Final Transcript – Ottawa Clip P5

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS AS PARTNERS IN ASSESSMENT

Narrator: For students, assessment and evaluation can be a positive and motivating learning process, or it can be a negative experience that causes them to give up on their learning efforts. When teachers collaborate with students as partners in learning**,** students take an active role in their learning. Their view of assessment is transformed, from seeing it solely as the teacher's way to determine what has been learned, to using assessment as a way for themselves to learn.

Lisa: They're so much more involved…there's a real change in their understanding of their job here at school. And of what my job is.

Narrator: What does a collaborative learning partnership look like? Students understand what they are to learn, why they are learning it, and how the new learning connects to what they already know and understand.

Stephanie: Well, first of all, when I start a unit, there's a lot of different ways of doing that, you could show them the expectations and they could unpack it like that, they could put it into language that they understand and therefore, then they know what they have to do.

Lisa: So once we unpack the curriculum together, and they understand what the learning goals are, then together we create the success criteria.

Narrator: Students understand how the tasks they do support their progress on the learning goals.

Lisa: So we want them to recognize that they're learning through these tasks…

Stephanie: The whole point is that then they realize at the end of the unit, when they go back to that, they know, they can actually say "yes, I have accomplished all of that". And they do realize what they're learning. And they realize that the things we do in class have a point, and they have a reason that we're doing them. We're always referring back to the success criteria and the learning goals, so they understand that every day, we are learning something about those learning goals.

Narrator: Students contribute to decisions about the design of the tasks they will do to learn and to show their learning.

Lisa: One of the ways to get the students excited about learning, to make them aware that this is a learning process, is to involve them in the planning. And that's really exciting for them because they get to provide their suggestions; they let me know what they learned last year and how they did it. And so that means that they'll give suggestions on materials that we can use and activities we can do. They're all things that they enjoy and have maybe used in the past so they have some knowledge of it already. So they're kind of going in there with some confidence, some genuine interest, and because I'm giving them the opportunity to give me their ideas, they feel like this is their plan.

Stephanie: A student might have an idea, you have those students who will come to you and say: "Why don't I do this? Can I do this, can I show you my learning this way?".

Lisa: So what I was thinking is this would be a good time for us to start planning some of the learning centres that you're going to be doing. These learning centres would give you guys a really great opportunity to continue learning more about 3D shapes and to practice using the geometric vocabulary.

Lisa: So we want them to recognize that they're learning through these tasks, and we want them to help us design the learning activities. And if they help us design some of the activities for the math centres, then that gives them a little bit more ownership.

Stephanie: And they'll be able to really see their own learning through those.

Lisa: I need you guys to help me decide what you're going to do with those learning centres so that you can show me what you've learned. So when you're using those centres, you're going to be talking about the faces on the shapes, you're going to be talking about the edges, the corners, how the shapes can be used and examples of where these 3D shapes, and even 2D shapes, are in real life. And some of the things that we've been using to learn about our 3D shapes and our 2D shapes are the geoboards. If we were to use the geoboards at a math learning centre, how could you show me that you're learning about shapes using those geoboards? Joshua?

Joshua: We can make 2D shapes.

Lisa: I'm going to write that down. I can make 2D shapes using the geoboards.
What else can you do using the geoboards? Rachel?

Rachel: You can challenge your partner to make an irregular 2D shape.

Lisa: I love it. So today what we're going to do, is we are going to use our learning centres. We're going to start using our learning centres and I just wanted to show you one thing: I took all the ideas you gave me, all the ideas you gave me for the geoboard centre, for the structures and art centre – I took all those ideas …and I typed them up for you. And this is going to go with each of the centres, and it's all your "I Can" statements. These are the ideas that are going to help you learn about the shapes.

Narrator: Students contribute to decisions about how they show their learning.

Stephanie: We could have challenges where we take expectations out of the curriculum and write them down, and when they feel that they're ready to be able to accomplish that, they can come find us. And they can, they can attempt to show us their learning by doing that. For example, if it's simply naming a number of 2D shapes, that they could show us where the 2D shapes are and explain that.

Lisa: Oh, I like that idea. We can leave it up to the students to decide how they're going to show their knowledge with those challenges.

Stephanie: Speaking of the final task, how do we want to-- how do we want that to look when we present it to the class? Or do we want the class to come up with their own ideas based on the learning goals?

Lisa: I think at that point, they're going to have a lot of knowledge about 2D shapes and 3D shapes. And because they've been planning so many of their learning activities up to that point, why not give them the opportunity to have some input in developing that final task too. So instead of telling them that they're going to create a specific structure, why don't we give them the options?

Stephanie: Absolutely. We can have them come up with the options.

Lisa: I think that'd be great.

Stephanie: Excellent. They take ownership for it, they are responsible for their own learning goals within that structure, and they should be able to explain to us why they've chosen those particular shapes and those particular materials to create that particular structure.

Lisa: And it just makes the activity so much more meaningful to them.

Stephanie And they can choose which structure they'd like to build. And that way, they're motivated to create a structure that they like and they take ownership of.

Lisa: A huge difference is the motivation that I see in the students, the excitement I see in the students, and the ownership to the learning. They're helping me plan the evaluation activities. I think it makes them feel motivated to do their best, but also quite confident, because they know right from the beginning what they're going to have to do to show that they've learned. And so, they've always got that in the back of their mind when they're doing the learning centres, when they're doing final products. So they're thinking about what vocabulary they're using and they're practicing. So I think that, knowing right from the beginning, and knowing that they've played a role in the planning, gives them a lot of confidence and is very motivating to them.

Stephanie: I notice a difference in my students when they know what is expected of them because it creates ownership and they become accountable to it. It's less about me teaching, imparting the knowledge, and more about them having it make meaning to themselves. It creates a pride where they can actually remember the time when they started and say "I learned that. I learned that. I wasn't told it. I wasn't given it. I learned it. It's mine". And that's a huge source of pride for them.