September 24, 2012

Journalism, Period 5

Hottest Classroom

September and October days in Manhattan Beach Middle School classrooms without air-conditioning have been thought to be hot and unbearable place to sit down and hear a lecture. Most rooms in the afternoon are usually the same temperature (sometimes hotter) as the weather outside. However, students and teachers are seeing if heat really affects their abilities to focus and learn.

Many students at MBMS know that when a weekend heat wave carries over to Monday, there in for a torturous forty-five minutes in a desk before another five minute breathe of fresh air. But does it really hinder with focus and thought processes?

Ms. Schell, a teacher of one of the south side “oven” rooms, thinks differently than most. When she was asked if she thought heat affected focus, she responded, “No. They might say it does, but I think it helps them stay alert and feel a little uncomfortable so they can’t relax too much. Heat reminds you of where you are.”

Another interview was conducted with 6th grader Izzy Stein, who after being asked by if heat hindered his focus, claimed, “No. I don’t think it makes a difference.”

In another article by Barbara Pytel on the website Suite 101, it’s claimed that research by Dunn and Dunn shows that the brain needs a perfect temperature in order to focus, memorize and learn. It also claims that on hot days, teachers should only review curriculum with students and not teach new things.

There are many opinions concerning heat affecting learning. Though science states heat does affect a student’s ability to learn, others say that it makes no difference. All in all, it’s up to the students to decide if hot days are awful in the many classrooms around MBMS.