



2015-2016 AESN Case Study

School: École Roosevelt Park Elementary

District: #52 Prince Rupert

Inquiry Team Members: Marla Gamble, Andree Michaud

Our focus for this year: Grade 4 and 5 classroom: Focus on Guided Reading within a holistic cross-curricular Classroom that focuses on social and emotional learning.

Will grouping students within their own class and providing additional adult support for Literacy Groups improve students' sense of who they are as readers in a positive way?

Scanning: During previous years, Guided Reading was a whole school pullout model. Students were placed into leveled reading groups and went to different classrooms and teachers for Literacy. The focus was skills, and many students identified themselves as weak readers. We found that although several students made gains in their reading levels, there were also a large number of students who improved a of couple levels or made no progress. Many did not feel comfortable reading.

Focus: We wanted to provide a classroom based literacy program, where students work together in inclusive groups, with additional adult support, and encourage a love of reading, thus increase their reading fluency and comprehension. A big part of the plan was to focus on a sense of belonging and positive sense of identity as a reader. Skills and strategies would be taught throughout.

Hunch: Reading within the classroom, with the classroom teacher, would increase student self-confidence and accountability. We were concerned about our vulnerable students and their self-confidence. We wanted to focus on building confidence through a number of structures (supportive groups within the classroom, Daily Five) and a new reading culture (developing a sense of belonging within each reading group and within the whole class). We wanted our children to feel safe and supported by each other, and by adults.

New professional learning: Our Guided Reading was focused on the Daily Five, whereby a "reading culture" was explicitly taught.

Taking action:

Our actions were centered around these key ideas

- all students stay with their classroom teacher, with support from several non-enrolling teachers and support staff
- a number of activities are developed to enhance a positive sense of identity within each reading group (less emphasis on reading levels and who reads better and who struggles)
- develop activities that enhance a positive sense of identity as individual readers (recognize that each student uses different strategies to figure out difficult words, recognizing individuals' strategies)
- non-enrolling teachers collaborate with the classroom teacher regularly and make changes as needed to better facilitate learning (assessment as learning)
- reading topics are connected to the social studies and science curriculum

- teachers rewrite reading material to meet the needs of more vulnerable readers, to access the curriculum
- as part of student portfolios, students read books and record them on video or voice memos, to celebrate their reading progress and skills, in order to enhance pride

These actions led to student success since the whole process was organic, and evolved throughout the year. We were assessing the learning and responding to needs (assessment as learning).

Checking: Our students are vulnerable. There are many variables that influence our children's lives (attendance, self-esteem, problem-solving, sense of self, stability, economically challenged). Reading skills are only one factor in assessing our students' learning. We do have Reading Benchmark Levels and performance standards for the beginning and end of the year for each student. Everyone improved in their reading, but if this was to be presented as a benchmark or performance standards, progress would appear minimal or not at all. We decided to gauge our success on students' confidence and love of reading.

We feel that our students are seeing themselves as readers, whether or not they are reading at grade level. This is a success, but needs continued reinforcement for many years. This is an ongoing goal.

Reflections/Advice: Did we make enough of a difference? Our ratio between adults and vulnerable learners is high but we did the best we could with the resources and time available to us. Overall we learned a great deal, and feel that our hunch was right. Children need to feel supported and cared for, along with learning the fluency and comprehension skills needed to become competent readers who value reading. Children in our class are positive about reading and reflect the philosophy of the teacher now!