



# Dennis-Yarmouth RSD

## Instruction Office Newsletter

### *Bring Excitement into Any Lesson*

There is a marked distinction between teachers who seek merely to entertain and those who actually engage, just as there is a difference between teachers who cater to rather than captivate kids. Our ultimate goal as facilitators is for our students to be fully committed to academic pursuits that mean something to them personally and move them profoundly.

By adding one or more of the following engagement techniques—the 10 Cs, I call them—teachers of all grade levels and subject areas can refashion any lesson into an exciting, enriching educational experience for all. Best of all, infusing your classroom with both wonder and worth always enhances your quality and depth of instruction. Cultivating student involvement doesn't entail compromise or invite complacency, so use these strategies liberally and often.



### Engagement Through Empowerment

**1. Curiosity:** Tap into the natural inquisitiveness of children through the use of intrigue, prediction, and **INQUIRY**. Allowing students to create their own questions based on careful analysis and thoughtful inference puts them in charge of their learning. To add a deeper layer of scholarship and ownership, require students to employ evidence and explanation in order to find answers to their own and their classmates' questions.

**2. Choice:** Students feel valued when given a degree of control over their education and respond positively

*Continued on page 2*



## February 2017

## Volume 4, Issue 6

### IMPORTANT DATES

February 2<sup>nd</sup>  
February 7<sup>th</sup>  
February 9<sup>th</sup>  
February 12<sup>th</sup>

**February 13<sup>th</sup>**

February 14<sup>th</sup>  
**February 20<sup>th</sup>**

**February 20<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>**  
February 22<sup>nd</sup>

Ground Hog Day  
Early Release Day  
Early Release Day  
Abraham Lincoln's Birthday  
**100<sup>th</sup> Day of School**  
Valentine's Day  
**President's Day Holiday**  
**School Vacation Week**  
George Washington's Birthday



### IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Central office is a **fragrance-free zone** so please be respectful and plan accordingly when you visit.

**D**ue to one of our members at the CO being highly sensitive to any type of fragrance, we ask that staff visiting/meeting at the Administration building refrain from using any scented products. Fragrances from personal care products, air fresheners, laundry and other cleaning products have been associated with adversely affecting a person's health. We ask that we all work together to make the environment a safe and healthy workplace for everyone.



Thank you very much for your cooperation!





*Continued from page 1*

when elements of autonomy are incorporated into class activities. Kids greet the simplest either/or opportunities with enthusiasm, but facilitators can capitalize on this by occasionally offering menus of choices so students can decide how to approach or show off their learning.

**3. Creativity:** Choice is not just being given the authority to decide between one thing and the other. Investment and authenticity are also enhanced when students are encouraged to express themselves organically and with originality. Move students from being passive consumers of information to active creators by welcoming their ingenuity and imagination.

**4. Construction:** Project- or problem-based learning forms purpose and practicality for students who naturally crave meaning and hands-on participation. When students create, build, or solve something personally impactful, the buy-in is palpable. These grand, ongoing projects also establish a through line of anticipation, significance, and commitment that keeps students eagerly coming back for more.



## Engagement Through Community

**5. Collaboration:** Working together toward a common goal is invigorating, advantageous, and enlightening. Whether this collaboration is done among pairs of students, small groups, or the entire class, do not settle for mere cooperation. True collaboration necessitates at least two people working closely on a particularly challenging or complex task. If most students can readily accomplish an assignment individually, do not designate that particular task as collaborative.

**6. Camaraderie:** The esprit de corps that fascinating facilitators engender in their students must not be underestimated. A sense of belonging, essential contribution, common mission, and mutual celebration transforms what could be an isolating school experience into one filled with rapport and relationships.



## Engagement Through Expertise

**7. Controversy:** Students spontaneously respond to pointed, provocative comments and ideas. They love to add their two cents, especially where issues of justice, equity, and freedom are concerned. Work to elevate your students' impassioned reactions, particularly when those responses are uninformed, into eloquent expressions of opinion and insight. Teach your students respectful debate skills and awaken within them the fire of self-expression.

**8. Critique:** When specifically asking students for their judgment, the intent is not for them to merely tear things apart and criticize but to expose both the strengths and weaknesses of what is being critiqued. Practice with this type of analysis also prepares students to evaluate their own work, as well as that of their peers, with increasing balance and clarity.

**9. Commentary:** Every child likes to feel smart, necessary, and listened to. Giving students voice entails providing the encouragement and support that increase confidence. Add the skills of articulation and explication, and kids increasingly open up to share their pertinent, personal ideas and experiences. If you want your students to talk and write like experts, then train and treat them like experts.

**10. Critical thinking:** Take students beyond what they already know, believe, can do, or think they are interested in. Also take students below the surface to explore and discover new insights and connections to what they previously knew or believed. Finally, take students back inward to reflect on their prior assumptions and to think critically about what they have read or been told. These opportunities for astute analysis ignite the inner scholar that resides in every child.

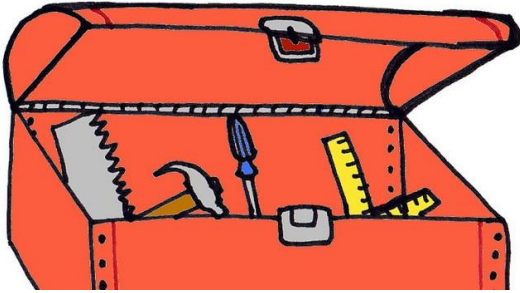
These 10 avenues of self-expression are potent ways to augment student achievement. Therefore, every teacher's investment in student engagement matters. And this makes school meaningful—which only inspires further student investment.





## 5 Tools to Help Students Learn How to Learn

By [Katrina Schwartz](#) March 20, 2013



Helping students learn how to learn: That's what most educators strive for, and that's the goal of [inquiry learning](#). That skill transfers to other academic subject areas and even to the workplace where employers have consistently said that [they want creative, innovative and adaptive thinkers](#). Inquiry learning is an integrated approach that includes kinds of learning: content, literacy, information literacy, learning how to learn, and social or collaborative skills. Students think about the choices they make throughout the process and the way they feel as they learn. Those observations are as important as the content they learn or the projects they create.

"We want students thinking about their thinking," said [Leslie Maniotes](#) a teacher effectiveness coach in the Denver Public Schools and one of the authors of [Guided Inquiry: Learning in the 21st Century](#). "We want them reflecting on the process and the content." Inquiry learning works best on longer, deep dive projects when students have to create something of their own out of what they've found.

**"When they are able to see where they came from and where they got to it is very powerful for them."**

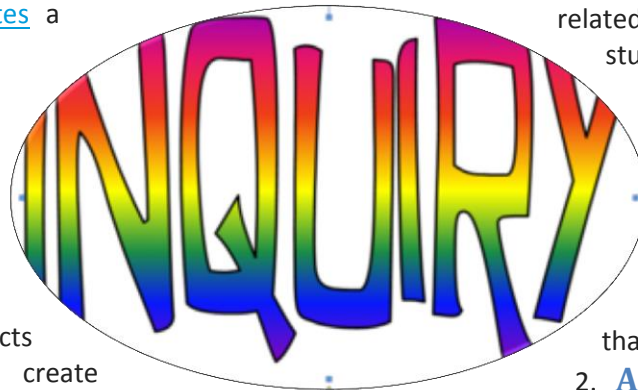
A good example is a long term [research project](#). There are several common stages in longer projects and researchers have studied how students feel, think and act around the different stages. Students initiate the

project, select a topic, explore it further, begin to formulate an approach, collect specific materials relevant to a focus and finally present on their findings. During the process, students will go through different stages of emotions. They might feel uncertainty as they begin, optimism when they select a project, then confusion or frustration when they've gathered a lot of information and don't know where to go with it. As they begin to sift through the information, they gain a sense of clarity and direction and begin formulating and executing the project. By the end of the process, they'll have a sense of satisfaction or disappointment on the outcome of their presentation.

[Understanding how students may feel](#) as they move through the stages of inquiry offers educators the opportunity to intervene at critical moments when frustration threatens to derail them. [Research shows](#) that letting students spend longer time exploring a topic before choosing helps them choose something worthy of inquiry. "Jumping right into identifying a question leads to low level learning," said Maniotes. She offers specific and simple tools to help guide the inquiry learning process.

### FIVE TOOLS TO GUIDE INQUIRY LEARNING

1. **An Inquiry Community** is the class itself. Each member is exploring a topic related to the same class unit and students can help one another clarify ideas. "All of this is set within the social context of an inquiry community," said Maniotes. "We value that community and we're using all these other tools to inform the level of conversation we might have within that community."
2. **An Inquiry Circle** is a small group where students can talk to one another around a specific topic that fits within the umbrella of the broader class unit. Inquiry circles are a place for students to talk out all their wild ideas and work best when instructors leave them alone.
3. **The Inquiry Journal** is one of the most powerful tools in the inquiry learning repertoire and should be utilized throughout the process. It's a place for students to reflect on both the process and the content they





discover as they go along. It's important to emphasize to students that the journals should be used to reflect on how he or she learns best and what feelings come up at different points in the process. It's meant to give them a moment to stop and think about what they've read and why it's important. The journal can also be a good bridge between the student and instructor.

4. **The Inquiry Log** helps students to keep track of the learning journey and every choice, change in direction or exciting moment along the way. "When they are able to see where they came from and where they got to it is very powerful for them," said Maniotes.
5. **The Inquiry Chart** is a great tool to help students identify a central question. They can chart, brainstorm and map their ideas in many ways. Getting them down on paper can help visualize what areas of research are well fleshed out and would make good focus points and which are tangential. Part of inquiry learning is teaching students how to make good academic decisions on resources and content, as well as recognizing when persistence is needed to dig deeper.

Taken together these five tools, which are deceptively simple, can give students the

experience of deeper inquiry, insight into their own learning habits and preferences, as well as the experience of

working through emotions that arise during the

process. All these experiences help them to encounter the next challenge effectively, even when not being asked to follow a rigid process.

Inquiry learning should also be a social and language-based process. "Inquiry tools support English language use," said Maniotes. "Students are able to use authentic language and they are constantly speaking, reading, writing, and viewing throughout the process." It also helps to set clear expectations for the project and to routinely use the tools so students recognize their function. When instructors reflect on how the tools are used at various points, modeling meta-



cognitive processing about how the tools support the inquiry process, students do more of that too. "If students hear that kind of talk then they know how to do it themselves," said Maniotes.

The tools also give instructors a way to assess student learning along the way. This type of formative assessment gives teachers a chance to intervene and shape the inquiry process or offer encouragement. The journal and log especially tell a teacher a lot about the process each student went through to arrive at a final presentation, offering far more data points for assessment.



## The Dolphin Way

In 2014, Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District decided to embrace the systemic framework of **P**ositive **B**ehavior **I**nterventions and **S**upports (**PBIS**) in order to establish district and school-wide expectations for social and academic behavior. Teams were formed at each building and were provided with a 3-day intensive training with experts from the May Institute on how to implement the structures necessary to ensure this initiative's success. Our work included defining those positive school-wide expectations for all areas of the school, creating an acknowledgement system for recognizing positive behavior, providing lesson plans for explicit instruction of these expectations, arranging consistent consequences for problem behavior, and using ongoing data collection for decision-making. Each building team is led by a coach whose primary function is to positively promote, shape, and reinforce the team's progress and products both within the school and at the district level. Yearly training continues for





the teams as we continue to move toward 100% fidelity in implementation by providing all staff with the necessary support and resources.

Recently the district team, consisting of the coaches from each building and myself, decided to move from referring to this initiative as “PBIS” to the more unifying “**The Dolphin Way**”. We believe that this more accurately describes the efforts to truly make this D-Y’s own and not something imposed upon us. Stay tuned for more information on how you and your students can become involved.

**Please take a few moments to read about how the Dolphin Way is unfolding in each of our schools this year.**



## EHBi

Ezra H. Baker Elementary Innovation School launched our **PBIS** efforts this year with an all-staff workshop on August 30<sup>th</sup>. This allowed valuable time for classroom, special education and related arts teachers, specialists and assistants to gather and review the previous year’s discipline data, update **PBIS** classroom and playground lessons and discuss ways to improve our lunch & recess process. As a staff, we reviewed



monthly discipline data, paying particular attention to incidents of physical aggression and physical contact. As we neared the end of December, our **PBIS** Committee planned numerous activities to re-launch “**The Dolphin Way**” beginning in January. Every classroom and learning space dedicated Morning Meeting time the week of January 4 – 6<sup>th</sup> to reteach “**The Dolphin Way**” of Being Respectful, Responsible and Caring, with a focus on Safe Body. We held an All-School meeting led by our Student Wellness Committee to reinforce “**The Dolphin Way**” and build enthusiasm within the school community. We dedicated a bulletin board space in our cafeteria to reinforce “**The Dolphin Way**” and provide a space for students and staff to make suggestions on how to improve our lunch and recess process. We issued the “**The Dolphin Way** Mannequin Challenge” as a culminating activity to the classroom discussions. As a way to review what students have been talking about with regards to “**The Dolphin Way**” classrooms think of “poses” that show examples of Being Respectful, Responsible and Caring (*i.e., students may “pose” using walking feet, giving personal space, doing a 5-finger breath, listening to their teacher, trying their best work at their desk, etc.*). To date, 12 classrooms have taken the Mannequin Challenge and been filmed. These videos will soon appear on our school website and viewed during upcoming Morning Meetings as a way to continue reinforcing “**The Dolphin Way**” at Ezra H. Baker Elementary Innovation School.



## NHWi





Nathaniel H. Wixon Innovation School Core Values:

## "The Dolphin Way"

Be Responsible

Be Respectful

Be Kind

Be Safe

At Nathaniel H. Wixon Innovation School, we believe in recognizing students who are acting like dolphins and demonstrating our core values. Students and staff are nominated for exhibiting our core values. Nominations forms are located throughout the building in classrooms and common areas. Forms are filled out and put in the nomination box, located across from the main office.

**PBIS** staff members take the nominations and choose one that really sticks out. That person's name is then put on a laminated dolphin and tacked to the "Welcome to Wixon Board" at the entrance of the school. Nominees are also recognized during morning announcements and nomination forms are hand delivered to the students in their classes. Students then take them home to show their families and some teachers also make copies and hang them up in the classroom

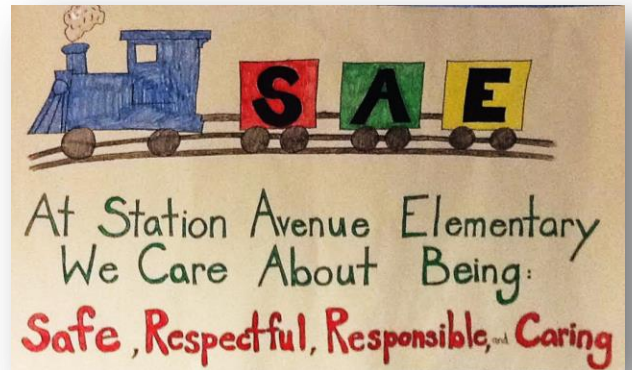


## MES

M. E. Small Elementary School has been showing **The Dolphin Way** by using the MES 5. When the students are observed being respectful, responsible, ready, caring, or safe, they receive a color coded bead for their necklace. When they have 20 beads on their necklace, they get a special 20 charm and their picture on a 20 bead bulletin board.



Before December vacation, we put out a challenge for the students. If we got 50 pictures on the bulletin board, we would have an all school pajama day. Students were seen counting the pictures every day and working hard using the MES 5. There were over 60 pictures on the board before vacation and we all enjoyed an all school pajama day.



## SAE

**The Dolphin Way** at Station Avenue Elementary School is to verbally acknowledge positive behaviors across all areas of the school using consistent language from all staff members. At Station Avenue Elementary, we care about being Safe, Respectful, Responsible and Caring. This year credit goes to our recess and lunch teachers for implementing management strategies that mirror our classroom teachers practice, and developing engaging acknowledgement systems, including preferred seating and lunch with Principal Crowell!





## MMS

Mattacheese Middle School is *SHOUTING out* to the new **The Dolphin Way**! Starting in December, MMS adopted the term “**The Dolphin Way**” for our school-wide system of supports. Our acknowledgement system (also known as “shout-outs”), acknowledges students for being Respectful, Responsible, and Resourceful. The shout-outs are collected and displayed in advisories. Banners displaying “**The Dolphin Way**” show our support and dedication to our school-wide expectations of being Respectful, Responsible, and Resourceful Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District students. With small groupings of students in our advisories, a display provides a visual reminder of our students’ accomplishments as we continue to build strong relationships among our MMS community. On average, we acknowledge 10-12 students per day over the morning announcements. Students receive shout-outs in their classrooms, in the hallways, cafeteria, and auditorium. Our staff is dedicated to providing positive praise to students while growing a positive community for our learners.

As of January 2017, our students have been acknowledged **781** times and counting!

## DYH

**The Dolphin Way** team at DYRHS has made some exciting moves forward in our process of implementation. First, we had a new member recently join our team. Evan Botting is a new math teacher this year, but comes from a school that had fully implemented tier 1, and was in the process on implementing tier 2. We are excited to have his experience and perspective.

We also just implemented our first system of recognition. These “Dolphin Shout-Outs” are awarded by all staff members in the building to students who are consistently exhibiting our behavior expectations. We are asking each person in the building to award one “Shout-out” per week. We just rolled this out to the staff and have seen a good response so far.

**DOLPHIN SHOUTOUT**

is recognized by ... \_\_\_\_\_  
for showing the Dolphin Way by ... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Be Here · Be Responsible · Be Respectful** HR Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Be Here · Be Responsible · Be Respectful HR Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

