



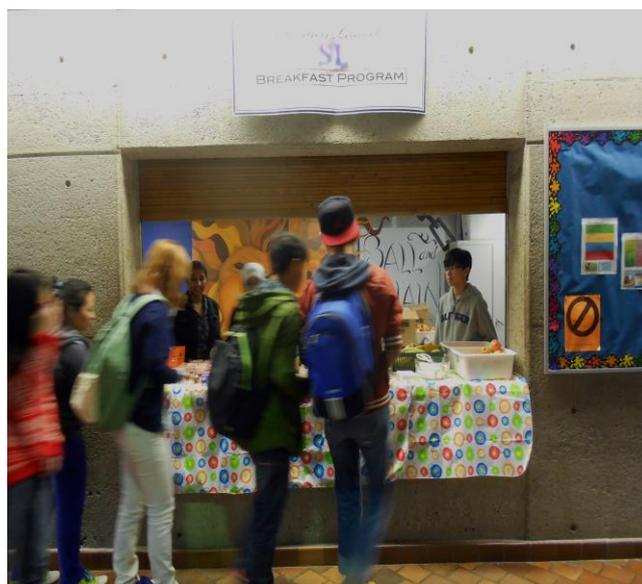
LEAP Action Learning Report 2014

Topic area (What)	What practices enhance Significance and the Supportive Classroom Environment, in classrooms and at the whole school level, to maximise student involvement and achievement?
Context (Where and When)	<p style="text-align: center;">Stephen Leacock Collegiate Institute, Toronto, Ontario September - October 2014</p> <p>Stephen Leacock C.I. (Leacock) http://stephenleacock.ca/ is a comprehensive secondary school (Grades 9-12) in Toronto District School Board. It shares the site and some facilities with John Buchan Senior Public School (Grades 7-8). The collegiate is situated in the Scarborough District of East Toronto. Many of the students are from language backgrounds other than English; many are recent arrivals to Canada. There is also a small group of International Students. The majority of students live in the tower blocks in the area surrounding the school.</p> <p>Leacock has an enrolment of 763 students.</p> <p>My LEAP partner Kathy Keroglidis is one of two Vice-Principals at Stephen Leacock. While at Leacock, as one of the 'Administrators', I was fortunate to be included in the evening Community K-12 BBQ, the Leadership Camp at the stunning Pigeon Lake and to be invited by teachers (at Leacock and John Buchan) to observe their classrooms, speak with their students and afterwards to discuss their programs. I 'walked the halls', a practice unheard of in Sydney, with the hall monitors Wendy and Caroline, who showed me around and included me in the daily breakfast club for kids and teachers.</p>
Research methods (How)	Classroom observations and walkthroughs; student interviews (what are you learning? what's the purpose of your learning? how do you know you're doing a good job?); teacher interviews about the observed lessons and support for learning; collection of work samples and documents; photographs.
Findings (So what)	<p>If you want to understand a school, talk to the students. Here are some of the practices that were working to engage, involve, extend and include students at Leacock.</p> <p>Support for Learning and Wellbeing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Guidance Department is a significant and central section of the school, with three full time permanent teachers and a secretary plus part-time social workers and a psychologist. Teachers in the Guidance Department (known as 'Counsellors') are assigned to students by alphabet. They are responsible for course organisation, tracking student credits, careers counseling, referrals and advice on scholarships, bursaries and post-school options college, university. They coordinate a variety of programs including: tutoring; volunteering; homework clubs; peer support. They organise courses for students at Night School, Summer School, Private School and

through e-learning. Leacock Guidance has their own website.

<http://leacockguidance.edublogs.org/>

- The Virtual Library – 24/7 access to e-books, research success guide, images and media, databases to assist students and teachers.
- Focus on Success (FOS) mentoring program for students identified as at risk in transition 8 to 9.
- Leap Program (at John Buchan) a ‘catch up program’ for new arrivals. When I visited there were eight students, all from a different countries of origin (ages 11 - 14) working intensively with a teacher.
- The Breakfast Program welcomed students to school each day and provided education on healthy eating. Students could take food to eat later; many would not have eaten otherwise.



Curriculum

To gain their High School Diploma students are required to successfully complete: 30 Credits, 40 hours volunteering and the Ontario Literacy Test. Belief: *community involvement encourages civic responsibility, promotes community values and supports career exploration.*

There is a broad curriculum, courses are compacted and semesterised; students do four courses per semester. The timetable is a 2-day cycle. Day 1 odd dates, Day 2 even dates, each day has the same subjects but in the reverse order. Therefore, teachers have students every day and students always know what they have.

Courses that provide authentic learning:

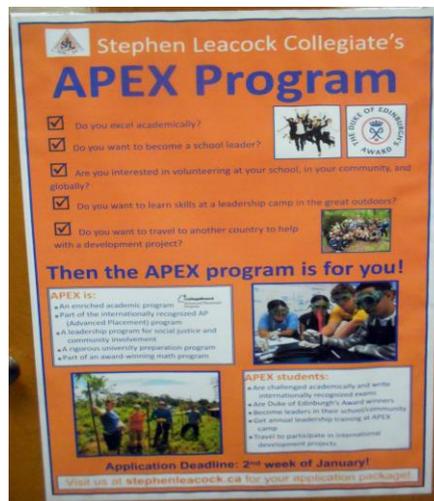
- Coop – students go to work and earn credits for it. The Coop teacher mentors students and organises the work placement to match each student’s needs, and visits the work placements.
- TV and Radio Production- real time broadcast LTV. This course develops skills, teamwork, problem solving, technical skills, presentation, employment skills, and literacy. Students begin by broadcasting the daily announcements at Leacock and weather. Available on You Tube.



- Automotive Mechanics – in- school auto lab and classroom.



- APEX program- advanced placement program adapted from The States. Provides academic challenge, leadership development and university preparation. Students apply for the program. It has been a significant strategy in attracting students to the school.



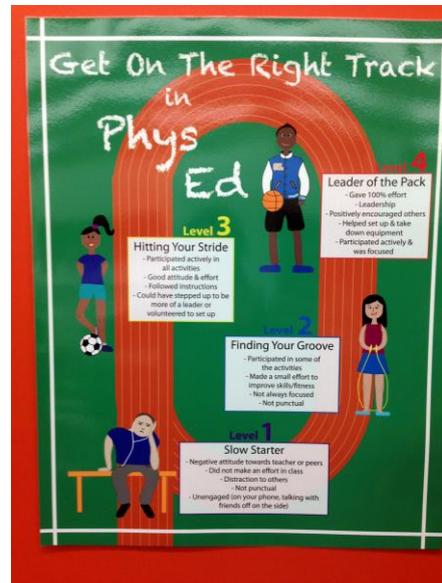
Other authentic tasks:

- Y10 Business (elective) students working on developing taste tests and survey for product of their choice.
- A Y11 poetry workshop with poet (and instructional leader) Lorne Kulak, introduces poetry by other TDSB students. His concept is 'street corner poetry' written by people who live there. The unit will include a poetry festival with poets who perform and work with students, including open microphone.

Explicit Quality Criteria/High Expectations

- Y11 English doing Marxist theory. Use of blackboards in the classroom to display quality criteria, key concepts / definitions that have been collaboratively developed.

- PDHPE



- Yr 8 Grammar lesson at John Buchan 'anchor charts' covered the room, just like primary, a brilliant lesson ended with, 'I couldn't send you on the weekend without something to practise'. I wondered whether we make our kids grow up too fast!



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