

2014-2015 AESN Case Study Template



School: Betty Huff Elementary **District:** #36 Surrey

Area of Focus: Enhancement Agreement

Inquiry Team Members: Marlene Brajak, Kate Colter, Kevin M'Lot

Question/Focus: Creation of the Spindle Whorl looking at the connections to the community through Cedar.

Scanning: As we watched our learners this past year we noticed that our students had a stronger memory than our staff did regarding our projects. Some teachers felt bad that they did not remember. As we had further conversations and reminders of what we did they then said "Oh ya, I remember that".

Focus: Our focus last year was the creation of our Spindle Whorl and the connection to the community through Cedar. We wanted to create a deeper understanding so staff and students may feel more comfortable with their knowledge and understanding. We felt that by developing a deeper sense of understanding that it may help with integrated Aboriginal teaching in the classroom.

Hunch: We still find that for some adults in our school may not feel it is important to integrate Aboriginal perspectives and some may still feel uncomfortable with leading the content. We are trying to fine tune our focus as we brought attention to our Spindle Whorl three times in assembly form for the entire school including some parents. We also had all grade 7's make a Spindle Whorl that they can take with them. We found that right after a focused assembly staff remembers fluently, after a few months they have forgotten. The students actually were able to recall the meaning of our projects more concisely.

New professional learning: It seemed there was a stronger sense of understanding for staff by asking for their feedback. We still feel that there is room for growth as only six staff members responded to giving feedback. We were able to have one teacher extract feedback from all her students, which we will include with this case study. We plan to present the Bead of Time to all staff in the beginning of the 2015/16 school year.

Taking action: We repeated the theme of the Spindle and reiterating the teachings of the Paddles all students made last year. We were presented with a very large Paddle and had a celebration to all students. Cedar was also included in the teachings. We involved staff and students letting them know the importance of Witnessing and remembering what we have learned. We could see the interactions and excitement from students as well as feedback.

Checking: We sent out an opportunity to express what staff and students know prior to our Paddle assembly and also after. We did notice there was a stronger sense of ownership from the students. We will include feedback notes.

Reflections/Advice: There was significant learning and yet there is still some reluctance of participation from staff. We have found a class that wants to be part of the development of our outside classroom that includes the existing indigenous plants in our school yard as well as the cedar trees we harvested from a few years back. We will identify the plants we have with name plates. We will also develop cross-curricular literacy materials that will explain the indigenous plants and their traditional uses. We believe this will create many future projects for classrooms and relates to everything we have done in the past. We will also incorporate the Survey Monkey tool to get a deeper sense of what is really going on for our staff during the next school year.

Spindle Whorl Reflections Division 4 Students

Pre-Reflection:	Post-Reflection:
<p>We started to sand the small paddles with sand paper as it started to become a different shape. After a while my hands started to hurt. I ended up making an oval shape. I had lots of fun.</p>	<p>The spindle whorl took a year to make. On the spindle whorl there are two wolfs one is red and one is black. The red stands for good thoughts and positive choices in life. The black wolf stands for bad thoughts that you should not be thinking about if they make you feel bad or sad. The black wolf could also mean not good choices in life. Feed the red wolf not the black wolf. Both the wolfs are in us.</p>
<p>I remember last year when I tried to take the path of the red wolf instead of the black wolf. I went to go play outside instead of playing video games or watching TV. I ate things like apple and oranges instead of junk food. I was happy that I took the path of the red wolf because I knew it was the right thing to do.</p>	<p>This year we made a drum in the classroom and Leon Helped us to make the drum because we don't know how to make it. During the assembly we saw an Aboriginal Ceremony for an elder. At the end when all the classrooms were leaving they drummed and sang an Aboriginal song.</p>