on the evening without a booking.

Booking Instructions:

Please click on the following link

<https://www.collegiatehigh.co.za/cghs-online-bookings/>

Select: Category: Meeting; Service: Parent\Teacher Meeting; Staff Member: Name of Teacher whom you would like to see. Click on NEXT. Select the time slot. Only available time slots for that teacher will show. If no time slots are visible, it means that that teacher is fully booked. Complete your personal info: Your name, your contact number, your email address and your daughter's full name. Click the "start over" button at the end if you would like to make another booking. You will receive a confirmation email at the email address you specified with all the details of your booking. Entry will be through the main gate opposite the front entrance of the school.

We are partners in your daughter's education and value the opportunity to engage with you regarding any intervention necessary to ensure your daughter's academic progress and ultimate success.

STAFF FAREWELLS

Sadly, for us, there are staff members venturing down new paths from the end of term and it is time for us to bid them farewell.

Mrs Sue Hofmeyer joined us at the start of 2022 and it is with sadness that we say goodbye so soon. Mrs Hofmeyer's husband works on a game reserve and naturally Mrs Hofmeyer would wish to be with him. The opportunity for this has come and Mrs Hofmeyer will be starting a new school on the reserve for the employees' children. This is incredibly exciting for both the children and Mrs Hofmeyer.

In 2016, the Jubilee Lab welcomed the second Scientist to take up residence within its walls.



Doctor Chantelle Radue, fondly known to her colleagues as 'Doc', had arrived on transfer from East London to run the Physical Sciences and Natural Sciences Departments. She soon placed

her stamp on the department and has ensured solid results each year. Dr Radue's interest in Science has extended beyond the school laboratory with her taking groups to science lectures and workshops at NMU, amongst other endeavours. She has also been on hand in the afternoons to provide tutoring if needed, and has played a key role in the curriculum administration from developing the school timetable each year, to producing reports, schedules and analysis of marks.

Dr Radue has also stayed in the Hostel from 2018 and been a tutor and mentor to many Bodas. Some might fear her seeming sardonic wit, but beneath this lies a caring heart and a deep-rooted faith. Dr Radue, when you land on Aussie soil, and embrace all that the nation has to offer you, remember that your roots in the Eastern Cape run deep and draw strength from that.

Mrs Jeneé Moreton joined the staff in July 2009 when technology at Collegiate was very different from what it is today. During her time, the school has progressed from LAN network points to a full WiFi network through the school, hostel and most of the campus. In addition, the computer literate staff members have progressed from a small number to all staff being competent in many applications and on Windows-based laptops and Apple iPads.

Mrs Moreton involved herself fully in the school life and assisted at times with accompanying sports teams on tours, and with Squash and Athletics.

After fourteen years of service, Mrs Moreton has decided to pursue a different avenue and we wish her well as she embarks on the next phase of her career.

On 12 March 1993, the then Principal of Collegiate, the late Miss Ellis, sent **Mrs Eunette Stoltz** a letter offering her the Afrikaans post from April that year. In it, she wrote: "We hope that you will have a long and happy association with the Collegiate and we look forward to welcoming you to the school next term." Thirty years, later, we can confirm that Mrs Stoltz has indeed had a long and happy association with the Collegiate.



In her application letter for the position, Mrs Stoltz had written, "Indien my aansoek suksesvol is, verseker ek u van my heelhartige ondersteuning aan u skool." [Should my application be successful, I assure you of my wholehearted support of your school.] Mrs Stoltz has shown that she is a person who keeps her word and has been fully committed to Collegiate and the welfare of Collegiate learners past and present throughout the past thirty years.

During her time at Collegiate, Mrs Stoltz has fulfilled many roles and has done so with commitment and to the best of her abilities. She has coached Netball, been involved in Athletics, run Power-Walking, Cross Country, Road-Running and Synchronised Swimming.

Mrs Stoltz also had the unenviable task of being the Detention teacher for a number of years and I am certain that all were treated fairly, but none escaped.

Over the years, Mrs Stoltz has also been a Grade Head of several grades, Nine, Eleven and Twelve,

and showed understanding and firmness with the learners in the grade.

Other areas of involvement have been running the Grade 11 camp, the awarding of Department girdles, organising a highly successful Cultural Assembly, being involved in the Matric Dinner and the entertainment for it – and much more.

In 1999, Mrs Stoltz was made the Subject Head of Afrikaans and ran the Afrikaans Department with precision for twenty-one years.

EVENTS

One can only take a glance at the calendar and realise what a hub of activity our School is. Upon reflection, I am grateful for functions and events that we host. What a privilege it is to host a House Day, Rite of Passage Assembly for our Grade Eight and Twelve learners, launching our PTA, hosting the Matric Dance in our beloved hall and the fashion show to follow, and not forgetting the Collegiate Grey Mixer. We are always proud to showcase our campus on our Open Day and even gave the learners the opportunity to engage with old learners at our first Simamele for 2023. There were many learning opportunities for our staff continuously to upskill ourselves and offer our learners a holistic education.

Our extremely talented Music Educators presented a *Musical Maestros Concert* this week and what a magnificent evening of exceptional performances! All who attended came away uplifted and inspired, knowing that our Music Department does not only have Music educators, but musicians in their own right. The programme

Never one for the limelight, Mrs Stoltz has quietly got on with whatever task was assigned to her without any fuss or bother, conducting herself at all times with grace and tact. To use the words of the late Ingrid Scholtz: “This is a teacher who is held in high regard by peers and pupils alike.” (2003)

Mrs Stoltz, we salute you and acknowledge you as a teacher par excellence, whose influence lives on in the lives of those who have crossed your path.

ranged from classical, to jazz, to musical theatre, with the highlight being the finale of Scaramouche by Darius Mihaud, performed by Mrs Agenbag and Mrs Range on two pianos and Mr Deli on percussion.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Our Community Outreach Prefects, Mrs Vanderlinden and Mr Batista are collaborating with the Academic Committee on offering tutoring to Grade Twelve learners of St James Roman Catholic Secondary School. This programme is named S².

On 23 March, Collegiate continued what had been interrupted by Covid-19 by resuming the programme and were welcomed by the learners of St James with cheerful smiles and minds eager to learn. Although it was merely an introduction, it laid a firm foundation for the future successes of this

peer tutoring initiative which will commence fully next term.

Collegiate learners are extremely fortunate to be in a position where we can help others learn and, as a result thereof, further enlighten ourselves. We thank Mrs Lotz too for her oversight of this initiative.



In addition, Community Outreach this term has seen our continued affiliation with St Augustine's. Among other activities, our learners have visited the learners to read and we are assisting the school with the upgrading of their library. Our Interact Club continues to do amazing outreach work.



SPORT



Swimming

With our swimming pool back in action, the *Learn to Swim* programme commenced this term and proved to be a great success with fifteen eager and committed learners who are now water safe and working on their stroke and kicking techniques.

The Inter-House Aquatics Day on 1st March was hosted on campus with Queen Elizabeth House emerging victorious at the gala. Congratulations to the following achievers:

Jenna Coetzee broke the 2010 U16 100m Backstroke Record

Top U14 swimmer: Zandri Knoetze with 41 points

Top U16 Swimmer: Jenna Coetzee with 74 points

Top U19 Swimmer: Tiara Finnis with 59 points

The Annual Pearson Prestige Gala was held on 6 March with Collegiate and Grey coming 1st overall with a combined score of 687 points. Pearson was third with 519 points and St Andrews/DSG 3rd with 368 points.

This year was also the first time that Collegiate entered swimmers in the EC Trials. Congratulations to Zandri Knoetze, Kyras Mack, Isla Minderon and Jenna Coetzee who were selected to represent ECA at the SA School Championships in April.

Our Club swimmers have also been excelling in their Club events, and we wish them all the best for the upcoming galas.

Artistic Swimming

Artistic Swimming has had a good start to the year and is growing in popularity with nearly 20 regular attendees. We are very privileged to have the coaching skills and talents of old girl Mrs Moira Norden, a nationally recognised coach and judge, who with Miss Nina Smith, was able to give our swimmers the best start to the year possible.

We played host this year to the Eastern Cape School Championships where our learners achieved some excellent results.

Level 1 Figures, 15 and over age division: Iminathinkosi Tiso placed 1st and Ahlume Ncwabe achieved 2nd place.

Combined Level 2 Figures: Kate Erasmus took 2nd place.

Level 3 Figures, 13 – 15 age division: Aneesah Lindoor took 1st place.

Level 3 Figures, 15 and over age division: Rachel Taylor took 1st place followed by Tayla Catterall in 3rd place.

It was an enjoyable morning for all especially as we hosted teams from East London, Pearson and a few other schools in the Metro. We are very proud of all our learners who competed.

We are excited to announce that Tayla Catterall (our Captain), Rachel Taylor and Aneesah Lindoor will be representing Eastern Cape at SA Nationals in Cape Town from 3 to 6 April. We wish them well in their training and for the competition to come.

Water Polo

Once again, Water Polo continues to be a highlight in the summer sporting programme. The short season has showcased some wonderful moments ranging from tours as far as Johannesburg to our special local development league which we as a school host and are so especially proud of. We bid farewell to all our Matrics who have contributed in such a huge way to the sporting code and we wish them well for the remainder of the year.

Cricket

After an absence from competition for almost two years, Collegiate played their first game of the 2022/2023 season against New Brighton Hub. Having just one practice it was a predictable result, losing by six wickets. Our next game against Framesby was extremely close and we won by six runs. We continued with our winning ways by beating both Victoria Park and Alexander Road. We also have acquired the expertise of Mr Connor de Lange who has, in an extremely short time, developed the skills of the players quite considerably. This is a very young team with buoyant spirit and a great future.

Hockey

With the winter season looming, the Collegiate teams will be heavily involved in tournaments and festivals in the coming weeks. The 1st side will travel to Johannesburg to participate in the annual St Mary's Festival during the holidays and after an unbeaten start at the Greg Beling Festival held in East London, we wish them well.

Netball

The U14A, U16A & 1st Team played in warm up tournaments over the last three weeks,

participating in the Despatch as well as the Madibaz Netball Tournaments. The 1st Team will be playing in the St Andrews' Netball festival over the holidays. The U14A & U16A Teams will be travelling to Paarl over the Easter Weekend to participate in the Paarl Gim Netball Festival.

Tennis

Our tennis season started off with the Merrifield Tournament, where our 1st Team travelled to East London to play singles and doubles matches. Collegiate faced tough competition and ended up 4th overall.

Our Collegiate tennis players have been very busy in the leagues this term, with six teams being entered, which added to the comradery and spirit on the Collegiate campus every Tuesday afternoon.

In preparation for the Selborne/Clarendon Mixed Doubles Tournament in March, the Top 12 squad, together with the top twelve players from Grey High celebrated Valentine's Day on the court. The learners shared many laughs on the court as new friendships were formed.

Our summer season finished with the Mixed Doubles tournament, where Grey and Collegiate beat the defending champions in the opening round. The team progressed well throughout the tournament and we ended up being placed 3rd overall.

Lastly, our team enjoyed taking part in the opening of the Africa Padel courts at the Old Grey Sports Club last week to conclude a wonderful term of tennis.

Athletics

The Inter House winners were Queen Alexandra House. At the meeting several records were broken. Amy Wilmot, Lilian Krige and Amy Botha all broke the shot put record in their respective age groups and Jenna Coetzee broke the u15 1500m record. Jenna also broke the 800m record at the Eastern Cape Championship and also qualified for the SA Schools Championships.

FACILITIES

We hope never to take for granted the wonderful facilities on our campus. This term has seen much happen to improve and enhance our surroundings. The twenty-five metre pool was repaired and retiled, much to the disappointment of the frogs who had made



themselves at home. The ducks continue to enjoy the facilities. The boardroom (the Old College Girl) was refurbished and boasts superior conferencing facilities. Much thinking and innovation went into making a cost effective and functional venue. The cricket nets were put up and a wet-based astroturf is being installed. A mini astroturf is being built for warm-ups, using the remnants of the old astroturf in true recycling fashion.



The stained glass window was saved from damage when our painters noted a looming problem. The window is presently boarded up and will be restored to its former glory. The gardens received a facelift in preparation for our 150th Celebrations in 2024. The roof is coming up on the workshop next to the Squash Courts and is due for completion at the end of April. We are in the process of alleviating our loadshedding challenges and hope to bring light and WiFi to our campus soon in spite of the loadshedding schedule. We need to renovate our upstairs bathroom following on from the successful renovation of the downstairs bathroom. We are



looking for any enterprising ideas on how to fundraise for this.



SUBJECT CHANGES

Grade Tens have until the end of Term Two to make a subject change. A maximum of TWO subject changes is permitted. Grade Elevens are allowed to

make ONE subject change after the NOVEMBER EXAMINATIONS for their Grade Twelve year.

MATHEMATICS OLYMPIAD

On 9 March, 12 learners took part in SAMO (South African Mathematics Olympiad) Round 1 and these learners were invited to the second round:

Grade 12: Jordyn Marriott
Grade 11: unable to participate due to camp
Grade 10: Jennifer de Kock and Maria Freercks
Grade 9: Vedhya Jeena, Clarice Pieterse, Zara Sallie
Grade 8: Adrijaa Bhadra, Elizabeth De Kock, Olivia Freercks, Eleni Kyazze

CAREER AND STUDY EXPLORATION

The Rocking Roadshow, a travelling expo of tertiary education exhibitions, visited Collegiate's Grade Twelves to share information about the vast array of courses that can lead to financial security and, more importantly, ignite the flame of passion for what you love to do. Our learners were attentive and curious, and engaged positively to take in all

the information in order to make informed decisions. We appreciate the work done by the Life Orientation educators and the continued support they offer the learners.

The Grade Eleven learners headed off to the *Working World* exhibition at The Feather Market Hall on 16 March for an insightful expedition where they were able to learn more about their career choices, university applications and bursary criteria. Mia Jack enjoyed the variety of stalls that were offered as it showed her how many different



opportunities were available, Emma Johnstone found that the representatives were very informative and helped her to understand the different careers and Hannah Stiglingh was able to gain a greater view of new careers which interest her and felt that it was a very well-run event.

THE STUDYING SISTERHOOD

Nicole Lister, the Academic Prefect Portfolio and Committee Head, has worked on a number of projects this term.

On 10 February, the Academic Committee ran a Study Skills workshop for Grade Eights and Nines. Nicole Lister, Sinelitha Mdludlu, Jayde Lubbe, Kaylin Campher and Caitlin de Beer drew up a programme of presentations on how to draw up a roster and activities on how to summarise and how to deal successfully with academic life. Thirty learners were equipped with valuable skills from the presenters who are excellent role models.

Our *Studying Sisterhood* programme has continued with a slow and steady increase of numbers seeking help from volunteer tutors in the labs in the



afternoons. Nicole tutors six regulars and some sporadic attendees, and the thirty tutors working with her are experiencing the same level of interest.

Nicole spoke to learners about their first experiences and received this feedback:

“Whoever said that matric was revision of Grade Eleven was not telling the truth.”

“Term One has taught me to work hard in everything now so that by finals, my hard work will help me succeed.”

“Term One has helped me know what to expect going forward and has set the pace for what lies ahead.”

THE INTEGRITY OF ASSESSMENTS

There are reports from tertiary institutions of an increase in cheating and plagiarism. On an international level, we hear of a moral decay where dishonesty is considered clever and the decision to use AI, which is seen as actual intelligence rather than artificial intelligence.

We simply cannot afford for the integrity of our results to be in question, and every learner has the responsibility to ensure that her work is her own.

More than her mark is the character that she is developing. We must, as a society, value the character of an individual more than the mark attained. For this reason, it is vital that parents and learners have a heart-to-heart conversation around honesty in assessments. The School Diary contains the consequences of cheating and plagiarism, but of equal concern are the consequences for the individual. An individual who finds it acceptable to cheat for an assessment may be on a slippery slope of escalating this seemingly inconsequential fraud to criminal activity in adulthood.

CLASS OF 2022 DEPARTMENT ACADEMIC AWARDS



The Nelson Mandela Bay District of the Department of Education held an Award Ceremony on 3 March 2023 to celebrate the impressive results of the Class of 2022. Schools, teachers and subject advisors were recognised at this Award Ceremony.

Collegiate Girls’ High School received a trophy for being in First Position in the district.

Collegiate Girls’ High School received a certificate of achievement for Exceptional Performance for attaining a 100% pass rate in 2022.

The District also reviewed which schools had attained 100% for the last four years, and Collegiate Girls’ High School was the only recipient of this title.

Teachers in the Nelson Mandela Bay District were awarded Certificates of Achievement for excellence in teaching, based on the pass rate, enrolment and other factors. In some cases, the Subject Head was recognised and in some cases all the teachers of a subject in Grade 12 were recognised. Certificates were awarded to:

Mrs Lotz, Mrs Taylor and Mrs Jooste for excellence in Consumer Studies.

Ms Hayward and Mrs Helmie as respective Subject Heads of the Life Orientation Department.

Mrs Vincent as Subject Head of the Mathematical Literacy Department.

Mr Marriott as Subject Head of the Life Sciences Department.

MARK OBSESSION

A recent study published in March 2023 in The Conversation highlighted concerns about grade or mark obsession. In past centuries, the achievement of a learner was communicated to parents through oral progress reports (typically through a visit from teachers to the student's parents at home). Grades were initially seen as an efficient way to communicate student achievement in school to parents. Grades are meant to represent, using letters or numbers, the quality (and, at times, the quantity) of learner learning in a subject, either on assignments or on report cards.

The learner's grades have serious consequences: Universities and colleges select students and award scholarships based primarily on grades. Higher grades lead to more post-secondary education opportunities, which can result in higher paying jobs. Having better grades can also open opportunities for studying in new countries. Given the consequences of grades, it is no wonder many students and parents are grade-obsessed.

In a recent survey of teachers from around the world, research has found that respondents identified "grading obsession" as one of the top challenges in education. Teachers felt that many students, parents and other educators primarily focus on grades over feedback to improve learning. The grading obsession poses a significant threat to student well-being, learning and education. A fixation on grades can lower students' self-esteem and life satisfaction. Grades encourage comparison and competition among learners, potentially harming their relationships with their peers and teachers.

Testing, one of the main tools used to generate grades, has been shown to increase anxiety, which can lower student achievement. In serious cases, students have reported experiencing suicidal thoughts associated with testing.

Grade obsession changes how students learn. When students are mainly motivated by the pursuit of good grades, they tend to focus on memorising information instead of deeply understanding new concepts, establishing connections and making creative extensions. They are also less likely to take risks in their learning — an important part of growth and development. Focusing on getting the correct answer may overshadow deep learning and integration of teacher feedback.

Grades affect parents and teachers too. Parents rely mainly on grades to know if their children are doing well in school — they often find it difficult to assess their child's educational success without grades. Parents are also interested in how their children compare to their classmates.

Across the Greater Toronto Area of Canada, learners' grades are increasing, a general trend stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, a phenomenon known as **compassionate grading**.

Obsession with grades prevents teachers from using assessment in ways that support meaningful learning. Teacher feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learner learning. However, if learners do not prioritize teacher feedback, it cannot support their development. Focusing on grades tends to lead to lower grades while focusing on teacher feedback can support better grades.

Instead of competing for grades, students should focus on co-operating to help each other improve and using the teacher feedback as a way to foster improvement. Such an approach is far more powerful to support learning. Assessment should shift from something that happens to students towards an ongoing process that students, parents and teachers engage in together.

Adapted from: <https://theconversation.com/how-grade-obsession-is-detrimental-to-students-and-their-education-199980>

IS THE WORK TOO HARD?

We are seeing an increase in parents and learners questioning the school in terms of the difficulty levels, particularly in Grades Ten and Eleven. It is worth bearing in mind that during the Covid pandemic, there were revised Annual Teaching Plans to accommodate the difficult times. However, education has returned to the levels of pre-Covid. This is not because we are making the work harder, but because we are nationally returning to the required standards.

Learners and parents query our Mathematics and Physical Sciences programmes and believe the teachers set work that is too hard. It is important to recognise that these subjects require mental stamina and many hours of additional work. The syllabus and assessment requirements are followed by our teachers and it is for the learner to meet this standard, and not for us to drop our standards. The Department sets rigid requirements for the three cognitive levels to be covered in any assessment and on how it is to be marked. It is worth noting that we have an obligation to prepare our learners for tertiary studies too and this requires us to instil in them perseverance and mental resilience.

We also find that parents of Grade Eleven learners ask us why we make it hard for our Grade Eleven learners to obtain provisional acceptance into university with their Grade Eleven end of term marks. This acceptance is based on the APS score working with levels. We reviewed this and found the following in relation to the Grade Eleven averages of 2021 versus the same learners' averages in Grade Twelve: Four of our subjects went up a level, four of our subjects went down a level and eleven subjects stayed on the same level.

There are a number of factors influencing marks going up and down from the end of Grade Eleven to the end of Grade Twelve. For example, Umalusi released a report on 16 January 2023, and do this annually, where they indicate which subjects are adjusted for standardisation processes; and generally marks should go up as learners gain experience in the subject content and practise exam writing techniques in the trial examinations.

Of equal importance is for us to consider whether we are giving learners' false hope that they will meet the requirements for a particular course, and to this end we reviewed the level distribution from Grade Eleven to Twelve. Here we find that we are on a par. Where there are discrepancies, it can be attributed to standardisation processes or the improved work ethic of the candidates and improved skills of the learners.

We have also seen an increase in learners wanting specific subjects to be separated in test and exam programmes. The Department of Education does not differentiate between subjects and does not place certain subjects spaced out. Nor, do they give preferential treatment to certain subjects. In Departmental timetables, learners can write three or four tough subjects in the space of two or three days with morning and afternoon papers as the norm. It is essential that learners become used to the rigours of this and accept that a timetable will not be worked out for a particular subject set.

THE PARENT AND TEACHER RELATIONSHIP

There are many ways parents can contribute to a child's success at school. Most are common sense, but get lost among the academic pressure and are

undervalued. But, when home and school work together, the learning outcomes for children are impressive. Dr Deborah MacNamara, of the [Neufeld Institute](#), gives sound advice:

Normalise and support the challenges that come with learning:

So much of learning involves being placed outside of the comfort of 'what you know.' Learning is about being stretched and pulled a little, drawn into discovery and inquiry, taking apart what you know and putting it back together again, and being changed by the whole process. But all of this may create some discomfort as one moves to a place that isn't certain, is vulnerable, and new.

If a teacher cares about a child's learning then they should feel challenged by this teacher. It was the student's duty not to take offence but to realise the gift in having someone believe they are capable of learning and stretching.

A parent can help a child embrace feelings of discomfort, and normalise these emotions as part of the learning process. It is important not to always try to 'rescue' a child nor prevent the discomfort that is part of learning process, but convey that you believe they will get there eventually and are there to help. Similarly, faulting a teacher because learning is hard doesn't support the child's relationship with the teacher nor convey faith in a child to overcome the challenge that is before them.

Help your child adapt:

There are a lot of things at school that won't go a child's way – like breaks that end too soon, being one of many learners with different needs and wants, and following someone else's rules. School represents many futilities that are part of life and beyond one's control. Some children seem more adaptable than others and part of this rests on the support they have at home. Tears may be part of the process too, and we may need to support them in surrendering to the things they cannot change with warmth and patience.

Keep your relationship strong:

When children have strong caring relationships with adults at home, they are less likely to arrive at school 'hungry' for attachment. If parents can hold onto a strong relationship with their children, then it frees their child to have healthy peer

relationships, and to follow and learn from the adults in a school environment.

Match-make a child to their teacher and school:

When children see that their parents like their school and teacher, it can go a long way to helping them trust their adults at school. Parents need to take an active role and play matchmaker with the teacher by speaking with warmth about the teacher, conveying trust in them, orienting them to the school culture and rules, and ensuring that the relationship with their teacher stays on track.

Put limits on technology:

Setting and maintaining healthy habits around technology ensures it won't hijack the time that is needed for homework, play, or connecting with family members.

Schools are increasingly having to deal with issues between learners that have blown up over social media and impact the learning environment. The digital world has made the divide between home and school weaker.

Support the school schedule and routine:

Schools have set agendas, calendars they plan well in advance, curriculum that needs to be covered, and holidays to navigate around. When children repeatedly come in late, don't have their things ready for school, don't have support at home with projects or supplies, or take vacations during school time, it makes teaching and learning harder. Parents can help by drawing a child into healthy habits and routine that support getting to school rested, fed, and ready to learn.

Let them play:

Children work at school even though many teachers try to make learning fun and engaging. With so much work, children need to play and rest so as to balance their day and have space to integrate new learning. While they may be engaged in structured activities after school, they also need time away from these as well as stimulation that prevents expression and inquiry. While it may seem like

unproductive time to adults, it is the rest they need so they are able to work again in school.

Put them in charge of homework where appropriate:

Battles over homework are hard on relationships and do little to foster a child's internal motivation to care about their learning. The goal for parents is to help create routine, structure, and play a supporting role in getting homework done, but not to descend into battles for control which erode parental influence and a child's desire to learn.

Communicate with teachers and preserve your relationship:

When parents and teachers work on having a good relationship, their children benefit. It is useful to keep in mind that both parent and teacher see a child in a different environment and listening to each other's perspective can go a long way. When there are problems, trying to preserve goodwill and a relationship is critical and requires maturity on all parts. The most productive meetings I have been part of are where the adults try to make sense of a child instead of focusing on fault finding and blaming others.

Support a child with challenging peer interactions:
In school environments, it is next to impossible to

prevent wounding that happens between children. There are times when they are left out, unkind words may be said, and gossip hurts. When peer troubles are present, it is helpful for parents to draw out tears at home and help them find their words for what has happened. What is most important is for a child to see that an adult believes in them.

What every child needs is a relationship at home to turn to. The good news is when a parent has a strong relationship with a child, then that child is more resilient and less impacted by the immaturity of others.

When parents take care of their child's need for relationship and support their emotional development, teachers can harness a child's natural desire to learn and to overcome challenges. Learning doesn't happen in a vacuum, and when parents and teachers join forces, we are in the best position to help our children reach their learning potential.

Adapted from:

<https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/the-ten-things-teachers-need-most-from-parents/>

THE IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY

On 22 February, the Queen Mary House Day guest speaker was Jennifer Lindridge. Mrs Lindridge inspired the learners to see their academic progress as part of a life journey and offered the following insights:

Learn to accept criticism. There is winning and there is learning. Things always take three times longer than you think they will so budget for this. The world owes you nothing so do not blame others or circumstances. There is no such thing as a free lunch. Punctuality matters.

She gave the following tips on improving creativity:
Read, as reading is an incredible way to open your

mind and expose yourself to new ideas, new vocabulary, better understandings, better ways of doing things and it stimulates your brain. Observe. Analyse. Engage in art forms. Write. Exercise. Make messes – making mistakes should not be feared but should be seen as promoting learning, improvement and new discoveries. Think. Ask big questions. Ponder the workings of the universe. Play brain games like Sudoku to keep your mind sharp. When problem-solving or designing, don't settle for the first idea. Find all the ideas and solutions and then choose the best one.

LEARNER'S JOURNEY

Mrs Sulcas is a consultant on overseas studies and visited Collegiate in February to share her insights with interested Grade Ten to Twelve learners. Mrs Sulcas can be reached at 082 0800 475 or Heidi@learnersjourney.co.za.

Here are some of her tips:

Becoming matters because of three realities. Reality 1 is that your degree doesn't guarantee you a good job. Reality 2 is that you are going to forget much of what you learn. Reality 3 is that many of the job skills you learn in college will become obsolete.

The outcomes of Becoming include creativity, critical thinking, communication skills and character.

Five things that are important to develop in university include excellent communication skills the know-how on asking questions, developing zero tolerance for unethical behavior, a global

perspective. and the ability to converse in another language.

Three things to incorporate in any degree to future-proof your education (*Futureproof*, Bush and Codrington 2020): business and entrepreneurship (how to actually run a business), technology and software development (don't be a techno-idiot), communication (how to translate from AI to communicating with actual humans).

Two-thirds of the jobs that you will have in 2030 have not been invented yet – find place to grow, something love to study. A study done of graduates from UK universities in 2017 found that 30% had jobs that didn't exist the year before and that, on average, there were five career changes and seventeen job changes per person.

"The best guarantee of future success is deeply engaging in what you love. Not being in the bottom third of your Accounting or Engineering class because you think it will make you more money down the road." (Jeff Levy, educational consultant, California)

