

# REFLECTIONS: EBEC LABORATORY CLASSROOMS 2004-2005

## **The Laboratory Classroom**

- ❖ Twenty-two laboratory classrooms K-9 opened their doors for visitors.
- ❖ Close to two hundred teachers, coaches, and administrators visited lab classrooms.
- ❖ The observation protocol (prebriefing, observation, and debriefing) helped focus and deepen the professional conversations.
- ❖ Creating a learning community.

## **Valuable Lessons Learned**

1. Never assume any thing when it comes to what your students know; just because you taught it doesn't mean they got it.
2. Plan backwards. First you need to know the end goals for your students in any unit of study. Only then can you plan the steps for getting there.
3. Take baby steps. We are all pushed for time and try to double or triple up on what we try to teach students in each lesson. More is not necessarily better. Break the concepts to be taught in pieces students can manage.
4. Model, Model, Model. We tend to release students too soon and then get frustrate when they don't understand or internalize the focus lesson. Gradually release students.
5. Show and tell. You can't teach by just talking. You need the visuals to go along with your talking.
6. Letting students talk is good for them. Students need to verbalize their learning in order to internalize it. Letting them talk to one another builds their learning and holds them accountable for paying attention. Students need time to talk about their learning before they write about it.
7. Sharing of learning is vital. Sharing is not to be left out of the workshop model. It paramount for students to hear from one another and build upon each others' thinking. Students can't wait to get together to share their accomplishments and their comments and suggestions are meaningful and well thought out.
8. Truly love and respect your students and you will be amazed at what they can accomplish. And in return their love for you and enthusiasm for what they are learning will push you to constantly improve your teaching.

"Together we will embark on a journey of learning that every one will look forward to each day." (Grade 2 lab classroom teacher)

"It was very powerful to visit another classroom & see various methods/strategies take shape. Models are important for our students and also for us. I learn the best from a model & seeing a classroom alive with students doing the work and getting excited was very influential and helpful" (High school lab classroom teacher)