

MASTERS IN  
EDUCATIONAL  
LEADERSHIP:  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**BUILDING CONNECTIONS:** a secure and reliable foundation created through learning and growing, professional and personal relationships, and trials and tribulations.

*BUILDING  
CONNECTIONS*

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### GROWTH PLAN

**October 2012:** I am excited, but anxious to begin this journey/program. I know this will be a poignant journey; however I also know I will be challenged to look at the big picture, question my views of the world and education, and to see things with a new lens. I expect that my masters will allow me to grow as a person and a professional. I want to learn and challenge my thoughts, ideas and come out of this program with new perspectives. This also ties into one of my personal goals I would like to reach in the master's program: I want to respect, value, and learn from my colleagues and instructors. As a leader, this is a skill that requires mastering. If a leader cannot listen to the thoughts and opinions/his/her team, eventually there will be no team to work with. I am very excited to develop my knowledge of leadership throughout my masters, and to sculpt this into my own personal 'credo' of leadership in education. I am taking this program to become a better teacher, leader and community member. As a fairly new teacher my learning curve has been quite steep and I feel that more I know the better I can be. I also want the opportunity to take on leadership roles in the school and the community, and taking this course will better prepare me for those roles.

**June 2014:** As we are approaching the end of this journey I could not be more satisfied. I have created lifelong relationships with my colleagues and I have grown more than I ever imagined. I have chosen to present a thematic approach in my presentation titled, '*Building Connections*'. As I reflect upon my journey I became aware of how many connections I have made from my learning, relationships (both personal and professional) and life changing events. Moving forward from here I have set out personal and professional goals, as I embody my present role as a teacher, and I strive to help my classroom, school and district grow through my hard work and dedication to the profession.

**GOAL 1:** To value the personalities and unique qualities of all my students and fellow staff by working together towards common goals (school)

**GOAL 2:** Continue to increase my knowledge and the knowledge of my staff in assessment, and how to better implement it into teaching using the Standards Scale (leadership)

**GOAL 3:** To increase student's ability to be more adventurous and courageous on their path of learning (students)

**Personal Goal:** To continue to challenge, grow, & learn about myself and others, to be accepting of myself.

Having these goals I will continue to grow, learn and challenge myself as a lifelong learner in order to be a leader in the education system and the community.



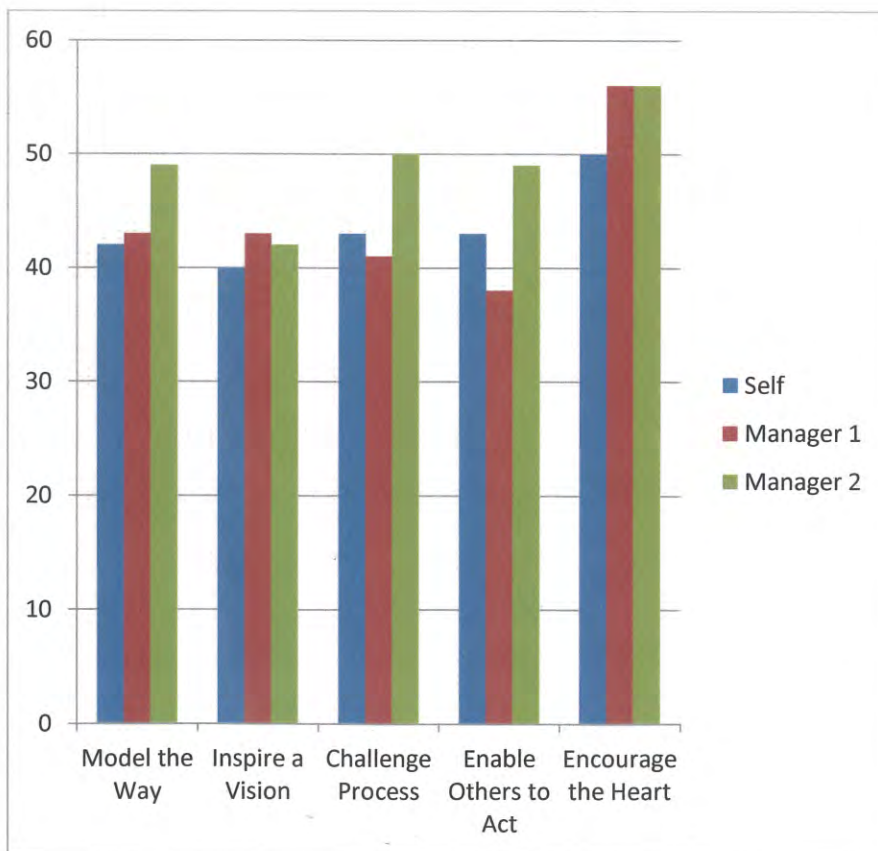
# Mission and Vision

*To produce meaningful education by creating lifelong learners through development of each individual by providing students with a 21<sup>st</sup> century skill set in this constantly changing world, through the fostering of relationships with students, colleagues, and community members.*

*A school climate should be collegial, collaborative and inclusive, no matter ones position in the school. It is an environment that is open and inviting for students, staff and the community.*

**“Vision without action is a dream. Action without vision is wasting time.  
Vision with Action can change the world”  
- Joel Barker**

## Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)



### Reflection

Although our experience with LPI was a bit confusing in the beginning I found this exercise to be extremely valuable. Some things that I took from this activity are:

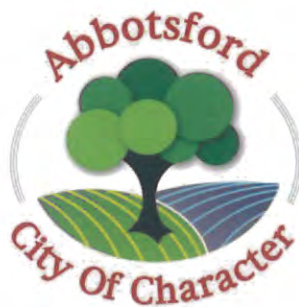
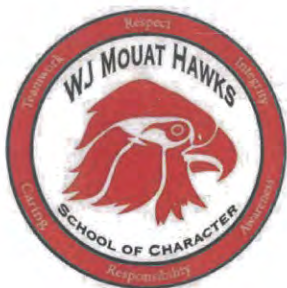
- 10 means perfect. I am not perfect and I would change how I answered some questions ( I redid my questionnaire)
- Sitting down and discussing certain ratings was an eye opener.
- Allows me to set goals and work on specific leadership qualities.
- Lots of “room for improvement.”
  - Actively listen to diverse points of view
  - Ask for feedback
- Some ways my leadership is manifested: I identify strongly with my school and school community and thus ‘take on’ responsibilities because I feel I own them as a member of that community.
- I inspire the heart through my enthusiasm and caring.

# Leadership



Leadership is a major component of teaching. I feel I have chosen a career where learning is a never-ending process. I love challenges, change, and new experiences. I am looking to develop my skill set further and this program has provided all these opportunities. A good leader is someone who is inspirational and has a clear vision of what they would like to achieve with their team. They are open to ideas, listen to others, and lead by example.

There are many different styles of leaders and it was evident in the people in my cohort. One of the major connections I was able to make in this program is to be authentic in leading and teaching. If I am not true to who I am then people will not follow or see my vision. Moreover, another major idea that was prevalent was that leaders should be out front leading the way, not from behind pushing. If the group you are trying to lead needs to be pushed then you are not a leader for them. People will follow your vision if you lead by example. I will always remember the Lion and lamb leadership style example.



Reflecting on the attributes and qualities of the interviewed leader assignment (Jacqueline Hall), some information that stands out is: to surround yourself with people who make up for your weaknesses, modeling, and shared vision. These are all things that I plan to be aware of and to work on the rest of my career. Throughout this journey I not only found the information I was learning to be useful in the world of education, but I was also able to see the connection to other aspects in my life. This is why I have chosen to label my journey through this program: **BUILDING CONNECTIONS**. For instance, finding people in your life who either complement you, or make up for your weaknesses is valuable. I have found that because I have chosen to do this I have continued to grow and learn. My colleagues, who have become my friends are the ones who will point out when I am wrong, or I need to change my perspective, and because of this I will be forever grateful.

## TOP THREE LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

1. Authentic
2. Visionary
3. Passionate



# Curriculum, Technology, Supervision, & Counselling Reflections

## Curriculum

It is important to incorporate a lot of activities that link the curriculum, to the student's personal lives because this allows the material to become meaningful to them. By taking the time to find ways in which it applies to them many students will become more interested. When I taught Macbeth this past year I decided to implement differentiate instruction and I quickly learned that differentiated instruction is not simply about giving smart students more work, rather challenging them differently. The materials that student's work on can be different, not necessarily more or less. Furthermore, last year at WJ Mouat Rob Comeau handed out a copy of Marzano's, *The Art and Science of Teaching* from which the staff were encouraged to implement or try some of the strategies from the book. I found that Marzano's High-Yield Instructional Strategies worked particularly well. For this unit I used the Venn diagram approach to have the students identify similarities and differences between themselves and a character from the play. If students were not comfortable using themselves they had the option to compare two characters. Originally this was not in the lesson plan, but was added as an option because it was clear some students were not comfortable. This also worked out well because students were able to draw parallels from themselves to the characters.

In addition to this, it is important to keep students at the center of curriculum development and know that it is not a product, but rather a process. Teachers need to be open change and development because this is an ever-changing world. *"Textbooks are not the curriculum"* –Des McKay

## Technology

Schools have significantly changed over the years, and gone are the days of chalk boards, overheads, and regular scientific calculators. They have now been replaced with Smart Boards, graphing calculators, and smart phones. Technology is an increasingly large part of our everyday lives at home, work, and in the school system. A current problem that school districts are faced with is not actually purchasing the technology (other than cost of course), rather the difficulty lies in how to harness the technology, and use it in appropriate ways to help the students achieve their educational goals. As a leader it is beneficial to consider the driving force behind providing unique and irreplaceable opportunities and experiences for students. One of these driving forces is technology. For instance, technology enabled two students from Mouat to have an experience of a lifetime. The boys were able to create a 3-dimensional eating building (mess hall), and then present it to the ambassador of Africa. Afterwards the boys flew to Africa and turned this dream into a reality, going to Africa to help construct the actual building they designed; brick by brick. This experience enriched their lives, and they built connections they never would have had before. This unique experience is one that was offered by a public school, solidifying that the public system can offer the same and an even better education than private. Future leaders in this district need to realize the value and potential of offering technology in their schools to ensure the district is not losing student's to homeschool, private school, or other online options.



## Supervision

Supervision of Instruction is an integral part of teacher development and best practice. It is often an intimidating process if not executed properly, and teachers do not feel safe. Teachers need to sense that the purpose of being evaluated is for teacher growth and not for the purpose of discipline. When teachers are using best practice strategies they can properly support and increase student achievement. Implementing effective supervision the first step in creating a culture of trust within the school, and this is something that is so important when a school undergoes change or a school wide initiative. The success of the initiative will be based on creating a culture of trust. This trust begins when the administration team and the teachers take part in a collaborative atmosphere.

For example, when someone is disengaged or discouraged then something has hindered their engagement. Furthermore, if conditions were created where people feel significant, contributing, and important they will feel that they matter, and that will encourage them to work hard to make a difference. From this I learnt how integral it is to try and shape and change the organizational system through encouragement rather than with force. Finally, we touched on how fear is attached to perceptions of being judged, and how it is important to find ways to reduce fear. We are not open when we are experiencing fear. We don't take risks. It limits our ability to learn. I've learned that the supervisor is not merely to evaluate, but that there should be a continuous cycle of observations and feedback, both formal and informal in order to promote growth.

*"Supervision and Evaluation is not the same thing."  
-Stan Watchorn*

**"BE CURIOUS  
BEFORE JUDGEMENTAL"**

**"When adults fight,  
kids suffer"**

-Stan Watchorn

## Counselling

During our counselling courses there was a lot of information that was valuable not only on a professional level, but also on a personal level. One assignment made it clear how difficult it is to facilitate a counseling session without posing questions. The learning outcomes for this assignment are to work towards open listening through practice reflective feeling statements, accurate paraphrasing, and summarizing statements, however, without doing the recording several times, and pre-establishing what I was going to say, I was unable to reach these outcomes. I found that as I was listening to the recording, making changes, and thinking about what I would do differently is when most of my learning occurred. I found it very frustrating to complete; however, I now appreciate the value of it through the reflection process. A low facilitative response, during the counseling session would be when I address the feelings of my client's spouse. This inflicts my personal opinion of how I think someone feels. It is also inappropriate to assume how a person would feel without that person being present; it is not possible for me to know how he might be feeling without talking to him. Although my client was telling me about the situation and how they both felt, my response validated her comment, and therefore was an assumption on my behalf. Part of what I have learnt in this course is about how important it is not to make 'assumptions.' In fact, making assumptions takes away from the listening process.

Some other valuable points I learnt:

- Step back and analyze the situation before taking action.
- I have made an effort throughout the program to work on my listening skills and my wait time when dealing with conflict.
- I have learned that our students must have their basic needs met before we can engage them in meeting any higher needs.
- Administrators have to follow a process

The connections I made in this area are clear. I can use the tools gained in the counselling courses not only with my students, but with my colleagues, family and friends.

*"Listening is not waiting for your turn to talk"*

- Judy Chapman

# Research Paper

## Research Question:

*After 3 years of implementation of Learning and Living with Character 10 what does the staff feel have been the effects of this program on the students and the school in general, and what could be done to enhance the program?*

### Statement of the Problem

I became interested in researching the effects of the *Character Initiative* last year when I was part of a team who developed and implemented the *Learning and Living with Character 10* course at Mouat. Over the summer I took on the responsibility of converting this course to an online course, as it is offered as a blending learning course. I believe this to be an important program to conduct research around because teaching has become more than delivering curriculum. Students are in school with their teachers almost as much as they are with their parents. Teachers have become responsible for building life skills and helping students understand connections between their studies and the world beyond high school. "It's everyone's responsibility—parents, teachers, community, and media. But parents and teachers have the most time with kids, so they have more opportunities for impact" (Brannon, 2008). We must help kids and empower them to take responsibility for their actions. Also, we need to help them process things they see and hear that are contrary to good character.

### Purpose of the Study

Our staff at WJ Mouat has been involved in the implementation of Character Education for three years. We believe that now is an appropriate time to assess our progress and degree of satisfaction with the program so that we may improve it. The views of staff are critical to that assessment.

### Methods & Procedures/Organization of the study

This is mixed method research. The steps followed were: Staff were sent an email informing them of the study and told it is voluntary and anonymous. The survey will be a Likert scale consisting of 20 questions with some additional demographic information and sections for written comment. As will have been explained the survey and the Participant Consent form will be provided to staff in the spring of 2014.

*"Intelligence is not enough.  
Intelligence plus character – that is the  
true goal of education"*  
-Hal Urban

### Review of Literature

**Theme 1: Importance of Teaching Values:** It is extra-curricular activities and other programs that schools offer that keep students engaged, involved, and counteract these issues. Robert Crider's article, *Character Education: A Relationship with Building Health* supports the implementation of Character Education in schools. It focuses on Character Education, and the direct correlation it has on school health.

**Theme 2: Teacher Experience (Perspective, Concerns, Suggestions):** A study was done by Michael Romanowski at Edwardsville High School (EHS) in West Central Ohio of a Character Education Program (CEP) during its fourth year of existence. Every teacher interviewed agreed that "although difficult to assess...[they] viewed this increased awareness as an important and effective element of CEP" (Romanowski, 2005). Many of the criticisms about Character Education is that it is difficult to assess and there should be some value to the fact that having these lessons, discussions, and scenarios devoted to this content at the very least get the students thinking about these things, which otherwise they may not. This awareness is better described as "stimulating the moral imagination".

### Theme 3: Character Education and the Effects on School Culture

School Climate can greatly impact students and their learning therefore, it is integral to look at how a Character Program affects a school's culture. A study was completed over five years in Northwest Wisconsin in various elementary schools interviewing third, fourth, and fifth graders on their thoughts about what they liked about school. The common themes that were prevalent in their responses were compared to the lesson that was taught in their character education classes. This study emphasizes the importance of maintaining a positive school climate by implementing a program that teaches good character traits.

# INTERNSHIPS

1. Learning Services
2. Development of Learning and Living with Character 10
3. Connecting the school, district, and community through introducing the Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI)

(Below: Abby City of Character Champions Retreat)



## Internship #1

- Develop my knowledge and understanding of IEP's
- Increase my awareness of options available in learning services by attending school based team and care team meetings
- Meet with the district principal to understand policies and procedures around learning services
- Maintain my communication between learning assistance department and our teachers.
- Provide a safe and belonging atmosphere for at-risk youth by implementing seasonal activities



## Brave account by Abbotsford high school girls wins recognition

By January 16, 2014 · 12:28 PM  
3 Comments



W. J. Mouat Grade 10 students (from left) Elizabeth Tauber, Yoselyn Villegas, and Jessica Freimuth shared highly personal stories of domestic violence at a school assembly. / ALINA KONENSKY/ABBOTSFORD NEWS

## Internship #2

- Assist in the development and implementation of Learning and Living with Character 10 at WJ Mouat Secondary
- Increase my awareness of time and effort dedicated to developing curriculum
- Meet with colleagues and leaders in the school to help develop the course at the grade 10 level
- Maintain my communication between other teachers and students about the changes occurring with the implementation of the course

## Internship #3

- Organize meetings with the various people involved with Learning and Living with Character 10 to share ideas about the program, and make necessary changes. Make appointments with David Ennis to ensure my knowledge of Moodle is up to date. Ensuring the content/materials used are approved by the district.
- Present to a group of principal's ranging from elementary, middle, and secondary levels, (Networks of Innovative Practice), about the implementation of Learning and Living with Character 10, as well as, the Youth Philanthropy Initiative (YPI), with a focus on PBL. As well as, join the District's Youth Council (YC34: Web) on December 4th
- Touch base with colleagues to ensure they are comfortable with YPI sessions. Schedule meetings to debrief: hear teacher feedback, allow them to collaborate, and take notes for next semester teachers.
- I will be sending out emails to various community and district representatives about the semi-final, and finals for YPI. I will also be contacting the media to ensure the community is aware of the work and effort that students have been putting into their charity (YPI) projects.
- The City of Character will be presenting the 2nd Annual Youth Forum hosted at WJ Mouat Secondary. This involves not only the city, but-various schools in Abbotsford ranging from elementary to secondary. This is a great way to learn how to weave character into our schools, but also connects members of the community.



# Four Folds & Inspirational Leaders

"If we only have great companies, we will merely have a prosperous society, not a great one. Economic growth and power are the means, not the definition, of a great nation."

— Jim Collins

**DANIEL GOLEMAN**—Emotional intelligence EQ vs. IQ, Character & Leadership effectiveness

Goleman's work is similar to Howard Gardner's work. Although, they do differ, similarities are that they both argue I.Q. is not always the most important in order to reach success, rather a combination of elements. Goleman's argues that people who experience success are the ones to have E.I.Q., a combination of both.

*"There is zero correlation between IQ and emotional empathy. ... They're controlled by different parts of the brain."*

- Emotional Intelligence, 1995

**MICHAEL FULLAN**— "All systems go: the Change Imperative for the Whole System Reform"

Effective leadership and success of schools is dependent on all levels of people. It starts at the bottom with parent involvement and ends at the district level. Having participation at all levels will lead higher success of schools. It is difficult to have involvement at all levels, and there will always be resistance at every level. In addition to this Fullan argues for high impact strategies to help impact student learning.

*"High impact strategies such as structured feedback to students, reciprocal teaching and observation and feedback on one's own teaching all had high impact on student learning"*

**JIM COLLINS** —"From Good to Great"

Essentially Collins' argument is that, good is not good enough, in fact, good hinders great. If you are going to aim, you better aim high. This can be applied in all aspects of life, not just in the goals of major corporations, but also in education systems. The quote chosen is important because it shows how as a leader, it is important to see your vision fit into the bigger picture of life. It is also important to note that change does not happen with one goal, vision, or person, it takes many of these. One of the most difficult changes I have seen occur at WJ Mouat has been adjusting the school's culture. It has taken many people from all areas in the school to do so, and there are still challenges that are being faced.

*"Get the right people on the bus, in the right seat"*

In fact, leaders of companies that goes from good to great start not with "where" but with "whom." They start by getting the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats.

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*"The Effective Change Leader actively participates as a learner in helping the organization improve"*

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## QUOTES

“Effective education reform begins with students and teachers in their classrooms, with student achievement ‘the super ordinate goal, supported by uniform yet flexible behaviors in the classroom.”

- Marzano, (The Art and Science of Teaching, 2007)

“The bad leader is he who the people despise; the good leader is he who the people praise; the great leader is he who the people say, ‘We did it ourselves.’”

- Senge (The Fifth Discipline, 1990)

“Moral courage is the bridge between talking ethics and doing ethics.”

- Rushworth Kidder (Moral Courage, 2005)

## Continued...

### **ROBERT MARZANO**—“The Art and Science of Teaching”

*“My focus has always started at the individual student level in the classroom, and moved out from there”.* This is an intimidating concept for a teacher with a class over 30 however; this is truly the basis of reaching student success. I loved his concept on personalized goals for students. I have found that this has led to success in my classroom. By allowing students identified what daily goals are and even what they could be, gives them ownership of their learning.

### **PETER SENGE**—“Schools that Learn: A Fifth Discipline Field book for Educators, Parents, and Everyone Who Cares about Education”

*Systems Thinking* - The key to educating people in systems thinking is to use a developmental process -- Eventually the concert pianist can simply look at a piece of music, which to our eyes is hopelessly complex, and absorb it with his self-conscious awareness. He may still have to practice it, but his ability to deal with complexity has expanded. A rapport has developed within his own consciousness between his self-conscious awareness and a more automatic level of consciousness capable of dealing with much greater complexity.

It is difficult to get teachers, administrators, or school districts to change their philosophies. Many people and systems can become resistant to grow. In order to meet the needs of students, people in the education system need to be willing to adapt and improve their strategies and techniques. To help combat this resistance, leaders must approach others properly. For example, asking and not telling and sharing the responsibility and ownership.

**RUSHWORTH KIDDER**—“Moral courage can be defined as the readiness to endure danger for the sake of principle.” People may have sound values and develop great skill at moral reasoning/ethical decision-making, but it does not matter if their decisions are not put into practice. People who talk the talk need to walk the walk. For example, as a leader one must lead by example. No one will follow a leader who cannot do what they ask others to do.

### **ROLAND BARTHES**—“The Jossey Based Reader: Educational Leadership”

The most important things a leader can focus on are relationships and workplace culture. While researching Barth and reading chapters written by him in, I became immersed in his writing. I was able to make many connections to events at Mouat. For example, the many challenges that administrators face while adapting the culture of the school, due to a concept Barthe refers to as ‘nondiscussables’. There are many other reasons why changing school culture can be difficult, however it’s clear that the very issues a school has that people do not openly discuss can be the most difficult to change.

*“The successful school principal is a culture builder, one who discovers and has the courage and resourcefulness to provide conditions within the school that are hospitable to human learning—that what it means to be an educator.”*

# THE END?!?!?

**Building Connections:** I will continue to strive towards growing and learning. This program has allowed me to create a solid base to stand upon, and whatever the future may hold I feel the possibilities are endless due to my personal and professional knowledge gained in these past two years!

These are the people and programs that motivate and continue to help me grow. It is a circle: as they influence me, I influence them. Really this is what teaching is all about: supporting, learning, and collaborating.

