Principals Qualifications Program

Practicum Submission

1) The Final Written Report
2) The Reflective Journal
3) Practicum Log
4) Form 2 – Leadership Practicum Evaluation

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**Statement of Intent**

As we progress in the twenty first century, the explosion of technology has had a profound impact on society in general, and specifically on education. Our students possess knowledge and are connected in ways that were inconceivable even a decade ago. As a system of education, we have struggled to match the speed of this connection revolution. As such, there is a desire amongst educators to increase their knowledge base around technology and, more importantly, around effective pedagogical approaches to technology integration. This PLC is designed to organize a voluntary group of teachers and administrators to investigate the learning theory of constructivism and apply those principles to classroom teaching through the integration of web 2.0 technologies.

**Literature Review**

Over the last decade, the amount of information to support technology integration in schools has grown exponentially. From traditional sources like journal articles, books and scholarly papers to videos, blogs, websites and social media, the amount of information is easily overwhelming. One of the key complaints of teachers however is that technology integration by itself has a very limited impact on student achievement and thus, we must look at reasons why this is the case. A review of the literature on the subject suggests that in order for technology to be effective it must be accompanied by a change in pedagogy that reflects the intent of the technology. With this in mind I will reference key pieces of academic literature that were part of my research during my Master of Education that will provide a framework for the type of learning that my professional learning community (PLC) espoused. I will also reference non-traditional literature and videos that influenced my perspectives on technology integration with
the purpose of emphasizing how these sources can be highly effective in creating a plan for technology integration.

The Need for Change

Sir Ken Robinson, in a talk discussing change in education, states “Every country on Earth at the moment is reforming public education” (Robinson, 2010). A central reason for this impetus on reform is the emergence of a new generation of students, popularly called the ‘Net Generation’ or ‘Digital Natives’. These 21st century learners communicate and interact socially in a way that was not possible in previous generations. As these students move through the education system, they are challenging traditional methods of teaching, and are creating a climate of change that looks to transform how teachers use technology to help students learn. In his work discussing how the ‘net generation’ is changing education, Tapscott states, “Kids who have grown up digital expect to talk back, to have a conversation. They want choice in their education, in terms of what they learn, when they learn it, where, and how. They want their education to be relevant to the real world, the one they live in. They want it to be interesting, even fun” (Tapscott, 2009, p.126). Our education system has not risen to this challenge presented by students and is stuck in a model that was created more than 100 years ago to meet the demands of a completely different society.

“The Net Generals have grown up digital and they’re living in the twenty-first century, but the education system in many places is lagging at least 100 years behind. The model of education that still prevails today was designed for the Industrial Age. It revolves around the teacher who delivers a one-size-fits-all, one-way lecture. The student, working alone, is expected to absorb the content delivered by the teacher. This might have been good for the mass production economy, but it doesn’t deliver for challenges of the digital economy, or for the Net Gen mind” (Tapscott, 2009, 122).
In his work on the wicked problems of schools, Stephen Murgatroyd (2010) talks about how schools have remained untouched despite the revolution of technology, globalization and collaboration;

“Many teachers still teach subjects in a way that resembles how this was done 25 years ago or more. The curriculum, rather than being radically different from what it was before the widespread use of the Internet began in 1993–94, is basically similar with more items added, giving less time for creativity … Teachers and schools are part of a command and control model of school systems which is outdated for knowledge intensive organisations. It is difficult to imagine a social organisational system which seems as immune to change as the school systems of Britain, the US and Canada. The knowledge-driven organisation which demands innovation and creativity on the part of all employees does not correspond to many aspects of school systems” (p. 259).

He goes on to discuss the needs of the next generation of workers, who currently occupy the public education system.

“This generation will understand the power of social networks, cloud based computing and technology and will absorb such technologies to facilitate work and social transactions, change work practices and engage in global conversations. They will have these skills despite their school systems, which currently seem unable to engage these technologies in the pursuit of learning, knowledge and understanding. Indeed, many school systems are outlawing social networking technologies, seeing them (sometimes with good reason) as distractions. The iGen will also be quick to leverage the rapid emergence of machine and artificial intelligence as well as domestic and social robotics — they will 'get' change as a constant in a way that the current generation of leaders and managers still find difficult” (Murgatroyd, 2010, p. 261).

Seth Godin (2012), in his manifesto on the state of education, makes several key talking points that further highlight some of the reasons why change is necessary and provide an opportunity for reflection on why exactly we, as educators, do the things that we do.

“Large-scale education was not developed to motivate kids or to create scholars. It was invented to churn out adults who worked well within the system” (p. 7).
“If you do a job where someone tells you exactly what to do, he will find someone cheaper than you to do it. And yet our schools are churning out kids who are stuck looking for jobs where the boss tells them exactly what to do” (p. 7)

“Are we going to applaud, push, or even permit our schools (including most of the private ones) to continue the safe but ultimately doomed strategy of churning out predictable, testable, and mediocre factory workers?” (p. 8)

“If school’s function is to create the workers we need to fuel our economy, we need to change school, because the workers we need have changed as well” (p.10).

“Changing school doesn’t involve sharpening the pencil we’ve already got. School reform cannot succeed if it focuses on getting schools to do a better job of what we previously asked them to do. We don’t need more of what schools produce when they’re working as designed. The challenge, then, is to change the very output of the school before we start spending even more time and money improving the performance of the school” (p. 10).

Creating an educational experience that is relevant to students must include the use of technology that accurately aligns the needs of teachers with the way that students use that technology in their daily lives. This necessitates an increased emphasis on the social aspect of learning; one that encourages and supports collaboration. “Instead of lecturing, teachers should interact with students and help them discover for themselves … Instead of isolating students, the schools should encourage them to collaborate” (Tapscott, 2009, p.122). This collaboration does not need to be limited within the walls of the traditional classroom; current technology provides such a wide range of interactive, collaborative tools that the new classroom is not confined by walls, space or time; it is truly global.

Learning, while using technology and collaboration, has shown an increased level of student engagement along with increases in academic performance (Tapscott, 2009). “Compared with students enrolled in conventionally taught courses, students who use well crafted computer-mediated instruction … generally achieve higher scores on summary examinations, learn their
lessons in less time, like their classes more, and develop more positive attitudes towards the subject matter they’re learning. These results hold for a broad range of students stretching from elementary to college students, studying across a broad range of disciplines, from mathematics to the social sciences to the humanities” (Baker 1997, as cited in Tapscott, 2009, p. 133). Given this insight into the needs of 21st century learners and the impact of collaboration on student learning, the next challenge lies with how teachers can incorporate this knowledge with the current curriculum and educational system requirements.

*Constructivism*

If it is agreed that significant changes are needed to the education system, the next question is, does a learning theory exist that supports a vision for 21st Century education and provides a lens through which educators can mediate these changes. This learning theory must support collaboration, be flexible enough to support consistent innovations with technology and reflect the world outside of school so that the process of learning is consistent both inside and outside of school. As it stands, the learning theory of constructivism, which was developed in the 1960’s, supports each of these criteria; “Constructivism is a philosophy of learning founded on the premise that we construct our own understanding of the world we live in by reflecting on our experiences” (Russell, 1999, p. 1) and “Constructivism emphasizes that new knowledge is a personal creation that is socially mediated” (Schwartz and Fischer, 2003, p. 23). A more practical example of constructivism reveals an approach to learning that, while seemingly simplistic, is far more difficult to implement and attain, given the current educational focus on content and standardization. “Isolated facts are of little interest to a learner unless they are connected to or understood within the learner's larger framework of knowledge. This suggests that interactive exhibits, curriculum, and other learning tools should be constructed, taking into account the prior knowledge and existing interests of the learner in relation to the information and
experiences introduced” (Russell, 1999, p. 1). OISE researchers Marlene Scardamalia and Carl Bereiter discusses the idea of ‘Knowledge Building’ as an evolution of constructivism, with a focus on how technology can be integrated to support this learning:

“Accordingly, it [knowledge building] involves students not only developing knowledge-building competencies but also coming to see themselves and their work as part of the civilization-wide effort to advance knowledge frontiers. In this context, the Internet becomes more than a desktop library and a rapid mail-delivery system. It becomes the first realistic means for students to connect with civilization-wide knowledge building and to make their classroom work a part of it” (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 2006, p. 98).

Applying this theory to students learning outside of school, through an example such as Facebook, it is easy to see that constructivism works. Ask a student to describe their process of learning with a tool like Facebook and they will describe how they connected it to prior knowledge, utilized their connections (digitally and face to face) with other Facebook users (both novice and advanced), and utilized problem solving skills to ‘teach themselves’ how to use it. When you ask a student who their Facebook teacher was, where they took the Facebook class, and which Facebook textbook they used, they will respond with a look of bewilderment. The process of learning that currently takes place in schools is so dissimilar from how they learn outside of school. It will take a paradigm shift, where the learning theory of constructivism can be a starting point, to begin the process of making these necessary changes.

21st Century Skills / Trends / Technologies

The Horizon Report (2011) offers a perspective on the emerging trends in education worldwide and provides timelines to implementation for each of these trends. In the 2011 report, Cloud Computing and the integration of Mobile Devices were described as short term (one year or less) from implementation while the creation of Personalized Learning Environments (digital) were seen as long term (four to five years). As an education system in Ontario, we are nowhere close to seeing effective integration of cloud computing or mobile devices, which begs the
question, are we as ‘cutting edge’ as we think? If this report is based on global information, it should give a different lens through which we can look at our progress as a system and make the necessary adjustments. At a recent educational conference I attended, I was introduced to a quote from Eric Hoffer that states, “In times of change, learners inherit the Earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists”. As an education system, are we producing learners, or is our focus on ensuring that our students are learned, and if so, which is more important?

**Connections to School / District Improvement Plan**

In November 2011 the Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board formally outlined a strategic plan that included a section on technology integration. This document was released just prior to all teachers being provided a board issued laptop computer, all schools achieving an improved student to computer ratio and a SMART board in every other classroom, and is meant to direct our thinking around professional development and technology integration. In his introduction to the plan, our director states, “Now more than ever, we need creative thinkers and innovative leaders to contribute to social, technological and environmental advancements” (KPR Strategic Plan, 2011, p. 1). Within the document a goal of the plan is “Programs and resources that support the effective implementation of advancing technology, social media and scientific principles in all elementary and secondary schools” (KPR Strategic Plan, 2011, p. 7). The PLC that I led was designed to help teachers expand their knowledge base around effective technology integration, with the purpose of having the technology reach its promise in improving student achievement and engagement.
**Evidence Based Practice**

Given the nature of the PLC, there was no specific data related to student achievement that drove its creation, nor was there any student achievement data that was collected at the culmination. I like to think of this project as more of a qualitative research project as opposed to one that driven by numbers or statistics. As evidenced by the letter from my mentor that is attached, and from the significant success with technology integration that was experienced by most members of the PLC, learning, growth and increased comfort with technology certainly improved. I would be hesitant to say that there was any meaningful impact on student achievement at this point, but the objective of the PLC was not to create a measurable increase in student achievement over a four-month period. By the end of the school year, more than half the teachers on staff were utilizing the Google Apps suite of tools in some way in their classrooms and were showing significant increases in their technological aptitude.

**Connections to Standards**

I believe that the PLC reflected the Ontario College of Teachers Standards of Practice and the School Effectiveness Framework in a meaningful way.

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<th><strong>OCT - Standards of Practice</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Commitment to Students and Student Learning</strong></td>
<td>The PLC was designed to improve instructional practice to improve student learning and student achievement.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership in Learning Communities</strong></td>
<td>This PLC was safe, supportive and collaborative and certainly maintained the ethical standards of the profession.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ongoing Professional Learning</strong></td>
<td>Each team member committed to ongoing professional learning throughout the PLC and were equipped with tools (Twitter) to continue learning following its completion.</td>
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### Professional Knowledge

A great deal of highly current research was shared by all members during the PLC.

### Professional Practice

PLC members refined professional practice through inquiry, collaboration and reflection.

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**School Effectiveness Framework**

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<th>Assessment for, of and as Learning</th>
<th>The technological tools that were discussed by the PLC included a huge digital component that is meant to improve communication, between teachers, students and parents (Google Docs, Twitter, Wordpress, Edmodo)</th>
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<td>1.7 – Ongoing communication is in place to allow students, teachers and parents to effectively monitor student learning.</td>
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**School and Classroom Leadership**

| 2.1 – Collaborative instructional leadership builds capacity to strengthen and enhance teaching and learning. | A huge focus both of the PLC and of the content of the PLC was collaboration. Everything that we did and every tool that we used was collaborative in nature and was designed to improve teaching and learning. The learning theory of constructivism lends itself to having students explore learning in an inquiry based setting that is designed to deepen understanding of curriculum expectations. The purpose of the PLC was to build capacity within the school and while I think we were successful, it was not as successful as I had envisioned. |
| 2.2 – Processes and practices are designed to deepen content knowledge and refine instruction to support student learning and achievement. |                                                                                                                                     |
| 2.4 – Job embedded and inquiry-based professional learning builds capacity, informs instructional practice and contributes to a culture of learning. |                                                                                                                                     |

**Student Voice**

| 3.1 – The teaching and learning environment is inclusive and reflects individual student strengths, needs and learning preferences. | Constructivism is a highly inclusive way of learning and allows students to work at their strengths while using the knowledge and skills of their peers to further develop their areas of need. |
| |                                                                                                                                     |

**Curriculum, Teaching and Learning**

| 4.1 – A culture of high expectations supports the belief that all students can learn, progress and achieve. | The nature of constructivism is one of high expectations. Given the freedom of learning that students are exposed to, the expectations for learning and knowledge building is extremely high. It is expected that all students can learn as constructivism is based on how people learn in general, not just in school. The PLC incorporated 21st Century technology and learning skills and was meant to deepen |
| 4.3 – Teaching and learning incorporates 21st century content, global perspectives, |                                                                                                                                     |
learning skills, resources and technologies.

4.4 – Learning is deepened through authentic, relevant and meaningful student inquiry.

students understanding both of the course content and how they each learn individually.

Benefits

Students

I think that there were three main benefits to students that were seen through the work of teachers who were part of the PLC. First was an increase in the connection between student’s lives at school and outside of school. Adolescents who are connected at all times outside of school can feel as though they must ‘unplug’ once they enter the school doors. Through the work of the PLC, teachers began utilizing students interest in technology as an engagement tool and found that the results were much more positive than they had envisioned. Students were able to use the features of the technologies to their advantage, which included using their cellphones, mobile devices, laptops, netbooks etc. in class and at school and that made school feel more like a continuation of their regular lives as opposed to an interruption.

The second benefit to students was, in my opinion, an increased relevance to ‘the real world’. While this is a highly debated topic, I think that when teachers utilize a specific learning theory, like constructivism, students are able to transfer the process of learning to all aspects of their lives, including learning situations outside of school. By utilizing the technological tools, like Google Docs, Edmodo and Twitter, in a constructivist way, students gained a deeper understanding of ‘how’ to learn new things without relying on a teacher or a textbook to control the process of learning for them.

Students were just beginning to scratch the surface of the last set of benefits of the PLC as the year wound down. To achieve these benefits, teachers needed a more in depth knowledge of
the technologies, along with a deeper understanding of constructivism, which would allow them to step outside of the traditional model of teaching and learning. Those benefits were things like increased collaboration through tools like Google Docs, Edmodo and Twitter; increased organization and time management through personalized Google Calendars; increased engagement as tasks became more student centered and student directed; and increased connectivity and transferability between classes as the technologies allowed them to transfer skills to each of their courses.

**Staff**

Like students, I think that there were three main benefits for school staff who were part of the PLC. First was an increased comfort level with technology. My most significant ‘moment’ from the PLC came from a teacher I worked with whom, after being part of the PLC for a few weeks and attending the ECOO conference with me, went from the teacher who sent several students to the office each day for ‘texting’ in class, to the teacher who had students using their phones, tablets etc. everyday in class and is now likely the most effective user of technology for education in the school. She has developed enough confidence and comfort with technology that she will be presenting at the ECOO conference in 2012 and sharing her journey with others just like her.

The second benefit I think comes from teachers recognizing that they had the support of administration (who attended every one of the PLC meetings) and the confidence to take big risks pedagogically in their classrooms. Two teachers in particular radically shifted their pedagogical approach to one that embraced the ideals of constructivism and both had tremendous success. My hope is that these teachers can continue to distribute this leadership with their colleagues and encourage more teachers to take risks.
The final benefit I think was the building of collegiality amongst individuals who were typically very isolated in terms of what they were doing pedagogically. Seven of the teachers who were part of the PLC are now using Twitter to connect with their colleagues around the world and are continuing to reap the benefits of this ‘digital’ collaborative tool, and I would like to think that this started, or at least gained momentum, through their work in our PLC.

Parents / School Community

The one area where the PLC did not meet my original expectations was in the area of parents and the school community. While we did start a school Twitter account that was an outstanding success (it is updated daily and has over 250 followers), we did not get enough input or feedback from the school community, especially parents, on what their thoughts were with regards to constructivism and technology in the classroom.

Application of Theory to Practice

In the article, Leading Change – A conversation with Michael Fullen, Fullen talks about the six secrets of change and how these secrets help leaders understand the process necessary to lead change. I will explore my attempt to lead change as part of the PLC, through the lens of these secrets.

Fullen (2008) identifies a leadership theory as a way to “identify the thinking that underlies the technique” (p. 2). In essence, this was one of my main objectives through the PLC; to identify the thinking, constructivism, that underlies the technique of technology integration. Fullen also discussed the idea that in attempting to lead change, educators have embraced the idea of professional learning communities (PLC’s), and that most of these are superficial in nature, because they involve a lot of conversation but little action. I think at times, our PLC fit that model but by the end we had many teachers taking many different actions. The second
secret he talks about is connecting peers with purpose, and the importance of getting people to work *together*. I think that this was one of the strengths of the PLC in that several people who were previously isolated, were now working together, however I was unable to inspire many of those who were not part of the PLC to embrace the idea of collaboration. Fullen also discusses ways to know that a PLC has been successful, and I think that our PLC met this criteria for a number of staff. “When a professional learning community has been successful, individual teachers stop thinking about ‘my classroom,’ and start thinking about the ‘our school.’ And they do it, not so much because of the leadership – although that’s always a factor – but because of the influence of their peers” (Fullen, 2008, p. 5). He also described the importance of differentiating between professional learning and professional development. Our PLC met regularly (once per week) and strived to put learning into action on a weekly basis and teachers shared the results of those actions and we collaborated on ways to improve learning for students. I think that one of my main failures as the leader of the PLC was that I was not as successful as I had hoped at developing other leaders. Fullen (2008) talks about the importance of effective coaching leadership, “because when a leader leaves, the system will continue to work in the same direction”, and I am not sure that I achieved this aim (p. 7).

**Improving Teaching and Learning**

*Below, five specific examples are listed of how teaching was impacted through the PLC and how student improvement was demonstrated through that shift in pedagogical approach.*

1) An English teacher became very interested in the idea of collaboration with her senior level class and decided to use both Edmodo and Google Docs to support this collaboration. Her classes became so knowledgeable with the technology and its benefits that they prepared for their final exams using Google Docs, had their peers review their
preparation and wrote their final exams online. This was a major shift for a person and a department that relied heavily on the traditional exam structure, and was a more authentic task for students because it reflected how they approached writing throughout the semester.

2) A Chemistry teacher worked extensively with the idea of constructivism and knowledge building that were discussed in the articles I gave teachers in June before the PLC started in September. He completely revamped his courses and moved away from the ‘sage on the stage’ model to a more student-centered model that allowed students more opportunity to take control of their learning and took advantage of several technologies (Google Docs, Edmodo, YouTube, Khan Academy etc). There were several hiccups along the way but his willingness to continue to learn and take risks was enabled by the support and guidance he received through the PLC. While his students struggled initially with the shift, their feedback at the end of the courses truly demonstrated an understanding of how that approach was connected to their ability to learn both in and outside of school.

3) A second English teacher completely revamped her class to a more constructivist approach. While she did not utilize technology at all (philosophically she is not there yet) her course was extremely student centered and the culminating tasks submitted by her students demonstrated true knowledge building, collaboration and differentiated instruction.

4) The fourth example is from a Humanities teacher who embraced the idea of Twitter and now collaborates regularly with his subjects colleagues around North America. As the only Humanities teacher in our school, he went from being highly isolated to being highly connected. Through the PLC and his connections on Twitter, he is now moving away
from the ‘sage on the stage’ model and is eliminating his reliance on textbooks as the primary mode of student learning.

5) The last example is my principal. While she is a tireless advocate for change, and was well before her participation in the PLC, I believe that she gained a better understanding of collaborative technologies and she is also now an active Twitter user that has made connections with educators around the world. Through the PLC she also became comfortable with the ‘idea’ of Twitter and supported me in starting a Twitter account for the school. She updates it daily and it has been an extremely positive tool for the school in reaching out and making connections with the community.

**Effective Practices**

1) Setting Direction – ensuring the vision

The goal of the PLC was to investigate a different pedagogical philosophy that would optimize the effectiveness of technology integration in classrooms. I ensured that vision was clearly articulated, shared, and understood by all members of the PLC at the first meeting in June prior to the actual PLC commencing in September.

2) Setting Direction – appropriate technologies

The PLC was a great opportunity for teachers to learn about new technologies as they determined the need to learn. During the PLC teachers would discuss a certain activity that they wanted to do with their class and we could then offer different technologies and pedagogical strategies that might fit that need. Teachers also shared the technologies that were successful in their classrooms and this encouraged others to try new things and also distributed leadership to others within the PLC.

3) Building Relationships & Developing People – professional learning
I think that the PLC was a great opportunity for teachers to engage in professional learning as we did a lot of work with journal articles, video clips, blogs etc. and this created a great deal of the cognitive dissonance that is necessary for professional learning to occur.

4) Building Relationships & Developing People – promote development

I received excellent feedback from participants (including my mentor) during and after the PLC process and several members of the PLC have gone on to become leaders both within and outside of our board. One teacher is presenting at ECOO 2012, another is presenting at an International conference in October, and our principal is presenting at our broad principals conference.

5) Developing the Organization – collaborative learning culture

This was at the heart of what I was trying to accomplish with the PLC and I think that I demonstrated reasonable success. The outcome that I’m most impressed with is that members of the PLC are now comfortable being leaders themselves and I regularly hear stories of teachers outside of the PLC using technologies in the classrooms successfully because of the help they have received from those in the PLC.

6) Developing the Organization – challenges thinking and learning

The PLC had many moments of cognitive dissonance, where the ideas that I, or another member of the PLC presented, were met with skepticism and resistance. However, I think that, through discussion and the analysis of research, we were successful in reaching a common understanding of those ideas even though we may not have reached consensus. I can think of several instances where teachers felt they needed to ‘see it work in person’ before they would embrace a certain concept or ideology.

7) Leading the Instructional Program – new and emerging technology

One of the greatest successes of our PLC was that teachers began to feel comfortable talking about new technology and increased their abilities to learn about new technologies in a way that
is much different than how teachers typically learn new things (at a one time PD session). For those who may have been apprehensive about technology because of their perceived lack of knowledge, the PLC gave them the tools and the language to feel comfortable talking about it.

8) Leading the Instructional Program – develops PLC

As this was one of the first truly staff led PLC’s ever developed at our school, I think that its impact goes beyond its content. Our principal and several staff members saw the benefit of this type of professional learning and my principal is now advocating for, and supporting, the developing of more staff led PLC’s for this upcoming school year.

**Personal Professional Learning**

Through the PLC I experienced several key benefits to my personal professional learning.

- Teachers are interested in technology but at the same time have trepidation. How the integration of technology is approached is vital to its success. If people are pushed to hard they will tune you out and increase their resistance.

- Commitment to PLC’s is highly variable, even when participation is voluntary. I was expecting the same level of enthusiasm as I had for the topic and thought that, because the PLC was voluntary, others would share my enthusiasm. What I learned was that everyone has different motivators (impressing the principal) and levels of enthusiasm and I needed to do a better job of respecting and honouring those differences.

- Advocating for pedagogical change can be highly controversial. While I thought that I understood this difficulty before the PLC, it was only through taking this risk and going through this experience that I was truly able to appreciate this challenge. I work at a school that is highly academic (we have no locally developed students) and as such, we score very highly on provincial assessments (94% on the OSSLT this year). This creates
a culture whereby change is deemed unnecessary, given that ‘we’re already doing a great job’. I experienced several instances of resistance, isolation, and ostracization during and after my work with PLC and the primary reason was that people felt that I ‘wanted them to change’. Now I own a great deal of responsibility for this because I did not approach this attempt at creating change in a way that was sensitive to the school culture. I misread people’s desire for technology – we refer to ourselves as a ‘tech’ school – as a desire to change pedagogically in order to effectively implement it. This was not the case.

- My greatest learning was perhaps a lesson in humility. I believe that I have a great deal of knowledge around pedagogy, technology and the needs of the 21st Century, and this has allowed me to be highly effective in my role as a teacher. However, to be as effective as an administrator, I need to learn a great deal more about how to effectively implement change in a way that meets the needs of, and is supported by, the staff at the school, while also moving people to align with board and ministry policy and with my personal vision for school improvement.

**Results and Recommendations**

Reflecting on this experience, I would say that it was both a tremendous success and a great failure. It was a success because I felt as though my work with teachers had an overall positive impact on students. Students truly enjoyed the integration of technology in classes and I believe that they also benefitted from improved instructional practice related to constructivism. I think that teachers learned a great deal about technology and how it can be implemented effectively and I think most truly valued the opportunity to collaborate with their colleagues. As I progress as a learner, I will continue to present teachers with opportunities to learn about
technology integration, constructivism and collaboration and I will continue with the PLC process, as it is a process I truly believe in.

The PLC was also a failure for a couple of reasons. First, my colleagues and I attempted to promote technology integration to other staff and in the end we alienated certain staff members. While our approach had the best intentions, it was not planned as carefully as needed and certain members of the PLC presented it as a ‘either your with us or you’re against us’ type of problem. This was not my intent at all but next time I think this is something that needs to be directly addressed and discussed by the PLC before bringing anything to staff. I need to do a better job of recognizing teacher sensitivities to change and better understand the difficulties they face when encountering the possibility of change. Secondly, I do not think that the work of our PLC will be sustainable once I leave the school (hopefully to a VP position). I was very much at the centre of the leadership of the PLC and did a poor job of distributing leadership. I was afraid that if I gave up control that the PLC would lose it’s momentum and cease to exist as so many other new initiatives do in our school. The next time I run a PLC I will make a conscious effort to distribute leadership and will take the risk of losing the PLC to promote more authentic learning.

Overall the PLC was hugely beneficial to my learning as a leader. I was able to experience, on a much smaller scale, the challenges of leadership and the difficulties of attempting to transform pedagogy in a school. I have a much better understanding of the practical applications of the Ontario Leadership Framework and a better understanding of my strengths and weaknesses within that framework. It was a tremendously positive experience and I will be using my learning from it as I progress as an educational leader.


