



Principal's Report

To

Meadowbank School Board of Trustees

20 June 2018

18th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THINKING

HISTORY:

- The first ICOT was founded by the University of the South Pacific, Fiji in 1984.
- They are hosted by a university every 2-3 years. Cities which have hosted previous ICOTs include Boston (twice), Bilbao, Melbourne, Edmonton, Wellington, Auckland, Belfast, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur.
- Meadowbank staff have attended the following previous conferences –
 - Melbourne (Camilla Jackson, Edith Cross)
 - Norrköping (Peter)
 - Wellington (Moira Blair, Rochelle Manning)
- Education is always one of the conference themes. Others change according to the focus of the hosting university and have included Sports, Business, The Arts and Environmental Sustainability.
- Speakers / presenters at ICOTs have included Edward de Bono, Art Costa (Habits of Mind), Howard Gardner (Multiple Intelligences), Robert Swartz (critical / creative thinking), Temple Grandin (autism / health), David Perkins, James Nottingham (Challenging Learners / The Pit), David Hyerle (Thinking Maps), Bena Kallick, Brendan Spillane (Coaching), Bill Martin, Rafi Feustein.

2018 CONFERENCE:

- Nice little touch – 18th Conference in 2018.
- Hosted by Florida International University (FIU). It is America's 4th largest university with over 57,000 students.
- The conference themes were –
 - Education, Learning and the Brain
 - Health and Well-Being
 - Environmental Sustainability
 - Population Movement, Integration and Global Citizenship



- There were over 250 presenters (keynote speakers, featured speakers, guest speakers, workshop presenters and students)
- About 20% of all breakout sessions offered were in Spanish, and all presentations (in English) were simultaneously translated into Spanish.
- There were over 1,200 registrations representing over 50 countries. There was large representation from Latin American countries.
- This year the NZ contingent was smaller than normal with only about 25. They included principals from Tauranga, North Shore, West Auckland, Ellerslie, Grey Lynn and Richmond Rd. Two schools included their DPs. There were 3 NZ presenters – Karen Boyes (Spectrum Education) and the principals of Grey Lynn and Richmond Rd.



SOME HIGHLIGHTS:

For the most part there were some great presentations. Unfortunately there were some duds and it showed the danger in making workshop choices relying on what presenters say about themselves and their topic in their briefs.

DAVID PERKINS:

What does it mean to be smart?

- Professor of Teaching and Learning at the Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Highlighted the changes in identifying intelligence from 50 years ago when it largely relied on IQ Tests. The debate was whether education could raise IQ levels vs there is little wriggle room for change.
- Now there are several versions of what smartness / intelligence can involve – Playful, Dispositional, Multiple, Performance and Intuitive.
- **Playful:**
 - Involves a lot of where schools / education is moving in NZ. Considering viewpoints of many, reflection time / what did I learn, deeper learning, allowing self-management / agency, social interaction (discussion / collaboration).
 - Catch – is learning transferable (to other areas)? Depends on time and school organisation. And how good are the routines? They don't suit some.
- **Dispositional:**
 - Again links to developments in NZ – signage and birds in hall. How do we feel about the topic? Involves student agency / choice.
 - Dispositions need to be cultivated and nurtured. They need structured language, modelling, interaction with others and other ideas, and high expectations.
 - Catch – many dispositions relate to pre-held beliefs. Danger of fixed vs open mindsets. People can be defensive rather than opening their minds
- **Multiple:**
 - Multiple intelligences requires different skills for the different intelligences. It is about broadening children's learning, not just literacy and maths. Involves the arts, physical aspects. Howard Gardner defined 8 intelligences. Our curriculum provides a broad scope of opportunities to enthuse interest and learning.
 - Catch – very difficult to divide schools into 8 areas of learning. Staffing, funding issues. Most children fit across many intelligences. They need variety.

- **Performative:**
 - Even though someone may be intelligent, have a high IQ, it is not a pre-determiner of success life or business.
 - Thinking / learning as doing. Decisions about how to engage with topics. Usually involves project based learning. Includes play-based learning (our NE/Y1 directions). Students tend to be more enthusiastic about their learning. Links to shifts of mental models (Dwek).
 - Catch – smart about what? What is the topic? Schools need to focus on broad foundational understandings. Avoid pushing kids too much to the technical stuff (eg calculus)
- **Intuitive:**
 - Involves our two minds – fast (thinking on the fly) and slow (considered internalisations). The latter operates on top of the former. Intuitions involve personal choices, reasons (for not liking someone), over-confident illusions.
 - Catch – co-relationship between intuition and actuality is just about zero.

MARY HELEN INMORDINO YANG: Why Emotions are Fundamental to Thinking

- Dr Inmordino Yang is Associate Professor of Education at the Rossier School of Education, Associate Professor of Psychology at the Brain and Creativity Institute, and a member of the Neuroscience Graduate Program Faculty at the University of Southern California.
- Gnome Project showed that humans have less genes than rice.
- Humans rely on high quality social relationships to develop. Evidenced by children from Romanian orphanages in 1990s.
- Presentation based on research involving the Nova School of the Future.
 - Studying reactions to stories and variations of stories. How does it make you feel?
 - Engaging children on an emotional level.
 - Evidence shows that engaging children on an emotional level increases their involvement in learning.
- Children need to learn how to feel emotions, not what to feel. Particularly the emotions that you can't see.
- Meaningful thinking and learning always involves emotions. They help construct a sense of self.
- Brain mapping shows greater activation when emotions are involved – this enables greater learning.

LANE CLARK: Deep Thinking for Deep Learning

- The former activates the latter. Therefore what are you doing to make children think in your classes in every lesson, every day.
- Relationship between sensory experiences and working memory. See, hear, touch.
 - See ½ sec, Hear 3-4 sec, touch < 1 sec to transfer to working memory.
 - Working memory can only deal 3-4 things at any one time.
 - Aim is to transfer from working to long term memory
 - To do so activate prior knowledge to enable relevance (see NZC & Best Evidence Synthesis) and transfer.
 - If overloaded (eg 5 things) they learn nothing.
 - Need to keep reviving items to keep in LTM. (maintenance)
 - Danger of semestered study. Maths. Items only revived say every 6 months.
- Impossible to go deep on all learning. Therefore integrate learning where possible. Link to prior learning.
- Use technology to help –
 - Brain Pop, Kahn Academy
 - Video lessons where possible. Available for sick kids, kids on holiday, those who need repetition, missed a stage, those who need to move on. Allows agency.
- Use organisers: Allows greater agency. Don't get agency without organisation and strong routines.
 - Think about cheat sheets with model answers. If children copy to write in red.
 - For older children: Question – how does this link to my work? So what?
- Integrate. Learning needs to be cross-curricular. Is school the only place where subjects exist?

BENA KALLICK:**Preparing Agile Students for the VUCA Age**

- Co-Director of Institute for Habits of Mind and Program Director for Eduplanet21.
- Web Link: [eduplanet21](http://eduplanet21.com)
- VUCA: An acronym used by US military (Iraq/Afghanistan), Harvard, Business world.
 - Volatility
 - Uncertainty
 - Complexity
 - Ambiguity
- Parents worry about children's readiness for world – college, career.
 - In 20 years will they be the same? College NO, Career maybe not.
 - Preparing kids for a changing world.
 - Teach global competencies. Prepare for an ambiguous world – many points of view creates a lack of clarity.
- Need to teach dispositions.
 - Cultivate, model, have high expectations
 - Children need to reflection against them

Habits of Mind: Knowing how to behave intelligently when you DON'T know the answer. Having a disposition to behave intelligently when confronted with problems, the answers to which are not immediately known.

The habits are –

Persisting	Thinking about thinking (metacognition)
Thinking & communicating with clarity & precision	Taking responsible risks
Managing impulsivity	Striving for accuracy
Gathering data through all senses	Finding humour
Listening with understanding and empathy	Questioning and posing problems
Creating, imagining, innovating	Thinking interdependently
Thinking flexibly	Applying past knowledge to new situations
Responding with wonderment and awe	Remaining open to continuous learning

- The habits
 - Can be learned and assessed
 - Are applicable to children and adults
 - Describe actionable patterns of capacities and behaviour
 - Focus on long term learning
- Moves learning from knowing the right answer to knowing how to behave when you approach the unknown.
- Integrate into the curriculum and norms of the school.
- Links with –
 - IB / PYP attitudes
 - Character education
 - Social / Emotional Intelligences
- Reflection and Agency.
 - Move from teacher led thinking / learning to student led mindful learning
 - Hattie research. Significance of student self-assessment
- Schools should –
 - Focus on what kids can do, not what they can't.
 - List the accomplishments they are proud of
- Learners should –
 - Identify the accomplishments that they are proud of
 - Be aware of the strengths that are most valuable when working with others
 - Which habits of mind they do well and don't. List "I can" statements – Yes / Not yet / No
 - Share ¼ly reflections with parents. Seesaw???
- <http://www.habitsofmindinstitute.org/icot>

BENA KALLICK: Teaching Choice

- Teach children how to choose – rather than to choose
- Choose a book from the library
 - Child frequently says by the cover / the back cover / the blurb / the vocab on the first pages
 - Teacher says read the first 25 pages. Does it excite? You don't have to stick with it.

BENA KALLICK: Metacognition

- Thinking about thinking
- Internalising what is going on inside your head. An awareness of your thinking.
- Knowing yourself as a learner.
- Being aware of –
 - Self Talk
 - Self Questions
 - Doing the right thing / or not
 - Can I do better
- Coaching Self
 - Know self as a learner
 - Awareness of self
- Mental Rehearsal
 - Seeing self as successful
 - Practising visualisation
- Cognitive Questioning vs Behaviour Questioning
 - Right answers for the wrong reason
 - Wrong answer for the right reason
- Talking about strategies
 - Children can compare strategies with the strategies of others.

FRED BURTON: Where's the Wonder?

- Tell me 3 things to cause me not to forget you.
- How does your past influence how you teach?
 - What you think is important
 - Your past success limits your future successes.
- Susan Engle. \$5 million grant to study Curiosity in Schools. Gave money back because she found a lack of evidence of it occurring.
- The rate of children's questioning drops from the age of 3.
- IBM Global CEO Survey – creativity was the No 1 criteria that was being looked for.
- vs
- Texas – We oppose the teaching of higher order thinking skills
"We can't allow children to daydream." Eva Moscovitz
- When a flower doesn't bloom you fix the environment. When a child doesn't bloom you
- Teachers should –
 - Don't start with the bar too low. It's better to start high and if necessary lower it.
 - Be provocateurs
 - Borrow, improvise, steal ideas
 - Ask a wonder question for your class each day. I wonder what birds do to have fun?
 - Shine a light on news item or social problem. How can we best help homeless people?
- A question – Have you failed on this enough to make it good?
- Speed is the enemy of quality

GUY CLAXTON: The Learning Power Approach – Teaching Students to Teach Themselves

- MA in the Natural Sciences from Cambridge; doctorate in Cognitive Science from Oxford; Fellow of the British Psychological Society, the Academy of the Social Sciences and the Royal Society of Arts. Former Professor of the Learning Sciences at Bristol University, Co-Director of the Centre for Real-World Learning at Winchester University, and currently Professor of Education at King's College London.
- Develop Learner Profiles – describing the outcomes of teaching / education. What (graduating) children can do.
- LPA involves school-wide
 - Vision
 - Curriculum
 - Pedagogical approach
 - Approaches into assessment
 - Leadership practices and priorities
- Student Agency and feedback are at the heart
- Assessment moves away from traditional testing. Not assessment wagging the dog.
- Thinking and Planning
 - Involves metacognition, agency, growth mindsets, resilience, critical thinking, building self-esteem, habits of mind
 - Not done “to” learners but “with”
 - All teachers think inquisitively about their teaching
 - How we measure / know about progress. That Y5 are more resilient than Y4 than Y3
- Vision
 - To raise school achievement and life fulfilment
 - That responsibility for learning is systematically transferred from us / teachers to them / students
 - More sharing of control with students
 - For learners to be good in unfamiliar situations
- Teacher need to –
 - Invite imagination, curiosity and wonder
 - Accept differences
 - Provide a safe environment for learning
 - Don't accept criticism within their classes
- www.guyclaxton.net
- I purchased 2 copies of his latest book “*The Learning Power Approach – Teaching Learners to Teach Themselves*”
- Guy presents at Waipuna on the 18th October. \$325pp + relievers.

GUY Claxton

Desirable Outcomes in Education

- Learners fulfilling potential
 - How do we know when they are?
 - When they're not?
 - Being aware of the goals and vision
- Children know what to do when they can't do something
 - When missed the train
 - When not understanding maths / homework
 - When talking to other who are different to themselves.
- Avoiding over-rescuing children. Need to experience being in the pit.

VERONICA BOIX MANSILLA: Signature Pedagogies in Global Education

- Principal Investigator and Steering Committee member at Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education
- What is global competence, and what kinds of thinking and learning does it embody? How can we nurture global competencies among students through powerful pedagogies?
- Think about where we are. Use of Google maps to slowly focus in from space.
 - Touch the boundaries, touching lives
- Links:
 - Wittgenstein Centre. Some amazing map links showing population movement
 - City Lab. Global connectivity. Global warming
- Rise of xenophobia and nationalism
 - Is it good? What causes it? How do we counter?
- Global Competencies
 - Seeking relevant deep, long-lasting learning
 - Engaging students to full potential
 - Learning for a more inclusive and sustainable world
- Nurturing in classrooms
 - Country reports, special issues, compare civilisations
 - Experiencing places (maps, feel, how would you divide the country, gather images / photos / videos, experience music, taste the food, view the art
 - Big Issues: Urbanisation, 1st Nation Peoples, Ecosystems, Rate of Change, Conflict, Global Warming, sustainability
 - Modelling the World: An opportunity to understand world patterns. Build models to see impact of ice melt, be a climate scientist, use e-pals to examine / compare contexts.
 - Humanise Identities: See and understand others in their full complexities. Successful migrants. Ban words such as weird, strange.
 - Take Action: Fundraise for Syria, Haiti, Samoa. Engage with empathy. Find inspirational people and possibilities. Photos

LINOR HADAR: Pathways to Implementing Thinking Education

- An Israeli experience
- Developed out of research observations –
 - 50% students' minds wandered off topic during lessons, 50% of the time.
 - There were islands of attention within islands of learning
- Involved integrating a thinking skills programme with mindfulness
- External facilitators assisted with the design phase and the analysis of issues / problems
- Positive learning impacts occurred when –
 - There were clear goals / direction and all supported and were committed to those goals
 - There was integration into all lessons and all areas of the curriculum
 - Teachers used mindfulness exercises to attend to mind wandering
 - All staff had shared PLD about practice
 - Teachers collaborated and talked together about student learning
 - There was teacher agency enabling curriculum design and implementation
 - Teachers were seen as learners as well.
 - Teachers reflected on the programme implementation and its impact on learning

TEMPLE GRANDIN: Autism

- Professor of Animal Science at Colorado State University and prominent author and speaker on both autism and animal behaviour
- Dr. Grandin did not talk until she was three and a half years old. She was fortunate to get early speech therapy. She was mainstreamed into a 'normal' kindergarten at age five.
- In 2013, the American Psychiatric Association revised the diagnostic criteria for autism. This greatly broadened the spectrum. Over the years, the diagnostic criteria have kept changing. It is not precise like a lab test for strep throat.
- Labels such as autism, ADHD, sensory processing disorder or learning disability are often applied to the same child. In older children with speech delay, the diagnosis sometimes switches back and forth between autism and ADHD.
- One of the problems today is for a child to get any special services in school - they have to have a label.
- The problem with autism is you've got a spectrum that ranges from Einstein to someone with no language and intellectual disability. Steve Jobs was probably mildly on the autistic spectrum.
- Rigid academic and social expectations could wind up stifling mind that, while it might struggle to conjugate a verb, could one day take us to distant stars
- Most people will know people who were/are geeky and socially awkward but very smart. When is a geeks or nerd become autism? It's a gray area. Half the people in Silicon Valley probably have autism
- Too many children that have a special needs are becoming their 'label'
- They need to have time to tinker
 - Experiment
 - Art / sewing / cooking
 - Playing musical instruments
 - Woodworking
 - Theatre
 - Welding
 - Auto shop
 - Creative writingTry different things - do you love something...do you hate it
- Grandparents and parents often discover that they may have autism, Aspergers, dyslexia or ADHD after their child / grandchild is diagnosed
- A label can also impact parental expectations, a major source of therapeutic momentum for children. A parent with a diagnosed autistic child might be reluctant to teach practical social skills that are outside the child's comfort zone, such as ordering food at a lunch counter. You have to stretch these kids just outside their comfort zone to help them develop
- Children who think differently will often thrive if they have more hands-on activities. An opportunity to concentrate on the things that their disability doesn't stop them from doing well.

SHARI TISHMAN Slow Looking

- Look at the interactions that we have
- How frequently is there wonderment and awe. Beyond the boring.
- How frequently do we look deeper? How do we do it?
 - A quiet stillness
 - See the wonderment
- See something with fresh eyes
 - In a painting see the yellow; see the red
- See things from the perspective of an outsider / another eye.
- Notice the details – see the colours and the patterns

LIANE BENEDICT: Mindfulness

- Mindfulness – a pathway to health, well-being and learning.
- Slow down and have greater awareness of the world around us
 - In mid list 5 things you can see, 4 feel, 3 hear, 2 smell, 1 taste
- We teach / parent who we are.
 - What should we teach? How should we teach? Why should we teach?
 - Seldom ask who we are teaching?
- Our bodies know when it is hungry, tired, thirsty. Awareness when it happens.
- Need to take time to reflect on the world around us and what is happening to us. Are we Mind Full or Mindful?
- Series of breathing exercises and routines.

HOWARD GARDNER:

- Professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.
- Instead of being related to his life-long work on Multiple Intelligences he presented on a new focus, Higher learning / University Environments
- Biggest issue facing universities is regarding mental health. Often linked to not belonging to institution / peer group / academic study

PROF. ERSKINE DOTTIN: Give Pupils Something to Do, Not Something to Learn

- Heavily focussed on Habits of Mind
- In order to learn from experiences teachers need to ensure that connections to prior knowledge and interests are made.

SO WHAT? SOME EVALUATIVE COMMENTS

- Like most conferences there was a large range of learning opportunities. Some were very good, and some did not live up to expectations.
- It was very re-affirming to be assured that we at Meadowbank School are on the right pedagogical pathway. Time and again key vocabulary common to that being used an implemented at Meadowbank cropped up. This included –

Student / Learner Agency	Teacher Agency	Collaboration
Shared Vision	Shared PLD	A common language of learning
Learning Dispositions	Learner Profile	Time for reflection (teachers & students)
Philosophy	Self-Assessment	Curriculum Integration
Thinking / Learning Maps	Coaching	
- Agency needs strong organisational routines. What do we need to do to ensure this?
- The presentation by Guy Claxton ticked many boxes.
 - I purchased 2 copies of his latest book for staff to absorb
 - I propose send several staff to hear him when he presents in Auckland in October
- SOLO Taxonomy went unmentioned.
- Should we delve in the Habits of Mind? A question for staff to discuss and ponder.
- Repeated presenters commented on the damage to the curriculum of schools and the pedagogical practice of teachers posed by national assessments / testing.
- With National Standards gone, is there room for more Wonder and Awe in our teaching and in children's learning? I found Fred Burton's laid back presentation inspiring and left me with a happy feeling. A gem.
- Are we doing enough of hands on learning?
- I know that we are at the end of the world, but do we give sufficient emphasis to globalisation and being a global citizen? Despite technology shrinking our world, are our children as aware of the world and world issues as much as children were 20-30 years ago?
- It's a while since I last heard Lane Clark, but it made me wonder if we can use technology more to enhance learning and agency.
- Compared with some parts of the world we are fortunate to have the freedoms that we do.
- Finally, the next ICOT is likely to be in 2021. Where – who knows. A lot of the original stalwarts are aging and they need new leaders. However, I think that Meadowbank should consider sponsoring a small group of staff to attend and to present about their / our success story. They would not be out of place.

Finally I would like to thank the Board of Trustees for continuing to support my professional learning and development which in turn positively impacts on –

- the professional growth of our staff,
- our school's continued exploration and implementation of the latest research,
- and the wider professional community via principal groups which I belong to.

Peter Ayson

Principal

Meadowbank School

June 2018