



## Networks of Inquiry and Innovation Aboriginal Enhancement Schools Network

### 2016 - 2017 AESN / NOII Case Study

**School Name:** Cheslakees Elementary

**School District:** SD#85 Vancouver Island North

**Inquiry Team Members:** Marilyn Randall, Jill Cook

**Inquiry Team Contact Email:** mrandall@sd85.bc.ca / jcook@sd85.bc.ca

**Type of inquiry:** NOII

**Grade levels:** Primary (K - 3)

**Curricular area(s):** Applied Design, Skills & Technology, Language Arts - Literacy, Language Arts - Oral Language, Language Arts - Reading, Language Arts - Writing, Science, Social Studies

**Focus area(s):** Aboriginal understandings (for example, Traditional Knowledge, oral history, reconciliation), Core competencies (for example, critical thinking, communication, problem solving), Differentiated instruction, Experiential learning, First Peoples Principles of Learning, Formative assessment, Growth mindset, Inclusion and inclusive instructional strategies, Inquiry-based learning, STEM / STEAM, Universal design for learning

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

Our focus was maintaining a positive attitude towards literacy, when literacy strategies are presented earlier in the school year.

**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?

We were aware that clear intentions to the learners with active exploration of literacy and guided discovery led to students having a positive attitude towards learning. We recognized that learning takes patience and time. However, we wondered whether beginning earlier in the school year would lead to a richer Literacy experience for all. We noticed that students who required more time for learning received it in a variety of ways.

**Focus:** In a few sentences, explain why you selected this area. What changes were you



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hoping to obtain for your learners?

This area was chosen because the previous students responded well to the methods of presentation. We hoped that earlier introduction to materials would honour the time some children needed to consolidate their learning without an adverse effect on enjoyment.

**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.

Although we were pleased with our classroom practices we wondered whether we were respecting the preschool knowledge in literacy of children coming into our class.

**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 tied literacy learning into the complete Kindergarten curriculum. We included nature exploration, technology, traditional knowledge, hands-on interactive presentation, and individualised learning. We shared orally on a regular basis. We are a small staff and talk daily after school, sharing our professional learning.

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

We explained the purpose of the instruction to the students. We presented materials in an active interesting way. Because children come to school with varied preschool experiences we provided tier two instruction.

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

In May 2016 of 18 children:

- 72% could give the names and sounds of 20 or more letters
- 94.4% could give the names and sound of 15 or more letters
- 88.8% of students read at PM Benchmark Level 1 or greater
- 66.5% of students read at PM Benchmark Level 2 or greater
- 16% of students read at PM Benchmark Level 3 or greater
- 11% of students read at PM Benchmark Level 6 or greater



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These results were met in February of the current year.

In May 2017 of 15 children:

100% could give the names and sounds of 20 or more letters

80% could read at PM Benchmark Level 1 or greater

53% could read at PM Benchmark Level 2 or greater

46% could read at PM Benchmark Level 3 or greater

13% could read at PM Benchmark Level 6 or greater

These students were very confident in knowing where they were going with their learning and told us what they wanted to learn next. We regularly reviewed these goals with the students. 100% of our students readily named two or more adults in the school who care about them and support their learning.

For the second year we found no discernible differences in attitude or achievement in students of First Nations ancestry.

**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.

In the coming year it will be interesting to see if this year's Literacy results can be duplicated or exceeded with the incoming students. We would expect to offer more active learning in the style of STEAM