

TEACHER ADVISOR PROGRAMS: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

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Dedicated to:

Nordis Maley

An inspiration

Abstract

Teacher Advisor programs have been implemented in junior high schools, middle schools, and high schools to build relationships with students, increase student academic success, increase the social skills of students, and provide an opportunity for students to interact positively with other students in the school. The focus of the teacher advisor program is typically in an area the school wishes to improve. Each school implements activities to achieve the predetermined goal. For example, a teacher advisor program could focus on: academic success, building relationships, or anti bullying. Each school designs activities, schedules, and groupings to achieve the specific goal(s) of the teacher advisor program. Once the initial reason for the teacher advisor program has been met, the program can be adapted or changed to incorporate and achieve new goals. Tuxedo Park School (a pseudonym) has focused on using the newly implemented teacher advisor program to build relationships among students, parents, and teachers. The school has introduced a number of new activities to build these relationships, as well as created a Teacher Advisor Professional Learning Community to discuss issues, solve problems that may occur, document ideas and strategies, discuss how students are participating and reacting to the activities, discuss and improve problems teachers are having, and offer any suggestions for any improvements that can be made to the program. This project, *Teacher Advisor Programs: Building Relationships*, will identify and describe different activities that have been implemented at Tuxedo Park School, how students have reacted to activities, and how teachers are responding to the teacher advisor program. Through documents, pictures, descriptions of activities, timelines, and an Iweb site, this project will describe how Tuxedo Park's Teacher Advisor Program was started, and what

modifications were made to ensure that the program`s goal of building relationships is occurring.

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Introduction

In September 2007, Tuxedo Park School, a middle school comprised of grade 5 – 9 students, started a teacher advisor program. This program was launched to build relationships among teachers and students and build rapport among teachers and parents, with the main focus being to improve relationships amongst students. A number of activities, projects, communication strategies, and reflections were introduced to build understanding about student needs, increase communication with parents, develop relationships between teachers and students, and develop relationships between teacher advisors and parents. The program is designed such that each student will have the same teacher advisor group for the entire duration the student is enrolled at Tuxedo Park. For example, a grade 5 student has the same teacher advisor teacher for grades 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. This provides support and stability for the student, and also increases dialogue among teachers since there is one expert teacher for each student in the school. If a student is having a problem then the teacher advisor can inform the other teachers who work with the student. Similarly, when a teacher is having a problem with a particular student, then the teacher can discuss his/her issues with the teacher advisor, who can suggest strategies that may help the student's learning, achievement, and overall success. This process also provides the teacher with an understanding of what the student needs. Similarly, when students are facing problems they can confide with an adult with whom they have built a relationship.

This study will provide a narrative description of activities, communication, expectations, and strategies implemented to build relationships within the school community. It will include pictures, examples of activities, reflections, surveys, student

opinions, and timelines. It will provide a background of information about where teacher advisor programs started, and what constitutes an effective teacher advisor program.

Statement of Purpose

This project will demonstrate different activities that are being implemented at Tuxedo Park School with a focus to improve the relationships between teachers and students, teachers and parents, and among students. The results of this project will be reviewed by Tuxedo Park School's Teacher Advisor Professional Learning Community to determine which activities positively impacted relationships within the school culture, and which activities can be refined to improve relationships.

This study will record activities including: service learning projects, teacher advisory pairing activities, whole school activities, and individual teacher advisor projects. This study will also include an Iweb site which may be used to provide examples to other schools and districts about how Tuxedo Park School has designed its teacher advisor program.

Background/Rationale

For the 2007 – 2008 school year, Tuxedo Park School implemented a teacher advisory program. This program was introduced to teachers on the first day teachers returned to work after the summer holidays. Teacher advisors phoned each of the students in their teacher advisor group personally to welcome them to, or welcome them back to Tuxedo Park School. Teachers started the organizational day with team building exercises, including ice breakers and information sheets to display on bulletin boards. All teachers in Tuxedo Park School are designated as a teacher advisor, including teachers who teach homeroom or core classes such as Science or Social Studies. Complementary

teachers who teach French, Physical Education teachers, Fine Arts teachers which includes Drama, Music, and Art, Technology teachers, the special needs coordinator, and the teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students. Lockers were grouped for each teacher advisor class to ensure lockers were located near the students' homerooms, or where the majority of their classes are. Each teacher advisor class had to come up with their own special name or identifier on the first day of school.

Teacher Advisor Names

It was important for each group to create a name together to establish a feeling of comradery and pride. Classes designed a poster that was hung outside the Teacher Advisor classroom. The resulting Advisor class names are listed in Table 1.

Table 1.

Names of Teacher Advisor Classes

Grade	Name
Grade 5	Peterson's Perfect Pirates
Grade 5	Franklin's Freaky Flamingos
Grade 5	Robert's Rock 'n Roll Room
Grade 5	Hank's Happy Hippos
Grade 5	Friday's Fantastic Fearless Fighting Ferrets
Grade 6	Brown's Brainy Bunch
Grade 6	North's Nice Noodles
Grade 6	Earheart's Enchanted Extremists
Grade 7	Hansen's Hungery Hungery Hobos
Grade 7	Morrison's Menacing Mullets
Grade 7	Price's Pointed Platypus
Grade 7	Bennett's Blazing Braniacs
Grade 8	McBride's Marvelous Models
Grade 8	Draper's Diving Ducks
Grade 8	McDonald's Munching Maniacs
Grade 8	Rambo's Randomly Rambunctious Raccoons
Grade 8	Kline's Kinder Surprise
Grade 9	Conlon's Courageous Coconuts
Grade 9	Rembrandt's Ridiculous Rafters

It was intended that the names of the Teacher Advisor Classes will remain the same until the Class graduates from Tuxedo Park School.

In a random survey conducted on January 8, 2008, 72 out of 104 students could state the name of their teacher advisor. Thirty-two out of 104 students did not know the name of their teacher advisor, typically replying when asked the name of their teacher advisor class “Do you mean my teacher advisor teacher?”

Teacher Advisor Program

The teacher advisor program is scheduled Monday – Thursday from 8:00 a.m. – 8:20 a.m. for silent reading, and the collection of forms, fees, and report cards envelopes. Some teacher advisor classes have chosen to implement buddy reading between the lower grades and the higher grades, which also provides mentoring to new students within the school. These buddy programs have been very effective for younger students who may have been intimidated by the older students, and for the older students who have demonstrated inconsistency with sustained silent reading. The effort students put into the teacher advisor reading block is reported on Tuxedo Park’s report card. There is a rubric displayed in each classroom to ensure students know what is expected for each effort mark. Effort marks include:

Table 2.

Teacher Advisor Effort Reading Marks

Descriptor	Marks
Excellent (E)	90% - 100%
Very Good (VG)	80% - 89%
Meets Expectations (M)	60% - 79%
Needs Improvement (NI)	Below 60%

On Fridays, the teacher advisor period is forty minutes, and consists of Health activities based on the Program of Studies. Each teacher within a specific teacher advisor grade grouping is in charge of a section of lessons and each lesson is compiled in a binder so in future years teachers will not have the extra responsibilities of planning the teacher advisor health lessons, but will merely need to refer to the lessons that were taught the previous year. The schedule of teacher advisor activities and classes for Fridays is listed in Table 3a, 3b, and 3c.

Table 3a.

Term 1 Timetable of TA Health Periods

Date	Timetable Day / Period	Descriptor
Tuesday, Sept 4 th	TA Opening	Lockers, schedules, expectations, agendas
Friday, Sept 7 th	DAY 3 Period 3	First week questions
Friday, Sept 14 th	DAY 2 Period 3	Friday after meet the teacher – something easy!!!
Friday, Sept 28 th	DAY 5	Terry Fox Run
Friday, Oct 19 th	DAY 5 Period 3	Health Lesson
Friday, Oct 26 th	DAY 4 Period 3	Halloween TA Activities
Friday, Nov 2 nd	DAY 3 Period 4	Health Lesson
Friday, Nov 9 th	DAY 2 Period 4	Remembrance Day Assembly
Friday, Nov 16 th	DAY 6 Period 4	Health Lesson
Friday, Nov 30 th	DAY 3 Period 4	Health Lesson

Table 3b.

Term 2 Timetable of TA Health Periods

Date	Timetable Day / Period	Descriptor
Friday, Dec 7	DAY 2 Period 3	Winter Activities
Friday, Dec 14	DAY 1 Period 3	Health Lesson
Friday, Dec 21	DAY 6 Period 3	Last Day of Classes – Multi Cultural Assembly
Friday, Jan 11 th	DAY 5 Period 3	Health Lesson
Friday, Jan 25 th	DAY 2 Period 4	Artist is Residence (Grades 5,6 & 7)
Friday, Feb 1 st	DAY 1 Period 4	Health Lesson
Friday, Feb 8 th	DAY 5 Period 4	Valentines Activities
Friday, Feb 22 nd	DAY 6 Period 4	Health Lesson
Friday, Feb 29 th	DAY 5 Period 3	Health Lesson
Friday, March 7 th	DAY 4 Period 3	Health Lesson
Friday, March 14 th	DAY 3 Period 3	Health Lesson

Table 3c.

Term 3 Timetable of TA Health Periods

Date	Timetable Day / Period	Descriptor
Friday, April 4 th	DAY 5 Period 3	Health Lesson
Friday, April 11 th	DAY 4 Period 4	Health Lesson
Friday, April 18 th	DAY 3 Period 4	Health Lesson
Friday, May 2 nd	DAY 6 Period 4	Special TA Activities – Grade 5/6
Friday, May 9 th	DAY 5 Period 4	Special TA Activities – Grade 7
Friday, May 23 rd	DAY 1 Period 3	Special TA Activities – Grade 8
Friday, May 30 th	DAY 6 Period 3	Special TA Activities – Grade 9
Friday, June 6 th	DAY 5 Period 3	Health Lesson
Friday, June 13 th	DAY 4 Period 3	Final TA Celebration

Research Statement

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate different strategies that are being implemented at Tuxedo Park School to build relationships within the school culture.

Main Question

How does the teacher advisor program build relationships between teachers and students, teachers and parents, and amongst students within the school community? At the end of the school year, teachers and students will complete a survey showing how they feel the teacher advisor program is effecting relationships.

Nested Questions

1. How has the teacher advisor program affected parent communication within the school?
2. How do students perceive the teacher advisor program?
3. How do the teachers evaluate the new teacher advisory program at Tuxedo Park School?

4. Does an Iweb Site help provide examples of activities that are working for Tuxedo Park School's teacher advisor program?
5. Does the use of a rubric increase student understanding of expectations in the teacher advisor program?

Glossary of Terms

D2L: A communication tool that all Tuxedo Park School teachers can access. This computer program allows teachers to post information, questions, and comments about curriculum, teaching, student concerns, messages from the principal, administrative secretary, custodian, and librarian.

Homeroom: Core classes (Humanities- Language Arts and Social Studies, Math, and Science).

Homework Blog: Each teacher is expected to have a homework blog that parents can access to find out what homework their children have. Teachers often include upcoming important dates.

Homework Hotline: A telephone line that parents can access for students' homework.

Individual Program Plan (IPP): Individualized working plans for students with special needs.

Option: Complementary courses students can choose to enroll in. Typically each Option runs for one full term. There are three terms during the school year at Tuxedo Park School. Options offered include: Music, Drama, Art, Computer Technology, Foods & Fashion, Outdoor Education, Leadership, and American Sign Language.

PE: Physical Education is offered every day at Tuxedo Park School.

PLC: Professional Learning Community

Teacher Advisor Program (TA): The teacher advisory program provides an opportunity to introduce an adult advocate for every student in the school. Advisory activities allow them to connect with a caring adult and other students to help them excel during middle school years.

Literature Review

The teacher advisor program can be traced back to the 1880s where guidance education was included in the English curriculum and documented by a high school principal in Detroit. The first program began as a way to help students cope with emotional, physical, and psychological problems, and as a way to deal with the lack of counselors in schools (American Youth Policy and Forum, 2006). However, as a program specifically designed for younger adolescents, like the age of students in middle schools, the teacher advisory program began in the early 1890s when it was implemented in junior high schools. Guidance education that provided citizenship and character education was implemented to help students adapt from an agrarian to an industrial population. These programs provided the foundation for students to understand what was expected of them in this new industrial society (Galassi, Gullledge, & Cox, 2003).

In the 1920s, there was a push to recommend teacher advisor programs in schools to ensure that students were not neglected as a result of being taught by several teachers. Students were appointed a teacher advocate to ensure that student needs were being met. These needs included educational, social, emotional, and physical needs. In 1920 Briggs did a study of 232 junior high schools and 191 (82%) of these schools had implemented a teacher advisor program (Galassi, Gullledge, & Cox, 2003). During the 1920s and 1930s

the role of guidance in education expanded as the education system began to intertwine the role of the classroom teacher and guidance counselor.

Myrick (1990) traces the teacher advisor program origins to the 1960s when schools were attempting to create a homeroom or home base for students that provided a sense of security and provided one consistent adult for students to approach when facing issues or problems. Adults in homerooms are supposed to be able to notice changes in student behaviour, and eventually be able to determine if something has happened to a student to cause the behaviour, because they have developed an understanding of the students in their advisory class. Initially the general public was suspicious about why schools were promoting an advisory program, instead of focusing strictly on educational goals and objectives. Due to the lack of understanding in the general public about what a teacher advisory program entailed the advisory programs initially had limited success.

As teacher-advisor programs became more popular, there was a continuous push to reiterate the fact that students in grades 5 through 9 are especially vulnerable, and that these grades are especially formative for students. Students in this age range are developing more rapidly than in any other age of development except infancy. Physically, middle school students gain weight and height rapidly. During a one-year growth spurt, teenage boys can grow as much as 10.2 cm, and girls as much as 8.8 cm. The growth spurts typically occur two years earlier for girls than boys. Weight gain often results from muscle development in boys, and body fat in girls. In today's trendy society models, movie stars, and musicians are incredibly skinny, and this adds another dimension to the development of body fat on girls. This body fat, that is natural occurring, does not fit into the ideal image of the female figure currently being promoted in the media.

Rapid height and weight gain is confusing, and added to the physical differences is the change of hormone levels that activate the development of sex characteristics. This includes the growth of pubic hair, menstrual periods for girls, penis growth for boys, voice changes for boys, the growth of underarm hair, facial hair, increased sweat gland activity (which can be very unpleasant for the teen who often cannot smell his own body odour), and an increase of oil which often produces acne. Students often make derogatory remarks to one another about facial acne, and mock individuals afflicted with acne by commenting rudely about having a pizza face, needing Proactive, pointing out a newly formed pimple in front of a group of peers, or posting insults on MSN instant messenger or the Internet. (<http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/family/350-850/350-850.html>)

In addition to physical changes, teenaged brains often do not fully develop until late in adolescence. Studies have indicated that connections between neurons are incomplete, and affect emotional, physical, and mental responses in teenagers, which may explain why teenagers have trouble controlling their emotions, why they tend to be impulsive, and why teenagers often make decisions which may not seem rational.

On average, teenagers should be getting nine and a half hours of sleep per night to provide enough time for their bodies to grow. When the growth spurt occurs, teenagers often are clumsy and uncoordinated, and their appearance is often gangly. They may try to cover their changes by wearing baggy clothing, or experimenting with make-up. The internal and external changes being faced by teenagers are reason enough to want to ensure that teens have a positive relationship with a teacher. Teenagers also become awkward demonstrating affection to their parents, especially to the parent of the opposite sex. Teens will start to be interested and ask questions about sex, and try to figure out

what their sexual value is. Some teenagers will equate intimacy with sex, and may become promiscuous by assuming that a physical act will guarantee an emotional attachment. Teenagers will want information on birth control, protection, and sexually transmitted diseases. (<http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/family/350-850/350-850.html>)

As middle school years are especially difficult for students because of the physical and psychological changes, social and educational expectations are also increasing. More students drop out of ninth grade (35%) than any other year of school, which highlights the importance of strong preparation in the middle grades for students of all socioeconomic and racial backgrounds (American Youth Policy and Forum, 2006). Middle schools need to prepare students academically, socially, and emotionally for high school. Successful middle schools use collaborative leadership and professional learning communities to personalize learning, support the curriculum, provide variety in instruction, and use a variety of assessment techniques which ensures that the maximum learning potential is occurring for all students.

Many teacher advisor programs have been developed on the belief that the guiding and counseling of students is the responsibility of everyone in the school, and this premise is endorsed by the National Middle School Association and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (American Youth Policy and Forum, 2006). Teacher advisor programs typically have fifteen to twenty students in each class, and each teacher advisor class typically remains together, with the same advisor, for the class's entire duration in the school. Ellis (1990) highlights that teacher advisor programs should follow a guidance curriculum, and should include concepts such as:

- getting to know each other
- developing skills and habits
- self assessment
- communication skills
- decision making and problem solving
- motivation
- conflict resolution
- personal hygiene
- wellness
- career awareness
- educational planning
- community involvement.

Although teachers may not have the professional training that counselors have, they are often the first to be approached by students who are having a problem. As teachers interact daily and develop relationships with students, teachers are in a position to provide help, guidance, and support in many aspects of student lives. Teachers often exhibit many of the same traits as counselors, which include the ability to empathize with what students are experiencing, show patience, display excellent listening skills, provide flexibility to help students solve problems, openly discuss issues, draw on experience in interpersonal relationships, share and listen to new ideas, and often recognize the individual difference among students.

Due to the numerous difficulties and changes that middle school students face, another important aspect of the teacher advisor program is the presumption that the counseling of students is everyone's responsibility, particularly because there are not enough trained counselors to cope with all of the needs in the school. The teacher advisor program helps to take the pressure off counselors, as students are more likely to discuss problems with an adult with whom they have established a relationship. Teachers can refer a student to the counselor when they feel they are not qualified to help with a particularly serious problem, and may be able to provide the counselor with some

background to the problem. Myrick (1990) points out that often the ratio from students to guidance counselor can be 500 to 1, or in the best circumstances 200 to 1. Obviously, no guidance counselor would be able to do an effective job if he or she was the only person helping middle school students in times of stress or misfortune. Due to the high ratios of students to counselors, many students fall through the cracks because teachers may think that counselors have more time on their hands than they actually do, or feel that counselors are more qualified than they actually are. Often troubled students will not open up to an adult unless a relationship has been previously established.

Middle schools that are implementing teacher advisor programs are building relationships among students and teachers by having teachers assume a role in the developmental guidance of students. Advisors can assist students in making good decisions and becoming self-managers as their independence increases. Studies have indicated that students who have positive relationships with teachers perform better academically. Teacher advisory programs promote student's educational, personal, and social development (Galassi & Gullede, 1997).

Galassi & Gullede (1997) surveyed over 160 middle schools and found that over 90% of the schools shared the following characteristics: interdisciplinary teams, flexible scheduling of classes, options, home-base or advisory programs, intramurals, and a focus on student development. Advisory programs should be considered an integral part of the school, and not some program added onto an already hectic day (Galassi & Gullede, 1997). Galassi & Gullede believe that advisory programs should include information and support for students on:

dating
 friends
 relationships
 school spirit
 decision making
 tobacco awareness
 drug awareness
 alcohol awareness

Many of these topics fall under Alberta Education's mandated Health curriculum

(<http://education.alberta.ca/media/313382/health.pdf>).

Research into adolescents and child development throughout grades 5 to 9 indicate that these are some of the most stressful times of a child's/teenager's life, and there are physical and emotional changes occurring at an alarming rate. In addition making decisions often becomes more difficult during extreme growth years and growth spurts may make students feel gangly and uncoordinated.

With the many different stressors happening within the middle school years, it is extremely important that students feel they have an adult to talk with, confide in, and receive help from. The teacher advisor's role is important and pivotal in middle schools. As students grow and mature, they will be in contact with the same teacher advisor throughout, which should provide an environment where the student is able to ask questions, get advice, and feel safe.

What is a Teacher Advisor Program?

One definition of a teacher advisor program is "an organizational structure in which one small group of students identifies with and belongs to one educator, who nurtures, advocates for, and shepherds through school the individuals in that group" (Cole, 1992, p. 5). Another way to think of a teacher advisory program is that it "makes it possible for students to belong, meets their need to affiliate with a group, and makes

caring manageable for a teacher, enabling the teacher to express concern in a personally satisfying way to a small number of individuals” (Cole, 1992, p. 7).

Myrick (1990) describes teacher advisor programs as assigning teachers as advisors to groups of 18 to 25 students who try to meet regularly with their advisees both individually and in-group sessions. The total number of students may fluctuate as needed into smaller or larger groups, and may be formed in different settings. However the basic assumption remains the same, which is that the teacher advisor program provides each student with a friendly adult in the school who knows and cares about the student in a personal way.

Galassi and Gullede (1997) base the definition of the teacher advisor program on the premise that the guidance of students is the responsibility of each member of the school. They believe that there are not enough counselors to deal with student problems, and that teacher guidance is an important supplement to school counseling. Basically, the idea behind any teacher advisor program is to insure that each student has a teacher who is available to help with academic issues, personal problems, misunderstandings, and to share in personal successes, and victories. Each student also has a teacher advocate who can give support to an individual student and help other teachers develop an understanding of specific needs, strengths, or problems. Teacher advisor programs should reflect the middle school purpose to create a student-centered, effective education and which create a bridge between the elementary and the middle school, and the middle school and high school.

Galassi, Gullede, and Cox (1998) suggest that the teacher advisory program is the fourth “r” in education: reading, writing, arithmetic, and relationships. There are a

number of different goals that the advisory program can focus on. Galassi, Gullede, and Cox (1998) provide a classification system to help schools clarify the purpose of their teacher advisory program (see Table 4).

Table 4.

A Typology of Advisory Emphasis

Type	Need	Time	Goals & Focus	Advisor Skills	Sample Activities
Advocacy	Affective	Substantial implementation time	Adult-student relationship	Personal qualities-interest and concern for students	Individual student conferences
Community	Affective	Substantial implementation time	Group identity	Personal qualities-group qualities	Group discussions, projects, intramurals
Skills	Affective and cognitive	Substantial "prep" and implementation time	Developmental guidance	Personal qualities-group management, group facilitation	Decision making, stress management, race relations, values, clarification
Invigoration	Affective	Minimal "prep" time	Relaxing, recharging	Personal qualities-enthusiasm	Intramurals, and clubs, parties, informal "fun" activities
Academic	Cognitive	Substantial implementation time	Academic performance	Personal qualities-teaching	Study skills, silent reading, writing, tutoring
Administration	Administrative	Minimal "prep" and implementation time	General school business, "housekeeping"	Clerical, Organizational	Announcements, Distributing school materials, collecting money

Hoversten, Doda, and Lounsbury (1991) state that a teacher advisory program should:

1. Provide an environment and activities that will foster bonding within an advisory group so that students will feel accepted and valued by teacher and peers.
2. Help students cope with academic concerns and set goals which will facilitate positive school experiences.
3. Give students avenues through which to discover their uniqueness so that they might come to appreciate the many differences among people.
4. Help students develop positive relationships through experiences that utilize group dynamics.
5. Promote critical thinking skills through discussions and problem solving activities so that students can learn to make responsible choices.
6. Develop listening skills and an understanding of the road blocks which hinder effective communication.
7. Build self-esteem in students so that they might become confident, capable young people who accept responsibility for their own actions.
8. Heighten student awareness of good citizenship through providing opportunities for meaningful contributions to their school and community.
9. Provide opportunities for extensive student involvement through shared decision making.
10. Improve home/school communication and relationships.

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There are many different goals that can be the focus of a teacher advisor program. At Tuxedo Park School, we are focusing on building relationships. The main component that needs to be addressed in a teacher advisor program is that each student feels that there is a teacher who is available for any need that may arise. Our teacher advisor program goes beyond an educational focus, and includes personal relationships, guidance, and support.

Organizing Your Teacher Advisor Program

When a school decides that it is going to implement a teacher advisor program, it next needs to decide how it is going to structure the program. Decisions such as the size of each teacher advisor group, who will be responsible for which age grouping, will groups be multi grade or singular grade need to be considered. There are checklists and

questions to help get a teacher advisor program started. First, the approximate size of each teacher advisor group must be decided, and who will be in charge of each advisory group? Next, where and when will each advisor group meet, and what will they cover for content? Is there support and professional development available? Who is the person that teachers can go to when they have questions?

How Tuxedo Park School Organized its Teacher Advisor Program?

There is a lot to think about and decide upon before a teacher advisor program can be started. When Tuxedo Park School implemented and organized the start of the teacher advisor program, the staff posed and answered the questions to determine what would work best. The questions were adapted from Sizer and Meier (2006). The focus for Tuxedo Park School was specifically to build relationships. The following excerpt summarizes the Q & A's that the staff addressed:

People and Size

Q. How many advisees will each advisor have?

A. Each teacher advisor class should be a maximum of twenty students.

Q. Which adults in the school building will serve as advisors? What characteristics should they possess?

A. All teachers are acting as advisors, including homeroom teachers, Fine Arts specialists, two Physical Education teachers, two deaf or hard of hearing teachers, and one special needs coordinator. The only two teachers not included as teacher advisors are the Assistant Principal and the Principal, who may need to cover Teacher Advisor classes from time-to-time.

Q. If some teachers do not serve as advisors, what supportive roles can they take on?

- A. The Assistant Principal and Principal are available to step into teacher advisor rooms for extra supports, to come in as a special reward, or to help solve problems.
- Q. Will any advisories be co-facilitated (e.g., First-year teacher with veteran teacher?)
- A. Each first year teacher is part of a learning community, and although this is not specific to the teacher advisor program, new teachers do have support.
- Q. By what criteria will students be sorted into advisories (e.g., age, grade level, gender, race/ethnicity?)
- A. Tuxedo Park School sorted teacher advisory groups by grade. Each group is comprised of one grade only.
- Q. By what criteria will individual advisees be assigned to individual advisors (e.g., advise only students you teach, common interests, previous relationship, self-selection, random)?
- A. Each advisee was selected randomly by grade.
- Q. Will advisors and advisees be paired for one year or multiple years?
- A. Each teacher advisor will keep his or her group for the number of years that group is in the school. For example, a grade 5 teacher advisor group will be with the same teacher for grades 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9.
- Q. What will be the specific roles and responsibilities of advisors and advisees?
- A. Specific roles for the advisors are to develop relationships with their advisees so that teachers are in a position to advocate for each of their teacher advisor students.

Q. How will parents be involved in the advisory program?

A. Parents will be involved by developing a relationship with their child's teacher advisor teacher. The parent will be able to ask the same teacher questions about report cards, parent-teacher meetings, problems, school holidays, bussing issues, team tryouts, information notices, or other questions.

Q. How will community members outside the school be involved in the advisory program?

A. Tuxedo Park School is involving the community by implementing service learning projects where certain grades interact with members of the community. For example, grade 9 students help elderly members of our community by shoveling their sidewalks when it snows.

Time and Space

- Q. How often will advisories meet (e.g., daily, twice daily, twice weekly)?

A. Teacher advisor classes meet Monday – Friday.

Q. How long will advisory meetings last (e.g., brief check-ins, longer activity periods)?

A. Meetings last Monday – Thursday from 8:00 AM – 8:20 AM and Fridays for 40 minutes.

Q. Will there be time for individual meetings as well as group meetings?

A. Although there is no individual advisor – advisee time scheduled, students can discuss problems or issues with their advisor during Monday – Thursday sessions, as students are silently reading.

Q. How will this time fit into the master schedule?

A. The schedule fits into the master schedule through the Humanities and Health Curriculums.

Q. Where will advisories meet?

A. Teacher advisor classes meet in the teacher's classroom. Some teachers need to use other spaces, so the science lab, library, gymnasium, unused classrooms, and the art room are used as teacher advisor rooms.

Q. How will advisories be able to personalize their space?

A. Each teacher advisor group made a banner with their teacher advisor name on it. These banners are displayed either in the hallway, or in the teacher advisor room.

Q. Will each advisory have its own space?

A. Each teacher advisor group had its own space.

Professional Development and Support

Q. How do we create regularly scheduled time for advisors to meet (e.g., time for training, curriculum development, sharing success, having kid talk)?

A. Tuxedo Park School spent the first teacher non-instructional day building an understanding of what the teacher advisor program consisted of, who was in each group, and the time frame and schedule for the year.

Q. In what types of configurations can advisors meet for training and support (e.g., clusters, teams, full faculty, pairs?)

A. There is a teacher advisor professional learning community that addresses problems and provides feedback on activities and decides any additional suggestions for activities. For example, each teacher advisor has an email list to send information to parents electronically, as well as phone numbers.

Q. How will we identify types of training and support that advisors need (e.g., group process and development, how to communicate with parents, listening skills, knowing when to refer advisees to others, academic advising)?

A. Again, the teacher advisor program has a professional learning community to address problems and solve problems as they arise.

Q. How will initial and ongoing training be conducted, and by whom?

A. Initial training was provided by the teacher in charge, and ongoing training will occur as needed.

Q. What resources do advisors need (e.g., a program coordinator, curriculum, parent volunteers, counselors, petty cash)?

A. Resources for each activity have been delivered by students in the school's leadership program.

Q. What additional support will be given to advisors who are new to advising?

A. Additional support will be given as questions or problems arise.

Q. What additional support will be given to advisors who are struggling? Again, additional support will be given as questions or problems arise.

Q. How will advisors be observed and assessed?

A. Advisors are assessed each time their class performs for the school, as well as through documentation of completed activities.

Q. How will advisory responsibilities be dealt with in the master contract?

A. Advisory responsibilities are overseeing the writing of Individual Education Programs, reminding parents of Parent Teacher Conferences, distributing report cards, and collecting fees and forms.

Q. What type of budget will be required for the program?

A. The budget is an interesting problem that can be solved by either giving each teacher advisor a budget or by giving all teacher advisor programs supplies from one budget. This year, most teachers have used classroom supplies and materials when necessary. However, this has proposed some problems for teacher advisors who are not based out of a classroom. Next year we are planning to give each teacher advisor program a supply box with supplies such as paper, scissors, markers, paint, glitter, and other useable supplies that are needed.

As this was the first year that the teacher advisor program was implemented, there were a lot of things that were not considered. Parents had a hard time knowing if they were supposed to contact the teacher advisor teacher or the homeroom teacher. Most of the problems that occurred will be improved upon for the start of the 2008 – 2009 school year.

An Interview with the Tuxedo Park Teacher Advisor Coordinator

Tuxedo Park was fortunate to have a key teacher who took the lead in establishing the teacher advisor program. She took the ideas and needs of the school, and created a program that would best meet the needs of Tuxedo Park School. She had the most experience working in other middle schools with teacher advisor programs. This teacher took the best qualities of the teacher advisor programs that she participated in and tweaked these qualities into a program that focused on the goal of improving and building relationships. She used the leadership team to generate ideas and during the school year she worked with her leadership students who organized and ran key events in the school. I was interested in why she had chosen to set up the teacher advisor program at Tuxedo

Park School in this manner, and prepared six questions for her. In an interview, she responded to these questions and provided insight into the choices she made. A copy of the transcript from this interview is in the Appendix (see Appendix A).

Questions

1. How many schools have you worked in that have a teacher advisor program?
2. Can you describe some of the things that you have tried in the past that have worked well? Things that have not worked so well?
3. How did you decide on the timetable? (Monday – Thursday, Friday Health)
4. How did you think of the activities? (i.e., Did you plan to use your leadership students?)
5. How did you divide up the teacher advisor groupings?
6. Why did you choose to do solid grades as opposed to multi-grade?

In answering the questions, the key teacher established that she had previously worked in two schools with teacher advisor programs. The programs were created to build community within the schools and ensured that all students had a teacher advocate. The only problem that the key teacher had encountered was when a teacher was not in the school for the entire length of a student's stay. For example, this year at Tuxedo Park School, two grade 5 teacher advisors left during the school year, and the students were assigned a temporary advisor. One teacher advisor moved back to Ontario, and a temporary teacher was assigned for the remainder of the school year, and the other teacher took a one-year maternity leave, and a temporary teacher was assigned. The temporary teacher may or may not be in the school for the entire maternity leave.

The key teacher found that in building a sense of community within a teacher advisor class, grade groupings worked well because students develop a familiarity with the teacher and other students who are part of the core group. She found the timetable was hard to decide on. The key teacher decided to have the teacher advisor reading period in the morning, but a problem arose in that at Tuxedo Park School, the buses are often late in the morning which means students are consistently missing the TA reading period.

The key teacher also got the program started by initially developing the teacher advisor curriculum. She developed the activities by having students initiate and generate activities that they collaboratively decided would build community within the school.

The Teacher Advisor groups were made by assigning students from academic core classes into smaller teacher advisor groups. IPP students were included in each group. It was decided that the groupings would be divided into single grade groups instead of cross grade groups with the idea that buddy activities could take place.

Getting Started

On the first day of school, all teachers were informed that there would be a new program starting at Tuxedo Park School. The new Teacher Advisor Program would take place from 8:00 – 8:20 Monday through Thursday mornings, and on Fridays there would be a 40 minute Health lesson. Teachers were asked to call the parents of their Teacher Advisor students to let parents know which Teacher Advisor class their children would be going to on the first day of school (Tuesday, September 4, 2007).

First Day of School for Teachers

The following agenda was provided for teachers. It answered questions and gave information out so all staff had a common understanding of what the teacher advisor program entails.

Agenda for Thursday, August 30th AM

8:30 – 9:00 AM TA Info/Expectations

What is a TA?

TA expectations:

Monday – Thursday Consistent Silent Reading Throughout the school

Friday – Health Lessons consistent throughout grade groupings

TA Responsibilities: IPP author, form collector/distributor (ie.

Registration, report cards, etc.) morning attendance Monday – Thursday, Friday

Health lessons, Service Learning, Win-it certificates.

It was intended that one teacher from each TA grade group would join the Teacher Advisor professional learning community.

Teacher Advisor Information was to be displayed on the front bulletin board, where students could go and find their TA teacher and learn some information about them. The categories included:

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Room: _____

Subjects: _____

Favourite Quote: _____

Three school year predictions:

Interests: _____

The answers to these questions were typed and placed below each Teacher Advisor's picture on the bulletin board in the front hallway of the school.

Here are two examples of what the pictures looked like in the front Hallway.

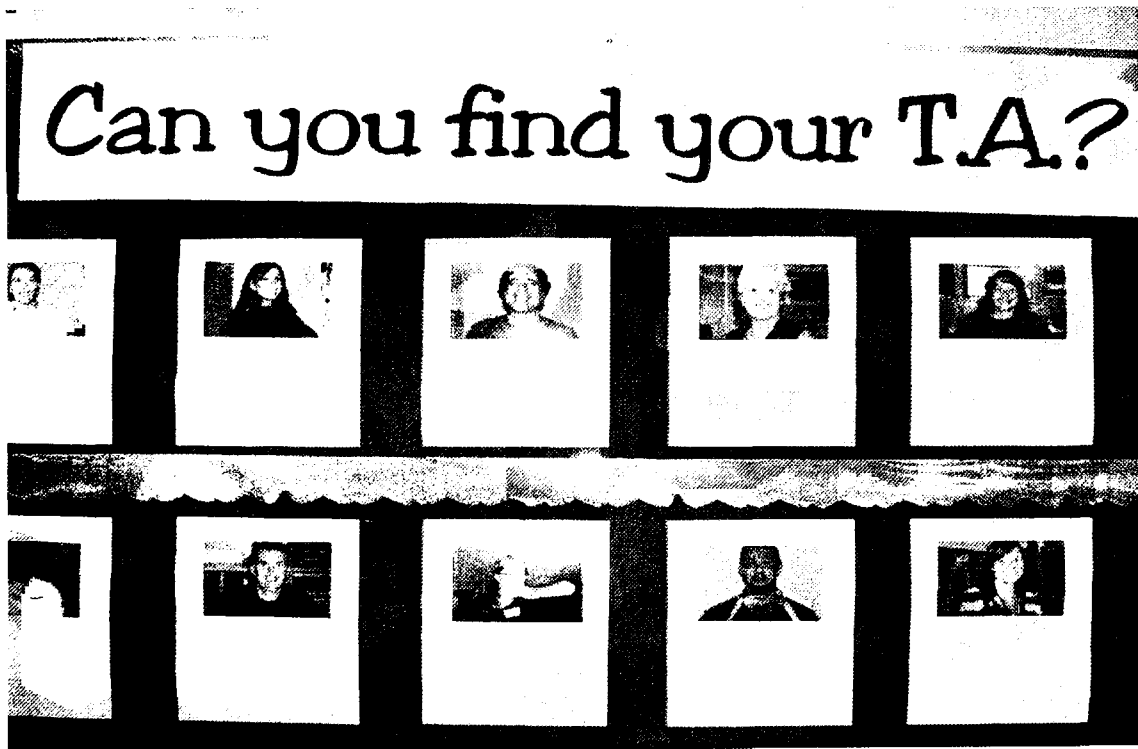


Figure 1. Bulletin board display promoting teacher advisors.



Name: Miss Primas

Grade: 5

Room: 27

Subjects: Math, Science, Humanities, P.E. & Health

Favourite Quote: Today is the best day of my life.

Three school year predictions:

- (1) I will complete my E. Ed. Degree by June 2008.
- (2) My class will be awesome.
- (3) This school year will be fast and furious.

Interests: Snowboarding, running, reading, ultimate, learning, music

Figure 2. A close up of one teacher advisor information sheet displayed on the bulletin board.

Teacher advisor students could go to the bulletin board, find their teacher advisor and learn interesting information about them. Students even pointed out staff that had not been included on the bulletin board because they had not been hired on the day we did the teacher advisor activities. Many students enjoyed learning about their teacher advisors.

After filling out the teacher advisor information sheets, and having individual pictures taken, teacher advisors divided into grade groupings to discuss the Health curriculum topics, and how to divide up the Friday Health lessons so that each teacher advisor had the opportunity to plan some of the learning activities for the entire grade grouping. The grade five teacher advisors decided to divide up the weeks so that each advisor planned four consecutive lessons throughout the year. They also nominated one teacher advisor to keep a copy of the lessons for the following school years, so the planning would be complete, and add-ons to supplement the Health curriculum could be the focus.

Once a month, grade groups got together to discuss how TA was going, and ways to improve either the reading periods or the Health lessons, and any other information or ideas that have come up, such as planning buddy activities or service learning projects.

Each teacher was given a timetable for the school year that divided each Friday TA Health period and gave the period number. An example of this timetable is located in the Appendix (see Appendix B). The grade five teachers split the timetable up so each teacher had the opportunity to plan Health lessons for the grade group. A scanned working copy of the grade five teacher advisor timetable is located in the Appendix (see Appendix C). After teacher advisors had decided on the schedule for the health lessons,

TA grade groupings began discussing ideas for activities for the opening day of schools.

These ideas included:

- Procedures for TA groups
- Allocating hallway lockers (gym lockers were to be determined during the first week of gym classes)
- Review school expectations from the agenda with students
- Distribute registration packages
- School picture forms
- Distributing academic class schedules
- Recording the bus letter of each student
- Photo mug shots for time capsule
- Ice breaker activity

During the 10:00 AM – Lunch session it was decided that because Tuxedo Park School had implemented a Teacher Advisor program, that teacher advisors would phone home and introduce themselves and the program to parents. This way, parents could ask questions, and let advisors know any concerns they might have regarding the first day of school. Mostly however, students answered the phone and were able to have a brief chat with their soon-to-be teacher advisor. This personalized phone call was how students learned which teacher advisor class they would be arriving at on the first day of school.

Two hours were allocated as time for advisors to make phone calls. The phone script was prepared to help teachers have an idea of what to say, to ensure teachers cover key points, and to create a commonality between the messages being sent home and the language being used. Often there are siblings in the same school so it is helpful if messages home are consistent. The phone script is located in the Appendix (See Appendix D).

TA Program

TA teachers were given their locker lists. Lockers were assigned on the first morning of school, and assigned so student lockers were located near their core classes.

This year, being the first year of the teacher advisor program, TAs were assigned so core teachers had the same grade for TAs. For example, a grade 5 teacher has a grade 5 TA, a grade 7 teacher a grade 7 TA, and a grade 9 teacher has a grade 9 TA. Next year however, a grade 5 teacher will have a grade 6 TA, a grade 7 teacher will have a grade 8 TA, and a grade 9 teacher will have a grade 5 TA. Next year, it will be slightly confusing for grade 5 students who will need to learn how to use lockers, and how to switch classrooms between TA Reading period every morning and core classes. Will lockers next year be assigned near TA rooms, or near core classrooms? This is a concern that will need to be addressed by the TA PLC. Leadership students may also have some ideas on how to solve this dilemma.

The lockers turned out to be more of a problem than originally anticipated. Each teacher advisor group got enough lockers for the number of students in their teacher advisor group. When new students came into the school, they were not able to have a locker with the rest of their teacher advisor group. In the future, if possible, there should be some extra lockers allocated in case new students enter the school. The allocation of lockers table is located in the Appendix (See Appendix E).

Next teachers were given the school calendar and a break down of what timetable day each school day would be for the 2007-2008 school year. An example of the year calendar and month calendar is located in the Appendix (See Appendix F and Appendix G). With a lot of new teachers, a daily class schedule was given for teachers who wanted to use this for planning. Classes were scheduled on a six day cycle, 8:00 – 2:30 Monday to Thursday, and 8:00 – 12:10 Fridays. An example of the daily class schedule is located in the Appendix (See Appendix H). The staff collaboratively determined the special

timetable for the first day of school. An example of the timetable for the first day of school with students is provided in the Appendix (see Appendix I and J). Some activities suggested for the first day of school included icebreaker bingo. See the Appendix for an example of the activity (Appendix K).

During the period where students were scheduled to go to their Option class, they were to go with their Teacher Advisor class to the gymnasium where teachers who taught the options would explain to the students what each Option course offers. These courses vary from year to year, so it is important for students to listen carefully to the information provided by Option teachers. At Tuxedo Park School, Teachers teach four core subjects, and one option or physical education. This means teachers are teaching 5 periods per day, plus the 20 minutes of TA Reading time Monday – Thursday, and 6 periods on Fridays, including one period being used for Health. After students have heard about the options being offered, they will return to their Teacher Advisor class where they will sign up for the three options they will be taking during the year. This is an important activity to do as a teacher advisor group because this is the one course where friends can sign up for options together. All other courses are scheduled by the office. A list of the Complementary Courses offered at Tuxedo Park School are located in the Appendix (Appendix L). Each student was given a sign up sheet to pick complementary classes. A copy of this sheet is included in the Appendix (Appendix M).

Each student filled out one sheet with the options they wanted, and in which term. TA teachers tried to ensure that students got the option of their choice, in the Term of the student's choice. If this was not possible, the teacher advisor spoke with their students individually to determine what would work best.

Teacher Advisor Banners

Each Teacher Advisor Class came up with an original Teacher Advisor name that rhymed with the last name of the Teacher Advisor. These names were designed on banners. Each class was provided materials to create their own banner with the name they created together. These banners were placed outside the teacher advisor classrooms.

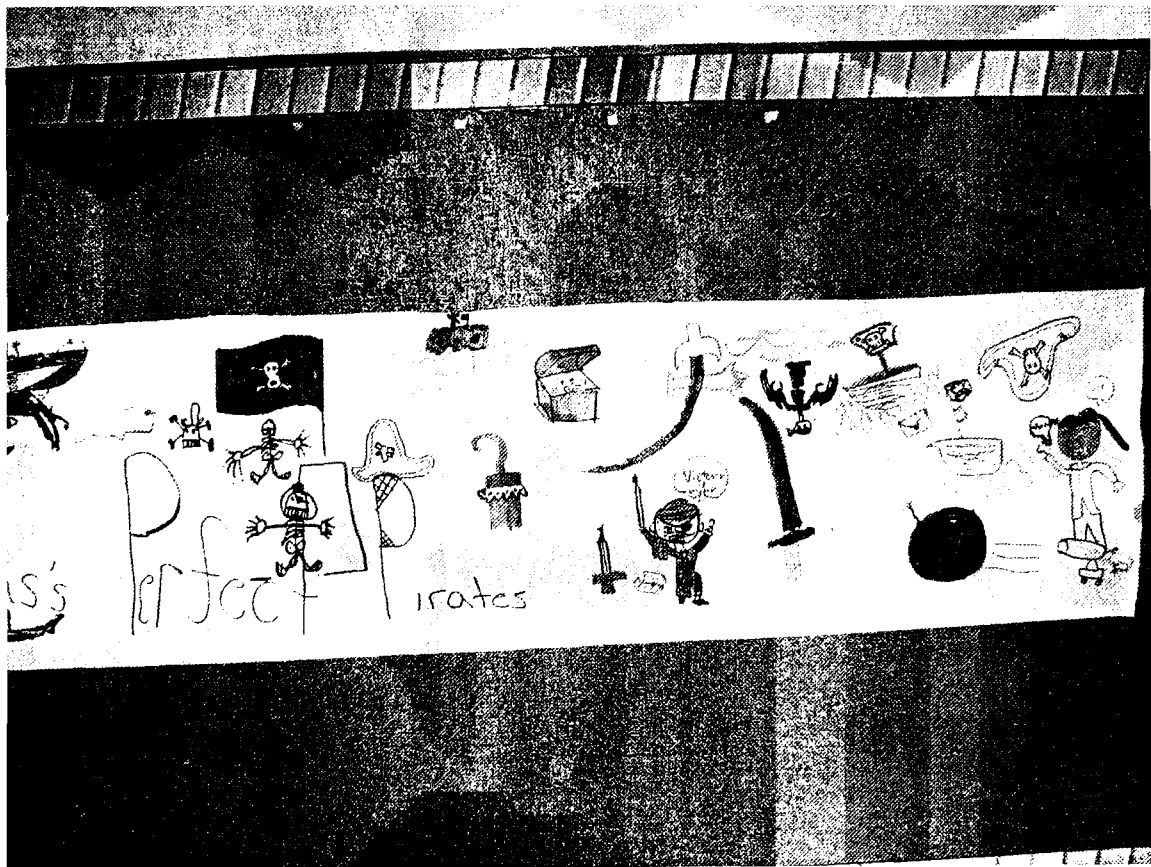


Figure 3. Teacher advisor banner.



Figure 4. Another teacher advisor banner.

The Teacher Advisor Challenges were designed to build relationships through having the students work together to solve a problem. The first challenge started things off with group collaboration. Students had to create an outfit for their teacher advisor out of two rolls of toilet paper. A copy of the challenge is provided in the Appendix (Appendix N). The following pictures display finished fashion outfits, and students involved in creating fashions for the teachers. Each outfit is very unique, although all students had the same instructions.



Figure 5. Toilet paper fashion.



Figure 6. Toilet paper celebration.

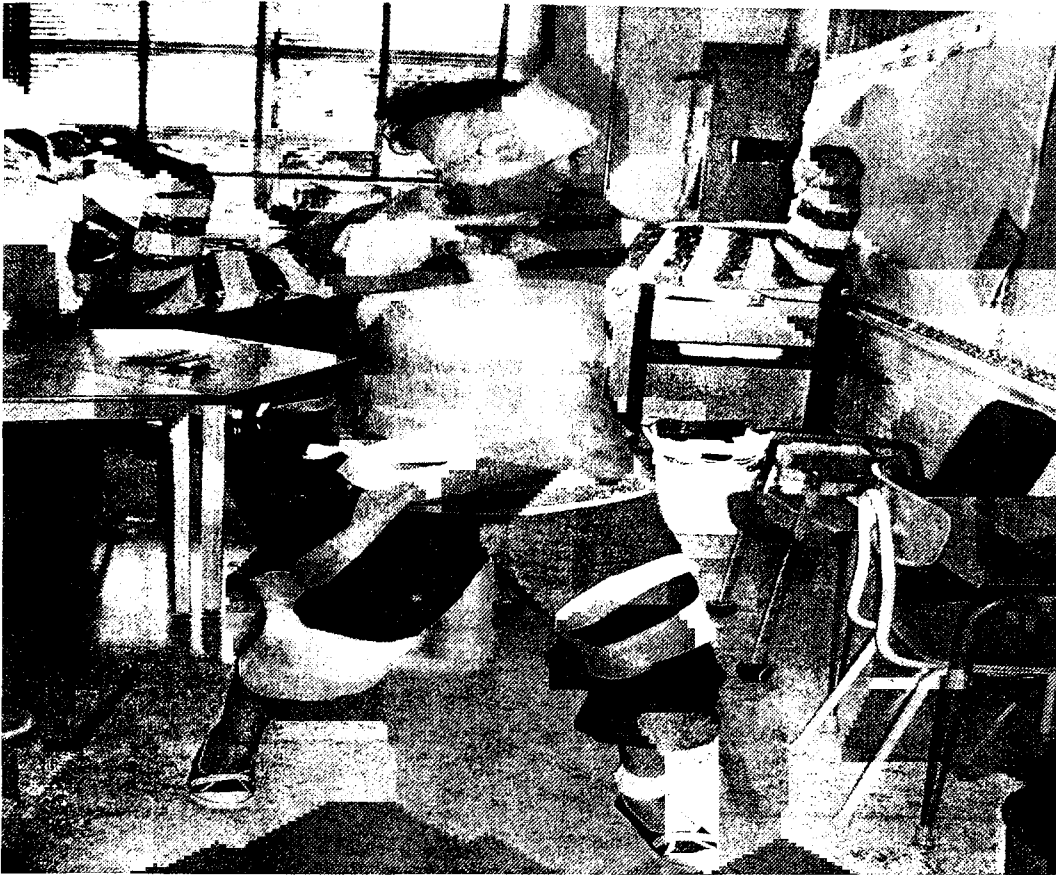


Figure 7. Fashion in action.

To be ready for the slide show that was shown in the afternoon of the first day of school, pictures of the toilet paper fashions and the teacher advisor banners were prepared for an assembly that afternoon. This assembly was the first time the entire school was together. Every teacher was introduced to the student body, and each teacher described one thing that he or she enjoyed doing for fun. After the introductions, the entire school watched the slide show where each teacher advisor group was included, and most of the students were included in the slideshow. It was a great start to the relationship building of the teacher advisor program. Even on the first day of school, each student had identified

personally through ice breaks and a group challenge with their newly formed teacher advisor grouping.

The next TA activity took place on Friday, September 7th. A copy of the lesson plan is in the Appendix (see Appendix O). One teacher from each Grade Team was expected to join the Teacher Advisor Professional Learning Community. Each PLC was given a template to record the minutes of each meeting. The template used for tracking the PLC meetings is included in the Appendix (see Appendix P). The first meeting for the TA PLC was held on September 14, 2007. This meeting was mostly used as a getting to know one another meeting, with some discussions about what PLC members were hoping to get out of each of the PLCs. It was also a chance to address any questions or problems that TA teachers had encountered so far. At each meeting, minutes were taken and downloaded onto D2L. This meant that all teachers could read the minutes from all of the PLCs. The three PLCs were Teacher Advisor, 21st Century Learning, and Assessment. With all of the minutes being on D2L, all teachers could keep up to date on what is going on. The record of our first TA PLC meeting is in the Appendix (see Appendix Q).

The two Teacher Advisor Professional Learning Community Learning Leaders met to discuss what needed to be covered in the next TA PLC meeting. The topics included the following.

Norms: How are we going to make sure that every member has an equal voice and is participating in discussions? How will we reach a discussion consensus? How are we going to keep up to date with D2L messages? Who is going to take the minutes? Who is going to ensure the agenda is sent out to the TA PLC members before a meeting?

Evaluation: How will TA classes look on report card- Effort TA/Health

Personal growth- effort
TA effort for reading
Health effort/skills
Comment- personal
Rubric for what effort marks look like.

A copy of the second TA PLC meeting is in the Appendix (see Appendix R).

Parent Teacher Conferences

The first big task for the TA PLC after the Winter/Christmas Holidays was to determine how to organize parent teacher conferences. There were two different thoughts, with some teachers preferring to have the interviews in the classrooms and other teachers preferred a common location, such as the gymnasium. After a lengthy discussion, the TA PLC decided to have the conferences in the gym. Signs were made for each teacher and grade, and the teacher tables were set up around the perimeter of the gym, with chairs for parents to wait on set up in the middle. The score clock was turned on with the time displayed.

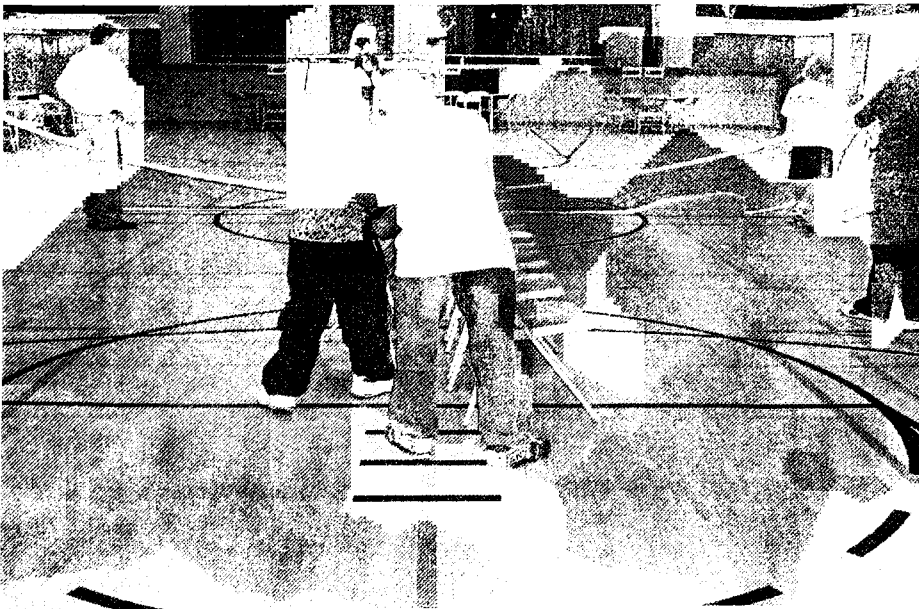


Figure 8. Setting up for parent teacher conferences.

At the parent teacher conferences, there were two computer stations set up to give parents the opportunity to provide feedback to Tuxedo Park Staff. The 2006-2007 Tuxedo Park Accountability Pillars indicated that relationships among students was very low. This survey provided some baseline data for Tuxedo Park School. At the final parent teacher conference, it was intended that another survey would be available to parents. As the TA program continues, we are expecting an increase in the relationship sections of surveys.

Survey Results Completed by Parents at Parent Teacher Conferences

Parents were given the opportunity to answer the same survey at the Parent Conferences in April. Typically, these conferences have the least amount of parents attend, so the link to the survey was placed on the school's website. The results from the survey in April appear in Table 5. In September, 109 parents filled out the survey, in April, 43 parents filled out the survey.

Table 5.

Parent Survey

Question	Fall	Spring
Number of respondents	109	43
As a parent, I am aware of what my child is expected to learn:		
Never	10.1	2.3
Sometimes	22.0	25.6
Often	34.9	30.2
Frequently	33.0	41.9
I am aware of how my child's teacher determines my child's progress:		
Never	13.0	4.7
Sometimes	27.8	23.3
Often	38.0	32.6
Frequently	21.3	39.5
I feel I have opportunities for input into my child's learning and schooling:		
Never	15.7	4.7
Sometimes	25.9	23.3
Often	38.9	34.9
Frequently	19.4	37.2

My child's TA communicates with me:	Never	24.1	30.2
	Sometimes	46.3	30.2
	Often	16.7	23.3
	Frequently	13.0	16.3
I know what is happening at the school:	Never	3.7	9.3
	Sometimes	43.0	46.5
	Often	37.4	23.3
	Frequently	15.9	20.9
The learning my child does at school is interesting and relevant to him/her:	Never	4.7	11.6
	Sometimes	23.6	16.3
	Often	47.2	44.2
	Frequently	24.5	27.9
My child is excited about the learning and activities they do at school:	Never	6.5	7.0
	Sometimes	33.3	34.9
	Often	42.6	39.5
	Frequently	17.6	18.6
Do you feel the TA program, implemented this year, is providing you with opportunities for school involvement:	Never	26.1	40.0
	Sometimes	45.5	17.5
	Often	12.5	20.0
	Frequently	15.9	22.5
Comments:			
	• Ok		
	• No difference from before		
	• I find it confusing		
	• Only speak to her during PTI		

This survey does not provide any conclusive information about whether or not the teacher advisor program is improving relationships among teachers and parents. However, it does show that parents are aware there is a teacher advisor program, and it also indicates that next year Tuxedo Park School needs to be clearer when providing parents with contact information. Questions about parent teacher conferences for

example, can be answered by the teacher advisor and course information can be answered by core teachers.

After only two TA Health lessons, TA classes had another relationship building activity. The annual Terry Fox Run was organized this year to have TAs participate as groups. TAs collected Toonies For Terry as a fundraiser, with Grade 9 TA students going around to all of the TA rooms to promote Toonies for Terry, and collect the money after the run. This year, Tuxedo Park raised \$632. Students went to their TAs at 9:30, which meant nutrition break had to be scheduled earlier. Students were asked to change into Tuxedo Park gym strip, and then return to TAs. The TA teachers explained the schedule for the run, which started with all the TAs being called down to the gym to learn about Terry Fox, watch a 20-minute Terry Fox movie, and then students moved to the starting line on the field outside the school. The movie also allowed for the TA teachers who were supervising along the course to leave early so they could get set up. A copy of the timetable for the Terry Fox Run is provided in the Appendix (see Appendix S). The goal of the Terry Fox Run was to have the maximum numbers of students participate. Students returned to their TA classes, and then got changed into Tuxedo Park School PE gear. Each TA set different goals for their TA. Students who remembered to hand in their permission forms participated by running in an outdoor 5 km course through the community surrounding Tuxedo Park School. Teachers ran, walked, or supervised along the route. Students who did not bring their forms ran laps in the gymnasium.



Figure 9. Students line up for the Terry Fox Run.

Every student got a bottle of water or a juice box when they completed the race, and a Terry Fox tattoo.



Figure 10. After the run.

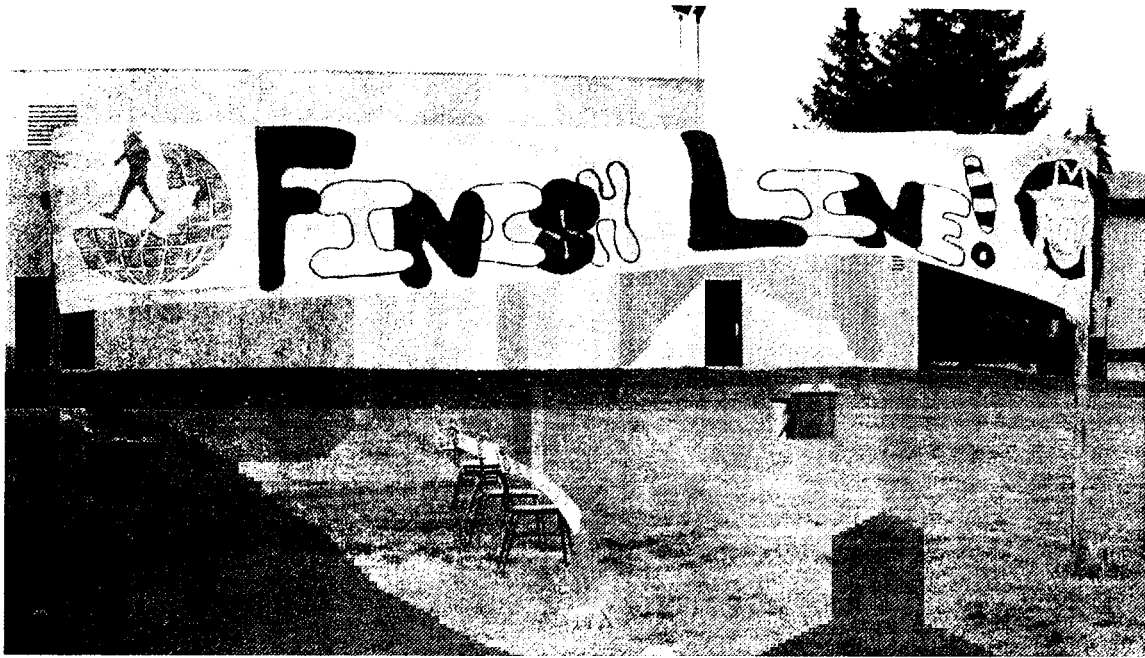


Figure 11. The finish line.

Teacher Advisor Class lists were printed off on computer labels, and each student got a label to wear during the race. When students came across the finish line, they gave in their nametags to the leadership students, which recorded how each student did. These lists were then hung in the hallway on bulletin boards, so students could go and see how they did. Many Teacher advisor groups set goals for themselves. Some tried to run one block then walk one block, and some tried to run the whole time, pacing themselves having trained during cross country running. Every student at Tuxedo Park school participated.

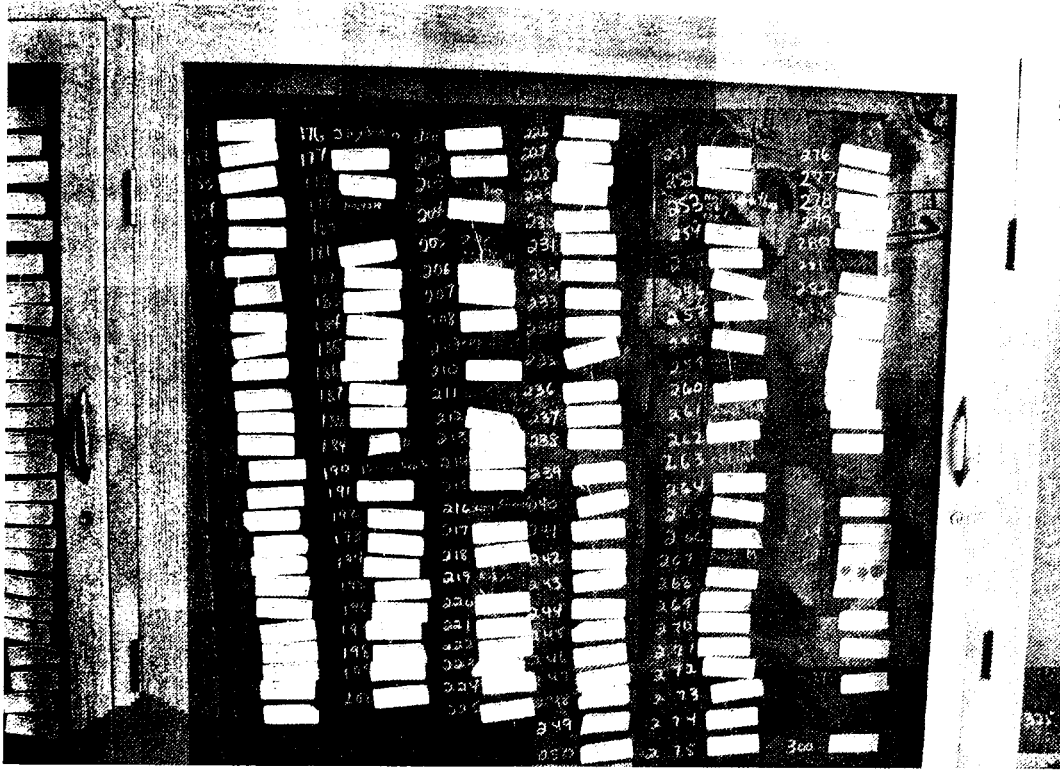


Figure 12. Results of the Terry Fox Run.

The next project was to create a rubric so students knew what they were being graded on in TA Health and Reading. Table 6 shows the template that was used as a starting point for the PLC.

Table 6.

TA Reading Rubric Exemplar

Effort Score	Percentage	Criteria
E (Excellent)	90 % - 100 %	-Always has a reading book. -Quickly gets seated and begins reading. -Fully engaged in the book for the entire twenty minutes.
VG (Very Good)	80 % - 90 %	
M (Meets Expectation)	60 % - 80 %	
NI (Needs Improvement)	Below 60 %	-Rarely begins reading. -Difficulty coming to class quickly. -Reminders to begin and continue reading.
Comments:		

Table 7.

TA Health Rubric Exemplar

	Needs Improvement 1	Is Meeting Expectation 2	Very Good 3	Excellent 4
Assignments	Assignments are rarely handed in.	Assignments are handed in with some prompting.	Most assignments are completed and handed in on time.	All Assignments are complete and handed in on time.
Responsibility	Arrives to class late and is often unprepared.	Arrives to class on time and requires occasional prompting to get ready.	Arrives to class on time with most materials.	Arrives to class on time fully prepared.
Attitude & Participation	Requires continual prompting to engage in activities and discussions.	Turns in assignments on time with some prompting and fulfills sufficient requirements stated in teacher directions.	Usually turns in assignments on time with some prompting and fulfills sufficient requirements stated in teacher directions.	Consistently turns in assignments on time and fulfills the requirements stated in teacher directions in a unique and creative manner.

The TA PLC took the exemplar and redeveloped it for students to understand how they were being graded on report cards.

Table 8.

TA Rubric For Effort in Reading.

Effort Score	Percentage (if Applicable)	Criteria
E (Always looks like - Once a month or less)	90-100%	-always has a reading book -always gets settled and begins reading promptly -fully engaged in the book for entire 20 minutes - always attentive during morning announcements
VG (Almost always looks like - 1 – 2 times a month)	80-90%	- almost always has a reading book - almost always gets settled and begins reading promptly - fully engaged in the book for 15 minutes - attentively listening during morning announcements
M (Looks like - 4 – 5 times a month)	60-80%	- usually has a reading book - usually gets settled and begins reading promptly - fully engaged in the book for entire 10 minutes - needs occasional reminders to listen to morning announcements
NI (Looks like - More than 5 times a month)	Below 60%	-rarely has a reading book to TA -rarely gets settled and begins reading promptly -engaged in the book for 5 minutes - inattentive and distracts others during morning announcements

Table 9.

Skills in TA Heath Rubric.

Effort Score	Percentage (if Applicable)	Assignments and Concepts	Participation	Respect and Responsibility
E	90-100%	-assignments completed on time and meet all requirements	-voluntarily participates and makes relevant, thoughtful comments on activities and discussions	-present when class starts with all supplies ready -demonstrates positive attitude to self and others -encourages others
VG	80-90%	-assignments completed on time and meet most requirements	-when asked, gives thoughtful, relevant responses when answering questions -voluntarily participates at least once per class (puts hand up)	-present when class starts with all required supplies -demonstrates positive attitude to self and others

M	60-80%	-assignments completed on time and meet minimal requirements	-when asked, give a relevant response when answering a question -needs encouragement to participate	-present when class starts, occasionally forgets supplies -occasionally requires encouragement to display a positive attitude to self and others
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The final rubric was created by combining the ideas from all three Tuxedo Park PLCs. The final rubric was enlarged and displayed on the wall in each classroom. Figure 13 is a copy of the final rubric.

Tuxedo Park 'PRIDE'

Criteria	Excellent	Very Good	Meets Expectations	Needs Improvement
Personal Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present when class starts with all supplies ready Homework completed and handed in on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present when class starts with all required supplies One or two late/incomplete assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present when class starts, occasionally forgets supplies Needs few reminders to hand assignments in on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrives to class late with supplies missing Assignments incomplete / late
Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates positive attitude to self and others Encourages others Focused on speaker, maintaining eye contact while listening quietly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates positive attitude to self and others Focused on speaker, and listening quietly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasionally requires encouragement to display a positive attitude to self and others Requires occasional reminders to stay focused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates negative attitude to self / others Requires reminders to focus

Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively helps others Completes class assignments and independently moves on to next relevant tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps others when asked Completes class assignments, but needs encouragement to move on to other tasks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student has no influence on other students' work Completes class assignments with encouragement from teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively distracts others Needs continual prompting to engage in activities and discussions
etermination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively seeks help Independently catches up on work missed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Readily accepts help when offered Inquires from teacher what was missed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reluctantly accepts help Student seeks out missed work when encouraged by teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refuses help Does not find out what was missed during an absence
 Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voluntarily participates and makes relevant, thoughtful comments on activities and discussions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When asked, gives thoughtful, relevant responses when answering a question Voluntarily participates at least once per class (puts up hand) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When asked, gives a relevant response when answering a question Needs encouragement to participate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited response to questions

Figure 13. Final Rubric.

Communication Home

As teachers continued to build relationships with students and parents, teacher advisors used different techniques to establish communication. Some teacher advisors called parents on the phone, but most teacher advisors found that the telephone was not the easiest way to communicate. Some teacher advisors used email, finding it convenient to have their teacher advisor parents on a group email list. This way, parents could be contacted quickly and frequently, and there is a record of communication. One example of a teacher advisor communication letter can be found in the Appendix. This teacher also made information sheets for parents to complete. This helped her to get to know her

students better (see Appendix T). One teacher advisor made information sheets for parents to fill out. Each teacher advisors were given a parent contact list to encourage communication (see Appendix U).

Teacher Advisor Relationship Builders

Most cultural holidays or celebrations typically mean that special activities will occur within the Teacher Advisor classes. For a week prior to Halloween, students could buy Scare-o-grams and send a Scare-o-gram to friends in other Teacher Advisor classes. Scare-o-grams cost 25 cents and were sold over the lunch break by leadership students. The following day, Scare-o-grams are delivered during Teacher Advisor sessions. Figure 14 provides an example that can be used for Scare-o-grams.





<p>Name: _____</p> <p>TA: _____</p>  <p>What is a ghost's favorite desert? Iced Screams.</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>TA: _____</p>  <p>How does a girl vampire flirt? She bats her eyes.</p>
<p>Name: _____</p> <p>TA: _____</p>  <p>What do ghosts and goblins drink on Halloween? Ghoul-aid.</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>TA: _____</p>  <p>What do witches put on their hair? Scare spray</p>

Figure 14. Scare-o-grams.

On October 31st, during the morning Teacher Advisor class when students usually read silently for twenty minutes, the Teacher Advisor classes were given a Halloween Trivia activity to do. Teacher Advisor classes who scored the highest qualify for a prize. These special activities were completed as a group, developing a sense of community and building relationships among the TA students and advisor. The scores were displayed on the front bulletin board near the office. Figure 15 provides an copy of the Halloween Trivia used at Tuxedo Park .

Halloween Trivia Contest

TA NAME: _____

1. HOW MANY "FRIDAY THE 13TH" MOVIES WERE THERE? _____
2. HOW MANY HALLOWEEN "HALLOWEEN" MOVIES WERE THERE? _____
3. WHAT RELIGIOUS DAY DID HALLOWEEN ORIGINATE FROM? _____
4. THE WORD "SPOOK" ORGINATED FROM WHICH NATIONALITY OF PEOPLE?

5. WHAT TIME OF DAY IS "WITCHING TIME"? _____
6. WHAT IS THE ONLY FLYING MAMMAL? _____
7. IN WHAT COUNTRY WERE CATS FIRST TAMED? _____
8. WHO IS "BEELZEBUB"? _____
9. WHO PLAYED FRANKENSTEIN IN THE ORIGINAL 1931 FILM?

10. WHO PLAYED THE CHARACTER OF PHANTOM OF THE OPERA?

11. NAME TWO WAYS OF KILLING A VAMPIRE? _____
12. WHAT TWO THINGS WILL KEEP A VAMPIRE AWAY FROM YOU? _____

Figure 15. Halloween trivia.

Figure 16 is a copy of the instructions given to teachers for the Halloween challenge. The challenge provided different options for TA classes, and TAs could choose to do all of the challenges or just the trivia.

Halloween TA Challenge

1. Halloween Playdough Creations (Mandatory)

Rules:

- Every TA will be provided with a ball of playdough
- You need to create a piece of art that is reflective of Halloween and includes some aspect of your TA name (IE. Conroy's Courageous Coconuts)
- You can use any added artifacts you would like – color, added objects, etc to help with your design
- Bring the finished design to Room 8 at the end of the TA period – make sure your TA name on a piece of paper is attached to your design

2. Halloween Quiz (Optional) -

Rules:

- Use your provided quiz put your TA's name at the top
- To find out some of your answers you will be allowed to use the Internet
- Put your answers in Mrs. Smith's mail box
- If all of your questions are right your TA may earn a tasty surprise YUM!

3. Door Decorating (Optional)

Rules:

- Your TA will be provided will a large sheet of paper to use to cover a section of your door
- Use any supplies your TA chooses and decorate your door in a Halloween theme
- If you need additional time use Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday's TA classes to decorate
- Your door will be judged after TA period on Halloween day

Figure 16. Halloween TA challenge.

In the afternoon, students went to Teacher Advisor classes, and from there they were able to decide which activity they wanted to participate in for the afternoon. The options were a) School Dance in the Gymnasium, b) Computer Lab (working on computers) c) Library (reading, playing games) d) Movie. Students could choose which activity they were going to participate in, but once they chose, they could not change activities. They were to stay at their chosen activity.

TA teachers were scheduled to supervise specific activities for one of the two periods in the afternoon. Most teachers chose to stay at the activities for the entire afternoon.



Figure 17. Students dressed up in the afternoon.



Figure 18: Students having fun before the dance.



Figure 19. Teacher advisors in the Halloween spirit.

Service Learning Projects

Service learning projects are a chance for TA students to give back to the school and community. Each grade was expected to do a service learning project. Projects could range from putting on an assembly, shoveling sidewalks in the community, and fundraising. The grade 5's hosted the Remembrance Day Assembly. This was an important team building exercise because the grade 5's performed in front of the entire school, and went around to all of the TAs to fundraise for the poppy drive and food bank. Students kept track of the money and food donated. The total donations were 143 food bank items and \$428. The final collections were done the morning of the assembly. See the prepared script and program of events in the Appendix (Appendix V and W).

One of the grade 9 TA classes decided to bring in toiletries to donate to homeless teenagers. They researched what it would be like to be staying in a homeless shelter, and collected toiletries that they thought these teenagers would need. This is a reflection by one of the grade nine students.

Our Service Learning project is for the boys and girls club. We are collecting toiletries and money for the homeless teens in Calgary. The donations that we receive are going towards Side Door and Avenue 15 programs. We are collecting donations until December 13 and we will be personally walking these donations to the boys and girls club located on 16th avenue. The goal of our project is to collect shoe boxes filled with toiletries that will eventually be turned into Christmas gifts for the homeless teens.

At the same time, the three grade 6 TA classes were completing a service learning project to recognize the hard work of the teachers. Grade 6 TA students would come around during the day with hot chocolate or cookies. Another grade 9 TA class was fundraising by taking pictures of students with Santa Claus. Here is the information blurb that was sent out to teachers

Hi staff!! There will be a few gr 9s coming to classes today (and maybe tomorrow) to tell you about Santa pictures that will be happening this week. They will be at lunch and the money raised will be going to support our service learning project (toys for YWCA). They should only take about one minute of your time. Thanks. PS Did anyone happen to get your hands on a Santa costume?

After the fundraiser, one of the students provided a reflection on her feelings about the fundraiser.

YWCA Toy drive

We are going to TA rooms to collect money and toys for children who have left their homes because of violence or abuse. When they arrive at the shelter, our toys and money will help them feel better and happy in their new surroundings.

I like doing this project because we get to make children who have come out of a bad situation feel better”.

By Samar

Buddy Reading

Part of building relationships amongst students is creating opportunities for older students to be role models for the younger students. The opportunity for the pairing of older students in TA with younger students in TA was one of the reasons why Tuxedo Park School chose to organize the TAs in single grades. One way promoting positive relationships between TA classes was to have buddy reading with older students and younger students. Typically, grade 5 TAs were paired with grade 8 or 9 TAs. Here is a copy of the D2L entries that teachers used to get some buddy reading pairings started.

Just wanted to share... Lindsay and I have started doing reading buddies once a week with our TA classes. We had a super positive start and lots of really cool moments. I think it's going to be a hit with our 2 classes and besides encouraging our students to read, it (hopefully) will also build community between our teeny tiny people and our big grade nines.

“Sounds great! I love it, so many benefits for both sides.”

We are really enjoying it so far. I am impressed with how well it's going. I talked to my grade 5 TA team about it. If any of the gr.8 or 9 teachers are interested, I'm sure that my gr.5 teammates would be into it.

“I am interesting in involving my grade 8 ta with a grade 5 reading buddy. I have some people that have trouble focusing on reading. Perhaps this leadership opportunity will be motivating.”

“I would love to!”

“Hey Robyn, I am looking forward to Reading Buddies. My class will come to you next Thursday. Looking forward to it! Jen”

“Hi michelle... I will buddy my 5's up with your 8's. I have 14 in my TA, what about you? let's make some plans!”

“Hey Kaysi! super! I have 20..... so a few more, but we can make it work. Let's talk soon.”

Count me in...not all of my students can read at even a grade 5 level---the DHH and then K&E kids would struggle to even read their own books (that is if they bring them!!!) but I think it would be a great leadership skill for them to learn. let me know what you think

That's great that you guys are all interested. You would be surprised. Even the low gr.9's or ESL students have really excelled. A lot of the gr.5's pick pretty basic books and I think it has boosted the confidence and self-esteem of some of those guys and gals because they are able to help the gr.5's with some of the words. Like you said, it's a great leadership opportunity. It's awesome to see. Let me know how it goes.

This is a great idea and something that looks good on the IPP's for either the younger or older student. Younger: it's a school based support to their reading program; Older: A short term objective strategy to improve reading skills.



Figure 20. Buddy reading.

At first, the grade 5s were nervous about being paired with grade 9s, so the teacher advisors made up a question sheet for the grade 5s to get to know their older buddy, without having to think of any questions on their own. The grade 5s asked their buddies the following questions, and when they were finished recording the responses, the grade 9 buddies asked the grade 5s the same questions.

Buddy reading started with the grade 5 students reading a picture books to their grade 9 buddy, to support this the TA PLC is hoping to buy specific buddy reading books they can keep in the TA rooms. Every few weeks the TAs could exchange books so each TA room has a new supply. Magazines also were a big hit for buddy reading. Currently, all grade 5 TAs have a bin of library picture books in their classrooms that they can use for buddy reading.

As a way of getting to know each other, the grade 5's came up with questions that they wanted to know about the grade 9 students (see Appendix X).

Another TA Challenge

Christmas holidays are always a celebratory time in a school, and yet with the multicultural nature of schools, teachers need to be aware that not all students celebrate Christmas. The TA challenge for winter break reflected this. There were three activities for this TA challenge. First, students listened to 12 Christmas songs and tried to figure out the name of the song. Each TA recorded their answers on the answer sheet provided and handed it in for marking. Secondly, students decorated gingerbread men with candies and icing (the candies and icing were brought to TA classes by the grade 9 leadership students). Finally, long strips of paper were delivered, decorated, and displayed on TA doors.



Figure 21. The door decoration winner.

The gingerbread men were decorated, and then pictures were taken and displayed on the main bulletin board in the front foyer.



Figure 22. The main bulletin board display.

During the last week of school before break, students could buy candycane grams for their friends for 25 cents, and they were delivered the following morning in TA reading classes. These greetings promote season cheer, and also TAs because students need to know which TA to deliver the candycane gram to.

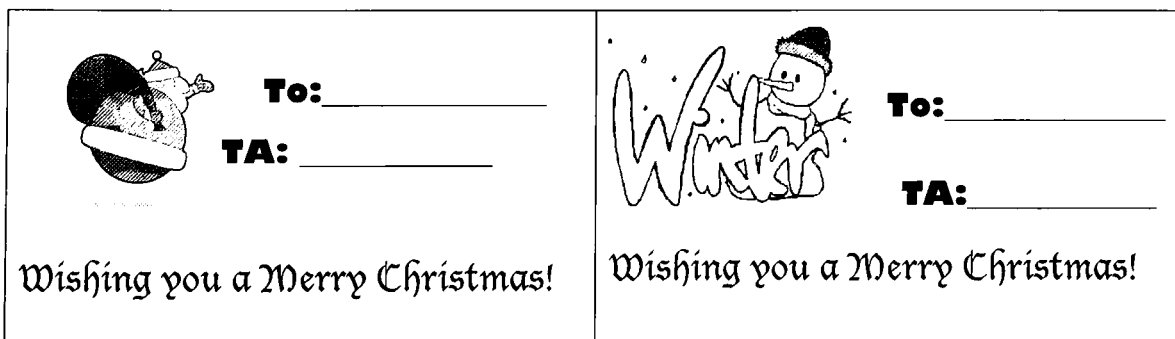


Figure 23. Candycane grams.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Shortly after the return from the winter break, Tuxedo Park School had the second round of Parent Teacher Conferences. After reflecting on the first parent teacher conferences, the TA PLC decided to continue using the same procedure. Teachers responded positively to the camaraderie of being together for the conferences. Teachers did not feel isolated, and they were able to signal to an administrator if they needed some assistance with an aggressive parent. Leadership students brought labeled tables and set them up in the gym, and teachers returned them to the correct classroom when conferences were finished.

The third and final parent conferences of the year were also held in the gymnasium. The final interviews took place over one evening and one morning, where the two previous conferences took place over two evenings (Thursday and the following Tuesday) and one morning (Friday). Thursday and Friday morning conferences were scheduled, and Tuesday evening was a drop in session so parents had the option of booking in or just popping by.

TA teachers made personal phone calls to parents to remind them that Parent Teacher Conferences were occurring, and that they needed to phone in for an appointment or take their chances by dropping in.

Carnival

Another important relationship building activity is the annual Carnival. This year, students were grouped in their Teacher Advisor classes with one leadership student per TA to help out with organizing and ensuring TA groups went to the correct activity at the correct time. The following is the explanation of the activities and timetable. The TA

reading period the morning of Carnival started with students watching an informational video of the activities in Quebec. After the video, TA groups went around to the various activities.

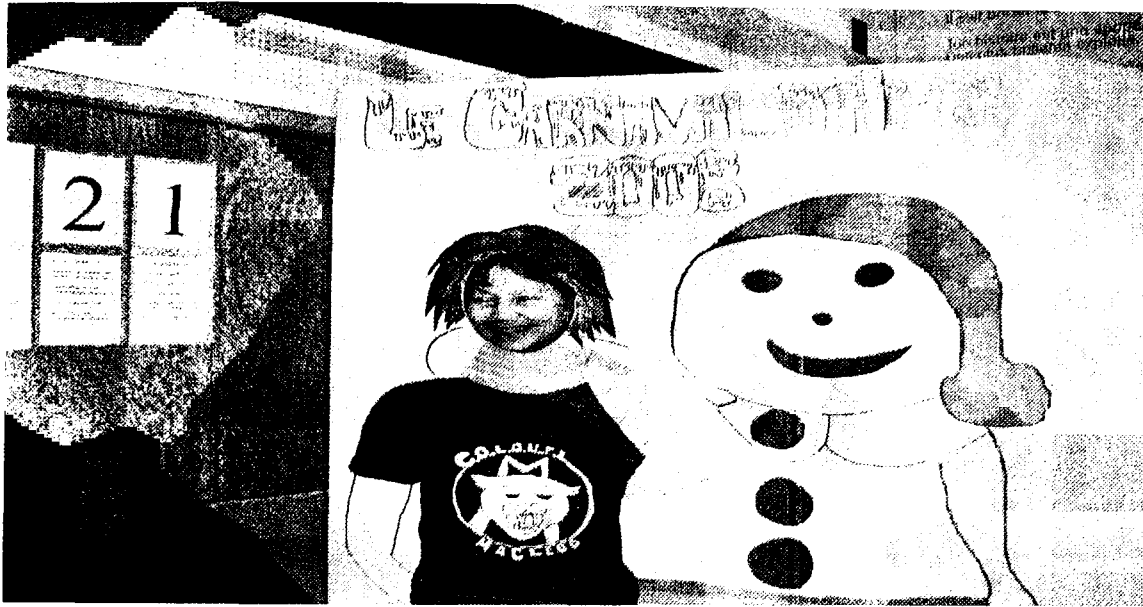


Figure 24. Carnival.

Carnival Activities

All TA groups were paired with a buddy TA group, and these pairs went around to all of the carnival stations together. The entire school was involved in carnival, with French Club students running the stations, and leadership students taking the TA groups around as guides. A full description of the Carnival Activities are listed in the Appendix (see Appendix Y).



Figure 25. Wooden spoons activity.

Valentine's Day TA Challenge

The TA Challenge for February took on a new idea for students. Students needed to do a number of different activities, and there was something of interest for everyone. Students needed to work together to complete tasks, and the Advisor was to oversee everything to ensure the activities were completed within the 40 minute Health block. The door decorating activity allowed some for some extra time, because they were not being judged until the following week.

Valentines TA Challenge
Friday, February 8th

1. DOOR DECORATING (Mandatory)

- a) use the white paper provided to trace one member of your TA and cut out the tracing to adhere to the door
- b) place the red heart on the appropriate location on the cut-out
- c) decorate as you see fit, remember that this month's Theme is HAVE A HEART
- d) you must include your TA teacher's name somewhere on the door for identification
- e) door will be judged after TA on Tuesday February 12th

2. NAME THAT TUNE (Optional)

- a) the provided CD contains 13 popular songs that all contain the word "LOVE"
- b) on the provided paper indicate the song title and artist of each song in order
- c) hand in to Karen's mailbox by the end of Friday February 8th

3. Valentines Quiz (Optional)

- a) there often isn't a lot of information about Valentines Day that is well known
- b) answer the 29 Valentines themed questions in the space provided using any resources necessary.
- c) hand in to Karen's mailbox by the end of Friday February 8th

4. Text Trivia (Optional)

- a) try and decipher student speak through text message acronyms
- c) You can use the students as resources – BUT NO COMPUTER and INTERNET!!!!!! (We are watching you!)
- d) Hand in to Karen's mailbox by the end of Friday February 8th



Figure 26. Valentine door decorating.

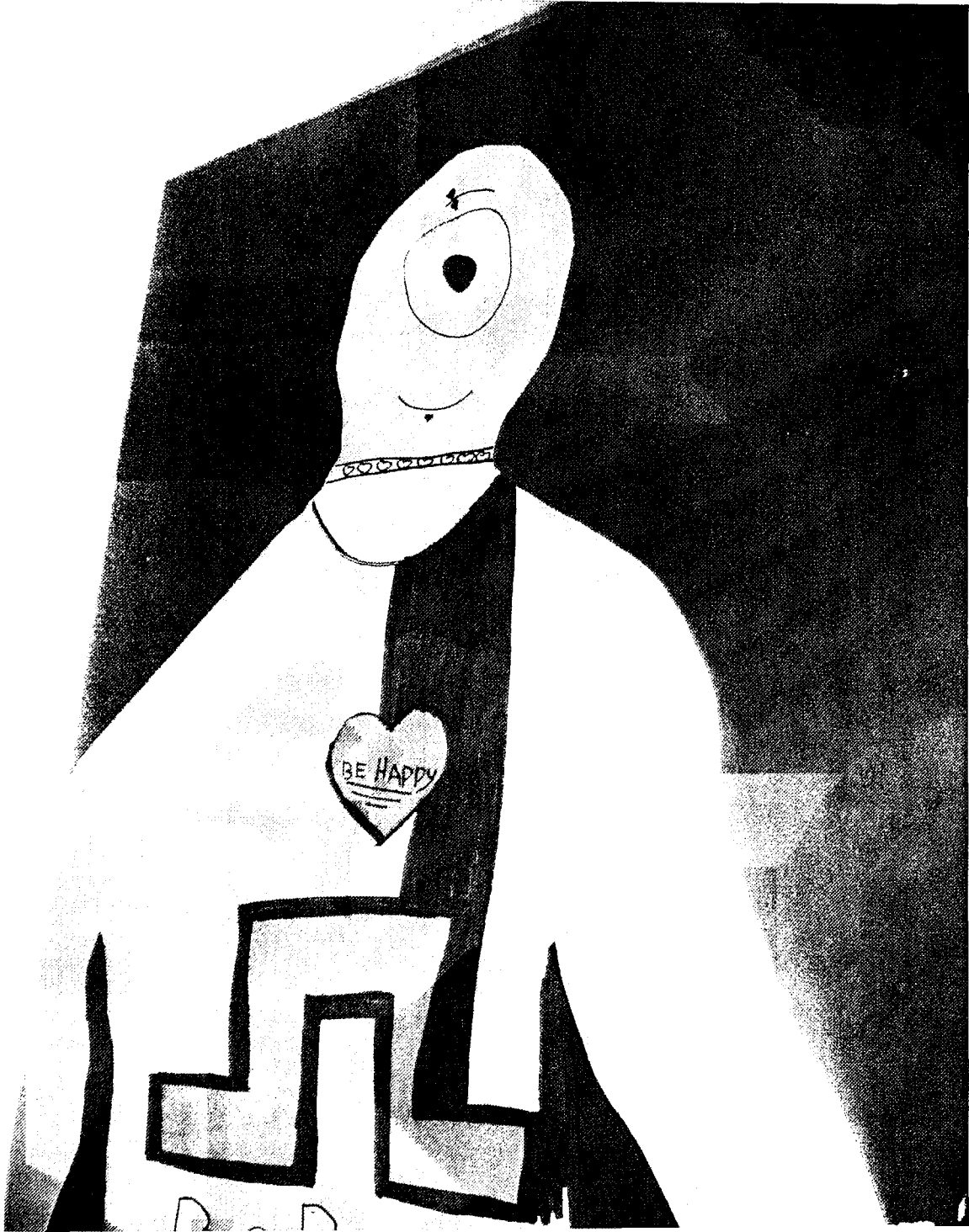


Figure 27. Another valentine door decoration.

Part of the TA Challenge for Valentine's Day was to answer trivia questions. The list of trivia questions and the text message mania appear in Appendix Z and AA.

Students were able to order flowers for friends before Valentine's Day. There was a choice of roses or carnations, and the flowers were delivered during TA Reading from Leadership students.

St. Patrick's Bachelor TA Challenge

The next TA Challenge was for St. Patrick's Day. The following instructions were given to each TA.

Monday, March 17

1. In the morning TA, all girls will receive a 4-leaf clover.
2. Girls are not allowed to talk with boys during class change and lunch hour all day long.
3. Any girls who talk with boys must give the clover and pin to the boy.
4. Any boys with more than 10 4-leaf clovers and pins at the end of the day come to the office for a prize.
5. Any girls with their clovers and pins left at the end of the day come to the office for a prize.
6. NO PULLING OFF CLOVERS!!!

Analysis

These are some of the activities that Tuxedo Park School have implemented to build relationships between students, between teachers and students, and between parents and teachers. Although we do not have the data as of yet to show that The TA program is improving relationships, we feel that these activities are increasing student attendance, creating opportunities for students to work together, and building the opportunity for students to interact with each other in collaborative activities.

One problem that has emerged in the TA program is that most people associate the term "TA" with a Teacher Assistant, who is an additional adult in a classroom who provides support for the teacher. Parents often need to have a breakdown of what TA

means, why it will benefit their children, and how it will build relationships between the school and home.

When a school is planning to implement a teacher advisor program, the staff needs to make sure to determine what the focus of the teacher advisor program should be. All of our teacher advisor challenges and activities have been tailored to build relationships between all members associated with Tuxedo Park School. These members include the students, parents, teachers, and the community.

Secondly, the teachers should research other schools that are implementing a TA program. There are a lot of schools with very effective TA programs that are improving learning, improving attendance, improving relationships, and improving the lives of everyone within a school.

To determine if the TA program at Tuxedo Park School did impact relationships this year, I conducted some surveys with students and teachers. The parent survey was administered in September and April, with April having a disappointing amount of parents answer the survey. This survey will be set up again at the Meet the Teacher night in September, 2008, which may give more information as this will be the second year of the Teacher Advisor Program.

Students were given a survey at the end of May to provide feedback about how they viewed the Teacher Advisor Program. Students in grade 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 were randomly selected to provide feedback. Typically, the younger students enjoyed the TA program. The older students however, especially the grades 8 and 9 students were very disappointed with the program. Here are the results.

Table 10.

Student Survey

Question		
Total number of student respondents		114
1. 1. Do you like the TA program?		
	Strongly Agree	22
	Agree	39
	No opinion	25
	Disagree	11
	Strongly Disagree	17
2. Do you know why Tuxedo Park has a TA program?		
	Strongly Agree	19
	Agree	18
	No opinion	40
	Disagree	18
	Strongly Disagree	19
3. Do you believe the TA program has built strong relationships with students?		
	Strongly Agree	21
	Agree	29
	No opinion	25
	Disagree	19
	Strongly Disagree	20
4. Do you believe the TA program has built strong relationships with parents?		
	Strongly Agree	6
	Agree	20
	No opinion	37
	Disagree	27
	Strongly Disagree	24
5. Do you know what TA stands for?		
	Strongly Agree	44
	Agree	18
	No opinion	18
	Disagree	13
	Strongly Disagree	21

The next two questions were short answer, open response questions. It was very interesting to see the answers that students wrote, and it gave me an understanding of just how different each TA was being run. Here is a breakdown of the answers.

Table 11.

<i>Favourite TA Activity</i>	
Activity	Number of Student Responses
Fly on the Wall	53
Reading	10
None	7
Creating door decorations	6
Christmas TA challenge	4
Winter Carnival	4
I don't know	3
Garbage clean up	3
Valentine's day activity	2
Taped people to the gym wall	2
TA challenges	2
Bullying	2
Playing sports in TA because we are in the gym	2
Names of love songs	1
Discussions that took place in TA	1
Making gingerbread men	1
I really liked how the grade 8s went to the boys & girls club and gave christmas presents (packages) to them	1
Bug on the Wall	1
Wrapping our teacher in toilet paper	1
I don't have one my TA sucks	1
Don't know	1
Colouring	1
Halloween	1
Outdoor School	1

Table 12.

<i>What Would I Change in TA.</i>	
Change	Number of Responses
Nothing	16
Reading	16
Take it out or wouldn't have it, or quit	9
I don't know	6
Everything	5
Pick your own class	3
Make it fun	2
Get rid of it and make more time for lunch	1
Everything especially reading and my TA teacher	1
TA should not be the same every year	1
The whole system	1
Chatting more	1

Less work	1
“I would eliminate TA from our school system”	1
The time on Friday	1
Have free time	1
Everything about T.A. but the good activities	1
Being able to read more comics and not always chapter books.	1
Just talk and do some unfinished homework	1
I would not have a TA program it sucks!! If you become a principal don't make us go to TA =(1
Wants to play puzzle of board games	1
You should be able to choose the TA your in/as long as its not going to disturb others around you.	1
Not having reading buddies	1
More activities	1
No health.	1
Wouldn't really change it	1

Although this survey demonstrates that a lot of students are impressed with the Teacher Advisor program, there are a lot of students who do not like the program, and who do not think that the Teacher Advisor program has made a positive impact on relationships. This survey should be administered again next year and the results should be compared. As the students become familiar with the TA program, will the results change?

However, next year at Tuxedo Park, the teacher who has been in charge of all of the TA challenges will no longer be working there. This may or may not have an affect on the TA program, because although TA challenges can be repeated. This teacher was the TA program specialist and her leadership will be missed.

The teachers also filled out a survey and the results from the teachers's survey appear in Table 13.

Table 13.

<i>Teacher Survey</i>	
Question	
Number of respondents	23
1. Do you like the TA program?	
Strongly Agree	5
Agree	13
No opinion	2
Disagree	3
Strongly Disagree	0
2. Do you know why Tuxedo Park has a TA program?	
Strongly Agree	3
Agree	20
No opinion	0
Disagree	0
Strongly Disagree	0
3. Do you believe the TA program has built strong relationships with students?	
Strongly Agree	3
Agree	13
No opinion	3
Disagree	3
Strongly Disagree	1
4. Do you believe the TA program has built strong relationships with parents?	-
Strongly Agree	3
Agree	6
No opinion	6
Disagree	7
Strongly Disagree	1
5. Do you know what TA stands for?	
Strongly Agree	15
Agree	8
No opinion	1
Disagree	0
Strongly Disagree	0

The teachers had the opportunity to add feedback about their favourite TA activity during the 2007-2008 school year and could suggest what they would change about the TA program? Teachers did not write any comments. I was surprised that more teachers were indifferent with the TA program. I have not heard any complaints in the TA PLC or

in staff meetings. The feedback for TA activities like TA challenges and buddy activities have always been positive. It may have been a better idea for staff to have completed this survey in the middle of the school year.

The main question for this project was, how does the teacher advisor program build relationships between teachers and students, teachers and parents, and amongst students within the school community? The TA program this year initiated communication with parents, however at the June, 2008 Parent Council Meeting, a lot of parents complained that they were confused about who they should be contacting at the school when there is a problem. Do they contact the TA teacher? The homeroom teacher? The office? It seems like the TA program has created confusion so far, although parents were happy to be getting phone calls and emails from the school, parents did not realize that most of the communication had been initiated from the TA teacher.

How has the teacher advisor program affected parent communication within the school? The teacher advisor program affected parent communication through phone calls home regarding parent teacher conferences, and the initial greeting phone call. Most of the parent communication came down to the Homeroom teachers, who initiated calls home when there were problems academically, and when the parent came in for conferences, they met with the Homeroom teachers.

The next nested question was: How do students perceive the teacher advisor program? From the survey results, students in the younger grades love the TA program. The results from the older students were mostly negative. I would be interested in learning how they compare their homeroom program from last year with the TA program this year.

How do the teachers evaluate the new teacher advisory program at Tuxedo Park School? Most of the teachers like the TA program, but the results were not as strong as I was expecting. It would have been great if teachers had provided some reasons for their opinions.

Does an Iweb Site help provide examples of activities that are working for Tuxedo Park School's teacher advisor program? Yes, the attached Iweb site has a number of activities and ideas for schools that want to set up their own TA program. It should be expected to take a few years (probably three) to have everything running smoothly.

Does the use of a rubric increase student understanding of expectations in the teacher advisor program? Each classroom has a TA Reading Rubric on the wall. These rubrics remind students that they are being marked on the TA Reading every morning (Monday – Thursday). Most students bring their books to class and read, but this gets more difficult to enforce in the older grades.

Conclusion

Overall, I feel that the TA program at Tuxedo Park school has been successful, and is beginning to build the much needed relationships between teachers and students. The teacher and parent relationships are going to take more time, but I believe parents will become more comfortable with the TA program as their child is comfortable with having the same TA teacher each year. Parents will like the fact that they have already met this TA teacher on several occasions.

Next year there will be new challenges, as core teachers will have a different grade group for TA. However, as the TA teacher continues to build relationships with each student in TA reading, health, and activities, the pros of this program should greatly

outweigh any challenges. The biggest challenges will be having the grade 5 students walking down to the grade 9 rooms for their teacher advisor class every morning and determining where lockers will be. It is possible for the grade 9 teachers to move to the grade 5 classrooms, but then where will the grade 5 teachers go with their grade 6 TA classes? It will be important for teachers to work together next year, as each teacher will be teaching a different grade of core students and TA students. Communication will be the key, so hopefully the D2L platform will help. Tuxedo Park has also purchased an automated phone system, which should help to keep parents up to date on school events. This automated system should help phone messages to be consistent.

For the first year of a program, I feel that the Tuxedo Park Teacher Advisor Program was very successful.

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Appendix A

Written Transcript to Interview

KS: Alright, so I have worked in two schools now with a teacher advisory program trying to really build the community of the school and also ensuring that all students have an advocate for them in the building that they move with from year to year and it is kind of their adult support system. Things that haven't worked so well in the teacher advisory programs are if a teacher isn't there for the entire duration of a student's stay in the building. So if they were to leave schools or go on maternity leave or for some reason not be in the school anymore then I think students sometimes feel that they're losing that adult advocate and have to build a brand new relationship with somebody new.

Things that have worked really well have been building a sense of community within that TA class so that students have some kids in their classes that they recognize from year to year and they have that familiarity to come and start the school year and know exactly where they're going and who is going to be in their classes and know who they're going to be spending that time with.

Deciding on the timetable. I don't think it's a perfect timetable I don't know what would be a perfect timetable. I've obviously seen it done two ways now. So in my previous school we had TA period everyday after lunch. They came back from lunch and they did their reading then. At our current school we have a busing issue that often students are late in the morning so we just decided to continue with TA period being first thing in the morning where they were doing reading from Monday through Thursday. Friday health period, again we're dropping one period, rotating it throughout the whole

year, it's maybe not the best maybe it works great that some classes are dropped once in a while but we just wanted it to be consistent that it was on Fridays and to give teachers the introduction to the program as well that we do lose some Fridays throughout the year and we wanted to make sure that teachers had success with this program we were trying it out here at Colonel, um, at our school.

How do we think of the activities? Well, I've taught leadership class for five years and so I've been to several leadership teacher conferences as well as student conferences and I've come across a plethora of books and binders and duotangs just full of activities and websites for Alberta and for Canada for leadership activities and so I always planned on being able to use my leadership students to plan and decide on the activities so that they're the grade nines, the oldest students in the building and are kind of having some leadership over the activities that are planned to hopefully include the grade nine students who are sometimes hard to bring in to the activities and buy into it.

We divided up the teacher advisor groupings for this first year just by divvying the students up from the four different academic classes so we made sure there was a good mix of academics a good ratio of boys to girls and a good ratio of IPP kids to regular streamed kids. And why we chose to do solid grades as opposed to multi grade is because we wanted the kids within their grades to be able to build strong relationships within their own grade and possibly do some buddy-ing activities with other grades in the school.

Interviewer: Thank you, that was awesome.

Appendix B

Health Lessons Tuxedo Park School 2007 – 2008

Term 1 – 6 Health Lessons

Tuesday, September 4 – TA Welcome (lockers, schedules, expectations, agendas, icebreakers).

Friday, September 7th Day 3/Period 3

Friday, September 14th Day 2 / Period 3 – the Friday after meet the teacher – something easy!!!

Friday, September 28th – Terry Fox Run (Day 5)

Friday, October 19th – Day 5/Period 3

Friday, October 26th – Day 4/Period 3

Friday, November 2nd – Day 3/Period 4

Friday, November 9th – Day 2/Period 4 (Remembrance Day Assembly)

Friday, November 16th – Day 6/Period 4

Friday, November 30th – Day 3/Period 4

Term 2 – 7 Health Lessons

Friday, December 7th – Day 2/Period 3 (TA Winter Activities)

Friday, December 14th – Day 1/Period 3

Friday, December 21st – Day 6/Period 3 (Last day of classes – Multi Cultural Assembly)

Friday, January 11th – Day 5/Period 3

Friday, January 25th – Day 2/Period 4

Friday, February 1st – Day 1/Period 4

Friday, February 8th – Day 5/Period 4 (TA Valentine`s Day Activities)

Friday, February 22nd – Day 6/Period 4

Friday, February 29th – Day 5/Period 3

Friday, March 7th – Day 4/Period 3

Friday, March 14th – Day 3/Period 3

Term 3 – 7 Health Lessons

Friday, April 4th – Day 5/Period 3

Friday, April 11th – Day 4/Period 4

Friday, April 18th – Day 3/Period 4

Friday, May 2nd – Day 6/Period 4 (Special TA Activities –grade 5/6)

Friday, May 9th – Day 5/Period 4 (Special TA Activities – grade 7)

Friday, May 23rd – Day 1/Period 3 (Special TA Activities – grade 8)

Friday, May 30th – Day 6/Period 3 (Special TA Activities – grade 9)

Friday, June 6th – Day 5/Period 3

Friday, June 13th – Day 4/Period 3 (Final TA Celebration)

Appendix C

Working Document of TA Health Lessons

TA PROGRAM

TERM 1 - 5 Health lessons

Tuesday, September 4 - TA Opening (lockers, schedules, expectations, agendas)

Friday, Sept 7 - DAY 3/P3

Friday, Sept 14th - DAY 2/P3 - the Friday after meet the teacher - snatching easy!!! - Team building/games

Friday, Sept 28th - Terry Fox Run (DAY 5)

Friday, Oct 19th - DAY 5/P3 ~~Monday~~ - Service Learning (Growth, Justice, or Change?) *Take pictures of students

Friday, Oct 26th - DAY 4/P3 (Halloween TA Activities)

Friday, Nov 2nd - DAY 3/P4 ~~Monday~~ - Service Learning (Focus: Inbound of the community)

Friday, Nov 9th - DAY 2/P4 (Remembrance Assembly)

Friday, Nov 16th - DAY 6/P4 ~~Monday~~ - Lindsay (Nutrition, wellness, personal health)

Friday, Nov 30th - DAY 3/P4 ~~Monday~~ - Lindsay

TERM 2 - 7 Health lessons

Friday, Dec 7 - DAY 2/P3 (TA Winter Activities)

Friday, Dec 11 - DAY 1/P3 ~~Monday~~ - Lindsay

Friday, Dec 21 - DAY 6/P3 (Last Day of Classes - Multi Cultural Assembly)

Friday, Jan 11th - DAY 5/P3 ~~Monday~~ - Colin (safety)

Friday, Jan 25th - DAY 2/P4 (Artist in Residence this week - Grades 5, 6 & 7)

Friday, Feb 1st - DAY 1/P4 ~~Monday~~ - Colin

Friday, Feb 8th - DAY 5/P4 (TA Valentines Activities)

Friday, Feb 22nd - DAY 6/P4 ~~Monday~~ - Colin

Friday, Feb 29th - DAY 5/P3 - Kaysi (Managing feelings)

Friday, March 7th - DAY 4/P3 ~~Monday~~ - Kaysi

Friday, March 14th - DAY 3/P3 ~~Monday~~ - Kaysi

TERM 3 - 7 Health lessons

Friday, April 4th - DAY 5/P3 ~~Monday~~ - Erin (Relationships, roles, conflict resolution)

Friday, April 11th - DAY 4/P4 ~~Monday~~ - Erin

Friday, April 18th - DAY 3/P4 ~~Monday~~ - Erin

Friday, May 2nd - DAY 6/P4 (Special TA Activities - gr 5/6)

Friday, May 9th - DAY 5/P4 (Special TA Activities - gr 7) ~~Monday~~ - Erin (Life learning)

Friday, May 22nd - DAY 1/P3 (Special TA Activities - gr 8) - Erin Lindsay (All)

Friday, May 30th - DAY 6/P3 (Special TA Activities - gr 9) ~~Monday~~ - Colin

Friday, June 6th - DAY 5/P2 ~~Monday~~ - Kaysi

Friday, June 13th - DAY 4/P3 (Final TA Celebration)

- Assembly @Angie Power, Banning, Patricia, ... + to Florida

- Tommy Davis
Erin
Lindsay
Kaysi
Colin

Appendix D

Phone Conversation Example.

Good morning, this is _____ from Tuxedo Park School and I would like to speak to the parent/guardian of _____. I am going to be your son/daughter's Teacher Advisor at Tuxedo Park for this school year. I am just calling to introduce myself and invite you to Meet the Teacher Night on Thursday, September 13th. If you have any questions or concerns this school year, I am your son/daughter's advocate. Please feel free to contact me at XXX-XXXX ext XXXX.

What would be the best way to stay in touch this year?

I look forward to meeting your son/daughter on Tuesday morning. Have a nice day.

What is a Teacher Advisor Program?

The teacher advisory program provides an opportunity to introduce an adult advocate for every student in the school. Advisory activities allow them to connect with a caring adult and other students to help them excel during middle school years.

Appendix E

Division of Lockers for TA Classes

TA Teachers and Classrooms (plus approximate numbers)**LOCKER ASSIGNMENTS**

Grade 5's	# of Students	Lockers
5A – Room 23 (ART)	(16)	417-434 (18)
5B – Room 26	(14)	435-452 (18)
5C – Room 27	(15)	471-488 (18)
5D – Room 28	(17)	453-470 (18)
5E – Room 29	(17)	489-508 (20)
Grade 6's		
6A – Room 1	(21)	219-242 (24)
6B – Room 3	(19)	243-246 & 177-194 (22)
6C – Library	(20)	195-218 (24)
Grade 7's		
7A – Room 2	(17)	509-528 (20)
7B – Computer Lab	(16)	381-400 (20)
7C – Room 22	(18)	401-416 & 567-570 (20)
7D – Room 24	(17)	547-566 (20)
7E – Room 25	(15)	529-546 (18)
Grade 8's		
8A – Room 4	(19)	155-176 (22)
8B – Room 5	(19)	247-268 (22)
8C – Room 6	(19)	141-154 & 269-280 (26)
8D – Room 7	(19)	281-302 (22)
8E – Room 9	(19)	119-139 (22)
8F – Gym	(19)	107-118 & 303-316 (26)
Grade 9's		
9A – Room 8	(17)	337-356 (20)
9B – Room 16	(18)	317-336 (20)
9C – Room 18	(17)	357-376 (20)
9D – Room 19	(19)	607-626 (20)
9E – Room 20	(18)	377-380 & 591-606 (20)
9F – Room 21	(17)	571-590 (20)
Empty Lockers - #1-106, 24 full length lockers (Outside Bridges, Room 9 and Room 8)		

Appendix F

Breakdown of Days for Tuxedo Park School

School Calendar- 2007-2008

August	29	Wed	Teachers In
	30	Thur	Teachers In
	31	Fri	Teachers In
September	3	Mon	Labour Day-No School
	4	Tue	Students In
	5	Wed	Fees, Photo Day
	13	Thur	Meet the Teacher
	21	Fri	Organization Day-No School
October	5	Fri	PLT Day #1 – No School
	8	Mon	Thanksgiving
	11	Thur	P/T Interview Evening
	12	Fri	P/T Interview am (IPP)
	16	Tue	P/T Interview Evening
November	9	Fri	Remembrance Day Assembly
	12	Mon	System PD- No School
	22	Thur	Celebration of Learning
	23	Fri	PLT Day #2 – No School
	30	Fri	Term 1 Ends
December	3	Mon	Term 2 Begins
	6	Thurs	Report Card
	21	Fri	Last Day of Classes
January	7	Mon	Classes Resume
	17	Thur	P/T Interview Evening
	18	Fri	Interview am (IPP)
	22	Tue	P/T Interview Evening
February	4	Mon	System PD-No School
	14/15	Thur/Fri	Teachers Convention-No School
	18	Mon	Family Day-No School
March	6	Thur	Open House Celebration-evening
	14	Fri	Term 2 Ends
	17	Mon	Term 3 Begins
	19	Wed	Report Cards
	19	Wed	Last Day of Classes
	20	Thur	Org Day-No School
	21	Fri	Good Friday-No School
	31	Mon	Classes resume
April	24	Thur	P/T Evening
	25	Fri	P/T Interview am (IPP)
May	14	Wed	PAT LA Writing
	15	Thur	PAT Math 6 A
	16	Fri	System PD
	19	Mon	Victoria Day
June	17	Tues	PLT Day #3
	18	Wed	PAT LA 6
	19	Thur	PAT Math 6
	19	Thur	Term 3 Ends
	20	Fri	PAT SS 6, LA 6
	23	Mon	PAT SS 6, SS 6
	23	Mon	PAT SS 6
	23	Mon	PAT SS 6, K&C Math
	23	Mon	PAT SS 6, Awards -
	23	Mon	PAT SS 6, Social
	23	Mon	PAT SS 6, Day-No School
	23	Mon	PAT SS 6
	23	Mon	PAT SS 6

Bell Schedule (Monday-Thursday)

8:00 – 8:20	TAV/Reading
8:20 – 9:13	Period 1
9:13 – 10:06	Period 2
10:06 – 10:16	Nutrition Break
10:16 – 11:08	Period 3
11:08 – 12:00	Period 4
12:00 – 12:40	Lunch
12:40 – 1:37	Period 5
1:37 – 2:30	Period 6

Bell Schedule (Friday)

8:00 – 8:40	Period 1
8:40 – 9:20	Period 2
9:20 – 10:00	Period 3
10:00 – 10:10	Nutrition Break
10:10 – 10:50	Period 4
10:50 – 11:30	Period 5
11:30 – 12:10	Period 6

Appendix G

Tuxedo Park School Calendar

August 2007						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesda	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29 Teachers In	30 Teachers In	31 Teachers In	

September 2007					
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1
3 Labour Day	4 Students In Day 6	5 Photo Day Day 1	6 Day 2	7 Day 3	8
10 Day 4	11 Day 5	12 Day 6	13 Meet the Teacher Day 1	14 Day 2	15
17 Day 3	18 Day 4	19 Day 5	20 Day 6	21 Org Day-No School for Students	22
24 Day 1	25 Day 2	26 Day 3	27 Day 4	28 Day 5	29

Appendix H

Daily Class Schedule

Monday - Thursday

8:00 - 8:20 Reading	
8:20 - 9:13 Period 1	
9:13 - 10:06 Period 2	
10:06-10:14	Nutrition Break
10:14 - 11:07 Period 3	
11:07 - 12:00 Period 4	
12:00 - 12:40	Lunch
12:40-12:44	Homeroom
12:44 - 1:37 Period 5	
1:37 - 2:30 Period 6	
2:30	Dismissal

Friday

8:00 -8:40 Period 1	
8:40 - 9:20 Period 2	
9:20 - 10:00 Period 3	
10:00-10:10	Nutrition Break
10:10 - 10:50 Period 4	
10:50 - 11:30 Period 5	
11:30 - 12:10 Period 6	

Appendix I

Schedule of Events for Teachers/Students.

Tuesday, September 4th Timetable

Schedule of events for teachers/students

First day of school

8:00 AM – 10:00 AM TAs (lockers, agendas/expectations, schedules, head shots, ice breaker).

10:00 AM – 10:10 AM Nutrition Break

10:10 AM Return to TA for Mini Day 1 Timetable

Reading Period 10:10 – 10:15

Period 1 10:15 – 10:30

Period 2 10:30 – 10:45

Period 3 10:45 – 11:00

Period 4 11:00 – 11:15

Period 5 11:15 – 11:30

Period 6 11:30 – 11:45

Back to TA 11:45 – 12:00 PM

Option teachers to gym for option/PE times

12:00 – 12:40 Lunch

Organize

Bingo/Ice Breaker Activity

Locks for each student and locker numbers

Give out an Agenda for each student

Appendix J

A Scanned Copy of the Schedule for September 4th, 2007Tuesday, September 4th

10:00
 8:00am - 8:45am - TAs (lockers, agendas/expectations, schedules, hand slots)

10:00
~~10:00am~~ - 10:10am - Nutrition Break

10:10am - Return to TA for Mini Day 1 Timetable

Reading Period - 10:10am - 10:15am

Period 1 - 10:15am - 10:30am

Period 2 - 10:30am - 10:45am

Period 3 - 10:45am - 11:00am

Period 4 - 11:00am - 11:15am

Period 5 - 11:15am - 11:30am

Period 6 - 11:30am - 11:45am

Back to TA - 11:45am - 12:00pm

Option teachers to gym for option / PE times

12:00pm - 12:45pm - LUNCH

12:45pm - 1:40pm - TA Activities

- Back to School Teacher Fashion (Follet Paper)
- TA Room Poster (Name - Amiteration)
- Ed Assistants taking pictures

1:45pm - 2:30pm - Assembly - Slide Show / Opening Remarks / Teacher Introduction

Organize:

BINGO / Get to know each other activity

-Schedule for Ed Assistants taking pictures (between 1:15 and 1:40pm)

-Supplies for poster decorating

Friday, September 7th

TA Period - Period 3 - Day 1

40 minutes

TIME CAPSULE (finish TA poster too!)

1. Reflection questionnaire - each student fills out the Time Capsule Questionnaire both sides, including a letter to themselves at the end.
2. Attach their mug shot to it (taken on the first day of school and printed off sometime during the first week by their TA teacher).
3. Sealed in an envelope and addressed to themselves.
4. All time capsules for the TA put into a sealed container (ie. Shoe box)
5. Any time left over can be used to finish the TA poster and post it outside your room.

Appendix K

BINGO Icebreaker Activity.

BINGO

Get a different autograph for each square in the BINGO sheet, one can be signed by your own name too!

Went Swimming this summer _____	Owens a Cat or a dog at home _____	Favorite food is pizza _____	Cheers for the Calgary Flames _____
Is wearing jeans today _____	Birthday is during the summer _____	Left the city of Calgary this summer _____	Has gone to the movies in the last week _____
Favorite subject is math _____	Is not wearing socks today _____	FREE SQUARE	Favorite color is red _____
Likes to go camping _____	Slept in past noon this summer _____	Went bike riding this summer _____	Ate mini-donuts at the Stampede _____

Appendix L

Tuxedo Park Complementary Courses 2007/2008

*Grade 5 and 6 Complementary Courses 2007/2008*ArtComputer ApplicationsFoods & FashionMusicDrama*Grade 7 Complementary Courses 2007/2008*ArtComputer ApplicationsFoods and FashionMusic/Drama*Grade 8 Complementary Courses 2007-2008*ArtCommunications Technology 8 (Full Year Course)DesignEnvironmental and Outdoor Education (Full Year Course)Music/Drama*Grade 9 Complementary Courses- 2007/2008*Communications Technology (Full Year Course)Foods & FashionLeadership (Full Year Course)Management & MarketingMusic/DramaArtCommunications Technology 8 (Full Year Course)DesignEnvironmental and Outdoor Education (Full Year Course)Music/Drama*Grade 9 Complementary Courses- 2007/2008*Communications Technology (Full Year Course)Foods & FashionLeadership (Full Year Course)Management & MarketingMusic/Drama

Appendix M
StudentS Option Sign Up Sheet

Name: _____

TA Class: _____

Term 1: _____

Term 2: _____

Term 3: _____

Appendix N

The Teacher Fashion (Toilet Paper).

T.A. challenge #1-Fashion your Teacher**Tuesday September 4, 2008**

Each T.A. will be given 2 rolls of toilet paper to fashion an outfit for their Teacher Advisor.

RULES:

- 1) Students will not be allowed to use any extra toilet paper.
- 2) No tape or any kind of adhesive allowed. No added color or props, nothing but the toilet paper!!!
- 3) Make sure that your teacher is completely fashionable!!!!!!!!!!!!
eg. their body is mostly covered
- 4) You will have the first 20 min. of T.A until leadership students will be around to take your picture.
- 5) Please do not throw out toilet paper until the picture is taken.

YOU WILL BE JUDGED ON HOW FASHIONABLE YOUR TEACHER ADVISOR IS.

FOLLOWING THE RULES AND CREATIVITY

Appendix O

Time Capsule

- Reflection questionnaire – each student fills out the Time Capsule Questionnaire both sides, including a letter to themselves to open and read at the end of the school year.
- Attach their mug shots to letter, (the ones taken on the first day of school and printed off sometime during the first week by the TA teacher)
- Seal everything in an envelope and address it to themselves.
- All time capsules for TA put into the sealed container (ie. Shoe box).
- Any extra time can be used to finish the TA poster and post it outside each TA room.

Appendix P

The Format for Taking Minutes in TA PLC Meetings

Meeting, Decision, and Action Record for School Teams

Date:	Time:
--------------	--------------

Team:	Team Leader:
--------------	---------------------

Purpose of the Meeting

Attendees	Apologies/No Shows

Agenda / Discussion
1.

Next Step Actions:			
WHAT	WHO	WHEN	COMMENTS

Next Meeting

Appendix Q

The First TA PLC Meeting

The first TA PLC meeting

Meeting, Decision, and Action Record
for School Teams



Date: September 14, 2007	Time: 2:15pm

Team: TA	Team Leader: Erin/Karen

Purpose of the Meeting
Introduction and attendance

Attendees	Apologies/No Shows
Mandi, Donna, Kaysi, Lindsay, Erin, Reg, Jackie, Yanna, Karen, Robyn	

Agenda / Discussion
1. Attendance Questions (What each person wants to get out of the TA PLC) Why we joined the TA PLC

Next Step Actions:			
WHAT	WHO	WHEN	COMMENTS
Learn more about TA process			
Easier way to explain TA Process			
TA activities in health - team building lessons embedded in health curriculum			
TA binders to keep lessons in from the year.			

Next Meeting
September 21, 2007

Appendix R

The Second TA PLC Meeting.

Meeting, Decision, and Action Record for School Teams



Date: Sept 21, 2007	Time: 9:00am
----------------------------	---------------------

Team: TA	Team Leader: Karen, Erin
-----------------	---------------------------------

Purpose of the Meeting
To define a SMART goal for our PLC

Attendees	Apologies/No Shows
Karen, Lindsay, Donna, Erin, Mandi, Kaysi, Robyn, Reg, Yanna	Jackie

Agenda / Discussion
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. NORMS - Discussion consensus; open to all view points/solutions/ideas; be prepared (read agenda, keep up to date on any missed info, bring any supplies needed for each meeting, be open minded) 2. Interviews - in the gym sitting in core teacher teams interviewing together; TA teams all in proximity to each other; teacher name signs; any teacher concerned about their own TA student(s) should be aware of when that student is interviewing with their core teachers (possibly booking time off to be in

<p>that interview); phone calls to be made by TA teachers to make parents/students aware of upcoming interviews</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Evaluation - two effort marks: one is a record of daily reading and the other is skills in health; rubric to define what each score means (to come in Oct) 4. Report Card - personal growth and TA/Health in a box together and the responsibility of the TA teacher; TA needs skills in Health and daily effort (two separate scores) with an effort mark in each; TA/Health comment needs to be very personal to make an impact 5. Accountability Pillars - two areas of focus are school community and parental involvement; Community - use of bulletin board by gym and TA celebration assembly, important for TA teams to document all challenges/service learning/events;

Next Step Actions:			
WHAT	WHO	WHEN	COMMENTS
Create rubrics	- team	Oct 19	- effort in reading - skills in health
Make a schedule for Service Learning	- team	Oct/Nov	- get feedback from grade teams to organize schedule
Next Meeting			
Oct 19, 2007 - create rubrics			

Appendix S

Timetable for the Terry Fox Run.

Terry Fox Run Day

Friday, September 28, 2007

MODIFIED SCHEDULE

DAY 5

PERIOD 1 8:00 – 8:40

PERIOD 2 8:40 – 9:20

NUTRITION BREAK 9:20 – 9:30 (Snack and change if needed into gymstrip).

9:30 Students go to TA Classes

9:35 Students are called down to the gym

9:45 – 10:15- Opening Ceremonies (There will be an announcement at the start of the assembly for teachers placed on the course to head out).

10:15- Students will go outside to the field.

Between 10:15 and 10:30 Start of Terry Fox Run

11:30 Last walker crosses the finish line

11:40 Back to gym for closing ceremonies

12:10 Dismissed from gym

** Please remember to wear Tuxedo Park School Gear

** Dress for the weather

** Bring a lawn chair for your station on the route.

THANK YOU!!!

Appendix T

TA Parent Letter

An example of one Teacher Advisor communicating with the parents/guardians of her TA



October 2007

Dear Students, Parents and Guardians,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your child to Tuxedo Park School. For those who are new to our school community, I would like to extend a special welcome. I hope you have settled into the swing of things with the new school year. The year ahead will be filled with many exciting challenges, for you as parents, I as a teacher, and of course for the students as well.

It is my belief that we are working together as partners in the education of your child. As partners, we should be fully aware of your child's progress - both academically and socially. During the school year, I will be phoning you about various events going on at the school (e.g. Parent/Teacher Interviews). Please feel free to contact me at the school anytime if you have any questions or concerns about the various things going on at our school. (XXX-XXXX x. XXXX)

I hope that together - you, your child and I - can make this school year truly rewarding and fulfilling. I have enjoyed sharing in reading period with your child each morning, and I look forward to our health periods on Fridays as well.

Thank-you for your anticipated co-operation.

Sincerely,

K. R.

Teacher Advocate

Dear Parents & Guardians,

Please complete this form about your child and send it back to school as soon as possible. This will help me to get to know your child. Thank-you! ~ K. R

Child's full name:

Name of parents/guardians:

Birthday: _____ Age: _____ Phone #: _____

My child is good at:

My child needs help with

My child enjoys

My child dislikes

Socially, I would like my child to work

The best way to contact me is (please check): Email Phone Letter

Email: _____

Is there anything else I should know about your child to help make this school year more successful?

Appendix V

Remembrance Day Assembly November 9, 2007

Grade 5 students went around to every TA and read from the prepared script.

Hi everyone!

We're here to tell you about our grade 5 service learning project that is taking place this week.

As you all know, Remembrance Day is on November 11th. We will be having our Remembrance Day assembly during period four on Friday. You are welcome to show your support by wearing your cadet, scout or guide uniform on Friday - if you have one. If not, you will be given a red poppy on Friday to wear.

Everyday this week, we will be coming around to your classroom to collect money and food donations to help out our local legion. We hope that your TA will be able to fundraise at least \$20 by Friday. We will take any and all type of money – coins and bills!

If you can't bring in money, please bring in a food item to help fill up our donation box. Our service learning target is to completely fill up our donation box by Friday. We hope that you will be able to help out!

Please invite your parents and guardians to our assembly on Friday. A mistake was made in the newsletter that was sent out last week, so please tell your parents to come out at 10am.

That's all we have to say for today. Just before we leave... does anyone have any money that they can donate today? We will be able to start your TA's tracking list if you do. And just so you know, we will be announcing each day which TA has been bringing in the most donations... so.... good luck!

Appendix W

Remembrance Day - 2007 - Program of Events

** Slideshow/Music Plays as students enter...

- 1) Opening Welcome - Darren Toews
- 2) Oh Canada (English) - Katelyn Hunerfauth (Gr. 9), Piano
- 3) Oh Canada (French) - Gr. 5/6's singing on bleachers
(DVD showing in background on screen)
- 4) MC's Introduce - Grade 5/6 & 9, Poetry
- 5) MC's Introduce - "Pittance of Time" (DVD)
- 6) MC's Introduce - Flander's Field (5's song)
- 7) MC's Introduce - Laying of Wreath ("Last Post")
- 8) MC's Introduce - Minute of Silence
- 9) MC's Introduce - Song of Peace (5's Song)

Appendix X

Buddy Reading Questions

Buddy reading questions

My name: _____

What is your name? _____

Who is your favourite teacher? _____

What is your favourite sport? _____

What is your favourite food? _____

How old are you? _____

Do you have any brothers or sisters? _____

Do you have any pets? _____

What is your favourite hobby? _____

What is your favourite subject? _____

What is your favourite TV show? _____

What is one cool thing that you have done? _____

What is your favourite song or band? _____

What is your favourite movie? _____

Do you like scary things? _____

What is your favourite book? _____

Appendix Y

Carnival Information

CARNAVAL 2008 IN A NUT SHELL...

- 20 TA groups (collapsed 7-02, 9-21, 8-07, 5-23, 9-08)
- 5 ZONES (A,B,C,D,E)
- 2 activities in each zone
 - A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2, D1, D2, E1, E2
- 20 minutes at each activity
- Rotating through zones in order, every 40 minutes
- Grade 9 leadership student will lead your class, explain the activities, and keep you on schedule for the morning
- ZONE A
 - Sled Race
 - 3-Legged Race
 - Tug of War (optional)
 - * Stop at lockers for jackets before and after Zone A
- ZONE B
 - Snowshoe Obstacle Course (courtyard)
 - Bingo (Library) and/or Voyageur activities (Rm 26)
 - Sugar Shack (after Snowshoe activity)
- ZONE C
 - Carnival site treasure hunt (computer lab)
 - Jeopardy game on SMARTboard (science lab)
- ZONE D
 - Gym activities (Gym) / Concession (Stage)
 - Wooden Spoons (Drama Rm)
 - * Set meeting time and place to leave gym and go to next station
- ZONE E
 - Indoor Foosball (Lower Gym)
 - Hockey Shootout (Cafeteria)

COURSE À 3 JAMBES / 3-LEGGED RACE

- **Materials: ties, pylons**
- **Divide your class into two teams, lined up facing the end pylon.**
- **Have students pair up with someone and tie their inside legs together, standing side-by-side.**
- **At your command, the first two pairs race around the pylon and back trying not to fall.**
- **Continue in relay style until all students have gone through.**
- **Change up the teams or try a 4-Legged Race (3 students tied up).**
- **Switch up the teams if time allows.**

COURSE EN RACQUETTES/ SNOWSHOE OBSTACLE COURSE

- **Materials:** Snowshoes, SNOW, 2 hula hoops, 2 balls, empty garbage can, skipping ropes
- **Divide your TA into two teams and have them line up at the two starting points (pylons).**
- **The first 5 students on each team must put on a pair of snowshoes.**
- **At your command, the first student from each team must run through the obstacle course in the courtyard.**
- **Continue in relay style until all kids have completed the course. Once kids return from the course, they must pass on the snowshoes to the next in line.**
- **VOYAGEUR ACTIVITIES Arm/thumb/leg wrestling**
- **Divide students into pairs for three types of wrestling. You may have students compete with only girls/ only boys /mixed or however you see fit.**
- **Leg wrestling explanation: Two students are on the ground sitting side by side facing each other with legs stretched out in front of them. Students lift their leg closest to their partner and wrap it around their partner's lifted leg. The students try to pull their opponent to their side. The winner is the student left sitting.**

LOTTO/ BINGO

- **Materials:** Bingo cards, markers, word cards
- **Students are given a card and bingo markers.**
- **The leader will call out a Carnaval word. The word can be found anywhere on the student's card. To win student must call out "Carnaval" and have on their card a straight line of 5, a diagonal line or blackout.**

LA CABANE À SUCRE / SUGAR SHACK

- **Materials:** popsicle sticks, SNOW, maple syrup
- **Students will be given a popsicle stick to roll in the maple syrup poured over snow to make a sugar stick to enjoy.**

CHASSE AUX TRÉSORS/ CARNAVAL SITE TREASURE HUNT

- **Materials:** Computer & Website www.carnaval.qc.ab.ca
- **Ask your students to go to a computer (they may need to partner up as there will be another TA in the lab as well)**
- **Computers should be on the Carnaval site, if not ask your kids to log in as 'student' and go to the website above**
- **Your kids will have to follow the instructions on the TREASURE HUNT sheet beside the computer (extras on the table)**
- **If there's extra time, they can browse through the site**

LE JEOPARDY /JEOPARDY

- **Materials:** SMARTboard, projector, laptop, jeopardy game, buzzers
- You will be competing against another TA for this station.
- Choose a representative from your TA to start.
- One student from each team will be at the 'buzzer desk' with their hands at their sides.
- Your TA leader will run the jeopardy game and choose the first category. They will ask the question and only the reps from each TA can answer by pressing the 'buzzer' first.
- If the answer is wrong, the other team can steal the points. The winner of the round wins the points. Switch reps and continue through until game ends or time runs out.
- If neither contestant knows the answer, they can switch spots with another teammate who must get to the buzzer before their new opponent to answer the question.
- All questions are based on CARNAVAL and the information from the video in the morning.

CONCESSION / GYM ACTIVITIES

- In this zone, your TA will have free roam of the gym and concession on the stage. Make sure they have \$\$ with them to purchase snacks at concession.
- There will be a variety of activities for them to check out, all of which will be run by students. Some of these include: la pêche (fishing pond), mini bowling, magic show, spin the wheel, photo booth with Bonhomme, etc...
- For the concession, ask your kids to follow the signs to enter (ENTRÉE) and exit (SORTIE) the stage area.
- There will be cashiers selling tickets that they can then take to the concession counter and select their snack.
- Ask your TA to watch the time clock in the gym and plan for a departure time and meeting spot.

WOODEN SPOONS

- **Materials:** Wooden spoons, CDs
- There will be two TA's in here at once. One can play the spoons, while the other dances? Or you can have a 'spoon-off' between TA's
- The leader will run the music and kids can play the spoons to the music.

LE HOCKEY/ HOCKEY SHOOT-OUT

- **Materials:** 2 hockey nets, 4 hockey sticks, 2 balls, 2 pylons, score charts, wait line (masking tape), KFC man
- Have your kids line up at one pylon. There will be two TA's at this station.
- Leaders will be score-keepers and ball retrievers
- First players will take a shot (or two) from the pylon, then pass their stick to the next in line. Points will be awarded for goals as marked.
- Continue in relay style until all have gone through, compare scores

You may choose to do boys versus girls and mix up the TA's

INDOOR FOOSEBALL

- **Materials:** 2 nets, 2 soccer balls, hockey sticks?
- There will be two TA classes at this station. You may choose to have TA's compete or mix up the team.
- Have each team set up in 'fooseball' form: (ie. Teams X and O)

```

                X   O
            O   X   O   X
        X
    X       O   X   O   X       O
        X
            O   X   O   X
                X   O
  
```

- This game is not limited to 11 players per team, but you may decide to have your extras wait at the benches and do a full switch at some time.
- Players **MAY NOT** move forward or backwards, only from side to side. They must hold the end of a hockey stick between two players on a line and not let go during the game.
- The ball will be thrown into play and players must pass to their teammates to get closer to the goal to score.
- Leaders will ref the game and keep score.

Appendix Z

Valentine Trivia Questions.

TA NAME _____

VALENTINE'S TRIVIA QUIZ

(29 Questions for our LEAP year month!)

Answer all questions in the side box provided using any means possible!!!! Good Luck!

QUESTION	ANSWER
1. Does the Date of Valentines ever change? When is it?	
2. Which Patron Saint is Valentines named after?	
3. What does the word Valentine mean?	
4. How did sailors send messages to their loved ones while at sea in the old days?	
5. What fruit is also known as the "love apple"?	
6. Sailors often scratched or carved designs on bone, tusk or wood to give as a love token, this hobby was called?	
7. What is the winged child shooting arrows at unsuspecting Valentines called?	
8. What part of the body must Cupid's arrows hit to be effective?	
9. What is the Greek word for Cupid, God of Love?	
10. Who are Shakespeare's "Star-crossed Lovers"? (first and last names!!!!)	
11. What type of bird symbolizes Valentine's Day?	
12. What happens to someone struck by Cupid's arrow?	
13. Do doves mate for life?	
14. According to English tradition - what happens "to the first man a woman sees on Valentine's Day?"	
15. What flower is most commonly symbolic of Valentine's Day?	
16. What color is the symbol of warmth and feeling?	
17. What color is the symbol of purity and faith?	
18. What year was the first recorded Valentine sent?	
19. Where do you "wear your heart" if you are quick to	
19. Where do you "we	
19. Where do you "we to kiss to turn it into a Prince?	
19. Where do you "we	
19. Where do you "we ol "X" originate and why does it	
19. Where do you "we	
19. Where do you "we when males and females pay for their own meal or entertainment on a date?	
23. In what language does "le Ovele Ouye" mean I Love You?	
24. Who purchases more cards for Valentines Day, men or women?	

25. What percentage of women send themselves flowers for Valentine Day?	
26. Te Amo is I Love you in what 3 languages?	
27. In 1995 the Guinness Book of Records had how many couples kissing simultaneously for the record?	
28. How was the date of Valentines Day chosen? And when was the original date?	
29. Candy given out for Valentines Day began in the 17 th Century from what verse by Shakespeare's Hamlet?	

Answers:

1. No, Feb 14
2. Saint Valentine
3. Sweetheart
4. Bottle
5. Tomato
6. Scrimshaw
7. Cupid
8. Heart
9. Eros
10. Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet
11. Dove
12. Lovesick
13. Yes
14. Marry Him
15. Red Rose
16. Red
17. White
18. 1415
19. Sleeve
20. Frog
21. It dates back to the middle ages, when illiterate people made an "x" and then kissed it in front of 2 or more witnesses to show their sincerity
22. Going Dutch
23. Pig Latin
24. Men
25. 15%
26. Italian, Latin, Spanish
27. 1500
28. Romans believed it was the start of Spring and Fertility and was celebrated as 2-15, but with Feb having 28 days, it was changed to the true centre of the month 2-14
29. "Sweets to the Sweet"

Appendix AA

Text Message Mania

TA Teacher Name: _____

TEXT MESSAGE MANIA

For a chance to win a fabulous prize for yourself

complete the following tasks!

(you can use TA students for assistance BUT NO COMPUTER)

For each of the text message acronyms below write the correct or reasonably accurate meaning

1. BEG: _____
2. MYOB: Mind Your Own Business
3. L\$MBLE: _____
4. OH LIGAD: _____
5. QI: cutie
6. ROFL: roll on floor laughing
7. OTOH: _____
8. TTTT: _____
9. UOMBI: _____
10. W.E: Weekend
11. SWAK: _____
12. WDYF: What do you think
13. WIG: _____
14. TFFT: _____
15. TIX: Thanks
16. YGIBKM: _____