THE BOLT STORY:   
DIVERSE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS BECOME ENTREPRENEURS

by

MOIRA FRICKE

B. A., Simon Fraser University, B.C., 1990

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Dr. Adrienne Castellon, Supervisor

Dr. Ken Pudlas, Second Reader

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**ABSTRACT**

Special educators have tried to enhance employability skills of their students by involving them in the operation of school-based enterprises based on a segregated or “pull-out” model of instruction (Lindstrom, Benz, & Johnson, 1997). “Coffee Carts,” a local example of educators teaching students with special needs job and life skills by having them serve coffee in their high school, while an admirable initiative, is not an inclusive one (Langley School District, 2016). This project aimed to provide an inclusive, formational learning experience *(FLex)* for both neurotypical students and those who have exceptional learning needs to run a school café *together*. *FLex* is a term used by a group of Canadian, Christian educators involved in professional development (Prairie Center for Christian Education, 2015). Teachers are invited to create authentic formational learning experiences that provide “real work with a real need for a real audience.” Involvement in running the café gave each of the students a chance to gain valuable knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours to better prepare them for life after high school. I will present my research as a narrative story depicting, in a case study format, the experiences of diverse students participating in an *inclusive FLex.*

*Key Terms*: employability skills, inclusive, formational learning experience, neurotypical, exceptional learning needs, diverse students

**DEDICATION**

This project has been a work of love whose aim was to provide an inclusive formational learning experience for high school students with and without disabilities. I dedicate this paper to the students who have volunteered at the cafe and continue to work together to make it a successful business that serves our school community. I asked a colleague what she thought the cafe had done for the students at our school. Part of her response included a quote by Jean Vanier (2015), who greatly influenced this work,

So let us listen and look around. Let us experience the dividedness of reality. And then let us see that we are not confined to this dividedness. We can grow! We can choose to walk across the street, to blur the line, and to step over the boundary in order to meet the other. (p. 24)

My prayer is that anyone who reads this paper will be inspired to cross the street and meet others who are different and grow from the experience.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

There are some very special people that need “honorable mention” for their support bringing this project to reality. The inspiration for this project came from seeing the Falcon Café, in action, at Surrey Christian School and asking lots of questions of the teacher responsible, Sean Engbers. To our coffee consultant, Sasha Vandekeere who not only painted cupboards, ordered supplies, developed the menu, trained the baristas, and did countless other jobs; she did it all on her own free time, wanting to give back to her beloved high school. You are such a gem! A huge thank you goes to Jon Mayan, who stepped in this year and took over running *The Bolt* with his Entrepreneurship 11 class. You and your class truly embraced the inclusive heart of the project and are doing amazing things with the *The Bolt*. Your energy, dedication, and enthusiasm for the project are contagious! Thank you to our High School Principal, Kevin Visscher, who supported the project from very early on and never wavered, even when we ran into trouble and had to ask him to invest more capital! To our custodian, Kevin Bouwman, a talented and hardworking person who can fix anything, even an espresso machine! He also loves all the students and embodies what inclusion should look like. To the people who began and continue to grow the idea that is called “Teaching for Transformation”; your philosophy and pedagogy are inspirational and more educators need to hear about and use them! Two very enthusiastic Trinity Western Film students, Megan Doell and Madison Fleischer, did a terrific job making a short video about the project, entitled *Struck by the Bolt.*[[1]](#footnote-1) I also owe a debt of gratitude to my supervising professors, Dr. Ken Pudlas and Dr. Adrienne Castellon, who provided scholarly example, inspiration, support, and encouragement throughout this pursuit of knowledge. Last but not least, to my wonderful family who stood behind me when I got overwhelmed with doing courses at university, writing papers, helping to run *The Bolt* and my own household-thanks for putting up with all the take-out dinners and a messy house!

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**Chapter One**

INTRODUCTION

The topic of transition planning has received much attention in the research for the past two decades. The government and other interested stakeholders in education want every student graduating from high school to have a solid set of skills to help them earn a good living later on in life. To that end, various types of career preparation experiences have been offered to students in high schools including: work experiences, job shadowing, mentorships, apprenticeships, resume writing, mock interview role playing, school-based enterprises, and career fairs (Carter, Trainor, Cakiroglu, Sweeden, & Owens, 2010; Kellems & Morningstar, 2010, p. 67). A study conducted in the United States (Carter et al., 2010) surveyed a large sample of schools to see what types of career preparation activities they offered to students with and without disabilities. They found the three most underrepresented out of those offered, are probably the best for students with disabilities: 1) school-based enterprises, offered at only 52% of schools surveyed; 2) actual job placements with only, 44.1% offered and 3) mentorships were offered at fewer than one third of the schools. They also reported that students with disabilities were not accessing the career preparation activities as often as the typical students (Carter et al., 2010, p. 19).

Secondary schooling has been criticized for not properly preparing students for life in the workforce after graduation (McDonough & Revell, 2010; Lounds & Taylor, 2015). Some researchers believe that transition planning starts too late and suggest that we teach targeted vocational skills at an earlier age (Cimera et al., 2013, p. 89). Other researchers lament the lack of work experiences for students with significant developmental disabilities such as autism spectrum disorder (McDonough & Revell, 2010; Lounds-Taylor, 2015). Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Levine and Marder (2007) reported that students with disabilities were having difficulties getting into the job market or into college after high school graduation. It is also reported that “Employment rates of population not living with severe disabilities are eight times higher than peers living with severe disabilities” (Westbrook, Fong, Nye, Williams, Wendt, & Cortopassi, 2015, p. 16).

**Background**

Awareness of the need to better prepare the students at our school, with exceptional learning needs, for employment after high school, prompted me to try using a pull-out model of instruction to teach employability and life skills, even though I was fully aware of the benefits of inclusion. The strategies I used to teach certain skills often felt quite contrived and inauthentic. According to Jackson, Ryndak, and Wehmeyer (2008/2009): “Self-contained settings cannot replicate the peer conditions that are critical for good instruction, notably in relation to the acquisition of communication skills” (p. 181). Ultimately, it was the students themselves who pointed me back to inclusive practices; they preferred to be in the mainstream classroom, learning alongside their neurotypical peers.

Dissatisfaction with the results of my classes spurred a search for more relevant, engaging and inclusive teaching strategies. I visited a high school cafe run by a diverse group of students rather than by contracted food service professionals. I saw the value in creating this type of school-based enterprise, ensuring that all students are placed in the “foreground” and the idea of “disability” gets pushed to the background (Anderson, 2011). Vanier, the Canadian founder of the L’Arche community where people without disabilities live with people who have, explains that

…work had to be found of a kind which would allow mentally disabled people to develop their particular gifts and give them access to the dignity of a salary, no matter how small. There was an unmistakable happiness that sprang from the disabled person’s discovery that he or she could make something beautiful or useful. Opportunities to nurture that happiness had to be created. (Spink, 2006, p. 72)

Rather than ignore the differences or limits posed by a disability, we must identify the strengths, skills, passions, interests and talents of individuals and how they can contribute to the world (Armstrong, 2012). Educators need to help students identify and nurture these attributes so that eventually they will find careers capable of bringing them joy and fulfillment. It is obvious that Vanier felt compelled to do something for his friends, so that they could be happy. It is similar to how parents feel compelled to do something for their children or teachers for their students. It speaks of looking for ways to tap into who each person is and finding strategies or opportunities that can help them learn and being able to use these skills to make a difference in the world.

We are trying to equip graduates with exceptional learning needs today, who are ready to enter the job market by preparing them to do this alongside their neurotypical peers, in the hopes that in a more inclusive society, they will be their future colleagues. We do not want our graduates with disabilities to work in sheltered workshops, away from the rest of society, as they have in past decades. We want them to be working in careers that utilize their strengths and gifts, alongside people without disabilities. With this vision in mind, the Vancouver Parks Board (2016) has become the first municipal agency in British Columbia to create a training program on Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) for staff and implement a pilot job-creation program for people with ASD (Vanden Hull, 2016).

Another example recently highlighted in a local newspaper told the story of two A&W restaurant owners awarded “The Widening Our World” award “for providing inclusive employment opportunities” (Landreville, 2018). They have employed Lisa who has diverse abilities for over twenty years and whose talent is making fresh onion rings in store. “She is… the longest employee at that store” (Landreville, 2018). Another example of community initiatives to support people with barriers to employment is through the Pacific Community Resources Society (PCRS) which offers a Barista Training Program. The aim of this program is to provide “...support, guidance and training to youth for employment at Starbucks” (PCRS, n.d.). These three examples demonstrate that when given a chance, young people with exceptionalities can find employment that brings them personal fulfillment and satisfaction.

It is a very exciting time in BC as the Ministry of Education is implementing a new curriculum that focuses on better preparing graduates to enter post-secondary institutions, trades programs or the workplace in the 21st Century. My project aligns itself to the new curriculum as it aims to better equip both exceptional and neurotypical students for their careers after graduation. “There is an emphasis on real-life experiences – community involvement, gaining business knowledge, and hands-on learning. These are the kinds of skills that build better students and better citizens” (BC Ministry of Education, 2018b).

**Definition of Terms**

To enhance the clarity in understanding the context and nature of the research, the terminology used is defined as follows.

**Exceptional students or students with exceptional learning needs:** There will be students with various exceptional learning needs involved in the running of the café.

**“**The physical attributes and/or learning abilities of some children...differ from the norm (either below or above) to such an extent that they require an individualized program of special education and related services to fully benefit from education. The term exceptional children includes children who experience difficulties in learning as well as those whose performance is so superior that modifications in curriculum and instruction are necessary to help them fulfill their potential” (“Exceptional students,” 2018).

**Experiential learning:** This term relates to my project in that the experiences available to the students working at the café are offered as a means for them to attain knowledge and skills. Experential learning was described as “…a way to transform experience into learning and reliable knowledge (Kolb, 2015).

**Formational learning experiences (*FLex*):** The students at the high school, both those in the Entrepreneurship 11 class and the exceptional students included on the café team, will be involved in formational learning experiences. “Students must be given the opportunity to do God’s work – real work that is authentic and connected, for a real audience that addresses a real need” (Monsma, 2015).

**Inclusive Education:** Inclusive Education Canada (2017) defines inclusive education as follows: Inclusive education means that all students attend and are welcomed by their neighbourhood schools in age-appropriate, regular classes and are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the life of the school. Inclusive education is about how we develop and design our schools, classrooms, programs and activities so that all students learn and participate together. (par. 1 & 2)

**Integration:**  “Integration is one of the major strategies used to achieve inclusion. With integration, students with special needs are included in educational settings with their peers who do not have special needs, and provided with the necessary accommodations determined on an individual basis, to enable them to be successful there” (BC Ministry of Education, 2016, p. v). Another word for integration is mainstreaming (see below).

**Mainstreaming: “**Mainstreaming is a term which was in use during the early years of the movement toward integration of students with special needs, but which has been replaced by the term ‘integration’” (BC Ministry of Education, 2016, p. vi).

**Neurotypical students:** Armstrong (2012) defines neurotypical students as those referred to as “so-called normal...individuals” (p. 10). Merriam Webster online dictionary defines neurotypical as “not affected with a developmental disorder and especially [autism spectrum disorder](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/autism%20spectrum%20disorder) : exhibiting or characteristic of typical neurological development *neurotypical* students; the *neurotypical* brain.”

**Pull-out model of instruction:** Prior to using the inclusive formational learning experiences described in this project, the researcher used other types of pedalogical strategies including pull-out instruction. **“**Pull-out instruction refers to implementation of individualized programming for alternate programs, courses, and curriculum which occurs outside of the classroom. Instruction should be offered in the least restrictive, most inclusive environment respecting the dignity of the student. Where it has been determined by the program planning team that outcome(s) designed for an individual cannot be optimally met in the classroom setting, pull-out instruction may be required” (Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Education, 2011).

**Service learning:** This type of learning greatly influenced formational learning experiences and serves as a philosophical basis for this project. It involves two essential elements:“...learning through the experience of rendering service in the school or community and actively reflecting upon the experience” (Witmer & Anderson, 1994, p. 3).

**Teaching for transformation:** The Teaching for Transformation Program, as developed by the Prairie Centre for Christian Education (PCCE), provides a framework for the development of authentic and integral Christian learning experiences that are grounded in a transformational worldview with a focus on seeing and living God’s story. (Prairie Centre for Christian Education, 2015, p. 1)

**Project Description**

**Research Problem**

How can we teach high school students new knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours in a way that is meaningful, practical, and valuable in an inclusive setting? My study aims to provide an inclusive formational learning experience at the high school level and assess its effectiveness to teach *all* students. I wish to contribute to the understanding of the process involved in creating an inclusive formational learning experience for high school students and whether or not students perceive value in their participation.

**Research Questions**

1. What are the processes involved in creating an inclusive formational learning experience at the high school level?

2. What are the experiences of students who participate in an inclusive formational learning experience?

**Relevance and Significance**

**Who Will Benefit from This Research?**

It was the intention of this research that all students, collaborating on a diverse team, would gain new knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours through involvement in *The Bolt*. The hope was that not only would team members benefit, but the school community would also witness the impact of inclusive formational learning experiences. There was the added convenience of a cafe for the enjoyment of the entire school community. By documenting the story of this project, including the reflections of the students and various stakeholders such as parents, teachers, teaching assistants and administrators, I hope that other educators will be inspired to initiate similar inclusive formational learning experiences for their students. I invited university students to make a short documentary film about *The Bolt* story so it can be shared visually as well. The students titled the film *Struck by the Bolt*.

**Chapter Two**

LITERATURE REVIEW

**Inclusion: What is It? Why is It So Important?**

Inclusion Education Canada (2017) defines inclusive education as follows:

Inclusive education means that all students attend and are welcomed by their neighbourhood schools in age-appropriate, regular classes and are supported to learn, contribute and participate in all aspects of the life of the school. Inclusive education is about how we develop and design our schools, classrooms, programs and activities so that all students learn and participate together. (par. 1 & 2)

The field of education has been grappling with the idea of including students with exceptionalities into the regular classroom for the last forty years (Winzer, 2011). The human rights movements of the 1970’s brought an end to segregated schools for students with disabilities. The 1980’s saw the introduction of “progressive inclusion” which “…refers to a gradual shift from the segregation and isolation of children with exceptional needs, particularly those having more severe or obvious forms of disability or handicap, to mainstreamed educational settings and programming within the child’s home community” (Lupart & Webber, 2012, p.12). The direction education took in Canada at this time was not imposed by federal laws as it was in the United States but rather by provincial directives placed upon educators to take on more responsibility for students with exceptionalities in their classrooms. The Ministry of Education in British Columbia speaks to the rights of all students “to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education” (2016, p. v). Polat (2011) exhorts educators to view educating people with disabilities with their typical peers as a “step towards social justice” (p. 224).

Students with exceptionalities are said to make academic and social gains when they learn alongside their typical peers (Joffre & Lattanzio, 2010; Pierson & Howell, 2013); “…scholars have developed a compelling body of literature documenting the impact of inclusive services for students with disabilities (Theoharis & Causton, 2014, p. 83). The proponents of inclusion consistently maintain that including students with special needs in general education settings provides them with better adult outcomes (Ryndak, Alper, Montgomery & Storch, 2010, quoted in Westbrook et al., 2015, p.16). Lynch and Irvine (2009) also reported on the “positive benefits attributed to inclusive education” (p. 855).

Many innovative models have been designed by educators faced with the challenge of trying to meet all of the different learning needs in their classrooms. Some of these innovations include: Co- Teaching, Differentiation, Universal Design for Learning, Response to Intervention, Assistive Technologies, and Understanding by Design. Sokal and Katz (2010) refer to these methods as “school division-level approaches that respond to the inherent diversity in inclusive classrooms “ (p. 46).

Two Canadian researchers, Lupart and Webber (2012) advocated for the marriage of what is best practice in special education settings with those from regular education, to create learning opportunities that make sense for each student: “The knowledge base that has been separately developed in segregated special educations classes needs to be synthesized into the broader general education classrooms. Specialized forms of instruction and assessment coming out of special education classes need to become commonly practiced in general education classes to ensure that the learning needs of a more diverse student population are met” (p. 29).

**What are the Barriers to Inclusion?**

Despite all the rhetoric surrounding inclusion, Stevens (2016), conducting an extensive literature review from 2009 to 2016, notes the existence of a “Disparity between research on the positive effects of inclusion and (the) absence of seeing inclusion fully implemented in (Canadian) classrooms” (p. 12). Many teachers report feelings of unpreparedness due to lack of pre-service training in special education (Shanker, 2010; Shanker & Barker, 2016; McCrimmon, 2015), lament the lack of professional development and resources and hold widespread differences in attitudes about the issue of inclusion.

Even though education has come a long way since the days of institutionalization and segregation of people with disabilities, there are still many challenges to inclusive education in Canada (Edmunds & MacMillan, 2010). Statistics from Timmons and Wagner (2008), quoted in Sokal and Katz (2015, p. 45) reported that Manitoba, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island had the highest percentage of students with special needs in highly inclusive settings at 50%, whereas other unnamed provinces lagged behind with only 33% of students included. Compare these statistics to the United States and Canada doesn’t fare very well on the inclusive front. An American study, quoted in Hoppey and McLesky (2013) reported 34% of students with disabilities were educated in general education classrooms for most of the day in 1989-1990; that number grew to 58% in the years 2007-2008( p. 245). Wehman, Schall, Carr, Targett, West, and Cifu (2014) stated: “For most students with higher level of needs, very little time is actually spent in the mainstream courses, with the majority of the students’ time spent in special education classrooms” (p. 30).

Armstrong, an author at the forefront of the inclusion movement asserts, “What is required is a sea change in attitude” (2010, p. 193). There is a paucity of North American research encouraging a shift in the attitudes of educational leaders such as district personnel and school administrators, who are responsible for leading educators, to embrace inclusive practices (Schat, 2016; Maxam & Henderson, 2013; Edmunds & MacMillan, 2010; Eisenman, Pell, Poudel, & Pleet-Odle, 2015; Theoharis & Causton, 2014; Hoppey & McLesky, 2013).

**Elements of Inclusive Schools**

Eisenman et al. (2015) did a five-year qualitative case study of an inclusive high school. They looked at what went on at the school as a whole and specifically what happened in the classrooms where inclusion was successful. The essential elements of inclusive practices described in their study are: intentionality; creativity; collaboration and caring among staff, parents, students, and other stakeholders; community-building amongst the participants; and training, instruction and support for all team members. Self-determination, self-advocacy, and independence were goals for all of the student participants in the project.

**Self-Determination**

One theme that emerged throughout Eisenman et al.’s study was the growth in students’ dispositions and self-determination. Students were taught how to set personal goals, stay organized, and actively participate in their Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings. The school did not have segregated classes. All students with IEPs were integrated into regular classes but had access to learning support coaches. All grade nine students took the Career and Transition Academies course. I ensured that all students, including those with IEPs, were given the opportunity to choose their role in the café. A digital survey uncovered their previous experience, interests and abilities. Throughout the duration of the project, the students were given many opportunities to reflect on their progress towards their personal goals; they were “...guided by the expectation that every person will strive to continually grow and improve, regardless of role or cognitive ability” (Lupart & Webber, 2012, p. 29).

**Communication, Caring, Collaboration, Community, and Creativity**

The inclusive school described by Eisenman et al. (2015) provided professional development for teachers that focused on “collaborative approaches to learning-focused, inclusive instructional practices” (p.109). The relationships and communication between students, staff and parents were vital to student success. It appeared to be a very caring school community: “As Jay observed, his feelings of finally reaching his potential were firmly rooted in experiencing academic competence alongside typical peers” (p. 111). Communication, caring, collaboration, community, and creativity are vital components to inclusion, and are very much a part of the school where I work. Not everything worked all times in every case, therefore students and teachers needed to work hard together, have good communication, and be committed to the success of the project.

**Intentionality, Training, and Support**

*The Bolt* wasa setting where “…relationships between disabled and nondisabled students are consciously nurtured” (Anderson, 2011, p. 17). Research shows the pursuit of inclusion needs to be intentional and requires a lot of time and effort. Sharma, Loreman, and Forlin (2012) point out: “…implementing inclusive education is not an easy task and requires significant change to facilitate improvements in the way teachers have been working in the classroom” (p. 12). Inclusion just doesn’t happen by merely putting students with exceptionalities into regular education classrooms.

An American study (Pierson & Howell, 2013) chronicling the efforts towards full inclusion of students with varying special needs in two large U.S. high schools, required two years in one high school providing training and resources to the staff and guiding the implementation of school-wide inclusion. All students at this school were a part of the regular education classes. Consequently, I was intentional in my project by pairing up students, so that one neurotypical student could work alongside another with a disability. I had a parent and behavioural consultant who came in and talked to the students about how to be relational with students who have disabilities such as ASD. At *The Bolt*, not all the students with exceptional needs were ready to work alongside their neurotypical peers at the outset. In some instances, they needed to train with a special education assistant until they had the requisite skills needed in the cafe environment. However, our preferred practice was to pair an exceptional student with a neurotypical student and have them work shifts together at *The Bolt*. Peer mentoring which pairs students with ASD and typically developing students is highlighted as a key way to improving services for students with autism (Kellems & Morningstar, 2010; Carter et al., 2010, Matthews, 2011).

There was ongoing training and support given to the members of *The Bolt* team from the teacher sponsors as well as an alumnus who will provide the cafe training. Also, the teacher sponsors provided on-site support to the students as they learned how to operate the cafe and mentor the neurotypical students on working alongside students with exceptionalities.

**Service Learning:** **What is It and Why is It Beneficial?**

Service learning involves bringing “…the content learned in the classroom to life through hands-on projects that make a difference in the community” (Sweeden, Carter, and Molfenter, 2010). The historical roots of service learning trace back to Dewey (1938) who stated: “What is unique about service learning is... its aim is to benefit students and the recipients of their service in the community” (Sweeden et al., 2010, p. 43). In our case, the school community being served, as well as the high school students doing the serving, both benefited from the cafe.

Service learning has been praised because it “gives a sense of belonging” to students (Plante, 2009). A benefit welcomed by college students involved in a service-learning project in Scotland, was the small class size and the sense of community among learners, which developed over the course duration (Deeley, 2010). The researcher described many positive impacts that occurred for her students including the development of improved interpersonal skills, communication, self-confidence, social awareness, self-esteem, leadership skills, teamwork/collaboration, and prosocial skills (Deeley, 2010). Other researchers (Plante, Lackey, & Hwang, 2009) also suggest that as a “…direct result of service learning”, students can increase their attitudes of “…compassion, empathy, altruism, moral development, civic engagement, (and) pro-social behavior” (pp. 28-29).

Certain themes emerged from interviews conducted by Deeley during the course of her research. The students felt like they had gained intellectually, developed critical thinking skills and believed that the experiential element was vital to their learning. They valued the chance to discover things for themselves instead of being told what to think. “Critical thinking is essential to create reflective thinkers who are able to use critical judgment to solve problems, and not just passively accept the status quo because they are powerless to change it” (Duarte, 2010, p. 5).

**Essential Elements of Service Learning**

**Relation of Project to Course Work**

Deeley asserts the “essential requirements of service-learning are that the service is connected with the coursework and that, through critical reflection, students make the connections between their service experiences and the abstract concepts of the course work” (p. 43). Shandra and Hogan (2008), who looked at programs designed to prepare students with disabilities for jobs after high school, such as school-sponsored enterprises, argue, “... Participation in school-to-work initiatives can provide actual or simulated job experience that can be useful for building a youth’s resume and demonstrating their future employability” (p. 119). This is the critical piece I wanted to provide for my students: a place where they could practice things learned in class, not just in a simulation or experiment, but in a real-life, work setting within their own school community.

**Critical Reflection Component**

“All the students claimed that the service learning (experience) had changed them.” In conclusion, Deeley (2010) reported, “…service learning involves a combination of cognitive, affective and practical aspects which are connected and drawn together through critical reflection…” (p. 51). There were also negative consequences of critical reflection, which impacted some of the students. Many of them recounted anxious feelings surfacing when they were challenging some of their previously held beliefs, which was an upsetting experience for them. This information better prepared me for any potential negative impacts that reflection exercises may have on our students.

Essentially, the critical reflection component in my project consisted of questionnaires given to the students at the beginning of the project and at the end. The students were asked to share their hopes, expectations, worries, and fears, in terms of working at *The Bolt*, through answering the following questions:

1. Why do you want to become involved in *The Bolt* project?
2. What skills, gifts or strengths do you have which can benefit the project?
3. Do you have any fears, concerns or apprehensions about your involvement in the project?
4. What risks will you take during this project?

**Student Involvement in Project Design**

Other essential elements of service learning are student input into design (Deeley, 2010) and project evaluation (Gent, 2009). Some researchers purport, “Involving the students in identifying critical service areas is an effective way to engage them in the service-learning process from the outset” (Sweeden et al., 2010, p. 3). The creation of advisory boards and a “youth feedback team” (s) can aid you to “evaluate the success and impact of the program” (Sweeden et al., 2010, p. 9). Although the students in my study did not choose their own service project because we had already initiated *The Bolt* as our school-based enterprise; they were still be greatly involved in its operation. The Entrepreneurship 11 class started the year by devising a business plan for the café, ordering the supplies, scheduling volunteer staff, and implementing accounting practices. They also evaluated the success of their efforts and explored new ways to improve the operation of *The Bolt* throughout the year.

**What are the Pitfalls to Service Learning?**

Swinton (2012) and Gent (2011) argue that service learning should not be used to reinforce the negative depictions often surrounding people with disabilities such as the notion that they are helpless. For example, some service learning projects aim to help groups in society who are less fortunate, such as the poor, homeless, disabled, and elderly, frustrating people who are against “ableism.” Ableism is described by Hutcheon and Wolbring (2012) as “ …a concept (that) describes, and is reflected in, individual and group perceptions of certain abilities as essential”. *The Bolt* does not fall under this category; the community that we are serving is the school community which includes everyone. We were not reaching out to help people who are less fortunate by operating *The Bolt*. Students with disabilities were not intended to be the recipients or focus of the service learning; all students were offered the chance to be involved in the operation of *The Bolt*. The students in the Entreprenuership 11 class initiated a promotion of gift cards this year and some of the proceeds went to a local organization. Some people may see this as a form of ableism, but the intention of the students was to promote awareness of diversity and partner with a cmmunity organization that has the same philosophy.

Inclusion in service learning is lacking and there are more segregated classes of service learning in the United States than inclusive ones (Dymond, Chen, Rah and Renziglia, 2013).Cease-Cook, Fowler and Test (2015) describe seven different types of work-based learning experiences that can occur in secondary school settings for students with disabilities: career exploration, job shadowing, job sampling, service learning, internships, apprenticeships and paid employment. Unfortunately, none of these experiences occur in inclusive settings.

Carter, Sweeden and Moss (2012) lament the lack of participation in volunteer activities for students with disabilities, compared to their typical peers as a “missed opportunity” (p. 45). He and his colleagues spearheaded a project to help schools “…explore new avenues to more fully engage students with and without disabilities in high school community life” (p. 45). Some of the schools involved in this project used their funds to implement inclusive service learning.

**What Is Inclusive Service Learning?**

Inclusive service learning is service learning that includes all types of students. Proponents of inclusive service learning in schools such as Dr. Lerman, the Director of Inclusive Schools Climate Initiative, suggest that when developing inclusive service learning projects, it is imperative that “…general and special education students *work together* and be given opportunities to “*reflect* on service initiatives” (Wangaard, 2015).

Carter et al. (2012) presents an extremely helpful list of “Action Steps for Connecting Students to Inclusive Service Experiences” (pp. 7-9). It points out that inclusive service learning can also benefit students with severe disabilities who can work on “transition related skills.” These skills are often a focus of Individual Education Plans (IEP) for special education students before high school graduation. Inclusive service learning for students with disabilities may result in improvements in communication, problem solving, leadership, vocational, and academic skills. This article supports the value of incorporating inclusive service learning into special education programming, which is the aim of my entire project.

Sweeden et al. (2012) maintain, “…well designed service activities place youth with significant disabilities in valued roles to contribute to their school and community, work alongside their peers, and gain valuable community-based experiences” (p. 2). For these reasons I wanedt all of the students to have an inclusive experience, so that they could serve their community and learn important life lessons while doing so. As a result, *The Bolt* is a place where the “…unique contributions of each person to the community’s well-being is valued” (Anderson, 2011).

My hope was to help all the students discover and fully develop their strengths and talents. Social Role Valorization (SRV), a theory put forth by Wolfensberger (2000), focuses on people’s competencies, not their deficiencies, in helping them reach their full human potential. Cocks, a researcher from Australia, has done much to promote services for people with disabilities based on the SRV theory. Cocks (2001) explains that there are ten themes in the SRV theory and number six, “Personal competency enhancement and the development model” is most relevant to my project. He continues, “The positive assumptions of the development model underpin the importance of the enhancement of competencies particularly for devalued people who have impairments” (p. 15). People with disabilities have to be given the chance to contribute to society; if their competencies are not yet fully developed, they need to be given the chance to develop them. That is our job as educators. The additional benefit to developing their competencies is the positive enhancement of their image to society. Cocks asserts that “It is role valorizing to enhance the perceived value of the social roles of a person, a group, or an entire class of people, and doing so is called social role valorization. There are two major strategies for pursuing this goal for (devalued) people: (1) enhancement of people’s social image in the eyes of others, and (2) enhancement of their competencies, in the widest sense of the term” (Osburn, 2006, p. 5).

B.C.’s new educational curriculum is focused on providing learning opportunities to build all students’ competencies in six key areas:

1. Communication
2. Creative Thinking
3. Critical Thinking
4. Positive and Personal Cultural Responsibility
5. Personal Awareness and Responsibility
6. Social Responsibility

The vision of *The Bolt* aligns perfectly with these competencies; all students involved in *The Bolt* had opportunities to enhance each of these competencies throughout their entire experience. The following section provides definitions of the core competencies from the Ministry of Education and examples by which *The Bolt* may enhance the development of these competencies in the students:

1. **Communication**

Throughout their participation at *The Bolt*, students were required to interact with other team members as well as with the customers they served. During the training and team meetings a lot of information was communicated, requiring speaking and listening skills. The students in the Entrepreneurship 11 class were also afforded many different types of communication opportunities such as writing emails, letters, PowerPoint presentations, interviews, school announcements, schedules; talking to suppliers, business owners and merchants; speaking to school personnel and to the school community during assemblies. These are the types of opportunities targeted by the communication competency which “… encompasses the set of abilities that students use to impart and exchange information, experiences and ideas, to explore the world around them, and to understand and effectively engage in the use of digital media” (BC’s New Curriculum, 2018).

1. **Creative Thinking**

The students were asked to operate, or be a part of operating, a school-based enterprise. Therefore, they experienced first-hand what a business owner encounters on a daily basis. They had to develop a business plan which included a mission statement, marketing initiatives and operational procedures. Such opportunities enabled them to cover the creative thinking competency which “… involves the generation of new ideas and concepts that have value to the individual and others, and the development of these ideas and concepts from thought to reality” (BC’s New Curriculum, 2018).

1. **Critical Thinking**

For the students charged with running a business there were countless tasks to initiate and problems to solve which is exactly what the critical thinking competency involves, “… making judgements based on reasoning” (BC’s New Curriculum, 2018).

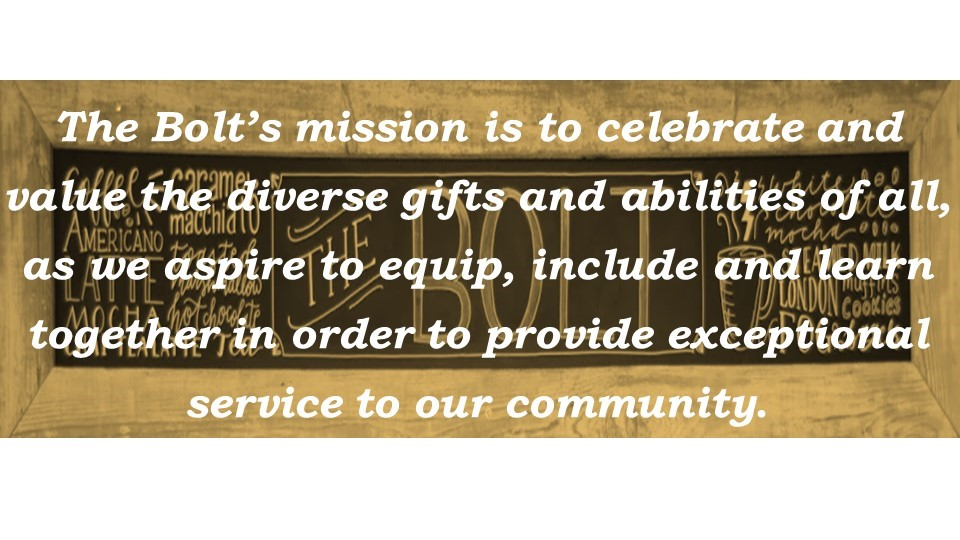
1. **Positive Personal and Cultural Responsibility**

The students involved in *The Bolt* were fortunate to have many international students who travelled from other countries to study at our school. By working together at *The Bolt* they had a unique opportunity to share their backgrounds with each other. One obvious way is that for many of the international students, English was a new language, making it difficult for them to communicate; this provided the Canadian students and teachers the chance to teach them English speaking skills as well as showing empathy and hospitality to people who were new to our country. Again, this type of experience enabled the students to meet the requirements of the positive and personal and cultural identity competency which “… involves the awareness, understanding and appreciation of all the facets that contribute to a healthy sense of oneself. It includes awareness of one’s family background, heritage(s), language(s), beliefs and perspectives in a pluralistic society. (BC’s New Curriculum, 2018)

1. **Personal Awareness Responsibility**

The students became aware of their gifts, strengths and their areas in need of growth. *The Bolt* team was responsible for developing the menu and determined if the food choices provided at *The Bolt* were healthy choices for the school community. They also had to use their critical thinking skills, an example of how the competencies have a tendency to overlap. Stress was encountered by the students as they attempted to run the cafe, therefore stress management and perseverance were required, another way in which the personal awareness and responsibility was met. This competency “… includes the skills, strategies, and dispositions that help students to stay healthy and active, set goals, monitor progress, regulate emotions, respect their rights and the rights of others, manage stress and persevere in difficult situations” (BC’s New Curriculum, 2018).

1. **Social Responsibility**

*The Bolt’s* mission statement, created by the Entrepreneurship 11 students, is reproduced in figure 1, and reflects the social responsibility competency by stating:****

The task of running a school-based cafe is not an easy one and required that all of the team members fulfilled their duties to each other, to their teacher sponsors, and school community. For example if they were not able to commit to a certain shift, it was their responsibility to let the team know, so that a replacement could be found. They had to be trusted with the cash and to be able to clean up the cafe space when they worked a shift. They were expected to treat each team member with respect as well as the customers they served. In terms of the environment, composting food waste and recycling plastic and paper items was required. These types of social responsibilities involved “… the ability and disposition to consider the interdependence of people with each other and the natural environment; to contribute positively to one’s family, community, society, and the environment; to resolve problems peacefully; to empathize with others and appreciate their perspectives; and to create and maintain healthy relationships. (BC’s New Curriculum, 2018)

Lee and Carter (2012) outlined the skills and competencies required by today’s employers who want employees who are capable of “…demonstrating personal integrity in work, following instructions, showing respect for others, being on time” (p. 994). They point out that “strong social-related work skills” are “critical to the success” of people with High Functioning ASD. Social skills are a critical component to being job ready for all students and they can be an inherent skill deficit to many students with disabilities including ASD and intellectual delays. Therefore the authors recommend that “… social- and work-related instruction should be a prominent focus of instruction and support within the secondary curriculum” (p. 995). A study by Chiang, Cheung, Li and Tsai (2012) showed that the chances of employment were “…up to five times higher for students with higher social skills” (p. 1840).

**Formational Learning Experiences**

What does *Teaching for Transformation* (TFT)have that other pedagogical approaches are missing? In short, God! I teach at a Christian high school, and the Christian values and beliefs embedded in TFT make sense for our students. Smith (2009), a contemporary Christian author, writes:

Education is not primarily . . . concerned with providing information; rather, education most fundamentally is a matter of formation, a task of shaping and creating a certain kind of people. These people are distinct because of what they love and desire – the kingdom of God. (p. 16)

The main idea behind TFT is grounding educational practices in a transformational worldview which celebrates living with a divinely inspired purpose. There are three essential practices highlighted in TFT: Biblical Throughlines, Storylines and Formational Learning Experiences. For the purposes of this current research, only the practice of *FLex* will be described. Providing students with chances to become active in the Kingdom story is the central idea of *FLex* . Through *FLex*, students are given an opportunity to

…do God’s work NOW – to be active and creative in God’s story. Meaningful work creates a sense of purpose in their lives, and draws students more powerfully to God’s story…. Formational Learning Experiences are designed to form the students’ hearts and actions as well as their minds, equipping students to become people who live and breathe God’s story. Research and experience suggest that formational learning best emerges from experiences that get at our gut and touch our heart. (Prairie Centre for Christian Education, 2015, p. 2)

The philosophical underpinning of TFT is concerned with the spiritual formation of students, not merely their academic performance. My deep hope was that through their participation in this particular *FLex*, the students would have an opportunity to grow as Christians, by reflecting on their learning, as well as giving back to the school community.

There are various secular pedagogical approaches with a similar desire to promote students who can think for themselves, including: Service Learning, Experiential Learning, Invitational Education, Transformative Learning, and Deeper Learning. TFT is grounded in these types of pedagogies. Antithetical to this type of thinking are educators who have the attitude that they are the ‘sage on the stage’ who tend to fill students full of their own ideas about the world and how it should be. They typically employ a lecture type of teaching style (Gregory & Burkman, 2012, p. 67). The word education comes from the Latin word ‘educare’, which means to draw forth. Teachers who act as ‘the guide on the side’ are those who “...stand at the students’ sides as they begin to explore new ideas” (Bahls, 2012, p. 12) They see their job as providing students with the tools necessary for thinking and learning. “Learners must decide to undergo the process themselves otherwise, educators are venturing into indoctrination, manipulation, and coercion” (Cranton, 2006, p. 133). These pedagogical influences behind TFT are the reasons behind the TFT language of ‘invite’, ‘nurture’ and ‘empower’ with regards to how educators can work alongside of students.

Darryl Deboer, a local TFT educator, (2017- personal email), said the following:

At the end of the day, that is the beauty of TFT. While it draws on philosophical ideas (James K. Smith, Richard Rohr) and combines pedagogical approaches (Experiential Learning, Deeper Learning), it is the creation of something new that is specific for Christian education as it is rooted in THE Story.

I believe that TFT has much relevance for Christian educators and to date there has been little published about it in the academic literature. One key phrase used by TFT educators refers to living as “peculiar people”, that is, people who live differently than everyone else. Although I was eager to incorporate Christian principles into my project, I was aware that TFT never explicitly mentions the inclusion of all students. Sadly, this is true of many educational reform initiatives, as Luppart and Webber (2012) point out “... general reform literature has typically failed to incorporate coverage of issues pertaining to educationally challenged and gifted students” (p. 10). Inclusive pedagogical practices are those opportunities offered to individuals “...to participate, to be recognized, to engage, and to be respected” (Burnard, 2008, pg. 62). Therefore, in order to develop an inclusive formational learning experience for high school students, I combined inclusive service learning and formational learning experience and renamed it *inclusive FLex.*

**Chapter Three**

METHODS

My aim in conducting this research was to fill a need in the literature describing the experiences of inclusive formational experiences from the perspectives of the students and placing it within the context of TFT. I chose to do qualitative research using a case study format. Qualitative methods and a constructivist-transformative paradigm were used to “gain an understanding of the realities constructed by people” (Mertens, 2015, p. 237). I studied the lived experience of twelve students from an Entrepreneurship 11 class as well as three students with exceptional learning needs, who worked alongside each other at *The Bolt*. I also sought insight from parents of students with exceptionalities who worked at *The Bolt* as well as education assistants, administration and the coffee consultant who was integral to this project. I was in the natural setting with my students and tried to relate their experiences as they described them to me. It is important for qualitative researchers to get to know the community of people at the research site. Choosing to conduct the study at my workplace provided an advantage of already knowing the people involved.

A case study was my chosen research method to scrutinize the implementation of an inclusive FLex at our school. “Case study research is an investigative approach used to thoroughly describe complex phenomena, such as recent events, important issues, or programs, in ways to unearth new and deeper understandings of these phenomena” (Mertens, 2015, p. 245 quoting T.S. Moore, Lapan, & Quartaroli, 2012, pp. 243-244). Being a very inclusive community, trying to implement TFT, made the school an excellent place to conduct this research, eliminating the need to introduce totally new concepts. The school was launching a new Entrepreneurship 11 class, whose responsibility was to operate *The Bolt*. Historically, it was leadership students who took on the school snack shop as a project, but lately the enthusiasm and efforts in the snack shop had been waning. Fortunately, the renovation of the present kitchen locale at the outset of this project, infused some life back into the snack shop initiative.

What follows is an attempt to document and interpret how the students experienced the opportunity of an inclusive FLex. This is one of the goals of qualitative studies in special education presented by Brantlinger, Jimenez and Klinger (2005): “These types of studies enable us to explore the nature and extent to which a practice has a constructive impact on individuals with disabilities, their families, or on settings where they tend to work, reside, or be educated” (p. 196). Telling the story of *The Bolt* will provide firsthand insights into the impact that an inclusive FLex had on student learning. Data collection occured through observations, interviews and student reflections. I explained the study and the expectations of the participants to the students in November, 2017 and sent an information letter home to their parents or guardians who had to give their permission for the students to participate. The participants were twelve grade 11 students enrolled in the Entrepreneurship 11 class during the current 2017-2018 school year as well as several students from grades 9-12 who volunteer on The Bolt team.

The students were asked to share their hopes, expectations, worries, and fears, in terms of working at The Bolt, through answering the following questionnaire:

1. Why do you want to become involved in *The Bolt* project?
2. What skills, gifts or strengths do you have which can benefit the project?
3. Do you have any fears, concerns or apprehensions about your involvement in the project?
4. What risks will you take during this project?

I was able to access class work done by the Entrepreneurship students to add to my data regarding their inclusive formational learning experiences. The classroom teacher created a Google Classroom enabling my access to all student assignments, some of which included critical reflections about their involvement in the project.

Reliability checks for accuracy in my accounts of their experiences were necessary to ensure that I shared the participants’ voices in the study rather than my own. Avard, Black, Samuel, Grenier, and Knoppers (2012) assert: “Qualitative research is an excellent method to permit researchers to give children and adolescents a voice and to help understand from a child’s (youth’s) viewpoint, their cognitive, emotional, behavioural and health issues” (p. 40). Mertens points out that it is important to tell their story without relating your own bias which makes member checking and peer debriefing critical in qualitative research (Mertens, 2015). I conducted formal and informal check-ins with the stakeholders in the research. The consent forms, signed by all participants, included the agreement to present my report drafts during a debriefing session (see Appendix A).

Not only was it critical for my research that I undestood the stories of the participants, it is also important in terms of inclusive practice as Katz, Bendu, and Epp (2012) point out: “A prerequisite for successful inclusion is the meaningful dialogue between those involved and those who experience the process” (p. 3).

According to Brantlinger et al. (2005) “Qualitative research is not done for purposes of generalization but rather to produce evidence based on the exploration of specific contexts and particular individuals” (p. 203). Providing sufficient detail helps make transferability possible. This careful description of time, place, context and culture is known as “thick description” (Mertens, 2015, p. 271). Provision of a chain of evidence (similar to an audit trail for accounting) is necessary so that readers can determine if there is sufficient data to support my conclusions.

**Chapter Four**

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

My aim in conducting this project was to learn about the process of setting up an *inclusive FLex* and assessing its effectiveness as an engaging and relevant teaching strategy for all students, exceptional and typical alike. From the responses of both the students and other stakeholders it is evident that they had a truly positive, inclusive formational learning experience, gained valuable skills and increased their knowledge and appreciation about inclusion, during their involvement in *The Bolt*.

Mertens (2015) emphasizes the vital importance of reciprocity, or the act of giving back, to the community after the study is over. My project added to the school community while at the same time taught valuable life skills to those students directly involved in its operations. With so many benefits at various levels, I foresee the cafe continuing long after my project is over. I hope to extend the benefits of my project to educators worldwide by promoting the value of creating inclusive formational experiences for their students.

I am using the “Action Steps for Connecting Students to Inclusive Service Experiences” from Carter et al. (2012, pp. 7-9) as a framework to tell the story of *The Bolt*. As the story unfolds, it demonstrates our attempts at “positive niche construction”, a phrase coined by Armstrong (2012) which sees “creating conditions that minimize disabilities and maximize abilities” (p. 207).

**Step #1: Identify Compelling Service Opportunities**

As previously discussed, I was looking for more effective ways to teach life skills and employability skills to students in high school who have exceptional learning needs. I was fortunate to visit a local high school who was achieving this by having them work alongside their typical peers at a student-run cafe. I took my life skills class to see the cafe and meet the students who run it. We were very impressed by the design of their cafe and the products they served. We took notes, pictures and talked to the students and staff. We came back to our school, polled our students to find out what they would like to buy at our own cafe and then we conducted product testing within the school community.

We were fortunate that already considering a cafe, our school had conducted some fundraising and put aside a considerable amount of money. Students had previously been given the chance for input into the design of a cafe and location within the school. The administration was fully behind the project; hence the wheels were already set in motion to choose the cafe project. Schools wishing to conduct *inclusive formational learning experiences* without such a history, would be advised to brainstorm potential activities that already exist in their own community, develop community partnerships, or start new initiatives independently (Carter et al., 2012, p. 53).

The dream of opening a cafe at our school began taking shape as I continued to enlist the help of my segregated Life Skills class (2015-2016). We took down the existing kitchen cabinets, sanded and painted them. During the summer, I oversaw the installation of new countertops, flooring and a contemporary backsplash. We also used much of the funds for start-up costs including the purchase of a used, high-end, espresso machine, a used panini machine, a brand new dishwasher and all the other products necessary to run a cafe. Having a graduate from our high school with eight years of invaluable expertise in the food and beverage industry, committed to our project, provided us with a “Cafe Consultant” who trained us in operations of a cafe. The hours of groundwork inviting the staff and students to become involved in the project was critical to positive niche construction (Armstrong, 2012). I had meetings with teachers, educational assistants, and administration, seeking their input to ensure that everyone on staff was behind the project.

The second year can be considered the pilot year of this project (2016-2017). The school year began with a contest to rename the newly renovated kitchen. All kinds of names were suggested but the winner was *“The Bolt”*, named by a grade eleven student, in honor of the team name of the school. At a school assembly he was awarded a gift certificate to spend at *The Bolt*. It was fitting that the winner is also a student who has exceptional learning needs, the student demographic *The Bolt* is aimed at doing more to support. *The Bolt* officially opened after Thanksgiving in 2016 and was the result of hard work and dedication of two grade twelve leadership students who took *The Bolt* on as their leadership project for the year. The two students were supported by several staff members who guided their efforts to run the café, which was a considerable task, akin to running their very own business. When asked to write an operations manual for future students, they shared that they did not initially fully understand the amount of work involved but they learned how to do everything from making handcrafted hot beverages with a high-end espresso machine, to baking cookies and cinnamon buns, scheduling and supervising several shifts per week as well as ordering the products for the cafe.

**Step #2: Connect Youth to Relevant Experiences**

Since the inception of the project, the Educational Support Services staff has looked at ways to support students with exceptional learning needs through working at *The Bolt*. The Educational Assistants (E.A.s) created a “sticky note wall” enabling us to “Review students’ IEPs to identify goals that could be addressed through service activities” (Carter et al., 2012, p. 53). Skills, linked to IEP goals, for various students which could be practiced at *The Bolt* included: washing dishes, cutting food, cleaning the cafe space, stocking shelves, ordering products, counting money, doing laundry and serving customers. Other sticky notes included ideas about attitudes and behaviours which students could learn such as: problem solving, communication, and job etiquette. We used “person-centered planning to uncover interests and goals of students” (Carter et al., 2012, p. 53). For example, we knew that one student needed to focus on functional math skills, so she was given the task of counting the cash after each shift as well as rolling the coins, preparing them for bank deposits. Another student who has ASD was very particular about cleanliness, therefore we focused on his interests and gave him the opportunity to do the dishes, recycling and cleaning of *The Bolt*. Another young lady who has ASD works on one of the goals from her IEP regarding communication skills. (See Appendix B for a picture of the “Sticky Note” wall.)

**Step #3: Set Goals for Service Experiences**

With the help of our “Cafe Consultant” the students were given training in all areas of the cafe operation including making drinks (Barista), doing the cash (Cashier), and serving the customers food and beverages (Floater). This current school year (2017-2018) is the one in which the data for this project is being compiled. The school saw the potential of a school-based enterprise in the café and decided to offer a new class called Entrepreneurship 11. They were fortunate to find a teacher willing to take on the project with his class of twelve students. He spent a lot of time teaching them the theoretical underpinnings of running a business. Early in September, we met with the Entrepreneurship 11 class and other students who had signed up as volunteers, including students with exceptional learning needs, who had been invited to participate. We conducted a survey with each of the team members to find out which roles in the cafe they preferred. (Appendix F contains The Bolt’s Training Outline.) The consultant, classroom teacher and myself identified students who could take on lead positions during each shift. This pedagogical process involved inviting and nurturing the students, engaging them in the project itself, and aligning their strengths and needs to what they could offer to *The Bolt* and what they could learn.

**Step #4: Ensure Service Activities are Inclusive**

We made sure that the service activities were inclusive by advertising to the whole school community when recruiting volunteers so that no one was turned away; everyone had the chance to work at the cafe if they desired. We were also intentional about asking students with exceptional needs to join the team in order to provide inclusive formational learning experiences for them. Each shift we aimed to include one person who has an exceptional learning need. This required a lot of planning in terms of support. We either tried to have a peer who was competent and comfortable working alongside an exceptional student or we had a teacher or E.A. available for support.

Training activities were always inclusive. At one training session when the cafe consultant taught us how to make milkshakes, a student with ASD was the first person to volunteer to try making a milkshake; she was there on her own, without a parent or E.A.. One activity which was not inclusive involved a student with ASD who counted the cash after each shift with the assistance of an E.A. However, we saw this as a good use of his time to gain functional math skills as he was not yet comfortable to work in the busy atmosphere of *The Bolt.*

A crucial part to this action step is to “ Elicit help from peers on how students with disabilities will actively participate” (Carter et al., 2012, p. 53). The intent of service learning is that students are given the chance to voice their opinions, make suggestions and be active in their learning. The classroom teacher enlisted the students to think of ways that the team could work effectively together without explicitly referring to students with disabilities.

**Step #5: Support Students Effectively and Naturally**

Our staff did an excellent job at playing a “facilitative rather than a leadership role” (Carter et al., 2012, p. 53). There were many E.A.s who saw the opportunity for their students to learn valuable life skills. Therefore, they tried to find times in their students’ schedules when they could help do things for *The Bolt* such as laundry or baking cinnamon buns or cookies. Initially, I was doing a lot of things that the students were capable of, including shopping for some of the products. Upon learning that some of the students had their drivers’ license and were allowed off school property, I gave them the responsibility of getting important errands done. Other times, students with IEP blocks went to the grocery store with EA support, to purchase necessary items which fulfilled some of their IEP goals such as purchasing items, counting change and talking with customer service people. There were days when we were prevented from opening because the orders weren’t done on time or students didn’t show up for their shifts and we were understaffed. The idea of letting natural consequences happen so that student learning could occur was seen as a means of empowerment. Another idea we implemented is to “Encourage learning and friendship-building opportunities by planning ongoing activities” (Carter et al., p. 54). We have tried to have monthly “staff” meeting for *Bolt* team members which presents a challenge as the high school students have many competing meetings and activities. Typically, the type of students who get involved with school projects are the ones who get involved with many school projects simultaneously! We try to ensure that the staff meetings are a fun time for students to get together and usually incorporate some food or beverage sampling as part of the activity. We also try to acknowledge the team, letting them know how much we appreciate their efforts. We have awarded “Bolt Team Members of the Month” to single out students who are really working hard. We gave out thank you cards at a school assembly and had a slideshow with photos of *The Bolt* to show our appreciation in front of the entire school community.

We would also like to have a “staff” party to celebrate the accomplishments of *The Bolt*, to say thank you to team members who are serving their community and as a chance to build friendships amongst the team.

**Step #6: Evaluate the Success and Impact of the Program**

One of the recommendations is to “Embed student reflection opportunities into every activity” (Carter et al., 2012, p. 9). While I think it would be valuable to do this more often, the reality of finding time for students to write reflections after every activity is unrealistic. We were able to give the students a formal opportunity to reflect on their experience of working at *The Bolt* two times.

*Question #1:*The reflection question aimed to find the reason why they chose to be a part of *The Bolt?* Many of the Entrepreneurship 11 students answered honestly by saying that they really hadn’t chosen it; one student even mentioned that he had been “voluntold.” Many of these students described feelings of disappointment as they had originally signed up for an Accounting 11 class, but the school had widened the focus of the course from accounting to entrepreneurship. Others thought they were going to be taking a law course which couldn’t be offered due to low enrollment. It seems that all of the students, when given a chance to be honest and reflect, said that after their initial disappointment and subsequent involvement in the project they had more positive feelings about the course. (See Appendix C for more extensive samples of student quotes.)

*Question #2:* The students were asked to reflect on their personal skills, gifts and strengths which they felt could help *The Bolt*. The responses from the international students provides evidence about the power of inclusion and diversity. Even though these young people have limited proficiency in English, they have other skills that they could offer. These students and others show that everyone on the team has something to offer whether it is behind the scenes work or up front working with the customers. The number of strengths, skills and gifts mentioned by the students was staggering and testifies to the power of teamwork (see Appendix D for more student quotes). The list of skills, gifts and strengths listed from all the students involved included:

* creativity
* artistic ability
* organized/efficient/orderly
* enthusiastic/motivated/eager
* friendly/like to see others smile/serving customers with a smile
* confidant/cool under pressure/independent
* positive/optimistic
* good with money/budgeting
* fast learner
* teaching ability/leadership skills
* hard-working/good work ethic/willingness to serve and learn/servant-worker
* team player/ability to work well with everyone
* technological knowledge
* problem-solving abilities
* previous experience in the food-service industry
* different cultural background

*Question #3:* The studetns were given the oppporunity to examine their fears, concerns or apprehensions about their involvement in the project. By far the most common fear cited by students was of “messing up” an order or not knowing how to use the espresso machine properly. Others mentioned their shyness as a concern knowing that working with customers could be a difficulty for them. Some people are not as good as others at handling money, dealing with budgeting or finances and said that these tasks could be “overwhelming” or “daunting.” The international students naturally commented on their lack of English speaking skills and also their ability to understand what others are saying. A couple of students mentioned that as far as running the business, they were worried about the competition near the school from the extremely popular “Tim Horton’s” coffee shop. They also worried about how the school community would accept the changes made from the previous concession stand which had run for many years in the same location at the school and served items such as “Mr. Noodles” and other less nutritious foods. Fortunately working at *The Bolt* proved to be a great place to overcome fears such as shyness or trying a new task, as evident from the perspective shared by one student: “When I was first scheduled to work our cash at the grand opening, I was pretty nervous because I had never done anything of the sort, but it wasn’t as bad as I had anticipated, and I can easily work with our customers without worry.” More student responses are included in Appendix D.

*Question #4:*The final question given at the outset of their participation in the project asked the students to share how they thought they were going to take risks during the duration of the project. Not surprisingly, many of the young people decided to work on areas that they had determined were areas of fear, concern or apprehension. For example, several of those who said they are shy, wrote that they were going to try to talk more. Others mentioned taking on challenges and unfamiliar tasks such as doing the orders, dealing with invoices and reimbursements as well as being in charge of promotions, were areas that they felt would “stretch” them. One student saw the inherent opportunity offered by the class: “I hope to step out of my comfort zone in any way that I am called upon to do, because I feel that working at the Bolt is a valuable way to gain work experience in a real setting, but that doesn’t have dire consequences if I mess up. So I would like to gain whatever kind of real experience that is required of me, while I’m still in the ‘practice’ setting of the Bolt” (see more student quotes in Appendix D).

After their involvement with the project for three months, the students were given a follow-up questionnaire. When asked what was the best thing about being part of *The Bolt* Team, many students said they enjoyed working with their friends as well as with other students from different grades. Some said they enjoyed talking to new people at school and giving them drinks to enjoy. Someone commented “It is always good to work as a team.” Others commented on the skills they appreciated learning including how to use an espresso machine, how to clean an espresso machine, and someone said that they learned to “stay calm even when there is lots to be done.” Many of the students were able to offer excellent suggestions about how to improve the success of the cafe including ideas on how to deal with freshness of several of the perishable products, lowering prices to attract more business, increasing advertising through word of mouth and other means.

One of the initiatives taken on by the Entrepreneurship 11 class this year was to look at how *The Bolt* was run last year as well as its mission. One student conducted a 30 minute interview with several staff members and students to find out their experiences as customers at *The Bolt* during its first year of operation. They looked at the products to sell and the created a mission statement and tagline “The Bolt is a Small Business with a Big Purpose.” They created an instagram account to attract followers and customers. The grand re-opening of *The Bolt* this year occurred on November 17, 2017. Customers were encouraged to visit and save 10% on their purchase by showing they were instagram followers. They also gave out free samples to entice sales!

During our pilot year of operation we used an application called Square on the ipad which only took cash as payment. This year, the Entrepreneurship 11 class responded to customer requests of having debit and credit available, by adding these options to our system. Another amazing addition that the class initiated was “The Bolt Gives Back” campaign. The campaign was launched just before Christmas to not only increase sales but to partner with an outside agency from the school who is actively promoting the values of diversity and inclusion. The students chose to make available gift cards, which customers could purchase for $10, with 10% of the funds going towards our local chapter of the Canadian Community Living Association (see Appendix F for information on *The Bolt* initiatives).

Overall it would appear that *The Bolt* was a very successful and effective way to teach students employability skills. The information obtained from the student volunteers, in the second questionnaire, confirmed the positive benefits. Questionnaire #2 was completed by 16 high school students who volunteer at *The Bolt*. All of them report they benefited from their experience and felt that it is a good way to teach job and life skills to high school students. The most frequently occurring response for new skills learned was teamwork; for new attitudes, community service; for new behaviours, working efficiently and for new knowledge, creative thinking. Many of the students were able to offer excellent suggestions about how to improve the success of the café. Read student responses in Appendix D.

In addition to the students who were involved in *The Bolt*, several interested stakeholders including administration and parents, completed questionnaires. Virtually everyone responded favorably, stating that T*he Bolt* is an excellent way for students to learn business skills such as communication, teamwork and problem solving. One parent reported that she really appreciates the real life experience that her daughter is getting in a place where it is “safe” to make mistakes, giving her the confidence to enter the job market in the future and increasing her sense of belonging to the school community. Another said that she thinks her sons’ involvement in the project will be the highlight of his entire first year in high school (see Appendix E for further stakeholder comments).

**Chapter Five**

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

One limitation to my study is that in the year it was conducted there were no exceptional students enrolled in the Entrepreneurship 11 class unless we included the ELL/International students. However, many exceptional students were involved in running *The Bolt*. Although they worked shifts and were involved in its’ operation, they were not enrolled in the actual class that had the responsibility of running *The Bolt*. I hope that in the future, students with exceptional needs will be encouraged to enroll in Entrepreneurship 11, in order to benefit from the entire experience from the classroom to the cafe.

The best way to foster ownership in students is by allowing them to choose the project themselves (Deeley, 2010; Gent, 2009; Sweeden et al., 2015). However, as noted earlier, rather than choosing their own *inclusive FLex*, students were tasked with running *The Bolt*. I hope that educators patterning my project will be able to encourage students to choose their own initiative.

Another difficulty with my topic was how to capture the subjective experiences such as student spiritual transformations, due to their involvement in the project. When asked if they had grown spiritually during the project only three students stated that they had; however, spiritual growth was not something that was ever discussed with the volunteers. As Groen (2008), from the University of Calgary, points out, there is inherently “soulwork” involved in learning that transforms, a “spiritual aspect” that is “difficult to quantify” (p. 20). Citci, Ariday, and Yuskelt (2010) as quoted in Groen (2008) warn:

… we can never expect nor require our learners to undergo transformational learning in any course…As we evaluate the work of students, we cannot assess the quality of their work based on the level of spiritual transformation. Our role is to create the safe space, the supportive community, and processes that encourage deep reflective learning through dialogue, journaling, and storytelling, so that our learners, if they choose, may experience those deep shifts of ongoing spiritual transformation. (p. 202)

I did my best to capture the experience of the students, but in the end, their experience is part of their own individual story. In future, the volunteers could be provided further means to deepen their experience, in a more spiritual way.

Initially I had wanted to measure the attitudinal shifts of the typical students before and after they had worked with the exceptional students, which was beyond the scope of this study. My hypothesis, based on the literature was, that their attitudes would improve. Cocks (2001), promoting the theory of social role valorisation, speaks about the importance of enhancing “the social image of vulnerable people” as well as enhancing “their competencies” (p. 14). I think that the *inclusive FLex* offered by The Bolt, at our school, not only bolstered students employability skills (students’ competencies), but also enhanced the social image of persons with disabilities. Although it may have provided interesting data, the objective measurement of these sklls and social image perceptions was beyond the scope of this research. Exploring attitudinal change would be a worthwhile endeavor for future research, potentially bolstering the argument that inclusion benefits both typical students as well as those with exceptionalities.

Because inclusive formational learning experiences go beyond traditional classroom settings, they can provide new insights to the literature concerning the benefits of inclusion. It appears that educators feel like inclusion is a given, even though the disparity between theory and practice has a wide gap. I believe more research is needed to see how inclusion can be more effectively implemented by the use of models such as *inclusive formational learning experiences*. This project provides educators with compelling evidence described by students as well as stakeholders, that one of the best ways to learn employability skills and other valuable life lessons is by connecting their classroom learning to real, practical settings which include diverse learners.

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***Appendix A***

CONSENT FORMS

**Consent Form for Student Participation** in Graduate Research Study titled:   
*The Bolt Story: Diverse High School Students Become Entrepreneurs*  
  
**Principal Investigator:** Mrs. Moira Fricke. I am a staff member of Langley Christian School and Trinity Western University Graduate student in the Master of Arts in Educational Studies- Special Education focus. The Bolt Café project is a major part of my graduation requirement to contribute to the area of educational scholarship. Once it is completed and approved by the university it will be posted on the TWU website where it will be available for public reading.  
**Purpose:** I am doing this project to find out about the experiences of High School students when they are involved in an inclusive formational learning experience.   
**Procedures:** How things will work during the project: If you agree to be in this project, here is what will be asked of you from the mid-November 2017 until the end of January 2018.

**1. Questionnaires:** I will give you a small written questionnaire with five questions on it. You can write out your answers or tell them to me in your own words and I can write them down for you (November, 2017). At the end of the project I will give you another questionnaire with the same number of questions about your experiences in running *The Bolt* (January, 2018). The questionnaires will not take very long for you to do, maybe the most time needed will be about 15 minutes. The questions will not be difficult for you to answer and you will not be graded on these questions. You do not have to be in the project if you do not want to; your participation is completely voluntary. Being in the project is not a part of your classroom work; it is something extra you are volunteering to do.

**2. Classroom Visits:** I will also visit your class and *The Bolt* to watch you and your classmates working together, to see how it is going for you and ask you about your work experiences.

**3. Classroom Reflections:** I will ask your teacher to share with me some of your reflections written in class about your experiences of working in *The Bolt*. I may also ask your teachers to look at your Progress Reports.

**4. Documentary Film:** There will be some University students making a documentary video about *The Bolt*. When they do this project, you may be asked to be in the film and be interviewed during it. The students will ask you questions about your work at *The Bolt*. You do not have to be in the film, if you do not want to. I will show this film to other teachers, to tell them about the type of learning that you experienced in *The Bolt*. The students from the University will show it to their professors as part of an assignment for their film class. The video may be posted on social media as well; it is very possible that it will be viewed by the general public.

Are there any bad things that can happen to you during this project (called risks)? We know of no risks that will come from participating in this project. All that we ask of you is some your time to write out the answers to some questions. Basically, all I want to do is find out about your experiences working at *The Bolt*, by talking to you, reading your questionnaires and reflections written in class.

Are there any good things that can happen to you during this project (called benefits)? I hope that being in this project will be a good way for you to think about your experiences working at *The Bolt*.  
  
**Confidentiality:** Your name (as a person volunteering in this project) will not be written on any of the reports, when I hand them in to Trinity Western University. No one will know that you were in the study unless you want to be in the video. After I am finished handing in my project, I will take your names off of any papers that I have by erasing them or cutting them out, so that there will be no permanent records with your names left anywhere, for someone to see.  
**Contact for Information** about the Project: If you have any questions or need any other information about this project, you can contact Mrs. Moira Fricke at [mfricke@langleychristian.com](mailto:mfricke@langleychristian.com), 604-533-0839, extension number #230.   
**My supervisor** from the Education Department at Trinity Western University is   
Dr. Adrienne Castellon who can be contacted at 604-783-8066 or Adrienne.Castellon@twu.ca  
If you have any concerns about how you are being treated during the project as a volunteer, you may contact the Trinity Western University’s Research Ethics Board contact person, Elizabeth Krieter at 604-513-2167 or researchethicsboard@twu.ca  
The following page is where I would like you and your parents to sign your names telling me that you want to be involved in my project called: The Bolt Story: Diverse High School Students Become Entrepreneurs. Please take this letter home and talk to your parents about it and bring it back to school, once it is signed. You can give it to your classroom teacher, myself, or hand it in to the school office in the envelope I am giving you.

**Consent:** Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary and you may stop or refuse to participate up until the time when the first draft of my project is completed (anticipated date of completion is February 28, 2018). You can email me up to this date telling me that you no longer want to be involved in the project. Your answers to the questionnaires, reflections or interviews will not be used in the project, if you choose to not volunteer any longer. Your parents or legal guardians must also sign to let you be in this study.  
**Signatures:** Your signature below means that you agree (give your consent) to participate in this project and that your responses to the questionnaires, interviews or reflections from class, may be used in the project in anonymous form, but your actual name, will not be included. Your responses may be put in anonymous form indefinitely and kept for further use after the project is finished. Your signature below means that you have had any questions about the project answered and that you have a copy of this consent form to keep for yourself. Note: There are two sections to sign: The Project Consent and The Video Consent. Please take the time to fill out both sections, even if you do not want to be in the video, I would like your signature and your parents signature giving your consent or not.

I. PROJECT CONSENT FORM  
*I consent* to participate in this project. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
*I do not consent* to participate in this project. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, if you do not want to participate in the project.  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Research Participant Signature (student) Date  
  
Printed Name of the Research Participant (student) signing above

*I consent* to my child’s participation in this project. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
*I do not consent* to my child’s participation in this project. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, if you do not wish to have your child participate in the project.  
  
Parent or Guardian Signature: Date  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Parent or Guardian signing above

II. VIDEO CONSENT FORM  
*I consent* to participate in the video regarding this project, recognizing that this video may be made public. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
*I do not consent* to participate in the video regarding this project, recognizing that this video may be made public. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, if you do not wish your child to participate in the video.

Research Participant Signature (student) Date  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of the Research Participant (student) signing above  
  
*I consent* to my child’s participation in the video portion of this project, recognizing that this video may be made public. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
*I do not consent* to my child’s participation in the video regarding this project, recognizing that this video may be made public. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, if you do not wish your child to participate in the video.

Parent or Guardian Signature: Date  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Parent or Guardian signing above

III. THE BOLT STORY: ADULT CONSENT FORM   
Consent Form for ADULT Participation in Graduate Research Study titled:   
*The Bolt Story: Diverse High School Students Become Entrepreneurs*

**Principal Investigator:** Mrs. Moira Fricke. I am a staff member of Langley Christian School and Trinity Western University Graduate student in the Master of Arts in Educational Studies- Special Education focus. The Bolt Café project is a major part of my graduation requirement to contribute to the area of educational scholarship. Once it is completed and approved by the university it will be posted on the TWU website where it will be available for public reading.

**Purpose:** I am doing this project to find out about the experiences of high school students when they are involved in an inclusive formational learning experience.   
**Procedures:** How things will work during the project: I will be conducting interviews with interested stakeholders such as administrators, parents of high school students, educational assistants at the high school or other parties. I will ask you questions about your impressions of *The Bolt* and how you see it fitting into inclusive practices at the high school. I will not put your name in my written work, which is handed in to Trinity Western University and published on their website upon completion. If I do include anything you have shared with me, it will be in an anonymous fashion. There is also a documentary video being done by Trinity Western University film students, which you may be asked to participate in, as well. You do not have to participate in the interviews or the video project. Both are completely voluntary. If you wish to participate, please sign the consent form below. Thank you very much for your support of The Bolt Story!

IV. PROJECT CONSENT FORM  
*I consent* to participate in this project. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
*I do not consent* to participate in this project. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, if you do not want to participate in the project.

Research Participant Signature Date

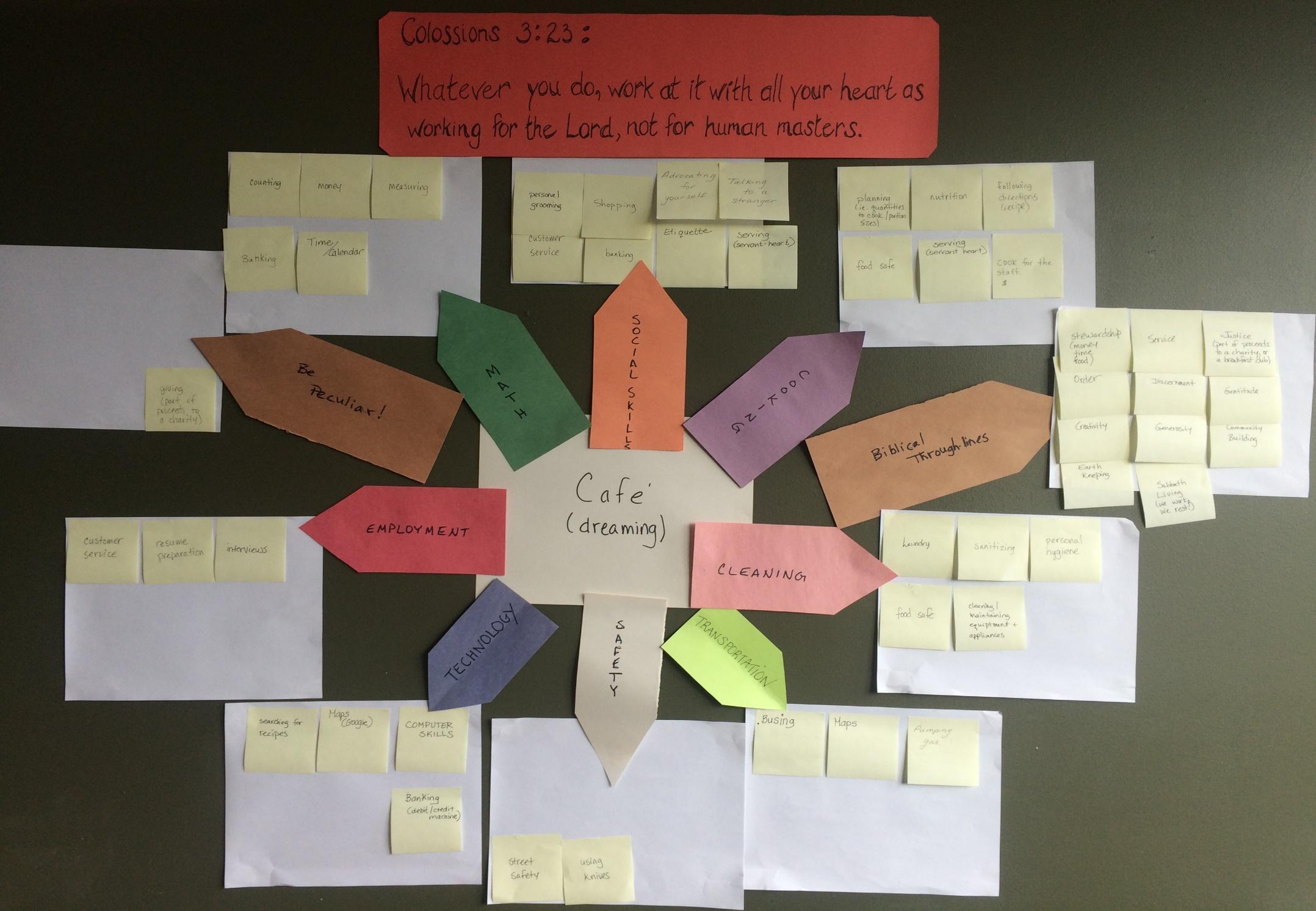
Printed Name of the Research Participant signing above

V. VIDEO CONSENT FORM  
*I consent* to participate in the video regarding this project, recognizing that this video may be made public. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*I do not consent* to participate in the video regarding this project, recognizing that this video may be made public. Check yes here, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, if you do not wish your child to participate in the video.  
Research Participant Signature Date  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of the Research Participant signing above

***Appendix B***

“STICKY NOTE” WALL



Our Deep Hope is that a *FLex*, like the café, can be a place of **Real Learning** and a place of meeting **Real Needs** in our school community through our service. We hope this will be a place to develop **Real Relationships** and practice many of our developing skills (High School Special Education).

***Appendix C***

QUESTIONNAIRE #1 QUOTES

1. Why do you want to become involved in *The Bolt* project?

* “I thought I was coming into this course to learn about Accounting but that changed to Entrepreneurship. I wish that Accounting was still a course but I’m learning and growing a lot personally in this course.”
* “...and although it has not been what I was expecting, it has been teaching me valuable skills that I will need for post-secondary school and also general business life after that.”
* One student gave specific skills she has learned by being involved in the project: “I didn’t know that I’d be working in *the Bolt* when I signed up for this class, but I am glad to gain the valuable work experience that it gives me, like working face to face with the customers and working the cash machine, and also having a leadership position in a small business.”

2. What skills, gifts or strengths do you have which can benefit the project?

One international student said, “I can’t speak English well, so i (sic) think I have my strength skill are counting manny (sic/money) and serving a customer with a smile.”

* Another international student responded, “I can take care of sanitation (cleaning) and I could work organization of Bolt.”

3. Do you have any fears, concerns or apprehensions about your involvement in the project?

* “I have no prior experience in making coffee.”
* “I’m unsure how good I’ll be at making complex drinks.”
* “My English is not enough, so sometimes it is hard to understand what people saying.”

4. What risks will you take during this project?

* “I am a bit quieter and this would mean that I come out of my shell to help pass this class and help the school community thrive. Another risk would be putting my opinions out there, but this course is for sure helping me interact and communicate better.”
* “I am going to try and be as outgoing as I can be...it will be really good for me to get out of my comfort zone.”

***Appendix D***

QUESTIONNAIRE #2 QUOTES

The second set of questions, given to the students after three months of their involvement with the project were:

1. **What has been the best thing about being a part of *The Bolt* team?**

* “I like working as a barista.”
* “Meeting new people and being able to bond with grades above and below.”
* “Making drinks.”
* **“**Working with other volunteers.”
* “I like contributing to making *The Bolt* profitable and self-sustainable”.
* “Learning leadership skills and applying how to take initiative in a workplace situation, and being able to be in a business environment and take charge and make priorities to get stuff done.”
* “Learning about how to run a small business.”
* “Taking pride in the success of *The Bolt.*”
* “Making improvements to the way it is run and the special food day events.”
* “To discuss with teammate and improve *The Bolt.*”
* “I could share my idea with teammate, also i could get new idea.”
* “Eventually, we have done lots of event!”
* “Getting to work together with others who I might not have ever worked with otherwise. And getting to be involved in something impacting the school.”
* “First time, I was really confused about this class, because I didn't choose my classes, so I had no idea what was going on and what should I do. But I’m getting used to it and lately I understand my job and what should I do. And I got some friends through working at *The Bolt* so I really appreciate this class.”
* “The best thing that work at *The Bolt* is I can do new experience.”
* “Japanese school doesn't have that kind of activity so that is good for me.”
* “Being more involved with the school and interacting with people I wouldn’t normally when working at *The Bolt.”*
* “Also, cool to see when events are a success that we’ve put a lot of effort into.”
* “Everybody good communication skill.”
* “Everybody do hard something.”
* “I have really enjoyed working with people that I wouldn’t otherwise talk to, and getting to know them better.”

1. **What new skills have you learned? Check off these if they apply to you and add your own:**

Communication

Leadership

Teamwork

Problem-solving

Food safe skills

Specific job- related skills such as- making coffee, cleaning the espresso machine, ordering products, scheduling staff, cleaning the cafe, doing the cash, promotions, etc.

Other skills:

1. **What new attitudes have you developed? Check off these if they apply to you and add your own:**

Compassion

Empathy

Community service

Spiritual growth

Understanding diversity

Other attitudes:

**4.** **What new behaviours did you develop? Check off these if they apply to you and add your own:**

Working hard

Working efficiently

Being on time for shifts

Being professional

Using Food Safe practices

Other behaviours:

**5.** **What new knowledge did you gain? Check off these if they apply to you and add your own:** Critical thinking

Creative thinking

Reflective thinking

Business/Entrepreneurship

Inclusion/Diversity

Other:

**6.** **How do you think we can improve *The Bolt*?**

* “Sometimes prices are quite high? Ex: the Feb 14 candy bags.”
* “More organized system for handing out drinks/ making them.”
* “Nothing.”
* “Offer delivery service.”
* “Creating a more inviting atmosphere and expanding the brand.”
* “Expanding the menu to include lunch items, which will appeal to more students. Also, to make the entire system smoother overall (with the space between ordering and the barista).”
* “More lunch items.”
* “Sell once a week or bi-weekly to middle school students.”
* “Include the whole school to give input and help them feel like this is theirs as well.”
* “I think shift is not good, because sometimes I had to work even though there isn’t shift on that day on shift calendar. I love to work at *The Bolt*, so I can work if they want, but I just want to know the correct shift.”
* **“**Increase more lunch menu.”
* “By working on a goal of providing more lunch items for more days of the week for teachers and students.”
* “We was able to succeed about Pizza day, Macaroni and Cheese day. So, we should think more about new events and users of Bolt.”

“I think that the way *The Bolt* is run is very smooth.”

**7.**  **In your opinion, is *The Bolt* a good way to teach students job and life skills?**

* + “Yes. I think it is good for work experience and on a resume. From knowing how to be a cashier and barista, it can be easier to get a part time job at Starbucks or something.”
  + “Yes, it is.”
  + “For business skills, yes.”
  + **“**It is.”
  + “For some students, yes.”
  + “Yes. Any kind of job or situation in which someone needs to take on responsibility or leadership is a good experience, where they can learn how to act in an employment environment, and *The Bolt* is especially good for this because, while it is a legitimate business, it is in a school/class setting, so the consequences are not as strong if something goes wrong, and it is a test zone for the real world of business.”
  + “Yes, but it depends on if the student and if they end up applying the skills they have learned.”
  + “It can be for some people I wouldn't say this helps me with life skills.”
  + “Running *The Bolt* is not easy, but we can learn lots of things. We discuss about issue with teammate to improve *The Bolt*. I think this is very good thing! We can to share new ideas. Also, we can learn communication skills. These are important things when we work in the future. *The Bolt* have taught us lots of things!”
  + “I think so because we have to learn to work with a lot of people and also how your actions can impact others either positive or negative.”
  + “Absolutely yes, because it’s good way to learn service or dealing, and also it’s good training for my English skill. I’m really happy to take this class and work at *The Bolt.*”
  + “Yes. Because we can learn about food, money, and how to communicate with people.”
  + “I think so! I’ve already learned so much from just a couple shifts at *The Bolt* this school year about communication, customer service, and teamwork.”
  + “Everybody good communication skill.”
  + “Everybody do hard something.”
  + “I think, yes, it is. Because I learn important a lot of skills from *The Bolt.*”
  + “Yes, not only does *The Bolt* teach new job and life skills, but it gives students solid work experience to put onto their resume.”

***Appendix E***

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STAKEHOLDERS

**1. Do you think that *The Bolt* was an inclusive formational learning experience for the students at this school?** **Yes/ No? How so?**

* “I think it has.” – administrator
* “Yes. My daughter has loved having the experience of a safe and fun environment for her to learn customer service and handling money. She has less anxiety now when thinking about getting a job.” – parent
* “The interaction between the Neurotypical (NT) kids and IEP kids, helps give the NT kids an awareness and empathy for those who have other needs. It also gives them the opportunity to see past limitations and focus on the abilities of the IEP kids.” – parent
* “Yes, there are new connections being made and mentorship. Love this opportunity!” – parent
* “New friendships are being built, children are able to be stretched to cooperate, support each other, teach each other and guide each other regardless of where they are at.” – parent
* “Yes, I do. It was a great blend of students with exceptionalities and those without exceptionalities. It taught a number of customer service, beverage making, food preparation and team building skills to all students. All students are looking forward to putting this on their resume.” – Coffee Consultant
* “It is great for encouraging (forcing) social interaction and expanding her comfort zone.” – parent
* “I would like to see more experiential training like this happening for/ with kids with IEPs.” – parent
* “It has allowed students who would not naturally be together to build relationships that did not previously exist.” – Coffee Consultant
* “Yes, I feel the Bolt provides a safe and inclusive environment for our students to learn practical skills from their peers. Students can practise money and math skills when they assist on the cash register taking drink orders, as well as when they count the cash box at the end of the shift. Students are able to learn practical work skills alongside their peers such as safe food prep, communication skills, following directions, dishwashing and garbage/recycling removal, all while being in a safe social environment. The Bolt provides students with jobs skills and confidence helping with positive self-esteem, future job opportunities, and friendships.” – Educational Assistant

**2. What do you think participation in an inclusive formational learning experience at *The Bol*t has done for the students in this school?**

* “I think the benefits to everyone are that they learn to break down barriers which is the path to so much growth. – administrator
* “It’s given our students in Special Education an opportunity to work shoulder-to-shoulder with other students while at the same time learn valuable life skills.”   
  – administrator
* “Our daughter has been really enjoying it. It has given her a sense of responsibility and belonging. She enjoys the interactions with some of the girls with whom she has been regularly scheduled.” – parent
* “She feels inspired and capable and confident enough to want to seek out a summer job in a coffee shop.” – parent
* “Her confidence is growing.” – parent
* “She is learning valuable life skills in a supportive environment with people who understand her. She is learning, time management, money skills, following directions, being part of a team and responsibility.” – parent
* “We can teach and talk about these things, but getting out and actually applying these skills in a real world way in far more valuable.” – parent
* “*The Bolt* allows her to show what she is learning in "a non-traditional school " manner.” – parent
* ” She had a brief period of disappointment when she was getting less shifts and predictability during the transition at the start of the year. I think this is a testament to how much she values the experience.” – parent

**3. What three words would best describe the project in your view? Circle three only.**

Relevant

Authentic - yes

Engaging

Inviting - yes

Nurturing

Meaningful - yes

Practical - yes x3

Valuable - yes

Real-life experience - yes x2

Hands-on learning - yes x3

Gaining business knowledge

Empowering - yes x3

**4. Do you think that *The Bolt* is a place that Teaching For Transformation refers to as being “grounded in a transformational worldview” Yes? No? Not sure? Please comment.**

* “Yes, it provides an opportunity to grow/ work together; real work for real people.” – administrator
* “I would hope so. I think the intention is there, but is it evident: How can we make this more obvious? I think that the very nature of inclusion of Special Education students in a project like this is transformational.” – administrator
* “Yes. This is very relevant to real life situations and helps prepare students for worldviews that they may not access until graduation.” – Coffee Consultant
* “I am not sure about this but I do know that it is allowing children to gain confidence and skills that can be transferred into everyday life. I am so happy that our daughter has been given this opportunity. She has to build new confidence and connections.” – parent

**5. Does the school community benefit from the inclusive formational learning experience offered at *The Bolt*?**

* “Definitely!” – administrator
* “For sure: It’s been a long time coming to this dream of a cafe, come alive. It’s been a great experience to see students gather in community outside the cafe. It’s been a place to build community.” – administrator
* “Absolutely. It impacts a number of aspects of the school community – the staff working in *The Bolt*, the entrepreneurship class who manage it, the recreational leadership class who borrow *The Bolt* and all the customers (who are other students, parents and teachers).” – Coffee Consultant

***Appendix F***

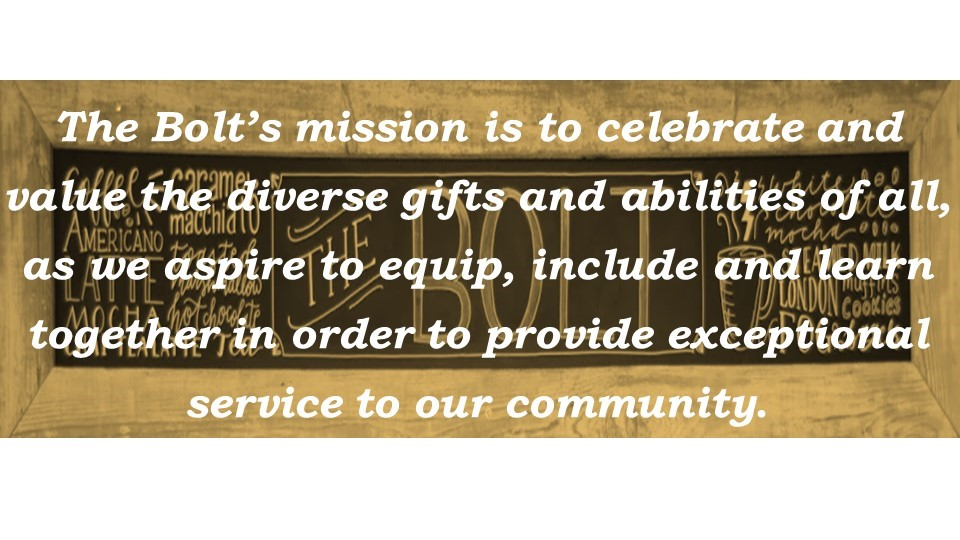
BOLT INITIATIVES

**The Bolt Training Outline**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Training (in Bolt) | Responsible |
| **Beverage Training**   * (integrate Food Safe procedures) | Coffee Consultant |
| * (if time permitting) * Set up and clean up after a shift | Coffee Consultant |
| Training (in Library or Lab) | Responsible |
| **Customer Experience Summary**   * Making each customer feel appreciated and cared for * Results of Brainstorm TOP 5 * Exploring non examples | Classroom Teacher |
| **Goal/Mission**   * To celebrate and value the diverse gifts and abilities of all students, equipping each individual to work together, to include one another and to learn alongside each other * Inventory of your gifts | Classroom Teacher |
| **Teamwork**   * Roles and responsibilities:  floater (team lead), cashier, barista, preparer | Classroom Teacher |
| **Google Forms Survey**   * Shift availability, how many times per week, 2 individuals you enjoy working with, role that matches your gifts/abilities, ideas you would like to bring to ‘management’ | Classroom Teacher |

|  |
| --- |
| **THE BOLT TEAM VALUES OUR CUSTOMERS BY**  **Providing Exceptional Customer Service** |

* Being patient, polite and respectful.
* Being professional by practicing Food Safe principles.
* Sharing a smile, being happy and showing a positive attitude.
* A friendly greeting, making eye contact and using a customer’s name.
* Problem solving efficiently without complaining.

****

The following is an email from a sponsor teacher to the Entrepreneurship 11 class on   
Dec. 8, 2017 describing “The Bolt Gives Back” campaign:

Great news for Team Bolt! Our high school principal shared with me that he is willing to purchase 45 gift cards. This is more than we anticipated! In addition, the cards arrived so we will have to load them on Monday through the square system. Job well done! Special thanks to Jane Doe for getting on this right away and drafting an email and sending it to the High School Principal.

Dear High School Principal,

The Entrepreneurship 11 class has been working hard on a campaign called “*The Bolt* Gives Back.” The purpose of the campaign is to raise awareness and funds for our local chapter of the “Canadian Association for Community Living”

The CACL’s mission is to build and strengthen community by engaging people of all abilities. This organization provides services and support to improve the quality of life for children and youth with special needs. Our own students have benefited from the services this organization provides. The CACL's mission fits with *The Bolt’s* purpose- to celebrate and value the gifts and abilities of all students.

Our business plan is to sell gift cards for *The Bolt*, with 10% of all profits from the cards going towards the “Canadian Association for Community Living." The gift cards are ordered and set to arrive on December 10. They are going to be available in $5

increments starting at a $10 value. We were hoping you would consider purchasing some for the school staff as a Christmas present. By purchasing these, you would be supporting both *The Bolt’s* future work and mission as well as making a donation to the Canadian Association for Community Living.

If you have any questions, let's talk in person.

Thank you,

Jane Doe

Bolt Team Member

"*The Bolt* is a Small Business with a Big Purpose"

1. Go to www.youtube.com and put in the code: xNnVh7kAVDg [↑](#footnote-ref-1)