

September 25, 2010

Students from the Seven Oaks
School Division MET School in
Winnipeg, Canada



Time is flying...

The first day of October is right around the corner, and things are moving fast. Students are venturing out into the community for service opportunities as well as learning through interests, STPs are being launched and dual-enrollment college classes are beginning. Never a slow day!

In the news this week:

- A second article about a fabulous Bronx Guild senior and the farm work he has been doing: http://www.nydailynews.com/ny_local/bronx/2011/09/20/2011-09-20_he_brings_country_farm_to_his_high_school.html
- Thanks to Jon Morse from Big Picture Fresno, for a link to an opportunity for students. A deal from Comcast where families that qualify for free/reduced lunch can access internet at home at a greatly discounted rate. Check out the website and share with your families: <http://internetessentials.com/>

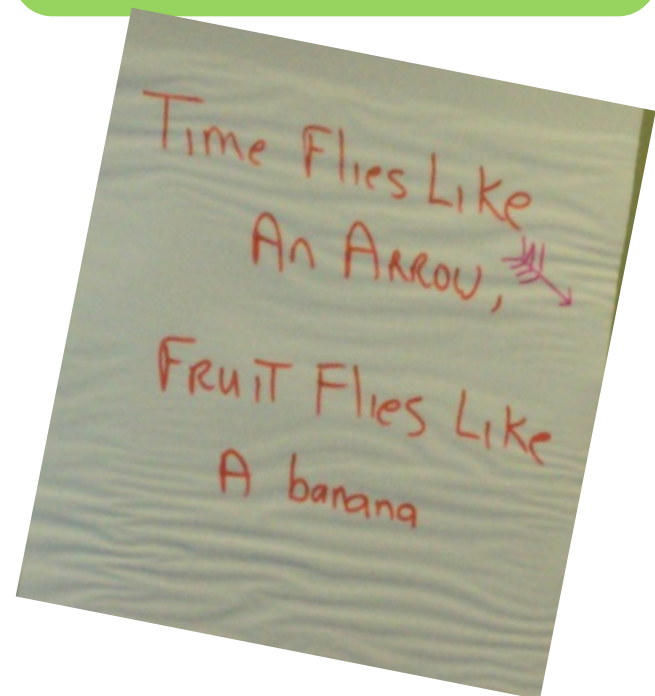
Have you seen the Big Picture YouTube site lately? Take a look - alumni speeches from Big Bang, sample exhibitions, great info about the network: <http://www.youtube.com/user/bplearning>. Have great videos to share - send them our way!

Keep sending pictures and news and we will share with the network and look for lots of information to come in the next few weeks to help you kick off your school year!

Have a great week!

Mark your calendar!

Principal Retreat in
Sunny San Diego California!
February 8-10, 2012
More details will be coming soon - but
hold the date!



Co-Corner: D to the E

From Doc

I'm in Ann Arbor for the weekend, for a college reunion. For me, it is a fundraising trip. All the people I graduated with (my fraternity- yes, I was in a fraternity- remember it was 1962) are richer than me. Seven years ago, I put on my own reunion when I turned 60, I walked out with \$100,000 check and have gotten one every year from that "brother". The "brother" introduced us to his commodities partner and he has been giving us 3 times that for the last 5 years. Now you know why I'm here.



Besides lots of regulations meetings, I spent a day and a half at The Business Innovation Factory Event. They bring in 30 cool people to tell their story for 15 minutes and then give you good time to schmooze. The speakers are local, national and international. Gotham Chopra (Liquid Comics), Marck Krazinski (Global Giving) Graham Milner (CEO of HD-40- 40 stands for the number of times it took them to get the formula right), Matthew Manning, a 14 year old kid who liked 50 peaks in 50 days in the US, Byron Reeves, A gaming expert from Stanford, Angus Davis, an entrepreneur, President of Babson and our friend and board member Dan Pink.

Some thoughts I had as I listened to the speakers/ or things I heard that stuck with me.

Global businesses say creativity is the number one most important skill in their workers.

Its not about making mistakes, its about correcting them quickly. Its also about making better mistakes.

Urgent always supersedes the important.

Entrepreneurship- definition- to make and find opportunity in everything you see.

Common sense isn't always common sense.

DON'T TRY TO BE THE BEST , WHEN YOU CAN BE THE ONLY. This was important to me. It is who BP and The Met should be. We don't need to try to compete with schools who are so different from us. We are an only and must talk/do that way.

I also had the opportunity to speak at BIF. My opening was "high schools suck...colleges suck...and who loses- the kids-who loses most- the disenfranchised kids. At the end I asked the crowd to tweet me and offer to be an e-mentor to our students. IT was very cool. Many actually did- now we have to follow up.

As soon as my talk was over I drove to Newport where I met 2 East Bay students to give a talk to a policy academy for newly elected federal legislators. The conference was on common core standards. My opening was, standards are fine but don't think that just having standards will do anything. Yo must innovate and get your students engaged in real work. Then the students did the rest. I think they got the message.

Dennis

From Elliot

All this week I went to meetings on projects we are doing all over the country that involve assessment and research. It was an incredible feeling to finally get this work off the ground. In New England Greg is taking the lead on developing performance assessments using a new competency wheel that looks at work-base, non-cognitive, LTI's, certifications, college courses, and alignments to the common core. Charlie and I were on the phone putting together a new proposal with MPR to develop and test what criteria makes for a good LTI. Mario is reviewing responses to proposals to collect and analyze data around graduates from our schools in CA. Yesterday, I had a great time at a meeting in San Francisco with Mario and four of our California schools. We were continuing work we started eight years ago around the a-g course requirements that get our students admitted into University of California system. Our schools compared how they assess students and give them credit for what they do based on all different ways to learn the a-g content. It was great to see the richness of the projects around student interest. Still with all of this alignment work, everyone assembled agreed that much of the vast rich and deep student learning was not being assessed or counted for the a-g coursework. Our next steps are to get our a-g work set up as a system to get us better at what we do and then take this work out to districts and school development organizations. All in all, we are finally at the place where we are seriously collecting and analyzing data on our innovative practices that will allow us to go to scale.



<http://www.gallupstudentpoll.com/home.aspx>

There is a Gallup Student Poll that measures student engagement, hope, and well-being. It has been out for about a year. We need to get all our BPL schools to

sign up and take this poll. It looks like Gallup has made it possible to aggregate our network data. We could really find a great deal out about our schools measured against comparison groups.

From the website:

"All data collected by the Gallup Student Poll is stored, aggregated, and analyzed by Gallup. Data are reported by school and by district and are accessible via an online scorecard. Under no circumstances will Gallup reveal a student's individual item responses to anyone."

Armed with this new and ongoing research, parents, school districts, communities, states, and the nation can pursue student success goals with proven and actionable data that can lead to significant improvements."

"If there's a choice between same and odd, I'm routing for odd."
From the movie Spanglish

When I was in Tulsa this week having dinner with our coaching team, Carol told me a wonderful story about her daughter's first day in kindergarten after spending a year in a Montessori pre-school. This is as close an approximation as I can muster.

Carol's Daughter: Mommy! Mommy! You won't believe this. All the kids in my class sit in rows.

Carol: That's right, Sweetie. This is not your old school. This is kindergarten.

Daughter: But Mommy, you won't believe this; they are all doing the same thing at the same time, the same way. They don't do anything that's different.

Carol: That's what they do in this kindergarten.

I spent some time at MUSE again this week putting initial foundation down for the start-up of a middle school next year with program and curriculum in place. Some of their teachers are starting to listen and observe their youngest two and three year-olds "tell" them what they are interested in. The next steps are to really connect their interests to both what they are doing in and out of school.

Next week, I'm in Nashville and Albany trying to negotiate work around systems of alternative schools. Kari and I did the same this past week in Tulsa. Then, off to Providence to meet with our team and discuss the future and our upcoming board meeting.

Enjoy the rest of the weekend!

CTC Focus in September

How are you prepping students and helping them with their post high school plan?

FRESHMAN ADVISORIES

Freshmen should be focusing on their interest exploration. What do they like to do? Why? Advisors should be focusing on knowing their students well so they can help them pursue their interests.

SOPHOMORE ADVISORIES

Sophomore students are getting ready for gateway. This month they are beginning to develop their post high school plans, prepping for the PSAT/PLAN (generally offered in October) and mapping out their year for college exploration.

JUNIOR ADVISORIES

Junior students should be getting more in-depth with college admission policies, while also learning how to understand the truth behind marketing numbers - to assess if a school is the right match.

SENIOR ADVISORIES

- Senior Parent Night/Week
- Finalize college list
- Finalize college essay and resume
- Work on college portfolio
- Get college applications and begin completing
- Register to re-take ACTs or SATs if applicable.
- Attend college visits and information sessions
- Identify and start scholarship applications

Create the culture:

What are you doing as a school to create a college-going culture? Share your ideas!