

School News & Notes

Small School Big Advantage For Teens

(NAPSA)—In the typical classroom, the teacher lectures, the student takes notes, then the student's grade is based on test scores—or test scores and a few papers. Students who are taught this way do not necessarily become enthusiastic or well-rounded learners.

At a small, college-prep school in New Hampshire, teaching and learning are very different from the age-old model. At White Mountain School, a boarding and day school near Littleton, New Hampshire, the mantra is “Small school. Big outdoors.” However, it might well be “Small school. Big ideas.”

Founded in 1886, the school uses the outdoors to supplement regular classroom work, with the goal of helping students to “experience something greater than themselves.” Its philosophy is simple: Teach more than facts, grade more than knowledge.

Although students receive letter grades, they are expected to develop as a “complete learner” and graded in six areas called “Learning Outcomes.”

The six Learning Outcomes are:

- Knowledge—“Content” mastery is important; it is simply not treated as the proverbial “end all to beat all.” Students learn to acquire and integrate information.

- Critical Thinking—Nearly all classes are discussion-based, where students are challenged to use a variety of complex reasoning strategies.

- Self-Direction—The self-directed learner is the student who pushes personal limits, sets



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clear goals and manages his/her own progress towards those goals.

- Communications—Students learn to organize and express ideas clearly and to communicate effectively to diverse audiences, using a variety of media.

- Information Processing—Students learn to differentiate and assess the validity of information sources (the Internet is not always the definitive answer teens think it to be!); then they learn to interpret and analyze the information effectively.

- Collaboration—Students learn to monitor and regulate their behavior in a task-oriented group environment.

“Our approach offers opportunities for students to succeed in six different performance areas and to have their successes reflected in their grades. This builds learning and self-confidence,” says Alan Popp, Head of School.

Visit White Mountain School at www.whitemountain.org or write to admissions@whitemountain.org.