

Submitted to: Frank Kelly
By: Joy Badder on behalf of Jim Costello
Re: LKDSB participation in *Ontario Innovation in Action Tour: Texas* sponsored by Apple Canada

LKDSB Participants: Dave Doey Superintendent – Special Education
Taf Lounsbury Superintendent – Elementary Student Achievement
Phil Warner Superintendent – Human Resources
Joy Badder Superintendent – Leading and Learning

Tour: March 1 – 3, 2016

Sites Visited: Belton New Tech High, Austin, Texas
Richard J. Lee Elementary, Dallas, Texas
Coppell New Tech High School, Dallas, Texas
Coppell High School Campus, Dallas, Texas

LESSONS LEARNED:

Eight Elements for Success:

Vision	Student Learning
Team	Measurement
Community	Professional Learning
Environment Design	Financial Sustainability

The Senior Team has been focussing on these eight elements during the implementation of technology-enhanced teaching and learning within LKDSB. To witness other Districts' implementation of these same elements gave the team pause to reflect upon the depth of our implementation. In particular, the team reflected upon the culture they experienced in the schools and how aspects of that culture were facilitated by the "Environment Design" element:

- *Technology* was seamlessly integrated into the learning environment of each school. Tablets and laptops were utilized for teaching, learning and collaborating. The walls of the schools did not inhibit the students' learning as all possibilities were able to be explored. Secondary students assumed responsibility for the care of their devices "manning" the *HelpDesks* within their sites. *All forms of digital communication* were utilized by the staff including in one site, live streaming of morning announcements/celebrations so community and family members could keep abreast of the learning;

- Students in two of the secondary schools wore student identification cards as well as *Trust cards*. The Trust cards were automatically given to the students and were theirs until they “lost” them and earned “back” the trust of the school community. Three words were printed on the Trust cards: Trust, Respect and Responsibility. These three tenets were the foundation of the schools – between staff/students, students/students, staff/staff, staff/community, students/community. Placards throughout the school denoted the characteristics of these traits in different areas of the schools e.g. In the hallway, in the collaborative seating arrangements. Students spoke precisely as to the honour it was to be trusted by the staff and their colleagues and emphasized that if a Trust card was ever lost, it happened only once in one’s school career;
- One Principal described her students as “*learners*” and her staff members as “*facilitators*”;
- At the secondary schools, *student ambassadors* were our tour guides. An ambassador also greeted us in each class and eloquently articulated the learning that was currently occurring in that respective space;
- Each of the schools (one to a lesser extent) was designed with many *collaborative spaces* in which students freely gathered to work alone or in group settings. These spaces varied from a quiet nook to a larger gathering space. As the students were trusted, there was not specific adult supervision in these areas;
- *Creative architectural elements* allowed students free flow of thought e.g. students, alone and with partners, brainstormed and recorded their thoughts on plexiglass walls and white boards mounted in collaborative gathering areas;
- All schools had *screens* mounted in hallways/open spaces *for multiple purposes* e.g. showcasing as well as facilitating student learning. In the elementary school, the Principal could call up student data on any screen which enabled focused discussions with staff members anywhere/anytime as screens were found throughout the school;
- In the elementary school, students were *grouped to maximize their learning*. Students were assigned to an age-appropriate grade level group as well as to an “achievement-grouping” according to Language or Math acquisition. The latter groupings were flexible according to a student’s achievement within a learning cycle. These groupings were “colour coded” with each group having an assigned collaborative working space within the school in which to gather. Learning goals for the group were highlighted in the groups’ colour on the screen mounted in this learning area;
- Each school had an authentic *Learning Commons area* and
- *Project-based and/or challenge-based learning* was the paramount mode of learning at two of the secondary schools. Staff differentiated and scaffolded the students’ learning on an individual and as-needed basis through the CBL process.