

## Conference Report – Bryce Beilman (BLC18)

This summer, I had the chance to travel to Boston to attend the “Building Learning Communities 18” conference. BLC is an annual conference hosted by Alan November that focuses on creating conversations about innovative teaching practices. Through over 100 sessions and pre-conference classes, teachers can choose to dive deep into almost any topic that interests them in emerging teaching practices. From Computational Thinking, to Project-Based Learning, to Student-Centred Learning, no acronyms are left off the table. For me, I was most interested in moving ownership of the learning from me to my students, and I was able to find multiple sessions that met my needs. Through sessions with Joy Kirr (author of *Shift This!*), I was able to think about the practicalities of allowing student voice, and through Alan November’s closing session, we got to take a look at what it means to make sure that learning is still purposeful. Another key takeaway for me was our discussions about the future of education and work. From Stephen Wolfram (Founder and CEO of Wolfram Research), we learned that coding might not be the panacea we think it is, and that computational thinkers (people who can frame their ideas in ways computers can understand) will be the leaders of every industry. From Ted Dintersmith (author of *What School Could Be* and Executive Producer of *Most Likely to Succeed*), we got to talk about the inadequacies of the system that exists to prepare students for the future and learn about teachers who are innovating to move past it. I would highly recommend this conference to teachers in our division and am thankful for the support I received to go!