The 'Standards of Practice of the Teaching Profession' outlines the collective goals of the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) and all educators who are members of the OCT collective. My focus for consideration will be on the best practice of 'Commitment to Students and Student Learning', which states that 'Members are dedicated to their care and commitment to students. They treat students equitably and with respect and are sensitive to factors that influence individual student learning. Members facilitate the development of students as contributing citizens of Canadian society.'(Ontario College of Teachers)

Over nearly two decades as an educator, I have strived to implement this best practice in every class I've taught. It is good practice to reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses of each interaction with our learners and/or the quality of the lessons we have conducted. Some days run much smoother than others. We, the educators, are accountable for figuring out why and how to do better for our learners. This course has better equipped me to conduct reflective evaluations that uphold the integrity of my teaching and enhance the learning experience for our students.

Incorporating 'As Learning' strategies—like exit cards, critical analysis, and self-reflection—not only allows us to gather meaningful feedback from students on their comprehension and emotional engagement with the material (Growing for Success, 32), but when embedded into the learning process, serves as a powerful indicator of the effectiveness of our teaching and the depth of student learning. Clearly communicating success criteria ensures that we are transparent about the goals that need to be met to earn success in a task, which should lead to stronger effort and success for our learners. (Growing for Success, 33) These tools aid in gauging the success level of our lessons and help us to pinpoint where our students are on their learning journeys. Through equitable practices, we can surmise what concepts or skills we need to revisit or review. Such practices alert us to students who may need the material provided in a differentiated manner. Holding ourselves to the highest standards when interacting with our learners, individually and as a group, imbues a strong influence and a clear sense of direction that can build our learners confidence in their ability to contribute, each in their unique way, to their communities.

Through the process of participating in this Media Art AQ course, my understanding of the commitment of care and equitability to our students has expanded to include responsibility for our students as producers and consumers of media. The research provided about the safe use of media was an eye opener in terms of my understanding of how young people are affected by the media they participate in. By framing the conversation around media use by teenagers in respect to the balance between their development of 'agency' and 'community,' (Beyond Screen Time, 2020), we are confronted with the reality of the needs of our learners in terms of their development and how their use of digital media and/or digital games plays a significant role. Relieved to learn that students are involved in many healthy practices such as researching their interests, connecting with their 'tribes' and for those who enjoy digital games, developing healthy empathy for other players, the doors open to enable healthy and balanced practices to be woven into our learning environment. (Technology Addiction, 24) By understanding how students use digital media, we can better serve them by incorporating practices that encourage a balance of skill and knowledge development through both digital and traditional measures. 'There is a difference between spending hours using technology to create digital worlds, hone photography or music skills, or engage in meaningful discussions of important issues and being a passive consumer of content or using tech to distance oneself from social relationships. A healthy digital lifestyle could and should include thoughtful and intentional uses of media and technology.' (Technology Addiction, 28) Guiding our learners to develop an awareness of their own media practices, modelling and nurturing balanced practice that include both physical 'in person' practices as well as digital 'online'
practices, empowers students to gain confidence and ability to conduct themselves thoughtfully and respectfully through multiple forms of communication. (Technology Addiction, 27)

Our learners are our future and as the cultural practice of The First Nations People of Canada teaches, 'Think Seven Generations Ahead' to understand the value or consequence of our actions before deciding how to act. It is essential, in this context, to acknowledge the value of honoring our learners and ensuring fairness by implementing a variety of instructional strategies and assessment methods. No two learners are the same. It is our duty to understand our student profiles in terms of IEP's, ELL learners, FNMI learners, cultural, religions

and diverse experiences, while also evaluating how individuals learn and responds to their environments. Assessments should be based on growth demonstrated through the use of the creative process and the final product to ensure that our students have equal opportunity for success. In Dr. Douglas Reeves report on 'Toxic Grading Practices,' he states, 'the importance of supporting students and guiding them towards success rather than just giving '0's. 'Encouraging students to complete the work themselves serves as the most constructive consequence—one that helps them recognize their own capabilities and achieve their goals through persistence and determination.' (Toxic Grading Practices, 3:03-3:15) In my classes, I have experienced student reluctance to do the work, regardless of the consequences, but discovered that when the work is completed, the students feel a sense of accomplishment having achieved their goal.

Michael Fullon's report called 'Great to Excellent (2013),' revels in the success of implementing the 6Cs that form the foundation of our character (citizenship, communication, critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration and teamwork, creativity and imagination) as a primary focus for our Ontario schools. The idea of focusing education on the development of the character of our young people seems vital at this critical point when learners are exposed to multiple influences from local, national and international media, peer groups, classrooms, family and society. Unless a strong foundation is provided by mentors, educators, and parents, the path can be difficult for young people to navigate safely and ethically. In developing a strong media arts program, it is vital to ensure that our students are learning how to be responsible and informed media consumers as well as empowered producers of media, driven to utilize their foundation of the 6C's for the greater good of our society.

Resources

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