

From Teacher Efficacy to Student Efficacy: From Engagement to Achievement

Dr. Raymond Tam

The pandemic has created huge impacts on different aspects or domains of life. The definition and dimension of school life and school support have never experienced their redefinition and complexity during these two years.

New terms in education have surfaced and brought educators new lessons, new understanding, new meanings, and even new skills, such as online classroom, remote learning, hybrid/blended/mixed mode of learning, concurrent (HyFlex: in-person and online by the faculty member), virtual education, physical lessons, in-person or fully in-person learning, and face-to-face lessons (Lawson, 2022).

G.T. College being a pioneering Multiple Intelligences school in Hong Kong is no exception and no exemption from the needs to adapt to the modes of teaching and learning during these two years. With the conviction of GT's need to embrace research into its teaching and learning, GT is now on its research-school trajectory.

Despite the unprecedented uncertainty and helplessness, GT has managed to have its continued science education, which might be termed as "From Engagement to Achievement in Science Development." Students have been engaged because of the teacher efficacy which has transformed itself into student efficacy through different teacher-initiated self-learning projects.

The pandemic has been a blessing in disguise. Students have continued to participate in the online maths and science [Physics/Biology/Economics] Olympiads. They have been prompted to adopt their inquiry-based learning all the way, and they have manifested themselves to be high- or able-achievers in diverse domains. With concerted effort from all parties, GT students obtained awards in various local or regional linguistic or musical contests during these two



pandemic years.

G.T. College ranked number 11th over the world 5,000 IB schools in 2021. G.T. College organized the Greater Bay Science Project Competition (GBASPC) 2021 which is a STEM competition initiated by the Gifted Education Council (GEC), aiming to connect talented young scientists in the 11 cities of China. We also got the outstanding STEM School Award in 2021.

Other than the engagement and achievement in science education, the College has its unprecedented work in exploring and providing its regular social-emotional support to its home-confined students. For the school life in the New Normal, we will call the G.T. signature one—"Students' Social-Emotional Support via the Great Divide between the Traditional and the Digital." G.T. students have been nudged into seeing "schooling in the 21st century as a mixed mode of the Tra-Di-Tal" and GT as a Great Divide (an inevitable and influential force delimiting the constraints between the "Tra-Di-tional and the Di-gital").

A prolonged period of pandemic gloom has bred despair, desperation, and even destruction among all walks of life (Watercutter, 2020), never mind school policy-makers, teachers, and students. In spite of all its heaviness or "no/low" motivation on the globe, GT has produced quite a number of videos in short time to fill the gaps left by virtual education or the mixed mode teaching and learning, to boost the socio-emotional well-being of students while the giant pandemic is dragging with its feet all over the globe. Diverse, immediate, authentic, daily school experience could be experienced in real time and in no time; the "seemingly back-to-school" videos were namely the School Opening Ceremony video, Anti-Pandemic Video, Cheer-On Video, Merry Christmas video, and other festival ones. [You might wonder, is it "GT's got Talent"?].



This kind of “back-to-school life” has been commented by some parents as the “Charcoals in the Big Bad Cold.” Of course, you might say, “This is not real, sorry!” True it is; however, what G.T. students have received is a KEY MESSAGE—[Whenever the Zoom link is attached, they will shout]—“We are back home! Back to school!” What they have seen would NEVER be the “America’s Got Talent” or the “Britain’s Got Talent.” They know and they know so well that life will no longer be the same as school will neither. It is a Brave-New-World awaiting them. According to U.S. Department of Education (2020), life will continue and live well for those students whose emotional status is better supported. Schools, not just governments, must shoulder this responsibility without delay.

But from their continued engagement and achievements, what we as educators have witnessed are the hearts [of

G. T. Ellen Yeung College sets nunchaku Guinness World Record

By Ben Pang June 06, 2016



Setting a Guinness World Record is a group effort!
Photo: Ben Pang/SCMP

educators, students, and even parents] to create links in different types of learning via the invisible hands of school leadership [like the school board, principals] and exemplary followership [like teachers, office clerks, janitors]—the kind of efficacy from top down as well as from bottom up (Guskey, 2021).

Our vision is to establish relationships between teachers and students. There are phone calls to every student and to create physical class time for mentorship and activities. The “we-time” between students is more emphasized than the transfer of knowledge or the completion of assignments.

Despite the hovering uncertainty and difficulty, I believe that with love, creativity, and task commitment in education we can all transform and transcend the crisis and overcome no matter if it is called “Omicron” or “Pi” or “Psi” up to “Omega.”



References

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Dr. Raymond K. W. Tam

(raykwtam@gmail.com)

Dr. Tam is a devoted school administrator with vision and vigour. Aiming at providing quality education for gifted and talented youths, Dr. Tam works in the frontline to promote STREAM (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) education. Being Chairman of the Gifted Education Council (Hong Kong), he networks renowned schools from various countries to nurture students' global vision, wishing to promote multiple intelligences education, particularly in Hong Kong and mainland China. He enjoys reading and writing articles for major

Chinese and English newspapers in Hong Kong, commenting on education, politics, social policies, and school administration.