



2013-2014 AESN Case Study

School: Pinewood Elementary **District:** SD37 Delta

Area of focus: Enhancement Agreement

Inquiry Team Members: Lyn Holt, Cathy Hussey, Diane Jubinville, Caroline Weger

Scanning: We noticed our school community was not connected to the heritage of our Aboriginal students.

Focus: We have strengthened our connection through professional development sessions with an Aboriginal Elder who discussed the impact of the Residential School system. We also held two assemblies for our students and communities on flora and fauna indigenous to our neighborhoods, and the historical significance and Aboriginal history of the land that our school is on (including Tsawwassen, Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh nations). The learners in our school benefited from these experiences with awareness of the lands and honoring the historical cultures. The adult team recognizes the historical wrongdoings and have developed more empathy for the Aboriginal communities.

Hunch: We believe that what we are doing is effective for our learners and will continue to follow and develop this plan next year.

New professional learning: The District Vice Principal of Aboriginal Education and various guest speakers came to our school and supported professional development for our staff. Assemblies were held, as well as class and small group instruction for our students.

Taking action: We began by asking our Aboriginal support worker and district vice principal of Aboriginal education to give a whole school presentation on why we acknowledge traditional territory. This included talking about the surrounding area, the history of settlement and the history of the First Nation Peoples. We then invited Elders and presenters from the First Nation communities to speak about different aspects of the culture at future assemblies. We will also be providing opportunities for classrooms to take part in hands-on, experiential learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Checking: The majority of staff indicated a positive impact from the presentations that were done, and students of Aboriginal heritage have noted that they are more comfortable talking about their ancestry/culture than they used to be.