

Quest Journal – Volume 9

The Quest Journal, Volume 9: The Quest for Increased Student Achievement and Well-Being

It is with pleasure that the Quest Committee announces Volume 9 of The Quest for Improved Student Achievement and Well-Being: A Journal of Educational Inquiry and Practice, an online research journal focused on linking research with practice in the interests of improving student achievement and well-being. The publication of the journal coincides with the annual Quest Conference, and its content reflects the annual theme of the Conference.

This year's Quest Journal, Volume 9, is entitled Deep Learning in a Digital World. Submissions will fall under one of five themes – equity, modern learning, innovation, excellence or professional culture. Submissions should also reflect on the importance of the New Pedagogies for Deep Learning (M. Fullan)–Character, Citizenship, Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, and/or Critical thinking.

One of the highlights of our Quest Conference is our online Quest Journal in which various conference presenters, educators, and scholars have the opportunity to publish articles relative to the conference theme. We invite you and your colleagues to submit articles, images or video from the work of your districts, organizations or from your own personal research.

We are also pleased to showcase art throughout the journal from students across the YRDSB. [Standing on the Shoulders of Giants: An Ethical Leadership Agenda for Educational Reform in Mauritius](#)

Authors: Jean Claude Ah-Teck and David Hung

The increasing economic needs of Mauritius to position itself

as an intelligent nation state in the front line of global progress and innovation, mounting pressures to improve the quality of schools, and the shortcomings of various educational reforms over the past two decades have prompted Mauritian education authorities to seek ways to raise educational standards. Reflecting the Mauritian government's 'quality' agenda and its focus on the work of school leaders, this paper reports the findings of research exploring Mauritian principals' views about how a leadership focus on systems thinking could create major changes for school improvement processes directly impacting teaching and learning. Whilst confirming the lack of a systemic focus in Mauritian schools, the paper brings new thinking to understanding the critical role of the school leader for systemic improvement of the total educational system in Mauritius with social justice as the platform for transformation. The paper further reviews an empirically developed and theoretically sound framework that builds on a set of values and ethics that underpin Mauritian principals' leadership practices. The central claim is that this framework could be applied in realizing and sustaining the vision of transformed learners for quality education. Significantly, the paper discusses school leadership from an ethical perspective, often silenced in the literature, and is a serious attempt to relate morality and ethics in educational leadership.

Reprinted and distributed with permission of International Journal of Arts & Sciences. This research was also presented at the International Journal of Arts & Sciences' American Canadian Conference for Academic Disciplines, Harvard University, May 2015.

Keywords: educational leadership, ethical leadership, school improvement, quality education, total quality management, mauritius [Developing the Next Generation of Effective Altruists: How Digital Cross-border Communication can Help Reduce the Empathy Gap and Foster Greater Global Equity](#)

Author: Akila Venkatesh

Effective Altruism is a way of living and giving that uses rigorous evidence-based data and quantitative and qualitative analysis to determine the best possible scenario for doing the most good (Singer, 2015 & MacAskill, 2015). Developing an evidence-based awareness of issues of equity, a critical lens of our personal biases towards marginalized groups, and the analytical skills to weigh multiple giving scenarios, are all important in educating both teachers and students towards more effective altruism and global equity. However, this paper argues that these skills are not enough to sustain a commitment to social justice and social action, as there is a pervasive empathy gap created by the physical and social distance across borders and cultural groups, respectively. Online cross-border communications using video conferencing such as Skype, social media, and multimedia can serve to reduce the empathy gap and build greater mutual understanding and deep learning amongst students and teachers across the globe, thus empowering a sustained, intrinsic commitment towards effective altruism, global citizenship and equity.

Keywords: equity, effective altruism, empathy, digital cross-border communication, global citizenship [Collecting Whole Student Data through Pedagogical Documentation](#)

Authors: Shannon Bailey and Dr. Tania Sterling

Over the past two years, the Keewatin-Patricia DSB has been engaged in an external Efficacy Framework Review with Pearson Canada. The intent of the review was to involve a cross-sectional group of stakeholders in a collaborative reflection process to scrutinize the KPDSB Strategic Plan, and essentially determine whether or not the board was moving forward in its efforts to meet its goals. One of the recommendations from the initial report was to create a list of criteria for measuring the whole child within the northern Ontario context. Collecting data in the non-Academic areas

would then become a modern learning practice, as we become more familiar with the non-academic, whole child needs provincially. There is an increased number of resources to support teachers and administrators in learning about and supporting the emotional, social and well-being needs of students. In order to determine if whole child needs are being met in schools, there is an urge to find a way to collect and analyze such supporting data. By using pedagogical documentation, the hope is that not only will opportunities arise for the students to include their voice in the assessment process, but also the non-curriculum criteria can be measured.

Keywords: whole child assessment, efficacy, pedagogical documentation, well-being, student success [The #Innovatorsmindset: What We Can Learn From Carly Rae Jepsen And The Harvard Baseball Team #CE15](#)

Author: George Couros

The attached is an excerpt is from George Couros' new book, 'The Innovator's Mindset: Empower Learning, Unleash Talent, and Lead a Culture of Creativity,' which will be published this month (October 2015) by DBC, Inc. This same post has also been shared on Edsurge as well.

Keywords: innovation, mindset, leadership [Trust, Listening and the Role of the Principal: Building a Community of Learners with Principals, Teachers, Students and Parents at St. Sebastian School, Toronto](#)

Author: Gianna Helling

This paper will look at how one inner city school in Toronto nurtured a community of learners with staff, students and parents using online pedagogical documentation for learning. Students were encouraged to publish and document their work online rather than hand it in. The process built further engagement for learning as it acted as a catalyst for building

inquiry through brain based learning and culturally responsive teaching. As their learning journey progressed, students began tackling more challenging complex learning, including the study of math through the lens of social justice.

Keywords: pedagogical documentation, social media, 21st century, mathematics [The Glass Really is Half Full: Supporting Students Through the Asset Mapping and Resiliency Planning Process](#)

Authors: Scott Milne, Valerie Kitazaki, Susan Johnston

The theme of equity is explored in this article, with narratives describing action research done in a pilot project of the Asset Mapping and Resiliency Planning (AMRP) process. The AMRP process aims to create an inventory of student assets that can be used to develop a resiliency plan. The plan identifies which assets could be mobilized to increase the student's levels of engagement at school, at home and in the community. How do we more effectively support students who have experienced difficulty functioning in the school environment emotionally or academically in order to facilitate their own ability? The components of the Asset Mapping and Resiliency Planning process, the shift in thinking to achieve this process, as well as outcomes are detailed.

Keywords: assets, asset mapping, equity, inclusive schools, resiliency, resiliency tools, special education resource teacher, supporting students, vision services [Supporting Teachers with Moving Forward with Inquiry](#)

Author: Beate Planche

Leaders create the conditions which allow deeper learning to flourish. Inquiry approaches are considered part of a repertoire of deeper learning processes. Moving forward with inquiry learning in schools requires leaders to consider some of the important supports and dispositions they need to model in order to help staff gain confidence and motivation to

reframe their instructional approaches to one where inquiry leads the way.

Keywords: leadership, inquiry ['Making' Does Not Equal 'Constructionism'](#)

Author: Peter Skillen

The 'maker movement' has become extremely popular in K-12 education over the last few years. There is a danger that 'making' may be implemented without strong pedagogical understanding—specifically that of student-driven inquiry embedded within a constructionist culture. Some of the main tenets of constructivism and constructionism are outlined with a plea to not necessarily equate making with constructionism.

Keywords: maker movement, constructivism, constructionism, inquiry, Jean Piaget, Seymour Papert, making, visible thinking, conversation [Productive Struggle: How Collaboratively Inquiring about Growth Mindset and Mathematics Led to Deeper Learning for All Involved](#)

Authors: Nancy Steinhauer and Gianna Helling

This is the story of how one school used growth mindset research to foster engagement and deep learning for all students. As a result of a number of math inquiries over a two year period, students, educators, and parents explored the big ideas in math and pedagogy including: growth mindset, rich math conversations and culturally responsive pedagogy and math. These experiences extended the learning by reaching out to local and global communities. By engaging in rich learning opportunities through the lens of inquiry, students at St Sebastian increased learning and achievement in math, writing and reading.

Keywords: mathematics, inquiry, culturally responsive pedagogy, growth mindset, equity, professional culture [A Sense Of Balance: District Aligns Personalized Learning With School](#)

And System Goals

Authors: Debbie Donsky and Kathy Witherow

□Published in the JSD The Learning Forward Journal: The York Region District School Board in Ontario, Canada, is working at both the system and school level to balance the need for individual and collective learning. In this new definition of professional learning, the principal is a co-learner.

Keywords: leadership, co-learner