

Parent Forum – 16 March 2016

“Most Likely to Succeed”

What did participants find interesting about the film?

- How can we as parents and school help our children develop ‘soft skills’?
- How we (parents/society) indoctrinate our children with our beliefs. Go to school to “ace the test” to get into college, to get a job, to buy a house, be happy in life the way we did it!
- Set right framework from the start.
- Te Whariki – ECE curriculum is high tech, high for under 5.
- The balance of what we ‘value’ with what society, community and/or high schools value.
- At CGS there seems to be no computer based learning evident. Team sports/activities important.
- Inclination to underestimate change. That an approach which delivers those outcomes isn’t more common.
- Teachers sitting back and letting students take the lead.
- Teachers are facilitators and coaches.
- How is Unlimited School performing? Same model as HTH?
- If world is going to be technology dominated should computer engineering be a common subject?
- Noise?
- Assessment method (Exhibition) was interesting.
- Results of unstructured learning are not at scale yet.
- The enthusiasm and passion of the teachers.
- Problem solving – learning for life and practical skills.
- Exam test was better than traditional schools.
- How strongly additional teaching/learning methods are instilled in parents.
- Hearing the statistics for information retention following a short break.

- Life as a series of projects.
- Passion which it created for learning.
- Children seem engaged.
- Change/growth in students.
- To see how passionate and engaged the students were! All seemed to spend time, energy etc to work on their projects. All self- motivated.
- Teaching styles.
- Environment.
- “Make”, create to share.

What were the pluses you saw in this different approach?

- Collaboration, perseverance, grit.
- Teachers interested in each child’s learning style.
- Never give up attitude.
- Soft skills – collaborate, resilience.
- Depth of learning.
- CGS is brave enough to question the status quo.
- Risk taking questioning encouraged.
- Thought provoking soft skills – how to teach – demonstrated by the way the kids performed at the exhibition.
- Perseverance shown by students to complete projects – maturity and confidence.
- Learning driving a school rather than a timetable.
- Learn self-esteem.
- Development of social skills.
- Teachers’ creative, positive environment.
- Realizing what is most looked for in potential employees.
- Keeping children engaged and curious.
- The HTH model becomes a talent magnet.
- Recognizing that ‘soft skills’ are important.

- Project outcome is important – real life!
- Independent thinking.
- Soft skills more valuable than intellect.
- Failure OK.
- Ken Robinson.
- Harnesses natural ability of child.
- All children valued – fostering belief, passion, positive.
- Self-reflection based on real outcomes with their peers.
- Engaged in the learning process.
- If everyone is having fun the learning is wider and deeper.
- Teamwork and engagement.
- Independence of students solving their own problems.
- Taking responsibility of their own learning.
- More future problem solvers.
- By engaging in topics more of interest, the students better persisted even when the task was hard.
- Greater regard for students and what they have to offer.
- Developing team skills.
- Exhibition – public celebration of learning.
- Critical for 21st Century Learning
 - Inquiry
 - Creativity
 - Critical Thinking
 - Collaboration
 - Resilience
 - Co-operation
 - Passion for Learning

What were the minuses of the approach used in the film?

- The challenge of getting parents to let go of traditional teaching methods (what we are familiar with).
- Calibre of teacher?
- Finding teachers with passion for subject and facilitating learning in others is a potential challenge.
- What about the children who do not engage?
- What happens to the quiet children?
- With teams some individuals can “hide” behind stronger team members.
- We are all conservative – what if it doesn’t work?
- Need to influence secondary schools in Christchurch.
- The challenge of delivering those outcomes within CGS – barriers to change.
- A student can get lost in the process and by nature can relax their purpose.
- Less academic content.
- What about developing skills your child doesn’t have?
- Still focused on college entrance even though at start 50% would not get a suitable job.
- Rules based personalities may struggle with “lack of routine”.
- Noise levels can cause noise sensitive students to feel lost and ‘out of control’. How to achieve such a reality in the broader context of a NZ curriculum and Ministry “expectations”?
- Time constraint.
- Children want to know how they did – hard to quantify results.
- Suggesting that academic skills are not so important – they are!
- Risk for your child if concept doesn’t work.
- Some learning could be lost. Maybe a narrower field of learning?
- Need to learn the 3 R’s to some extent to correct spell check to have some idea of the answer to a mathematical problem.

- Less focus on the basic skills which may be required for project style learning e.g. you need to be able to read to Google info, or know basic math to solve many problems. The basics would still be essential at Primary level.
- Teachers all “on board”.
- Authentic purpose.
- Make to share.
- Leaders, teams, roles of learners.
- Maturity of pupils? A complex variable.

What might this mean for Cathedral Grammar?

- CGS works well. Do not mess with it too much.
- What potential is there for teachers to train in and implement these methods at Grammar?
- Focus teamwork, problem solving, collaboration.
- Look at removing marks off school reports. Allows comments/effort to be full focus.
- Prize giving – no prizes only effort.
- How do we combine the traditional academic learning with the more holistic project style learning? How can we get the best of both to create the most rounded children?
- I like CGS servant leader concept. I have learnt a lot from watching the children this.
- I would like to see CGS adopt project based learning into our current study. For example in 6B the boys are doing a Lit study. I would like to see the last question that they had to answer actually be create a new ending to the story - either use video, write a script, role play, act it out, film it. Do whatever you like to create a new ending.