



Networks of Inquiry and Innovation

Aboriginal Enhancement Schools Network

Deepening learning through inquiry, innovation and teamwork

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BC NETWORKS

CONNECTING, INQUIRING, TRANSFORMING, EXPANDING

Fall 2016

Dear Network colleagues,

We hope that you have all had a terrific start to the year. There is much to celebrate about our collective efforts to transform the life chances for all our learners through inquiry and teamwork. In this newsletter you will learn more about how the BC approach to inquiry is transforming not only schools and districts in BC, but also schools in other places around the world. We will also make sure you have everything that you need to embark on another year of inquiry.

Update from Network Leaders' Meeting

Earlier in October we met with 40 NOII AESN leaders from across BC and the Yukon. We had a great meeting and covered a lot of important topics about ways in which we can support inquiry more directly. Please take a look at the [blog post](#) that Sarah Lockman wrote with details about the meeting as well as links to a number of resources that were shared.

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL LINKS

Whole Education Network.

[Whole Education](#) is a national network in England that facilitates collaboration between innovative schools; exposes teachers to world-class thinking and approaches; and supports effective professional development, enabling its member schools to move beyond delivering the national curriculum to building a stronger foundation for learning – a 'whole education'. Our work with Whole Education started three years ago with a small group of schools piloting the spiral of inquiry as a means to improving outcomes for vulnerable learners. It has expanded since then to four cohorts of schools from across the country. A key part of the WEN strategy has involved focused coaching calls with the school teams between network sessions and it was through observing how effective the coaching calls have been for the English schools that is leading us to explore ways to adapt this to the BC / Yukon context. You will see some of the resources shared by Rosie Palmer and Lynne Tomlinson in the blog post linked above.

Australia. It is exciting to see the ways in which our networks here in BC are starting to inform initiatives – and create stronger links - with colleagues down under. Those of you at the symposium last spring had a chance to meet David Sim, a leading primary principal in Sydney who along with his colleague (and recent award winning principal), Natalie Mansour have launched NOII Sydney. Last August Linda and I attended the first meeting of schools interested in being part of a network committed to using the spiral of inquiry to change outcomes for their learners and we are looking forward to being part of their first symposium next July. Here's a great short [video](#) that David created about the spiral of inquiry at Lurnea Public School.

David Turner, Director of Professional Learning for the [Queensland State Schools Association of Principals](#) was also at the 2016 symposium and he will be returning this April with a group of principals interested in seeing inquiry in action. In addition to visiting lower mainland schools, they will also be heading to Vancouver Island North. Next September, David will be hosting the first NOII symposium in Brisbane.

Last summer Nancy Roberts and Liz Bell, two school leaders from North Vancouver participated in the first BC LEAP ([Leading Educators Around the Planet](#)) exchange. This is a terrific program for school leaders – and we would encourage you to explore the possibilities available through LEAP.

New Zealand. There is some great work taking place in New Zealand connected to inquiry networks that we think will be a real benefit to all of us. First of all, the Ministry of Education is developing a set of web-based resources connected to the spiral of inquiry that includes case studies from BC schools. This website should be up and running shortly - and we will let you know the moment it is. Second, [Learning maps](#), developed by New Zealand educators, are a vehicle to grow student agency by connecting students, teaching professionals, families with one another and to global trends in learning. They are also a useful tool for both the scanning and checking phases of the spiral of inquiry. Finally, Rebecca Sweeney a consultant in New Zealand who you may recall wrote an article in [Adminfo](#) last year about leading in the use of the spiral of inquiry) is currently working with a colleague to create and develop a game to help practitioners to engage with teaching as inquiry. The prototype for “Catalyst” is in the works now and we think this could be another very useful - and creative - resource.

C 21 Inquiry Playbook. Late last spring we got an unexpected call from a ‘plain language’ specialist who had been contracted to produce a publication for C21 Canada focused on inquiry and leadership. When she asked if we would be willing to work with her on a creating a handbook for school and district leaders based on the spiral of inquiry – we immediately said yes. The collaboration with Joanne Wise, with input from Lynne Tomlinson and Brooke Moore, has led to [The Spiral Playbook](#) that is being launched November 2 in Toronto. The case study used to illustrate the spiral comes from Brooke and her colleagues’ work in Delta with the [Farm Roots](#) program and was part of a final project for the [TELP](#) program last July.

NETWORK INQUIRY 2016-2017

How to get started

We welcome any school in BC and the Yukon that is willing to work together to change outcomes for their learners. The spiral of inquiry provides the framework for school teams to be curious about what is going on for their learners, to develop a focus for their team inquiry, to explore hunches about what is leading to this situation (good and bad) for learners, to identify areas for new learning, to take action, and to check how much difference these new actions are making to learners.

Don't worry about getting the right question - We have learned from our experience with network schools – and from some very productive conversations with Helen Timperley – that sometimes our obsession with getting the ‘right’ question can actually limit our thinking. So once you have completed a thorough scanning of what’s going on for your learners, then simply agree what your focus area for this year is going to be and then identify it clearly at the top of the template. You can find the template attached to this newsletter as well as on the NOII website.

Please send all submissions to NOII or AESN to Donna Weaving (dweaving@dccnet.com) by November 25. All school submissions will be posted on the website by early January and will be organized by searchable focus areas. We think this will make it a lot easier for schools to learn from each other.

Impact study

We are pleased to be continuing the impact study focused on transitions for Aboriginal learners with all fourteen schools identified last year participating again this year. Dr. Catherine McGregor is the lead researcher on this study and Debbie Leighton Stephens is doing a great job of coordinating the project and staying in contact with the schools. We look forward to learning more about the work of these individual schools at the symposium next May – and know that we will all benefit from their focused inquiries in support of their learners.

Grants for 2015-2016 Schools

We have finished reviewing the case studies from last year and they are now posted on the [website](#). We are deeply

impressed with the quality of the work that is captured in the NOII and AESN case studies and we encourage you to read them carefully. By mid November we will send out certificates of appreciation along with the recognition grants to all schools that completed their case study for 2015-2016. Again, a sincere thank you to the Ministry of Education and the Irving K Barber Learning Centre at UBC for helping to fund the network - and to everyone who has purchased a copy of *Spirals of Inquiry* that is now in its tenth printing!

Spring Symposium May 12-13 Richmond

Save the date now for the Spring Symposium at the Westin Wall Centre in Richmond. We are looking forward to sharing stories of impact from schools across BC and the Yukon - and to welcoming back Helen Timperley, Amelia Peterson and David Sim as well as new international guests from England, Australia and New Zealand and leading thinkers from right here at home.

Stay Connected

Please visit and share our website (www.noi.ca), blog (www.networksofinquiry.blogspot.ca) and follow us on twitter (@noiaesn). We're always looking for contributions from network members. Please contact Sarah Lockman to share your ideas: noi.aesn@gmail.com.

Our thanks to all of you for your commitment to the three big goals of the networks:

*EVERY learner crossing the stage with dignity, purpose and options.
ALL learners leaving our settings more curious than when they arrive.
ALL learners gaining an understanding of and respect for Aboriginal knowledge and culture.*

Your inquiry spirit, focused professional learning, persistent efforts, teamwork and generosity in sharing your learning are having a profound impact on the lives of learners across BC and the Yukon.

Have a great year!!

Judy Halbert & Linda Kaser