

The Honourable Lincoln Alexander, Patron

Newsletter

New Community Clusters of Schools Forming

With our new team this year of Stan Pearl, Fred Peach and Elizabeth Gouinlock, and the excellent support of our partners at the TDSB, L2L is making impressive progress. Having two retired principals from the TDSB is a huge help in communications with the schools.

The community cluster model is a break from the past methodology of just signing up schools that asked.

Clusters form around a high school hub,

and its feeder schools. Currently there are six clusters under development, in the east and central parts of the city. While organizing this makes for a few less tutors to date this year, it sets the platform for much healthier growth.

How much growth? As much as it takes to help the third of the elementary school students who are failing to meet the provincial academic standards, and the quarter who do not finish high school.

Catching Them Before They Drop – out! Right From the Start!

In tandem with the community clusters of schools project, L2L is working with its high schools on a new transitions program: **Right from the Start**. This program will catch the students entering Grade 9 who are known to be at risk, and matching them with L2L prepared tutors right at the start of the year.

The training involves prepping the

tutors in the preceding spring to be ready to greet the students when they first arrive. The regular 'orientation' will include buddying right from the start, then some mentoring in the new environment, followed by tutoring in key subjects. For each student we graduate, our GDP grows by \$600,000 lifetime

earnings, not counting the savings from welfare, potential incarceration and health costs. Of the 160,000 Grade 9s, in Ontario, 40,000 will drop out = \$600,000,000 lost **–annually**. That's what we are working at!



It does, actually, take a city! Cranberry Resort and Collingwood did it! Seven more students succeed in addition to the nine last spring. And all the tutors who learned, too, and led.

Excellent!



Picture, left, Felicia Tse, right, and her friends, the video producers from Don Mills CI. See link, http://youtube.com/watch?v=0K_iGq6_6fk

Learning tip of the month! To learn something, you have to have a head clear of all the interference and worries of the moment. Stare at a blank piece of paper with a medium sized dot at the centre for a few moments and let the thoughts drain away. Then start the work. See **Relax and Focus** in the Resource files at www.L2L.ca or copy and paste directly from: http://www.l2l.ca/site/resources_ppp2.php#visiondrills for the full exercise.

Getting it done, 34 schools at a time



...through student success.

For several years now, Janet Maxwell, front row right, and her students at East York CI have been helping Grade 9 students to recover an English credit.

Scheduled into her classes, L2L trains her students in its unique tutor training curriculum. This augments and complements the work the class already does. Classes are set aside for the tutors to work with the struggling students during school time.

Each semester the reports come back indicating that students who would not otherwise have passed, did so with the tutors' help.



Pictured above, teacher, Sally Spofforth, top right, and Principal, Ricky Goldenberg, top centre, congratulate their students at Marc Garneau CI for earning the L2L Tutor Certificate. This MGCI/L2L partnership is in its fourth year. The L2L training and certificate are part of the course that is paired with one in which the students need in-class help. The Marc Garneau students also tutor in its feeder school, Valley Park Middle School. In this round, half of the tutored students improved their standing and passed, and one quarter held on for a pass.

Allowing students to help each other



by understanding how to learn

As early as Grade 5, when only 10 years old, students can understand that we all learn differently and how we learn differently.

To be a doctor one needs doctoring skills and understanding - and the education to acquire them. The same is true for engineers, or plumbers, or any useful pursuit.

So if we know that the same process is required for the practice of 'learning', why aren't those skills of how to learn taught as a discipline for our students from the earliest years? Traditionally, we've only been concerned with what to learn, not how to learn. Interestingly, the 'how to learn' is not a major part of teacher training. The 'what to learn' is. Students need both.

For the Knowledge Age, Canada will need a huge edge to keep ahead. Knowing how to learn will be the major advantage we have.

Partners

It actually takes more than a village to raise a child to meet the challenges of modern life. Building partnerships is a key part of the process. Our partnership with the TDSB is the cornerstone so far. Fred Peach has had very positive response from the Retired Teachers of Ontario organization to attract volunteer retirees to 'adopt' an L2L school for tutor training and supervision. We are talking to Frontier College as both organizations have tutoring as their mandate, L2L in the schools and Frontier College in the adult world. There are now overlaps, so partnering makes sense. And we cannot do anything without material support, and we are hoping that a new and imaginative partnership in this realm is materializing. More news in next the letter.

Huge thanks to our supporters so far this year, including **HydroOne, Telus, the Paloma Foundation and Raptors' Kids Foundation**. These and many individual supporters have made all the difference. We are just beyond the halfway point of the year, and would welcome contributions from those who give in the NewYear: www.L2L.ca!!
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