

2014 - 2015 NOII Inquiry Case Study



School: Prince Rupert Middle School **District:** #52 Prince Rupert

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Scanning: Prince Rupert Middle School is a grade 6, 7, & 8 school. We have noticed that many of our students are reading below grade level. The teachers at PRMS, for the most part, are not primary trained teachers and find it difficult to teach basic reading skills to students in higher grades. We have also noticed that teachers may not be aware of how their students learn best and how they can change their teaching methods so that all students can learn in the best way possible for them. Many of our teachers have realized the importance of building relationships with students and learning but some could use more support in this area. After completing benchmark assessments for classes and determining which area teachers should focus on, we were able to give teachers strategies to use with the whole class. Teachers incorporated these strategies into their teaching and saw improvement.

Focus: Our inquiry focused on the learner at the center of our inquiry. The goal was to increase each student's reading levels by teaching them the skills that they need in the way they learn best. This also reflected that emotions are central by focusing on student learning styles and needs. We wanted to stretch the learning for all learners, those below and above grade level. Individual differences were recognized by determining students learning styles and needs.

Hunch: Many teachers were not directly teaching strategies to improve students reading abilities. Teachers were aware that students were not reading at grade level but instead of trying to improve their reading abilities, were finding them reading material at a lower level. As Learning Services Teachers, we were finding that teacher's main concern was that certain students were not able to read grade level material and they wanted us to find appropriate material for them. We saw the need to help teachers learn strategies to improve literacy abilities for all students.

New professional learning: We learned how important it is for teachers to feel confidence in their ability to teach literacy strategies. With guidance and support, we were able to help teachers view their class as a whole and know what strategies to use to improve students literacy abilities.

Taking action: We completed pre and post Benchmarks assessments on all students. From the results, we determined the grade level of each student as well as their strengths and needs; comprehension, decoding, or fluency. We gave the summary of the results to each teacher and determined the strengths and needs of their class as a whole. Teachers used these results on a

class synopsis that they completed as a preview. On this synopsis teachers determined class interests, medical concerns, learning concerns, and the results from a Visual Auditory Kinesthetic that teachers completed with their class. Using all this information, Learning Services Teachers introduced strategies that can be used with the class as a whole and with small groups. Strategies included the Rewards Program, Six Minute Solution, Reading Power Strategies, Reading A-Z and other programs. Learning Services Teachers supported class room teachers with programs that they were interested in using and helped implement them in the classroom.

Checking: Post benchmark assessments were completed in May and June. The majority of students increased 2 or more benchmark levels. The difference made that we were most encouraged by was the noticeable difference in teacher confidence that they could make a difference within their class rather than it was only the responsibility of the LST to take certain students.

Reflections/Advice: We learned the importance of helping teachers become confident in their ability to teach literacy strategies in the classroom. Completing Benchmark assessments with all students was a challenging task, we would like to train all teachers to do this with their own class, to save time, and also because we think the information would be more valuable for teachers if they completed the assessments themselves. We will continue with the class synopsis in place of previews next year.