



The Insider

The Official IPSF E-Bulletin



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Upcoming Events

Next IPSF Meeting

The next meeting of the 2018/19 IPSF membership will be held on March 06, 2019

See back page for address and details

A Message from the Director, Dr. Ronnie Miller:

There have been several interesting presentations since the beginning of the year, ranging from discussions about human rights issues pertaining to private schools, legal issues related to school disparagement, and facilitating at-school PD meetings using the seven-environment learning methodology advocated by AdvancED.

In addition, schools pursuing accreditation by AdvancED had a two-day seminar, hosted by RoyalCrest Academy. Ms. Kelly Knipe and Mr. Scott Davidson of AdvancED walked us through the process of preparing for the Readiness Review. Several of our schools are already scheduled to host their Readiness Review in early April, which is a necessary step towards the Engagement Review which leads to school accreditation. We wish these schools success in the process and we are looking forward to receiving their feedback during our next IPSF meeting.

Several of our members have decided to pursue STEM Certification with AdvancED, rather than School Accreditation. We have appointed an accomplished and award-winning STEM specialist to help them throughout the process. This specialist communicates with Mr. Scott Davidson, who is responsible for STEM certification on behalf of AdvancED.

We also facilitated an online IPSF meeting, where members joined the meeting through Adobe Connect. A survey monkey was conducted at the end of the meeting and indicated overwhelming satisfaction in using the online medium for IPSF meetings. Thus, the IPSF Executive Team is considering hosting one onsite and in-person meeting per semester, and to hold all other meetings online.

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

Mr. Mohammed Ali presented to our members his newly developed software program for organizing the data management of private schools. Since the vast majority of schools attending the presentation showed interest in the software, IPSF has appointed Mr. Esper to draft a contract for interested member schools with Mr. Ali. Mr. Esper will soon provide the members with details.

Our next IPSF meeting will be **held online** and will be hosted by Mr. Nicolas Esper of Seneca Hill Private School, who will discuss the new PPM dealing with the Duty to Report. This is an important new PPM, and the PSIE unit of the MOE provided little to no information about this new policy to private schools. The IPSF Executive Team wishes to promote awareness of this policy, and to provide member schools with the opportunity to study the document carefully. To facilitate attendance at this online meeting, Mr. Christian Bayly will invite you to attend the session with Mr. Esper using the Adobe Connect platform. This invitation will be sent to you a few hours prior to the beginning of the meeting at 10:00 a.m. on March 6, 2019.

The IPSF Executive Team would like to welcome Ms. Sara McDonald, who will be replacing Mr. Bayly as a new member of the Executive Team, for a period of two years. The Executive Team would like to thank Mr. Bayly for his many contributions and long-term commitment to the success of our Forum.



Respectfully,

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

IPSF Executive Director

IPSF Annual Summer Institute: Inspiring Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum

Mississauga Grand: August 27, 2019, 9:00AM – 2:00 PM

Summer Institute Synopsis

This practical, hands-on workshop will support the development of critical thinking skills across the curriculum. We will explore a variety of disciplinary lenses and frameworks from literacy, science, math and visual arts to help students critically analyze and evaluate information presented in texts, the media and the world around them, so that they can actively think about, question and investigate what to believe and do.

Ready to use activities and resources will support:

- recognizing point of view
- detecting bias
- evaluating information and sources for reliability and validity

while increasing student engagement, thinking and learning.

Workshop Facilitator:



Sandra Mirabelli is currently seconded as the Literacy Project Lead for the Toronto Region through CODE (Council of Ontario Directors of Education). During her time as an academic consultant with the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board she supported elementary and secondary teachers in developing inquiry-based, thinking classrooms. Sandra has authored literacy strategy and skill development lessons for a number of science resources across Canada.

Fee: The fee for IPSF school member is \$95 (plus HST) per teacher. (The fee includes breakfast, lunch, handouts and parking).

Retrieval Practice: The Most Powerful Learning Strategy You're Not Using

Summarized from an article by Jennifer Gonzales in The Cult of Pedagogy, published on September, 24, 2017.

In this practical article, Ms. Gonzales interviews an expert on retrieval practices, Dr. Pooja Agarwal. In this interview Dr. Agarwal first explains that retrieval is the act of recalling information without having any specific prompts in front of you to support you in this act. Typically, to practice retrieval of particular, needed information a student will list off as many of the items as they can and then reference notes or text book to check if they were accurate and complete.

Dr. Agarwal and her colleagues have now conducted research and have confirmed that as compared to other study/learning strategies, such as review of notes and re-reading the text, specific kinds of retrieval practice are far more powerful in sustainable long-term learning.

In one study, Dr. Agarwal and her fellow researchers had junior high-school students complete additional quizzes on aspects of their Social Studies course. The teachers did not know the content of these extra quizzes, and taught their classes as they normally would. When it came to end-of-unit testing it was found that the students performed far better on those areas in which they had received the extra quizzes. **This tells us that the experience of being quizzed helped students remember and learn better.**

Teachers can use this information by doing something more than “just reviewing” content with their students; by asking students to “find” the desired information, through techniques such as zero-stake quizzing, students will learn and remember those concepts better.

Other quick strategies can include: **Think-Pair-Share**, with questions such as “Think of one thing we learned about the Noble Gases yesterday”. Students first think independently, jot down their answer, and then share their responses with a partner.

Brain Dumps, where students are asked to write everything they know about a particular

subject, for instance the organelles of an animal cell. This can also be used to start a new unit, and then as a quick check for progress part way through the unit, and as review at the end of the unit. Students can then share their information in pairs, small groups, or as a whole-class exercise. Finally, the tried and true strategy of using **Flashcards**; but students need to be shown how to use this technique properly. Students must be encouraged to fully answer a flashcard question, and not assume they know the answer to a familiar question. Sometimes having students provide the answers out-loud can slow them down and provide them with the opportunity to really think about the answer, before they flip the flashcard over for the answer. Shuffling the flashcard deck and ensuring that a complete and accurate answer can be given at least three times, before assuming mastery, are also important for getting maximum benefit from flashcard use.

Using Circle/Community Practice in the Classroom

Taken from: Author: Mary Davenport, Edutopia, August, 2018

When teaching lessons, teachers should know their students well and then adapt their lessons to reflect current events that interest their students. The method used to create lessons intersecting with current events involves several steps.

First a teacher must know his or her students well. This keen awareness of students can be achieved by creating an environment where students feel safe and comfortable expressing their opinions and listening to each other. Teachers also need to deeply know and appreciate their curriculum so that they can find ways to incorporate student interests while still ensuring alignment with curriculum requirements. Teachers also need to be realistic about how much and when to insert current event additions. Teachers can do this by incorporating small adjustments to see if students respond well to the connection between lessons and current events. Teachers must also be transparent and sensitive about these endeavours and inform their colleagues about this process, particularly where there might be opportunities to pursue cross-curricular lessons.

Educators should consider linking current events to their lessons as this strategy has the potential to greatly improve student engagement.

When to Give Your Child a Smartphone

Taken from the article written by Jennifer Gonzales in Cult of Pedagogy, published on November 18, 2018

The engagement of students in classroom conversations that reflect learning content is a goal that every educator should strive to achieve. Many teachers report that despite their best efforts to emphasize more student-centered approaches such as think-pair-share and appointment clocks, these approaches were not generating the desired results of in-depth student conversation. Teachers were reporting that student conversations would often drift from content centered interactions to social interactions.

The strategy that garnered the best results was the use of a **conversation tracker**. Using this strategy, each student received a chart indicating the name of the person they spoke to, the date the conversation took place, and a one-line summary of their conversation. Students utilized multiple charts and repeated this process to fulfil the minimum number of student conversations as required by the teacher, and also had a timeline in which to complete the minimum required dialogues, usually within 2 weeks. The conversations were structured, as the teacher would scaffold the conversations by projecting meaningful topics, one at a time, on the board for students to discuss.

The results of this technique reflected that students were staying on topic, were more engaged, and through use of the charting format, teachers could utilize the trackers as part of their formative assessment.

What Makes a Good School Culture

Taken from an article by Leah Shafer in The Harvard Graduate School of Education website, published July 23rd, 2018

Most school principals indicate an awareness of the importance of school culture in providing excellence in education for their students. Many principals, however, struggle when they are asked to itemize what constitutes a “good school culture”. As well, principals will oftentimes prioritize quantifiable items such as standardized test scores and university admission rates, rather than the more difficult to define or share aspects of a positive school culture.

Many researches, however, suggest that a failure to prioritize positive school culture is a mistake. Ms. Ebony Bridwell-Mitchell, an expert in educational management, explains that her research shows a strong correlation between organizational culture and organizational performance. She suggests the following conditions for a strong and positive school culture – In a strong culture, there are many, overlapping, and cohesive interactions, so that knowledge about the organization’s distinctive character – and what it takes to thrive in it – is widely spread.

She explains that a school culture will be strong or weak dependent upon the interactions between the people involved with the school. Where there are many opportunities for positive interaction between members, commitment to the school rises. In particular she notes the need for communication between school leaders, teachers, families and students in which the beliefs and values of the school are shared, articulated, and given opportunity for growth and evolution. This means that situations in which teachers or parents rarely hear from the principal, or where certain groups feel isolated from the rest, will negatively impact the development of a shared, positive culture in the school. While ongoing communication between all stake-holders is critical, the content of the communication is equally important. The messages that are shared must promote shared

and reciprocal beliefs and behaviours around collaboration, honesty, hard work, personal responsibility, kindness, etc.

Ms. Bridwell-Mitchell discusses five interwoven elements which principals can and must influence to build and maintain a positive school culture.

These are: 1. The core assumptions of the school, such as all students have the potential to learn or behaviour is a form of communication and must be responded to in that fashion 2. The shared values of the institution, such as the importance of collaboration or the right of all school members to feel safe and valued 3. The school norms, such as teacher/parent communication should be frequent and honest or physical activity is necessary for healthy functioning and needs to be planned into every day 4. School Behaviours that reflect the core assumptions, values, and norms of the school, such as meetings for staff to exchange ideas and concerns or school and class time set aside for social-emotional learning 5. Looking for, acknowledging, and supporting tangible and physical evidence of all of the above, such as parent volunteerism or teachers arriving early or staying late to prepare for their classes.

IPSF Meeting Reminder

Date: March 6

Time: 10:00 AM – 1:00PM

**This meeting will be held online,
participants will be contacted the day
of the meeting**



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!!