Spotlight

**RESIDENTIAL AND
VISITING SCHOLARS**

Welcome

The tagline at the top of our original professional learning website, created in Fall 2009, reads, "Continually becoming the professionals we already are." I find this statement wonderfully circular. The teaching faculty at LAS are professional, but we continually strive to be more professional, and by doing so, we are professional.

In other words, the true claim of being professional comes from an attitude of always seeking to do better. As each individual teacher strives to improve, we create a community atmosphere that encourages student learning and a community attitude that wants to always do better.

Continually becoming the professionals we already are.

To help create an exciting atmosphere of improvement, we began supporting our own faculty members, as well as faculty members interested in LAS, to focus on specific projects. The projects themselves benefit the school, as you will see, but in addition, the doing of the projects benefits the school.

With LASER, faculty create curriculum and evaluate curriculum implementation, rethink assessment to bolster learning, implement blended learning, test classroom products, and reconsider how we support student homework. Our faculty who take on these issues develop professionally, help their colleagues question if current practice is good enough, and provide possible solutions to issues we'd like to resolve.

Enjoy the introductions to the people and their projects. Don't hesitate to contact any of the authors. If you can, sit down with them during a campus visit to ask about their work. And if you are working in a school, consider starting a research arm yourself as an extension of professional learning.

Paul Magnuson
Director of LAS Educational Research
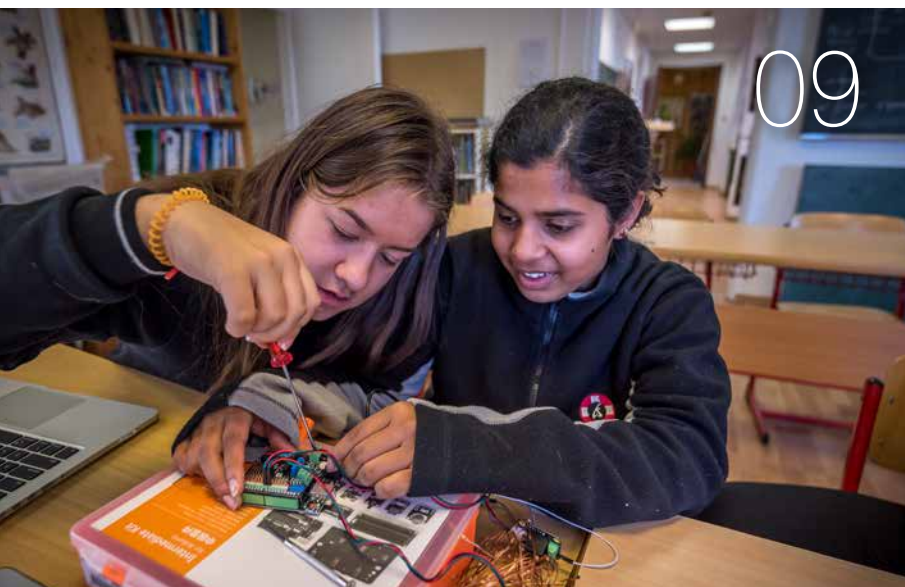*las.ch/educational-research*

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On the Cover

LAS hosted its first TEDx conference in 2016. Student Jenna S. spoke about adoption in India. In all, there were 3 student speakers and 7 invited speakers from all over the world.

Introduction

In our second issue of Spotlight, we continue the focus on our own faculty members as excellent resources about teaching and learning, curriculum development, and new paths in education. We also expand to highlight the visitors to our campus in these early years of the LAS Educational Research Center.

We had nine resident scholars in our first year, eight in our second. Here we highlight three projects from 2015-2016, including Andie Flett's and Suzy Meysken's (resident hall heads) research of study hall, Dan Patton's (science teacher) and Bill Tihen's (IT network specialist) development and pilot of a middle school class called robot gardening, and Vanisha Gorasia's (math) switch to standard based grading. Adam Bradford (science teacher), Amanda Bjorling (librarian), Chris Leonhard (science teacher), Jason Murphy (math teacher), and Keegan Luttrell (art teacher) also completed projects in our first year.

We also highlight results from 2016-2017, including the mindfulness work in the middle school by Brittany Holsapple (learning support specialist); Kellie McGill's (health center director) work with the LAS pledge of the middle school students, and Kelly Deklinski's (arts teacher) horizontal curriculum through an artistic Idea Book. Additional projects this year include a review by Kellie McGill of staff professional development in mindfulness, Caroline Brocvielle's (French teacher) study of the active learning classroom, Anthony Leutnegger's (development) energy audit of our campuses, and Joan Flynn's (English teacher) efforts to increase student self-regulation in the reading and writing workshop course in the middle school. Dan Patton and Andie Flett extended their work from the previous year into the current year.

One goal of LASER is to present the work we do to an audience beyond our school. In one conference this year, we exceeded the total number of academic presentations of the entire past year. Andie Flett, Bill Tihen, Chris Leonard, Dan Patton, John Harlin (Alpine Institute Director), Paul Magnuson (LAS Education Research Director) and Stephanie Ameri (French teacher) presented at the ECIS Educators Conference, held this year in Copenhagen. Our goal is to improve ourselves through preparing our ideas so that we might share them with others—and in the process, identify and network with the other educators who are on the forefront of teaching and learning in their schools.

If you didn't make it to Copenhagen to hear our presentations, no worries! We are bringing some of them to you here, complete with contact information for all of our teacher researchers who have worked so hard.

The Idea Book as Horizontal Curriculum

Kelly Deklinski
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The Middle School "Idea Book," an A4-sized unlined sketchbook, is used by students in grades 7 and 8 throughout their academic and personal lives. The book, along with a kit of art materials, is carried to each class and to after-school activities.

Creating an atmosphere of innovation and reflection doesn't stop with our residential scholars. We also invite external educators—visiting scholars—to learn with us at LAS.

We started small in 2014-2015 with a single visiting scholar, Yoshida Hisashi, from J. F. Oberlin University in Japan. Hisashi studied and wrote about the IB program during his sabbatical stay with us.

Interest in being a visiting scholar is strong, however, and in 2015-2016 we welcomed a number of visiting scholars. John Harlin, Director of the LAS Alpine Institute, introduced many visiting scholars to us through his interest in citizen science. Chris Randin (University of Lausanne) and Irene Alvarez and Anne Delestrade (Centre de Recherches sur les Ecosystèmes d'Altitude) joined us in Fall 2015, looking at phenology and climate change in the Alps. Mauro Fischer (University of Fribourg) lent his support in the study of glaciology and Martin Brocklehurst (European Citizen Science Association) introduced LAS to its first international conference in Berlin, where we presented our efforts in citizen science.

One doesn't have to be a professor to be a visiting scholar. Graduate student Alys Mendus made a stop at LAS in 2015-2016 in her tour of schools across the globe, looking for elements of high-functioning innovation and pedagogy in education. Beth Skelton, who runs her own education consulting company, visited LAS for the fourth time in 2015-2016, committing to a visit in 2016-2017 as a resident scholar, and John Miller, the CEO of Agile Classrooms, joined us for the entire summer in 2016.

We started the 2016-2017 school year with a visit from Jón Ingvar Kjaran (University of Iceland), who recently finished his book on gender roles in Iranian culture. We were also fortunate to have two individuals who have taught on our campus for the Endicott College masters programs live with us for six weeks, Steve Carber and Thy Tran.

Alys Mendus and Beth Skelton plan on return visits in the spring and our work continues with our citizen scientist partners from the Swiss universities, French research center, and German association.

Enjoy the articles and don't hesitate to contact the authors. They would love to tell you more about their projects and possibly help you set up a project as an extension of professional learning in your school.

The Idea Book was introduced in the 2016-2017 school year in an effort to increase creative thinking, attention to detail, mindfulness, planning, autonomy, and self expression, as well as to make connections across disciplines. In addition, students who pursue advanced studies in a variety of disciplines will be better prepared to keep process journals and develop their work.

As the teacher of Middle School Integrated Arts (interdisciplinary music, visual art, and theater), I was able to put together individual kits containing the sketchbook, writing instruments, and arts materials for each student and then pilot the use of the book this year. Faculty members working directly with middle school students also received an Idea Book and kit as well as a teacher guide containing prompts and other ideas for how the Idea Book may be used in class.

Any teacher or member of the residential life staff can request that students complete work in the Idea Book during the academic day or after school. For example, science faculty have used the book to create mind maps, design faculty have asked students to draft plans for a futuristic car, and trip leaders have had students sketch and reflect on their experiences. Students may also work independently in the book to develop their ideas, express feelings, sketch, plan, draft, and design, among other things. The possibilities are endless!

Resident Scholars

The goal of our resident scholar program is to provide support for creative and driven staff to explore educational issues in depth and in our school context to enliven their experience of professional development at LAS while they enrich the academic environment for us all.

2015-2016

Adam Bradford | Science teacher
Product Testing: Circuit Scribe

Amanda Bjorling | Librarian
Online Learning with Odysseyware and Other Platforms

Andie Flett & Suzy Meyskens
Resident Hall Directors
Rethinking Study Hall

Chris Leonhard | Science teacher
Raising Environmental Awareness

Dan Patton | Science Teacher
Development of Forest Ecology & Robot Gardeners: Two Middle School Courses

Jason Murphy | Math teacher
Technology Planning for the Middle School

Keegan Luttrell | Art teacher
Art in Leysin

Vanisha Gorasia | Math teacher
Standards Based Grading

2016-2017

Andie Flett | Resident Hall Head & Younger Grades Coordinator
Dormwork

Anthony Leutenegger | Alumni and Development
Energy Audit and Sustainability

Brittany Holsapple | Learning Specialist
Mindfulness: Creating a Culture of Self-Care

Caroline Brocvielle | French Teacher
The Active Learning Classroom

Dan Patton | Science Teacher
Bill Tihen | Information Technology
Authentic Ways to Incorporate STEM Across the Curriculum

Joan Flynn | English teacher
Scaffolding Self-Regulated Learning in the Middle School Reading & Writing Workshop

Kellie McGill | Mental Health Counselor
The LAS Community Pledge in the Middle School

Kelly Deklinski | Arts Teacher
The Middle School Idea Book: Implementation and Inspiration

Middle School Curriculum Development: Robot Gardeners

BILL TIHEN & DAN PATTON

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Dan Patton (science) and Bill Tihen (IT) joined forces to create a course that includes both their interests—biology and electronics. The basic task for students? Build a terrarium that will support a healthy garden, but make it using simple robotics and coding so that the garden will stay alive even when you aren't around.

During the 2015-2016 school year, Dan and Bill continued building on projects from the previous year to create two interesting 5-week courses for the middle school.

Robot Gardeners is not a common name—or subject—for a class. What is it?

Dan | We're using Arduino microcontrollers and compatible sensors to automate the conditions plants need to grow, using small plastic terrariums right in the classroom. The idea grew out of the work we were doing with aquaponics the previous year and the desire to do better scientific experiments, which require better control.

And why do you want to automate gardening?

Dan | Well, for starters, it's hard to talk with students about all the variables involved with growing plants unless students can actually experience each variable and see the way in which they are all connected.

Think about humidity. Humidity matters, even though it's hard to see. It's one of the variables that needs to be accounted for, that needs to be controlled. And learning about how to control it helps the students learn about humidity itself: what it is, what other variables affect it, and how it influences plant growth.

What are some of the other variables the students learn to control?

Bill | Light intensity, temperature, soil moisture, and air flow.

You are writing curriculum, but you also piloted the unit in class this year.

Dan | Right. We used a couple of different sensors to take a look at the basic variables in play when growing plants. Light and temperature sensors weren't too difficult for the students. Soil moisture sensors were quite difficult, though.

Bill | We went with the inexpensive models and they didn't always work so good.

Dan | Yes, next time we'd maybe build them ourselves with wires and nails and plug that into our system.

Bill | The sensors we had worked pretty good with relatively dry soil, but tended to give all kinds of inconsistent readings with wet soil. We'll have to keep playing around with that.

Dan | That's a good example. It was a problem for us as teachers, but it still helps students learning about moisture. When a student sticks a sensor into dry soil and it says wet on her

computer, she obviously has to wonder what can be going on. Maybe the surface is dry, but below the surface, it's wet.

So the sensors didn't work too good in one sense, but even that provided some good learning opportunities.

Dan | You could say that, yes. Some of them worked great, though.

Bill | We had some pretty real and specific needs—like going on spring vacation. The goal was for students to keep their plants alive even when they weren't here, letting the Arduino "robots" do the work that the students had programmed. So the pumps that didn't work were replaced with stuff that was a little better. We played around and kept saying, well, what else can we do? We set up some tests with light, for example, using a flashlight. We used a disco light for tomatoes [laughs].

A disco light?

Bill | Yeah, well, we once got a feedback loop where the sensor would realize it was dark, so it would turn on the light, but then the sensor would realize it was light, so it would turn off the light. It was sort of funny but it didn't do much for the plants. Again, we've learned a lot.

Did the plants learn to dance?

Bill | No.

Dan | Another motivator to create the course comes from my perception that there doesn't seem to be very much electronics

and there's very little computer programming and automation anywhere in the curriculum. It's not that hard to do, so I started thinking that robot gardening would be a good way to introduce kids to programming.

Since you started, have you found other schools doing similar things?

Dan | I haven't seen it in high school. Universities, sure. High schools are probably using Arduinos in one way or another, most likely in a makerspace context. I haven't heard of teachers using Arduino in biology to control plant science.

What have the students said about it?

Dan | You can tell that they like it, at least for a stretch of time, because they were tripping over themselves to get the materials. I didn't need to try to get them to get to work.

Bill | The engagement seemed good. If they were frustrated when they didn't get it, I think we can assume that they really do want it to work.

Do you feel ready to do the course again?

Dan | Yes.

Bill | We know what parts we should have more of and which parts would be good to have as backups. We've burned up some stuff along the way. [Pointing to a poster on the wall] See the note over there?

"Do not plug in until you have checked the wires!"

Yeah, well, when you get a sudden puff of smoke and a hot plastic smell, it's usually not so good for the equipment.

Dan | Interestingly, the amount of time the lessons took was actually less than we thought. We did our pilot course about twice as fast as we had planned for.

Bill | It was hard to know what would be difficult. Some parts were fast and some were slow. Learning about the relay and the LEDs went fast. They got that immediately. But the water pumps seemed to take forever to get done.

Dan | All the students did some good building, focusing on their different variables, and using the bits of computer code we gave them. But unfortunately, right at the end we ran out of time and didn't get all the components: light, temperature, humidity, and so on, going at the same time. Our timing will be better next year.

Bill | We built and took apart, then built and took apart. Next time, if we keep building each time we won't have to rebuild the whole thing at the end. That will be a better model.

Dan | There's lots we can do different next time, but the general framework worked really well. We were one week ahead in one class, where Bill and I worked together, and then I taught the other class myself, but about a week behind the first one. We set it up this way because I started with almost no knowledge of programming and electronics, and Bill was teaching me.

We all need to be able to fail, but not fail miserably.

Bill | Right. That makes me think, we also needed to teach about the physics of pumping. The programming isn't the only important thing. Physically moving the pump 10 centimeters this way might make a flood, but 15 centimeters that way and it worked.

Does Robot Gardeners tie into the ClimeCase and aquaponics experiments from a year ago?

Dan | Sure, they are direct descendents. Ideas tend to come from ideas which came from ideas. Like the forest ecology course.

Right, tell me a little about forest ecology. That's also a unique concept for a class.

Dan | This idea came from the idea of how important it is to notice change over time in ecosystems. I have been working with this in one way or another since I started teaching science. It's become very important to see how ecosystems are changing due to climate change and global warming.

There's a great opportunity to learn about climate change using our local forest. What will be the effect on our local forest as it grows warmer?

How do you answer that question?

Dan | We can go into our forest lab right outside the middle school building. It's so nice to have a lab right next door, outside, and with a really diverse forest.

Think about change over time. How do you know change is happening? You have to measure variables over a period of time, and start making comparisons and seeing trends.

What types of variables?

Dan | Soil temp. Air temp. The canopy cover up above, but also on the ground, and for that matter, anywhere in between the ground and the top of the trees.

Are these things that you can really track?

Well, that's the issue. Unlike our small gardens in the classroom that change quickly, when we look at tree diameter and diversity of trees, we have to have a very long range view, because it obviously doesn't change much over time. But it does change, just over a longer length of time. And it's good for students to stretch their thinking and think about change in terms of years or decades, instead of just what can happen in an hour-long class.

So how do you help them see change in the forest?

That's where we have to think of the bigger study we're involved in here at school. We're putting the data we collect into a real science project. John Harlin in Alpine Institute has helped turn this project into ongoing data collection over years—hopefully over decades. Students today can see that their data will matter. Future students will be able to see that the foresight of previous students made their study of the forest even richer.

So is somebody using the data you are collecting already?

Not yet, but CREA and GLOBE are both organizations that could use it now. And if we are good about recording our data over time, we will start to attract scientists who are interested in the data that we have, right here from our own forest.

You see, we are in the zone here where two biomes meet. Our forest changes from deciduous to coniferous right here in Leysin, at least for now. The coniferous forest is going to climb higher. We can learn if the coniferous is getting pushed out by the growth of deciduous trees, or if the coniferous forest is adapting to the climate and essentially creating space that the deciduous forest is taking advantage of.

There's an intentional and very direct tie into our annual LETS study that John and Chris and the rest of us developed. Our forest ecology class next year will train middle school students to be experts to help guide the LETS data collection every fall.

These long-term studies on forest ecology are very important—ones that have been done over long periods of time are referred to often in the scientific literature. But there's not many of them. It's so easy for something to happen, like a loss of funding and then no more data collection, or a forest getting clearcut, or something else that wrecks the long-term study. We expect LAS to be here and students to be contributing to data collection for a long time. If we can get this course incorporated into the curriculum, we can make a significant contribution to science.

We can be citizen scientists.

That's a really long-term vision.

It's a super long-term vision. But within a few years, we're already going to start seeing some very interesting things.

Bill | Well, there is a pretty interesting study in the US from a professor in the state of Vermont. No one thought his study was particularly interesting or important at the time, but it turns out the data he was collecting was in a transition area and the study became very valuable because of that. Universities aren't likely to run a study like this. Think of a PhD student's timeframe—it's not often practical to do real long studies. But we can, driven by student data collection and learning each fall.

Dan | One clear goal is that the students need to be ready for the LETS study, which happens in the middle of October. That's why this class is first in the middle school schedule, and we'll have students who are ready to lead in the LETS study. That's also some real motivation for learning, too. It's not just learning for learning's sake, but rather to complete another study in the field with the whole school.

Bill | And to contribute the data to a database used for actual scientific study.

What did you learn about curriculum development through creating these two courses?

Bill | For me, I learned that it's pretty hard to understand what students don't know—what level they are at—in a subject that I know a lot about. It's really necessary to find the right starting

Research in Schools

Paul has been the chair of Research Engaged Schools, a special interest group of the organization of international schools, ECIS, for the past four years.

Research Engaged Schools supports professional development through the research efforts of teachers at their own schools, in order to better understand and ultimately improve teaching and learning.

Different schools have taken different

point for students and not assume knowledge and skills that they don't have.

With robot gardeners, it was good to start off with coding that simply exposed students to written code. Cutting and pasting provided a feeling of "doing coding" in a way that ensured student success, even if they didn't need to understand the code itself. That small success maybe took away a bit of fear about coding.

Dan | Bill is right. To develop curriculum, it is really important to have a good needs analysis that includes finding out what students already know. Piloting the robot gardens course taught us a lot.

Bill | Yes, you have to discover what's mysterious and then the students need a way to experience whatever it is in a non-threatening manner. Like having a picture on the board that's super easy before you draw in more detail.

Dan | So scaffolding.

Bill | Yes, stepping up the difficulty after you discover where the students are. The hands-on experiments are really good for demonstrating to the teacher exactly what students know.

Dan | We think of curriculum sometimes as what is in the textbook. A teacher can turn to the text and trust it. But these two courses don't have textbooks. We just have lots of resources in general about technology, about data collection, about the scientific method, and we have our collaborators at CREA and the University of Lausanne.

No texts?

Well sure, there's an ecology chapter in a general science text for middle school students. But there is not a text for using the forest that's growing next to the building, on the edge of two types of forest, on a mountain in Switzerland. We have to organize everything ourselves.

Bill | For planning, I'm sure we put in more than two hours for every hour of class.

Dan | And finding resources is a challenge, but I like not having a textbook to follow. I think we're pulling together a course that gets the students learning in a very genuine way.

Bill | There's some sort of general learning principle in play here. As learners, you have to be a little on the edge—you need to experience some success while not having all the answers. You have to have little failures that help lead you and that aren't so big that they demotivate you. We all need to be able to fail, but not fail miserably.

Any last comments?

Bill | The amount of exploratory learning Dan and I had to do in order to get four weeks of a course ready—I wonder if this is doable for another school. Not every school has an electrical engineer with a software background who can work with a biologist who is ready to expand into automation with software. Nor do many schools have the number of close connections with experts from external research centers.

strategies to teacher research. ACS (UK) and LAS support teachers who apply to do research and curriculum projects in a variety of areas. St. Andrew's Episcopal School (USA) focuses all teachers on one central topic and published their first book about it last summer. Other schools like Wolfert van Borselen (Netherlands) partner with local universities for training in research methods, or in programs like Harvard's Research Schools International. The university

conducts the needs analysis with schools to determine where and what research may be most useful for a school.

The leitmotif in all the schools is that the cycle of Plan - Do - Reflect - Act is great professional development, which we all hope leads to an improved educational experience for students.

Visit the sites of these research engaged schools at:

Centre for Inspiring Minds (ACS) | acs-schools.com/cim

Center for Transformative Learning (St. Andrew's Episcopal School) | thecttl.org/aboutus/leadershipfaculty/

Support for schools interested in similar programs is available from ECIS Research Engaged Schools. Contact pmagnuson@las.ch for further information.

Changing the Homework Conversation

ANDIE FLETT AND SUZY MEYSKENS

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During the 2015-2016 school year, Andie Flett (Vermont Dorm Head) and Suzy Meyskens (Beau Site Dorm Head) collaborated on a study of our evening study hall.

Their initial projects, which were part of their graduate studies, started the conversation, and their work as residential scholars continued to "change the homework conversation" by giving us all a chance to reflect a bit about how we, as a school, can construct an evening learning time with maximum benefit—and even enjoyment—for our students.

They summarize their work in the abstract of their paper:

This research project is a continuation of a study conducted in Fall of 2014 by Andie Flett, which builds on a study by Suzy Meyskens in the 2011-2012 school year. As dormitory heads of girls residences at LAS, we have made similar observations about study hall and we have both made attempts to modify and test new models with the intention of improving student achievement. In the present study, we are collaborating to test a model for study hall that is student-centered and increases intrinsic motivation, personal accountability, and self-efficacy, while decreasing feelings of resistance to receiving help in the dorm during study hall. Six girls, ages 15-17, received the Super Study Hall (SSH) intervention instead of the status quo "supervised study hall" during the second marking period (weeks 7-11 of the school year). Most of the girls were receptive to the help and made progress in their ability to define their own goals and self-regulate their study habits.

Why did you feel the conversation about study hall needed to change?

Andie | I felt a dissonance between my beliefs as an educator and the system I inherited. As a teacher, I believe every student can succeed. Part of that is helping students work on their goals, but their goals are all unique and personal. I felt uncomfortable telling all students that we have a GPA goal for them, and then punishing them for not achieving our goals without first asking them what their goals are.

How did you ask the girls about their goals?

I differentiated between visions and goals. A vision is a dream, a fuzzy idea about what comes after high school. Maybe university, family, a career; maybe a certain lifestyle. It's okay that it's fuzzy.

I want to build a bridge between the present reality and their vision (their fuzzy dream). To do this, we created specific SMART goals. This is to break that vision into specific steps the students can achieve over a short period of time—say four or five weeks.

When students are successful with these small steps, they gain confidence. That confidence builds on itself and perhaps some of the details of the fuzzy dream get clearer and closer.

What did you change in the dorm?

The system I inherited used a student's GPA to determine if she had to be in a supervised study hall, together with an adult,

instead of studying in her room. Typically, a few girls with the lowest GPAs were required to study in the common area with adult supervision while the rest of the girls studied in their dorm rooms. You can see the opportunity for being stigmatized.

What we are doing differently now is asking questions of the girls, not just assigning them study time in the common area based on their GPA. The first question is:

Do you feel that your grades accurately reflect your potential in this class?

Most often the students know they can do better, but they might not know how they can do better. That's where we can help them develop strategies to get the grade that they feel accurately reflects their ability in math, science, or in any subject. We teach students that it is important to turn assignments in on time and that developing a positive relationship with a teacher is important for learning. Students sometimes feel like victims, forgetting that they are are in control of a lot of factors. We help them see—and use—those factors.

What is the most significant result of your study for you?

We identified that 30 minutes a week of one-to-one attention with a girl who is struggling academically is time well spent. They want to talk about their goals and their dreams, and they are receptive to suggestions about how they can be more in control about their future.

What about study hall actually changed?

We got a lot more flexible with study hall. Some girls study now in groups in the lounge, no matter their GPA. It's not just the place for the lowest performers, but rather a space for those who want to help each other out, get help, or just be together as they work. Girls use the lounge because they want to. Girls are more in charge of their own learning. Girls with lower GPAs aren't stigmatized either. This is hard to quantify, but it is very important.

What sort of further changes do you think you might make?

Our dorm team has made the recommendation that all girls might benefit from a vision and goal setting exercise during the second marking period. Though we created the program for girls who were struggling academically, girls with high GPAs have approached me to ask about being involved. Timewise, I can manage up to about eight girls,

but with additional resources or perhaps by refining the tool, we could offer it to everyone.

Where did your experience differ from Andie's?

Suzie | Every student is really unique. I found it challenging to figure out how I would carry on a similar conversation with each student when the students are so different. Having a clear idea where I wanted to bring a student during my conversation with her was challenging, too. How do students apply long-term goals to their immediate task at hand—the homework right there on the desk? It's not necessarily so easy to make a connection between long-term goals and the immediate task at hand.

I guess that was one of the biggest challenges for me.

Can you give us some background about study hall in your dorm?

I actually cancelled the supervised study hall last academic year (in 2014-2015), which was motivated in part by talking to Andie about her concerns. Then this year (2015-2016), I worked with five girls who agreed to participate. I met with each girl individually in her room where she was studying.

Do you think the girls benefited?

Sure, from the one-on-one, individual attention, yes of course. They maybe even thought a bit more concretely about their futures.

Do you think they did better academically?

That's hard to say. We don't know how they would have performed without doing the vision board exercise. With my five girls, two of their GPAs continued to decline, two stayed the same, and one GPA went up. That matches, in general, what happens during a semester; GPAs tend to slowly sink until about mid-semester. Then they stabilize and stay about the same.

Why is that?

There are fewer grades entered at the beginning of the semester. Grades stabilize when more grades are entered. And the students also have other agendas than just GPAs. Social connections are important and become more important over time. My girls always say that one of the biggest distractions for them is friends in class.

How do you think you'll continue with study hall?

The best thing was taking supervised study out of the equation. That alone is a great result. But the girls who participated also really enjoyed the vision boards, so I think a reasonable goal will be to work on how we make a stronger connection between vision boards and the long range future while creating some intrinsic motivation for homework today.

I'm not sure I was making the connections with them between the vision board and the task at hand. The two activities seemed like two separate things for me. Maybe Andie could create a little workshop or training video for faculty.

Was this project good professional development for you personally?

Yes. This project was an extension of the whole idea of thinking about study hall and what we should do differently. We moved away from a punitive system, or at least a negative system, to a more positive culture for study hall.

We're trying, with our research, to move things in a new direction and to have a new mindset about how we use evenings academically at our boarding school.

Now I would love to try some other things that help support students. So the project shifted my view and I moved forward in my thinking, and that is PD.

Can you give any hint about the other things you are thinking of?

The big takeaways: Every student is unique and different, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivators will be different. However, there are common themes. The most disciplined girls, academically speaking, tend to come from the homes that modeled being academic. When you ask them if they want to do well, all my girls say yes. But there are barriers. For example, the biggest distraction for teenagers right now is technology.

Maybe we can do some of the modeling for them, and maybe we can teach them how to reduce distractions—those need to be elements of the study program. I think we can teach students about how technology supports and distracts, and how they might control the distraction—how they can have technology without letting it take over.

I also want to focus on creating structures for more group study—more peers helping peers—with some sort of regular structure, which will help with modeling. Developing a stronger peer support structure will be a very interesting project to pursue.

How does what Suzy says fit your thinking, Andie?

Andie | I think it's interesting how we both got onto this project. The Endicott Masters program gave me an opportunity to create an action research project. Because study hall was bugging me, I chose it for my project. That was in 2014. I wasn't even aware that Suzy had chosen the same area for her masters in 2011. Coming together to do a follow-up was a natural progression for both of us.

What would you suggest for future possible investigations of and/or changes to study hall at LAS?

Well, like Suzy said, each dorm is unique, so dorm heads need to look at what works for their particular population of students. There's a common sentiment here and in other boarding schools that students benefit from being a more active part of their learning, which obviously includes their evening study time.

Was this project good professional development for you, too?

My big shift in thinking was regarding student motivation. It's easy to believe that students don't care and don't want to do well in school, but actually, we surveyed 123 students twice, in two different years, and 100% said they want to do well in school.

When I take the time to listen to my students, I see that it's true. The behavior we sometimes interpret as not wanting to do well is maybe just defensive because sometimes students don't know how to succeed at school. That's where I want to focus my efforts.

Also, listening to students is always time well spent. It's good as an international educator to be mindful that students communicate in different ways and it's good to carve out the time to ask students questions about themselves. We shouldn't always just be telling them what to do.

Suzy, back to you. What did you do in 2011 for your study?

Suzy | I decided to try and mimic the support students receive at home from parents. I created a space for communication among the students, their teachers, their parents, and me. I had the students complete a weekly schedule on Sunday night. Then, each weeknight, the students turned in a "homework sheet" that

We're trying, with our research, to move things in a new direction and to have a new mindset about how we use evenings academically at our boarding school.

showed what they needed to work on with an estimate of how much time it would take. That way, students thought about their needs for homework on Sunday and then again each night.

I briefly mentored students once during the week to check on their progress. We would discuss projects coming up and how to budget time. I emailed their teachers at the end of the week asking for simple feedback about each student—if she had performed well and any work she had missed. Then I sent that information to her parents over the weekend.

How long did you do that?

For a semester.

So this second study was different.

Yes. We created the "vision board" instead. Girls laid out images and words to describe where they would like to see themselves five, ten, or even more years down the road.

What are your big takeaways?

One: Students all want to do well in school. Two: The students who perform the best tend to come from homes with good

modeling. And three: The biggest distraction for students, particularly if they are sitting in their rooms, is technology.

Sure, students who struggle academically will find plenty of other distractions, so technology is not the only culprit. But phones and computers have a pretty strong and constant pull on attention. They create a sense of importance and urgency, like a "need" to respond to others via social networks.

What was helpful in implementing the program in your dorm?

It was helpful to bring the concept of doing a vision board and talking about vision with students to connect it to their learning. It's a great tool. But we need to have a toolbox full of a variety of tools to use with the students to meet the various things that will motivate them.

At this age, some students have not created a strong vision for their future. One of my girls felt this was perfectly normal and acceptable at her age, and I guess I agree. Some kids are thinking ahead, but many are not, or they would need to be coached to think about the future.

This age group, and especially the students who aren't disciplined and don't study well independently, also need tools that are more immediate.

Standards Based Grading

VANISHA GORASIA

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Vanisha teaches IB and US diploma mathematics and is completing a masters in education at the University of Bath.

You worked in 2015-2016 on standards-based grading. Why were you interested in that?

Grades are always important, no matter the school. In the last school I taught in, in the UK, I found that a lot of students liked our target sheets and that using target sheets helped them focus their revision on their weaknesses.

I wanted to do something similar with my classes at LAS to see if the same system would work here. Our classes are typically much smaller than at my former school, and the background of the students is different. I was also able to tie this study into my graduate program by making assessment the focus of my second required module.

What was your main goal?

I wanted to be sure that students knew what topics they knew well and which ones they needed to work on more and how they could go about improving those that were weak.

How does standards based grading help a student know how to improve?

Traditional grading systems usually assign a grade based on student demonstration of knowledge at one point after the material is covered, usually without an opportunity to revisit the materials after learning more in order to change the grade. I'm not sure that's the best way to assess, nor does it use assessments for the best purpose.

The target sheets point out weaknesses, making it my job to help students get the right resources to improve—sometimes those resources could be videos on a topic, maybe some extra work, individual help with me or another teacher, or help from another student who is already proficient.
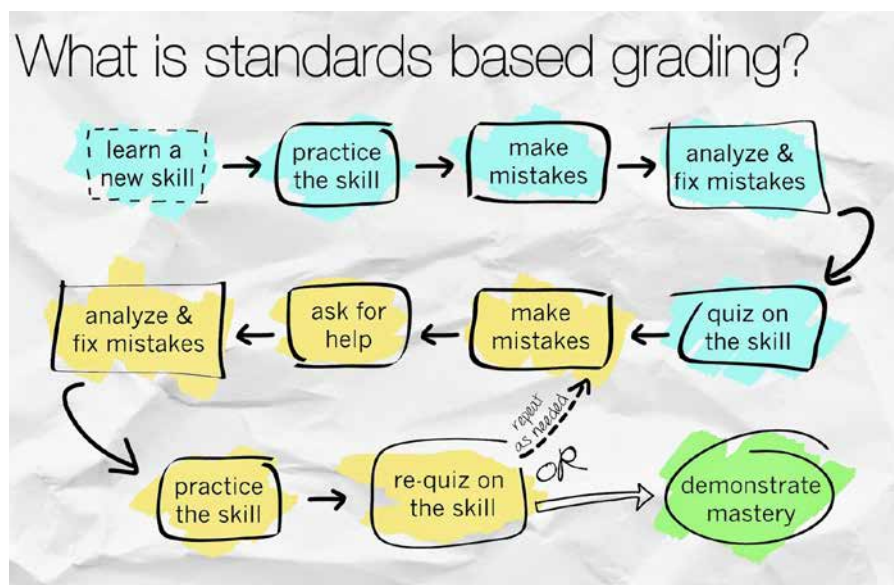
Source: Channahon School District 17

What exactly is the target sheet?

It's a list of learning objectives that students study throughout the whole year. The learning objectives come from the curriculum. The target sheets show the skills to learn and let students monitor their own progress. Using assessment, I point out for them where they need help by giving green, yellow, or red faces—smiley, neutral, and sad faces—for each skill. The goal is all smiley faces, which the students work toward by revising the skills that are yellow or red, neutral or sad.

Name:				Class:			
Learning Objectives		Exercise (Math Haese and Harris Textbook)	Tutorial Video clip number (Google drive - A2H folder)	Other resources (Myimaths, Khan Academy etc)	🔴	😐	🟢
Probability	25						
33. Understand and use relative frequency to estimate probability		Ex25B					
34. Identify the difference between experimental and theoretical probability		Ex25F	Clip 32				
35. Calculate expected outcomes of an event		Ex25D					
36. Identify probability from two-way tables		Ex25C	Clip 85				
37. Use a Venn diagram to calculate probabilities				http://goo.gl/D7WlaA			
38. Draw a sample space diagram for 2 events				http://goo.gl/ClLBa1			
39. Draw a tree diagram for 2 or more events		Ex25H, Ex25I	Clip 153, 154				
40. Understand independent events. complementary events,			Clip 182				
				Review set 25A			
				review set 25B			

Vanisha's math students know exactly where they stand in their learning and can always revisit work to improve their understanding and their grade.

In general, what did you find out? How did it go?

I found that introducing the target sheet with its support for self-directed student monitoring was valuable for the students and for me. When it came to student reports and planning lessons, I was better able to plan revision for the students. The students are better able to help themselves and can practice the general skill of targeting what they work on —their weakest areas—instead of reviewing everything.

What do students think about it?

A few students were asking if they really had to use it—if they really need to fill it in. They told me they knew what their biggest weaknesses were. I had to be very persistent. It was helpful to tell them that I didn't know their biggest weakness and that it would help me to help them. Of course, there is always room for doubt that students are the best judge of what they don't know. Just like adults, for that matter.

It took awhile but when the second semester came around, they were all on board. Currently, they are all using the target sheets.

Have other teachers asked about the target sheet?

I shared it with the math department. Some math teachers are using similar processes, if not the exact target sheets. It was easy to share within the department because the curriculum has very clear schemes of work outlining what the students are expected to know and be able to do.

Can you tell me more about changing grades?

I found in my first year here that students wanted to improve their grades and probably their actual learning, but for sure their grades. They all asked about extra credit. But I thought it was better to make sure students worked on what was most difficult for them. Of course, that means something different for every student. Aligning grades and assessment in a way that encouraged redoing work that was not understood so well the first time allowed students to improve both their grades and their learning.

And then further, if the process helps teach the students what to focus on, they can independently determine what they should work on to improve and be rewarded with a better grade.

Because learning is the goal, after all, right?

Exactly. Not all students learn things at the same rate. Why

Aligning grades and assessment in a way that encouraged redoing work that was not understood so well the first time allowed students to improve both their grades and their learning.

not have the opportunity to improve a grade and improve the learning? It doesn't matter so much if they do it all at the same time. That's not the point.

How did you set up your project?

I started with a simple questionnaire for the classes, just finding out what they knew about assessment, how they've been assessed in the past, and what they prefer. I did that first.

Then I took into account what I learned from them. They told me that they liked projects and presentations and working in groups. They also suggested open-book tests, which we usually don't do in math. So I adapted to their likes. These were different ways for me to meet their needs, and let's face it, not everyone is good at sitting tests.

Using other types of assessments worked quite well. The ESL students in particular seemed to be a lot more confident.

In summary, what are the biggest plusses of standards based grading?

Students base revision on their weaknesses. They don't just revise everything, they go after what they don't understand. The green section, the smiley faces, can be largely ignored—this is stuff they know. Instead, they can focus on the weaker skills.

Do you think it will have lasting effects on students outside of math?

I hope so. Here's one example. I have a student who has a book that she brings to my office hours because she has a list in it of everything she's been stuck on. In essence,

Ken O'Connor, the author of "A Repair Kit for Grading," will be on campus and working with LAS teachers in October 2017. Teachers who are excited by his work suggested we go right to the source … and Ken agreed to set a date next fall.

her own list of yellow and red topics across subject areas. It's amazing. Our math target sheet helped her formalize a system she was already developing herself. She's learning a process to systematically learn how to learn, which is the meta-goal of school, bigger than any particular subject.

You are moving to a new school next year. Do they have standards based grading?

No.

Do you think they need it?

I'm paying a visit to them toward the end of this school year to see what they're doing before I start. They seemed interested when I spoke about the idea during the interview process.

Whether it's a school policy or not, I will use it with my students because it works. Well, it takes time. It doesn't work immediately, but it works if you are patient and consistent and keep reminding the students to do it and the reasons for doing it. I put up posters and send constant reminders about what we are working on and how it helps. My gradebook helps, too, because it's set up in a way that reflects the target sheet.

It took awhile, but students are all over it now. It's just hard work at the start.

We are introducing a version of standards based grading for our middle school. Is that a good idea for seventh and eighth graders?

Yes. It gets students into the practice of being responsible for their learning and teaches them how to improve. It makes them less dependent on waiting for a teacher to tell them what to do. It'll take time to start but it will help students in later grades, too. Hopefully it will become natural later on.

Did you learn anything about yourself as a teacher through this process?

If you want something to work, you have to be very persistent and keep adjusting. I had to constantly keep training them, like I mentioned, all the time. I had to constantly check their books to see they are doing it. After all, if you aren't consistent as a teacher, how do you expect your students to be consistent?
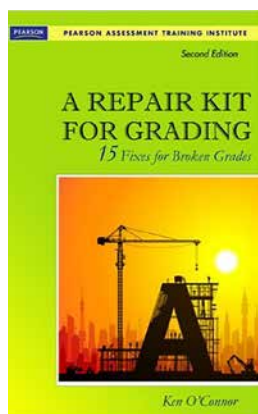
The LAS Pledge

KELLIE MCGILL

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During the 2015-2016 academic year, a team of faculty members drafted a new LAS Pledge based on the IB learner profile, spanning our academic classes, residential program, and after-school activities. The LAS Pledge has become part of the curriculum for the school's faculty families and the basis of the merit system.

The pledge reminds students of our community values, encouraging them to be innovative, inquisitive, open-minded, risk-takers who are compassionate, respectful, responsible, caring, ethical, and balanced. Our students are reminded and encouraged to embrace and respect our multiple cultures while honoring their own.

Kellie is working more in depth with the pledge in the middle school by proactively training the middle school students once weekly in regard to these important attributes. The middle school students chose to begin by focusing on four key words that they feel are most important to them: respect, responsibility, risk-taking, and communication. They worked together to create examples of these attributes in all areas of their lives at LAS; within their classroom, dorms, the hallways, activities, the cafeteria, and even in the village.

The students are encouraged to catch each other demonstrating the characteristics of the LAS pledge. They can fill out acknowledgement cards for each other, which are also entered as merits. Additionally, one card is randomly drawn each week for a special prize.

This project will continue through the year, focusing on a new attribute each week. Students will engage in fun and interactive activities that give them opportunities to think about what each characteristic really means to them and how they can put it into practice.

Students learn team working, and a bit of risk taking, by untying a human knot.

Mindfulness: LAS Embraces a Global Movement

BRITTANY HOLSAPPLE AND KELLIE MCGILL

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Mindfulness made its way into education in the late 1980s and has continued to spread to classrooms around the world. Teachers and students alike benefit from mindfulness practice as a way of training the mind to sustain attention in the present moment, self-regulate behavior and emotions, and reduce stress. While researchers are still exploring the impacts of mindful education in schools, there are growing bodies of evidence that show mindfulness in schools increases concentration, lowers stress and anxiety, boosts impulse control and increases empathy and self-awareness as well as develops conflict resolution skills (MindfulSchools, 2015).

Brittany received her Mindful Education training through MindfulSchools, a US-based organization that has trained educators in mindfulness in over 100 countries. During the 2016-2017 school year, she is teaching middle school students at LAS the importance of mindfulness in their daily lives. Her weekly interactive lessons focus on topics such as regulating emotions, response vs. reaction, gratitude and appreciation, mindful breathing techniques as well as many others. The aim is for students to reconnect with themselves and gain insight into the workings of their minds in order to stay calm and focused in a world full of stressors and distractions.

Mindfulness has found its way into countless arenas, such as health care, education, sports, and major international corporations. It's been featured in news reports, academic journals, and is widely talked about on social media. But what is it exactly? How does it help the individuals who practice it?

Mindfulness can be defined as one's ability to pay attention to emotions, thoughts, and sensations in the present moment, without judgment. It helps individuals develop and strengthen their minds while increasing their ability to focus, recognize, and manage emotions, make better decisions, improve relationships, and learn to respond rather than react in difficult situations.

Mindfulness-based interventions are supported by more than 35 years of research and development with bodies of evidence ranging from the medical field to kindergarten

classrooms around the world. In 1979, John Kabat-Zinn developed the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program while at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. The practice was later adopted by mental health professionals in the early 1990s.

Why did LAS join The Mindfulness Movement?

The world we live in is full of stressors and distractions. Individuals spend countless hours increasing their knowledge of the world around them and strengthening their bodies through a variety of activities, sports, and exercise. But what about our minds? Many students and staff at LAS have turned to mindfulness for the solution. With a positive school culture in mind, LAS adopted mindfulness as the theme for the 2016-2017 school year.

Brittany Holsapple and Kellie McGill teamed up as LAS resident scholars to bring mindfulness education to both students and faculty. Both Brittany and Kellie have a strong desire to improve school culture and became eager to implement mindfulness at LAS. As learning support specialists and counselors, Brittany and Kellie frequently use mindfulness techniques with students and in their own personal lives. They have experienced first-hand the lasting benefits of a mindfulness practice and they are firm believers in its efficacy.

Throughout this year, Brittany has been teaching middle school students the importance of mindfulness in their daily lives. Every Monday morning during homeroom,

students focus on topics such as regulating emotions, response versus reaction, gratitude and appreciation, mindful breathing techniques as well as many others. The goal is for students to reconnect with themselves and gain insight into the workings of their minds in order to stay calm and focused. The skills these students will develop over the course of the year have the potential to help them build caring and lasting relationships and handle the stressors they encounter both inside and outside the classroom.

Kellie's focus has been on staff involvement and education in mindfulness. Nineteen faculty chose to make mindfulness their Professional Development track for the school year. Jenny Eberman, an expert in leadership, communication and personal development, facilitated these workshops. Jenny is trained in mindfulness-based approaches for adults by the University of Bangor in the UK. She is also certified with Eline Snel ("Mindfulness Matters", NL) and trained with mindfulschools.org in the US for her work with children and adolescents. Several faculty also completed their Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) certificate by participating in a mindfulness retreat in January. Through this program, staff have learned to identify their thoughts, perceptions, and the associated patterns in order to become more focused on and attentive to their interactions. They are learning to identify stressors and use interpersonal communication and mindfulness skills as coping tools in their personal lives and with their students. Additionally, several teachers and dorm heads who were not involved in the PD track have taken the opportunity to learn more about mindfulness and implement practices. Kellie also worked with interested dorm heads to bring mindfulness education and practice into Sunday evening dorm meetings.

In a busy world, it is a challenge to take time to be aware of your breath, your emotions, and yourself in any given moment, but the benefits are incredible. We anticipate further mindfulness integration in professional development for faculty and continuing education and practice opportunities for students.

Visting Scholars

The goal of our visiting scholar program is for LAS faculty and academics from around the world to rub shoulders so that we all may feel the excitement of ideas and the commitment to lifelong learning.

2014-2015

Hisashi Yoshida | Professor
Obirin University, Japan

2015-2016

Alys Mendus | PhD Student
Freedom to Learn, University of Hull, United Kingdom

Anne Delestrade | Researcher
Centre de Recherches sur les Ecosystèmes d'Altitude (citizen science)

Christophe Randin | Professor
Université de Lausanne (climate)

Irene Alvarez | Researcher
Centre de Recherches sur les Ecosystèmes d'Altitude (citizen science)

John Miller | Consultant
Agile Classrooms, California

Luis Prieto | Post Doctorate
École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland (ProLearning Feedback)

Martin Brocklehurst | Consultant
Science Association (environmentalism)

Mauro Fischer | Professor
University of Fribourg (glaciology)

2016-2017

Alys Mendus | PhD Student

Beth Skelton | Consultant
Montana

Jón Ingvar Kjaran | Professor,
University of Iceland

Sigríður Ólafsdóttir | Post Doctorate
University of Iceland

Steve Carber | Professor
Endicott College

Thy Tran | Professor
Endicott College

A Sabbatical in the Beauty of Leysin

Hisashi Yoshida | Professor of Education | Obirin University, Japan

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I stayed in the LAS community during Fall 2014 and the first two months of 2015. Thanks to the great support extended by the research center and faculty, my research life in the beautiful alpine town was comfortable and productive. I summarized one paper, entitled "A Study on the International Education in Leysin, Switzerland," and published it in March 2015. I introduced the history of the town and its development, and described in detail the relationship between the internationality of the town and the international education promoted by LAS. I deepened my knowledge about the IB program through my interviewers with the TOK teacher, Daryl Hitchcock, and the IB Creativity, Action, Service coordinator at the time, James McKenna.

Education for the development of global human resources and teacher education programs are my current research interests. In addition to my professional duties at the university, I have given three lectures on the international education in Leysin and the IB program at LAS since my stay as a visiting scholar. I am always happy to talk about the town and the school because my own son graduated from LAS in 2001.

Private and public initiatives were introduced in Japan

during the academic year 2014-2015 to help more students study abroad so that Japan could develop future global human resources. Japan needs substantial efforts in this context and I hope to contribute to developing a positive attitude among young people so that they can become responsible world citizens in the future.

Check out Hishashi's website at http://www.obirin.ac.jp/

Resources

http://www.las.ch/images/uploads/content/A_Study_on_the_International_Education_in_Leysin,_Switzerland_-_Japanese.pdf

Traveling the World in Search of the Ideal School

Alys Mendus | PhD Student | University of Hull, UK

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My PhD is the story of my travels around the world as I search for the ideal school. I have been inside more than 70 different schools in 18 countries, sometimes working at, but mostly just visiting, schools who are thinking outside the box.

My experiences have ranged from visiting international boarding schools to working with refugee children on the island of Lesbos, Greece. I've seen progressive schools in the United States and a Steiner Waldorf school in Siberia, a community-based Montessori school in Portugal, forest schools in Scandinavia, democratic schools in Australia, environment- and sustainability-focused schools in Indonesia, and state-funded schools in the UK, which are trying to incorporate alternative pedagogies in mainstream schools.

The methodology I use is called autoethnography, which is a critique of my own life as I travel in search of the ideal school (Spry, 2011). The methodology looks at the "other" in education as a spectrum instead of getting stuck in the binary choice of "traditional" or "alternative" schools. I am using Deleuzian rhizomatic theory (1980/87), which views everything as an interconnected network, in order to write the dissertation in a "Choose your own adventure storybook" style, offering the reader choices to explore the different schools and philosophies that I have experienced.

I returned to LAS in Spring 2017, because I view my relationship with LAS Educational Research as one important piece of the interconnected network of schools that I am exploring.

Website | freedomtolearnproject.com

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Recent publications:

Mendus, A. (2016). Letters from Lesbos: A Recounting of Emergency Pedagogy in Action. Other Education: The Journal of Educational Alternatives. Volume 5, Issue 1 · pp. 73-78. Accessed at:
www.othereducation.org/index.php/OE/article/view/161

Mendus, A. (2016). Transforming Pedagogy in Primary Schools: a case study from Australia. FORUM: for promoting 3-19 comprehensive education. Volume 58, Number 3, pp 389-393.

Third Culture Kids & Research Methods without Stress

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I participated in life at LAS in two ways: through pursuing an interest of mine from several years ago and by teaching a bit of what I teach now as a professor at Endicott College.

Years ago, I completed a dissertation on interventions for culture shock among highly mobile international students, known as Third Culture Kids or TCKs. I revisited the topic recently because I wondered what the key questions are that we need to ask now. I'm in the process of moving away from the "kid" moniker, which never sounded great to me in the first place, and have started to call students and teachers "third culture people," or TCPs.

I started by piloting a survey that contained the issues I thought we should be considering. I posed prompts for students like "The K-12 schools serving third culture kids have a responsibility to address and support third culture kid issues." I also included open-ended questions asking, for example, what schools might do to offer TCKs support. I'm working on the results now after my stay in Leysin.

I was also pleased to bring my own background from Endicott College to LAS. For over a decade, I've been teaching educational research. Over the years, I have noticed how much anxiety some students (not all students, but many) bring to a course with the title "Research Methods." I had the unique opportunity during my visit to present some educational research principles to faculty in a casual environment without the pressures inherent in "being in a course" and "being graded."

Do you remember in the olden days when students took a spelling or vocabulary pre-test on Monday and then the final test on Friday? Between Monday and Friday students completed activities like writing the words ten times each or defining the words from a dictionary. It is only a small shift to think about gathering that same pre and post data from two classes rather than just one, and teaching one of the classes via a fresh new idea to see whether that idea works better. This is essentially the start of a quasi-experimental two-group study. While there is clearly more to explore, those are the basics, and I enjoyed being able to work toward a deeper understanding with LAS faculty members.

Equality in International Settings

Jón Ingvar Kjaran | Assistant Professor | University of Iceland

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I got the opportunity to stay and work at the Leysin American School for two weeks last autumn. During that time, I worked on two research projects: the intersection of gender and sexuality in Iran, and international schools and equality in terms of gender, sexuality and ethnicity/social class. The latter project connects well to Leysin American School, in terms of its international nature and because LAS is already working on gender and sexual equality. Moreover, I gave two talks—one about my work and one about Icelandic culture and society.

How Do Students Practice the "9 Key Ps" in Learning with Technology?

Thy Tran | Adjunct Professor | Endicott College

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In the first issue of Spotlight, regarding school culture in an era of technology, Alan Babcock stated that "if a school has not developed an effective, positive culture surrounding the use of technology for teaching and learning, it can make things difficult in the classroom." He discussed the advantages and challenges of the use of the iPhone in classrooms and the necessity of answering the question, "When and why do we need our iPhone?" (LAS, 2015, p. 15)[i].

In addition to deciding when and why students use technology in the classroom, it is necessary for students to practice digital citizenship (the how) in learning and in their personal lives. Davis (2014) suggested, "9 Key Ps for Safety and Success" in classrooms with technology. They are "Passwords, Privacy, Personal Information, Photographs, Property, Permission, Protection, Professionalism and Personal Brand" (Davis, 2014, pp. 197-198)[ii].

My research at LAS considered to what extent LAS students practice the nine key Ps in learning. An online survey was designed and distributed to LAS students. Questions were geared at learning how much students know about the technology they have, including for example, "Do you know how to turn GPS off on your smart phone?" or "If you use a copyrighted music or video in your multimedia product, do you put a proper citation?" In addition, interviews with teachers and administrators were conducted to explore how the school is teaching and implementing digital citizenship schoolwide.

Website | endicott.edu

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Student-Centered Data

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My professional development workshops and coaching sessions at LAS during the past years have focused mainly on methods to support language acquisition. As an educational consultant providing professional development for schools around the globe, I am particularly interested in understanding the impact that PD has on student learning. While it can be a challenge to make a direct correlation between professional development and student learning, ultimately this is how I must measure the impact of my work.

I believe that instructional coaching is the missing link between professional development and its potential impact on student learning. One recent coaching model (Sweeney 2011) encourages coaches to be student-centered rather than teacher-centered. By shifting a coach's focus from what the teacher is doing in the classroom to how the students are engaged in learning, coaches or department heads can provide valuable, non-judgmental feedback to their colleagues.

I shared a student-centered data collection tool a few years ago with LAS department heads Sarah Goodman (modern languages) and Aaron Deupree (ESL). We used this tool in a Spanish classroom to gather minute-by-minute data on how one individual student uses language. The results of the observation are in the charts. The first pie chart reveals that this student had balanced opportunities to listen, speak, and read during the class. The second graph shows that the student, when speaking in class, used the target language over 70% of the time.

This data not only gives teachers a snapshot of student engagement, but also an insight into their instruction. Teachers can immediately see if their lesson was heavily lecture-based or more interactive. The teacher of the Spanish class might notice that the lesson balanced listening, speaking and reading well, but did not include any explicit writing practice. This might lead to more direct writing instruction in a following lesson and make the difference for students on a written assessment.

Student-centered data often raises further questions. For example, the charts do not reveal if the student spoke in complete sentences in the target language or if she used the target vocabulary. A coach could gather that kind of information during a follow-up observation and together, the coach and teacher could decide on next steps for supporting the students in extending their language.

Website | bethskelton.com

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Time student spent engaged in each language domain during observation

- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- Listening

- Speaking Target Langauge
- Speaking English
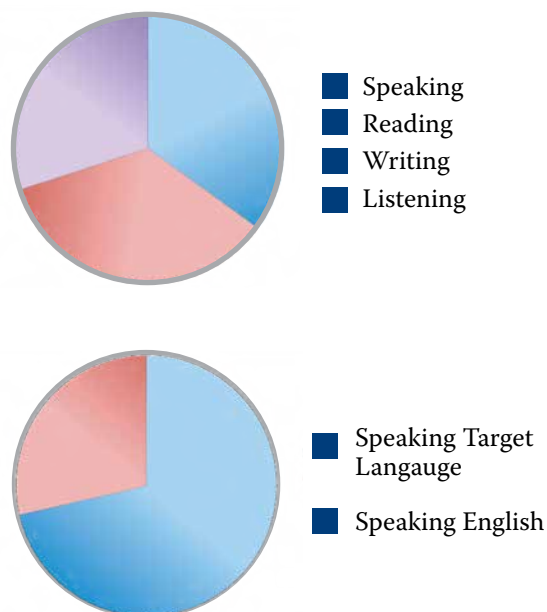
Citizen Science

Martin Brocklehurst | Independent Environmental Consultant

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Martin Brocklehurst has worked as an expert in the environmental sciences and as a health safety and security professional for some of the largest multinational companies in the world.

Martin is passionate about the power and potential for people to work together to record and monitor their environment and understand how it is changing and affecting their lives. He is a founding member and inspiration for the formation of the European Citizen Science Association (ECSA), part of one of the fastest-emerging global movements seen in recent years.

Citizen Science has the potential to transform our understanding of global environmental issues and contribute to nearly half the UN Sustainability Goals. It can tap into previously underutilized resources and expertise and connect policy makers, researchers and the public in a way never previously seen. Just 338 global citizen science biodiversity projects are also estimated to have added $2.5 billion per year of economic value to research.

In 2016-2017, he shared with LAS work that's now underway to set up a common global Citizen Science program to monitor the spread of vector-carrying mosquitoes. This is critical to ensure effective control of Dengue, Chikungunya and Zika virus diseases that are spread and carried by mosquito species. Backed by the United Nations Environment Programme, an expert's workshop was held at the United Nations Offices in Geneva in January 2017. The workshop built on work underway in Spain, the Netherlands, Germany and the UK. Once systems are agreed, the world will have a telephone app supported by a global database that will allow ordinary people to rapidly identify the spread of these potential vector carrying species and allow effective control programs to be developed. This is just one of a growing number of citizen science programs that pupils at Leysin can take part in to add to global and regional research.

Website | European Citizen Science Association (ECSA) (http://ecsa.citizen-science.net)

Resources | Mosquito Alert project
http://www.mosquitoalert.com/en/

Why DIY Language

PAUL MAGNUSON AND STÉPHANIE AMERI

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We have been piloting a new type of language class, or maybe it's a linguistics class, or perhaps it's more like a unit in IB's theory of knowledge, but then again, not really…

It's hard to put DIY Language in a cubbyhole because it's not your average classroom activity. First, what it's not: It's not a typical foreign language class, teaching students to communicate in a specific language. It's about languages—as many of them as we, the students and teachers, can usefully bring into the conversation. It's not really a grammar class, although we discuss how different languages handle different needs in their unique way. It's also not a linguistics class, though of course, linguistic terms and big ideas come into play along the way.

It's hard to put our new DIY Language course in a cubbyhole

So what is it? It's definitely a class in constructing a new language. This makes it unique, because New Language 101 is rarely part of the middle or high school curriculum. It's mental gymnastics, which is good for something. It's also an exercise in reimagining how we set up curriculum.

Project Based Learning

Let's look at the approach first, which will be familiar to most everyone as a type of project-based learning. Then we'll dive into DIY Language specifically.

Instead of a static curriculum organized around a list of common introductory topics in grammar and linguistics, from which the teacher then devises activities, our dynamic curriculum is organized around an activity with a final product—a grammar and lexicon of a new language that allows students to perform a skit in a new language. The process of working on the project will lead us to some common introductory topics in grammar and linguistics.

We're calling the two approaches the "List of topics" and "Make this." Picture these approaches like in Table 1.

In the "List of topics" approach, care has been taken to arrange the topics in a logical order. In addition to the order of the topics, the syllabus likely suggests the number of days for each topic. Teachers devise interesting activities for each topic. Assessment may be after each topic or a group of

Participants at the ECIS conference (November 2016) work on creating a pronoun system for a new language. Students and staff members at LAS created the language Blasa (from the verb "bla," to speak!) in a trial run of a course in the middle school, to be introduced during academic year 2017-2018.

TABLE 1: Comparing two approaches to curriculum

List of Topics	Make This
1.	2.
2.	8.
3.	3.
4.	2.
5.	4.
6.	9.
etcetera	etcetera

topics. Teachers and administrators can be fairly sure that the list of topics will all be introduced and worked on, save perhaps for the ones at the bottom of the list if time runs out in the school calendar.

In the "Make this" approach, the students work on their project, which is the creation of something new—in this case, a language that is robust enough to use in a skit. The teachers give the students the necessary direction and resources to create a language, solving the individual problems (e.g. how should pronouns work, how do we tell if something happened yesterday or is going to happen tomorrow?) as they go. Some of the topics from the "List of topics" approach will come up and need teacher guidance to address, but not in an order the teacher can predict. Not all of the topics from the "List of topics" approach will come up, but there's a real chance that some topics not addressed in the "List of topics" do come up. Most importantly, the topics that do come up

arise just at the point when it makes sense to talk about them because knowledge about them is needed right then and there. There's motivation to figure something out because it helps in solving a problem.

It's tempting to add "more fun" to the right hand column, but we realize we have to be careful with that opinion. Teachers and students who feel a bit at sea with the "make this" approach probably won't describe it as more fun. And good teaching makes learning fun (at least in the sense of rewarding, satisfying) in any of a variety of approaches.

You might say that this particular project-based learning we are leading is a curriculum of product, which requires thinking about topics, as opposed to a curriculum of topics, for which we develop activities. Our treatment of topics is in a sense "just in time" treatment. Our curriculum is a discussion to be had—we just don't know exactly what the discussion will be, or when.

Here are some important contrasts in the approaches:

Organizational focus - cover these	Organizational focus - make this
Prescribed coverage of topics	Treatment of topics as they arise
Curriculum presentation is concrete, with discrete points	Curriculum presentation feels fuzzy, with focus on process and "possible" topics.
Confidence that a prescribed set of topics will be covered.	Confidence that the (somewhat unpredictable) topics that are covered get attention when the context requires them.
Relatively easy ability to assess	Could be tricky to assess
Relatively easy to plan the topics ahead of time, but perhaps more difficult to supply context and motivation.	Difficult to plan the topics ahead of time, but easier to treat the topics when context and motivation is (arguably) higher.
Logical formative assessment includes quizzes on the topics.	Logical formative assessment includes observing the state of the project.
Logical final products are often tests or papers, perhaps student presentations	Logical final product is sharing the final product of the project.

[1]*DIY Language is currently an after-school activity, serving as a pilot for the five-week class it will be in school year 2017-2018.*

Our curriculum is a discussion to be had—we just don't know exactly what the discussion will be, or when.

Let's put this into context with how we have developed the DIY Language class.

DIY Language

Do it yourself (DIY) is currently hip as part of the general maker movement. We wonder with this class if we are caught up in yet another educational fad, or are we perhaps onto something a bit bigger? With luck, we're experiencing a combination of the two (the fad ain't necessarily bad).

The elevator introduction to the course is this:

Students use their language expertise (most of our students are bilingual at the minimum) to find the easiest grammatical system for the parts of language they feel they need to construct in order to put together a skit in the new language. They work agilely in groups of four and record their decisions in two Google docs common to all of them: (1) a summary of the grammar rules they create (and from what natural languages they may have borrowed from) and (2) a dictionary of the words they create (with reference to origins). Along the way they get some practice with Esperanto, the most successful constructed language, using the free Duolingo application. At the end of the course, students perform the skit for other students not in the same class.

Here is how we have answered a few of the questions from our own LAS middle school curriculum guide.

How will the course require active participation, experiential learning, and individual student initiative?

Group work, group presentations, debates (regarding topics arising from student work and about existing constructed languages), and group skit performances will support active learning.

[2] *See this publication for a brief introduction to agile.*

Writing and editing of the "language textbook" with vocabulary and grammar rules, plus work on Duolingo in Esperanto, will highlight individual student initiative in the group project.

How will the teacher know how much the students are learning day to day? Week to week?

Students in groups will display their work on the group Agile canvas.

Student presentations and debates in support (or not) of specific language rules will demonstrate how informed they are.

Weekly quick, informal formative feedback by Post-It question regarding learning and course content.

Duolingo Classroom tracks all progress for individual students.

How will the teacher allow students who complete work deemed "not yet" (below a B) to revise until they arrive at "satisfactory" (A or B)?

The format of the class will rely largely on group work (managed "agiley") with a series of group check-ins with the teacher(s) to determine if the work is satisfactory, including spot checking that all members of the group understand the group's product. Groups that have not completed work satisfactorily (the "not yet" work) or groups that have members that don't understand the group work, will need to revisit their work and be assessed as a group a second (or third) time.

Specific targets will be created for weekly progress in Esperanto, which can be done outside of class.

Which attribute of the learner profile will the teacher likely choose to assess? Why is that attribute a good fit?

Creative. Students are being asked to create their own constructed language and to write and perform skits for a wider audience in that language.

What set of national or international standards or other professional documentation will serve as the starting point (or an anchor) for the curriculum? Please justify.

From the MYP and how it feeds into DP:

"**The MYP language B** course aims to encourage the student to develop a respect for and understanding of other languages and cultures, and is equally designed to equip the student with a skills base to facilitate further language learning."

ACTFL Standards. Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, Communities.

"Through comparisons and contrasts with the language being studied, students develop insight into the nature of language and the concept of culture and realize that there are multiple ways of viewing the world."

Standard 4.1: Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through comparisons of the language studied and their own.

The Paderborner Method, Universität Paderborn

We are very loosely playing on the idea from the Université Paderborn that learning Esperanto facilitates second language development.

How does the structure of the curriculum assure accessibility for all students?

Experience learning a constructed language is (within parameters) individualized and at the students' own pace.

Decisions regarding the constructed language the class builds will be based on group consensus, following examples by students in their native languages (to help beginning ESL students).

Student skits will contain multiple roles that can be rehearsed ahead of time and adjusted for level of ability. Working in the constructed language will level the playing field between native and non-native speakers of English.

What are some samples of teaching and learning resources?

Esperanto course, Duolingo (free, online)

Duolingo Classroom (management system for teachers, free, online)

Agile Mindset - to guide students in flexible working groups

Language Awareness (iBook, written by LAS students, 2015)

Toki Pona - an invented language of 120 base words and 10 grammatical rules made to be as easy as possible. This can be a good guide for the teacher to use when making decisions about what questions students will answer about their highly simplified language.

"The Language Construction Kit" - a how-to guide.

The Art of Language Invention - an in-depth guide by the creator of languages for "Game of Thrones" and other shows.

"In the Land of Invented Languages" - a really fun read about the crazy lengths people will go to in order to make a new language.

Summary

We believe we are developing a course that is fun and creative and, in a unique way, is a backdoor into the study of linguistics. Our pilot activity in Fall 2017, to date, has created the beginning of a vocabulary drawn from Catalan, Italian, English, Persian, and more with grammar from Chinese and other languages and plenty of words and rules of our own invention.

Our own invented rules led to the name of the language, blasa. We got there by taking the verb blas (meaning "to talk," derived from blah blah in English—that's a pretty great verb for talking) and then adding the suffix -a, which turns any verb into a noun.

I write blasa without a capital letter, though we haven't discussed capitalization rules yet. Perhaps if you ever run across our new language, it will be spelled Blasa, not blasa, but that remains to be seen because our pilot group gets the say! *Blastu blasa?*

"There's such a special order in languages—it's hard to see an order unless you are trying to create one." - Masih Z.
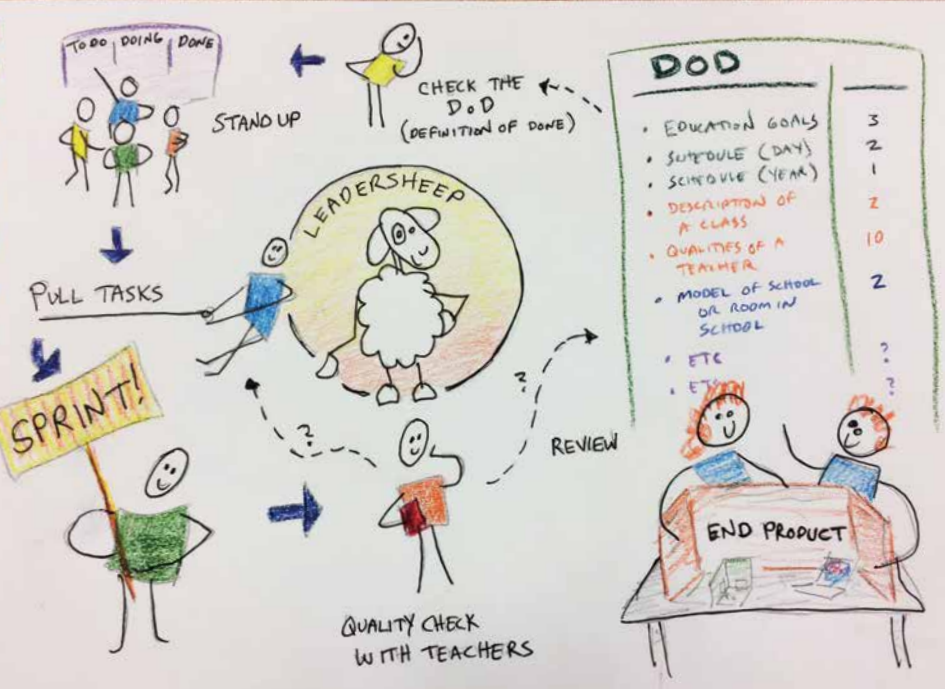
Pulling Agile into Education

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Our school is pulling agile into education. Now three years in, here's a snippet of our journey, highlighting the multiple paths we've been moving along and where we hope to go in the coming years.

The origins for our research center grew out of a study evaluating some donated Samsung hardware and software that promised to individualize and improve student learning. What we found instead was cumbersome software designed to share (and control) student tablets, software that seemed cool but was mostly a distraction, student behavior that was more off-task in our experimental classes than our control classes, and a teacher who pulled out of the study because he didn't feel he could afford to lose any more time due to the technology.

We turned our attention to iPads, with which we had some success. But after a semester of study, our most promising experimental user sent the iPads back to our IT office. Smart Boards? Well, they fared better, with our research observations and teacher feedback reporting in at least neutral. At least we were doing no harm, which felt at the time like something of a success.

All three studies, Samsung, Apple, and Smart Boards, were conducted using an observation tool that we developed ourselves in order to give feedback in

professional development programs to our teachers. Our understanding of the tool grew with its use, as did the need to move it from a paper to a web version. Eventually, in collaboration with the local university, we created a second tool from the original, which we are just beginning to use and understand better.

Our research center also evolved. What began with a single professor spending his sabbatical with us developed into a support structure for two main types of academic activity: visiting scholars, whom we invite to work with our students and teachers in order to further their own research agenda, and resident scholars, our own faculty members who take on extra research and curriculum projects as an extension of their professional development.

One productive line of inquiry that evolved from our early commitment to self-regulated learning was a suggestion by my colleague Bill in the IT department to structure a class using scrum, a methodology supporting collaborative, iterative group work that is well known in the tech world but only just beginning to appear in education. And here the story of EDgility (thank you, Bill, for the name) really begins.

In school year 2014-2015, I taught an experimental class to 17 students, grades 10-12. The students had three principle tasks. First, they were to spend their time learning one or more languages with online support. Second, they were to review, in teams, online learning platforms like Babbel and Duolingo. Third, they were to create language awareness activities based on a template.

By early November of that school year, I was seriously foundering. I was in need of some sort of structure, or framework, to support the self-regulated learning I was dreaming of. Bill pointed us in a new direction with a late night SMS: "Check out eduScrum," he

wrote. "It could help." And so scrum entered our education vocabulary at LAS.

I checked out the website and contacted the method's lead creator, Willy Wijnands. Willy was on sabbatical and suggested I contact John Miller of Agile Classrooms. I did. John offered to skype with Bill and me, and soon we had a monthly check-in to talk about how things were going in my experimental class. We were on to something.

I put the students into groups of four, assigned a scrum master (a student who could remind others about our process), provided limited background on the process as I understood it from eduScrum, and got them started. I taped the paper draft of each book chapter to the wall in a column marked "To Do," The other columns were labeled: "Doing" and "Done."

Students, it turns out, are wonderfully flexible. They easily understood the principle of pulling in a chapter, working on it to a specified set of standards (the definition of done, according to scrum), and understood the value of the standup to introduce their work. They reported their daily work on a burndown chart, showing how much was left to do and the amount of time they still had to do it. In some instances, scrum masters assigned homework so that the work would be done on time. In a rare instance, I helped a group reflect on their process.

The first finished chapters started coming in. I felt a little like I had jumped off the bank of a river into the water without checking the depth, or the temperature, or whether I was wearing a bathing suit. But now in midair, well, necessity is the mother of all invention.

While students were working on their second sprint (their second chapter), I met with working groups from the first sprint to review their work. I decided to set one grade for the whole team. I structured my review of their work based on our preset definition of done—the equivalent in education-speak is probably best understood as a rubric. I set it up a bit like a group defense of a thesis, requesting that all team members be able to answer any question in order to check that the work was collaboratively

achieved, not merely created by a nominal team that had broken the work into four barely connected individual tasks.

By now, any certified scrum master is probably squirming with questions about the various mistakes and misapplications of the methodology. (I prefer to think of them as small liberties.) But the improvement over my previously non-methodological approach to self-regulated learning was evident and we did, as a class, publish an iBook, called Language Awareness, at the end of the school year.

Checking in with John, Bill and I also convinced ourselves that we were on to something. We brought two of our colleagues to a conference hosted by the Dutch group, Scrum@Schools, an offshoot of eduScrum, and witnessed in the northern town of Gröningen what classes using the process could accomplish. Like in the original eduScrum videos that had convinced me to give this approach a try, the students we saw were able to start class independently, without a teacher, confer briefly about what they planned to get done, and get down to work in what appeared to us as a spirit of collegiality and collaboration.

We were off and running.

To mix metaphors, our running wasn't necessarily smooth sailing. I had no experimental class the following year to continue learning with. The application of eduScrum by teachers existed, though minimally. Bill stepped up, however, with the after-school activity makerspace he was running. Bill didn't use eduScrum but furthered self-regulated learning in a simple way. He required students to write down on a white board what they were going to work on and take a picture of what their project looked like at the beginning of the activity. Ninety minutes later as they were leaving, he required them to take a second picture of what they had attained. While not a perfect system (some students still manage to get by without producing much), the atmosphere in the activity has shifted markedly in the direction of positive, goal-oriented work. More than ever, we are convinced that students want to create things, and they want to get things done. Setting the minimal structure to maximize their self-regulation is the trick.

We sent a second group of teachers to the eduScrum conference the following year. We also invited John Miller to do a two-day workshop at our

**"If people aren't laughing at your dreams, your dreams aren't big enough."
- Robin Sharma**

school (for us and invitees from other schools). Our teachers were interested, attendance was good, the workshop was good, and the day Bill and I spent with John walking along the footpaths of Lake Geneva brought out some of the best learning I had that year. We arranged with John to come back as a visiting scholar and promised to keep up the effort.

In addition to the work with the research center, other work gave us a chance to use a new tool, namely Trello. Trello is familiar in the IT world, but not necessarily in education. It is an online Kanban board which can be set up however the user wants. Introduced by a colleague in IT, Trello quickly caught on with several of us organizing larger projects. Two major projects, designing a middle school and a self-study required for a ten-year accreditation visit, required that a number of additional faculty use Trello on a regular basis, resulting in many more teachers getting a feel for how Kanban helps make work visible. We'll return below to how visibility became our first step in introducing agile at the classroom level.

Our school embarked on a planning year to create a new section, a middle school, which in our case meant adding a seventh grade and putting seventh and eighth grades together in one building. Curriculum, extracurricular activities, and residential life was to be planned by several people over the course of a year. We began with a backlog, a to-do list of courses to be planned, a to-do list of projects that cut across courses (e.g. assessment philosophy, integration with the grades following the middle school, discipline, parent reporting), and a to-do list of residential and extra-curricular

planning. Teachers working on program development, administrators checking on progress, and admissions staff wanting details to sell the program were all invited into the process. There was no scrum here—the two of us in charge were in fact fairly top down—but the work was visible. We could call it a first step in introducing a feature of agile—visibility, to the wider school community.

During the same year, we were preparing, as a school, for an accreditation visit. Schools are generally accredited by one or more organizations. A common feature of the process is a year-long self-study, pulling together evidence to support claims of well-operating systems and self-identifying areas that need work. Reports are sent to the accrediting organization which arranges for a group (made up of nine international educators from around the world, in our case) to visit the school to check that the school's report matches their impressions of the school. Reports and evidence are required in seven areas, including, for example, overall management, teaching and learning, safety and security, admissions, the physical plant, and so on. The school is also required to involve all faculty members in the year-long self-study.

One word: Trello. All committee chairs, department heads, and section leaders were working from a shared board again, moving fairly large pieces of collaborative work from "doing" to "done." But there were opportunities to make some small bets using our growing agile mindset.

First, the steering committee was required to do lots of editing, but could only meet together for short amounts of time. We organized ourselves as a committee with a white

During his stay at LAS, visiting scholar John Miller organized a meeting of representatives from several schools that are introducing an agile mindset to teaching and learning.

Participants from Agora Roermond and Ashram College in the Netherlands, as well as eduScrum and LAS, worked for three days with an agile business coach and John to explore the use of agile in the classroom. We ended the week with a conference call with Manny Gonzalez, the former CEO of Scrum

board and tasks, and spoke about working in 25-minute sprints between check-ins. ("Whoa!" says the reader trained in scrum. "That's not a sprint!" Well, you may be right, but we are not dogmatic.) Working alone, in pairs, or in small groups, we pulled sections to edit, stayed heads down for a 25 minute spr … well, let's call it a pomodoro, and then relaxed as we checked in with each other. We asked the traditional stand-up questions: What did you get done and do you know what to do next? Is anything holding you up that we could fix right now? To a purist, we're all over the map. We say, baby steps, small bets.

The process required us to make a plan to address any deficiencies we identified. We modified the template the accrediting organizations had provided us to create tables with actionable steps. We labeled the final column "definition of done," which encouraged us to state the work we were committing to in terms of outcomes. To address connections between classes, one outcome reads, "Pro-learning schedule for 2016-2017 includes specific time for horizontal work with a specific agenda for those times, published and shared at the beginning of the school year." We were grooming a mindset that requires specific outcomes to address identified problems, with some of the vocabulary from the agile world. Moving forward, enough faculty understand "definition of done," so that when it appears in other work, the bar to assimilating this mindset is just a little lower. Baby steps and small bets.

During that year, two of our faculty working in the research center, and who had attended John Miller's two-day workshop on agile classrooms, introduced a Kanban process to the girls in their dorms. The girls planned their annual Christmas party as a dorm, using a primary tool of self-organization—visibility. As residential hall directors Andie and Suzy described in a presentation to administrators later, "Our goal was to create a tool that would encourage better leadership, teamwork, and accountability among our student leaders in the dormitory when planning events."

And finally, during the same year, two teachers in the ESL department experimented with visibility through Kanban boards. One of them, DeLona, had attended the Scrum@ Schools conferences in the Netherlands. The other, Aaron, had attended John Miller's workshop. In both cases one could call their efforts beginning because they are beginning, after all. In neither case would I say their work with the agile mindset is insignificant because incremental change is the name of the game and the theme of the last several paragraphs. We are inclined to think that the early adoption of the ideas in classrooms, dormitories, and program administration will set us up well for our next steps: agile mindset classrooms across the middle school and a curriculum development and review process for the middle school that is much more agile and much less hampered by the "big plan." And when we've achieved that, we may open the door from the middle school into the preparatory years (grades 9 and 10), where we will literally take what we've learned to the next level.

Alliance, which is an organization dedicated to promoting agile in businesses and now, in part to our efforts, in schools across the world.

But what is agile?

Agile is a broad term for perspective on work and working that originated in the world of software development. Essentially, programmers worked in small teams, largely self-regulated, to complete finished pieces of a project in short increments, learning as they go and adapting as they learn. The parallels with what we would like to achieve in a school setting are quite obvious. What isn't obvious is how exactly we translate the agile mindset and accompanying practices into teaching and learning, but we're working on it. In fact, Willy Wijnands of eduScrum delivered two days of workshops with three of his students here at LAS this spring.

Resources

New Direction | *The Agile in Education Compass translates the* language of agile for educators around the world. AgileVox, Issue 2, Fall 2016, pp. 48 - 56.

Agile Classrooms | *John Miller's site to support teachers working agiley.*

eduScrum | *Willy Wijnands' scripted manner in which to use scrum, one of the most successful versions of agile.*

Scrum Alliance | *The international organization for the support and promotion of agile.*

Our Agile Journey

2013 - 2014 and earlier

- Creation of the research center with focus on self-regulation
- Student-led coding club

2014 - 2015

- Experimental linguistics class
- EduScrum conference in the Netherlands for 4 faculty members
- John Miller skypes and workshop
- Makerspace activity year 1

2015 - 2016

- Middle school program development
- 10-year accreditation self-study
- EduScrum conference in the Netherlands for 3 faculty members
- John Miller skypes and workshop
- Makerspace activity year 2
- First appearance of Kanban working with a project in a girls' residence hall

Summer 2016

- Experimentation of agile mindset in university course
- Second meeting of agile schools at LAS

2016 -2017

- Beginning of middle school, with promise to include agile in teaching and learning
    - Two early adopters of Kanban and some elements of scrum (eg standups) in year long courses
    - Four courses (Coding, Robot Gardeners, Makerspace, and Project Innovate) explicitly designed with an agile mindset
- Scrum Alliance conference in Munich for 2 faculty members
- Makerspace activity year 3
- Expanded documentation of teaching and learning that provide insight into the agile mindset
- Eduscrum workshop held at LAS

Schools and people pulling agile into education

Agile Classrooms (English)

Agile Learning Centers (English)

Agora and Nieké Roermond (Dutch)

Blueprint Education (English)

eduScrum (Dutch, English, and German)

Leysin American School (English)

M.H. Willeke Adaptive Learning (English)

Scrum@School (Dutch)

Vizdos Enterprises (English)

Leysin American School
at a glance

overview

Since 1960, LAS students have come from around the world to study and excel on our campus. The school's focus on academic achievement and intercultural understanding, within a caring family like community, provides a range of opportunities for students to succeed as "innovative, compassionate and responsible citizens of the world" in the twenty-first century.

contact LAS

Want to find out more about LAS or have a question? Get in touch with our admissions office:

+41 24 493 4888
admissions@las.ch
las.ch/admissions/information

academics

Grades 7-12 (12-18 years old)

Postgraduate year - year 13

International Baccalaureate (IB)

US High School Diploma

English as a Second Language (ESL)

English Bridge Program (April-August)

Faculty-to-student ratio - 1:7

Average class size - 12

Full-time faculty - 72; 95% live on campus

70% with higher degrees

SAT/ACT/IELTS preparation and testing

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