



2013-2014 AESN Case Study

School: West Heights Community School **District:** SD75 Mission

Area of focus: Transitions

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Scanning: What we believe was most important to our team, was the impact the inquiry had on some of our most challenging students. When Halq'eméylem teachings and crafts started, one student completely changed their behavior as a learner. The inquiry was magnificent and it sparked the learning. It taught us to be more creative in our teaching with these students.


































Focus: The Halq'eméylem language was taught on a weekly basis to two Kindergarten classes. This helped our Aboriginal students feel a sense of belonging and our non-Aboriginal students to accept the diversity in our school. It also helped them to know that even though we are all different, it is okay and to accept each other as we are.

Hunch: A large number of our students attended the Aboriginal Future 4 Nations Preschool or went to our in school local Strongstart program. At these programs they were introduced to Halq'eméylem. It was a shame to see them quickly losing that education. Some even talked of attending the Aboriginal School in Chehalis just to get extra Aboriginal Education. But when we started teaching it in the school, the students picked it up really quickly again, and families were happy we were teaching it consistently here.

New professional learning: This all-inclusive program taught the Halq'eméylem language to the whole classroom. Two new Halq'eméylem teachers did a fantastic job teaching the language and Sto:lo cultural lessons.

Taking action: Our language specialist taught the language our local territory is on (Halq'eméylum). The two specialists further worked with our school's Aboriginal Liaison, and made a Halq'eméylem qel poster (Alphabet poster in Halq'eméylem). This poster was hung in both classrooms along with the Aboriginal Classroom poster. We also shared this 2x3 poster with other recipients of the grant in other schools in our area.

Halq'eméylemqel

i  i'mex waking	e  emət to sit, sit up, sit down	a  əxe Canada Goose	u  túxwəs nine dollars	o  ó:lh get into	ō  stó:lō river	
m  músməs cow	ch  cháləx hand	ch'  ch'áxwət dry something	p  ptákwem broken fern	p'  sp'og'əs eagle	'  s.ə.pələ ten o'clock	
k  kəpə coat	k'  p'esk'a hummingbird	kw  kwóse Star	kw'  kw'tsəl grizzly bear	y  vovəw'əm perspiring	w  wíwəpəp yawning	
q  qə:lə rose	q'  q'ám teenage girl	qw  qwə:p apple	qw'  qw'ə:l ear	t  təm:əw earth, world, land	t'  t'iem to sing	
ts  tsəbómé black cap	ts'  ts'átem crawling	th  thə:t tree	th'  th'áse heart	tl'  t'ít'á:tele fawn	l  lájəm house	
h  heyəw fire	lh  lhəm picking berries	s  sələ:w beaver	sh  kwəshú pig	shxw  shəwimá:lə store	x  Xá:ysəm ant	
x  xám crying	xw  xwelməxw First Nation Person	xw  xwəwá:ye fly	<p>Letters not used in our language: B, D, F, G, J, N, R, V & Z</p>			<p>B → p D → t F → p G → ch J → ch N → L R → L V → p Z</p>

Checking: Today we were in the classroom and the students were pointing at things and telling me what certain words meant in Halq'eméylem. Students are learning the basics of a language they seem very interested in (e.g., the Halq'eméylem alphabet). You can tell they want to learn more. They are even starting to learn a song. Parents have told me how happy they are that their children are learning Halq'eméylem. We have parents in our school that attended the last residential school in B.C. These parents lost their culture in the Residential schools as well and their trust with the school system. So if we can bridge this gap through simple programs like this, it is totally worth it.

Reflections/Advice: This was an amazing program and every school in our district should have it because we have over a 900 Aboriginal students. We hope to continue the program next year providing we can get funding. Once a week for presentations would work, or if students are older twice a week would be effective too.