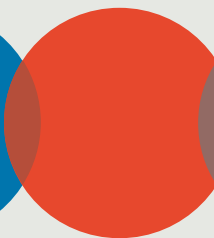
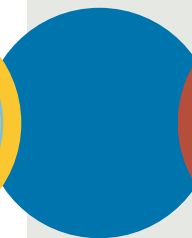
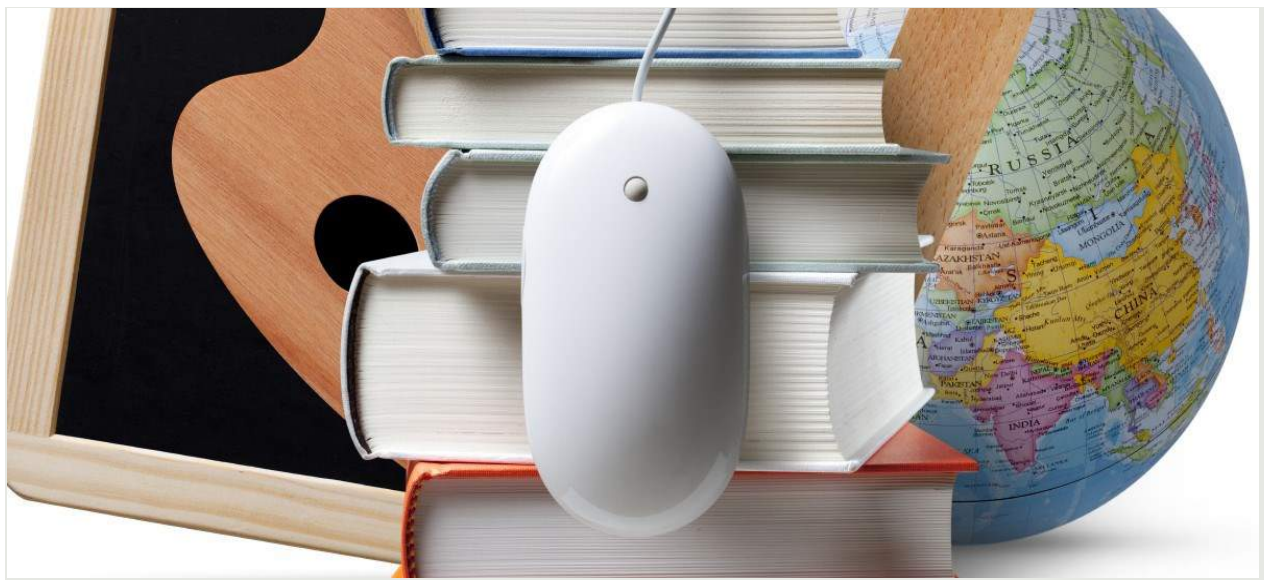


A monthly
newsletter
filled with practical,
research-based
articles for K-12
educators across the
North American
Division



the crae Connection

A Note from the Editor

During my work at a boarding academy, the most common complaint I heard from students was about the cafeteria food. The food was too greasy, too plain, too dry, too *unlike Mom's* cooking, the students would mutter. And why was it always the same? And despite the large rotation of meals that was kept, the students would often groan when they saw the meal being served and make up their own hashtag – #CorndogMonday or #HaystacksWednesday or #PizzaFriday.

Finally, one of the cafeteria staff came up with an idea. They put a suggestion box out at the front of the cafeteria lobby and announced that they'd try to incorporate any meals that the students submitted.



The students were thrilled. Finally, they huffed, they would get some *real* food. They stuffed that box full of ideas, with meals that ran the gamut from the traditional to the exotic. I thought this was a great experiment and applauded the cafeteria staff for being open to suggestions and willing to work with the students' tastes and wishes. We all were eager to see which meal the cafeteria would incorporate first.

The cafeteria wasted no time. By the following week, they'd put their plan into action. The students bounded into my room excitedly that afternoon. "Guess what!" they exclaimed breathlessly. "We had THE BEST LUNCH today!" The café had indeed followed through and the students were simply beside themselves with how *delicious* and *amazing* and *fantastic* the meal was. Eager to know what the first implemented suggestion had been, I asked, "So – what was it? What did they serve?" Their answers all tumbled over each other: "Beans over chips!" "Salsa and guacamole mixed in!" "Cheese and rice and chips! Oh, those chips!" One student proclaimed proudly, "It was my idea, my favorite dish – the Chipotle Bowl!" (a dish from the popular Southwest-based chain with eateries sprinkled across the country) "Hold on," I said slowly. "Are you telling me you had...haystacks?"

Silence.

I've giggled about that a lot since then – how our clever cafeteria staff satisfied a couple hundred teenagers simply by renaming a meal.

Branding is a powerful thing, isn't it? It's why there are degrees in advertising, courses about brand development and careers built on constructing sellable, marketable images of people and things.

In this month's issue of the *CRAE Connection*, we are going to approach this idea of branding from a few different angles. In *The Chalkboard*, we are going to discuss our images as teachers and our various styles of teaching. In the *Locker Room*, we'll explore the idea of failure – how we can help our students learn from their mistakes and face their failures without letting it affect their image of self. And finally, at *The Desk*, we'll study a completely different side of branding in education – the image of our campus.

Happy March! – Here's to enjoying Spring Break and eating haystacks Chipotle bowls!

THE BULLETIN BOARD

pg 4

THE CHALKBOARD

"Teaching Style: What's Your Brand?"

pg 2

THE LOCKER ROOM

"Helping Students Fail...Successfully"

pg 5

THE DESK

"What's your Brand?"

pg 3

CRAE UPDATE

pg 6



The Chalkboard: notes for the elementary educator

Teaching Style: What's Your Brand?

In college, we learn a lot about our future students' learning styles. "Assign a lot of small group projects," the professors remind us. "You want to especially engage those social butterflies in your class."

"Don't spend too much time lecturing; you'll lose the visual learners."

"Have you considered the flipped classroom? It works so well with your auditory students."

"Remember to take your kids outside for lessons as much as possible! Service projects, nature walks – those things really help the movers and wigglers in your room."

And while it is, of course, important to become attuned to your students' learning styles and to explore different ways of reaching each student, I have seen far too many new teachers try too hard to be too many things. They race from one method to the next, trying on teaching styles like hats, believing that – like a chameleon – they need to change their colors for each student.

But this only works if teachers *first* recognize their teaching style and know how they most successfully, confidently and effectively teach. You must be comfortable in your own skin and be able to clearly articulate your strengths and weaknesses before you can begin adapting your style and exploring other ways of connecting with students.

The Grasha-Reichmann Teaching Style Inventory is a common method used to identify an educator's style. It identifies 5 distinct styles of teaching: expert, formal authority, personal model, facilitator, and delegator. (If you haven't taken this survey, you can do so here <http://www.cgu.edu/pages/8468.asp>)

Besides identifying an official label or formalized style, however, educators could also explore different ways of articulating their style by asking questions such as:

How am I most comfortable teaching? How do I enjoy teaching most? From the front, lecturing? Facilitating small groups?

How do my students describe me as a teacher? Do I *like* their descriptions?

What qualities do my mentors and favorite teachers have in common? What do I admire most about them?

Once you've identified your teaching style – your brand, so to speak – you can begin considering how you currently teach *versus* how you might *like* to teach. Perhaps you are confident of your course knowledge but less certain about the efficacy of your presentation. Or maybe you feel like you work very well in facilitating student interaction but could improve your content delivery in order to be more effective.

Large companies spend millions of dollars and hours of discussion each year on branding research – picking the right colors for their logo, deliberating on the exact font type and size, discussing what message they want to convey. As educators, it might be well to spend just a small portion of that time and energy into our own branding research.



The Locker Room: notes for the academy educator

Helping Students Fail...Successfully

I have a friend who taught kindergarten for many years. On a recent lunch date with her, we were comparing notes about our previous classes and the various angles from which we approached learning and teaching. We got to talking about failing grades and the drastic steps that students sometimes take to hide bad report cards from their parents. She shared with me a key part of her classroom's morning routine that struck me as altogether profound and insightful.

"Every morning," my friend said. "After the Pledge of Allegiance and calendar and hot lunch count and prayer requests, I always ask my students, 'And what are we going to make today?' And – as we've practiced since the first day of school – they all holler back enthusiastically, 'MISTAKES!' And I respond, 'And WHY do we make mistakes?' To which they reply, 'Because that's how we learn!'"

I can't begin to tell you how much I love that – on so many different levels. I love that paradigm of learning. I love how that primes the students to view mistakes. I love that mistakes are seen as normal, everyday occurrences and that they are building blocks and not *stumbling* blocks.

Kindergarteners, though, may more easily be convinced towards this way of thinking. After all, as Robert Fulghum so succinctly puts in his essay, "Yes, I Can!"

Ask a kindergarten class, "How many of you can draw?" and all hands shoot up. Yes, of course we can draw—all of us. What can you draw? Anything! How about a dog eating a fire truck in a jungle? Sure! How big you want it? How many of you can

sing? All hands. Of course we sing! What can you sing? Anything! What if you don't know the words? No problem, we make them up. Let's sing! Now? Why not! How many of you dance? Unanimous again. What kind of music do you like to dance to? Any kind! Let's dance! Now? Sure, why not? Do you like to act in plays? Yes! Do you play musical instruments? Yes! Do you write poetry? Yes! Can you read and write and count? Yes! We're learning that stuff now. Their answer is Yes! Over and over again, Yes! The children are confident in spirit, infinite in resources, and eager to learn. Everything is still possible.

-- from Uh-Oh! (1991)

And yet, what happens by the time those bright-eyed, bushy-tailed six year olds get to high school? Where does that confidence go? How do we as educators continue to perpetuate that environment for our teenagers? At a stage where peer influence is at its peak and most students are so painfully conscious of their shortcomings and inadequacies, how do we even attempt to counter that and redirect them to *embrace* failure?

One of the most discussed studies that has come out in regard to failure and mistakes is Carol Dweck's research on fixed versus growth mindset. In summary, individuals who have a fixed mindset believe that one's success at a hobby or class or assignment is simply because he/she is good at that – an innate ability. The growth mindset allows for exactly that – growth. People with a growth mindset believe that they can improve and progress in any given field and continue to develop their skills and abilities. **Nurturing a growth mindset in our students** may be one

of the greatest contributing factors to their attitude towards mistakes. Research has shown that students with a growth mindset are more motivated to learn because they feel they have the *capacity* to improve. Mistakes are accepted because they are understood as a natural part of learning.

Another important facet to building this environment is intentionally framing your course expectations to **emphasize the journey and not just the destination**. You can encourage your students to value the importance of the process by:

Setting goals for the project that underscore milestones along the way.

Designing the project/assignment so that the terms of success are clear

Making the objectives of the project/assignment relevant and *not* arbitrary.

Continually asking students *about* their failures or mistakes and helping them to figure out how to use that knowledge to improve their next steps

Confronting the typical fears of failure can be a daunting task in and of itself – especially if you struggle with accepting mistakes in your own life! But we'd encourage you to explore some of these ideas and take steps towards teaching your students to embrace mistakes as enthusiastically as those kindergarteners did.

For further reading:

Helping Students Fail Better: <https://www.uco.edu/academic-affairs/cettl/TLGuideFiles/2012-08-tl1.pdf>

The Role of Mistakes in the Classroom: <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/benefits-mistakes-classroom-alina-tugend>



The Desk: notes for the administrator

What's your brand?

“If you were in an elevator and someone asked you to describe your school before the elevator hits the fifteenth floor, could you do it?”

Could you? Could you encapsulate the spirit, the culture, the purpose of your school in 30 seconds or less?

Educational blogger Bill Ziegler posed this question to school administrators on a recent post about the importance of school branding. He – and other writers – have spent an extensive amount of time discussing this issue and there seems to be a general agreement on four distinct questions that are deeply embedded in the concept of a school's brand.

What is your school's story?

What is your school's tagline?

How does your school reflect your brand?

How is your brand communicated?

Story. Each of our schools has its own story, its own reason for being. Public charter schools are

great examples of schools that have a specific niche. Some charter schools focus on the arts; others integrate a huge variety of electives or extracurricular activities. What makes *your* school different from the other private schools in the area? What do you want to be known for?

Tagline. Every business, store, and restaurant has a tagline – your school should, too. Because while some slogans may be trite or clichéd, a well-thought out and well-worded tagline can be hugely effectively in branding your school.

Here are just a sampling of some of our academies' taglines:

- Where Land and Sea Unite to Inspire (Monterey Bay Academy)
- Christ-centered, Character-driven (Portland Adventist Academy)
- Inspired learning, Engaging inquiry, Innovative Instruction (Tampa Adventist Academy)
- Educating for Life and Eternity (Grand Rapids Adventist Academy)
- Learn. Serve. Lead. (Rio Lindo Academy)

Reflect. Would a stranger to your campus see, feel, and hear your brand reflected throughout your school? Are your curriculum, discipline policy, academic expectations, voicemail message, and bulletin boards all cohesive with your brand?

Communication. Your school brand must be widely, effectively, *loudly* to your school family and community. Any of your parents – your best marketers! – should be able to clearly tell their friends about what your school stands for and why they have their children enrolled there. Ideally, your school website, Facebook page, Twitter account and any other channels of social media should all reflect your brand and carry that same coherent message.

Remember – branding isn't about trying to make your school fit into a cute icon. It is about articulating all the fabulous things that already *are* happening on your campus and finding a way to package that message.



The Bulletin Board: *notes for the whole community*

Last month, we asked the **CRAE Connection community**:

“Instead of teaching, this Spring Break, I will be _____!”

Here are a few of the responses we received:

“. . . in Peru with awesome high school students on a mission trip.” – Michelle Coy, 4th grade teacher, Spring Valley Academy

“. . . running a marathon.” – Kate Lewis, high school biology teacher, Loma Linda Academy

“. . . on a Maranatha project with my seniors in the Dominican Republic.” – Janesta Bryant Walker, principal, Hinsdale Adventist Academy

“. . . recruiting and relationship building in China and S. Korea.” -- David Morgan, principal, Blue Mountain Academy

“. . . spending time with my adult children and grandgirls in southern Utah hiking and exploring.” -- Sara Hobbs Willard, 1st and 2nd grade teacher, Summit Christian Academy

Thank you for your responses!

Next month’s question: “Every morning, As soon as I walk into my classroom/office, I _____”



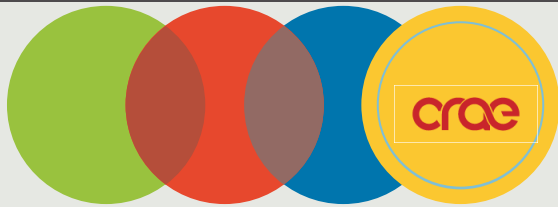
CRAE: keeping you informed

(Editor's Note: Based on recent feedback, we are going to include a small column each month about the goings-on at the Center for Research on K-12 Adventist Education.)

Elissa spent some time out of the office in various Southern California venues including a presentation for San Gabriel Academy's Home and School meeting and NAD Education Taskforce (NADET) meetings in Ontario. As the chair of the NADET, Elissa has been involved with this team of administrators, teachers, and principals since 2014, working diligently to review the state of Adventist education in the NAD, make recommendations, and develop strategies to strengthen our schools.

Our office is pleased to announce that we have a new assistant director! Aimee Saesim Leukert has recently accepted the position and will work closely with director Elissa Kido in this new role. Aimee has several years' of experience in elementary and secondary education as well as school administration. She is currently working on her doctorate at Claremont Graduate University. Aimee began working at CRAE in 2014 and loves the opportunity to champion Adventist education to an even broader community.

When not at work or school, Aimee enjoys being at home with her two young girls and her husband, Kristian, a teacher at Loma Linda Academy.



4500 Riverwalk Pkwy, 951.785.2997
Riverside, Ca 92505 www.crae.lasierra.edu

Brain Blurb

Did you know? A recent study conducted through Michigan State University found that individuals who believe that intelligence is malleable are neurologically tuned to pay more attention to mistakes and, therefore, bounce back from them more quickly. (Moser, 2011)