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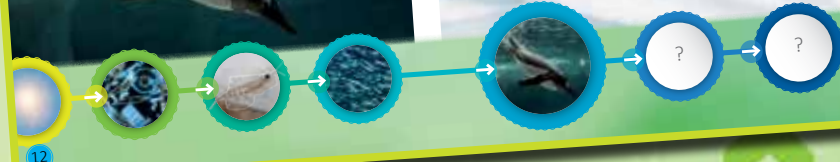


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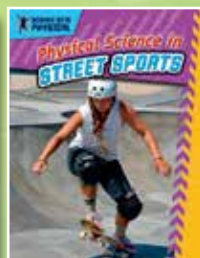
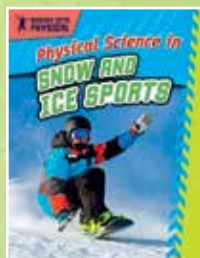
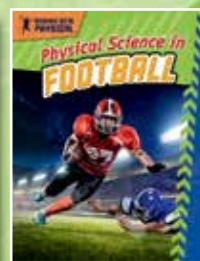
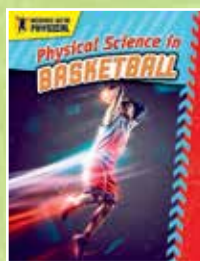
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The official publication of



**Canadian Association  
of Principals**  
association canadienne des directeurs d'école

Publisher **DONNA BILLEY**

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Advertising Sales **DONNA BILLEY, STEPHANIE DUPRAT**

Printing **FRIESENS CORPORATION  
ONE PRINTERS WAY  
ALTONA, MANITOBA R0G 0B0**

Friesens Corporation is a Platinum Sponsor  
of the Canadian Association of Principals

**CAP JOURNAL** is printed on FSC certified paper

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related to school administration and educational  
leadership are encouraged. For guidelines and editorial  
calendar information contact - [donna@mzpinc.ca](mailto:donna@mzpinc.ca)

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Christina Pike

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CAP-T0120

### CAP JOURNAL

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*Terry MacIsaac*  
President, Canadian Association of Principals

Dear Principals and Vice Principals,

As you are reading this, you have returned from a well-deserved Christmas holiday, and it probably seems like a distant memory. The half way point of the school year is fast approaching, but the work is probably not half done. As school leaders, we must try and find a way to support our teachers and staff while ensuring curriculum is covered, assessment gets completed, and ultimately, ensure students master the outcomes which are prescribed to them. This is certainly no small task!

At our recent semi-annual meeting in November, the CAP board undertook a strategic planning session with Jacqueline Skytt. During this process, we evaluated our policies and procedures, and came up with a number of initiatives which we believe will enable CAP to remain a strong voice for School Principals and Vice-Principals, and increase our presence on the national scene of education. One of the first initiatives we will embark upon will be a needs assessment survey of the affiliates to determine what information affiliates desire.

The upcoming CAP conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba, looks to be an exciting and informative event. The theme of 'Clear Vision for School Leadership', is certainly one that requires our constant attention due to many requests for access to our students, and the demands placed on us from our educational partners. The planning committee has been working diligently and have confirmed highly acclaimed keynote speakers. If you have the ability to attend, I highly recommend you do as this is one of the best professional development opportunities for school leaders that is available to you.

In closing, I encourage you to model work-life balance for your staff as you trudge through the winter season. As the demands of the school year build, we tend to allow ourselves to take responsibility for more and more tasks to be completed. Don't forget to take care of yourselves and show your staffs that there is more to life than just school.

Sincerely,

Terry MacIsaac



*Christina Pike*  
Editor, CAP Journal

Thank you to all that submitted articles for the Winter 2020 issue of the CAP Journal. CAP advocates for Principals and Vice-Principals - School Leaders - at a national level. Working with other national educational groups, CAP presents the views and opinions of Principals, Assistant-Principals, Vice-Principals and other school leaders regarding a variety of issues and in many different forums as we work with our provincial and territorial affiliates.

The theme for this issue of the CAP Journal is two fold. First, in anticipation of our national CAP Conference, we will be eliciting articles on the CAP 2020 Theme, *20/20 Clear Vision, celebrating CAP 2020 in Winnipeg*. As well, to celebrate all that schools do working with community partners, we have included articles about *Community/Social Engagement*.

School leaders have a myriad of duties, responsibilities, and pressures that they face every day from students, staff, Division office, and parents/ guardians. In a global world, students and staff are becoming involved in worthy extra curricular activities that address needs within their communities, regions or countries. This edition of the CAP Journal has been dedicated in part to highlight these contributions.

Sincerely,  
Christina



## CAP Awards – National Recognition

By **Jim Jordan**, CAP VP Central Canada

Annually CAP offers two awards which provide our affiliates with the opportunity to recognize the achievements of principals and vice principals.

CAP's *Distinguished Principal of the Year* and *Distinguished Vice-Principal of the Year* awards provide national recognition to school leaders who have shown both strong commitment to their schools and to their communities.

The nomination speaks to a candidate's experience, professional growth, community service as well as their philosophy of student learning. Successful nominees are honoured at the annual CAP conference and have an opportunity to address the attendees from across Canada.

In addition to the above-mentioned awards, our affiliates also have the opportunity to recognize student leaders. Affiliates can provide national recognition and a monetary award to a deserving student via CAP's *Student Leadership Award*. This award speaks to student leadership in both the school and the community as well as academic achievement. To be eligible students must be in their final year of high school.

One award per affiliate is available.

Please consider nominating a deserving colleague for either the *Distinguished Principal* or *Vice Principal* award. Make your high school colleagues aware of our *Student Leadership Award*.

Nomination forms are available at the CAP website, [cdnprincipals.com](http://cdnprincipals.com).



# *The Stories That Students Tell*

By Marc Kuly



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Like many Canadians, I spent a week in November riveted by the news following Don Cherry's last night as the star of Hockey Night In Canada's Coach's Corner. I grew up with Don Cherry and his unique mixture of earnest sentiment and divisive bombast is woven into what it has meant to watch hockey for me. When he called immigrants and refugees "you people" I wondered if this time he had gone too far and waited to see how Sportsnet would react. While I waited, I thought about all the possible reactions the media might have. And even though the trend towards greater diversity within Canadian classrooms continues to grow, I didn't think about Don's comments as an issue for schools. That idea came to me, as is so often the case, through the insight offered by one of my students.

I spent years teaching in Winnipeg classrooms and now teach aspiring teachers at the University of Winnipeg. In my class, students complete a forty-hour service experience working in after school programs for young people who have traditionally not done well in schools. Most of my students are white middle-class young adults and many of the programs they are placed in serve newly arrived refugee youth. At the end of every term the students gather to share their experiences. At the end of last term, one of my students, Chantal, shared hers. She explained that she had connected with Mohammed, one of the students she tutored because they shared a love of soccer. She had played in Winnipeg schools and clubs and he had played growing up in Syria. Through this connection Chantal came to learn more about him, including the wonderful things about life in Syria, the tragic losses his family had suffered, and the challenges of adapting to life in Canada. It was a touching story and when I thought Chantal was finished, I thanked her. But Chantal wasn't done. She continued, "I just really learned a lot from him and really respect him and then two weeks ago when I was watching hockey Don Cherry said, 'you people.'" She became visibly emotional, gathered herself, and then continued, "I'm not trying to start an argument about whether he should have been fired or not, I just know that if I didn't know Mohammed, I wouldn't have known why it was wrong for Don to say those words."

Students learn many things from being at school. Much of their learning happens because of the design and delivery of instruction. However, a lot also comes from the events and relationships that occur simply from being in school. In fact, it may be that these learnings are the ones that are most lasting. I know that when I reflect on my time in school it is the stories of the people who I went to school with that come to mind most immediately and most vividly. To be clear, I am not suggesting that curriculum and instruction are not centrally important to schooling. However, Chantal's story reminds us that the breadth of schooling's effects on communities is only partly created by solving equations and reading great books.

We often think of successful students as those who leave grade 12 with a diploma and a set of skills that will allow them to find meaningful work or pursue further education. But how often do we think about the stories that schools equip students with? It is inevitable that students will leave school with stories. From Kindergarten to grade 12 students encounter new people and new places and are challenged to make meaning from these experiences. Scholars from diverse disciplines have shown that the way we turn new experiences into meaning is by crafting stories.<sup>1</sup> When we craft these stories, we imbue places, times, and people with significance they wouldn't otherwise have.<sup>2</sup> Stories transform the strange into the familiar. The road we walk between school and home becomes marked

not with house numbers but as Joe's house, Annabella and Liam's house, and the house with the little dog that barks just when you think it hadn't noticed you. With every event the space called our neighbourhood expands. Likewise, the people you meet as strangers in the desks beside you become the characters that animate the legends told around the supper table. With every story the people we mean when we say "us" changes.

When Chantal introduced Mohammed to us through her story everyone in my class was given a reason to think of refugees as being a little less foreign or unknown. For her fellow students who may only have heard of refugees through news clips about war zones or worse, soundbites from Donald Trump, the message was essential. When we don't have first hand experience of our own, we rely on the stories we are told to guide our thinking. This is where schools can make an important social contribution. There are very few places left in society where people are compelled to spend time in the company of people from different ability groups or ethnic, religious, sexual, gender, and socio-economic backgrounds. School is one of them. As our society grows more and more diverse the ability to work with difference and recognize the strength it brings is going to be essential. By mindfully engaging our students in learning about and with each other we give them those skills. However, waiting for them to grow up to put those skills into practice in the larger society is going to take a long time. If we encourage them to tell the stories of living well together

with people who are different from them, we can accelerate that process.

The moral philosopher Martha Nussbaum suggests that stories and storytelling are one of the key outcomes of a quality education. She explains that:

*the insides of people, like the insides of stars, are not open to view. They must be wondered about. And the conclusion that this set of limbs in front of me has emotions and feelings and thoughts of the sort that I attribute to myself will not be reached without the training of the imagination that storytelling promotes. (Nussbaum, 2008, p. 150)*

When Don Cherry called immigrants and refugees "you people" it wasn't just a failure of the broadcaster's censors, it was a failure of his moral imagination. I wish he could have been in my classroom to hear Chantal's story. But I take hope from the effect that story had. I know she didn't just tell the story there. I also know that if we do our work well in schools many, many more students may tell similar stories to their families and friends, to the lasting benefit of us all. ■

<sup>1</sup> Gottschall, 2012; Huber, Caine, Huber, & Steeves, 2013; King, 2003

<sup>2</sup> Senehi, 2002, 2009

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**Marc Kuly** is an Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Service Learning in the Faculty of Education at the University of Winnipeg, located on Treaty One Territory, the traditional homeland of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Dakota, Dene, Oji-Cree, and Metis Nations.

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In Ontario, play-based Kindergarten is relatively new and there is a need to establish what sort of support is required by the coordinated efforts of teachers (OCT) and Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) who collaborate as educators in the classroom. This article reports on an investigative survey that assesses how professional development might be best tailored to suit the educators in these classrooms. It shows the challenges of providing geometry and spatial sense PD in this environment.

In this article, we use RECE exclusively as the professional designation defined by the Ontario College of Childhood Educators. The terminology Designated Early Childhood Educator (DECE) is also in use to facilitate equivalent qualifications. We treat these as being synonymous given the context of an Early Childhood Educator (ECE) working in a kindergarten classroom in Ontario. When speaking about qualifications we will use BEd (Bachelor of Education) instead of the Ontario College of Teachers designation “OCT,” because a BEd can be held by an RECE regardless of membership in OCT. We will use the term educator as an inclusive term for both RECE and OCT instructors in kindergarten classrooms.



*“Learning within spatial and geometric reasoning is often ignored or minimized in both early education and in the professional development of early childhood teachers.”*

The U.S. national research council puts a high emphasis on geometry and spatial reasoning in mathematics education programs, ranking it as the second most important strand.<sup>1</sup> This view is also reflected in the Ontario Kindergarten Program 2016.<sup>2</sup> However, many early childhood educators (OCT and RECE) do not feel comfortable teaching math.<sup>3</sup> Of all the strands, they feel least comfortable teaching Geometry and Spatial Sense.<sup>4</sup> It is also consistent with a finding that learning within spatial and geometric reasoning is “often ignored or minimized in both early education and in the professional development of early childhood teachers.”<sup>5</sup> Bruce, Moss, and Ross (2012) had similar findings from a survey of K–2 educators.

There are two possible interpretations of these findings. It may be educators in these classrooms have difficulty addressing the strand. Alternatively, they may be having difficulty weighing the relative importance of the strand when comparing to other strands, most notably number sense and numeration. The lack of clarity is problematic for leadership who try to provide support based on needs. For this reason a survey of Kindergarten educators was used to gather information about educator strengths and needs in five areas of geometry and spatial reasoning:

- ▶ Spatial reasoning concepts in Pre-K and Kindergarten Mathematics programming,
- ▶ Ontario Ministry of Education documents, policies, and curriculum,
- ▶ Children’s developmentally appropriate spatial and geometric learning trajectories,
- ▶ Spatial reasoning and geometry subject matter, and
- ▶ Teaching strategies that encourage the development of spatial reasoning and geometry.

The survey was conducted online in the summer and fall of 2017.

## Participant Details

A total of 69 educators were surveyed within Ontario school boards. The educators were from a variety of school boards because of distribution of the survey through a private Facebook group for Kindergarten teachers. The educators are described in Table 1.

**Table 1** Description of educators who completed the survey

Description	RECE only	RECE and BEd	BEd only	Other
Qualification(s)	19	4	45	2
EA training	2	0	0	0
Math AQ?	2	1	11	1

The qualifications of individuals who responded to the survey show that some teachers jointly hold both RECE and BEd qualifications. Note that the survey did not ask about the OCT professional designation, so the BEd qualification should be interpreted as having achieved pre-service training as opposed to necessarily having the OCT professional designation. It is also notable that two responses indicated not having an RECE, BEd, or EA training, but did have graduate studies training. Since one of these indicated having a math AQ it is believed they indicated their highest attainment as opposed to all qualifications.

A question that emerges from this table is whether RECE designated teachers have the same access to math AQs as BEd teachers. Since RECEs only require a two-year college diploma and registration with the Ontario College of Childhood Educators, there is a perception that they would not be eligible for AQ courses. Some university providers admit RECEs into AQs. The Ministry of Education has envisioned the teacher and RECE have complementary skills with the former focused on planning instruction, assessing, and reporting, while the latter focuses on childhood development with a focus on skills and age-appropriateness.



**Table 2** Training summary

Type	RECE only	RECE and BEd	BEd only	Other
BA/BSc	5 *	Required	Required	
Kindergarten Part 1, 2, Specialist	4	0	25	1
Math AQ	1	1	11	1
Special Education	0	3	32	1
Reading AQ	0	1	21	1
Primary Basic	1	1	17	1
Junior Basic	0	0	13	0
Intermediate Basic	0	0	13	0
ESL or FSL **	0	0	8	0

\* — One also holds a masters degree.

\*\*—No one had both.

The question of training opportunities and how it relates to qualifications is shown in Table 2. The survey reveals that, while RECE can be earned through a two-year college program, that one should not underestimate these individuals where five reported having an undergraduate degree. Four had a kindergarten qualification (no distinction was made between parts 1 and 2, and the specialist qualification). Beyond that RECEs had very few formal qualifications.

Teachers holding a BEd had quite a few formal qualifications. However, it is notable that special education far outweighed any other qualification. It is also notable that primary basic had 17 instances, which imply that these teachers were formally trained as junior/intermediate or intermediate/senior teachers. There is an implication that they were exercising mobility within the elementary school environment beyond what their initial qualification permitted.



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*“The U.S. national research council puts a high emphasis on geometry and spatial reasoning in mathematics education programs, ranking it as the second most important strand.”*

It is little surprise to see reading qualifications with nearly double the number of math qualifications. This is consistent with provincial emphasis on early literacy. The number of math qualifications is at the same level as second language qualifications.

RECEs notably listed a variety of other training including sign language, Montessori training, self-regulation certification, as well as electricity/electronics training. One RECE noted that they had received school board “training all on my time.” The BEd educators also noted various additional elements of training, but in contrast to the RECEs, they were predominantly official qualifications (such as library specialist).

The extent of employer provided training is given in Table 3. The values in the table are percentages for each type of educator. This allows comparison, for example, of RECEs and BEds where it indicates that the RECEs have had more employer PD than the BEds.

**Table 3** Employer provided professional development

Amount (days)	RECE only (% of 19)	RECE and BEd (% of 4)	BEd only (% of 45)	Other (% of 2)
<b>None</b>	0	0	7	0
<b>Half day</b>	5	25	16	0
<b>1–5</b>	53	75	53	50
<b>6–10</b>	21	0	11	50
<b>10–15</b>	21	0	9	0
<b>More than 15</b>	0	0	4	0

## Geometry and Spatial Reasoning Details

The survey asked questions organized according to five areas of geometry and spatial reasoning:

- Spatial reasoning concepts in Pre-K and Kindergarten Mathematics Programming
- Ontario Ministry of Education documents, policies, curriculum, and research
- Children’s developmentally appropriate spatial and geometric learning trajectories
- Spatial reasoning and geometry subject matter, and
- Teaching strategies that encourage the development of spatial reasoning and geometry

The details of the questions were derived from a variety of sources that are in use within Ontario. Policy elements, for example, were based on Ontario policies, while content questions also used American sources such as the NCTM resources and research findings. Each question was provided as a multiple-choice question with five answers to choose from. The questions were peer reviewed before use and few problems arose with the survey. There was one question that was found to have two correct answers and both answers were accepted.

The overall results of the survey showed 64% of the responses were correct. This points to the need for professional development, which was the original motivation for the survey, but should also be understood as targeting areas that might have needs as opposed to an overall performance of the educators surveyed. In other words, the survey purposefully challenged educators so that their strengths and weaknesses would be revealed.

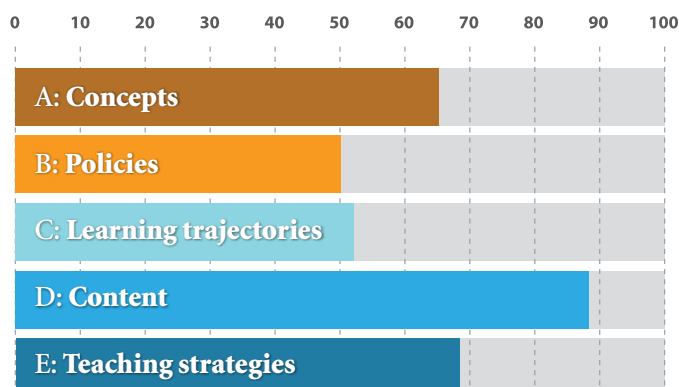
The outcome also speaks to Play-Based Kindergarten being a newly implemented program and requiring significant changes in the way educators run a classroom. We do not consider it in the best professional interests to distinguish outcomes for RECEs and BEds with the limited scope of the survey. However, the results are consistent with the intention that RECEs would bring a developmental focus where BEds would bring formal curricular approaches. Beyond that, the distinctions are somewhat blurred, which reflects the early stages of enacting a collaborative teaching environment.

Certainly in terms of providing professional development it is important that both components of the classroom team share in developing that professional relationship and coordination within the classroom. The results for each of the five categories are provided in Table 4 and the figure beside it.



**Table 4** Results for the five categories


Category	Result (%)
A: Concepts	66.4
B: Policies	49.9
C: Learning trajectories	51.9
D: Content	87.2
E: Teaching strategies	62.0



The results show considerable content knowledge (D) and that it would be misguided to focus professional development efforts in that area. While this result may be interpreted as high, in the given context, it does suggest the need for additional in-depth training to improve mathematical content knowledge. However, the need is in-depth and tailored to the needs of the educators. Using five questions from a van Hiele Geometry Test, it was found that all but two of the 69 educators are functioning at a minimum van Hiele Level 1, known as Visualization. (See the van Hiele textbox). While this is commendable, this assessment measure from the van Hiele Geometry Test (copyright ©1980 by the University of Chicago; reprinted with permission) only holds the respondents to a low standard. At van Hiele Level 1, geometric figures are recognized by appearance alone, often by comparing them to a known prototype, but the properties of a figure are not perceived (Usiskin, 1982).

There is a need for further math focused training, but moving a van Hiele level is beyond what can be done in routine PD sessions. It is more substantial and has been recognized more widely:

The mathematics preparation of elementary and middle school teachers must be strengthened as one means for improving teachers' effectiveness in the classroom. This includes preservice teacher education, early career support, and professional development programs. A critical component of this recommendation is that teachers be given ample opportunities to learn mathematics for teaching." (National Mathematics Advisory Panel, 2008, p 38).



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## The 5 Levels of Geometric Thinking

- ▶ **Level 0: Pre-Recognition:** At this level only a subset of the visual characteristics of a shape are perceived, resulting in an inability to distinguish between figures.
- ▶ **Level 1 (Visualization):** Figures are recognized by appearance alone, often by comparing them to a known prototype. The properties of a figure are not perceived.
- ▶ **Level 2 (Analysis):** Geometric figures are recognized and named, but relationships between these properties are not discerned.
- ▶ **Level 3 (Abstraction):** The relationships between properties and between figures are perceived, meaningful definitions and informal arguments to justify their reasoning are created.
- ▶ **Level 4 (Deduction):** Proofs are constructed, the role of axioms and definitions are understood, and the meaning of necessary and sufficient conditions are known.

In terms of directing professional development, it is unclear the extent that teaching strategies and concepts may be low because of the enactment of a new curriculum being combined with the collaborative professional classroom environment. It is possible that educator's views of child developmental are being infused by RECEs and that there is a professional 'working out' of best-practices for a play-based curriculum.

Policies and learning trajectories are both concerns that point to professional development opportunities. The need to take time to understand the policies after having gained some experience in the play-based approach is clearly needed. The educators, both BEd and RECE educators, require time to revisit the policies and to further develop their understandings of how the curricular goals can be achieved in the new format. Further to this, the learning trajectories provide an avenue for dialogue that will support the collaboration that is assumed in the new approach. Specifically, the RECEs bring developmental understanding and the BEds bring a larger view of the cross-grade subject development. What seems necessary is a consensus on a developmentally appropriate interpretation of spatial and geometric content, that both meets the developmental needs while setting students on a course for success in subsequent grades.

## Math PD Options?

What the survey does not reveal, though the results are consistent with, is that there is a fundamental Math PD conundrum and it is significant. RECEs emerged in Kindergarten as a result of a royal commission. For the love of learning (OME, 1995), which recommended that Early Childhood Educators should gradually replace Junior and Senior Kindergarten teachers. At the time, the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario (ETFO) fought against the diminishing of teacher roles, but when it became imminent tried with difficulty to redress a lack of union specificity by the Ministry of Education and succeeded at drawing in RECEs from ten school boards. The rest are split between other unions.

RECEs are spread across multiple unions including ETFO, Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation (OSSTF), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) (Gananathan, 2015), the Ontario Council of Education Workers (OCEW), and some independent unions. Only ETFO had negotiated preparation time for RECEs when Gananathan published in 2015, consistent with shared planning time being a "major problem" (Lynch, 2014). In addition, ETFO members receive six PA/PD days per year, while OSSTF is allowed to offer training onsite but RECEs are not paid for their time, and CUPE has no provisions for PA/PD. In addition, OSSTF RECEs receive paid time off for required courses to upgrade qualifications (Gananathan, 2015). For example, with the Renewed Mathematics Strategy, the funding for math AQs was available to RECEs if they were members of an affiliate of the Ontario Teachers Federation. However, it is our understanding that not all providers, and notably not ETFO, would allow RECEs into their math AQ courses.

The survey findings are consistent with Lynch (2014) who identifies challenges with the teacher and RECE being "equal partners" in kindergarten classrooms as well as policy misconceptions about play-based learning. She identifies "a more complex problem of what might be termed 'power relationships,' and that problem most likely cannot be solved through government regulation respecting role clarification" (p. 342). This occurs on multiple fronts and is exemplified by a letter to the editor of Professionally Speaking (the OCT publication), which admonishes an article for using the OCT designation for teachers but not acknowledging the professional designation of RECEs (Ainge, 2012). Further evidence of the power struggle is Ryan and Date's (2014) claim that "it has been made clear that the teacher is in charge of the class during the day" (p. 107).

Similar perceptions are held among administrators who have allocated ECEs for duties outside of instructional time. This led to a court case where a ruling interpreted the Education Act as saying that classrooms with more than 16 children were required to have a teacher and ECE. This would maintain the same adult-to-student ratio (Ryan & Date, 2014). However, it also determined that there was no requirement that both had to be in the classroom for the full instructional time (Axelrod, 2017). This has allowed schools to schedule ECE break times during instruction so that they can be available during other times, such as before school, during recesses, and other duties as assigned.

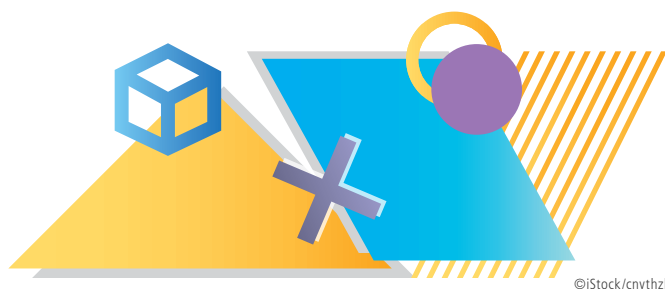


The unfortunate reality is that kindergarten is best characterized by a situation where there is an inequality between a teacher and an RECE. The relationship according to this research is consistent with an ongoing glass-ceiling (Tukonic & Harwood, 2015) operating against professional sharing of duties in kindergarten classrooms. The scenario is, in spite of the best intentions, hindering all approaches to addressing the math needs of both kindergarten and RECE educators in areas such as spatial sense and geometry. In conclusion, mathematics in kindergarten will not improve until foundational issues allowing a focus on co-learning for instructional improvement are realized. This is in spite of a call for addressing the complexity of guided-play in mathematics within the kindergarten environment (Wickstrom, Pyle, & DeLuca, 2019). ■

1 NRC, 2009, p. 21    2 Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016, p. 75    3 Germeroth & Sarama, 2017    4 Youmans, Coombs, & Colgan, 2018    5 Clements & Sarama, 2011

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# CAP Conference 2019

## “Northern Lights. Illuminating Our Experience”

### Whitehorse Yukon • May 1 - 3, 2019

By **Gary Morgan**, AYSA President, CAP Board member



For the first time in CAPs history, the annual conference came to Yukon and north of 60. The conference is a major undertaking for any affiliate to take on and even more so for an affiliate with roughly 50 members. To have a successful conference took a team that included the majority of Yukon principals and vice principals working for the common goal. In the end, the conference proved to be a great success on many levels. The quality of programming and speakers was world class, the City of Whitehorse and the community were welcoming, and even the weather was uncharacteristically warm and inviting. The feedback we received from delegates was very positive, as many delegates reported the conference offered unique opportunities that included a blend of First Nation and northern cultural perspectives on education. For the Association of Yukon School Administrators (AYSA) it was a PD opportunity we could not have provided for ourselves without CAP and we were pleased to share the opportunity with colleagues from across Canada. It was truly a win/win experience.

The conference was kicked off with a pre-conference cultural and education tour of Carcross, a community south of Whitehorse steeped in both aboriginal and 19th century gold rush history. The tour included a celebration of traditional dance performance by the students at Ghuch Tia School in Carcross. Delegates were also witness to a moving account of the Choooutla Residential School experience, a residential school established in 1911 and operated until 1969 in the Carcross community.

The conference program purposely began with a reflection on where we have come from collectively in education from a First Nation context as addressed by Gabrielle Scrimshaw. It then moved into the celebration of learning as showcased in Yukon's many experiential programs such as the annual bison hunts and its integrated arts program (MAD). The final emphasis of the conference was moving forward on the path of success for all students, as addressed by several speakers including John Malloy of the Toronto District School Board.

Being involved in the development and facilitation of this conference on behalf of CAP and AYSA has been a highlight of my time as a CAP board member service fellow educational leaders from across the country. I look forward to the conference in Winnipeg in May 2020 and I am confident that the experience will equal, or surpass the learning opportunities provided by the 2019 Yukon conference. ■



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# Experiences and Not Speak the Sc with children in

**International research from a variety of educational contexts has shown that parent involvement (PI) in children's education is a strong indicator of academic and social achievement.<sup>1</sup> The importance of PI is demonstrated by a recent edition of Education Canada Magazine (February, 2018) that was a bilingual French and English publication dedicated to PI and how educators and parents can collaborate better in the Canadian context.**

Literature from the minority-language context confirms the importance of PI for student achievement and that the role of family is especially critical for valuing and supporting use of the minority or heritage language and identity construction for children.<sup>2</sup> The literature indicates a gap between what is recommended in the PI research and what is practiced in schools to enhance PI (Hornby, 2011). Parents, as well as educators, play a key role in the success of students and schools. This research project explored the experience of non-Francophone (NF) parents, most of whom were not proficient in French, who had children in French minority-language schools (MacPhee, 2018). I discuss the barriers parents encountered to PI and the recommendations they made to improve their involvement in the children's education. Many of their experiences can be applied to other contexts where parents do not speak the school language.

## The Study

This research was based on a mixed methods research design with 9 focus groups involving 34 people, 4 individual interviews, and online survey data from 86 participants. The participants represented NF parents in a couple with a francophone, immigrant parents, assimilated NF parents with French heritage, and parents without French heritage. They were principally Anglo-dominant but 18% had French proficiency from being French immersion students themselves or from using French in the work place.

## Findings

Parents experienced challenges as a NF parent to a child being educated in a French school. They reported that at home they struggle to understand written communication from the school and to understand homework content and assignments. Participants agreed that being involved with French education takes much more time, energy, and effort than if it were in the parent's mother tongue. In addition, many felt that they cannot be involved at home or in school or the community to the degree they would like, and they felt unsure how to help with academic or language development because of a language barrier. Where supporting a minority language includes participating in community involvement (Cormier, 2005; Landry, 2010), some NF parents commented that they did not participate and others reported not feeling a sense of belonging to the French school or community because, without French, it was difficult to participate.

Parents made suggestions about how educators can help NF parents to be involved or to reduce barriers to involvement. Recommendations included using different strategies to help parents understand communications from the school, which includes providing a way to translate the language of the memos on the school web page, having communication from school shared in a bilingual or translatable format (i.e., emailing memos rather than sending home paper copies), and pairing parents with other school parent-partners to help NF parents answer questions and access information or activities. Parents believed that educators sharing tips and computer applications or programs with parents at the beginning of the year to demonstrate how to translate notes from French to English or ensure proper French pronunciation and sounds would be beneficial. Several parents recommended reorganizing school newsletters for parents to easily find information on youngest students earlier in the newsletter and older students later in the text, and general information relevant to all students prior to grade specific information. Parents explained that older children or children with several years education in the school language can read and help decipher messages in the later grades but parents with children in the early years mentioned needing more communication support. Other parent proposals included offering a translated or translatable version of notes for parents to refer to during meet-the-teacher night or open house sessions.

Participants also indicated they would benefit if school professionals could offer sessions or workshops to parents that focus on how parents can help students with literacy and numeracy development and programs to help with pronunciation and reading at home. The overall desire of participants was for school staff to welcome linguistically and culturally diverse parents explicitly and encourage a sense of belonging, make connections with other parents, as well as to provide an opportunity for parents to volunteer in diverse ways, even when their mother tongue is not French.



# Recommendations From Parents Who do School Language: non-francophone parents French minority-language schools

By Mary M. MacPhee, PhD



University of Prince Edward Island

## Conclusion

The data revealed that parents have a strong desire to be involved in the education of their children. Parents had increasingly positive experiences over time after the initial difficulty of translating school memos and navigating other communication issues. Repeated exposure to the school by being invited to attend events and the opportunity to meet other parents helped these participants develop greater confidence, connections, and increased the likelihood they would be involved at school or community events. Parents noted that once their children had developed good reading skills around grade three, the children could help with interpreting school notes at home, which continued as the years progressed. Parents who had received strong support from early year's educators in French childcare in school centers and from teachers in primary school grades reported the most positive experiences and involvement. Finally, parents agreed that French education for their children is a much greater challenge for them as parents than an education in the home language would be. However, these parents explained that the difficulties they faced were well worth it for the future opportunities and advantages that French or bilingual development would allow their children.

To conclude, educators can help parents who do not speak the school language to surmount PI barriers in the French minority-school context as well as other contexts to enhance PI at home and at school. As communities and classrooms become more multicultural in Canada (Iannacci, 2006), the principles of welcoming, informing, and accompanying parents in diverse ways and encouraging involvement in different ways, increases in importance. The findings from this research help school professionals to understand the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse parents and some of the PI barriers they face. When educators implement the recommendations proposed here to reach out to parents to improve communication, share strategies or resources, and develop a sense of belonging, it will empower parents to know how to help their children succeed in school regardless of the home and school language. ■

<sup>1</sup> Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003; Epstein, 2001; Jaynes, 2007, 2010; Weiss, Buffard, Bridgall & Gordon, 2009

<sup>2</sup> Archer, Francis & Mau, 2010; Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2003 [CMEC]; Fishman, 1990, 1991; Landry, 2010

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# MAKING MAGIC HAPPEN AT STAFF MEETINGS

By **Dr. Sunaina Sharma** and **Rebecca Newcombe**



## What We Saw

I see you at the staff meeting secretly marking. I hear you saying, “this all could have been said in an email.” I feel your exhaustion from a day of supporting students and know that you have an evening of assessing their work and contacting parents. Sensing all of this inspired a new way of doing staff meetings at our school.

## What Research Says

We knew we wanted to invite change and innovation in the way we were doing staff meetings, but before deciding on how to do that, we began looking at the existing research. There is a lot of research out there, but the ideas below are what resonated most with us.

“Coaching increases the likelihood that the behaviour will be sustained as a regular practice by 90% or more of the participants” (in *Coherence* by Fullan & Quinn)

“Professional development [shouldn’t] take place in ‘ballroom’ settings.” It shouldn’t be “organized as top-down or vertical capacity building” but should instead be “job embedded” (in *Intentional Interruption* by Katz & Dack)

“Choice gives students [and arguably teachers] the opportunity to cast their own line and choose the bait they want to put on the hook. Learning follows, not because it is forced upon them, but because it is naturally connected to curiosity and inquiry” (in *Empower* by Juliani & Spencer).

“A mile deep, an inch wide. If you want to have influence, specialize. Dig deep. Become an expert.” (Ryan Decker)

“If you want engagement, self directed is better” (Daniel Pink)



## What We Tried

Staff Meetings have become a time to explore topics of professional interest. These include: going gradeless, the thinking classroom, integrating technology effectively into the classroom, collaborative problem solving (CPS), teaching critical thinking, supporting mental health in the classroom, and others. Lead teachers facilitate each learning group - it's teachers leading teachers. Groups meet during staff meeting time. This provides the opportunity for educators to collaborate, brainstorm, wonder, question and plan. In fact, teachers have asked for more time to continue their journey, so time is now also carved out during PD days.

Through this model, we have noticed some wonderful things. Teachers emerge as leaders and mentors. Within groups, there are some teachers who are more knowledgeable about the topic and they are able to inform the group and support other teachers' professional development. Teachers are collaborating. Within groups, teachers are talking and contributing more than in a staff meeting or formal PD day because they all have a common interest. Teachers are co-planning. As teachers plan how they would implement their new learning into the classroom, they are talking with each other. This results in cross-curricular integration. Teachers lean on each other. Between staff meetings, teachers email each other to get feedback, they observe each other trying out innovative ideas and they continue the conversation at the lunch table.

## What The Key Components Are

We believe that there are 7 key components that lead to a successful staff meeting model.

- 1. Purposeful.** Students need to be put at the forefront. The purpose of the group needs to support student engagement, learning, achievement or relationships.
- 2. Collaborative.** You need people working in a team. Someone cannot pursue their own individual topic, because it detracts from the ability to see a different perspective.
- 3. Personalized.** There needs to be a variety of groups for educators to choose from, so that they can explore something that is of professional interest. The topics need to be staff generated so that everyone can see themselves in the learning.
- 4. Goal-oriented.** There needs to be a specific goal that the group wants to attain by the end of a specific time period. If it's too broad and lengthy, it's impossible to reach the goal making the process frustrating. Internal accountability is built into each group - the group is transparent and non-judgemental.
- 5. Inquiry-based.** Rather than the administrator or lead teacher deciding on the goal and direction of the group, the group needs to collaborate to identify what their learning journey will be. They need to explore their own answers.
- 6. Safe Environment.** Educators need to feel comfortable to share their success and failures with each other, without fear of judgement. Each challenge is seen as an opportunity to explore answers to the question, "What can we do next?"
- 7. Learner-centered.** Each individual educator in a group needs to be responsible for the learning and journey therefore, they can move at their own pace. Everyone learns differently and each educator needs to feel free to learn as they want to.

In the end, administrators need to be comfortable with giving up control of the learning and the notion of "one size fits all" PD. Educators are professionals and know where their interests lie and where their needs are. As leaders, we need to create a culture that deeply values teacher-learning, and support educators through differentiating the learning. When we create a model that encompasses the 7 key components discussed above and when we trust our teachers to engage in their learning, the magic will happen!



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## HERE'S WHAT EDUCATORS SAID WHEN WE ASKED FOR THEIR FEEDBACK.



### What The Impact Is

*When we asked teachers about the impact of their learning, they shared the following:*

- ▶ The “try, fail, learn, try again to attain success” motto was adopted.
  - This demonstrates teachers adopting a growth mindset modelling it for their students.
- ▶ Teachers became adopters of multiple opportunities for assessment prior to evaluation leading to increased student engagement and greater productivity in the students’ learning.
  - This demonstrates the implementation of the assessment and evaluation process leading to increased student achievement.
- ▶ Learning groups had new questions emerge that prompted a desire to continue learning.
  - This demonstrates the creation of a collaborative learning community so that we’re working to engage today’s 21st century learners.

### When we reflect on the impact, we saw the following:

- ▶ Increased interest in learning and professional development.
- ▶ Teachers were more enthusiastic about the process when we initiated it again this year.
- ▶ Change in how we teach, how we evaluate, how we connect, how we learn.

The impact is that teachers engaged in learning that led them to explore, in an authentic way, concepts like growth mindset, aspects of Growing Success, assessment and evaluation, critical thinking, the power of relationships as developed through collaborative problem solving in its relational context and teaching in today’s 21st century classroom. Because teachers were passionate about what they were exploring, it led to sustained, job-embedded professional development. It led to change. ■

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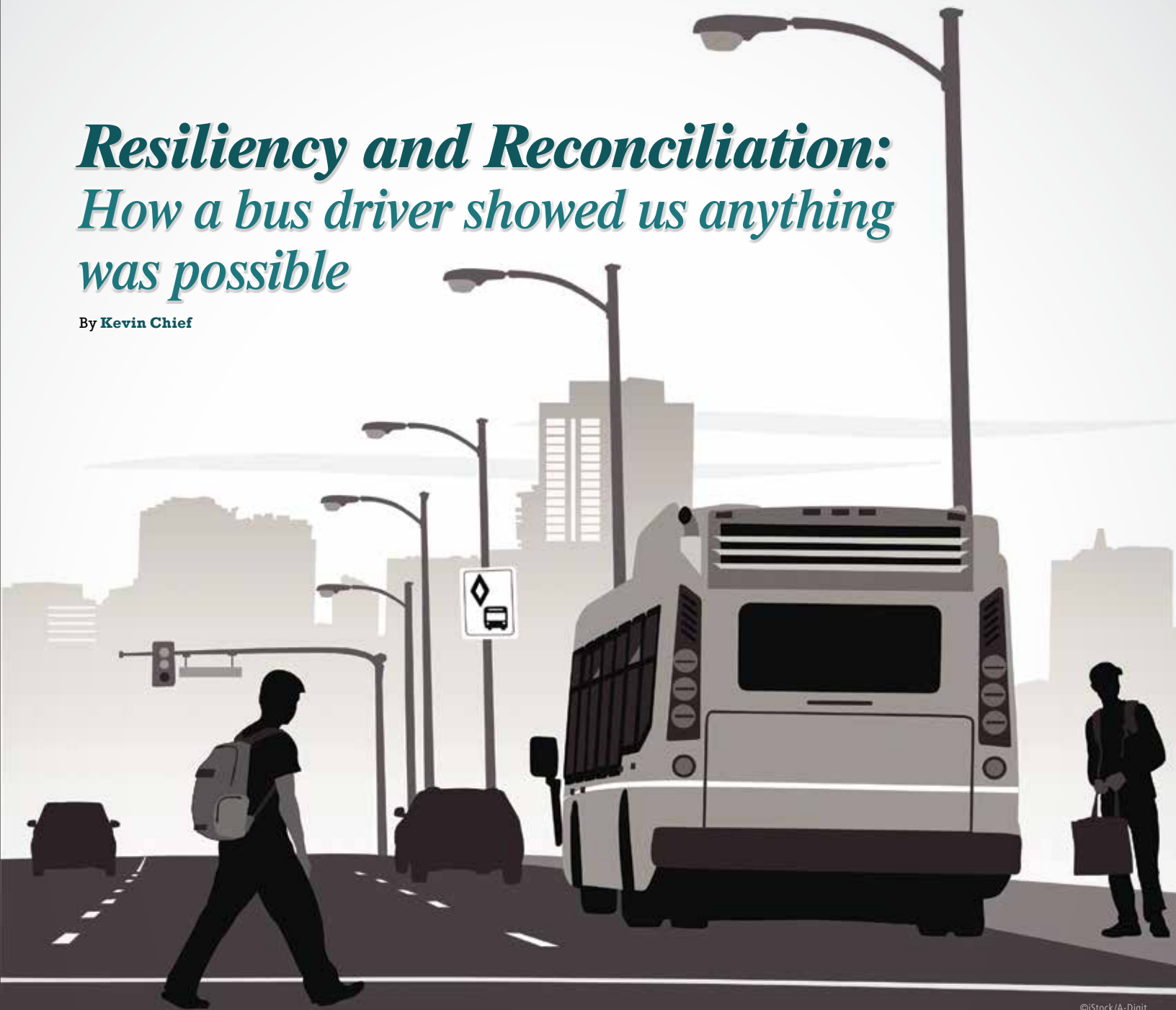
  
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# *Resiliency and Reconciliation: How a bus driver showed us anything was possible*

By Kevin Chief



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## **Belonging is an incredibly powerful value.**

With a name like Chief, you never forget you are Indigenous. When I was growing up, if someone asked me if I was an Indian - I thought saying “yes” might mean I didn’t belong. At school, I only wrote Kevin at the top of my assignments. Adding Chief reminded me I was wearing old clothes, that I had a sleepless night, and that I lived in a bachelor pad with a single father. Eventually, the embarrassment of being raised in poverty turned into a sense of shame.

But there were also moments when that would go away. When I would put on my Isaac Newton School jersey and sink a basket for my team - it let me feel what it was like to give back, to have the ability to contribute - and I held my head up high. It’s a feeling Manitobans from all walks of life know and embrace - our ability to contribute. Our generosity is recognized across Canada. It is rooted in a tradition of overcoming adversity and once overcoming it, wanting to help others do the same thing.

I saw it when my Grade Six teacher Mrs. Wilson was patient with me at school and when Leti, the Filipina owner of a corner store, made me part of her family. I saw it when coaches at the University of Winnipeg opened the gym early for me and when so many people mentored me as I started my career. They were willing to see my potential instead of focusing on my hardships. They made me feel like I belonged and changed who I thought I could be.



## Resiliency and Reconciliation

During the Truth and Reconciliation hearings Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair travelled the country for over six years and heard over 6,000 testimonials. Belonging was one of the most common values he heard from those stories. Building successful relationships by fostering a path of reconciliation will help us restore this sense of belonging.

Our classrooms and workplaces are looking different today as our population in Manitoba continues to grow even more diverse. We have one of the youngest and fastest growing demographics in the country including Indigenous and new Canadians. It's important for all of our youth to feel a sense of belonging in their community and workplaces so they can be proud of who they are, proud of where they are from, and know they can give back.

Many young people just need the right opportunity to put them on a path to realizing their full potential. They may be the first in their family to graduate high school or attend post-secondary but may not have a network of friends or connections to get that first job and experience. We need to help create paths and build those relationships for them to succeed.

We can't just tell them it is possible, we have to show them. It is irresponsible of us to ask anyone to overcome hardship and challenge unless we can show them others who have done it.

When I was seven years old my friend Chris Henderson and I were catching a bus on Selkirk Avenue to go swim at the now Sergeant Tommy Prince Place. We got on the bus and went to the back seat to sit down. Chris tapped me on the shoulder and said, "Hey, did you see the bus driver? Go look at the bus driver!" I ran to the front and came back. Chris asked me "Did you see? Can you believe it? The bus driver is Aboriginal - we can be bus drivers!" That was over thirty-five years ago when you just didn't see any Indigenous bus drivers. Until I saw that bus driver I never would have known we could be bus drivers.

I often think about that bus driver and I wonder if he knows how many people his life touched - how he inspired one boy who went on to become the Southern Grand Chief and another who represented that same neighbourhood in the Manitoba Legislature.

I think about what it took for him to be a bus driver. I wondered about the people around him who supported him and made it possible to get that job - who pushed our systems a little harder and said "why can't we have an Indigenous person be a bus driver?" I wish I could go back and shake their hands.

I know the hands that I would shake would be both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Those are the kind of ripple effects you may never see from your work but you should know they happen - how one small act can mean so much.

That's how a bus driver showed us anything was possible. ■


### AUTHOR BIO

Chief Partnerships MB *Kevin Chief* leads a team working to build relationships that strengthen community. His experience includes Vice President at the Business Council of Manitoba, MLA for Point Douglas, and work in the education, training, and employment of youth.



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# WHEN THE ANSWER IS BOTH

By Dean Shareski



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*Should schools prepare students for college and careers or to be good citizens?*

*Do we want students to get good grades or love learning?*

*When it comes to teaching Math, should we focus on procedures or problem solving?*

*Should learning be fun or hard?*

*Do we want students to consume content or create content?*

*Should we be using ebooks or printed books?*

All of these questions and dozens more are discussed pretty regularly and by many different folks. I'm sure as you're reading these, your instinct is to answer them and my guess is you're going to answer "both" to most if not all of these questions. If we're given any opportunity to add additional context, we often we add "it's about balance".

It's hard to argue that and generally, I agree. But for me, it's not so much about balance as it is about emphasis and what we lead with.

When Arnold Palmer was learning to play golf, his father told him "Learn to hit the ball as hard as you can and worry about accuracy later" If you know anything about golf you know you want to hit it long AND straight. But in this case, it was about what to focus on and in what order.

Should learning be fun or hard? While I personally question whether learning should be hard, this question is about what we emphasise. I think starting and leading with fun puts you in a much better position to handle the hard. Emphasizing that learning is hard, certainly sets a tone and maybe it's the tone you want. But what you emphasize and lead with matters. At the same time, I know many who speak incessantly about "rigor" (a word which I've personally come to abhor, just for fun, look up the definition sometime) and pride themselves in the difficulty, structure and discipline required to be successful in their school or classrooms. On the surface these two approaches do not have to be mutually exclusive. Except as much as we as school and classroom leaders may understand this, there's no doubt that our students rarely see the balance we may be seeking. They will be influenced and driven by the dominant language and attitudes we project. To that end, I'm very sceptical of our abilities to truly be balanced.

## Should schools prepare students for college and careers or to be good citizens?

Almost an age old question that seems to waver depending on the time and global and local political climates. I'm guessing many if not most people would argue the answer is both but not only is this a hugely ambitious request, it once again speaks to culture and greatly impacts what happens in classrooms.

One of the great moments I've had as an educator and parent is giving the only father/daughter talk in TEDx history. My daughter shares a powerful lesson she learned about how beauty can lead to empathy. In a supporting role providing an educational context, I posed this question relating to the purpose of school.<sup>1</sup>



With regards to vocation and citizenship, I said,

*I think it's worth noting that passion and vocation are different things. I don't know if Martha will find employment through this passion but that doesn't matter. I worry that students are being told to find jobs they are passionate about. Having a job that is your passion is nice not necessary. Being a good citizen is every bit as important as finding employment. As schools we should help them do both. **But I'd say I'd much rather have them leave schools prepared to be good citizens than ready to find a job. Certainly these are related but I think it's important what we emphasize and what we lead with.** Instead of asking our kids "What do you want to be?" We should ask them, "How do you want to live?" I think that's a question that can better help them make the key decisions in their lives.*

Saying it's "both" or "we need to have balance" is the kind of thing we say to please everyone. It may be partially true but it can also be an unsatisfying answer and one that lacks direction. So the next time you want to answer "both" to one of these kind of questions, think about providing a bit more nuance and clarity and what you think should be the focus. This doesn't mean you're choosing one idea over the other. But "both" sometimes sends a watered down or even convoluted message. You can always remind people that you want both and choosing a path or focus doesn't exclude the other but gives you a much better chance of creating a culture and momentum to do good work. ■

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tM1HT\\_d6x3I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tM1HT_d6x3I)

### AUTHOR BIO

**Dean Shareski** is an author, speaker and recognized educational leader. He brings 30 years experience from classroom teacher to community builder. He was the 2010 International Society of Technology Education's Outstanding Leader. You can read more of his writing at <http://ideasandthoughts.org>

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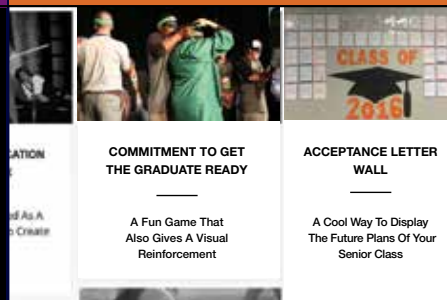
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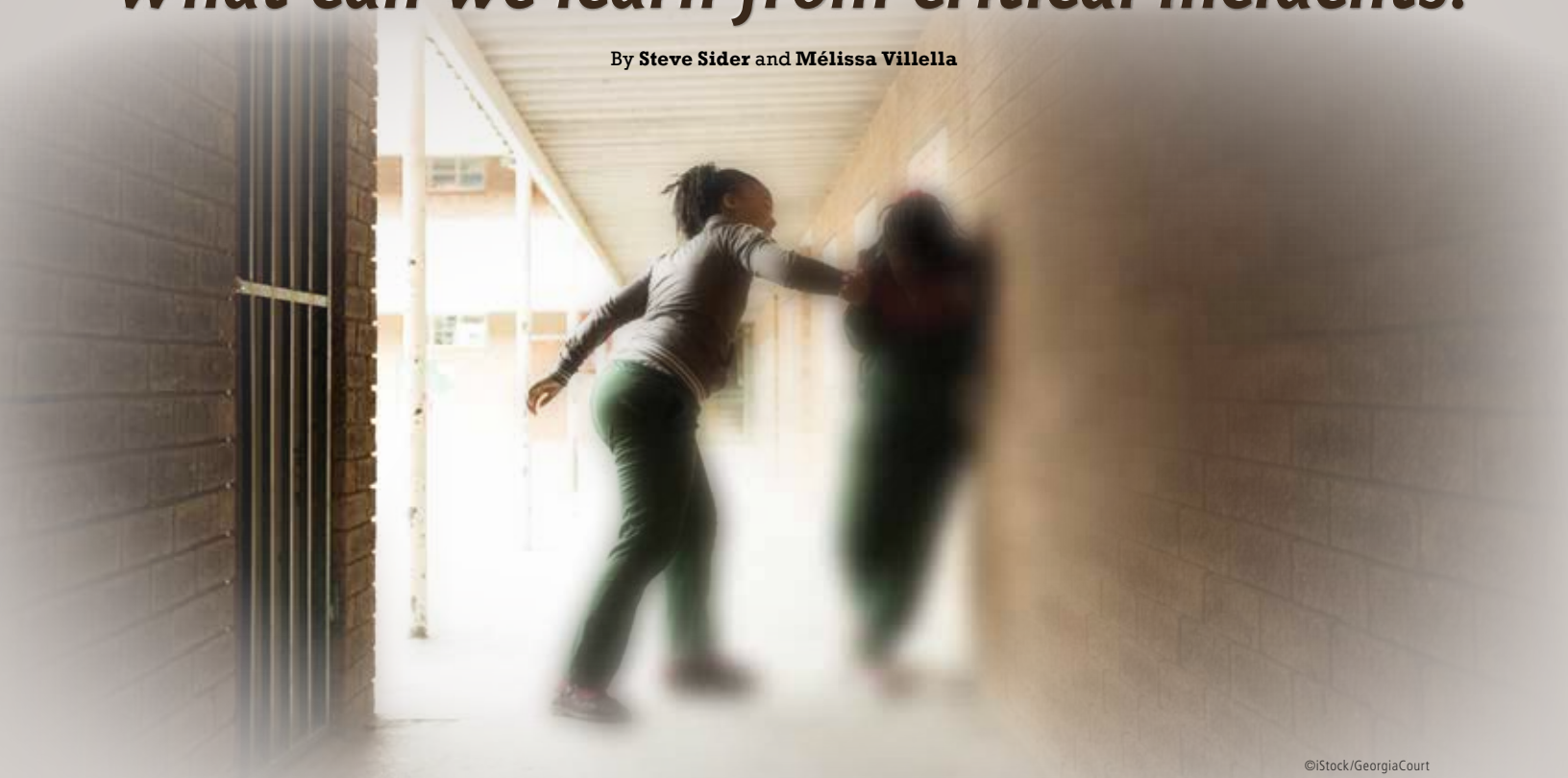
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# ***VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS:***

## ***What can we learn from critical incidents?***

By **Steve Sider** and **Mélissa Villella**



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*Aggressive and oppositional behaviours have garnered a lot of attention recently in Canadian schools. This has been highlighted in recent reports from teachers indicating an increase in violent behaviour in classes (ETFO, 2017). A recent report from the University of Ottawa documented that, of more than 1,600 teachers who responded to a study, 54% had experienced physical violence such as punching, kicking or biting, in the previous year (Santor, Bruckert, & McBride, 2019). The authors note that this suggests an almost seven-fold increase in the experience of violence against educators in the past 12 years.*

Parallel to these reports, our research team is finding that many of the French and English language school principals who are participating in our national studies of school leadership and inclusion of students with special education needs are reporting that they are dealing with violent incidents in their schools. Violent incidents may affect a principal whether they are targeted in the incident, intervening to protect the safety of staff and students, responding with disciplinary action, or working to rebuild the class and school climate after a violent incident has occurred. Clearly, a “hot topic” in Canadian education is the issue of violence in schools.

### **What we know about violence in schools**

In addition to the University of Ottawa study cited above, there have been numerous other recent studies exploring violence in schools. In the fall, 2019 the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation reported on a national poll of 4,000 Canadian youth that painted a highly troubling picture of violence in Canadian schools (CBC, 2019). Recent reports from the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario (ETFO, 2017) have documented teachers’ perceptions of violent incidents in their classes. The ETFO report indicates that 79% of ETFO members report that the number of violent incidents has increased, 75% say that the severity of these incidents has increased, and more than one out of every three teachers (36%) have participated in a class evacuation due to a violent incident.

All of these reports, and others, indicate a troubling overview of violence in Canadian schools.

***“79% of ETFO members report that the number of violent incidents has increased, 75% say that the severity of these incidents has increased, and more than one out of every three teachers (36%) have participated in a class evacuation due to a violent incident.”***



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## Violent incidents from the perspectives of principals

Over the past five years, our research team has conducted multiple studies examining the experiences of more than 300 Canadian principals in supporting students with special education needs in inclusive schools (e.g., Sider, Maich, & Morvan, 2017). Here we present three examples of the types of violent incidents that principals discuss specific to students with special education needs.

First, our studies indicate that school principals are seeing violent behaviour as early as the first days and years of schooling. One principal provides an example of the type of behaviour that is seen at very early ages:

*This young man, he came to us in kindergarten and he was very violent...hitting, slapping, pinching, drawing blood, that kind of thing*

*within days of being there. So we put in special support and then, the kids were still safe, but he would continue on, he just would not stop.*

Second, staff are calling upon principals for additional assistance in supporting safe and inclusive classrooms before and following a violent incident. A principal describes responding to a teacher's need for help:

*So I went up to the classroom, and I walked in, and he [student with problematic behaviour] was in the classroom, and essentially, he was trashing the classroom. He ripped things off the wall; he had dumped things. It was quite a mess. And I remember walking in and just being shocked.*

Finally, school teams are not always able to predict the behaviour of a student with special needs despite working together over time towards inclusion. One principal noted:

*We have had one student in particular with whom we experienced a lot of problem*

*behaviours. This child did put us in a very precarious situation when he grabbed a teacher by the hair, he was physically large as well, and put her down to the floor and kept her there while another teacher was trying to pry his hands from her hair. At that instance, the lesson for me was that this child, as many meetings we had had, and as many situations that we had for problem solving and offering support, that ultimately the issue for this child was a desperate need for medical intervention.*

Although these are only three examples having emerged from our studies, they are vignettes representing a concerning snapshot of the types of challenging behaviours to which principals are responding.

## What can we learn from critical incidents?

In our studies, a critical incident is framed as a positive or a negative experience that has significantly influenced a principal's leadership (Yamamoto et al., 2014). Their reflections on this experience (Dewey, 1933) helps us to better understand the ways in which principals support students with special education needs. So what can principals learn and do in the midst of this worrying trend of increasing violence in schools?

First, it is important to remember that behaviour is a form of communication. These types of critical incidents can help us better understand the students we work with. The ways in which school principals respond to student behaviours, and build healthy school climates that mitigate against violent incidents, will send a clear message to our students, staff, and family members of what we value in schools and in the broader society.

An advertisement for Earth Rangers Clubs. On the left, a group of four diverse children are gathered around a table, looking at various environmental materials like brochures and a globe. The top left features the Earth Rangers Clubs logo with a cartoon frog. The right side has a green background with white and yellow text. The text reads: 'Start your FREE Earth Rangers Club today!', 'Earth Rangers has everything you need to run an Eco Club at your school.', 'Join now and make the commitment to help animals and the environment with your students!', and 'For more information and to register your Club visit: clubs.earthrangers.com'.



Second, we can learn from these incidents. Critical incidents provide opportunities to consider how we respond and how we might be proactive to alleviate potential similar events from occurring in the future. Case studies can certainly help in this learning process. We have developed a number of case studies involving critical incidents which are available in English and French. In partnership with the Ontario Principals' Council, our research team has also developed a number of web-based, "choose your own adventure" case studies to support the professional learning of principals. These resources are freely available on our research team's website.<sup>1</sup>

Third, system leaders need to support school principals who wish to develop preventative strategies to decrease the likelihood of violent incidents from occurring. Provincial governments and school boards/districts need to implement measures that track these types of incidents and transparently report on them. Developing accurate baseline data is important for developing a better understanding of the underlying issues involved. It is also important that resources be allocated to support principals and their school teams. Fostering inclusion in schools requires that resources be appropriately channeled to staff and

programs, and that school principals have a say in how these resources are allocated given their in-depth knowledge of the local community.

Although violent incidents are on the rise in Canadian schools, these incidents cannot dissuade us from developing inclusive and equitable schools. Instead, these incidents should cause us to re-assess how we best support each student in inclusive schools. ■

<sup>1</sup> [www.leadtoinclude.org](http://www.leadtoinclude.org)

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# Youth-Community Partnership: Engaging

By E.D. Woodford



**Supporting student learning benefits not only the student but often expands to transform our local environment and community. Creating youth-community partnerships can establish ways for students to develop experiences of collaboration and mentorship towards leadership skills.**

Supporting diversity in schools argues that we must create opportunities of 21st century skills for students to obtain the skills. The Kimberley Youth Action Network (KYAN) in Kimberley, BC, led by Youth Coordinator, Lori Joe, guides and facilitates opportunities for High School students to engage in diverse activities encompassing learning related to technology, environmental action, or art interests. These high interest, learner-led opportunities foster innovation, digital literacy, career and life skills through youth-community partnership.

Creating a youth-community partnership, KYAN supports many of the 21st century learning skills of the Ministry of Education's (2019) skills for supporting diversity in BC schools:

- functional numeracy and literacy
- critical thinking and problem solving
- creativity and innovation
- technological literacy
- communications and media literacy
- collaboration and teamwork
- personal organization
- motivation, self-regulation and adaptability
- ethnics, civic responsibility, cultural awareness

Funded by the Columbia Basin Trust, KYAN meets each week at the local High School in a space provided by the High School for the group. At these meetings, the students who arrive are able to plan, organize and make decisions about learning experiences that they are interested in that may happen in the community. Leadership is

a foundational goal of KYAN. Working towards leadership, students are able to find their passions, connect with mentors, be mentors to others and become leaders.

Many projects are on the horizon for the KYAN students. In the area of technology learning, the Full STEAM group is currently building their own CNC machine. With this machine, the intention is to generate revenue from the projects they make to put back into other Full STEAM projects. For example, to support green initiatives in the community, the students will make take out boxes to replace the styrofoam ones that are often distributed by restaurants. While having a designated space would be ideal to eliminate the process of laying out and cleaning up projects, the group has recently been fortunate to partner with the local Fire Hall and work on assembling their CNC machine there.

For students interested in art experiences, KYAN has recently partnered with the local arts and cultural centre to host their first "Teen Pizza & Paint Night" where many students came to paint and eat and socialize while learning from a local artist. The success of this event encourages KYAN to establish this as a monthly event where they can invite different local artists each time and learn a repertoire of art styles and techniques in a fun environment. Partnership in the community with local artists and the cultural and arts centre provides the opportunity for youth engagement.

Currently, in collaboration with a local ecologist, students are engaged in an environmental project of reforestation. Forest fires have diminished the white bark pine in the region. Students have

# Youth in Active Participation in Community



All photos courtesy of Lori Joe, Kimberley Youth Action Network

germinated seeds of white bark pine at the school learning of the important benefits of this tree. White bark pine offers community benefits of watershed protection, but it is also important for wildlife habitat. Clark's nutcracker a seed dispersing bird in the Kootenay region, while grizzly bears rely on white bark pine as a food source.

In rural areas especially, it can become very demanding to ask teachers to fill every shoe and provide every learning experiences that students need. Subsequently, the role of teachers is no longer as expert (Ministry of Education, 2019). Through youth-community partnership learning opportunities, Lori Joe, as Youth Coordinator from an outside agency, ensures facilitation and guidance, while students are able to make decisions about what projects they want to work on, who they may want to learn from and where they will learn whether in a classroom, online or in communities. She states, "Our mission is to encourage youth to take a leadership role in their community through active participation" (L. Joe, personal communication, Dec 17, 2019).

With KYAN's youth-community partnerships, students are able to demonstrate leadership in not only developing their 21st Century Learning skills, but also in making their community better in different ways. While the program is funded externally, the local High School inviting Lori Joe into the school, providing space for the weekly meetings, and often providing transportation, which we know can be costly and detrimental to any program's success.

To conclude, collaboration and mentorships enhance the roles of teaching and learning for the students. Not only are the students mentees learning from others, they are finding opportunities to become mentors and teaching what they have learned to community members and to students in other schools. In 21st Century Learning theory, students have many ways of obtaining the information they need on many subjects, including access to learning opportunities. Through the Kimberley Youth Action Network, active engagement in their own learning strengthens their skills and prepares them with abilities to lead, collaborate and mentor, preparing them for active participation in community. ■

## References

Ministry of Education. (2019). UDL supporting diversity in BC schools: 21st Century Learning. Retrieved from <https://udlresource.ca/2017/12/21st-century-learning/>

## AUTHOR BIO

**E.D. Woodford** is a former Principal and works as an Instructor at the University of Calgary, the University of Lethbridge Calgary Campus and at Thompson Rivers University. She is passionate about inclusive education and 21st Century Learning theory.

## the O P E N S P A C E project

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## BRAIN TUMOUR FOUNDATION OF CANADA

### Hope is found here.

Since 1982, Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada has been working to #EndBrainTumours, and provide support for every Canadian affected by them. Throughout this time, we've shared laughter, shed tears, and spent countless hours searching for a cure on behalf of those struggling with the devastating words, "You have a brain tumour."

Their struggle is our struggle, and we make it our mission to ensure they never walk alone.

One of our main areas of focus in 2020 is funding pediatric brain tumour research. Even though they are the leading cause of solid cancer death in children under 20 years of age, there is very little awareness about pediatric brain tumours. We're changing that, one story at a time.

### Because as you know, our youngest voices can become the loudest agents for change.

Diagnosed with medulloblastoma at age 9, Yun Seo Park knew from the care she received as a child that she wanted to give back.

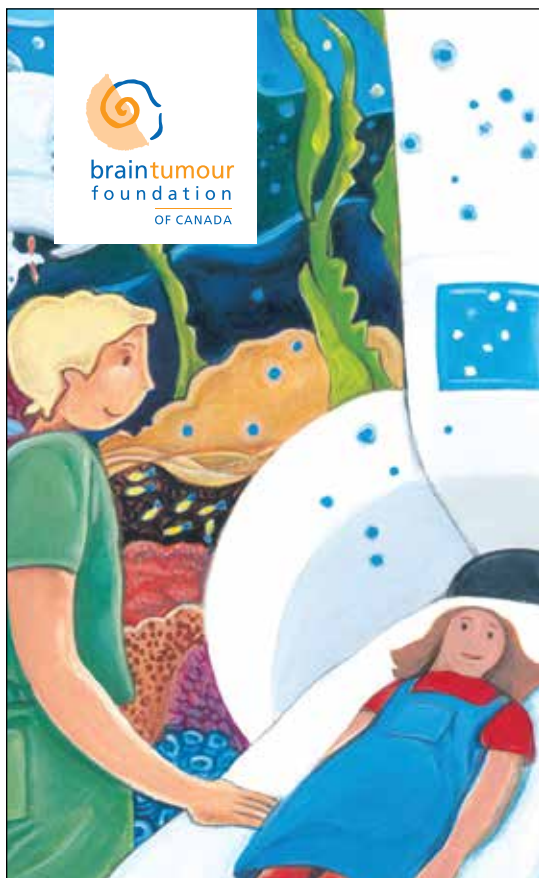
In 2018, she received a Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada Youth Education Award, which is helping her on the way to becoming a pediatric oncology nurse. "I want to give back the love and care I received when I had cancer, to children who are going through the same battle," she said in her application.

This year, she is paying that love and care forward in her placement at the Alberta Children's Hospital. Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada is proud to support survivors like Yun Seo, and other pediatric brain tumour patients along their journey.

We exist to #EndBrainTumours for all of them.



**braintumour.ca**



**Brain tumours are the leading cause of solid cancer death in children under the age of 20, now surpassing acute lymphoblastic leukemia**

**Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada is dedicated to empowering you, your staff and students with the education and resources to support a pediatric brain tumour diagnosis**

### Essential Tools for Schools:

- **A Friend in Hope Storybook** – follows the story of Hope, a pediatric tumour patient
- **Pediatric Brain Tumour Handbook** – a must-have for staff to better understand the challenges faced by children and teens with a brain tumour
- **Colouring Book** – Inspiring courage and hope through creativity

### A brain tumour diagnosis affects the entire school

**Contact our Senior Health Engagement Specialist to learn more about our education and support programs at:**  
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## KAIROS BLANKET EXERCISE

The KAIROS Blanket Exercise (KBE) is a unique, participatory history lesson that explores the historic and contemporary relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in this land we call Canada. Developed in response to the 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, this half day session is a transformative and deep learning experience that enhances awareness of continuing injustices and the impacts of colonization. It also builds empathy and opens minds and hearts to ongoing learning about First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

In 2018, the KBE was endorsed as a Successful Practice and Resource by Indspire, a national Indigenous-led registered charity that invests in the education of Indigenous people for the long-term benefit of these individuals, their families and communities, and Canada.

The KBE is used by students and teachers across the country. A 75 - 90 minute youth version is available for grades 6-9, and an elementary edition for grades 3-5 is in development.

For more information on how to bring the KBE to your classrooms or PD Days, please visit our website: [www.kairosblanketexercise.org](http://www.kairosblanketexercise.org)

KAIROS is a movement of Indigenous, settler and newcomer peoples committed to ecological justice and human rights. Through KAIROS, people of faith and conscience work together for change in Canada and beyond. KAIROS' Indigenous rights work is based on over four decades of solidarity and advocacy, working with Indigenous peoples for recognition of their inherent rights to land and self-determination as distinct peoples and nations.



[kairosblanketexercise.org](http://kairosblanketexercise.org)

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## WORLD RENEW CHANGING THE STORY OF POVERTY

Compelled by God's deep passion for justice & mercy, we join communities around the world to renew hope, reconcile lives, and restore creation. For nearly 60 years, World Renew has supported community development and transformation.

World Renew embraces a family-centered approach to ending global poverty with food security, peace and justice, economic opportunity, community health, and disaster response. Through this whole-person intervention model, World Renew joins hundreds of thousands of families each year to change the story of global hunger, poverty, and illness.

And thanks to partnerships with local agencies and churches across Latin America, Asia, Africa, and North America, the work of World Renew continues to grow. From disaster response to cultural immersion, World Renew believes in educating and equipping volunteers to better understand, engage, and respond to the story of poverty. When people volunteer with World Renew, they have the chance to deepen their understanding, stretch their thinking, and invest in people who are experiencing distress. Such volunteer experiences change people in ways that may well direct their sense of justice for the whole of their lives. Some will teach English in Mozambique, work towards sustainable urban development in Honduras, or rebuild homes after disasters in Puerto Rico, Texas or North Carolina.

**But, every supporter is a change maker because every donation supports peace and justice.**

Advocating for justice is a powerful agent of change and it is at the centre of all of our work. World Renew was founded on justice. We believe God calls us to pursue that justice for every child, every woman, and every man. Over the years, the actions we have taken to work towards peace have grown in scope and boldness. The work starts with listening to communities, and touch on three central areas of our work:

- **Climate Change:** The effects of a shifting climate are felt most acutely in developing countries like Kenya and Bangladesh. Your support goes both towards prevention and response: advocacy as well as training in sustainable farming of climate adaptable crops.
- **Gender Justice:** When you join in World Renew's work of gender justice, more girls complete their education, remain single throughout childhood, and gain access to leadership development in their own communities.
- **Trafficking Prevention:** Combatting trafficking depends on creating safety at home, educational opportunity, as well as strong community ties. The programming of World Renew engages all three, particularly for women and girls. When you give, they thrive.

World Renew is also deeply committed to working with local partners to maximize the effectiveness of donor support and to ensure that each community has its own strong voice in any change. Last year, World Renew partnered with some 70 organizations in the global south, many of which were small, local grass-roots organizations.

We walk alongside families to change hunger, poverty, and illness in the places of greatest need. We invite you to join with us and help change the story of poverty an injustice.







When you  
change  
a story...

**STORIES** start small.  
A village savings program.  
Access to clean water. 1,000  
days of healthy food to start  
a baby's life. But rarely do  
stories stay small. Because  
when you renew hope in one  
story, you renew hope in  
every life that story touches.  
You renew hope for many.  
One story can change far  
more than you imagine.

**GRACE**  
Sustainable farmer  
Nebbi District, Uganda

...she gets to  
change  
the world.





## THE PUSH FOR CHANGE

Joe Roberts, former homeless youth, began pushing a shopping cart across Canada to raise awareness and dollars to end youth homelessness. This national trek started May 1, 2016 from St. John's, Newfoundland and ended September 29, 2017 in Vancouver, British Columbia: a 9,064km, 17-month journey. The shopping cart is a symbol of Joe's transformation from youth homelessness. It represents the very outcome we are trying to avoid for future generations of young people.

The Push for Change inspired students, families, police officers, government officials and front line workers to work towards ending youth homelessness in their communities. Along the way, The Push for Change team met with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, spoke at We Day Family, raised \$570,000 and hosted over 450 school and community events.

The Push for Change legacy continues today through inspiration, education and youth empowerment. By working closely with educators, police and local agencies we continue to work towards ending youth homelessness through The Promise Project campaign.

## YOUR STUDENTS CAN WIN \$5000 FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE



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- Provides students the opportunity to enter their Promise Project into our contest for a chance to win \$5000 for their charity or project

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REGISTRATION DEADLINE: APRIL 15, 2020  
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## THE PROMISE PROJECT



[www.thepushforchange.com](http://www.thepushforchange.com)

## THE PROMISE PROJECT

Inspired by our walk across Canada, The Promise Project focuses on youth, and aims to inspire, educate and empower them in developing a project to address an issue affecting youth within their communities. Students will have an opportunity to submit their project as part of a contest that will occur in the last two months of the school year. Up to 10 projects will win a \$5000 grant to support their local charity or further their project.

The Promise Project blends leadership lessons with community service. These innovative leadership lessons are integrated easily into any subject area and all class or club settings. Designed to teach young people how to lead and serve, The Promise Project is available at no cost to educators or youth club advisers.

Throughout this leadership program, students will work through leadership lessons. Every registered project will receive the tools they need to be successful. Once project requirements are fulfilled each project team will be invited to "pitch" their presentation idea via video in a "Dragons Den" type of evaluation to a diverse community panel that will judge each project on key criteria listed in the lessons.



[thepushforchange.com](http://thepushforchange.com)

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