2019

CIS Ontario
Connects Unconference

IMPACT REPORT

Supporting our schools by sharing our collective expertise

CIS Schools Participated
39

Session Facilitators
21

Educators in Attendance
145

Participant-Facilitator Ratio
7:1

Conference Hashtag
#CISOPD

CONFERENCE FORMAT

- Learning with Facilitators, sharing collective expertise, curating practices, advice and activation strategies.
- Participants collaborate in prearranged table groups ensuring a balance of expertise, school divisions, and roles to enable a highly collaborative dialogue and deep-dive.
- The session discussion and learning is captured using a unique set of protocols and made visible by this post-conference infographic. Please share it widely as it represents the amazing collective expertise found within our association.

SESSIONS OFFERED

- STEM & Design Thinking
- Observations & Conversations
- Learning Skills & Executive Functions
- AR, VR & XR

Percentage of conference attendees who said that the conference provided them meaningful opportunities to connect, learn and share

= 100 %

❝ LEARNING

"Invaluable PD and discussion"

"The 'Unconference' is something every teacher should get the chance to attend."

"The day was full of inspiring conversations and innovative thinking, exploring trending educational topics!"

"Opportunity to meet enthusiastic and engaged colleagues who share my desire to learn and grow."

What We Learned
from the exit survey data

❝ SHARING

"Awesome format...invigorating discussions!"

"Incredible wealth of knowledge and experience in the room!"

"Such a rare, valuable chance to learn from the expertise of my colleagues across schools."

"We don't tell each other enough that you are doing great things in your class and have so much to share."

"Having the table groups curated in advance to ensure a balanced and effective discussion was incredible."

❝ ACTIVATING

"Igniting a spark to further my practise."

"Excited to try out some new ideas and materials ASAP."

"Lots of great expertise - lots of great ideas! Now, I just have to act!"

"The Connects Conference was a great confidence boost!"

▶ **SESSION SLIDES**

Guiding Question:

How might we develop learning & executive functioning skills in our students & measure growth?

Answers & Insights

Whole School:

- Co-Create a whole school shared language for Executive Functioning and Learning Skills
- Develop an EF & LS scope and sequence that is both realistic and developmentally appropriate
- Involve many different stakeholders in the creation of shared language for EF and LS, and share this lexicon with your entire community
- Dedicate time with staff and students to build capacity around EF and LS skill building
- Build school-wide tools that support the sustainability of EF/LS curriculum such as a classroom poster series and / or a classroom strategy bank
- Work as departments to introduce, practice and consolidate EF/LS skills, technologies and approaches
- Devote tIme to the explicit teaching of agenda and organizational strategies to develop common practices
- Include assessment of executive functions and learning skills on the report card

Classroom:

- Focus on a few Learning skills/Executive Functions and make this obvious and intentional
- Praise consistent practice: Celebrate good habits and strategies on a regular basis
- Communicate school-wide EF strategy to parents through existing channels
- Curriculum Integration: Teach EF and LS explicitly throughout the curriculum
- Teaching students to build and manage attention is core for all schools in today's digital & distracting world
- Integrate mindfulness and meditation activities across the academic program

Assessment:

- Include students in the creation of assessment objectives, rubrics and learning targets
- Focus on 1:1 conversations and ongoing meaningful feedback to move students forward
- Build self-assessment tools to identify progress: beginning, developing, consolidated
- Assessment tools can include video, rubrics, observations and conversations.
- Look at key feedback and measurements that stretch beyond grades: How might you use conversation and anecdotal reporting to build capacity?
- Self-advocacy - provide support to help students build and strengthen their personal toolkit of learning skills over time

Tips, Tricks & Advice

- Choose three skills to focus on **per year** as a grade team
- Carve out time in the timetable to explicitly teach learning skills
- Use Teacher Advisor program/Guidance as time for explicit teaching of EF/LS
- Provide toolbox for each class - i.e. noise cancelling headphones, highlighters, whiteboards
- Track learning skills using Google Forms

▶ **SESSION SLIDES**

Resources
to follow up with

- ▶ **Adam Cox** - No Mind Left Behind
- ▶ **Joann Deak** - My Fantastic Elastic Brain
- ▶ **Zones of Regulation**
- ▶ **Peg Dawson and Richard Guare** - Smart but Scattered
- ▶ **Anne Davies** - Triangulation of Evidence
- ▶ **The Big Disconnect** - Catherine Steiner Adair
- ▶ **ATL Skills MYP Workbook** - Lance King
- ▶ **Make It Stick** - Peter Brown et al. Understood.org
- ▶ **Calm.com**
- ▶ **Mind up Mindfulness Curriculum**
- ▶ **Lisa D'Amour** - **Untangled** and **Under Pressure** (Books)

Schools
to follow up with

- **Havergal College -** Whole school approach to learning skills and student support
- **HTS -** Co-constructed Learning Skills rubrics and self-assessment
- **UCC -** Learning Centre - EF Integration
- **TFS -** Scope and Sequence of approaches to learning/Learning Skills course
- **Montcrest -** EFs to the rescue.com
- **Greenwood -** Age and Stage Continuum
- **York School -** Use Google Forms to capture EF data

Guiding Question:

How might we effectively and authentically assess student learning through observations and conversation?
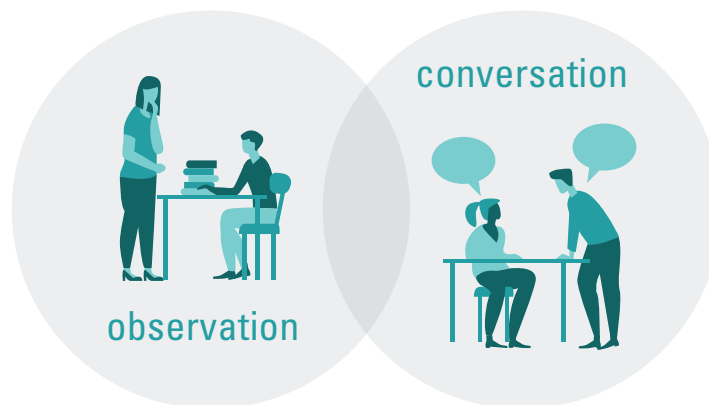
Answers & Insights

Assessing student work through observation and conversation is the underpinning of a modern flexible learning environment. Student-directed classrooms and pedagogy thrive when a language and culture of mutually respectful dialogue is created, valued and prioritized by the school.

Conversation and observations occurring outside of formal assessment time serve multiple functions including educating the teacher, student, and parent on the progress of the learner. Involvement of the teacher, student and parent in the assessment process establishes a culture focused on the learning rather than demonstrating knowledge demonstrated shown solely through the creation of products and traditional testing experiences.

Time pressures are often viewed as a challenge; however, with the right lens, they be seen as an opportunities to

leverage alternative methods of data collection. Technology can be used to amplify and streamline the collection of learning data through a variety of mediums (video, audio, survey, interview).

conversation

observation

Tips, Tricks & Advice

• Be patient with yourself, learn from failure, start small and go slow,

• Conversations can be short and precise, observations can too.

• Start with small opportunities and reflect on their effectiveness

• Don't duplicate or misconstrue conversations about marks with conversations about learning. They are not the same conversation.

• Leverage technology to help create and capture a "body of evidence"

▶ **SESSION SLIDES**

Resources
to follow up with

▶ **Parlay Ideas**: Rich online discussion assessment and engagement tool

▶ **Class Dojo**: classroom communication app, gamification style, upload photos, videos

▶ **Explain Everything**: online and mobile whiteboard for engaging and

collaborative learning

▶ **FlipGrid**: video discussion and feedback platform

▶ **Ann Davies**: an expert educator on triangulation of evidence

▶ **Damian Cooper:** an expert educator on triangulation

Schools
to follow up with

• **HSC** - Middle School Assessment Shift

• **Sterling Hall** - Student Led Conferences

• **Appleby College** - Harkness Discussions

• **Bayview Glen** - OneNote

• **Holy Name** - Interdisciplinary Projects

• **St. Clement's** - Re-thinking Math assessment

• **Holy Trinity** - Running Rubrics

Guiding Question:
How might we effectively integrate STEAM & Design Thinking across the curriculum?

Answers & Insights

To begin to integrate STEAM and Design Thinking across the curriculum, determine what you will assess, and try to prioritize the process over the product. Then, work to create moments of creativity, choice and play. It supports the above approaches and it allows students' and teachers' passion to add to the culture of the school.

An integral part to this culture building is to provide professional development that models the protocols and process that will be used with the students. Develop transdisciplinary thinking in your faculty and students by allowing them to take risks and experience non-catastrophic failure, to work with others outside of your .immediate community in order to develop empathy skills and compassion, and to put them in front of experiences that demand creativity and prioritize an iterative process.

Building on this PD approach, administrators need to support teachers, find connectors and those that already seek integration to know what is happening in other classes. Where possible, administrators should build intentional time for collaboration, strategic curriculum mapping, getting together during prep periods, dedicated times in faculty meetings to share what is happening in classrooms, development of special projects, and the creation or leveraging of 'innovation grants'.

Schools are encouraged to explore how time might be structured and restructured to allow for integration. Extended class periods within a day or revised daily schedules can facilitate longer projects and/or allow different teachers to work together on a common goal. Administrators need to prioritize this in their building of the school timetable and calendar: not a lot of space or resources are needed for great design to happen.
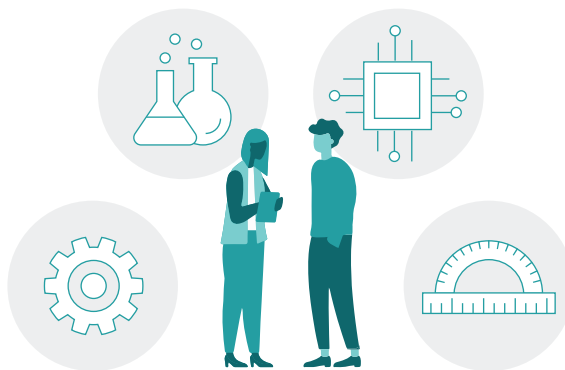
Tips, Tricks & Advice

- Embrace the "explorations" - Try something - Incubate a few projects that can grow larger after some trials and tribulations

- Find student advocates who can spread the word about the great things that are happening

- Take apart e-waste to explore how things work

- Focused PD Day like EdCamps or STEAM Day for students

- Use a framework that incorporates timelines, assessments and opportunities to present the thinking behind the products

- Approach your own PD as Design Thinking

- Find experts to help with the work. Parents & Community partners

Resources
to follow up with

- **Designthinkingforeducators.com**
- **Stanford D-School**
- **Gaming in Education**
- **George Couros** - Thought Leader
- **Tim's Cooper's STEM Starters**
- **Buck Institute** - PBL

Schools
to follow up with

- **Greenwood College School** - "Integration Week"
- **Hillfield College School** - PBL & Buck Institute
- **UCC** - New design program & Space
- **HTS** - Innovation Lab
- **Bayview Glen** - Design Lab programming
- **York School** - Gr. 6 - 8 MYP Design Curriculum & Space
- **BSS** - Design Programme
- **Pickering College** - Global Citizenship Diploma
- **Havergal College** - Forum for Change
- **Montcrest School** - New Maker Space

▶ **SESSION SLIDES**

Guiding Question:

How might we leverage new technology to enable immersive and experiential learning?

Answers & Insights

Virtual Reality (VR) is an immersive experience also called a computer-simulated reality. It refers to computer technologies using reality headsets to generate the realistic sounds, images and other sensations that replicate a real environment or create an imaginary world.

Augmented Reality (AR) is a live, direct or indirect view of a physical, real-world environment whose elements are augmented by computer-generated sensory input such as sound, video, graphics or GPS data. As AR exists on top of our own world, utilizes your existing reality and adds to it utilizing a device of some sort.

Extended Reality (XR) refers to all real-and-virtual combined environments and human-machine interactions generated by computer technology and wearables.

Experiential learning is best understood through the KOLB CYCLE, and XR can play a powerful role in providing students with an experience that generates active experimentation. Students can put themselves in situations where they can explore content and concepts in such a way that it is "almost like being there".

However, it requires intentional pedagogy to have students continue the cycle of reflective observation and abstract conceptualization. Using the TPACK model is highly recommended to ensure a meaningful implementation.

XR is an umbrella term for powerful tools such as Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality that are developing rapidly to provide students with experiences not normally possible.

Be intentional with faculty and staff professional development with XR tools. It is strongly recommended that XR tools implementation begins with a small cadre of lead teachers and IT staff to demonstrate and 'socialize' the technology first to show the power and potential. The technical knowledge should begin with this group to slowly build knowledge and capacity in the larger faculty and staff. In this way, a scope and sequence can be developed.

Tips, Tricks & Advice

- Try it first as a teacher - what do you notice, what apps do you think might work with your curricular outcomes?
- Start small and build capacity
- Explore various VR apps via videos, screenshots, text reviews first
- Determine which hardware/applications are appropriate
- Consider aligning the risk of these experiences with your experiential learning liability/waiver form if applicable
- Depending on the XR experience, students may experience physical side-effects with prolonged use.
- When using XR in high-empathy experiences, it is important to consider students' emotional well-being.
- Become familiar with the age restrictions/recommendations with hardware

Resources
to follow up with

Getting Going:
- Instage
- VRVision
- National Geographic, NY Times 360 Degrees Videos
- AR Circuits
- Google Expeditions
- Google Earth VR

On My Way:
- Google Tour Creator
- Merge Cube
- Sidra Project
- 3D Organon VR Anatomy

Ready to Launch
- Steam Store
- Mindshow
- Layar
- Virtualiteach.com

Schools
to follow up with

- **St. Mildred's - Lightbourn School:** In-House programming with hardware builds
- **Havergal College** - 3rd Party partnerships
- **Selwyn House** - In-House programming
- **RSGC** - Research and Integration into curriculum

▶ **SESSION SLIDES**