



*The mission of GISD is to ensure that every student achieves maximum potential.*

# GISD Curriculum News

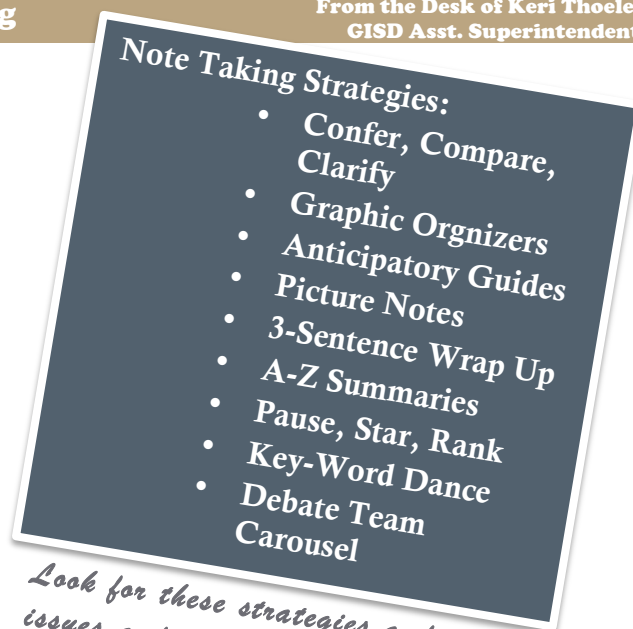
**rigor/engagement/higher-order thinking**

From the Desk of Keri Thoele,  
GISD Asst. Superintendent

## Note Taking: Way Beyond “Copy”

We take for granted that students know how to take and process notes, but this skill has to be taught and developed.

When it comes to note-taking, students are usually at one of two extremes, either they attempt to write everything down or they don't write anything. Students at either end usually have an inability to discern frivolous information from important information. Further they don't know how to summarize or put information into their own words so that their brains can process it. Research shows that teachers who embed participation strategies with note-taking have the most success.



*Look for these strategies and more in this issue and future issues!*

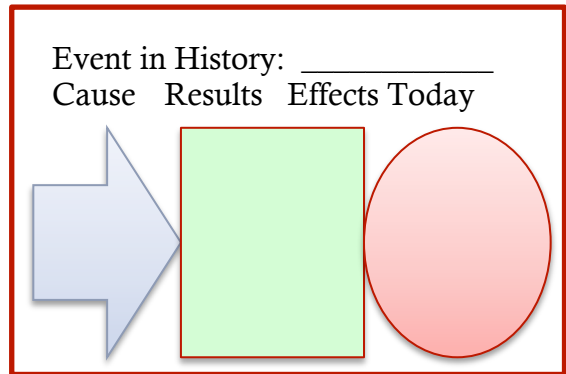
**Strategy  
of the Week:**  
**Confer,  
Compare,  
Clarify**

# Confer, Compare, Clarify

**Concept:** Just as the name implies, this technique allows students to confer with other students and compare each other's notes. Finally, after reading and discussing with a partner, each student can clarify his or her notes by adding information, rewriting, highlighting, etc.

**Procedures:** 1. After the teacher has lectured and the students have taken notes for about 8-10 minutes, students partner with one other student to "confer" or discuss and read each other's notes. Students should also write down any questions they have about their notes that need clarification. 2. Pairs join other pairs to discuss the questions students have and further clarify the information. 3. Finally, the students come back to the large group, and the teacher answers any questions that the students could not clarify on their own before continuing the lecture. The process is repeated as often as necessary.

**HINT:** Note-taking strategies can always be paired with other engagement strategies, such as *By Appointment* (if the teacher wants the students to pair with a variety of partners throughout the semester), *Whiteboard Splash* (if the teacher wants to record the questions the students have) or a graphic organizer, such as a t-chart. Also, the teacher can facilitate higher-order thinking by having the students analyze the note-taking process as well as the material.



**GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS, SUCH AS THE ONE ABOVE, MAKE NOTES MORE MEANINGFUL TO STUDENTS.**

## Graphic Organizers

### Some interesting info on graphic organizers:

- Graphic organizers are simply visual maps that guide a student through the note-taking process.
- Research shows that students take more accurate and comprehensive notes with the cues and visual organization provided by graphic organizers. (Konrad, Joseph, Eveliegh 2009)
- There are websites that already have prepared graphic organizers ready for teachers to use. Check out these sites:
  - ReadingQuest.org (strategies for reading, writing, organizing discussion and vocabulary in social studies) <http://www.readingquest.org/>
  - Readwritethink.org (classroom resources provided by NTCE) <http://www.readwritethink.org/>
  - Worksheets.com (you create your own) <http://www.worksheetworks.com/>