



2013-2014 AESN Case Study

School: Pacific Coast School (Grades 9-12 Alternate School)

District: SD52 Prince Rupert

Area of focus: Student Level

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Question / focus area: Will Project Based Learning and TREC² (outdoor program addressing teamwork, respect, environment, culture and community) increase student's understanding of the concept of stewardship with culture and community, self and family and the environment?

Scanning: Our team noticed that students who participated in the Project Based Learning days and TREC² (outdoor program addressing teamwork, respect, environment, culture and community) were more successful and engaged in their courses. Examples of stewardship were evident in the student's daily interactions with each other and the staff.

Focus: The inquiry focus for Pacific Coast School was around the theme of stewardship. The concept of stewardship was explored with project based learning Days and TREC² adventures. This concept was introduced to the students many times through the past school year as our Sm'algyax language and culture teacher, Alex Campbell shared adawx (true tellings).

Hunch: It was evident that hands-on projects and field studies all related to the theme of stewardship increased student engagement, attendance and course completion.

New professional learning: The team realized that some students were not as engaged as others. We met together and decided that we needed to tailor our Project Learning Days to be more personalized and planned with student's input in terms of interest areas.

Taking action: The staff planned numerous workshops, Project Learning Days and TREC² outings. Some examples included: sexual health classes, Economics for Success, Dollars and Sense, community scavenger hunt, teenage brain presentation, healing workshop, volunteer work at North Pacific Cannery, anti-smoking presentation,

and physical fitness (e.g., boxing lessons, healthy relationships, skiing, drum making and kayaking).

Checking: The data we collected for this inquiry has been qualitative not quantitative. Students and staff have gained a deeper understanding of what stewardship entails due to the hands on learning presented through Project Based Learning activities and TREC² adventures. Observable behaviors of students consisted of:

- Greater willingness to volunteer their time at the school and in the community
- Higher percentage of students completing physical education classes
- Decrease in the number of students smoking
- More students requesting assistance with writing resumes for job applications
- Some have been successful with the acquisition of a job
- Course completion has increased compared to the 4th term last year.

Reflections/Advice: We have seen an increase attendance on our Project Based Learning Days and TREC² adventures days. The average of 38 students attended at any one time compared to an average of 20 students from the previous year. Student engagement and regular attendance for all courses improved as a result of this year's inquiry. The findings of this inquiry have led us to believe that teaching the concept of stewardship has contributed to greater student success and course completion at Pacific Coast School. What we have learned is that not all learners were engaged and that next year we would like to focus on more individualized Project Based Learning activities for each and every student who attends Pacific Coast School.