**Westerville South High School**

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Dear Anatomy & Physiology Student and Parent(s)

My name is Janet Pritchard and I have the privilege of teaching your child in Honors Anatomy and Physiology this school year. I wanted to let you know about an approach to teaching that I will be using this year in this class. It is called the “blended learning” classroom. The basic concept behind a blended classroom is that what was traditionally done in the classroom becomes homework and what was traditionally done at home (homework) is done in the classroom.

So what will this look like this year in my classroom? The direct instruction or lecture portion of the class will become the homework. This will primarily be in the form of watching videos that are available online or PowerPoint presentations. Students could also be asked to read sections from the textbook. After students watch the video or read the text, they will take notes on vocabulary and content. **This should take no more than 30-45 minutes.** When students come to class the next day we will briefly discuss what they heard in the videos and answer any questions they may have. The rest of the class time will be used for practicing the concepts from the video (homework in the traditional setting), working with manipulatives, and doing activities/labs intended to enrich the curriculum. By moving the direct teach portion of the lesson to homework it frees up more time in the classroom so that I can interact more with my students and provide more individual help. There will still be assessment of student learning through quizzes and tests. In addition, there will be some additional outside work such as projects, reviewing for quizzes and tests, and occasionally finishing work that could not be completed in class.

Students can access the video on the Internet using most devices that can connect to the Internet. If students don’t have access to the Internet at home, they can watch the videos before or after school in the media center or my classroom. Students should also have “ear buds‟ or headphones when watching the videos at school, so as not to disturb other students. All of the video lessons can be accessed by going to the class website and clicking under links and download for that days date. I will also link pages from their textbook that support the video.

Here are some of the benefits to flipped instruction:

1. Students can watch a video on their own. They can pause and rewind whenever they need to review what they heard. There is **less student frustration** as they can write down specific questions and get them answered by the teacher and peers.
2. Parents do not have to worry that they can’t help their child with the anatomy homework. **Parents can view the lesson** and learn along with the child, empowering them to help their child as they can now see exactly what and how their child is taught.
3. **It helps busy students**. Many students are involved in activities outside of school and often have a hard time getting all their homework done. Students will be able to watch videos ahead of time from their home computer, smart phone, laptops, I-Pads or school computers at their convenience.
4. In a traditional model, if a student had questions about work they were doing at home, they had to go in for tutorials the next day. With this method, students are doing the work in the classroom and are able to **get their questions answered immediately**.
5. Flipping the instruction **helps struggling students**. By doing the work in the classroom, I will be able to monitor students more closely. I will be able to identify students quicker that have some misunderstandings or need more individualized instruction.
6. **Learning is student-centered,** not teacher -centered. Focus is not on the teacher teaching the content but on the student practicing and producing quality work.
7. There is **more interaction between teacher-student and student-student.** Since I won’t be spending the class time in instruction, there is more time for me to answer student questions, work with small groups, and guide the learning of each student individually. There will also be more emphasis on students working collaboratively with other students to facilitate the learning. They will be able to have more relevant science conversations and tutor each other.
8. **Absent students can view lessons at home** and will not fall behind.

**The Journey into the inner workings of the human body:**

* This is a project- and laboratory-based course where you will be allowed to generate knowledge about anatomy and physiology with your peers.
* Your teacher will be a guide for the journey, a facilitator, and an events planner.
* Other sources of information will be the textbook, charts and diagrams, videos, and many Internet sources selected by the guide and by you.
* You are the learner here! You are the one who needs to actively acquire knowledge.
* The anatomy~physiology guide (aka teacher) will provide you some of the ways and means of acquiring knowledge about the human body but you will also actively construct and generate your own knowledge by interaction with each other, written text (books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, internet "stuff"), drawings, pictures and movies, microscopes, computers, and dissecting specimen (aka body parts).
* In this model, what is the role of the students, parents and teachers?
  + ●  **Students**: Students are in charge of their learning. The students are responsible for watching the lesson before they come to class, taking notes of the video lesson, and coming to class prepared. If the student has not watched the video, powerpoint, or read the book prior to class time, they will then watch the video during class. The disadvantage to this is that the student then misses out on participating in the class activities and may fall behind. There will be no excuses. If they do not complete their homework, they will not be prepared, and will not be able to participate in classroom activities. In class, students are expected to participate and contribute to class discussions, hands-on activities, or projects.

● **Parents**: Parents are needed to make sure students are being mature, responsible learners and are doing their part by watching the video. Also, this is my first year of implementation so I welcome feedback, questions, or concerns to let me know how things are going and how I can improve. In addition, I ask for your patience and support during this time as there may be some kinks that need to be worked out. However, if we all work together and keep an open mind, this will be a very successful year for students.

* + **●  Teachers**: Teachers will deliver instruction, most of the time, through video lessons. In class, they will be available to answer students’ questions, give immediate feedback, clarify misconceptions, guide students through their understanding of concepts, and push them to dive deeper into the material.

I am really excited about the flipped class approach in this class. If you wish to learn more about the flipped classroom, I’ve provided some links to articles and videos on the Internet. If you have any additional questions, feel free to contact me.

Thanks,

Janet Pritchard

Anatomy & Physiology, IB Biology HL/SL, Human Body Systems, Principles of Biomedical Science, Biology

Article Links:

https://blended.online.ucf.edu/about/what-is-blended-learning/

Video Links: