

MS Practices - Students with Attention Issues

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On Monday, February 15, all Holland Hall faculty had the opportunity to experience Dr. Michael Saliba's presentation on ADHD. Dr. Saliba is well-recognized locally and nationally as a leader in the research on ADHD. In particular, faculty benefited from the recommendations offered that increase the likelihood of the success of students with attention issues in our classrooms.

During the past year and a half in the Middle School, we have engaged in rigorous dialogue regarding our instructional practices, programming and the overall student experience. In reflecting on Dr. Saliba's presentation, many of the strategies offered are currently being employed regularly, not only with our student population with ADHD, but also with our general population. Those recommendations being implemented include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Have a school ADHD liaison for parent-teacher coordinated care
- Stage a large project in smaller chunks
- Seat child with ADHD close to teaching area
- Allow some restlessness at work area
- Provide relevant, global cueing
- Use participatory teaching methods
- Actively involve child in teaching the lesson
- Encourage a homework "study-buddy"
- Peer tutoring at home and school for school work
- Intersperse low with high appeal activities
- Touch child on shoulder or arm when praising, reprimanding or instructing
- Use direct instruction, programmed learning or highly structured materials
- Train keyboarding in early grades
- Give after-school help-sessions, tutoring, books on tape, videos, etc.
- Require continuous note-taking during lectures and while reading
- Increase praise, approval and appreciation

A good deal of discussion about homework for students both with and without attention issues took place as well. One of our established faculty committees will be focusing our attention next year on the philosophical framework, research and pragmatic considerations of homework in our Middle School. Our focus in the Middle School in this regard is to assign meaningful homework that develops skills introduced in the classroom. This practice serves all students as we prepare them for the Upper School.

All research must be put through the lens of the Holland Hall experience. We are not a program designed solely for learners with attention issues. However, we are sensitive to the growing number of students with attention issues in schools. Dr. Saliba's presentation affirmed the practices of MS faculty and allowed for further reflection.