

Welcome Package

for School Improvement Facilitation Team Members

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School Improvement
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Members**

Dear School Improvement Facilitation Team (SIFT) member,

I would like to welcome you to what I believe may be one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences of your teaching career. I have spent over 40 years developing the Planning for School and Student Success Process that ensures success for all students, and as a SIFT member, you will have an opportunity to support the implementation of this process in your schools and districts. Details of your involvement with me and the Hulley Centre follow but I want you to know that although your work with us will demand some time and may occasionally cause you some frustration, the personal and professional rewards will make it worthwhile.

I am looking forward to meeting you personally at the SIFT training. Be sure to complete and return the information form at the end of this publication so that I can personalize your resource material and familiarize myself with your role responsibilities and background.

Once again, welcome to the Hulley Centre.

***Wayne Hulley
Director, The Hulley Centre***

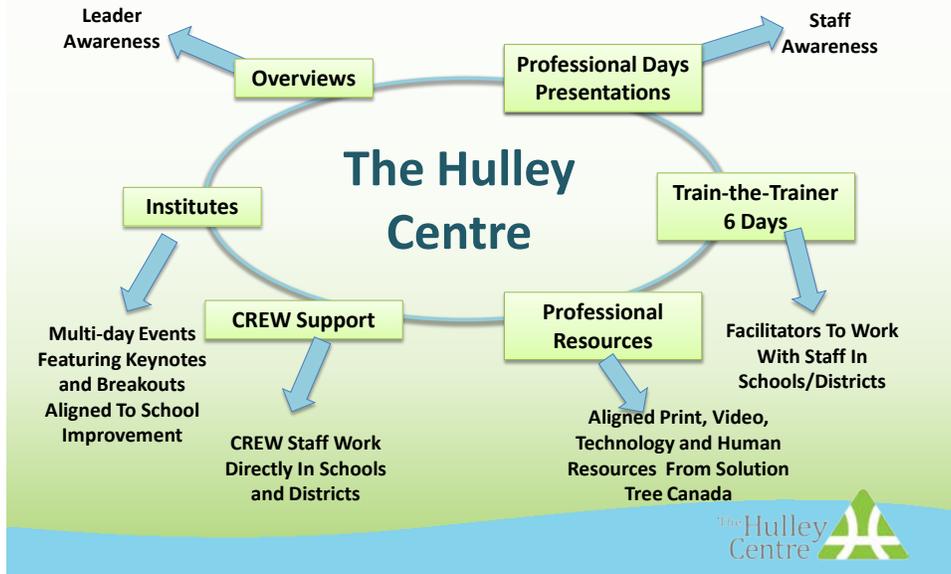
Who Are We?

The Hulley Centre, established on November 1, 2011, is a partnership between Wayne Hulley's *North Star Centre for Personal and Organizational Effectiveness* in Burlington, Ontario, and Solution Tree Canada, the premier provider of educational professional development in Canada. Through this partnership, the Hulley Centre is able to align the numerous resources developed by Solution Tree authors with a planning model with a proven track record.

The Centre's focus is on action-based planning centered on the Planning for School and Student Success Process (PSSSP) developed by Wayne over a period of 40 years. The PSSSP addresses eight issues that often interfere with a school's ability to make a positive difference for all students. Action planning is built on strategies that can be implemented in a school with an expectation that student outcomes will improve.

The Hulley Centre offers a number of services to support school improvement. These services include awareness sessions, professional development presentations, customized programs, and train-the-trainer sessions. As well, the Hulley Centre personnel will provide resources and consultation support.

The Hulley Centre



What Do We Stand For?

The Hulley Centre: What We Stand For

Our Values:

- **Student success:** We believe that all students want to succeed and that, given suitable opportunity, they will learn.
- **Teacher success:** We believe that teachers intend to do well by their students and that they will achieve greater success and professional satisfaction through collaboration, planning and a commitment to action.
- **District success:** We believe that the Hulley Centre resources will improve the efforts of school districts that are committed to school and student success.
- **Parent and community support:** We believe that parent and community support for schools is enhanced when student achievement levels rise.



Vision:

To provide a planning process for schools and districts that aligns current research and practices in ways that result in successful implementation and improved student outcomes.

Purpose:

To support school and district planning by providing processes, strategies, tools and skills that will positively influence the learning outcomes for all students.

Motto:

Bringing hearts, heads and hands to planning for school and student success.



Our motto sums up the essence of the Centre. We want to capture the hearts of staff so they make a commitment to improve the learning outcomes for all students. With the commitment in place, we then use strategies to create a plan that involves the best thinking of the staff. Finally, the hands represent the work that is needed to implement and renew the plan.

Why Is This Training Important?

These are demanding times for schools and school districts. Increased expectations for student learning results, budget constraints, curriculum changes, increased community involvement, and media attention have put tremendous pressures on schools. Schools are working hard but many are overwhelmed by the pressure and this can erode teacher confidence. When this happens, teacher morale can decline and result in lower levels of student performance. Staff discontent may be the outcome.

This training helps to make school planning focused and attainable. It is intended to reduce the tension in schools by aligning the efforts of the staff around goals that are meaningful to them and that are supported by strategies to support their growth. Schools cannot be expected to respond to more than three goals at a time. They must be meaningful to teachers, the people who are charged with developing and implementing the plan to achieve those goals. School improvement is about enhancing instruction and increasing professional competence.

The Hulley Centre training plan for school and student success focuses on teachers. It is divided into three aligned and coordinated modules, each of them designed for a two-day training session. The training sessions are designed to counteract eight issues, identified in the research, that result in planning that makes little or no difference—planning that frustrates staff and lowers morale, making future attempts at school improvement planning difficult if not impossible.

All schools and districts plan. The Hulley Centre Planning for School and Student Success Process does not attempt to take over the planning for them. In fact, it has the capacity to build the priorities of the district or province into the planning process. The district owns the process and the Hulley Centre encourages and supports the effort.

The CREW

The CREW is comprised of Wayne Hulley and the group of people who are associates of the Centre. We call ourselves the CREW to remind us of our role in supporting schools and school districts in their planning efforts.

The CREW



Collaborate: Work with school and district leaders to improve school and student success

Resource: Provide resources to support school planning

Educate: Train and support School Improvement Facilitation Teams (SIFTs) to work with their colleagues to improve the learning outcomes for all students

Wellness: Provide support and resources in ways that minimize the overload and stress that often exists in schools



Collaborate: The Hulley Centre supports the planning efforts of schools and districts by providing research, high-quality resources, a proven process, and qualified associates to collaborate with key school and district staff in the process.

Resource: The critical role of the CREW is to provide schools and districts with knowledge of proven strategies and resources that will assist in their pursuit of the mission of “Learning by All—Whatever It Takes.”

Educate: The Hulley Centre is committed to building the professional capacity of school and district staff with the goal of improving student achievement. The Planning for School and Student Success Process is a planning tool and common sense approach to school improvement which is only attainable through teaching improvement. Through the Hulley Centre training, key school and district staff become equipped with the knowledge and skills required to work with teachers to enhance school and student outcomes.

Wellness. We know that teachers and other staff are working hard, often against long odds. We also know that some get tired and frustrated and feel like giving up. The Planning for School and Student Success Process is self-paced based upon the readiness of a school culture to support the improvement initiative. Self-paced does not mean laissez faire. The process begins with an exploration of culture to define the school’s intention. It is a process that generates passion, hope, and the desire to work together. By coming to an agreement on their values, vision, and purpose, the staff can assess what actions are necessary to improve the learning outcomes for all students. The PSSSP balances readiness with opportunity and has an ongoing monitoring strategy that moves the staff forward. It is designed to guard staff wellness through support and encouragement rather than frustration and discouragement.

CREW Members

Members of the CREW have been carefully selected. They all combine high competence with strong character. All are associates of Solution Tree and, as a result, have had experience with a high performing organization which has grown to be one of the largest providers of professional development in the world. All members have had broad educational experience at the school, central office, provincial, and national levels. A number are authors whose books have had a significant influence on schools. They represent all areas of Canada and are able to deliver programs in both English and French. The CREW has assisted in the development of this program and has a high level of commitment to the Hulley Centre and its work.

The CREW will be part of institute presentations across the country. They will also be involved in train-the-trainer programs as well as have personal involvement at district and school levels. They are committed to helping teachers improve the learning outcomes for all students.

Outcomes of the Hulley Centre Training

- **Understand the elements of effective planning**
- **Develop a clear understanding of the Planning for School and Student Success Process**
- **Become aware of the eight reasons why school improvement planning often fails**
- **Understand the importance of passion and commitment to improvement as the first step in effective planning**



- **Experience learning activities that can be implemented in schools that will lead to the creation of an action plan to improve**
- **Engage in conversation and work in a Collaborative Learning Team to build capacity in order to offer high quality support to their colleagues**
- **Create a plan of action for implementing the Planning for School and Student Success Process in their school and district**
- **Grow professionally as they learn how the many resources available through Solution Tree Canada can be used to make a positive difference for students, staff and communities**



The School Improvement Facilitation Team (SIFT)

The Planning for School and Student Success Process is intended to influence teachers to see things differently, do things differently, and achieve different and better results with all students. Research has shown that attempts to frighten teachers into changing with threats of termination have not worked. Likewise, attempts to bribe teachers with merit pay scales have not worked. As DuFour and Marzano (2011) point out:

“The unspoken assumption behind these strategies is that educators have had the ability to help all students learn, but have lacked sufficient motivation to put forth the effort to help them learn. If that assumption is correct, then perhaps steps to provide sanctions and incentives to spur greater effort might be effective. We do not, however, believe that the problems of public schools have been caused by the unwillingness of educators to work hard or because they are disinterested in the well-being of their students. The problem, instead, is that they have lacked the collective capacity to promote learning for all students in the existing structures and cultures of the system in which they work.” (p. 15)

Since it is teacher behaviour that will ultimately change the outcomes for students, they should be the people managing the processes used to bring the change. Involvement leads to commitment, and commitment leads to a desire to improve; therefore, it is important that teachers lead the school improvement initiative.

The Hulley Centre Plan for School and Student Success makes use of a School Improvement Facilitation Team (SIFT) from participating schools or districts to lead the change process. The Team attends six days of training offered in three aligned two-day modules, spread over a number of months. After each module the SIFTs return to their schools and districts, and with the resources provided during the training, they support staff in the implementation of the PSSSP.

Selection of the SIFT is a crucial part of the Hulley Centre Plan for School and Student Success. The Team must represent the major groups in the school such as grade divisions, subjects, or special programs. The selection process can range from individuals volunteering, open elections, appointments by major groups, or appointment by the administration. Each selection method has advantages and disadvantages, but the most important consideration is that the members of the School Improvement Facilitation Team:

- Have credibility with the staff
- Are selected in a way that is transparent
- Have a willingness to serve
- Have a sense of self-efficacy
- Are comfortable supporting the growth of others

Ideally, SIFT members will be the informal leaders in the school—the individuals who have a positive influence on their colleagues.

WANTED: Leaders to be members of the School Improvement Facilitation Team (SIFT)

The Job: The successful candidates will be leaders and members of a team representing the major components of our school (i.e. grades, subjects, administration, special needs etc.). Six days of training based on The Planning for School and Student Success Process will be provided over a 3-6 month period through The Hulley Centre.

Following the training, members of the SIFT will return to the school to lead the staff in the creation of a plan intended to result in improved student outcomes, increased staff satisfaction and heightened community support of the school.



SIFT Job Qualifications

The ideal candidates will exhibit the following characteristics:

- Leadership qualities as demonstrated by the ability to positively influence others
- Highly regarded by the school staff
- Ability to organize and bring plans to fruition
- Willing to persist and support others in moving forward
- Forward looking and able to embrace challenges



One of the best predictors of future success is past and present success. As a SIFT member you are called upon to make a difference by positively influencing staff to take new actions to change the learning outcomes for all students.

What Can I Expect as a SIFT Member?

1. You will interact with members of the Hulley Centre CREW.
2. You will interact with members of your SIFT as well as SIFTs from other schools and districts that may be part of the training.
3. You will take part in six days of training organized into three modules, each of two-day duration. The modules will be interactive, positive, practical, and fun.
4. During the modules, a facilitation manual will be used to guide the learning. The manual contains all the background and materials you will need to return to your schools and districts to facilitate the planning activities of your staff.
5. You will be provided with electronic tools to support your work, and 24/7 support will be available through CREW members attached to your schools and districts.
6. You can expect to be professionally motivated since you will be in the business of changing lives. You will be supporting staff members who will be asked to commit to new ways of teaching and interacting with students to create improved results for all.

