



The Learning Clinic

Education & Career Development Agency

I expect to pass through the world but once. Any good therefore that I can do, or any kindness I can show to any creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer it, for I shall not pass this way again.

— Stephen Grellet

Men are only great as they are kind.

— Elbert Hubbard,

What wisdom can you find that is greater than kindness?

— Jean-Jacques Rousseau

A kind word is like a spring day.

— Russian proverb

No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.

— Aesop Fable

Our duty is to be useful, not according to our desires but according to our powers.

— Henri F. Amiel

If the world seems cold to you, kindle fires to warm it.

— Lucy Larcom

There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.

— Edith Wharton



Instant Access To Marks Over The Internet May Lead to A Whole New Way of Reporting Student Evaluation

REFLECTIONS by...

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The Rainbow District School Board made a significant announcement in February 2010 which on the surface appeared to be a unique experiment in communication, but I would suggest that this is a sign that we are on the verge of a whole new way of reporting student progress. Furthermore, I would respectfully suggest that this new reporting process will lead to an end to the traditional report card system that is now in place and which is better suited to a society that existed long ago.

The RDSB announced that by September 2010, all secondary schools in the Rainbow District School Board will have in place a system that will allow parents of high school students internet access to their children's mid-term and final marks as well as their attendance record. It is called the Parent Assist Program.



Parents will receive letters containing instructions and passwords that will allow them to access their children's academic information through the Rainbow Board's website. Students over the age of 18 will be given passwords to access this information instead of their parents.

Most students are responsible enough to be counted on to bring their mid-term and final marks home for parents to look at and if any of the parents wish to discuss the results they can always arrange to meet with teachers. Perhaps the most revealing information to be accessed through the Parent Assist Program at this point is the attendance record, which for some students is not very flattering and can explain a lot about the overall results being achieved by students. The key here is that if teachers and administrators are going to be able to post this

information on the internet for access by parents, then it must not involve much more technology for other information to be added.

I would hope that the next step in this process is the posting of all "unit test marks" in each subject area so that a "running" tabulation can be kept on each student which will allow one to identify problem areas at any time during the school semester and not just in the middle and at the end. This would allow teachers to provide anecdotal notes and suggestions on strategies for improvement on the site as well. Parents would then be able to communicate with their child's teacher over the internet or by phone so that they are working cooperatively to ensure the success of the student. This seems to be a natural evolution of the system and would provide more than just parents with valuable information. For example, teachers would be able to monitor the progress of their students in other classes and see if some of the comments being made by other teachers were consistent with what they are seeing. It would allow for teachers to discuss ways in which they could work together for the benefit of the student, much in the same manner as two doctors collaborating on the treatment of a common patient.

There are some obvious challenges that must be addressed before professionals feel comfortable about being so openly transparent when it comes to evaluation, but it would seem that there are some real possibilities here as a result of this technology. Think how nice it would be for a child to sit down with his/her parents and review the marks and on-going comments of all teachers. Imagine how much more meaningful education would be to a child if he/she could actually see the "whole picture" as it is developing right from the beginning to the end. And imagine how nice it would be for parents to be able to ask questions and make comments that would be added to the "profile" so that at the end of the year the report contains a summary of everything that has gone on with the child and not just a few grades and averages.

I am confident that this system can be done in a very professional manner which would greatly enhance the communication between home and school. Moreover, I see this as a great way for parents, teachers and students to work together in a very positive manner to help maximize the learning potential of each student.

SPECIAL NOTICE:

For a video clip on this topic, go to the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/MrRobertkirwan#p/u/1/mbusDCEAdHw>

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<p>Robert Kirwan, OCT, B.A. (Math), M.A. (Education) Education, Training & Career Development 4456 Noel Crescent, Val Therese, Ontario P3P 1S8 Phone: (705) 969-7215 Cell: (705) 562-7793 www.thelearningclinic.ca rkirwan@thelearningclinic.ca</p>	<p><u>PERSONAL TUTORING</u> Over 100 Instructors English & French Elementary to Post-Secondary One-on-One in Own Home</p>