

Message from the Principal



Happy May!

I cannot believe we have only two short months until summer break – we still have so much work to do! May and June are going to be busy months with field trips, final assessments, and Provincial Achievement Tests for grade 6, also known as PATs.

If you have, or have had, a grade 6 student you probably are familiar with PATs, but even if not, it affects all our kids, K-6. There is a lot of pressure to prepare kids for PATs every year, not just in grade 6 but in all the years leading up to grade 6 (BTW, PATs will happen again when your child is in grade 9). Teachers spend quite a bit of time analyzing data around PATs in order to celebrate what we do well, and to improve.

It got me to musing, however, about the dangers of focusing too much on data – what harm can there be? Research implies that while data can help inform teachers' instruction, too much focus on data and results can be detrimental to school culture and to the students.

My two biggest concerns about focusing too much on data are:

1. Causing students, and let's face it – parents, a lot of unneeded anxiety; and
2. Missing what data can't measure.

I can assure you we take the PAT results very seriously, but I can also assure you with great confidence, that it is balanced very solidly with DDS Staff seeing your child as the wonderful and unique person he or she is – not as a number, or a grade, or a percentage, but as a kind, unique human being.

Yes we want our kids to find success, and a part of that includes data, grades, and percentages. **HOWEVER**, the most important part to us at DDS, is developing your child, in partnership with you, to create kind, caring, resilient adults who will make a difference in the world - however that looks.

As always, pop by to see me if you have any questions or concerns about anything to do with your child and his or her education.

Best regards,

Ms. Rogerson

