

INNOVATIVE INKLINGS

Comox Valley School District Newsletter for Innovation

November 27, 2015



Trustees

Themes of interest

Yong Zhao

Yong Zhao blog posts

Trustees' work

Fall conferences

Adaptive Schools 2

Themes worth developing—my musings

Passion—higher calling—personal purpose is important and what many are opting to pursue. How do we help students define their purpose?

Resilience—what does resiliency look like in our teaching/schools today? Who knows about our plan to develop resiliency in students K-12?

Openness to Change—openness is one of the biggest influences on success. What does this look like in our schools?



Yong Zhao Blog Posts

[Never Send a Human to do a Machine's Job: Top 5 Mistakes in Ed Tech.](#)

[Lessons that Matter: What should we learn from Asia's school systems?](#)

[A World at Risk: An Imperative for a Paradigm](#)

Yong Zhao

Yong Zhao currently serves as the Presidential Chair and Director of the Institute for Global and Online Education and is an elected fellow of the International

Around the District

Innovative events and efforts from around our district

What do trustees do?

British Columbia is a large province with many communities, each having different priorities, needs and unique educational requirements. British Columbians elect their Boards of Education to improve student achievement according to the diverse needs of these communities. As locally elected representatives, the trustees on these boards best understand their respective communities' particular strengths, challenges and demands.

Trustees engage their communities in building and maintaining a school system that reflects local priorities, values and expectations. School trustees listen to their communities; guide the work of their school district; and



SUCCESS

it's not always what you see

Authentic Governance for Student Achievement

Our school district is very fortunate to have no shortage of excellent leadership. In addition to last weeks [BCSSA Conference](#) (*Engaging Each Learner: Transforming and Leading Together*) that Trustees [Peter Coleman](#), [Vickey Brown](#) and [Cliff Boldt](#) attended, our trustees had their own professional development [Academy](#) this week.

The Academy was focused on the importance of alignment through effective strategic planning and was framed by the keynote presentation *Counting What Counts: What defines a world-class education* by [Dr. Yong Zhao](#). There were six plenary sessions – Dr. Zhao (*Creating World Class Education in the Second Machine Age*), [Honourable Mike Bernier](#) (*Remarks from the Ministry of Education*), [Warren Woytuck](#) (*Critical Thinking: Thinking for Leading, Leading for Thinking*), [Kathy Sawchuk](#) (*Governance and Leadership through Research-Based Practice*), and Sheila Dodds (*Review of the Office of the Auditor General of British Columbia Report on the Education of Aboriginal Students in the BC Public School System*); [Betsy Baxter](#), [Patrick Bocking](#), and [Mike Roberts](#) (*Using Data to Inform Critical Decision-Making and Strategic Planning*) – and a series of break-out sessions available to Trustees—*A System Approach to Supporting Aboriginal Education; Board Governance Challenges with Closing and Reconfiguring Schools; Walking the Student Learning Road: Board support and involvement in enhancing student*

Adaptive Schools part two

Last week several teachers and administrators met again for days three and four of the Adaptive Schools' workshop facilitated by [Lucinda Wolters](#) and [John Clarke](#). The session opened with sharing how participants had put Adaptive Schools' strategies from days one and two into practice. It was apparent that many had focused on a particular Norm of Collaboration for the past few weeks and were ready to challenge themselves to learning more.

They dove more deeply into the [7 Norms of Collaboration](#) work: Pausing; Paraphrasing; Posing Questions; Putting Ideas on the Table; Providing Data; Paying Attention to Self and Others; and Presuming Positive Intentions. By engaging in over a dozen different interactive strategies, they became clear on the value of using these 7 norms for all collaborative work.

Next they turned their attention to the art of dialogue and inquiry, such as posing questions using exploratory language and approachable voice as well as neutral ways to surface ideas or inquire into another's "thinking" on a topic.

Reducing potential threat in questions proved to be a provocative exercise!

They had a rich discussion on one of the more sensitive norms of collaboration and inquiry: Providing Data. It was ascertained that many schools are "data-rich and meaning-poor." They learned how respectful interaction with data can bring meaning and relevance into collaborative practices.

Day four began with contemplating potential obstacles to facilitating successful meetings and brainstorming on ways to overcome these obstacles. Interestingly, each group of five came up with similar themes and noted the best strategies for preventing issues were those practices introduced through Adaptive Schools, such as establishing norms of collaboration, creating effective meeting spaces, and deciding on decision making processes.

Lucinda and John led them through a series of different structures for successful meetings, including developing standards, engaging in *cognitive* conflict, clarifying participant roles, and making decision making processes transparent. Research shows that providing clarity on decision making is the most critical function that influences meeting success.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and please direct any suggestions, questions, or inquiries to me directly: Gerald.Fussell@sd71.bc.ca