A group of grade 2 students is using Marc Brown's Arthur web site and Kidspiration software for visual story mapping. Cliff keeps excellent records using Ministry expectations and e-Teacher software, a product by Media-X, to evaluate and track progress for report cards.

Students know how to log on and use our school web site, www.tvdsb.on.ca/charles, to find appropriate information for their various studies. Check out our top-notch web site – then click the "e-mail us" button on our front page if you want to use the grade links or web site template for your school, free for the asking!

Because Cliff wants every child to have access to technology, he refits donated computers and gives them to Prince Charles students who don't have computers at home. Every day there are staff members getting his help with not only school machines, but their own personal computers. Every week teachers from other schools come to our lab for after-school PD sessions on many topics. Cliff readily offers his time and expertise to anyone who wants to learn. My own technical knowledge has increased exponentially since we became teaching partners – these days I even understand what he's talking about most of the time! And when my spouse has time to come to the school to have lunch with me, he spends half the time talking computers with Cliff!

In the last two years Cliff and I have done some great units together. We developed a unit with two GrADe. 2 teachers based on the Strega Nona books by Tomie de Paola. Four groups of about 12 kids each rotated through four areas (two classrooms, lab and library) working on different aspects of the theme. My group studied Italy, using non-fiction resources, learning mapping skills, exploring music and tasting Italian foods. (We liked the gelato best!) Students and staff enjoyed smaller learning groups and different teaching perspectives. This year, because the preparation timetable has been tightened considerably, we have not been able to do partners-in-action units as a team. Next year again, we hope.

Okay - by now, I'm sure you're thinking, "This sounds great. But where did they find the money?!" Well… our former principal Judy Arnold proved to be the visionary, accessing the board's Program Enhancement Fund for renovations and startup costs. She set my library budget at $5,000 per year, which our current principal, Mary Greenwood, has matched. Thames Valley District School Board allocated ministry grants designated for computers to our lab at $10,000 for each of the first two years; this year's budget is smaller. Cliff gets a lot of our equipment from Computers for Schools, the non-profit organization that distributes used computers, often only a year or two old, donated by local companies. Our Home and School is a very hard-working group which makes regular contributions to the media centre. There is money out there – sometimes you just have to dig for the treasure! Promote your programs. (Hey! I'm doing that right now!) Show everyone what a great job you're doing and maybe some purse strings will magically loosen! Financial partners can make big improvements in school programs.

Partnerships of all kinds can produce better results than individuals could achieve. Our media centre partnership has given new life to both the print and computer services at Prince Charles. A pupil who attends our school from JK to grade 8 will receive many benefits from this partnership: the joy of reading books, and the excitement of interacting with all kinds of technology; the confidence to seek and the ability to find information in many forms; the pleasure of working independently; and the self-esteem which results from the successful achievement of personal goals. As teaching partners, we're a winning combination!