

Leading Student Achievement: Our Principal Purpose

Friday, January 26, 2007

Symposium

**Toronto Airport Marriott
901 Dixon Road, Toronto**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Welcome: Nil Parent, ADFO

Nil Parent welcomed participants and reviewed the agenda for the day. He then gave a brief history of *Leading Student Achievement: Our Principal Purpose* and pointed out that 34 boards from across Ontario are now taking part in the project. He concluded his remarks by acknowledging the leadership provided by Dr. Avis Glaze.

Keynote Address: Dr. Avis Glaze, CEO and Chief Achievement Officer Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat

Dr. Glaze included the following in her presentation:

- Appreciation for the work of those involved in the project
- The positive developments that have occurred since the project began
- The need to diminish the large gap that continues to exist between the lowest- and highest-performing boards
- The high percentage of boards showing improvement in achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics
- The fact that schools in challenging circumstances can experience success with a good principal and an excellent staff
- Equity of outcome becoming a major focus
- The interventions and assistance available through LNS
- The divide created by technology
- Meeting the needs of the 'New Age' learner
- The task of transforming our organization
- The Professional Learning Community as the method for transforming the organization
- The need for educators to use their political voice to advocate for teachers, schools, and children
- *Everyday Leadership* by Stephen Covey
- The importance of teamwork
- Input from participants regarding the impact of the project

Leading and Learning: Student Achievement in Schools Facing Challenging Circumstances

**Dr. Denese Belchetz, Coordinating Superintendent, York District School Board
Lynne Hyne, Former Director, Curriculum Services Canada**

Origin of the Project

Initiated through the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat.

Deliverables Requested

1. Research component to encapsulate successful themes.
2. Visual component to provide training module on the themes.

Purposes of the Project

1. Contribute to the knowledge base regarding successful practices.
2. Provide evidence-based accounts of successful practices.
3. Provide the basis for sustainability of improved student learning and achievement.

Research Background

EQAO scores were used to pinpoint schools that were improving. Research methods included interviews, focus groups, and surveys. The research resulted in a list of key themes or practices impacting student achievement.

Online Training Site

www.curriculum.org/leadingandlearning/

When first entering the website, the user should click on “View Intro.” The main page of the website provides important introductory information on effective use of the website.

There are six modules on the website and for each, there is an Overview and Key Research Findings. In addition, the user has the choice of Individual Learning or Facilitated Group Session Path, each of which provides activities and resources.

Leading Student Achievement: Our Principal Purpose – First Year Results

Dr. Kenneth Leithwood, Professor of Educational Leadership, O.I.S.E./UT

Dr. Leithwood proposed that LSA might be viewed in one or both of the following ways:

- As a strategy for improving students’ literacy and numeracy achievement in the province.
- As an approach to “leadership training” on a large scale.

Surveys completed by teachers and principals produced evidence concerning these approaches. Dr. Leithwood presented the following conclusions based on this evidence:

- As a strategy for improving learning, LSA has yet to demonstrate much impact, but it is too early in the project for this to be a reasonable expectation.
- As an approach to leadership learning on a large scale, LSA shows promising signs of significant impact. It is reasonable to expect this impact to grow and to have an influence on the quality of teaching and learning in the intermediate term.

Dr. Leithwood then recommended five stimulators of student learning to be noted and to become the focus of the Professional Learning Communities that participants in the project are establishing in their schools.

August 2006 – Carmel Crevola Presents

***Breakthrough: Redesigning Classroom Instruction to Transform Learning*
DVD and Facilitator's Guide**

Bev Miller, LSA Steering Committee
Aarthi Vig, Instructional Leader, CSC

This DVD and facilitator's guide are additions to the package distributed to all participants at the August 2006 symposium (containing DVDs and guides for presentations made in April and August 2005 and in January and June 2006). The guide provides material for a full day's workshop, but there is also the option of selecting the specific segments that contain the main ideas in *Breakthrough*.

Learning Mathematics for Teaching

Mary Lou Kestell, Student Achievement Officer, LNS
Kathy Kubota-Zarivnij, Student Achievement Officer, LNS

The two presenters focused on mathematics instruction and teacher training. Their presentation included the following topics:

- The focus of job-embedded learning, *Mathematics for Teaching*
- What teachers need to know and be able to do mathematically
- What differentiated math knowledge looks like
- Examples of professional learning
- The most effective professional learning
- Suggestions for learning *Mathematics for Teaching*

Closing Address: The Honourable James K. Bartleman
Lieutenant Governor, Province of Ontario

The Honourable James Bartleman described the following in his closing address:

- His support for the causes of anti-racism, mental health, and the well-being of Native youth
- A personal history and the major influences in his youth
- The dire situation for Aboriginal peoples in Ontario's north, especially Aboriginal youth
- The initiatives he has undertaken to improve the literacy of Aboriginal youth

Closing: Nil Parent, ADFO