



## Career Education Newsletter

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### THE INFUSION APPROACH TO Guidance Oriented Approach to Learning

#### Beginning with the End in Mind

Career orientation in schools is moving away from being addressed as a career choice class, or course. Infusion or integration of career education across all grade levels and in all subjects is now becoming more apparent in many classrooms. In addition to providing information about the specific subject matter, teachers may properly discuss the roles and skills needed in various jobs. Whether the subject is science, French, English, mathematics, art or physical education students must learn the connection between their life and the subject matter they learn in the classroom. Guidance Counselors can also facilitate infusion of career skills by consulting with teachers and by teaching units for/with them. This approach of infusing career information into subject matter will add relevance and interest for young people and, ultimately, will contribute to the process and/or establishment of a "Guidance Oriented Approach to Learning (GOAL) Culture" within the school.

Over the years, research has been done dealing with the infusion of career education into the regular school curriculum, as opposed to teaching these skills separately. These studies (Millar, 1994; Himsl & Millar, 1988) have indicated that the infusion approach for education is best, as long as it is accompanied by professional development or staff training either at the pre-service level (university) and/or in-service level (schools). To accomplish this staff-training goal, I will be giving workshops during September 2003 to June 2004 entitled "The infusion of Career Development in the classroom". This will help teachers infuse career skills into their daily teaching activities.

"The Infusion of Career Development in the Classroom" will be a two-hour professional development workshop for elementary, secondary school teachers and guidance counselors.

#### A Method of Infusing Career Skills

As teachers, you have a strong influence on a student's career development. "The Infusion of Career Development in the Classroom" workshop will help you to develop lessons that draw on connections between the life of a child and the life of the classroom. The ultimate goal of the workshop is to allow teachers to assist students in making a smooth transition from school-to-school or school-to-work. This will be achieved by creating a network of teachers in the Western Quebec School Board who are infusing career development concepts and strategies into their everyday teaching activities.

Workshop activities will include:

- a. A review of the QEP. Elements of the Education Reform conducive to students' identity development and career planning and a description of how GOAL helps students meet the workforce requirements of the new economy;

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- b. Activities and lesson plan examples: practical learning.
- c. Discussion to generate a list of infusion activities for teachers.

Teachers already use a variety of methods or strategies to help students gain a better understanding of themselves in relation to the career building process. Some of these include:

- Encouraging students to examine and describe their school performance.
- Helping students to identify competencies used in school performance.
- Encouraging students to talk with and observe individuals in a variety of roles.
- Helping students connect their enduring visions with "the world."

In addition to infusing the career development ideas above, teachers should also implement the ideas incidentally, i.e., make casual comments when they see students in the hall or in class. Parents can also assist by acting as volunteers. For example, in one school a parent, acting as a career technician, used a telephone hotline and interactive video disc to assist students in exploring various career paths.

### **The Need for Professional Development**

In order for teachers and counselors to infuse career development into the curriculum, professional development needs to be provided. To address this issue there will be a GOAL Conference every school year for teachers, guidance counselors and administrators to attend. One of the guiding principles of this GOAL conference is to create in-service training opportunities for all involved in the Guidance Oriented Approach to Learning.

### **Conclusion**

Clearly, career education is moving away from addressing careers as a single choice in time, or one unit or course in a curriculum, to a pervasive, Life-Span focus. Infusing career education into all subject areas by providing professional development to educators, can make the Guidance Oriented Approach to learning a reality in your school. As a result, students will learn to view careers as dynamic and to view

change as an indispensable element in their future. The youth of today will require the career development concepts and strategies embodied in this infusion approach to live productively, successfully, and happily in the world of tomorrow.

In addition to "The Infusion of Career Development in the Classroom," other professional development courses can be offered to teachers to explore the different methods in delivering career education. If you have any suggestions or would like a specific workshop for your school to ensure that as teachers and counselors you have the background and skills needed to implement GOAL through the infusion approach please contact Kelly Butler at (819) 684 1770 ext. 13 or email: [kbutler@wqsb.qc.ca](mailto:kbutler@wqsb.qc.ca)

## **Aim Higher –**

### **Creating Workplace Learning Opportunities for Students**

#### **Mission Statement:**

“The “Aim Higher” initiative has been developed to raise educational standards by building alliances of mutual benefit between education, business and the wider community. The program aims to equip all students with the information and employability skills needed to make successful transitions from high school to post-secondary education and/or the workforce.”

Aim Higher is finally underway! Three community animators have been hired:

- **Kathryn Austin:** All Northern Schools.  
[kaaustin@wqsb.qc.ca](mailto:kaaustin@wqsb.qc.ca)
- **Sebastian Forget:** The Pontiac Region .  
[sforget@wqsb.qc.ca](mailto:sforget@wqsb.qc.ca)
- **Katie Mullaly:** Hull, Aylmer Region  
[kmullaly@wqsb.qc.ca](mailto:kmullaly@wqsb.qc.ca)

Participating school for the summer of 2003 are Symmes, Hadley, Philemon Wright, Noranda and John Paul II. If you would like to participate in this venture, please let us know as soon as possible as there is little time left before the end of school.

## TOP THREE CAREER WEB SITES

### 1. Job Futures 9/10

[www.jobfutures.ca](http://www.jobfutures.ca) This Human Resources Development Canada site for youth includes information about the world of work, plus career possibilities.

### 2. Youth Path 10/10

[www.youthpath.ca](http://www.youthpath.ca) Youth path is your single access point to government related youth programs, services and information. This fun interactive site looks at all aspects of life including, education, career, recreation, travel and more.

### 3. Jeune Youth 9/10

<http://www.jeune-youth.café.gc.ca> The only one of its kind in Canada, this Quebec based youth café is an information centre on federal government programs and services for youth aged 15-35. Many of these programs are linked to employment. Also available is a wide variety of information on themes such as travel, bursaries and business start ups.

## Conga Balloon Line

Participants line up one behind the other in a single file. Each person inflates a large balloon and then places it between him/herself and the person ahead, by placing the balloon at chest or stomach level. Each person in the line will have a balloon placed between their stomach and back, except for the ones at the front and back of the line. Now without using their hands, have all the students in the line attempt to negotiate around obstacles in the gym/room that has previously been set up. This can be done with just one group or many different groups within the class.

*Kelly Butler*

## The Transition to Middle School

Students make many transitions during their years of schooling: from home to school, elementary to middle school, middle to high school, and high school to college or work. These transitions are usually major events in the lives of students and parents. The stresses created by these transitions can be minimized when the new environment is responsive to each particular age group. This article presents a brief overview of some of the issues involved in the transition from elementary to middle school and provides suggestions for transition programs and activities.

### Middle School Transition Concerns

Student comments and behaviors give insight into their concerns as they move to a new school. When asked about making the transition from elementary to middle/high school, students at Chelsea Elementary expressed the following concerns:

1. Getting to class on time
2. Finding lockers
3. Keeping up with what will be taught in the classroom
4. Getting on the right bus to go home
5. Remembering which class to go to next
6. Bullying and/or personal safety
7. Finding lunch-rooms and bathrooms

Teachers also expressed their concerns for students when they make the transition from sixth-grade to middle/high school. Teachers listed specific challenges students experience including:

- Changing classes;
- Reduced parent involvement;
- More subject specific teachers;

## Quebec Loans and Bursaries

Information about the Quebec Loans and Bursaries program, scholarships and other financial concerns can be found at <http://www.afe.gouv.gc.ca/english> going on line is the fastest and easiest way to:

- Apply for financial aid
- Check the status of a submitted file.
- Find information on student financial assistance programs

The Quebec Loans and Bursaries Student Financial Assistance Manual is a 68 page document that is approximately 75% text and 25% clause (fine print). Reader beware. As several Quebec students are discovering the hard way, clauses add important qualifications to the body of guidelines that regulate Quebec's Loans & Bursaries policy. A particularly concerning clause, which makes it difficult for students who have received bursaries to earn extra cash during the school year, is catching a lot of students off guard.

- New standards and procedures;
- More peer pressure;
- Developmental differences between boys and girls;
- Fear of a new, larger, more impersonal school;
- Accepting more responsibility for their own actions;
- Dealing with older children;
- Unrealistic parental expectations;
- Unfamiliarity with student lockers;
- Longer-range assignments;
- A lack of basic soft skills.

### Effective and Comprehensive Transition Programs

The transition into middle/high schools is accompanied by intellectual, moral, social, emotional, and physical changes taking place in at least part of the transition group at any given time.

Students making the transition into a middle/high school need to receive assistance prior to, during, and after the move so that their social, psychological, and academic well-being is not compromised. Effective and comprehensive transition programs help (1) build a sense of community; (2) respond to the needs and concerns of the students; and (3) provide appropriate, faceted approaches to facilitate the transition process.

The following guidelines are suggested for planning transition programs (Weldy, 1991):

- Provide several activities within your school that will involve students, parents, teachers, and staff from both schools in the transition process.
- Establish a transition protocol that can be easily replicated and updated annually with little effort.
- Establish a timeline for the transition process.
- Schedule meetings between collaborative groups from sending and receiving schools and discussions for adults and students about the issues.
- Assess any human and financial resources available to support the transition process. Identify adult and student leaders from all schools and constituencies to help with the transition
- Ask students, teachers, guidance counselors, parents, and others to evaluate the transition program.

### Transition Activities

The following examples may be helpful in selecting or creating a transition plan to best suit your community:

- The need for curriculum articulation for all teachers at all levels should be clearly understood. Teachers from sending and receiving schools can meet to discuss curriculum and instructional practices.

- Teachers from receiving schools can visit the sending schools to initiate personal contacts.
- Letters can be sent home welcoming students and families, and inviting them to school activities.
- Parent Teacher Association members can call each new family welcoming them to the school.
- Guidance counselors and special education teachers from each school can meet to share information.
- Students of the receiving school can become "ambassadors" of goodwill. Student-to-student contact, preceded by a discussion of what information might be useful to new students, can help establish personal links. Sending-school students can be paired with receiving-school students for visitation days.
- Letters between students in the sending and receiving schools can be exchanged.
- Programs new to the entering students can be highlighted during student visitations.
- An unstructured open house can be held prior to the opening day of school; a structured evening open house can be held during the second week of school.
- A school handbook can be distributed to each family. Be sure to include phone numbers; school history; yearly schedules; teachers identified by grade level, team, and subject taught; bell schedules; lunch procedures; and other practical information.

### **The School Community**

The students, teachers, administrators, parents, staff, business partners, and residents in each school community contribute to the establishment, communication, and refinement of the various factors that define their middle/high school. Effective middle/high school transition programs:

- Establish a sense of belonging among the multiple constituencies involved,

- Appropriately respond to the needs of the incoming students,
- Provide multiple opportunities for all constituencies to develop a meaningful role during the transition process as well as maintain that role throughout the school year.

Adapted from an exert by Donna Schumacher

## **Lego Lesson**

**Purpose:** To demonstrate the uses for both teamwork and competition.

**Time:** 30 minutes for Part A, and another 20 minutes for part B.

**Materials:** one lego set of about 60-100 pieces for each group of 6-7 students.

### **Part A**

Prior to handing out the complete set to each group, take 2-3 key pieces of each set and mix with the other sets. Choose these pieces from the last ¼ of the instructions. Give each group of 6-7 students one lego set, and tell them the first group to complete their set is the winner.

Students will work together very quickly, but they will soon discover that they need to cooperate with the other groups if they wish to complete their task.

### **Questions:**

1. What kinds of cooperative processes did you and your group use?
2. Who made the decisions in your group?
3. How did you figure out that you had to cooperate with other groups? What did you offer that group?
4. Did you offer more in the cooperative process or the competitive? How did you change from cooperative process to competitive? How did you feel?
5. Which is more important cooperation or competition?

### **Part B**

To demonstrate that learning to plan is a transferable skill.

Ask the class if they think that they can put their puzzle together faster now that they have all the pieces, and they have had one try already. Undoubtedly they will feel they can. Have each group take their lego puzzle completely apart. Give them 2 minutes to make a plan without touching the pieces. After 2 minutes planning, have them stand up and rotate to another groups puzzle. Tell them the first group that finishes wins.

**Discussion:**

1. were you able to use any of your plan from the original puzzle to assist you in building the second? How much of it was helpful?
2. Since you had no time to prepare for the new puzzle, did the ability to plan help your group with the new puzzle.

**Wishing Everyone a Wonderful  
Summer!**

**See you in August.**