

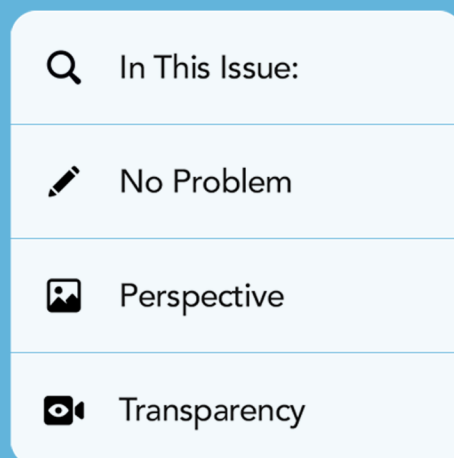
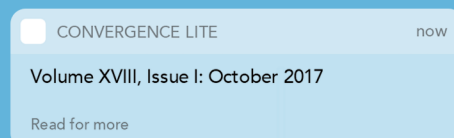
# → CONVERGENCE ←

LITE EDITION

## MAKING THE CONNECTION



### A CASE STUDY ON STUDENT ACTIVISM



# FEATURE:

## A CASE STUDY ON STUDENT ACTIVISM

BY: MATTHEW WANG AND JOHN MACE

### PREFACE

Until Monday September 25th, this article was called “An Open Letter to the School: The New WiFi Policy”, and had an entirely different focus. In light of the wonderful news from Mr. McKinney and the hard work of the four parties mentioned below, we’ve refocused this article to be about the case for student activism. A special thank you to the Convergence Lite team for switching beats so quickly.

During the Board of Stewards campaign and voting season last year, we heard a lot about transparency. When Adam Rothman was elected Head Steward, he made this a centerpiece of his campaign. What does the Board of Stewards do? Do students have power? Can we do anything?

Flash forward to September 25th, the day when Principal McKinney delivered what was undeniably the most topical speech of the year so far. He tells us that, after discussing with Adam Rothman and the I.T. Department, they’ve come to an agreement: the school’s wifi policy will be adapted so that students can use internet on their phones before and after school. It made waves, and it wasn’t just sound waves creating single slit interference: it was the sound of student action.

This Convergence article aims to break down what exactly happened from September 12th, when the new wifi policy was announced, to September 25th, when Mr. McKinney gave

his speech to thunderous applause. We’ll use this event as a case study to answer the larger question: Students actually make changes to the school?

### NO PROBLEM

On September 12th, 2017, Mr. Jim LaPlante sent out an email to the entire school detailing what our new network policy was going to become: a more restrictive network that only allowed students to connect their laptops to the internet (with an exception for boarders). What soon followed can only be described as unrestrained outrage. We heard common themes: “We pay 30k for this school, we deserve wifi”, “I hate the I.T. Department, this is so stupid”, and “How do I get around this now?”. I even heard a student saying that “LaPlante should go off himself”. For a majority of the student body, they couldn’t fathom as to why this new policy was in place.

At its core, Convergence exists to inform and create thoughtful, meaningful discussion. Unfortunately, we don’t think this kind of discussion happened within the student body. People were furious. They didn’t want an “open discussion”, they wanted their wifi back. This kind of attitude, while cathartic, isn’t the kind of attitude a group of people should have when they want to make change. Creating change comes from positive discourse, or what’s essentially a friendly negotiation. We need to understand what the other party’s needs are,

and make our best effort to match them while getting what we want.

### "CAN STUDENTS ACTUALLY MAKE CHANGES TO THE SCHOOL?!"

What were the school’s needs? As Mr. McKinney outlined in his speech, the core of the problem was bandwidth. In computing terms, bandwidth is the amount of data that can be transmitted at one time. Abstractly, it’s similar to how much water a pipe can handle at once. Every time someone visits PowerSchool, listens to a song on Spotify, or sends a Snapchat, that information (be it a webpage, music file, or photo) gets sent through our school’s network and consumes bandwidth. Too much of bandwidth usage causes problems: not only does it incur huge monetary costs to I.T., it also causes intermittent service outages which are bad for both school and students alike.

By itself, bandwidth overuse is bad. But what’s even more problematic is what our network was being used for. It’s not as if students were going on PowerSchool Learning every



day and were crashing the network. Rather, the largest culprits were far from curriculum programs: Snapchat, Netflix, Instagram, and Facebook were the most used. According to I.T., our school is clearing over a terabyte of data a day on these non-essential bandwidth hogs. 1TB is a lot of data: that's equivalent to four full MacBook Airs of information, or downloading 1500 copies of Christopher Nolan's Inception.

Any solution to our new internet policy needs to still address I.T.'s main concern, which is the bandwidth usage, let alone the corollary concerns like security and ease of maintenance. As we'll find out, the only effective solutions that exist are compromises. To create action, and to create change, we need to understand the problems that the school faces.

## PERSPECTIVE

AN OP-ED BY MATTHEW WANG

When I first heard about our new I.T. policy, I was dazed, confused, and then very angry. I immediately knew that I had to do something: not only will I no longer be able to check my email on my phone, but a lot of the things I do for the school rely on my phone and the internet. When our Convergence meeting came, I knew we had to do something. With a fellow Convergence correspondent John Mace, we booked several meetings with members of the I.T. Department and the school administration to talk change.

Our very first meeting was with Mr. Ryan Archer; we had talked to him previously about all sorts of I.T./technology related matters, and he was great at giving feedback to our ideas. We talked: we wanted WiFi on our phones, and we were wondering why it was taken away. Mr. Archer was able to respond to our questions:

this was a plan that the school was considering for at least a year, this was more than just an I.T. decision, and the school was worried about the impact that non-educational internet use had on our school network. He also gave us a suggestion to organize our thoughts: how can we focus our discussion around education? With his feedback in our mind, John and I went back to the drawing board.

At the next Convergence meeting, we decided to write an article on the new WiFi policy: it would examine the new policy, explain why it came into effect, and come up with a counter-plan that still met the needs we had as students, while also solving the problems that I.T. outlined. It was going to be long. 4 pages. But, we were fine with that extra burden; after all, we cared.

Your two correspondents started brainstorming ideas and arguments. The first idea that popped into my mind was challenging what I.T. defined as education. In a discussion with Mr. Barry Rittich (another member of the I.T. department) we discovered that both I.T. and the school didn't find any use for phones in the class (aside from Kahoot). He was right: I've never had to use my phone in class. But for me, education isn't just what happens in the classroom, and our school's marketing team assuredly agree. Education is just as much what happens before and after school as what happens during it. I'm here every day until 5 or 6, running debate meetings, planning conferences like WAC or OMUN, or contributing to the community via Horizons Robotics or Horizons Computer Science. This is education, and I often need internet on my phone to make the most of it. I manage social media for school events, I test websites and mobile apps on my phone, and when I'm here after being up for 30 hours in a row I might need an Uber home. In similar circumstances, John is here every day until 6 doing Robotics and Horizons Robotics. Neither of us have data plans, and us losing internet access on our phones hampers our ability to do things at and for the school. And we're not the only people who are grinding at the school every day: when I leave the school, I see athletes, artists, film creators, debaters, tutors, and mostly importantly, students. By denying internet access on phones, the school stops supporting the kind of education that happens outside the classroom.

I was able to pick Mr. LaPlante's brain on our new policy, and bring to him my perspective on education. When he was nodding in agreement, I was surprised. I expected him to shut me down immediately, but instead

we had a pretty reasonable discussion about the merits of my view on education. We talked about just how badly I.T. has been hit by student bandwidth usage, we talked about the money and manpower that had to go into fixing the constant service interruptions, and I truly understood why this policy was being implemented. Yes, I enjoy using Snapchat on the school WiFi, but it's a huge net negative. He was genuinely impressed that I was able to make an argument that phones can be educational, and he was excited to talk more.

I found time to talk with more people about

## "MORE DIALOGUE IS EXACTLY HOW WE CREATE A BETTER SCHOOL."

our idea: the Board of Stewards, other members of faculty, and some of the student body. The reaction I got from students was a little surprising: many accused me of "being against the students", and cussed me out. I think that's a weird notion: ultimately, the students, the Board of Stewards, our I.T. department, and the school all are on the same team. We're all trying to make the school a better place, it's just that each of us have a different perspective on what we believe makes the school better. I.T. and the school administration doesn't know the ins and outs of student life, and the students and the Board of Stewards can't possibly understand what it's like to run an educational institution. For us to make the best school possible, we need dialogue. And the discussion can't just be "we pay 30k a year for the school, we deserve wifi"; it needs to be meaningful. It needs to consider the perspective of others, it needs to be logical, and it needs to be discussed.

Hearing Mr. McKinney's address on the 25th was relieving. While a lot of the plans seemed temporary, I was happy that I could continue using my phone when it mattered most: when I needed to Uber home after spending 5 extra hours at the school making clubs fair posters. There still needs to be more discussion about a long-term solution, but I'm fine with that. More dialogue is exactly how we create a better school.

# TRANSPARENCY

*Convergence was able to sit down with Head Steward Adam Rothman, who was instrumental to the change in the network policy. In addition, he campaigned on transparency and student action last year; we wanted to get his thoughts on those areas of focus coming into a new school year. As a note, we've slightly edited some of the questions and answers for clarity.*

**Adam Rothman**  
Head Steward

**Convergence:** Thank you for agreeing to this interview Adam. Our first question has to do with “transparency”. During your campaign for Head Stewards last year, you talked a lot about transparency and student action. Do you have any thoughts on these ideas now?

**Adam Rothman:** Yeah, so we’re starting to implement the same ideas I was talking about last year. [On September 29th] we sent to the entire school a link to a Google Drive folder that holds meeting notes from all the meetings we’ve had, since back in April. The goal is that people, if they have the time, can look through what we’re working on and get an understanding of what the Stewards actually do, but also to check if the Stewards are or aren’t working on your issues. It is an outlet for [the Board] to get on the same page as the rest of the school, and give [the school] an understanding of what we do, so they can say to us, “this is what we want you to work on”.

**C:** Sounds like a great plan; we expect many students to look at these notes, including Convergence ourselves. Secondly, talking more about the WiFi policy; it was very controversial at the start. What was the Board of Stewards first reaction to that news?

**AR:** At first, a lot of people were confused; it wasn’t very clear to us what happened. What I first did was talk to [Mr. LaPlante], who said to me, “let’s talk about it”, sat down with me, and explained to me the situation and the decisions which led to its creation. I called a meeting with the Stewards where we tried to understand what was happening

as a collective; [Matt was] there. We started to thinking of ways to address this, knowing that students wouldn’t be happy with the changes. It was also quite clear that we didn’t really agree with the policy either. The next thing that happened was that I booked a meeting with Principal McKinney. I knew we would have to go above Mr. LaPlante to make change happen, and I have a pretty good relationship with Mr. McKinney, so I booked a meeting with him and we sat down and talked about it. I learned what his arguments where, and we worked out a compromise that he was happy about: having WiFi for before and after-school hours. I went into that meeting hoping to get it back for all hours, but we worked out a compromise which I think was successful.

**"IT WAS  
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THAT WE  
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ALLY AGREE  
WITH THE  
POLICY EI-  
THER."**

**C:** Thank you. We’ve believe many students are happy with the change that you’ve been able to make. Following up on what you said about having a conversation with Mr. McKinney: we heard a lot of students vilify the administration. In comparison, you took steps towards meeting and talking to administration, and making a compromise. When you see other students complaining about things like the Lower Dining Hall, what advice would you give them when they want to make change.

**AR:** That’s a good question. I think that we’re at a time in our school when the school is very open to change; we have a new principal who is at the beginning of his term and whose job it is to make changes within the school. He’s here to make adjustments to the policy, not to uphold everything that’s been in the previous

years. I think that’s exciting. Of course, in a big school it’s hard to meet the needs of individual students. The Stewards are probably the individual student’s best resource, as we already have working relationships with Mr. McKinney, with Mr. Williams and those people who are making the decisions, so I encourage students to work through the stewards. Of course, I understand not everyone wants to do that. Keep bringing the issues you’re wanting to bring to the administration, even though you may not always get the response you want. Regroup, readjust and think of how you can argue your point better next time. It is a long process. There is a lot of bureaucracy at the school, but I think that change is always possible.

**C:** That makes sense; having that open-minded and positive attitude contributed to you and the Board’s success. Finally, as a closing note, what other ideas do you have for the rest of the year? For example, we know that the student body still wants a better WiFi policy; is this going to be a continued focus for the Board of Stewards? Are there any other projects that you’re planning on?

**AR:** I don’t see the WiFi issue progressing too much. For the school it’s also very much a pilot project, they want to see how this goes. We’re only here for another year, and I think we’ve done the most we can; but, I’m open to hearing what students have to say. For the rest of the year, I would say our goals are creating better mental health programs; our wellness days in the past have been pretty lackluster, and we haven’t gotten much participation relative to the size of the school. We’re still figuring out how we can have meaningful and enjoyable days while also promoting wellness and mental health. I know the Stewards are passionate about that and want to get involved. We also want to bring a lot more excitement to our houses, trying to find ways to get people really engaged in them, both in and out of spirit week, as well as caring for how their house does. One of the ideas you’ll read about in our meeting notes is a rivalry week for Spirit week, where instead of facing a different house each day, you’re against the same house for the whole week. You’re really getting into with the other house, building that competitive atmosphere.

**C:** I think the student body is very excited to see what you have planned. Thank you for agreeing to partaking in this interview with Convergence!



# RESOLUTION

As this article goes to press, there's still room for improvement. The "new" new wireless network policy is only temporary, and there could be more discussion as to what educational aspects of student life the school is able and willing to support. In general though, there needs to be more dialogue. It's concerning that the majority of the student body only knew about this change after it was already in its implementation process. But it's not entirely the complete fault of the school; as the student body's response to the change hasn't exactly been constructive. That being said, we've shown in this case study that there is a possibility for meaningful discussion. The onus is on both the student body and the school administration to open the further dialogue.

## "LET'S TALK."

*As a final note, we'd like to especially thank the three members of the I.T. Department we were able to talk to. Mr. Archer, Mr. Laplante, and Mr. Rit-tich were all willing to have discussions with us, and without them, this issue would not have been possible.*

## EDITOR'S NOTE: JOHN MACE

I extend my gratitude towards all new and returning Convergence members for helping to take this first issue all the way from its inception on the whiteboards of Room 235 on September 13th to print. I couldn't be more proud of what we've already accomplished and still can't believe we have the whole year ahead of us.

My name is John, Convergence's executive editor. I've been working for Convergence since I joined halfway through Year 10 after reading an unexpectedly moving article published in their February issue. My work involves reading and editing all submissions, as well as working with all the writers in the aim to produce content of the highest level of student writing.

Our club head and editor-in-chief Camran Hansen is responsible for overseeing the entire

production of the paper at all times, working with not only with our writers but also individuals such as layout staff and cover designers, as well as our faculty advisor Ms. Ferguson. It also falls upon him to plan out what the content of each issue will be, being aware of what events and aspects of the school will make good for comprehensive and topical commentary.

Matthew Wang, our executive writer is responsible for ensuring the quality of each issue, nailing down each and every last detail in order to ensure that the whole issue meets our standards. He also manages the Convergence website, but he is looking for help.

Without our faculty advisor, Ms. Ferguson, Convergence would not be possible. Being the one who provides the final decision on the content of our publications, as well as providing her invaluable input gained from prior journalistic experience, we are all thankful for working with us on every issue.

The four page issue you have just read is not how Convergence is typically structured. Our "Convergence Lite" format was created to help new members build their writing, editing, layout and design skills before transitioning to working on a full issue. A typical Convergence is on average somewhere between thirteen and sixteen full pages, involving considerably more work from all involved.. Though it seems like this format is a standalone, this also because of it's role to serve as a rapid response to the implementation of the new WiFi policy, we encourage all those who have liked what they have or have not read to join Convergence. We meet Mondays at Lunch in Room 235. Please email any of the names you have read above if you have any questions.

## WRITER'S NOTE: MATTHEW WANG

Hey there, my name is Matthew Wang. With John (our executive editor) we wrote the majority of this Convergence Lite issue. We're excited to bring to you this article: as we think that student activism has an important place in the school, but needs to be properly channeled. The brand of pseudo-investigative journalism that we did in this issue is one of the reasons I love working with Convergence: it gives us the opportunity to learn more about the school, and share our findings with the student body.

John has done a good job of explaining what Convergence is (and who some of the executives in the club are). I just want to quickly talk about our personnel, and who we're looking for. It sounds a bit cliché, but we're really looking for anyone! For almost all of us, we feel strongly about one thing or another at the school, whether it's the new WiFi policy, the gradual degradation of the LD, or esports. At Convergence, we have opportunities for you to share your perspective while refining your writing style. Many of our senior student staff members (and our faculty adviser Ms. Ferguson) are here to help you become an awesome student journalist. We also have a lot of opportunities for you to explore your passions, whether it's writing a review of the fall plays, interviewing the captains of sports teams, or sitting down with people like Mr. McKinney or Mr. Williams and talking about the school. If that's something that remotely interests you at all, I definitely recommend you come out!

We also have opportunities that aren't writing related. Modern-day newspapers aren't just about typing things out: we have a graphic design team, a layout team, and even a website team (consisting of the lonely yours truly). Even if you aren't writing-inclined, we have opportunities for you to help out Convergence and still speak about what you care about: some of our most popular articles are infographics that our design team has made, which lets you creatively display information, while the cover art helps set the tone for the entire issue. If any of these things interest you, I also suggest you come to a Convergence meeting.

Finally, we're also looking for new mediums to express our news! Last year, we ran a pilot program of creating a website (<https://convergence.today>), though that didn't go exactly as planned. If you have ideas on how to inform the student body using new and create ways, we're all for it! Contact the Convergence team to get started.

I apologize for this entire word wall, but we really are excited to kick off a new year of Convergence! It's one of my favourite extra-curricular activities because there's almost no limit on what you can do with your ideas. In this coming year, the Convergence team is excited to hear what you all have to say; after all, we do need meaningful discussion, right?

# BLAZER

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| UCC's Humour Publication Written By People Who Think They're Way Funnier Than They Actually Are |

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## A-DAY REVIEW

A-Day kicked-off with the annual Friday Pep Rally. While everyone squeezed into the Laidlaw tunnel, the IB2s successfully broke 8 kneecaps, 3 collarbones and Gaurav Dogra's dignity (as if the last issue of Blazer didn't do that already). The highlight of assembly was the Dance-Off where Andrew O'Reilly and company solidified the belief that Cross Country does not count as a varsity sport. The Pep Rally closed with the tradition almost as famous as A-Day itself: the fire drill, where students filed outside to listen to "Canada's Greatest Motivational Speaker" who said approximately 3 words. This was followed by the annual lunch in the village in support of cancer research.

Saturday's A-Day opened with a parade down the Avenue. Featured at the parade was future UCC employee Andrew Speirs, who paired his dedication to Varsity Football's first dress policy with a strong belief that Saturdays are for the boys, by rocking a UCC Blues Bucket Hat. Blazer staff have confirmed that Speirs plans to wear the same outfit on his wedding day.

A-Day is a perfect blend of UCC service clubs asking for money, College moms asking for money, and if you're an old boy, UCC asking for money (It might buy us a new microwave! But definitely not a pool... UCC finds it hard enough to maintain functional water fountains).

The main draw of A-Day is the athletics. Teams from U12 to Varsity played throughout the day, with U14 drawing the smallest crowd. Blazer analysis has revealed that when you're 14, you're not old or good enough to be fun to watch, but you're also not young or cute enough for your parents to feel obligated to come to the game.

Speaking of teams no one watched, JV football managed to legitimately score 0 points in their game on Saturday - not even a rouge! Following the poor performance, sources within the team confirm that Head Coach Mr. Sturino has reached out to Colin Kaepernick, although there's no word yet on if the Board of Governors will allow the a signing.

The pinnacle of A-Day is always ~~Rasheed Tucker's Highlight Tape~~ the Varsity Football game. The game was very well attended until halftime, at which point everyone had to go to Boydell's house (his address won't be exposed in case St. Mikes gets hold of this).

Although we lost, it's safe to say that UCC boys have achieved victory off the field by correctly spelling "their" and not being named Ryan McGhee. Just remember boys, if you ever get down because we lost a couple games on A-Day, along with a great Varsity Soccer team, we also have a legitimate future!

## D&R Convenience

The Blazer is proud to announce their partnership with D&R Convenience - the essential campus variety store! They provide the best quality products with kind service. We encourage you to support this local establishment, but remember, CASH ONLY!



## IB Memes for Risk-Taking Teens

For some unknown reason, anyone younger than IB2 thinks "sliding into DMs" is when they ask their 120-man grade Instagram group chat for homework help rather than just creating a Facebook account. Since this is the case, the Blazer will plagiarize a picture from one of our favourite Facebook pages, which all of you could never see otherwise:



here is a leading planning, assessment and reporting platform for the IB continuum

woman: "lets call it womanagebac

man: "i have a better idea"



## Headlines

- Max Ward secures spot as next Blue Army General, Teddy Littler reminds UCC community that we made the right choice
- School fulfils promise to increase transparency with installation of new glass foyer
- Reach For The Top lose trivia mach: Name Carey Price as first Canadian hockey gold medal game shut-out, forgetting Paul Rosen
- Jackson Purchas reveals favourite game to be Angry Birds
- If you're a club head, read me, otherwise: delete.
- BSS girls shocked at Varsity Football Team's love for JO
- Jack Prince reinstated as QB1 after big throw Saturday night
- In an effort to save money, Principal McKinney eliminates school wifi... and power
- Andrew Speirs' big Saturday play cut short by arrival of ambulance
- Max Pentland over powers suit's self-cooling system; turns Ice into Water after only 2 minutes of light jogging

**Spoiler: Lunch today is Tikka Beef Stew... so more like spoiled appetites, really**

# → CONVERGENCE ←

## LITE EDITION

**INTERESTED IN CONVERGENCE?  
WE MEET MONDAY AT LUNCH IN ROOM 235.  
NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY, ALL ARE WELCOME**

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**WE'D LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE  
FOR MAKING THIS ISSUE POSSIBLE:**

MATTHEW WANG  
JOHN MACE  
CAMRAN HANSEN  
JOSEPH SAMUEL  
LIAM CORELLI  
ADAM ROTHMAN  
VICTOR LI  
MS. FERGUSON  
THE UCC PRINT SHOP  
THE I.T. DEPARTMENT  
THE BOARD OF STEWARDS

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**OH, AND WE HAVE A WEBSITE. CHECK IT OUT**  
<https://convergence.today>