

Superintendent's Message
Monday, February 28, 2011

Last week was a great week for both staff and our Board of Trustees. On Tuesday night we held our Parent Engagement Evening. Parents who attended were able to offer us a wide range of suggestions for continuing to strengthen program offerings and activities for our students. If interested in hearing what parents had to say, check out the notes from the evening on our "Board of Trustees" page. A report will follow later with information regarding the suggestions that we are able to follow through on for next year. A huge thank-you to all parents who were able to attend.

Friday, our staff were provided professional development in a variety of areas. The day began with an excellent keynote address by Mr. Frank Serafini on the role of teacher talk and how it affects instruction and reading comprehension. Mr. Serafini looked at how we talk with children and suggested ways to improve our classroom discussions across the curriculum. This was followed by a number of sessions as indicated below. A very productive day for all, as staff continue to develop their knowledge in various areas and strategies to put in place in their classrooms.

Non-Violent Crisis Intervention by Leah O'Keefe

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) by Wendy McDonald

Reading Workshop by Frank Serafini: Focus on aspects of the reading workshop from setting it up to comprehension strategy lessons.

Formative Assessment by Dr. Steven Van Zoost: Focus on Formative Assessment structured around the following five key questions:

1. What does the literature offer about classroom assessment?
2. What techniques can I use for pre-assessment in my classroom?
3. What techniques can I use to provide students with feedback/feed-forward?
4. What techniques can I use to promote self-reflection?
5. What equity and identity issues are involved in assessment?

- **Reading 44 by Josée Clermont:** For French Immersion teachers, a program to assist students in developing their reading skills and build their confidence in reading.

- **Introduction to Technology in the Classroom & Working with Google Docs by Larry Connolly:** Participants were given an introduction to the mimio and explored the world of Google Doc.
- **Why We Matter More Than Ever by Cam Buchanan:** Identification of professionals' roles in raising resilient and adaptive children and youth, exploration of why conventional behavioural approaches, and incident management strategies have little or no effect on problem behaviour, sharing and acquisition of practical strategies for reaching and engaging marginalized students, and an examination of the role of attachment in classroom behaviour, aggression, resiliency, and bullying. The afternoon focused on enhancing non-verbal and verbal interactions along with discussing and practicing de-escalation strategies, debriefing methods, reclaiming interventions, and how to build healthier relationships with students.

God Bless,
Claudia Parker, Superintendent