



2015-2016 NOII Case Study

School: Tuc-el-Nuit Elementary **District:** #53 Okanagan Similkameen

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Our focus for this year: A needs based model for school based student support services.

Scanning: The key questions were used to monitor if the students in our school were receiving the support that they required. Our school based team consisting of principal and support teachers worked with the classroom teachers twice throughout the year. At the first fall meeting we asked: What are the strengths of the class? What are the positive things about this group as a whole? What are your concerns about the class as a whole? What are their needs? What do you wonder about? What are your main goals this year? What are the individual needs in your classroom? Then in February we used the guiding questions: what's going on for our learners? how do we know? and why does this matter? We then plotted the literacy, numeracy and social emotional needs for all division on a planning pyramid.

We noticed that resources needed to remain fluid to meet the needs of learners. As needed the school based team shifted school resources, i.e. Learning support teacher time, Behavior support teacher time, educational assistance teacher time, Aboriginal support worker time, or technology. The school based team and classroom teachers met twice this school year to review the distribution of our student support services throughout the whole school.

Focus: We selected our focus as there are limited learning support resources to meet the needs of learners and teachers. We need to be sensible in our school based distribution of services. We are learning to use co-teaching, a Response to Intervention (RTI) framework and a needs based model to allocate and then maximize these resources.

Hunch: We have qualified teaching staff. In some divisions the support given to learners is inclusive and in others it is a pull out model. We know we are using different models of learning support to assist students and teachers. We are curious about how we can continue to improve our existing practices to continue supporting all learners and we want to identify those times when we are not.

New professional learning: We read and discussed "Co-Teaching That Works." We met three times with the deliberate purpose of exploring co teaching and a needs based model. We also collaborated with Shelley Moore and read chapters "Learning in a Safe School." During our collaboration we both listened and planned as she formed out thinking and then we practiced and implemented RTI teaching practices. We had Shelley observe our practice and share feedback. We discussed this as a school team.

Taking action: In three primary divisions, we provided early literacy support with both Primary learning support teacher and ELL teacher in the class during the same literacy block three times a week.

In another primary division, the classroom teacher would provide the additional learning support and the support teacher would guide the main lesson.

In one intermediate division we provided a stations approach during Math three times a week.

In another intermediate division of 30, we provided a parallel approach during Math four times a week.

In yet another intermediate division and another primary division, we provided a model of co-teaching with a technology specialist to support inclusive learning.

Checking: In our small school of 220 students we offered many different forms of support to students and teachers. We began to create a culture in which supports for student learning could remain fluid depending on the needs of students in relation to the needs of other students. Resources were reallocated throughout the year. In one division this resulted in the transfer of three blocks of learning support to another division with greater need. For a duration of one week this meant all our Aboriginal support worker time was allocated to one student. It also resulted in one Kindergarten student receiving full time support and during third term in allowed for 0.38 teacher time to be allocated to just one student.

Our evidence is that two significantly at risk adolescents were identified and we were able to create the supports for their inclusion. Further, although 40% of our primary learners are not yet meeting or approaching literacy expectations, we were able to meet these learning needs with limited support teacher time.

Reflections/Advice: Through this inquiry project we learned that our school based team needs to set aside time to reflect on whether we have appropriately allocated resources. Further, with the time to reflect we needed to use evidence such as that gathered on the RTI planning pyramids needs to guide decision making. Next year, we plan to create more fluidity by re-categorizing our learning support teacher and English Language learner teachers` time into simply `teacher` time to support student needs. I would encourage school teams to read "*Co-teaching that works*" as a launching point for discussions about student support.