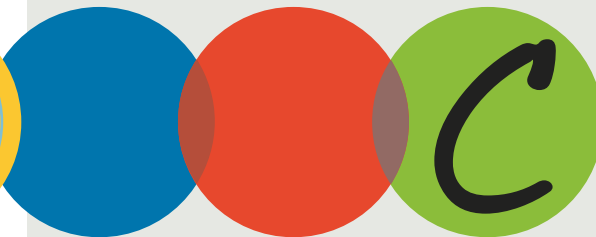


A monthly  
newsletter  
filled with practical,  
research-based  
articles for K-12  
educators across the  
North American  
Division



# the **crae** Connection

## A Note from the Editor

And just like that, we're in the homestretch of the 2015-2016 school year! Where did the time go?

In this last issue before the *Connection* takes its two-month summer hiatus, we wanted to leave you with parting thoughts on **collaboration**. We know that the responsibility of educating children "takes a village" and that we are more effective when we are able to share resources, support and ideas. We hope that some or all of this month's issue resonates with you and perhaps sparks an interest to further explore this topic in the summer months to come.



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At *The Desk* this month, we have another installation of the *Standing on the Shoulders of Giants* series with an interview from Heidi Morehouse. She brings us great insight from a slightly different perspective as an administrator of an online school. At *The Locker Room*, we discuss the importance of teaching students how to collaborate – a skill that is becoming more and more valuable in today's workplace. And finally, in *The Chalkboard*, we bring you some resources for digital collaboration within the classroom – tools that you can easily adapt and use for a variety of lessons and subjects.

Blessings to you *especially* this month, as you wrap up your year and race to squeeze in as much as you can these last few weeks. We thank you for your work this school year – for those late nights grading, for weekends switching out bulletin boards, for coming into work even when you were under the weather because it is *more* work to get a sub, for those difficult conversations you had with parents, for scarfing your lunch down in order to make it out for recess supervision, for participating in Crazy Hair Day and enduring funny looks at the gas station, for shelling out your own money for classroom supplies, and for so much more.

You are the backbone of our educational system, and it is because of you that we, the Center for Research on K-12 Adventist Education, have such confidence in sharing stories of our classrooms and schools with parents everywhere. God has so richly blessed your efforts this year and for that, we give thanks.



# The Chalkboard: notes for the elementary educator

## “The More We Get Together, the Happier We’ll Be. . .”

Raise your hand if you started humming as soon as you read that title! If you’ve ever taught the lower grades or preschool, you might be familiar with this childish folksong often used for cleaning up or circle time as a way of bringing students together for an activity.

This month, we’ve been discussing collaboration in both *The Locker Room* and here in *The Chalkboard*. And while it is an important issue to work with at the academy level, it seems even more vital to *begin* the process of nurturing and developing collaborative skills with our youngest children.

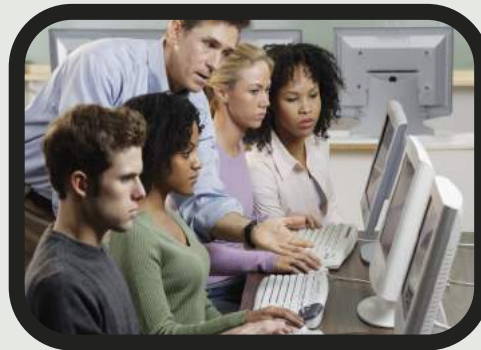
While it may seem difficult to even entertain the idea of creating assignments or projects for young students to work on collaboratively or to imagine how this will look within your classroom structure, remember that most children *naturally* want to work together. Traditional classrooms, in fact, usually work to limit conversations and “group work” and focus students on their individual work at their individual desk. The challenge lies in finding ways to channel those collaborative energies into productive work and teaching students what true collaboration involves.

There are some many digital resources available to make collaborative opportunities easier for you to design. Some of these may already

be familiar to you, but we hope you find something that you can work into the flow of your classroom.

### Student resources:

**Wikispaces:** Creates a classroom space where teacher and students can communicate and work on writing projects alone or in a teams.



**Circle art:** A simple project that would be a lot of fun with younger students.

**Storybird:** A unique language arts tool that llows anyone to make visual stories.

**Piratepad:** a web-based collaborative real-time editor that allows authors to simultaneously edit a text document, and to see participants' edits in real-time, with each author's text in their own color.

### Teacher resources:

**Google Classroom:** Helps teachers to streamline their digital workflow by creating a space where they can eas-

ily push out announcements and assignments, and give students a way to interact with the teacher and classmates, as well as turn in assignments electronically.

**Quizlet:** Quizlet’s study sets work like flashcards, helping students memorize or reinforce information on any subject. With Quizlet you can create your own, customized study sets for free.

**PlanBoard:** You can use this tool with other teachers and other tutors and aids. Planboard allows you to collaborate on lesson planning, or simply access a teacher’s lesson plan to view current study subjects and what to focus on with your students.

**Mindomo:** Mind-mapping is a great way to get your students thinking visually. Discuss with your students about ideas, tell stories, or draft special projects. Mindomo can help your class create and organize ideas in a way that everyone can understand.

**The Teacher’s Corner:** Ready-made projects for your class to jump in on!





## The Locker Room: notes for the academy educator

### Shared Resources: A Case Study on Collaboration

Nestled in the foothills of Oakland, CA, and a stone's throw away from San Francisco, College Prep is a private, non-profit high school that intentionally frames its curriculum and pedagogy around collaborative learning. Headmaster Monique DuVane notes, "What our collaborative learning style empowers and enables is a student's resilience -- how do you look to your neighbor as a resource, how do you test your own theories, how do you understand if you're on the right track or the wrong track. It teaches them that it's not just about content; it's about cultivating habits of mind that are the underpinnings of deeper scholarship."

Today's workplace inarguably places a larger emphasis on collaboration than it did 20 years ago. With open source software, free apps and massive online open courses (MOOCs) available to everyone, we are entering an era where sharing resources and knowledge are not only encouraged, but also expected.

For example, a team of researchers from the University of Wisconsin-Madison has been studying the Zika virus in infected monkeys. But rather than going the traditional route of publishing their findings in a paper, they are releasing their data, images, and notes online daily. It is an unusual move in the field of scientific research; however, David O'Connor, lead researcher, believes that opening the case up to the public may help speed up the research process into the nature of the virus. Other notable scientists around the world have applauded the transparency

of this effort and agree that sharing this information in real-time can only lead to faster, quicker results from online collaboration of other scientists. (For further reading on the study, click [here](#))

This is the world in which we now live. This is the world for which we need to be preparing our students. But how? Effective collaboration does not simply involve a list of skills; it requires an open mindset, a flexible attitude, excel-



lent communication skills and a humble heart. Where does one even begin?

**Plan Your Lessons.** If you want collaboration in your classroom, you have to make room for it. The teachers at [College Prep](#), for instance, intentionally design worksheets and activities that are *harder* than what they would do for an individual assignment so as to make the students realize

their need for their group. Almost all of the work that students do in each subject is collaborative in nature. From note-taking to discussions, there is an underlying theme of shared responsibility and collective wisdom.

**Plan Your Space.** Collaborative learning requires a different physical space than traditional, work-at-your-own-desk learning does. Teachers who encourage collaborative learning often set up their classroom so that students can face each other. Good eye contact and clear communication help with effective collaboration, and a round table seating arrangement or a [Harkness table](#) can facilitate that.

**Plan Your Mindset.** Allowing for collaborative learning really requires a certain degree of relinquishing control -- something that we educators are not necessarily great at doing! We are used to being masters of our domain and we can struggle with allowing students to take the lead, especially when it may seem so clumsy and awkward and ungainly at first. But understand that collaborative learning can only succeed if you are willing to model the spirit of collaboration first.

#### [Additional Resources](#)

- [Seven Tools for Student Collaboration](#)
- [College Prep](#)



## The Desk: notes for the administrator

### On The Shoulders of Giants: An Interview with Heidi Morehouse

*Online Adventist K-12 Education has existed for a while; however, we discovered a unique style of online education in our neighboring country, Canada. In this continuation of our **On the Shoulders of Giants** series, we sent one of our writers to do a little sleuthing and set up a date to Skype chat with Mrs. Heidi Morehouse, the lovely and talented principal of Prairie Adventist Christian eSchool (PACeS). Heidi has been teaching for 21 years and is in her fourth year as principal of PACeS. PACeS is a K-12 school, that provides Adventist Education virtually, with its home base being in Alberta, Canada.*

**Connection:** *Tell us a bit more about PACeS. How does it work?*

**HM:** Approximately, 75% of our students are online. That means that they are registered in our online teacher-directed program. So they log into class with their teachers; it is live class time with their teachers, classmates and them—it is not a recording. The classes are interactive and the assignments that they do are sent to the teacher for evaluations. The parent's role, in the online world, is to help keep the student organized. The remaining 25% of our students participate in traditional homeschooling, meaning that the parents are implementing the curriculum, and we do home visits with them. We facilitate that process.

We organize ourselves by a K-12 teaching schedule. Different classes for different levels, we follow a regular calendar school year, report cards, Spring Break, start and end dates, etc.

Other than not having a physical plant, we follow the basic outline of school.

**Connection:** *Do all of your classes meet every day, like a bricks and mortar school?*

**HM:** I'll start from the top down. Our grades 9-12 students meet Monday to Thursday; live class time starts at about 8:00AM and ends at about 1:00PM, with breaks between. Depending on their learning load, they could be online from one and a half to three hours a day. Grades 7 and 8 meets Monday to Thursday, an hour and a half a day. We have recently modified our class time requirements. Our upper elementary, grades 4 to 6, meet online an hour a day, three days a week, Tuesday to Thursday. Grades 2 and 3 meet two hours a week, two class periods a week, and Kindergarten to Grade 1 will meet one class period a week. In elementary, a lot of the work is completed at home. Our teachers give the parents the outline, the activities and the resources.

**Connection:** *Are all of your students Canadian?*

**HM:** We are not limited to only accepting Canadian students. In fact, roughly 2% - and growing! - of our students come from the United States. We're hearing of many families in the US that are Googling us and registering their children in our school.

**Connection:** *From your perspective, what are some of the common mis-*

*conceptions about PACeS?*

**HM:** The major misconception is that school will be "easier" than the typical bricks and mortar school, and it's not, if anything it might be harder. First of all, online education requires a serious amount of organization -- purposeful organization. This style of education requires students and parents to become self-motivated.

One of the most difficult things is that whether you are a parent or a student, you must learn to put yourself out there and communicate with your teacher. When I talk to my new families, I always say, "You have to be very purposeful in your communication. We are not walking by you in the hall, having a casual chat." We have web cams, but sometimes technology fails us. We can't always see the reactions of students when they do not understand what they are learning. You have to be willing to put yourself out there and say, "I don't get it. Our promise is to be there to help you, but you may have to tell us." Maintaining that connecting communication is key to the success of our students.

Another misconception is that learning or class time will take less time than the bricks and mortar school. Parents and students have to manage that at home. Sometimes families are not taking breaks and are working all the time. They need to take breaks and not try to complete everything in 12 straight hours a day. On the other end of the spectrum, there are families that are not completing the work at all. There is definitely a balance that must exist in time management.



**Connection:** *The successful implementation of an online K-12 education school is far reaching! What would you say is your favorite aspect to being the principal of an online school?*

**HM:** The opportunity for innovation is what I would say is my most favorite aspect. I was sharing with one of my teachers about our roles, and she agreed that the chance for innovation is very exciting. For me, I had an “ah-ha” moment, when I said, “We’re going to do a Week of Prayer online!” Now it’s a normal thing that we do twice a year. It is always exciting to discuss – how are we going to do these things? What sort of fun things are we going to do? Being innovative on this platform means that you have to be up to date on technology. We get the chance to sometimes figure out things that seem impossible.

**Connection:** *What are some of the benefits and setbacks to online K-12 education?*

**HM:** One benefit is that it allows for flexibility, especially in the work environment. We have many families that travel, teachers that travel. I travel. Again, back to being innovative, you are always trying to figure out how to do things differently and keep it interesting.

If you are a homeschool family and you join PACeS, you are joining a community, which is also a benefit. Those students have a sense of community and belonging even though they are participating in school at home. Our students wear their PACeS t-shirts with pride and joy, wherever they go. I’ve never seen anybody wear their t-shirts with such joy. When I show up for visits, they always greet me at the door with brightly washed faces and smiles wearing their green shirts.

Some of the setbacks would be, well, we don’t have a volleyball team. Sometimes in Science, it proves to be difficult to complete some labs. This year, we have found some practical and interesting ways to enhance and supplement their education, but it can still be challenging. Although Science labs can prove to be difficult, many of our students have gone on to become nurses, engineers, and have other wonderful careers. It is great to know that we teach the students to think and to process. These are some of the expected cons -- no longer depending on your school for those extracurricular activities. That, however, can be turned into a benefit because a person is more likely to engage in activities in the community.

**Connection:** *And finally, what does collaboration look like in your school setting?*

**HM:** Well, Google Classroom, Docs, Drive, and Dropbox are all fantastic tools. We collaborate a lot through those. We also use Blackboard. We have a lot of students completing group projects. When we do get together at a physical location, the teachers usually transition easily into “in-real-life” collaboration

– it’s amazing! I believe there is still a need to meet face-to face, even though there is plenty online communication. I noticed that when we did this more often, there was such a big difference in staff morale and community.

I realized that as a principal, I just need to provide that opportunity. I have learned, not just when we are in staff meetings, my K-6 teachers like to get together and do a shop talk, so we created an opportunity for them to do a shop talk. Because there are more high school teachers, I think that they collaborate a lot more. They’ll connect and collaborate on a student level.



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

**“In my experience, a struggling student most often needs \_\_\_\_\_.”**

Here are a few of the responses we received:

- A) to understand what (Who) gives them their value.
- B) someone who believes in them.
- C) encouragement.
- D) love.
- E) all of the above.”

-- Larry Hiday, biology and chemistry teacher, [Columbia Adventist Academy](#)

“Time and support from a teacher.” – Sharon Candy Aka, Associate Director, [Adventist Learning Community](#)

“Understanding and a listening ear.”

-- Tamara McGee Anderson, owner of [TRM English Consulting](#)

“Someone who believes in them.” – Sylvia Evert, stay-at-home mom, flute teacher

“Lots of encouragement, parental support and sometimes tutorial intervention.” – Deanna Hempel Bullington, 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, [Fresno Adventist Academy](#)

“Someone who genuinely cares and supports them.” -- Sonia James Dawes, middle school teacher, [Bermuda Institute](#)

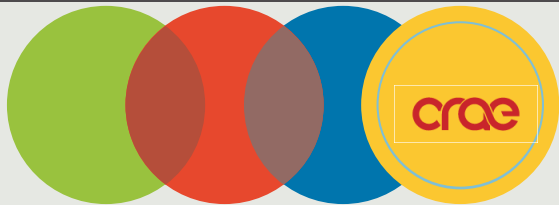
**Thank you for your responses!**

# CRAE: keeping you informed

Dr. Kido recently had the opportunity to speak at the Santa Ana Spanish Church in Santa Ana, California. She was accompanied by two CRAE employees, Lynn & Moses Lopez. Before the service they handed out CRAE and CognitiveGenesis materials to attendees. Many members of the church were interested in CRAE and all the resources that Adventist Education has to offer. Zaidy Olivarria of Orangewood Adventist Academy was also in attendance to support CRAE as well as recruit prospective students. The Lopez family was able to share their testimony with the congregation on how they have benefited from Adventist Education. Dr. Kido shared a great sermon on *The Blueprint* and the long-lasting benefits of Adventist Education. The audience was truly motivated and inspired by Dr. Kido's words. After the service, there were numerous parents looking to gain more information on CRAE and how they could enroll their children in an Adventist school.

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Assistant director Aimee Leukert was invited to speak at [Central Valley Christian Academy's](#) Alumni Sabbath on April 9, 2016. She had not visited their campus in quite some time and was delighted by the beautiful facilities and welcoming congregation and alumni she met there. Her presentation focused on the beauty of basking in memories, but the call that God still makes to each of us in the present to follow His will.



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## *Brain Blurb*

On collaboration: "The two aspects of being human that set us apart from other mammals are metacognition and the deep desire to belong or feel felt. Our sense of needing to belong to a group is an inherited part of our neurobiology, and collaboration with others is the desired outcome."

- Lori Desautels