



The Insider

The Official IPSF E-Bulletin



Contents:

1. Message from Director
2. Article Summaries
3. IPSF Meeting Details

A Message from the Director, Dr. Ronnie Miller:

Much has happened since our last bulletin. IPSF is becoming a leading organization for private schools seeking high level performance standards; particularly focusing on the leadership, instructional, and resources skills and capacities necessary for success in the 21st century school environment. Our members are being encouraged to pursue opportunities to develop authentic and meaningful Continuous Improvement Plans, leading toward accreditation with any reputable educational accrediting agency which sets high and rigorous educational standards, and which will distinguish our member schools from non-accredited schools. The IPSF referral connection with AdvancED, the largest international accrediting agency, is designed to support our school members in their pursuit of this rigorous set of educational standards.

Our members have had the opportunity to participate in an introductory seminar on Continuous Improvement Planning and the School Accreditation Process as implemented by AdvancED, and several members have already begun the accreditation process with this agency. As well, several members of our executive have begun comprehensive training sessions with AdvancED, including experiences with AdvancED Review and Engagement teams, as we continue to pursue in-depth understanding of the accreditation process and its benefits for our member schools. Mr. Hugh McKeown has just returned from an Engagement Review experience in China, and other members will soon join other Engagement Teams.

Upcoming Events

Next IPSF Meeting

The next meeting of the 2017/18 IPSF membership will be held on May 11, 2018

See back page for address and details

A Message from the Director, Dr. Ronnie Miller, cont'd:

IPSF members also had the opportunity to review legal issues with Justice Marvin Zuker, especially those issues related to employee contracts. Several of our members have recently faced the challenge of faculty members accepting positions with the publicly funded boards, and, thus, leaving their current teaching position. In recent months this issue has created challenges to the smooth operation of several private schools in the GTA. We also had an informative session with a representative of the Ontario Ministry of Labour, who reviewed with us several aspects of the Employment Standards pertaining to private schools. The Q and A at the end of the session was of particular interest to many school owners and principals.

Mr. Jason Krell will head a Long-Term Planning Study for the IPSF Executive, to determine the direction IPSF would like to take as it continues to grow. Since its inception the organization has evolved, and is now seeking to position itself as a forum for accredited schools. This shift signals our hope to create an educational body composed of top-notch, highly regarded private schools, intent on providing the best possible educational service to its students and focused on continuous improvement, and recognized as such by the community at large.

On behalf of all IPSF members, we would like to congratulate Ms. Emina Tihak on the birth of her son.

Ronnie Miller, M.Ed.; Ph.D.

IPSF Executive Director

IPSF Original
Klingenstein Center Heads of Schools Program 2018

By Janice Gladstone, April 11, 2018

For the last two weeks in January 2018, I had the privilege of attending The Klingenstein Center Heads of Schools Program – an intensive program for Heads of independent schools at Columbia University’s Teacher’s College. The center was founded by the Klingenstein Family – New York philanthropists whose foundation has been supporting educational and medical institutions for generations. Their intention in starting the Klingenstein Center can be summed up this way:

“For the Klingenstein family, classroom experiences of long ago inspired them to provide similar opportunities for future students by ensuring a cadre of strong school leaders to replace the great ones of the past.”

– <https://www.klingenstein.org/about-the-center>

The center’s mission is *“improving the quality of independent and international schools.”*

I heard about the program from a teacher I had just hired who, at the end of her first year with me, attended the Klingenstein program for early career teachers. She returned giving the program rave reviews and since then has incorporated her learning into leadership activities for faculty at The Linden School. What I didn’t know was that they had a similar program for Heads of Schools. I remain grateful that their admissions officer and recruiter contacted me to suggest I apply. I was thrilled by the prospect and immediately submitted my application. To my delight, I was granted a fellowship worth \$11,000 US to attend this amazing program in that amazing city. I have always loved Manhattan.

At the university, they kept us incredibly busy reading papers, attending classes, writing reflections and preparing presentations. It was an interesting twist that the professors treated us as experts in our fields with whom they could collaborate in deep learning. It took me some time to shift from assuming the mindset of ‘students’ engaged in learning under the sagacious direction of illustrious professors to ‘colleagues’ who had varying mixtures of academic and practical background and a great deal to learn from each other. There were 3 modules (mini-courses):

❖ **David Hansen – Philosophy of Education**

- Read Michel de Montaigne, John Dewey, Anne Phelan.
- Examined, discussed and wrote about their ideas and how they connected with ours.
- Thought deeply about the need for a personal philosophy of education and the connection between that and the missions and visions we have for our schools.

❖ Sonya Horsford – Social Justice and Diversity in Education

- Looked primarily at race but talked and thought about intersectionality as well.
- Wrote a sociocultural autobiography. This was an intense and very personal exercise that had me thinking deeply about my career and education in new ways. We were asked to reflect on our backgrounds and identities and think about how they impacted our experiences of school as children and, eventually, how they influenced our leadership as heads of schools.
- Learned and practiced a technique to use personal narrative to inspire people to action.

❖ Pearl Rock Kane – Symposium on Micro Schools

- Read about and discussed micro schools and charter schools.
- Visited four different schools.
- Created plans for our own micro schools in groups of four. One member of my group is planning to investigate opening one in his city.

We had only one day off (Sunday) and were required to submit a paper by midnight that night. They took us to dinner a couple of times at nice places, provided coffee and pastries and fruit each morning, took us to a wonderful and very relevant Broadway musical (Dear Evan Hansen) and provided us a guided tour of the Met. We stayed at a nice boutique hotel about 3 km from the campus and enjoyed walking or travelling by transit, finding interesting restaurants along the way. It was so refreshing to be a student again and have a chance to immerse myself in academic pursuits with like-minded, intelligent colleagues and professors. The conversations were consistently engaging and intellectually challenging. We contributed to a project on innovative school design that will likely be published in the near future and a colleague intends to create the school our group designed.

The best thing of all is that I now have a network of colleagues with whom I will remain connected who live and work all over the world.

The IPSF Executive would like to acknowledge and thank Ms. Merima Muminovic for her excellent work in choosing and summarizing the following articles for us.

How to Help Students Believe In Themselves

By Vicki Zakrzewski

<https://greatergood.berkeley.edu>

In this article Vicki teaches us that there is a different approach to helping students reach their goals. The 3 ways to cultivate hope are:

1. **Become mindfully aware of what's going on inside:** Before we start changing our beliefs about ourselves we must first understand them. For example, if a student experiences anxiety before the night of giving a public speech she may start to assume that she does not have the ability to give the speech, and therefore be sick the next day. The practice of mindfulness could support this student in becoming aware of her anxiety so that she could then utilize strategies to self-regulate and calm herself, thus allowing her to face the challenges of such a presentation. The practice of mindfulness can help us observe that our bodies and/or emotions are telling us something is not quite right, which then allows us to describe what we are experiencing. Since mindfulness teaches us that we are not our thoughts, researchers have found that [students who practice mindfulness](#), particularly those who can observe, describe, and act with awareness, are less subject to being persuaded by distorted thinking.
2. **Be gentle with ourselves and change our narrative:** Before or while “beating ourselves up” and telling ourselves that we are losers and therefore incapable of success at anything, it is critical that we learn to practice self-compassion, that is speaking kindly to ourselves and appreciating that making mistakes is part of the human experience. Indeed, studies have found that students who judge themselves harshly [have a weaker sense of self-efficacy](#), whereas self-compassionate students are more likely to demonstrate resilience and grit when faced with challenges.
3. **Check our own narratives about students.** The [relationship between educators and students](#) is at the heart of teaching—and research shows again and again the tremendous effect, both short- and long-term, this relationship has on students well into their futures. Educators should take note of whether they hold a deficit and fixed mindset about one or more of their students. In other words, is the teacher focusing on students’ weaknesses or their strengths?

“We cannot treat our students as ‘other people’s children,’” writes Duncan-Andrade. “Their pain is our pain.”

Five Ways to Reignite your Passion for Teaching

By Amy L. Eva

<https://greatergood.berkeley.edu>

With this article Ms. Eva helps us remember why we became educators in the first place. Most teachers admit the reason they love teaching is because it gives them a sense of participating in something larger than themselves. Here are 5 practical ways to reconnect with your role and purpose:

1. **Revisit your story:** Researchers remind us that having a purpose in life is crucial for health, longevity, and well-being. By creating a personal timeline of major life events we can begin to understand those experiences which shaped us into the person we are today. Choose 2 or 3 of those events and reflect on each one; remember how each event made you feel and consider those life lessons learned through the experience. According to psychologists, we all have an internalized narrative in which we “story” to ourselves how we became the person we are today and where we are likely headed tomorrow. As we revisit our story, it can help us to understand how and why we became an educator. It may also help us to answer the question “Who do I want to become and what kind of teacher do I wish to be?”
2. **Celebrate a favourite teacher or mentor:** Try to remember which teacher or mentor had the most influence on you; particularly focusing on how you felt when you were with this person. Consider the following questions: How did you change as a result of contact with this person? How did this person help shape your life as an educational professional? This can also lead you to consider the lasting and positive impression you would like to leave with your students, and this question can help shape and alter how you choose to interact with your students.
3. **Connect with like-minded colleagues:** It is important that we remind ourselves that we cannot do this alone. As educators, we all feel overwhelmed at times, and trying to meet the needs of so many young lives is exhausting both mentally and physically. Therefore, we must learn to connect with other educators who are able to support us with practical and personal ideas for thriving during this career journey. Connecting with colleagues provides opportunities to grow professionally and personally, meet new positive peers, and develop networks of support. Bottom line, reach out (even when it’s tough). It’s a great idea to nurture new friendships while pursuing new professional development options.
4. **Prioritize your well-being:** Teachers are often resistant to using scant and precious time for helping ourselves, and are very prone to putting the needs of others first. Mental health researchers and those involved with teacher

development realize that there are many obstacles preventing a busy teacher from engaging in self-care activities, but all the research indicates that this should be a priority. “Self-care is not a luxury,” write John Norcross and James Guy. “It is a human requisite, a professional necessity, and an ethical imperative.

5. **Create a resilience plan:** Consider some of the research-based practices above. Notice which sound appealing, enjoyable, or helpful. Think about how you might incorporate one or two of these practices into your life. Choose one or two self-care strategies or practices to implement in your daily life (or almost every day) for at least 5-10 minutes. (Keep it simple.) Consider what kind of obstacles and barriers might arise, and then plan for how you might address those obstacles. Also consider, how in moments of flagging energy and enthusiasm, you can encourage yourself to prioritize this plan. As you commit to a plan remember you will likely need to alter it as circumstances change. Be flexible, but keep your well-being as a priority.

Pressure, Stress, and the Gifted Student

By Lisa Medoff

<https://www.education.com/download-pdf/article/63552/>

It may seem that gifted students are the fortunate ones; bestowed with talent and intellect. This exceptionality, however, can come with challenges of its own. In particular, research suggests that stress and anxiety issues are more likely to occur with gifted students. A lifetime filled with high expectations can lead gifted students to be extremely hard on themselves. Gifted students are sometimes placed in school environments that are filled with performance pressures. Thus, while gifted students usually need some form of modified track to prevent them from becoming bored at school, educators and parents must remain aware that the demands of both the coursework and the possibility of a shared environment with other gifted students, can cause a great deal of stress.

Remain alert to changes in behaviour that might indicate stress, such as:

-Physical symptoms that are sometimes related to stress, such as stomach aches, and headaches.

-Negativity or resentment towards school in a child who used to be generally happy or excited about learning.

-Difficulty sleeping, fatigue, or low energy. (Please note that changes in sleeping patterns are a normal part of adolescence, as teenagers tend to prefer to stay up later and sleep later, so tiredness is often a normal part of the life of an adolescent). Concern should arise

when children are exhibiting sleeping difficulties without other explanations, or are consistently losing sleep due to worry about excelling in school.

-Extreme irritability, moodiness, insecurity, inability to make decisions, and/or overreaction in the face of events that the child was previously able to handle.

-Acting out through destructive or aggressive behaviors.

-Self-medication with alcohol or drugs.

Parents and educators can help students who are experiencing stress by trying some of the following ideas:

-Put the focus back on effort, rather than innate talent. Gifted children are often very used to excelling without having to put in a lot of work. When they are faced with tasks that require effort, gifted children may feel that they have hit the limit of their ability, and experience stress as a result.

-Sometimes gifted children who are grouped together can engage in intense competition. Do not get involved in this competition by comparing your child/student to others. Make sure that your child/student knows that you appreciate her or his uniqueness.

-Consider limiting or carefully selecting the number and kind of accelerated classes and/or extracurricular activities that your student can be involved with. Help students find activities outside of school where the focus is on enjoyment and/or other areas of interest and talent, such as cooking, photography, sports, etc. Make sure children have outlets for self-expression in areas that they simply enjoy and which replenishes their spirit.

-Make sure that gifted students know that even if they feel burned out or disillusioned about school, they still need to be polite to teachers and fellow classmates. Teach them how to stand up for themselves and question by being assertive, without being rude or disrespectful. Remember, that intellectual giftedness or an area of skill and talent, does not mean that these students are equally gifted in areas of social-emotional development.

-Think about whether your child/student is in an environment that best suits his or her needs, temperament, and learning style. Sometimes the best way to deal with stress is to remove oneself from an environment that is unhealthy and find the environment that works for you. Your child/student may need to switch to a learning track that is a better fit. Talk to your child/student about what might make school a better experience, and if she/he is interested in making a change. Ask about your child/student's favorite and least favorite subjects and classroom settings, and work to determine with them what would be the best learning environment for them. Remember, this is not about one-size-fits-all.

How to Listen with Compassion in the Classroom

By Martha Caldwell

<https://greatergood.berkeley.edu>

Our students, as with all people, are driven by a need to belong. It is not uncommon for students lacking social-emotional skills or self-confidence to fall into the trap of bullying or bending to peer pressure as they strive for acceptance. Such behaviours often lead to patterns of interaction which make it difficult to form healthy, supportive relationships.

Designing a classroom that challenges this negative and self-fulfilling dynamic, by teaching and modelling compassion, can greatly support each student. When clear ground rules for respectful communication are established from the outset, classrooms become safe places for students to share their lives with each other and find support for their growth and development.

These 7 principles can make the communication and interactive process more explicit and help students cultivate the skills they need to build a strong learning community.

1. **Be fully present:** Paying full attention when someone is speaking creates safety and focus in the classroom. Compassionate listeners are often silent during exchanges, paying close attention to the words they hear, facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice, noticing even the silences between words.
2. **Know listening is often enough:** Listening with deep attention involves a calm, relaxed state of mind, free of the desire to “fix” someone or solve their problems for them. It does not necessarily involve giving advice or intervening in any way. If our minds are busy coming up with solutions for the speaker, we fail to truly listen.
3. **Respond with acceptance:** Deep listeners are motivated by the desire to understand how others feel and how their experiences have affected them. Their genuine interest and heartfelt concern make it safe for others to share their vulnerabilities, because they sense that what they say will be received without judgement.
4. **Understand conflict as part of real-life learning:** A learning community in which people are encouraged to be honest and express how they feel involves a degree of risk. When we stay connected and stick with the process, conflict can be a catalyst for positive change. When conflict is resolved, relationships often become stronger.

5. **Ask authentic questions to learn more:** By asking open-ended questions like “What was that like for you?,” “Can you tell me more about that?,” or “How did that make you feel?,” compassionate listeners can guide speakers to share more deeply. If they think they may not have understood something, listeners can repeat back what they think they heard and ask for clarification. “Did I hear that right?” Try to eliminate or at least reduce assumptions.
6. **Be gentle with yourself:** Deep listening involves compassion for yourself as well as for others. Accept yourself and your responses without judgement. Allow yourself time to process and learn.
7. **Treat the candidness of others as a gift:** Honor the trust others have placed in you and keep what you hear confidential.

When students share personal stories in the classroom, teachers help them make connections to the larger world they live in—stories in history, literature, politics, and other academic disciplines. Young people need to learn how to create inclusive social spaces in which everyone feels a sense of belonging and deep, authentic communication can be a part of that process.

IPSF Meeting Reminder

Date: May 11, 2018

Time: 10:00 AM – 1:00PM

**Location: 212 Eglinton Avenue East,
Second Floor Multi-purpose Room**

Toronto M4P 1K2



Contact the Editor

If members have articles, news, events or any other ideas to share and be included in the e-bulletin, please send them for consideration to the editor at info@ipsf.ca

Please let us know if there are particular topics you would like covered in future bulletins.

Thank you!!