

Tiffany Goulet



Teacher St. Joseph's School (Northwest Catholic DSB), Writer,
Presenter and Blogger: From the Kindergarten Classroom to the Board and beyond

Tiffany Goulet has written about Dr. Stuart Shanker's Self-Reg for the International Journal of Holistic Early Learning and Development, for the blog Lovingly Learning Language, and when designing her school's Transition to Kindergarten program. She has shared Self-Reg at PD sessions across her board and beyond including on VoicEd radio. "My Self-Reg journey began in 2016 with a very tough year. I had a class of 29 Year 2-Kindergarten students who were very dysregulated, as was I that year to be honest. I left each day exhausted, frustrated and in no place to be the parent or partner I wanted to be at home."

Big Picture

"If we actually understood behaviour, ours and theirs, we could better address and support it. We had been coming at stress behaviour with outdated classroom management techniques. It was like we were using the wrong tool for the job, but at the time- it was the only tool that many had. I came across the book Self-Reg and it became very clear what the issues actually were and how I could think differently about what I was seeing. After I had Self-Reg - I had to know more."

Process at this Point

"The main priority for us has always been to educate and bring the adults on board in a way that would allow them to see this [Self-Reg] in themselves."

TNCDSB and various grants funded curriculum leaders, youth workers, educators, and early childhood educators to take TMC foundations courses, to attend SRSS 2018, participate in book studies and a video conference with Susan Hopkins. Finally, in May 2019 the board hosted a Self-Reg community night featuring Susan Hopkins for 300 guests including educators, child care workers, administrators, support staff, physicians, counsellors, police officers, parents, and coaches. At the school level Self-Reg is the basis of the School Improvement Plan, part of Welcome to Kindergarten Programming, students partake in health and screen free challenges, classrooms and offices have had Self-Reg makeovers, healthy snacks are available daily, and relationships between students across grades is supported.

Challenges

"Change is hard for many people, so the idea of doing something different was tough to sell at the start. We overcame this by modeling it, proving it, sharing constantly and inviting people in to see what it might look like in a classroom. Let others join in on their terms- don't force it- model it/prove it. You can't have people co-regulating others when they are truly not invested."

"As our beliefs changed, we began to realize that some of our practices no longer meshed with what we believed about self-regulation. Changing up something so drastically, though scary, was actually a benefit, because it allowed us a huge opportunity to speak to the public about self-regulation."

Fond Memory

"Getting my school board "on board". Convincing them that something coming out of a classroom/school was worthy of board attention, funds and promotion felt like a HUGE breakthrough as initiatives often come top down, but this was the opposite."

"One of the most beautiful things I have witnessed recently around our work was the transfer or the "ripple effect that was transferred to the home. Though we started this work to support children, we found that in the process, we have supported our staff and families as well."

Hope!

"Start- don't wait until you know everything because you won't ever know it all. When you start, you will see that the changes can be both immediate and long lasting. Trust the process. It's not a quick fix. Learn and connect. Being with and supported by like-minded people gives you support and enthusiasm to journey on, especially in the face of challenges."

"Remember that you are "oh so human" as Susan says. Your Self-Reg is important, but you are not perfect either- allow yourself the same patience and acceptance as you give to others."