Tribes Learning Community

A new way of learning and being together

Tribes is a fresh look at teaching and learning together – taking lots of familiar things and presenting them in a new way. It is not a curriculum or program to implement, adding to the huge list of things teachers have to do. The Tribes ‘process’ supports, develops and enhances excellent practice that is already happening in classrooms.

“Tribes is not something extra to add to your plate... Tribes is the plate.”

“The outcome of the Tribes process is to develop a positive environment that promotes human growth and learning. How does it happen? Can anyone do it? Yes! It requires learning how to build community through three stages of group development using four agreements among the students or adults with whom you are working.”(Jeanne Gibbs, Reaching All by Creating Tribes Learning Communities: Pg 9)

Tribes has been widely used in America for thirty years and the word is spreading, fast. Australia found Tribes over five years ago and it is being used in many schools in other states. South Australia’s journey has just started with schools discovering Tribes for the first time.

The key elements for building a Tribes community of learners:

- Developing social skills and building a feeling of inclusion, so all members of the community feel safe and valued.
- Using four caring agreements:
  - Mutual respect – respecting ourselves, others and the environment around us;
  - Attentive listening – listening with our eyes, our ears and our hearts;
  - Right to participate or pass – encouraging children to participate fully in lessons, but appreciating that there may be times when they want to watch and listen.
  - Appreciation - No Put Downs – speaking kindly to others, recognising each others gifts and talents.
- Explicitly teaching collaborative skills and applying them socially and academically.
- Building resilience, developing problem solving skills, building stronger relationships.
- Bringing fun back into teaching across the curriculum.

If you would like further information please visit the following website or join our Tribal Community Assemblies each fortnight held in the Hall at 2.30pm: http://www.tribes.com