St. Andrew High School for Girls

Academic Year 2017-2018

Theme: Soaring to New Heights through Christ
Focus: Teaching and Learning

This year, we will be exploring together the concept of SOARING as we focus on lifting the levels of Teaching and Learning in the institution to even higher heights. What does it really mean to soar? The image of the Eagle in flight comes readily to mind as it intuitively catches a thermal and rises gracefully into the air, way up high, beyond the view of the naked eye.

Throughout the year we will be examining several characteristics of the eagle that we believe will serve to inspire and instruct all members of the school family in the way we should go in order to achieve our goal of maximizing our potential and being the best that we can be.

While we are pleased with the achievements of the majority of our students, who continue to perform way above the national average in all areas, we are conscious of the fact that excellence is a moving target and that there is no place for complacency in a truly progressive learning environment. The decision effective September 2017, to adjust the academic rating scale upwards by 5% for Grades 7-11 is a strategic decision taken by the staff in an effort to motivate our students to aim even higher.

We agree with the MOEYI that the 5E model for instruction, provides an easy to grasp structure to the Constructivist approach to lesson planning and delivery which is necessary as we seek to build the capacity for independent learning in our students. Oftentimes the root cause for learner dependency can be traced directly to the teacher centered approach to instruction that still exists within our ranks. This is understandable as daily we face the challenge of striking the balance between finishing the syllabus in time for exams and truly educating the students who the Lord has entrusted in our care. As we continue in our quest to adopt and adapt the National Standards Curriculum mandated by the MOEYI, the emphasis on the 5E model for instruction is therefore intentional.

We know that it is not an easy task to move from being the "Sage on the Stage" to being the "Guide on the Side" and truth be told there is a place for both approaches during the course of our interaction in the classroom. What is important however is that the emphasis be placed on developing in each student that desire along with the skills needed to learn independently. This is vital if we are to succeed in our mission to produce well-rounded graduates, ready to face the challenges of the rapidly changing society of the 21st century.

Through the 5E model: ***Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate***, educators are expected to focus on developing in students the 4Cs - ***Communication, Collaboration, Creativity and Critical Thinking***, currently designated as the 21st century skills. It is important to remember however, that skills are often rendered ineffective and at times destructive if they are not governed by positive values and attitudes. We are therefore reminded of the importance of infusing in our lessons our Core Values: ***Reverence for God, Excellence, Discipline, Respect, Integrity and Honesty, Kindness and Compassion.***

The eagle has the ability to see two miles ahead which is eight times further than the human being. This ability was given by God as it is necessary for successful existence when you are living way up high. For us this speaks to the importance of having a vision- that “imaginative insight” and “statesmanlike foresight” that can only come from God as we seek to do His will.

This year as we endeavour to apply our knowledge and hone our skills within the context of positive values and attitudes, our prayer is for the Holy Spirit, our thermal, to enrich us with wisdom and inspire us with the vision required to implement efficiently and effectively, the strategies that will empower us to truly Soar to New Heights.

Sharon Reid (Mrs.)
September 1, 2017

How ? Why ? What ? When ? Where ?
Romans 1: 19
Deuteronomy 32:11
Isaiah 40: 28-31

There are many action words that describe movement eg: creep, walk, run, row, climb. In recent times we have used the analogy of rowing and climbing in our efforts to encourage and inspire our students to aim higher and work harder to maximize their potential and lift the standard of their performance. (See stories attached).

We are pleased that many of our girls are focused on achieving excellence and we continue to work with the others who are at different stages in the journey towards self awareness and the realization that in the harvest field of education, there is a direct correlation between sowing and reaping. The truth is that while there are relatively few students who are figuratively still creeping, there are some who are walking, while a larger number are running, rowing and climbing.
On another level, this analogy can also be used to describe members of staff in the institution who are at different stages of their journey in the teaching profession and are constantly faced with the challenge of improving their performance as we all seek to enrich ourselves so as to empower our students to maximize their potential.