

PERSONAL LEARNING PLAN – WALO 2

It has been a week since school has broken up for the summer holidays and I have had the opportunity to reflect and relax before writing my second WALO. It has been a challenging last month of teaching with year 12 students finishing off making sure they had completed all of their tasks for assessment. Then I had the year 11's and 10's to focus on, admittedly I had put their needs on the back burner a bit because of the 12's, and finally once they had gone it left me with just my middle school students (year 8 and 9's). I was very aware and a little sad that this would be the last time I teach middle school students for at least two years because next year all teachers at MOC will teach in only one sub school. Adding to the pressure a little more was the moving of my Art room. The school is overflowing with students and space is at a premium and because I am teaching in the smallest sub school (seniors) and not a core subject I have to make way for large middle school classes that are core subjects that must meet the Australian curriculum. The specialised space that I had worked very hard on to set up over the last two years is now gone. I am told not to be precious and no one owns classrooms or space but it is still hard to let go. However, after a week of rest and thinking I now realise that this is my Wicked Awesome Learning Opportunity.

I have moved over the other side of the school to building 11, which is the senior years building and yes it is small and not purpose built but it will do. The great thing about it is that I am now no longer hidden away in an area that very few people see and doesn't allow me to collaborate with other teachers in the senior years. Now the Art classroom is front and centre when you walk into the building and is surrounded by Maths, Science, SOSE and English classes. It reminds me of Jeff's Art room at High Tech High, I really felt it his room was the heart of the building with all of the art projects displayed throughout the building not hidden away.

Since coming back from HTH I have presented several times to colleagues about what we can do differently at our school and the response from the majority has been positive and exciting. I presented how to write project overviews and why we should adopt the HTH way at a PD day. Within weeks I had approximately five teachers send me a project overview for year 10 classes. The teachers wanted to talk to me individually and wanted my opinion and guidance. It was great but it was hard to catch up and see each other. Now I am there and even though I have only been in my new room for a few days the drop ins' and conversations I have had would never have happened if I was in the old room. I feel as though I am able to be more of a leader and collaborate much more successfully in my new space.

All senior teachers have been put into teams of three to implement project-based learning throughout year 10 classes in 2013. By being in the same space and having easy access to each other already we are developing projects that cover the Australian curriculum and are more relevant and exciting not only for the students to learn but also for the teachers to teach. My buddies in my teaching team are older and much more experienced than myself and sometimes I think do they really want me telling them we need to change but it's not like that at all. They are excited and one of them said "I'm excited and feel rejuvenated to teach in a different way (he also said my excitement was infectious which I'm chuffed about)." My other buddy is so enthusiastic to actually teach what she is passionate about and to share her knowledge not just with her students but with us as well.

As I now think about my Leading Schools Projects I am coming up with some fierce wonderings. Probably the first is how can we keep the momentum going for the whole of 2013 and deal with people that are still not convinced about PBL. There are some teachers that were on board but now think leadership have not given us enough time to prepare. They have now become closed minded about PBL are stuck the issue of time and not moving forward. This makes meeting up and discussing projects difficult because it is the only issue they want to talk about and focus on.

My final fierce wondering is emerging more and more in my thinking and that is have I bitten off more than I can chew? My whole year 10 curriculum next year is PBL and I am working with 3 different teachers on three different projects one after the other. I think I can do it but is it too much, am I over excited? I hope I can accomplish the three and have successful outcomes for the students and the school.