



From Scratch: Leadership Experiences in Establishing a New and Future Focused Primary School in Sydney

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Category: Creating the Future – The Challenges and Opportunities of Leading in a Technological Era

In this presentation, Thomas will reflect on the 132 days lead-in time from appointment as foundation principal of North Kellyville Public School to opening the school gate for the first cohort of students. He will highlight the sources of invigoration including community building, pedagogical planning, strategic recruitment and resourcing, and discuss the challenges incumbent on establishing a lighthouse technology-rich school within a constricted budget to stand out in a system where excellence is often found on islands and strict procurement and support systems are in place.

Thomas will detail the consultation, strategic planning and vision for North Kellyville Public School, juxtaposing the need to lead with conviction and direction with the need to embrace stakeholder consultation. He will discuss the school's synthesis of national and state policy and curriculum within the context of a national innovation and science agenda, and how he was able to generate interest and engagement from its diverse teaching and support staff.

Device usage across the school curriculum will be analysed with trends reported and improvements noted. Deeply committed to cross-platform technologies, Thomas will outline the challenges and opportunities of device management and use of online collaborative tools including Google Suite and Office 365 Online.

Partnering with industry and acquiring the support of educational-give-back programs has been critical in North Kellyville Public School's early success in delivering technology-rich leadership, technology-rich curriculum and technology-rich collaboration. STEM programs grounded in the Scientific Method of Inquiry, entrepreneurialism grounded in financial literacy programs, historical investigation through virtual reality and Skype connectivity are synonymous with the school only six months into operations. Thomas will discuss the short, medium and long term vision for the school and its students, outlining how his leadership in a technological era has and will lead to the achievement of the high aspirations that the community he serves holds for its children.

This presentation explores the once in a lifetime opportunity of starting a school from scratch.