

David Carpenter: Narrative 1

An international educator who wants to make a lasting contribution to a school needs a well defined educational philosophy and a confident, positive, and nurturing approach to others. As a teacher, instructional technologist, provider of services to the gifted and talented, coach and guidance counselor, I work not only to help my students grow but to do the same myself. I strive to teach my students that they have the power to grow, govern and enrich their lives. Being **pro-active** and a leader for **collaboration** supports the feeling of self-assurance that I model for my students.

As a teacher, I employ technology, varying instructional models, and concept-centered curriculum to create a learning environment that interests, motivates and guides students. By **building strong relationships** with my students, I help **strengthen their confidence** and willingness to stretch out of their safety zones. My lessons put students in control of their learning as they come to their own understandings.

In providing a good amount of freedom to our students we must also teach them the responsibility that goes along with it. My work **supports character education and service learning** in international schools. Many students in such schools enjoy security, wealth, and live comfortable lives... but in these positions they can learn and grow by giving to others. And when children make mistakes, they should not be protected from the natural consequences for their actions in order for them to learn valuable life lessons. As adults, we should model our beliefs in **citizenship** and live lives of quality and integrity.

My professional background has offered me opportunities to work with and **learn from many different types of people**. This experience further reinforces my belief in the importance of **flexibility, good communication and community building**. With a background of working in independent, public and many international schools, I continually grow with exposure to different ideas and cultures.

Years ago, families and faculty of my first overseas school (in Israel) faced the school's closure and evacuation during the first Gulf War. It was my first posting overseas and provided me (as a guidance counselor) a close study of **crisis management**. Our school in Hong Kong also closed in 2003 due to an outbreak of SARS. In my new role facilitating technology, I coordinated our effort to provide HKIS's "virtual school" for a month and championed its themes: community, collaboration and curriculum (interactive!). In the past year, I pro-actively partnered with our school principal to prepare for the possibility of school closure in the event of Avian Flu, terrorism or other crisis. By building a team approach with staff buy in, we were able to ramp up our preparedness and skill sets to be ready for the possibility of another virtual school. It was hugely rewarding to bring people together in this planning process while providing training in **skills that also enhance current instruction**.

My wife Margaret and I encourage **"can do" positive attitudes** wherever we live. By modeling constructive attitudes while assisting others to reach out and understand differing points of view, we work to build feelings of community and understanding. We especially enjoy **the sense of adventure, challenge and connection** that international schools offer our children.