



# Meet. Share. Spark Innovation.

*Dear Colleagues,*

*Let your faculty meetings be a time when information and conversation spark innovation.*

The ISACS Spark is an initiative to provide our member schools with quick and engaging professional development opportunities to spark conversations in 15 minutes or less. These “sparks” can be used as food for thought or as opportunities to engage in larger conversations among peers. ISACS will be sending Sparks throughout the school year and we hope you will find them helpful in stimulating conversations around exciting research related to teaching and learning.

## **October’s Topic – Parent Teacher Conferences**

In many schools, this is the time for Parent Teacher Conferences. Are you prepared for difficult conversations you might have with parents or students regarding their progress? Here are some suggestions to consider as you prepare for upcoming conversations.

### **Videos:**

- **Clip #1:** [Having Difficult Conversations with Parents, National College for Teaching and Leadership](#) - Dr Fiona Davidson shares her top tips on how to prepare for and conduct difficult conversations with parents effectively. Some conversations, by their very nature can be challenging, but by planning ahead and following a few best practice principles, they needn't be a cause for anxiety. (5:19 minutes)
- **Clip #2:** [Michael Grose interview with Steve Francis, Happy Schools](#) - Steve Francis from Happy Schools and Michael Grose discuss how to have difficult conversations with parents, how to listen, understand, and make a plan for how to resolve the issue. (4:59 minutes)

*(Length of time for the two clips: approximately 10 minutes)*

### **Additional article of interest:**

- [10 Tips to Deal with Difficult Parents Effectively](#)

We hope these ideas ignite thinking and conversations in your school.

Regards,

The ISACS Professional Services Committee & the ISACS Professional Development Team

**The ISACS Spark has been developed by the Professional Services Committee (PSC). The PSC is comprised of teacher leaders from around the region who are passionate about professional development. All sites and clips have been reviewed and deemed appropriate for sharing.**

## ***PAST SPARKS***

Please visit [www.isacs.org/ISACSSpark](http://www.isacs.org/ISACSSpark) to view all previous ISACS Sparks.

### **September 2016 ISACS Spark:**

September's Spark focuses on Failing Forward. Is school a safe place to fail? Do students see failure as valuable feedback? Fear of failure in school can negatively affect a student's motivation and ability to learn, according to a study led by the Bilkent University (Turkey). As teachers we are constantly battling both parents' and students' fear of failing. Here are compelling reasons and strategies to create a safe space for all to learn from both successes and failures.

### **Videos:**

- **Clip #1:** [Kid President tells us how to support each other as we learn by identifying the 20 Things We Should Say More Often](#) (3:31 minutes)
- **Clip #2:** [What Do You Think We Should Say More Often?](#) - Here are suggestions sent to Kid President (4:59 minutes)
- **Clip #3:** [Audri's Rube Goldberg Monster Trap](#) - Watch an enthusiastic seven-year-old attempt to make a complex Rube Goldberg machine work. Audri doesn't let his first few failures slow him down, and his exuberance when he succeeds is infectious. (4:06 minutes). Great to share with students!
- **Clip #4:** [Famous Failures](#) - How to deal with failure (2:58 minutes)
- **Clip #5:** [What Fear Can Tell Us](#) - In telling the story of the whaleship Essex, novelist Karen Thompson Walker shows how fear propels imagination, as it forces us to imagine the possible futures and how to cope with them. (11:30 minutes)

*(Length of time for the five clips: approximately 27 minutes)*

### **Additional article of interest:**

- [How Can Adults Help Students Buck the Pressure of Perfection?](#) *New York Times* - An article about the increase in suicides on college campus' and what we can do to help.

### **August 2016 ISACS Spark:**

August's Spark focuses on preparing kids for the future. Are we preparing kids for the future? Welcome to the new academic year and new opportunities to empower students in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Columbus will host the 2016 ISACS annual conference on Thursday, November 3 and Friday, November 4 where attendees will hear from keynote presenter and author of *Most Likely to Succeed*, Tony Wagner. "Tony Wagner and Ted Dintersmith want us to stop thinking about success for our children in terms of test scores, and start concentrating on real learning, creative problem-solving, and the joy of discovery. *Most Likely to Succeed* is a book for everyone interested in seeing our children thrive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century." — Daniel H. Pink, author of *Drive* and *A Whole New Mind*.

We hope you will view the clips below and consider joining us in Columbus where you can hear directly from Tony Wagner and view the film *Most Likely to Succeed* in its entirety!

**Videos:**

- **Clip #1: [Most Likely to Succeed, Tony Wagner](#)** - Introduction to Tony Wagner and those who are most likely to succeed. (3:38 minutes)
- **Clip #2: [Wanted: Creative Problem Solvers, Tony Wagner](#)** - Harvard education expert Tony Wagner explains why the new economy needs innovators, not necessarily "A" students. (1:27 minutes)

*(Length of time for the two clips: approximately 5 minutes)*

**Below are previews from additional annual conference presenters!**

- **Clip #3: [21<sup>st</sup> Learning Videos - New Line Learning Plaza with Bob Pearlman](#)** (8:21 minutes)
- **Clip #4: [Journey to Pixar - Drawing Research Group with Paul Topolos](#)** (5:36 minutes)

*(Length of time for these two clips: approximately 14 minutes)*

*This email has been sent to heads of school, division heads, assistant/associate heads, deans of faculty, deans of studies, directors of professional development and ISACS teacher representatives.*