

## 2014 - 2015 NOII Inquiry Case Study



**School:** Nanaimo District Secondary School (NDSS)

**District:** #68 Nanaimo Ladysmith

**Inquiry Team Members:** Carey Avender, Linda Cassidy, Brett Hancock, Patti Mountain, Crystal Petersen

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**Our focus area:** Creating more Innovative Learning Environments

**Scanning:** There continues to be a lack of engagement in many learners in this district and in our school building. Nanaimo District Secondary School (NDSS) has eliminated the pull out classes (Learning Assistance, Resource Room, Junior and Senior Alternate) from our school building. Our four Connect ND Coordinators (3 Tier 1-2 and 1 Aboriginal) are now supporting teachers in the classroom with instruction, especially adaptations and assessment practices. This Response to Intervention (RTI) model has all staff working together to help provide more differentiated instruction that will allow success for all students in the school and their learning styles. There is a fifth Connect ND Coordinator (Tier 3) that also works with our Tier 3 Programs. There continues to be mixed reviews from the staff and students on this model as there will never be a “one size fits all” model for student learning to take place. Many former resource room students were interviewed with the FOUR QUESTIONS THAT MATTER:

1. Can you name TWO adults in this school who believe you will be a success in life?
2. Where are you going with your learning?
3. How is it going?
4. Where to next?

Staff who interviewed the students with these questions were provided with some very rich data. Most students felt a stronger sense of belonging in the school building and more clear vision of where they are going with their learning now that they have been taken out of Resource Room and Learning Assistance and belong to the mainstream.

**Focus:** How can staff use Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and action research (student surveys) to build differentiated learning packages to better support both classroom teachers and students?

**Hunch:** The hypothesis of this study was that student surveys and the Four Questions That Matter would help provide staff with more information on each of our learners. This data provided us with information to help successfully differentiate learning for a wide range of the school population.

**New professional learning:** We needed to find out how we could best support all students under our new Connect ND model. We wanted to help promote more curiosity in both the students and staff at NDSS. By sharing the voice of the students, we believed that this might promote more strategies for differentiating instruction.

**Taking action:** Working with students and staff the Learning Services team developed and distributed student surveys. These surveys helped provide information that can help staff develop more innovative student learning and engagement.

**Checking:** We analyzed the data that we gathered to help support all staff and better engage all learners in the building. During this stage we identified that it is critical to collaborate regularly in order to best support each of our learners. The more qualitative data provided us with much richer information on how to differentiate instruction and create more innovative learning environments.

**Reflections/Advice:** We believe that this is only our first trip around the spiral of inquiry and now have more direction to continue our inquiry work.  
Here's a copy of our survey:

#### Differentiated Instruction Student Survey

Staff at NDSS want to hear from the students in the building. Our goal is to try and design programs and classes that will engage all learners. We will use the data that we gather to help us plan lessons and provide supports that will allow for more student success. By completing this anonymous survey and handing it in, you not only help all of the staff and students in the building, but you will receive a ticket and be entered into a draw to win a \$50 Woodgrove Shopping Center gift card.

Please circle the number that best represents your choice for questions 1-7.

1 Strongly Disagree    2 Disagree    3 Neutral    4 Agree    5 Strongly Agree

1. I find it helpful when teachers write a daily schedule on the board.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

2. It is helpful when teachers keep the due dates of all assignments posted in the classroom.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

3. I would use a planner to help me with my school work, if the school provided them.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

4. I would benefit from using a laptop in the classroom.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

5. I feel a sense of belonging in each of my classrooms.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

6. I believe that I am given a chance to succeed in each of my classrooms.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

7. I am given regular feedback from each of my teachers to help improve my learning.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

Please answer questions 8-10 on the back of the page.

8. Do you use your phone to help you with your learning? If so, how does it help?

9. What do you think causes students to not attend class?

10. What gets in the way of you learning (examples. teachers, noise, parents, uninteresting projects)?