

Educational Conclave held at Doon School



By OUR STAFF
REPORTER

DEHRADUN, 5 Mar: Aditya Birla Education Academy and Mpower organised an educational conclave for school leaders and educators at The Doon School, here, on 25 February. The aim of this event was to provide a platform to stakeholders in the education space to come together and discuss the future of education and the growing importance of mental health within the schooling system. Approximately 60 educators from over 18 top schools of Dehradun and Mussoorie attended the conclave.

The first section of the conclave consisted of a keynote address by Kamal Ahuja, Dy Headmaster, The Doon School, who explained the growing importance of evolution of skills

in the future of education. He emphasised the importance of experiential learning, a dynamic curriculum, agile classrooms and a shift from the STEM to STREAM. There had to be equal if not more importance given to reading and arts along with STEM; he gave an example of how most CEOs in the world were history majors and how the study of historical information aided them in decision making. Ahuja concluded by saying that learning should be rewarded more than results and teachers need to inculcate a reflective approach in the way students learn.

The second section was a panel discussion on the topic: Skill or concept, what is more important in a child's educational journey? The panel consisted of stalwarts in education, namely Dr Gunmeet

Bindra – Principal, Welham Boys School; Dr Harinder Mann, Director, Doon International School; GK Swamy, Founder & Secretary, Purkal Youth Development Society; Maya Norula, Principal, Hopetown Girls School; Rashid Sharfuddin, Headmaster, SelaQui International School; along with Anez Katre, Head of Department, Training, The Doon School. Swamy began the discussion by explaining how cognitive skills, technical skills and interpersonal skills were abilities that students needed to develop today. Dr Bindra explained how schools today needed to design better curriculums, manufacture the right teachers by training them appropriately and maintain and empower them to make their students' learning better. Conceptual learning was easily

available on the internet or via books – but skills were needed to comprehend these concepts. Mann highlighted how the teaching process had changed and was more challenging today. Imparting soft skills had become very important for students' overall development. Norula gave examples of how schools needed to manage parental expectations in terms of marks – which left very little scope for skill based learning in national boards. The panel also discussed how teaching had to be considered a desirable profession by the youth rather than a hobby so that schools also had a better and more dedicated workforce.

This discussion was followed by an introduction to Aditya Birla Education Academy by Surabhi Goel, Academy CEO. Video

testimonials of students and their faculty of courses from University of Pennsylvania, Iowa & Nottingham were shown to the participants at the conclave to brief them about the courses offered.

The third section of the conclave was a group discussion on child and adolescent mental health, conducted by Parveen Shaikh, Psychologist and Head – Outreach, Mpower. Parveen briefed the audience on the current status of mental health in India. The participants were divided into groups to discuss different mental health concerns. The discussion was focussed on symptoms and what educators could do for each concern. Examples were given on how these concerns could manifest in a scenario more common to boarding schools.