



COMPASSIONATE INSPIRATIONAL PASSIONATE PROBLEM SOLVER RESILIENT ENTHUSIASTIC
OBSERVANT PERSISTENT IMAGINATIVE ADAPTABLE EMPATHETIC TRUSTWORTHY STRATEGIC
CREATIVE MINDFUL HUMBLE HONEST RESPECTFUL
CONFIDENT AUTHENTIC HOPEFUL
INNOVATIVE MINDFUL HUMBLE HONEST RESPECTFUL
CONFIDENT AUTHENTIC HOPEFUL
EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT SUPPORTIVE
CURIOUS PROACTIVE FAIR
RESOURCEFUL
KNOWLEDGEABLE

the
GENIUS
of School Leadership

UNDERSTANDING
DISCIPLINED DEDICATED
INSIGHTFUL WISE LOYAL
REFLECTIVE

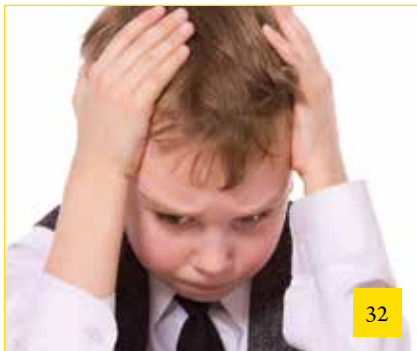
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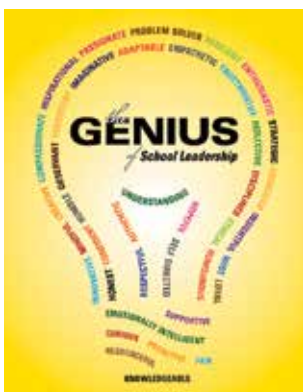
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Learning Together!

A 21st Century Staff Meeting Model

Standing on the sidelines of 21st Century Learning is not an option. Our students will transcend and surpass us if we fail to adapt and embrace technology. Leadership is hard work. Effective, impactful leadership requires even more effort.

Today's dynamic, rapidly changing school cultures provide an ever-shifting landscape. In order to achieve a 21st Century Learning model in our schools it requires us to be innovative, to be visionaries and to be willing to pioneer new and creative strategies in our own leadership designs.

Exit the "know-it-all, do-it-all leader."

Enter the self-aware, intuitive, enabler who is willing to share components of their leadership with their team. This leader takes a holistic approach to the end goal – pulling people, resources and ideas together to get the job done. This process involves maximizing all of the human resources in our school by empowering individuals and giving them an opportunity to take leadership positions in their areas of expertise.

As Principal of St. Marguerite School, I was fortunate to have identified three staff members with an expertise in the area of technology. They were all proficient in using iPads and interactive Smart Boards. As principal, my charge was to ensure the entire staff could develop the same proficiency and harness the power of 21st Century Learning in each and every classroom.

Effective leadership develops people and ensures that the people with great capacity are reproduced throughout the entire school. As a school, we

Successful
people discover
what they
themselves are
good at, while
successful
leaders
discover what
other people
are good at.

collectively agreed that 21st Century Learning would be a focus for us and for our students. Through innovative thinking and distributive leadership we were able to build capacity. For the last two years, staff meetings have had a professional development component dedicated to an aspect of technology in the classroom. This plan was well aligned with School Council expectations, as well as the goals in the School Improvement Plan.

With the purchase of 40 iPads we had the technology in hand. The next critical step would be to implement a plan that would ensure staff had the skills, knowledge and comfort to use these new tools.

I asked my three-member Technology Team to provide workshops at staff meeting. The team began using their planning time to provide tutorials for the entire staff. They created a circulation schedule for the tablets and regularly visited classrooms to troubleshoot and assist teachers or students who may have been experiencing difficulty. Before long,

teachers throughout the school were asking that various Apps to be placed on the tablets. With some creative timetabling we freed up the Technology Team so that staff could visit them to learn how to use the technology more effectively. In a matter of months, 50 iPads were fully in use in every classroom from Kindergarten to Grade 8.

We used the same approach to introduce interactive Smart Boards. School Council generated funds to ensure that most of our classrooms had an interactive Smart Board. However, our Technology Team recognized that unless staff members were fully conversant with the Smart Boards, these new tools would be useless to our teachers and therefore provide no

Doreen Scott-Dunne

Author of *When Spelling Matters*

WHEN SPELLING MATTERS



*Words strain,
Crack and sometimes break, under the burden,
Under the tension, slip, slide, perish,
Decay with imprecision, will not stay in place.*

T.S. Eliot, *Burnt Norton*, *The Four Quartets*

Finding the right words, as T.S. Eliot indicates has always been the most important task for the writer, and finding the right words tends to be easier for those who love words, who are playful with words, who explore the origins of words and who pay attention to how words work. We all know the story of the student who wrote, *I have a cat*, when he really had a hamster, but he did not know how to spell *hamster*. Instead of expressing the truth and beginning to find his voice as a writer, he was limited to using only the words that he could spell.

Spelling has always been an emotionally-charged issue in education. Perhaps that is because it is so visible – misspelled words can be easily identified in a piece of writing. It is harder to identify the bias or perspective of the writer, or the message the author intends to convey to the reader. There are a number of questions that are raised when discussing spelling.

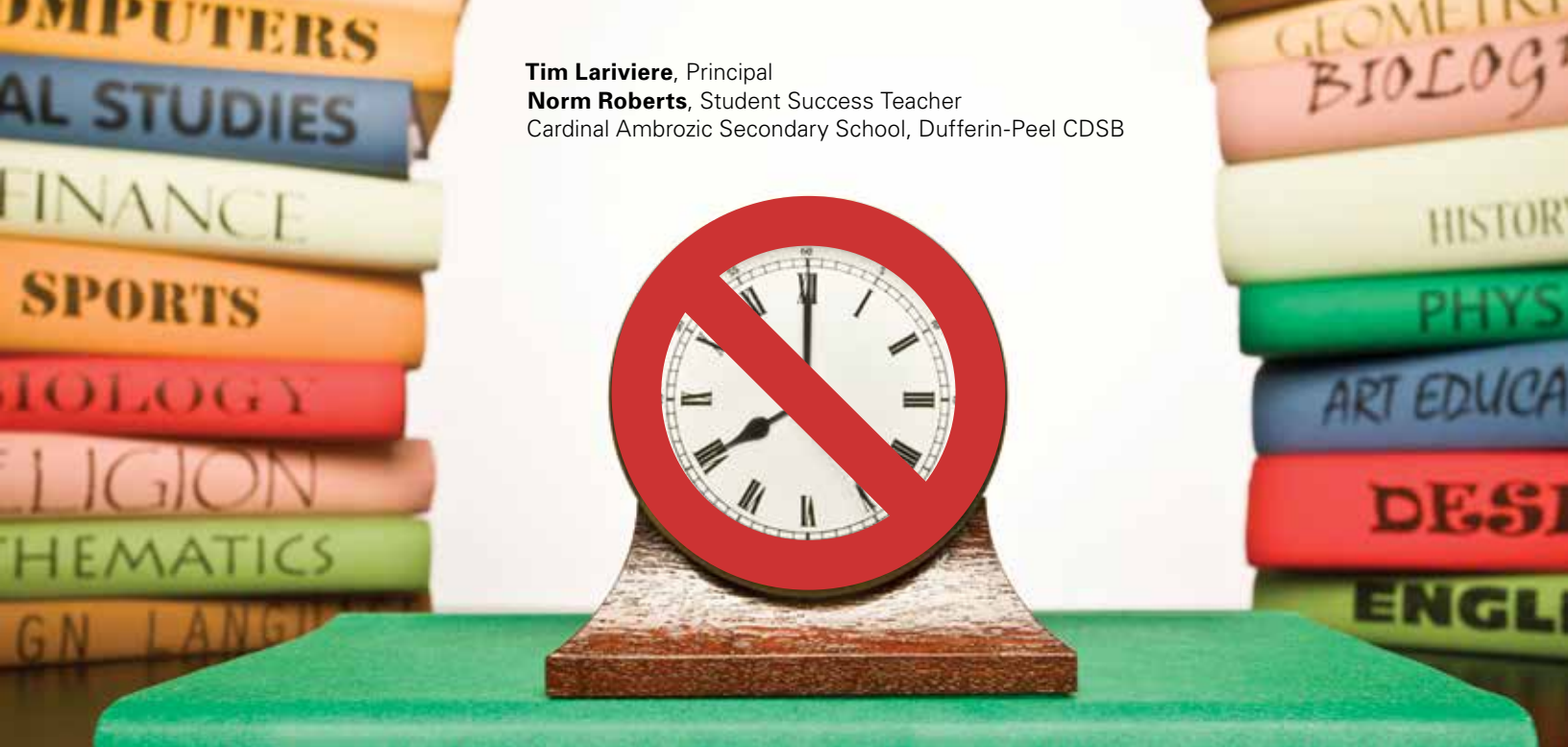
**The question of the moment seems to be
*When does spelling matter?***

Spelling does not matter when you are ...

- Texting
- Writing a grocery list
- A fledgling writer
- Drafting ideas
- Creating a *to do* list
- Creating a reminder note
- Writing in a personal journal
- Creating any private piece of writing

Spelling matters as soon as you share writing with an audience and it becomes public. Even then it only becomes important at the editing stage, not when you are formulating ideas, collecting metaphors for poetry, or trying to find the right words to express your thinking.

Tim Lariviere, Principal
Norm Roberts, Student Success Teacher
Cardinal Ambrozic Secondary School, Dufferin-Peel CDSB



Does Your School Timetable Reflect Your School Vision?

As Catholic leaders we live our Catholic ethos through the programs we choose to put in place to support students. A Catholic school is more than the sum of its parts: the work at Cardinal Ambrozic Catholic Secondary School is an example to enliven why Catholic education is important.


It is always beneficial to do a bit of introspection or soul searching. There are a plethora of mythologies and perceptions that surround the reputation and expectations of being a Catholic School – discipline, academic excellence, sports proficiency; these have been touted as the goals of Catholic education. As appealing and wonderful as they may seem, they are at best the fruits of a deeper reality, and may be happy by-products of the philosophical and religious underpinnings of Catholic education.

Catholic education is rooted in the Gospel values of Jesus Christ. What that means is that the foundations of a Catholic philosophy are to be found in the very incarnational dignity of each and every human being. The starting point of being created in the image and likeness of God reveals the inherent, God-given dignity of each and every student. This means that Catholic educators who themselves are cognizant of their own dignity are commissioned to help students discover and live that dignity. Catholic education is directed to the edification of humanity and through that pursuit, to serve the common good and thereby transform the world, ushering in the kingdom of God.

With that being said, the Catholic system achieves the sense of academic excellence and sports proficiency, not as goals unto themselves, but as means to enable our young people to encounter and empower their own giftedness.

In this light, it is essential that our modus operandi continue to reflect our commitment to provide an environment that liberates our young people to reveal their beauty as the children of God. While the content of our curriculum is essential, the pedagogical process and the milieu in which it is delivered are in fact fundamental to our message.

Too often when evaluating Catholic education we use a measure based on knowledge as opposed to praxis. In other words, what do our students know as opposed to how do they live? It is incumbent on us as a system to develop and cultivate structures that will nurture a more holistic and student-focused environment, assisting them to integrate their existential dignity into the free choices they make. This requires an understanding of the current cultural patterns in which our students find themselves, or as current literature in education promotes: *know the learner*.



Pam Garbutt, Principal
Blessed John Paul II, Waterloo CDSB

THE *SNEAK PEEK* STORY

How a Small Innovation Leads to Big Results

From the first moment that a student or parent sets foot in a Catholic school, he or she ought to have the impression of entering a new environment, one illuminated by the light of faith and having its own unique characteristics.

~ The Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988

The first part of my article features theory and thinking about an innovation that led to a new community service at our Catholic elementary school in Kitchener, Ontario. The second part discusses the *Sneak Peek* innovation itself and the surprising impact it has had on student achievement and well-being.

THINKING ABOUT INNOVATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Organizational development has at its heart a fundamental premise that like all living systems humans desire and create order out of chaos. Schools are living systems and are very capable of creating ordered social systems shaped by our values, beliefs and assumptions. Creating order in schools requires deep patterns of inquiry that must precede innovation and change. Ultimately human energy used to create change is characterized by questioning and critical thinking. This

innate source of human energy is the match that lights the candle of enthusiasm, creating innovative and positive change in our schools.

Improving schools through innovation requires two ways of seeing. One view is through the lens of good management and operations. The other view is from the lens of good leadership. Margaret Wheatley (1992) observes that it is our relationships with others that qualify our ability to see ways in which we can improve. *Seeing well* creates the energy or spark that captures the imagination allowing us to question, think, relate and act. When we use our lenses to create effective ways of seeing with others we humans create a specialized energy that ignites and creates vision. Therefore, innovation is the result of a willingness to see. It is in using our adaptive and collaborative energy that the lamp of ingenuity is lit enabling us to generate new ideas and solutions.

Building Capacity in the Midst of Tremendous Change



And let us not lose heart ... for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary.

Galatians 6:9

How does one face the challenge of building capacity within a school where change is an everyday occurrence? How does a leader *not become weary*? It has been said that the only constant in our lives will be change. This article examines how a principal manages the delicate balance of a school amidst all the change that is taking place.

Our school is located in one of the fastest growing areas in North America. We have a diverse student population and a young staff. Students come and go on a regular basis. Each year, we welcome many new immigrant families to our school community. And as a principal, I also find myself welcoming new, long-term occasional teachers each school year.

While change of personnel rather than stability appears to be the norm for many schools, it presents a challenge that must be faced. It is neither discouraging nor insurmountable. Instability could be seen as a potential hindrance to our ability to build instructional capacity; however, as school leaders, we cannot let such obstacles become an excuse for not setting the bar high and striving to improve student achievement and learning.

Creating a Culture of Mentorship

For me, the first step towards building capacity within the school is believing that I have a strong team of teacher leaders, and the support of literacy and numeracy coaches. Working together, within a culture of mentorship, caring and distributed leadership, ensures that through the many changes we experience in a school year, our teachers feel supported and our students receive the education they need.

Creating a culture of mentorship builds self and collective efficacy for our staff. It is also essential in order to build capacity within Instructional Leadership. This would appear to be self-evident. However, as the one charged with this seemingly overwhelming responsibility, I find myself relating to *The Little Engine That Could*. You tell yourself “I think I can, I think I can,” while building a culture of support, encouragement, resilience and perseverance. *The Little Engine That Could* had the knowledge of who she was, what her purpose was, and where she was going. She needed to get to the other side of the mountain, and she could not do it alone. The scenery along the journey is always different. The obstacles are ever changing. However, the path taken is always informed by the present situation.

I have come to understand that sharing a common vision and belief that all students are able to learn, provides the foundation on which we build. This common understanding points us in the direction that we need to work collectively as a team, whether it is the team that is coming, going or staying. Teamwork matters if we want to ensure that the moral imperative, of raising the bar and closing the gap as defined by Michael Fullan, is realized.

Mobilizing Knowledge

Mobilizing knowledge has an enthusiastic ring to it. However, when dealing with the reality of a large and often changing staff, increasing student enrolment and the delivery of new portables to house classes that no longer fit in the school, mobilizing knowledge presents a whole new level of challenge.

Dr. Sonia Mastrangelo, Assistant Professor
Lakehead University, Faculty of Education



USING VIDEOCONFERENCING AS A TRAINING TOOL IN DELIVERING AN AUTISM INTERVENTION PROGRAM

Possibilities for Principals, Teachers, Students and Parents

During my years as a special educator for the Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board I had the privilege of working with the late Dr. Arnold Miller of the Language and Cognitive Development Center in Boston through a videoconferencing link established between my classroom and his center. At that time, I spearheaded a self contained class for children on the autism spectrum in the primary/junior division and worked alongside a dedicated team of professionals which included Educational Resource Workers and a Child and Youth Worker using a cognitive developmental systems approach known in the autism community as the Miller Method. Dr. Miller provided

weekly consultative support to the children, all of whom had a diagnosis of ASD, their parents and the professionals working in the class for over seven years. The benefits of the technology were numerous and included: ongoing professional development for the staff working in the classroom environment, support for the parents who were learning new strategies being implemented in the classroom that they could transfer to the home setting, and *on the spot* feedback during live sessions with the children which included programming and assessment ideas in their development of body organization, communication, representation and social-emotional skills.

Autism Spectrum Disorders: The Need for Ongoing Professional Development

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurological disorder characterized, in varying degrees, by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication, repetitive behaviors and can be associated with intellectual disability, difficulties in motor coordination and attention and physical health issues such as sleep and gastrointestinal disturbances (Autism Speaks Canada). Persons with autism may exhibit repeated body movements (hand flapping, rocking), unusual responses to people or attachments to objects, and resistance to changes in routines. Individuals may also experience sensitivities in sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste (Autism Ontario). Autism Spectrum Disorder is one of the most common developmental disabilities and

based on recent studies by Canadian researchers, the prevalence rate is 1 in 94 (National Epidemiologic Database for the Study of Autism in Canada). In Ontario, there is an estimated 100,000 individuals with ASD. Due to the variability of the disorder, professionals in the medical, educational, and vocational fields are still discovering ways to best meet the needs of children on the autism spectrum. Professional development continues to be a priority in all sectors but particularly in our classrooms where teachers and support staff are working in the front lines. According to Simpson (2005),

The unique learning needs of the population of students with ASD differ greatly from those of other learners, requiring educators to possess specialized skills to adequately meet their needs. These learning differences are made up of both strengths and needs. Strengths include visual-spatial abilities and skills, physical development, rote memory, unique perspectives, systemizing