



Networks of Inquiry and Innovation Aboriginal Enhancement Schools Network

2016 - 2017 AESN / NOII Case Study

School Name: SD79 Learning Team

School District: SD#79 Cowichan Valley

Inquiry Team Members: Denise Mansueti, Glen Posey, Lisa Read, Julie Conroy, Debbie Mah, Courtenay McGeachy.

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Type of inquiry: NOII

Grade levels: Primary (K - 3), Intermediate (4 - 7), Secondary (8 - 12)

Curricular area(s): Not applicable, Aligning IEP process with new curriculum

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

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

Through the lens of Inclusive Education and teacher inquiry, how will the aligning of IEPs with the renewed curriculum help to strengthen our practice, thus improve outcomes for our learners?

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?

The scanning phase happened authentically through the '1701 rush' that happens in all districts at the beginning of the school year. Conversations began with our Itinerant Resource Teachers and School Psychologists about how they were going to make the IEPs "fit" into the revised curriculum. They then invited some other members of the learning team (curriculum coordinator, district technology coordinator, and an assistant-superintendent) to join the conversation. With this broader scan of the district our



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ideas and concerns began to align between departments.

During the scanning process it was clear that the current IEP process was disconnected from the revised curriculum but more importantly through deeper conversation we all soon realized that our current IEP process was also not inclusive to ALL learners.

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

The "1701 rush" began the discussion about the current changes that were occurring in our district regarding "Communicating Student Learning" and in turn our District Principal of Technology was asked to join the team, not only for a perspective on instructional strategies but also to be involved in the conversations that will ultimately lead to a more meaningful design of an actual IEP template for our district.

Our goal was to finalize our new template by having it included in our new Communicating Student Learning App called "EdInform". EdInform was created by our district teachers, the District Principal of Technology and a Willocks Information Systems Engineer. The Willocks Engineer ideated in parallel with our ongoing discussions from this team to move their systems into alignment with our redesigned IEP. Ideas kept on flowing and growing.

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 had many hunches. The main hunch was that many of our students and teachers were unaware of how the current IEP process and paperwork fit into their daily practice.

Other hunches were as follows:

- We needed a greater opportunity for student voice in contributing to their learning plan, while in the context of the learning plan for the whole class.
- We needed to strengthen our overall beliefs for diversity and inclusive education along with inclusive strategies that can be written with the whole classroom in mind.
- We needed to provide a framework for reflective practice through a lens of what do I want my students to know, what do I want my students to be able to do and what do I want my students to understand as organized in the redesigned curriculum.

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?



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This opportunity for inquiry supported collaboration time. Through the collaboration of the many departments at the district level we were able to research more deeply what other districts were doing around IEPs and assessment.

The resource that we found most useful was from our own Learning Team. Once we all sat down and worked together rather than in silos we soon discovered the hidden talent, amazing ideas, and resource that we could be to one another, specifically around our need for a new IEP process and framework.

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

We created a survey that allowed us to gain feedback from ALL adults that would be involved in a student's support team. We also gathered interested teachers together for an evening of appetizers (Applies and Apps) to work through the design thinking framework to create their ideal IEP artifact/prototype.

The survey allowed us to gain feedback from ALL adults that would be involved in a student's support team. This process worked out very well. We had incredible response from our support teachers. This created outside conversations and soon we were being asked from random teachers and schools in the district about our project.

The Appie Night was a huge success. Using a design thinking framework (and food :)) was the key to moving this meeting forward. It was a nonjudgemental, non evaluative process for teachers to share their ideas and create their utopia/ideal IEP artifact.

Our team was able to take away three different prototypes that we will use to work towards a new IEP framework. The teachers involved are excited to begin piloting the new IEP once it is ready to go.

A few people from our team had the opportunity to meet with Shelley Moore and to discuss the IEP changes that Richmond, Surrey and the Ministry of Education are currently working on. This meeting resulted in a keen interest around what SD79 is doing from Shelley and currently our district leaders are working to bring Shelley back to SD79 for ongoing professional development in 2017-2018.

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



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The biggest difference that we were able to make this year was to start the conversation throughout our district. Teachers and EAs are curious. Throughout the year we brought not only our diverse team together but also created opportunities for ALL teachers in the district to provide feedback on IEPs and the renewed curriculum.

Next year our team hopes to have a prototype ready for teachers to pilot and again provide us with feedback. It is very important to our team that the classroom teacher, EA, support teachers, student and parents ALL have the opportunity to provide us with the necessary feedback that will be needed to move forward in a positive and productive manner.

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.

This inquiry was much larger than we initially imagined. We will need to continue our inquiry work next year. We are now preparing to create and launch a new innovative tool that will be linked to the SD79 Communicating Student Learning E-Portfolio App called EdInform. Our next task will be to work with the Willocks Engineer to add an IEP link within EdInform that can be accessed by teachers, parents and students.

Our focus will be on SMART assessment replacing SMART goals. This is a brand new way of thinking about IEP goals and assessment for students with high and low incidence MoEd designations. As this will be a brand new practice for all of our Learning Assistance and Resource Teachers, careful roll out will be of the utmost importance. This is why we are moving slowly and will continue our work into the 2017-2018 school year.