



Networks of Inquiry and Innovation Aboriginal Enhancement Schools Network

2016 - 2017 AESN / NOII Case Study

School Name: Bayview

School District: SD#68 Nanaimo-Ladysmith

Inquiry Team Members: Genny Isaachsen, Kevin Brand, Lauren Baetz, Shelley Beleznay, Kirstin Funke-Robinson, Julia Browning, Pene Haslam, Ed Young

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Type of inquiry: NOII

Grade levels: Primary (K - 3), Intermediate (4 - 7)

Curricular area(s): Competencies: Social Emotional

Focus area(s): Social and emotional learning

In one sentence, what was your focus for the year?

We explored collaborative and proactive solutions as a way to integrate trauma-informed practice into our behaviour management strategies with students.

Scanning: Briefly summarize your scanning process. How did you use the four key questions as part of the scanning process? What did you notice about the experiences of your learners that were most important to your team?

In using CPS, we noticed that students felt that they had a voice in the problem solving process. Students had a chance to take part in their own behavior management plan, which increased self-awareness and ownership over their behaviors. We considered that emotions are integral to learning and recognized individual differences in behavior management planning. Therefore, each case study had its own objectives tailored to the individual. We recognized that this process would take patience and time.

Focus: In a few sentences, explain why you selected this area. What changes were you hoping to obtain for your learners?

We reviewed our school community. Our school community consists of 170 students, close to two-thirds of students are of Aboriginal heritage. Additionally, we



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welcomed many students from Syria this calendar year. Our school services many students who are living in poverty and who have experienced various forms of trauma. Many of our students have difficulty regulating themselves emotionally and socially. The school culture has included self-regulation programming for a number of years. Our Zones of Regulation programming is helping, however we have students for whom we need to enhance our practice and explore new ideas. Some students report feeling stressed, isolated, bullied, and lonely. We intend to continue to build understanding and empathy for students who have lagging skills in the area of social and emotional communication through Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS), Ross W. Greene (2016). This approach is respectful of Aboriginal Understandings and everyone is more comfortable in the learning environment when they feel understood and heard.

Hunch: Describe your hunches about the ways in which practices at the school may have been contributing to the experiences of your learners that were of concern to you.

We may need to change our lens. It is proposed that helping students to understand themselves better and to explore problem-solving in a peaceful manner will calm some stress-response behaviours. There is a hope that reframing social-emotional disregulation as a form of developmental delay will help staff to better understand learning needs and to continue to build compassionate and effective practice.

New professional learning: What new areas of professional learning did you explore? What resources were most helpful? What specific designs did you use to support the learning of your colleagues?

We explored the works of Ross Greene and www.livesinthebalance.org. Tools that we used included the Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems, Plan B, and the Bill of Rights for Behaviorally Challenging Kids. We have also begun the practice of restorative justice as a trauma-informed approach.

Taking action: Describe strategies you and your team decided on and how your actions worked out.

Our team read the book and explored the website. We met in small groups to discuss specific students and build case studies. For each student, we followed the protocol set out in Ross Greene's book. The plan was to meet monthly to review each student's plan (with the student, teacher and counsellor). This was a new process for our staff, and we



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found it difficult to follow through with our designs with staff turnover throughout the year. Integral team members were absent making collaboration and follow through problematic. We also planned to make this part of a PLC, but something else always came up which took precedence.

Checking: Summarize the differences you made. Were they enough? Were you satisfied?

The few students that we did work with had more opportunity to reflect upon and take ownership of their behavior. With a lack of follow through in our design, we were unable to gather enough evidence to comment on our overall effectiveness. We are not satisfied with our progress or our results, however we did feel it was still a worthwhile experience.

Reflections/Advice: Finish by sharing what you learned from this inquiry, where you plan to go next, and what advice you would offer other schools with a similar interest.

From this inquiry, we realized that children's behavioral challenges can be understood as a form of developmental delay in the domains of frustration tolerance, problem solving and flexibility/adaptability (much like delays in reading writing and arithmetic). In other words, this allowed us to look at challenging behaviors as skills that are lagging and not just manipulative and attention seeking behaviors. Going through this process forced me to look at ALL students and ask what lagging skills I needed to teach to help them solve problems. Moving forward, for CPS to be effective, staff would have to decide whether or not it is a school initiative. We think CPS will not be as successful in a silo. The reality of this process is that it is extremely time consuming, needs a cohesive team that is dedicated to collaborating and we felt that a whole staff approach would be more effective so that all adults would be versed in the CPS philosophy.