



# CONNECTION

RESEARCH-PRACTICE PARTNERSHIP (RPP) NEWSLETTER



## INTERVENTION SEASON HAS (FINALLY) ARRIVED

Now that teachers have signed consent forms and we know who will participate in the study, it is time to share the intervention with students.

As we described in the September 2019 Connection newsletter, teachers will have the ability to introduce Fiona's Feedback Adventure to their students. They are free to modify the storybook, create a new one, find a different source, or come up with an entirely different way to generate conversations with their students about feedback, learning, and making mistakes.

No matter what resource teachers choose to spark conversations about feedback, it is very important that they complete the questionnaire that accompanies the intervention materials. We will share a link to the questionnaire via email to teacher participants through principals at Suzuki Charter School and Calgary Arts Academy. The questionnaires will also be available at [leighton4learning.com](http://leighton4learning.com)

If teachers have any questions about using the intervention, filling out the questionnaire, or anything else, please reach out to Vicky Qualie by email at [vorlick@ualberta.ca](mailto:vorlick@ualberta.ca).

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITY

In an effort to connect teacher research partners, we have created a professional learning community (PLC) using eClass External from the University of Alberta. eClass is designed to support online university courses, but we are using its unique qualities to open a discussion platform for teachers to share their intervention ideas.

Teachers who choose to participate in this PLC will be given a username and password to log on to the secure website. They will have access to Fiona's Feedback Adventure and a link to the questionnaire to provide their feedback. We will set up discussion forums for teachers to share ideas with one another. For example, if a teacher uses Improv Theory (Failing Forward) to engage their students in a discussion about feedback and making mistakes - they could share the contents of the lesson, resources that supported their work, and how the students responded.

Vicky Qualie will populate the forum with ideas that teachers generated during the teacher-research meetings on August 27th (SCS) and September 3rd (CAA). One thing we ask is that teachers do NOT post pictures or videos of their students engaged in these activities on eClass. We do not have ethics approval to take/share photos or videos of students.

We hope to create an "information hub" where teachers can go to be inspired and support one another. Vicky will be available to monitor the discussions and answer questions, and Jacqueline will chime in if there is a specific need. We are stronger together!



## RESEARCH + PRACTICE IN ACTION

There is a growing demand for researchers to produce and practitioners to use evidence-based practice in education, yet these two worlds are not historically well connected.

The traditional view of knowledge production and dissemination places researchers at the front end of the pipeline, identifying problems of practice or gaps in literature, designing and carrying out the inquiry, and sharing their results for teachers to infuse into their practice (Tseng, Easton, & Supplee, 2017). One way to shift this approach is to introduce reciprocal relationships where teachers become research partners. This was one of our goals as we developed an RPP.

The Research + Practice Collaboratory (RPC) is an organization that engages “educators, researchers, and students to jointly discuss and design opportunities for improving [science, technology, engineering, and mathematics] STEM education” (RPC, n.d.). They are made up of four collaborating laboratories who develop and test new approaches to research and practice. You may be interested to read about their Research + Practice in Action in the link below.



This group uses a design-based implementation research (DBIR) approach with their RPPs to infuse systematic inquiry with an evaluation component (Fishman et al., 2013). We have been using similar principles in our intervention research as we ask teachers to try a new tool, gather feedback, make changes, and try again. Through these iterative cycles of testing in the field, we expect to generate meaningful and useful results.

## ATTACHMENT IN THE CLASSROOM

Our study is rooted in the relationship between socio-emotional variables - specifically trust, empathy, engagement and well-being - and academic achievement. The desire to learn is rooted in emotions (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005) and the social environment of the classroom can influence that desire.

Bowlby (1969) discovered that a child's attachment to significant adults, including teachers, directly impacts cognitive, emotional and social development. When children feel secure in the relationship with their caregivers or teachers, they are free to explore and learn.

Even though the bond between teachers and students is temporary, we propose this attachment is bolstered when

teachers are sensitive to children's needs and therefore trustworthy in the eyes of students (Leighton, Guo, Chu, & Tang, 2018).

Edutopia produced the video below, where they highlight how strong student-teacher relationships are central to the learning process.



The American Psychological Association offers tips on how to improve student relationships with teachers, including developing relationships with difficult students. Check out their website here:



## ALBERTA RESEARCH NETWORK: PRESENTATION AND POSTER SESSION

Our co-authored submission to the Alberta Research Network (ARN) October meeting was accepted. On October 16, 2019 Vicky Qualie will present a break-out session titled: *Research-Practice Partnerships: Bridging the Gap with Evidence*.

In this presentation, she will share some of the obstacles our team encountered in the second year of the research project and describe the research-practice partnership (RPP) that emerged from a process of reflection and collaboration. Vicky will outline the design parameters of the Parallel Project, which aims to evaluate teachers' experience with intervention researchers and the RPP. Jacqueline and I are pleased to share this knowledge with the ARN community.

In addition to the presentation, Vicky has co-authored a poster to share during the breaks and attract more interest among researchers and practitioners to consider RPPs for future research projects.

## REFERENCES

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