

XP School induction expedition...an expedition for our teachers

24th March 2014 Gwyn ap Harri

For us to truly understand Expeditionary Learning, we have designed – with the help of Anna Switzer and [Ron Berger](#) – our first expedition for our teachers.

Rule number one: Practice what you preach – we are asking our kids to go on an [Outward Bound](#) expedition on the first day of their school life at XP, and our teachers need to experience this first, so with the help of Anna who is an Outward Bound instructor in the States, we will experience this in Wales for three days. Anna usually works in the Everglades, Florida, but we're hoping there will be more sheep than alligators...

After this, we will fly out to New England to visit three EL schools; [King Middle](#), [Renaissance](#) and [Four Rivers](#), as well as meet our mentor, Ron Berger.

As part of our mission to expedite our practice, we have also arranged with our friends at [Whole Education](#), a trip that is open to other schools and practitioners. Get in touch with them directly, but this includes two schools in Portland, Maine; King Middle and [Casco Bay](#), as well as an evening with Ron.

I have got to say that when Andy and I first went over to EL, and asked if we could be officially affiliated with EL schools, the EL Board at that time decided that they couldn't lose focus on the amazing things they were doing in the States, so they were not going to offer any official overseas support. We could appreciate their decision, and were understandably disappointed, but the *unofficial* support we have received from them has been absolutely overwhelming!

This will not be mere visits to schools, but genuine fieldwork where our teachers will research, record and reflect, creating sustainable relationships with teachers who have been practicing EL for decades. As Andy and I found when we visited, it will provide priceless experience and invaluable ongoing support.

As part of this expedition, Anna will be visiting [High Tech High](#) where the journey for Andy and I first started. On this trip, she will be able to see the similarities and differences of HTH and EL pedagogies. There are many similarities and we see it as a perfect partnership. Again, HTH and especially our Co-opted Governor, Laura McBain has been invaluable from our conception through to continuing support.

The teachers will then be prepared to create their first expedition, to create our curriculum. The authentic audience for this work will be the parents of our children. No pressure then!

To wrap up this incredible induction programme for our staff, we are working with Sheffield Hallam University to accredit the teacher's work which will count towards two units of a Masters Degree. This is a statement of intent of our high expectations for our teachers to lead their own learning as well as our students.

All our work will be shared publicly through our website.

I wish I was a teacher.

Gwyn ap Harri
Chair of Governors, XP.