

Dr A.E. Perry School Community Council Engagement Plan

The Dr. A.E. Perry SCC got together and brainstormed how we wanted to contribute to our school's Learning Improvement Plan. Through a series of discussions we developed our engagement plan. This was to be a frame work of how we wanted to change the way our SCC operated in conjunction with the staff and students of the school and to engage all members of the Dr Perry community (teachers, parents, students) to make our school a place where the students could develop a lifelong love of learning and self development. The following is a brief description of our five areas of focus:

1) Enabling Parental Involvement

Parents play a vital role in education. When parents are engaged and involved, everyone benefits – students, parents, families, teachers, schools and communities – and our school is enriched as a positive place to teach, learn and grow. We recognize that parental engagement can take many different forms. Some parents serve on School Councils and School Committees. Some volunteer for field trip, others read to their children every night. These are all engaged parents and all are contributing to their child's education.

We want to recognize, and encourage these many forms of parental engagement, to break down barriers that exist, and to support all parents with the desire to be fully engaged and involved. We recognize that strong partnerships among parents, educators and communities are vital for parental engagement. Our goal is to develop avenues to engage as many parents as we can in the learning process.

2) Growing Citizenship

We believe that the heading growing citizenship means enabling children to develop into individuals that are equipped to participate as contributing and responsible citizens now and in the future. Good citizens understand and demonstrate that they have a responsibility to the community, environment and law.

Our original brainstorming ideas that focused on this theme included:

- transfer of morals and values
- bullying prevention for all grades
- helping hour
- express appreciation
- take home kits/activities for families to do together at home on themes focused in this area. Some ideas included kits with a LIP focus such as respect, math activities, etc.
- card making session to make thank you cards for volunteers in the school/ community

3) Sharing Spirit Through Partnership

We believe there are different cultures and values within our own community. I don't think I could come close to naming all of them, but there is the school, of course, the Albert Park Community Association, the neighbourhoods and relationships between neighbours, the Wintergreen senior's complex, businesses... all have a different set of beliefs and behaviours. I think there's great benefit in finding how we would examine and potentially exchange beliefs and values, seeing where we have similarities and where there is diversity.

In addition to these original notions, the values of the Circle of Courage come to the forefront in my mind when I ask "How should the SCC share spirit through partnership?" We're not proposing any answers. Rather, we see this exercise as producing a template for the kinds of things an SCC sub-committee could consider.

4) Acknowledging Student's Value and Worth

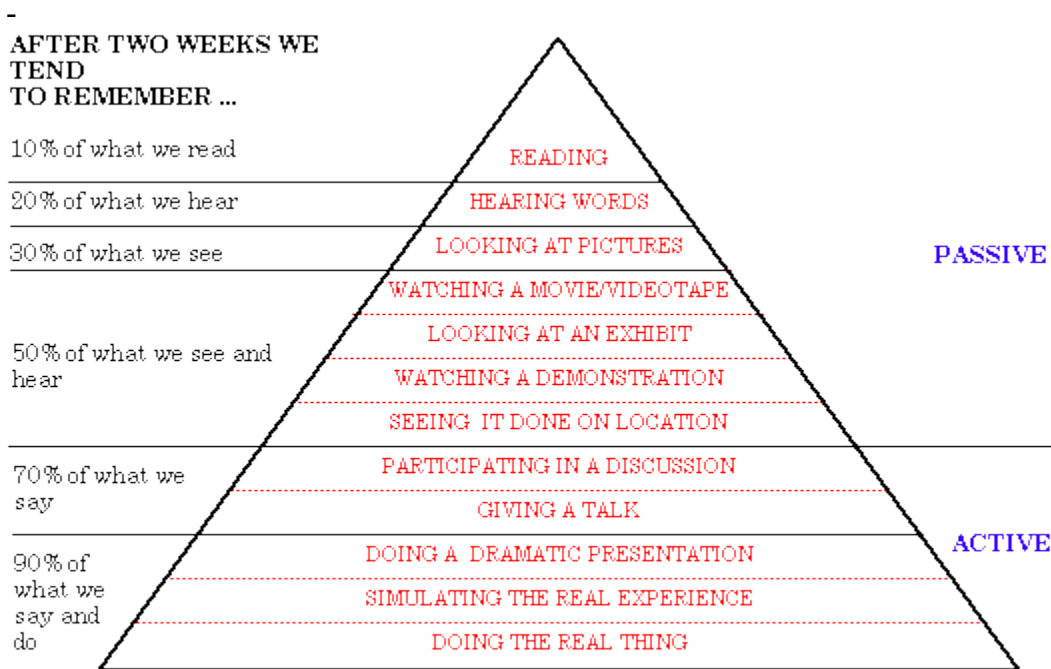
We believe that acknowledging students' value and worth is going beyond recognition for achievement or effort – this is acknowledgement for its own sake. The essence of this theme is acting on opportunities to acknowledge the student's existence as a human being, that the space they occupy is noted, that their *being, their personage* is acclaimed and accepted. Many social scientists working in this area agree the first and often most important first step in instilling positive self-beliefs in a child is to let the child know that you believe in them and love them for **who they are, not for what they do**. This can be said for parents, teachers and any significant others in a child's life. In acknowledging the student as a person, the statements we issue in this regard should not be "empty", "feel-good" comments or purely false flattery.

All aspects of the Learning Improvement Plan can be explored through this theme e.g. diversity, belonging, courage, independence, etc. Many of the activities within this theme are in alignment with other themes in the SCC Engagement Plan e.g. Warm Fuzzy Program and Self-esteem workshops can be associated with the Diversifying the Learning Experience.

5) Diversifying the Learning Experience:

We believe that we should help provide several channels of experiential learning facets, which coincide with classroom learning to enable the student to apply their knowledge to everyday life situations.

Our goal is to help provide children of all levels, physically and mentally, with creative opportunities to diversify their learning experience. An overview of goals could include: To assist youth in becoming attached to education, to have work ethic, to care and have input in the student's own learning content, show generosity, show kindness/courteous behaviour, achieve/recognize/consider or care about goals, timeframes, deadlines, and communicate effectively. The following is a bit of information to demonstrate the effectiveness of different types of learning:



Adapted from: Edgar Dale *Audio-Visual Methods in Teaching*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

