

the GOAL post

2007
Symposium
coverage

Resilient teachers, resilient students

Lucy MacDonald's keynote address to the 2007 GOAL symposium could not have been timelier.

The challenge of implementing curriculum reform and new approaches such as GOAL demands a genuine openness to change when the normal human tendency is to resist.

How we react to change and other stresses depends to a large extent on what **Lucy MacDonald** calls our own "thinking habits or explanatory style." She maintains: "The #1 roadblock to resilience is not genetics, not childhood experiences, not a lack of opportunity or wealth. It is our cognitive or thinking style. How you explain your successes and failures influences persistence."

Identify beliefs — and challenge inaccurate ones

There's a lesson here for both educators and students. Sometimes we need to challenge our own beliefs—whether we're teachers confronted with new pedagogical thinking, or students who perceive a setback in one area of their lives as evidence that "they can't do anything right."

Educators help their students become more resilient by encouraging them to identify their feelings, challenge their assumptions and analyze why things may have happened the way they did and how future outcomes could be better. Similarly — and this is where GOAL comes in — teachers and professionals who are inclined to innovate, take advantage of professional development and consciously challenge their own thinking habits are already modelling the resiliency they want their students to develop.

Sandra Salesas

Sandra Salesas, c.o., ccc
Provincial Coordinator, GOAL

How resilient are you and your students?

Download Lucy MacDonald's presentation from the GOAL website.



Lucy MacDonald is a Montreal-based counsellor and consultant on learned optimism and resiliency.

A student's-eye view of the GOAL symposium

by Krista Ferguson, student, Howard S. Billings Regional High School

Learning by doing is vital to the GOAL philosophy. Here's how one Secondary V student summed up the 2007 symposium for her journalism class.

INSIDE

- 3 Students get serious about the Charter of Rights and Freedoms
- 3 POP update: Educators are students for a day
- 4 Entrepreneurship resources: yours for the asking

PLUS

- 4 Your GOAL Networking Committee



Making Dreams Come True

On Friday, September 28, MELS held its sixth annual GOAL symposium at the Hilton Montreal Airport Hotel. Adherents of the **Guidance-Oriented Approach to Learning** know that by motivating students to make the right educational and career choices, they can lower students' risk of failure and dropping out, and help them to be successful and make the right decisions for the future.

The symposium began with a very inspirational guest speaker, **Lucy MacDonald**, who is a Canadian certified counsellor. She spoke about resiliency, and how one must bounce back and move forward in order to change and grow. Through her many touching and funny personal stories, she explained how she learned to be resilient. "We don't learn resilience until we have to," she said. Her book, *Learn to Be An Optimist*, shows how anyone can learn the skills of optimism and resilience. *(continued on page 4)*



Krista Ferguson uses her journalistic skills during an interview with NFSB symposium participant, **Don Rosenbaum**. (Photo: Amanda Holowathy)

“To be honest, I believe that when implementing GOAL into any lesson plan, the lesson is generally more intriguing and enjoyable.”

Meagan Bristowe
Student, D'Arcy McGee High School

Check the GOAL website for regular updates:

www.learnquebec.ca/en/content/mels/goal/index.html

GOAL gives meaning to student learning

by Christina Belway, student, D'Arcy McGee High School

James Truslow Adams, an American historian and writer said: "There are obviously two educations. One should teach us how to make a living and the other how to live."

The art of today's teaching is to be able to do both at the same time, and the guidance-oriented approach to learning (GOAL) is a stepping stone to achieve this.

It's important to make learning relevant to students because when teachers teach a classroom without that approach, students are left to wonder why. As we grow older we become more aware that whatever information we are absorbing in school will affect our future . . . and we would like to understand how it does this. By giving us examples and explanations, we see a point in classes that [we] otherwise consider useless . . . By understanding why we need to know something, we become much more willing to learn it.

Christina's participation in the symposium was her "first experience directly interacting with others on a professional basis." She adds that not only did she learn more about the educational system, she got to see it from a teacher's perspective.



The LBPSB's **Ken Elliott** (left), **Sheila Southon** and **Stephen Brayne** were among the 200 educators who attended the 2007 symposium.

"Give students the opportunity to shine and they will knock your socks off!"

"Students so very often are given tasks in school that are simulated," says **Kelly Butler**, GOAL consultant for the WQSB. "Involving them in events such as the GOAL symposium gives them the opportunity to have a hand in something that has a purpose. They probably learn a lot more without even knowing it."



Above: Rosemere High School student volunteers (l to r): **Amanda Ronci**, **Ariane Legault** and **Cassandra Laporte**.

Infusing the broad areas of learning into... a symposium!

by Christina Belway and Sandra Salesas

Instead of just talking about the broad areas of learning, organizers chose to integrate them into the day's activities. This gave participants concrete examples of how they could incorporate them into classroom lessons and projects.

Citizenship and Community Life

External organizations were invited to participate in the symposium as exhibitors. These included the Quebec Order of Chartered Accountants; The Learning Partnership (organizers of the national "Take our Kids to Work" Day); and the Advancing Canadian Entrepreneurship (ACE) program at Bishop's University.

Student involvement highlighted the importance of volunteer work to develop experience and validate interests.

Personal and Career Planning

The symposium focused on how and why students learn. Workshops and round-table discussions provided examples of how educators can make learning more meaningful by infusing career education into the curriculum.

Media Literacy

Students learned about media literacy first-hand by taking part in activities and acting as reporters, photographers and video-makers.

Health and Well-being

The WQSB's **Kelly Butler** and students, **Meagan Bristowe** and **Christina Belway**, led an invigorating aerobics exercise during one of the breaks that got everyone up and moving, rather than heading for the coffee and muffins.

Environmental Awareness and Consumer Rights and Responsibilities

Educators who had received tote bags at previous symposiums were asked to bring them along for recycling at this one.



Marsha Gouett, a pedagogical consultant with the EMSB, was another eager participant.



Leo La France, assistant deputy minister, MELs, enthusiastically gets into the act.

There was no mistaking which broad area of learning was up for discussion when GOAL consultant Kelly Butler and two WQSB students took to the stage.

Teachers + the Canadian Bar Association = engaged students

by Joan K. Wasserman, Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board

Moot courts dealing with actual Supreme Court cases transform students into lawyers and judges who must apply the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

“The basics of the Canadian Constitution—including the Charter—should be mandatory learning in our schools and high schools,” stated the country’s Chief Justice, **Beverley McLachlin**, as reported in an April 2007 article in *The Globe and Mail* marking the 25th anniversary of the Charter.

In recent months, students in several high schools of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board have not only been learning about the Charter, they’ve been interpreting and applying it as lawyers, judges, interventionists and bailiffs in a moot “Supreme Court” they and their teachers create in their schools. So far, the program has been incorporated into the teaching of English language arts, ethics, history, media literacy and economics.

Organized in collaboration with the Quebec branch of the **Canadian Bar Association (CBA)** and the **Canadian Judges’ Forum**, the program helps to make students responsible for their own learning, while educating them about the judicial system and the Canadian and Quebec charters.

Choosing from among actual charter-based Supreme Court cases provided by the CBA, students work in teams to research their case, develop arguments for each side, present their arguments, and ultimately render judgment. During the process, they receive guidance from prominent lawyers and judges who generously volunteer their time. On the day of the moot court, student judges even have the opportunity to confer



Laval Liberty High School students deliberate over their moot Supreme Court case involving search and seizure of a minor.

with a Quebec Superior Court judge who participates in the proceedings.

“This was the most rewarding project I did in class last year,” says **Pierre Home-Douglas**, a teacher at **Laurier Senior High School**. “It was a great combination of self-directed learning and cross-curricular activity. Kids learned about Canadian history, our legal system, and how to argue a case — a valuable skill not only for school (in particular argumentative and persuasive writing), but for the ‘real’ world as well.”

Outstanding efforts, outstanding teamwork

by Joan K. Wasserman

Teamwork has underpinned this initiative from the moment SWLSB became involved. Lester B. Pearson School Board teachers, **William Holt** and **Joanna Vitas**, who had already used the Charter program in their classrooms, came to our initial teacher workshop in January 2007 to discuss their experience so that our teachers could see the concrete nature of the initiative. Justice **Pierre C. Gagnon** and lawyers **Simon Potter** and **Louis Brousseau** from the CBA also took time out to explain the initiative to our principals.

If you’d like to learn more about this initiative, contact Joan Wasserman at (450) 621-5600, ext. 1397 or email jwasserman@swlauriersb.qc.ca

POP Update

Educators walk in their POP students’ shoes

by Cheryl Pratt, Provincial Coordinator, POP and Exploration
& Malcolm MacPhee, Eastern Shores School Board

At the Rural Schools Educational Conference in Gaspé, educators from the Eastern Shores School Board discovered what it’s like to be a POP student.

The administrators and teachers who participated in the conference’s two-part workshop on POP found themselves in a typical POP class — as experienced by their students.

Working in an actual POP classroom, the “students” logged onto the “Career Matchmaker” section of the *Career Cruising* website (<http://www.careercruising.com/>) to discover occupations or fields that meshed with their interests. Many discovered that teacher or principal appeared at the top of their list!

Equipped with their lists of potential careers to explore, the participants went on to try out other POP tools. The ESSB’s interim director general, **Nicole Cosgrove**, tackled the Law tool kit, while **Brian Rock**, principal of **Baie-Comeau High**

School, discovered virtual knee surgery on the POP Index website. Other “students” researched which tools and resources they might like to pursue in more depth. All were so fully engaged, it was difficult to get their attention away from their activities!

Meanwhile, two teachers used two different career exploration forms to plan their own exploration process, drawing on resources available in a POP classroom, their school board, their community and through personal contacts. They found this task much more challenging than they had anticipated and are now aware of the struggles their students might face. They also appreciate why the program requires students to complete three to eight career exploration processes in order to master the competencies.



Curriculum links

- Develops critical thinking
- Cultivates direct understanding of one’s rights and freedoms as a Canadian
- Promotes reading, writing and talking to learn
- Encourages students to formulate opinions about diversity and differences in society (Citizenship and Community Life)
- Requires reflection on ethical issues (Moral Education)

Stepping back into their professional roles, the educators were able to discuss in-class strategies they could use to help real students in this engaging, yet challenging, program.

You’ll find the career exploration forms used during this workshop at http://www.learnquebec.ca/en/content/curriculum/career_dev/pop/

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RESOURCE CENTRAL

Connecting those entrepreneurial dots

by Josée-Ann Cloutier

The Réseau des carrefours jeunesse-emploi can help you introduce entrepreneurial skills and concepts into your classroom.



Josée-Ann Cloutier

One of my favourite childhood activities was to play connect the dots on paper. I remember feeling so much curiosity connecting each dot and great satisfaction in seeing the whole picture.

My name is **Josée-Ann Cloutier** and I'm the new

provincial coordinator for youth entrepreneurship, representing the Anglophone sector with the **Réseau des carrefours jeunesse-emploi du Québec** (www.cjereseau.org).

Our team of approximately 90 officers province-wide is available to assist teachers who want to integrate entrepreneurial concepts into their regular classroom activities. We can support you with curriculum that will help your students develop

entrepreneurial traits. We're also available to present workshops.

My goal is to ensure that your communities have the tools to continue developing an entrepreneurial culture. I am here to connect the dots, create a link, be the bridge. If you have questions, issues or want to say hello, I'd sincerely like to meet you!

You can reach me at (514) 393-9155 ext. 208 or email josee-ann@cjereseau.org

A born entrepreneur

A native of northern Ontario, Josée-Ann Cloutier developed a passion for entrepreneurship as a student at Dalhousie University. While there, she started a small business producing, marketing and selling fresh organic blueberry waffles at the Farmer's Market. She also initiated DalWellness, a student-led society that promoted health and wellness in the community. She graduated in 2005 with a degree in management.

A student's-eye view... (continued from page 1)

Many workshops followed throughout the day. One focused on *The Real Game* that has gained international recognition as an effective classroom tool. It allows students to role play real-life challenges such as planning for large purchases like houses and cars while working within a budget. It's a great way for students to be better prepared for the future. (*Students also practise their language skills through team discussions, problem solving, identification of transferable skills and summarization of their action plans.* – S.S.)

Another workshop demonstrated how students at **Mother Teresa Junior High School** in Laval raised \$ 3,000 for the victims of the earthquake that hit Pakistan in October 2005. (*Guidance counsellor, Michael Ioannidis, and behaviour technician, Michael Frank, explained how this interdisciplinary project engaged community partners and furthered learning in the subject areas of history, geography and English language arts.* – S.S.)

Many participants were really impressed with how well the symposium turned out. **Ken Elliott**, assistant director general of the Lester B. Pearson School Board, learned more about the new **Personal Orientation Project (POP)** course and how it works. "It was excellent," he said, confirming the usefulness of the new personalized program to career research that is being introduced in high schools across Quebec.

Students from various school boards also participated in the symposium, including **Meagan Bristowe** and **Christina Belway**, grade 11 students from **D'Arcy McGee High School** in Gatineau, Quebec. They interviewed participants for an eventual professional development video.



Students **Christina Belway** (left) and **Meagan Bristowe**

2007 Symposium coverage

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