



2015-2016 NOII Case Study

School: Kelly Road Secondary School

District: #57 Prince George

Inquiry Team Members:

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Our focus for this year: Formative assessment and standards based assessment.

Scanning: *What's going on for our learners?* Teachers described ways that transitioning from grades to comments influence student learning, teacher and student relationships, and teacher, student and parent relationships. Teachers acknowledged influences to continue using grades, but student engagement was being noticeably increased and ownership was being developed through formative assessment and standards based assessment and this drove the learning.

How do we know? Students are developing common language and vocabulary to describe their own learning – teachers are developing common language and vocabulary across the grades and curriculum to describe learning. Classroom teachers that have developed a community of learning through explicit use of formative assessment and standards, as well as an understanding that learning is experiential and relational are having more success (as rated in attendance, willingness of students to participate).

Why does this matter? KRSS educators know that students need to develop common language, linking learning intentions, criteria and feedback directly to standards in order to understand their own learning and be the center of the learning. Educators value creating a connected learning environment in which students have agency.

Focus: Educators have been informally focusing on the impacts of grade on student learning and efficacy and realize this must be a school wide effort in order to move into the new curriculum in a way that makes sense for all – parents, educators and students.

Hunch: Continued practices of traditional pedagogies are not increasing students' engagement or the quality of the learning experience. Changes in curriculum, pedagogy and awareness of student ownership of learning are emphasizing the need to explicitly teach and support our students as they develop language. It is apparent to the learning that teachers are using standards in different ways, creating confusion for the students and 'muddying' the expected outcomes.

New professional learning: Educators have committed to learning more about formative assessment and have each read 'Embedding Formative Assessment' and participated in

discussions. As well, the educators have examined the Communications Core Competencies and some research work around standards. Staff members attended a number of Learning Team meetings and explored texts, participated in discussions, shared strategies and deepened their own learning as they moved to change their own practices.

Taking action: Educators were encouraged to take learning from discussions and resources into their classrooms, examine their practice and the depth of ways they were implementing formative assessment strategies. As well, educators worked together to create a common language and standards around students embedding descriptive language about learning. Educators participating in the learning team will be sharing their understandings with the staff and supporting other staff members in implementing and embedding learning about learning as well as learning content.

Checking: We believe that we are at the beginning of our journey. We think we are closer to students being able to answer the four questions and that by the end of next year, students will be on the way to metacognitively discussing learning with confidence. Parents will have been introduced to the new directions and purposes of this learning and educators will be devoting more class time to learning as to content. We know that we need to make small but continuous steps, support educators willing to move forward and be invitational towards reluctant adult learners.

Reflections/Advice: We believe we have learned:

- students are the center of the learning, but this means we must work to develop common beliefs and values as well as language amongst all community members
- there is a varying amount of understanding around formative assessment and the use of standards and we must work to include all staff members in this learning journey
- there are a number of teacher leaders willing to lead

Next steps:

- we will include all staff members and our family of elementary schools to share common purpose and passions; and to create a greater learning community that ensures there is common understanding in our family of schools
- we will embed University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) Education students into the school in an effort to increase both their learning and established educators' learning around formative assessment and the use of standards
- we will develop a common chart of language to develop common understandings no matter what grade or subject topics