



## Interview with Beryl Boyle | Belle Anse Elementary School, ESSB

### Focus: Role of Principal in a CLC School

#### Tips

- **Go slow!** Take the time to meet with one existing or potential partner at a time...connect the CDA with one teacher at a time
- **Make CDA visible to staff** - include CDA in staff meetings so teachers know that they are part of the team and to ensure CDA has a good understanding of school goals. Walk around the school together.
- **Anchor yourselves in the school's success plan** - you can otherwise be pulled in too many directions.
- **Stay informed** - the more you know about what teachers are trying to accomplish in the classroom and which partners are out there, the more you can build bridges between the two.
- **Asset mapping** - consider who and what is out there that can help the school meet its goals.
- **Get to know your CDA** - Block off time to meet with your CDA regularly and be faithful to it, especially in the beginning.

#### Challenges

- **School building** is used more frequently by more people - it's harder to keep it clean, but it's worth it!
- **Territoriality** - external organizations can be territorial - teachers too! Encourage collaboration inside and outside of the classroom.

#### Why it's Worth the Effort

- **Increased school visibility** - your school is invited to participate in more and more community-based initiatives
- **Representation** - Students see themselves reflected in their community
- **Learning** is brought to life

- **More resources** - More financial and in-kind contributions (material and human resources)

## Interview with David McFall | Pierre Elliott Trudeau Elementary School, WQSB

### Focus: Program & Partnership Development

#### Tips

- **Take risks and make room for new ideas** - it generates excitement inside and outside of the school.
- **Build up your relationship with the CDA** - whether they are new or experienced, invest the time.
- **Start off by building partnerships that can support the work of teachers** - it generates excitement and openness to collaboration in the school, which creates the kind of culture you want - one where teachers start to grow the initiative in ways you couldn't imagine.
- **Embrace intergenerational projects** - at-risk students who are connected to senior citizens are transformed - I've never seen anything else like it.
- **Celebrate memorable moments** - highlight your successes with partners to parents.

#### Challenges

- **Avoiding over load** - you will need to determine what existing initiatives to drop or keep over time - you can't just keep adding things on. Consider the [evolving] strengths and interests of your school team, what's working well and what isn't and the needs of your students. Do some planning with your CDA before the new school year begins if you can!
- **Sustainability of projects** - some projects can't be easily maintained after the initial year or simply run out of steam. Don't be afraid to let some things go.

#### Why it's Worth the Effort

- **Visibility & Growth** - since becoming a CLC, our school has grown 45%. We surveyed our Kindergarten, grade 1 & 2 parents to find out why they selected us. The number one response we got was our community approach - our partners and activities.

# Interview with Warren Thomson | Quebec High School, CQSB

## Focus: Shared Leadership

### Tips

- **Make use of the Provincial Resource Team** for orientations, tools, emergent opportunities and support with more formal reflections about the work that's being done.
- **Learn** about the strengths and motivations of everyone you're working with and give them an opportunity to take leadership on a specific project or initiative. This includes partners.
  - Do a lot of listening.
  - Make room for the school team's vision and focus on taking away the hurdles (finding money, speaking with nay-sayers, clarifying the value...etc) so that their projects can be realized successfully.
  - Learn about the mandates of your partners - identify common goals.
- **Model** - Don't ask a staff member to do something you aren't willing to do yourself.
- **Maintain regular communication with CDA** - formally and informally. What are the goals? What is our capacity? What's our approach to evaluation? What is the vision for next steps? What needs to be worked on?
- **Facilitate communication** between the school team and the CDA.
- **Connect with community leaders** - the CDA can help to coordinate things, but they can't replace you as principal. You need to invest in building relationships with community leaders.

### Challenges

- **CDAs don't [necessarily] have backgrounds in education** - this can give you pause at first but get to know them, their strengths and skill sets. Identify what you have in common and how you want to work together.
  - Orient your CDA to school operations and the Educational Project.
- **Not all staff will buy in right away** - start with the teachers who are ready and willing to try out joint initiatives. Teachers inspire other teachers to get involved.
- **Keeping the workload realistic** - CDAs can't do everything. Keep an eye on their hours and their workload so they don't become overburdened.
- **Sustainability of projects** - the CDA's job is to get things up and running, but they need to then be able to hand it off to a staff champion or partner. If not, development comes to a standstill.
- **CDAs don't have any formal authority** - you need to help position them as leaders.

## Why it's Worth the Effort

- **More resources** - community partners invest resources into the school.
- **It takes on a life of its own** - there are now many CLC projects that are led independently from the CDA.
- **Community involvement** - Being a CLC school allows you to broaden your role in the community, which is hugely rewarding.