



Dear Parents

It has been a busy first term at Curro Aurora and we are all feeling the effects of an intense but – certainly from my point of view – extremely positive and productive period.

We are now 11 weeks into the 2017 academic year and, as you can see from this edition of the CAB, there has been lots going on both in and out of the classroom. It contains news on some of the ways that Aurorians have embraced life at Curro Aurora and are developing roles of leadership, accountability and responsibility that will stand them in good stead for the future. Well done to all who participated and celebrated success, good sportsmanship and the privilege to be part of Curro Aurora. We are proud of you!

The main priority was, and will of course always be, to get learners settled into the daily routine and stuck into their academic work. A widespread atmosphere of learning and academic focus is needed to ensure success. I'm glad to report that this has happened across all schools.

I see it in the faces of the young 3 year olds who have started this term - all in awe of their beautiful environment where the possibilities to learn seem endless. Their joy is also expressed with the warm greetings I receive from the primary school children when I join them for assembly or visit a classroom. The desire to learn is sustained through the High School also with most of the students putting in many hours of extra work.

Unfortunately, this is still not true for all high school students and I believe more work is needed to set goals and targets to act as motivation for students who are currently underachieving due to lack of effort and/or poor school attendance. During Term 2 the focus will be very much on students who are not performing to their full potential to ensure that all students are well prepared for the mid-year exams.

As a parent there are a number of steps you can take to support the school in its efforts to continuously improve the academic performance of both primary and high school learners: (as amended from www.kidshealth.org)

1. ATTEND PARENT EVENINGS AND COMMUNICATE YOUR CONCERNS.

Learners do better in school when parents support their academic efforts. Attending a parent evening is a great way to get to know your child's educators and their expectations. School management may discuss school programs and policies that parents need to know about. Attending parent-teacher meetings is a great way to stay informed.

Keep in mind that parents or guardians can request meetings with educators, heads, school counsellors, or other school staff any time during the school year.

2. VISIT THE SCHOOL, THE WEBSITE AND READ THE WEEKLY NEWSLETTER.

Knowing the physical layout of the school building and grounds can help you connect with your child when you talk about the school day. On the school website and in the weekly newsletter you can find information about:

- the school calendar
- contact details of school staff
- special events
- testing timetables etc.

3. SUPPORT HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

Especially during the high school years, homework gets more intense and grades become critical for acceptance into tertiary studies. Learners have to balance academics with extramural activities and social life.

An important way to help is to make sure your child has a quiet, well-lit, distraction-free place to study. Distraction-free means no phone, TV, or websites other than homework-related resources. Be sure to check in from time to time to make sure that your child hasn't gotten distracted.

Regularly conversations with your child is important to make sure they're balanced, and help him or her to stick to a homework and study schedule.

Encourage your child to ask for help when it's needed. Remember that educators are available for extra help before or after school.

4. SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL READY TO LEARN

A nutritious breakfast fuels up teenagers and gets them ready for the day. In general, teens who eat breakfast have more energy and do better in school.

You can help boost your child's attention span, concentration, and memory by providing breakfast foods that are rich in whole grains, fibre, and protein, as well as low in added sugar. If your child is running late some mornings, send along fresh fruit, nuts, yogurt, or a peanut butter sandwich.

Teenagers also need the right amount of sleep — about 8 to 9 hours each night — to be alert and ready to learn all day. But early school start times — on top of schedules packed with classes, homework, extramural activities, and friends — mean that it's common for teenagers to not get enough sleep. Lack of sleep is linked to decreased attentiveness, decreased short-term memory, inconsistent performance, and delayed response time.

Ideally, teenagers should try to go to bed at the same time every night and wake up at the same time every morning.

5. INSTILL ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

Learning and mastering the skills of getting organized, staying focused, and seeing work through to the end will help learners in just about everything they do. Teenagers can benefit from some parental guidance with organization and time-management skills.

Parents and guardians can help learners keep assignments and class information together in binders, notebooks, or folders that are organized by subject. Creating a calendar will help learners recognize upcoming deadlines and plan their time accordingly.

It also helps to make prioritized daily to-do lists, and to study and do homework in a well-lit, quiet, orderly workspace. You can remind your child that, when it comes to studying and homework, multitasking is a time-waster. Working in an environment free of distractions like TV and texts works best!

6. TAKE ATTENDANCE SERIOUSLY

Learners should stay at home if they have a fever, are nauseated, vomiting, or have diarrhoea.

Otherwise, it's important that they arrive at school on time every day, because having to catch up with class work, projects, tests, and homework can be stressful and interfere with learning.

Learners may have many reasons for not wanting to go to school — difficult assignments, low grades, social problems, or issues with classmates or teachers. Talk with your child and then perhaps with the class teacher to find out what may be causing the anxiety.

Learners may also be late for school due to sleep problems. Keeping your child on a consistent daily sleep schedule can help avoid tiredness and tardiness.

7. MAKE TIME TO TALK ABOUT SCHOOL

Because many teenagers spend so much of the day outside the home — at school, extramural activities or with peers — staying connected with them can be challenging for parents and guardians. While activities at school, new interests, and expanding social circles are central to the lives of average Generation Z individuals, parents and guardians are still their anchors for providing love, guidance, and support.

Make efforts to talk with your child every day, so he or she knows that what goes on at school is important to you. When teenagers know their parents are interested in their academic lives, they'll take school seriously as well.

Because communication is a two-way street, the way you talk and listen to your child can influence how well he or she listens and responds. It's important to listen carefully, make eye contact, and put down the smart phone while you chat. When teens know they can talk openly with their parents, the challenges of school can be easier to face.

FINAL WORD

Thank you to every parent for the ongoing support received during Term 1. I believe we are well on our way to raise the bar in all areas. I also look forward to an exciting second term. June exams, an extensive sports program, stage productions and campus developments, which include the building of the new school hall and new sport ablution facilities are some of the highlights to look forward to.

You will soon receive a link to the “Your Voice” survey. Thank you for your participation and constructive feedback – together we can take Curro Aurora to new heights!

It only remains for me to wish you a wonderful Easter break.

Kind regards

Mr JC Engelbrecht

Executive Head

