



Networks of Inquiry and Innovation Aboriginal Enhancement Schools Network

2016 - 2017 AESN / NOII Case Study

School Name: Ebus Academy

School District: SD#91 Nechako Lakes

Inquiry Team Members: Nicole Arnold, Bonnie Toll, Stacey Soffel, Sarah Barr, Shannon Himmelright, Lisa Zukewich

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Type of inquiry: AESN

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

Curricular area(s): Arts Education, Language Arts - Literacy, Language Arts - Oral Language, Language Arts - Reading, Language Arts - Writing, Science

Focus area(s): Aboriginal understandings (for example, Traditional Knowledge, oral history, reconciliation), Community-based learning, First Peoples Principles of Learning, Indigenous pedagogy, Land, Nature or Place-based learning

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

Embedding Aboriginal content and culture in the curriculum in many areas.

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 noticed that learners are more interested now in the opportunities that are offered online than in the past, and are seeking more events to attend. Over the past few years there has been a steady increase in participation in the events and learning opportunities, showing an appetite for more.

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

We needed to build on the momentum of increased student engagement and participation (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) students in their education by ensuring Aboriginal content



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and culture is infused in the weekly and daily learning opportunities. We also needed to continue the face to face events we have made part of our school experience.

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.

There were limited online opportunities to explore Aboriginal content, culture in the courses offered by Ebus. The different nature of online learning can be a barrier to student engagement. We can offer opportunities but we never know if anyone is going to show up at the event or sign into the v-class session.

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?

-Teachers used the Aboriginal Education worker's knowledge of resources, connections to the community, the traditions and history to help infuse their teaching with Aboriginal content.

-A community member took the Aboriginal Education worker, a high school science teacher on a medicine walk in the winter and they made videos for learning on the Ebus website

-A primary teacher had the opportunity to work with Roy Henry Vickers to learn about his books, his history and artwork (online meetings). She also learned about the work of other Indigenous authors like Jay Odjick

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

The cultural learning expanded to all ages, from primary to secondary in a variety of curricular areas, from storytelling to science to history.

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

Some of the changes we are noticed were:

-increased student engagement with the primary stories in v-class (students don't want to miss each week's story, which is partnered with a reading/comprehension strategy)

-students expressed that they had not known much about Aboriginal history in Canada (residential schools, etc.) and developed a greater understanding of current and past circumstances.



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-students who chose to participate in the v-class sessions were very engaged and returned over and over, indicating that the experience was valuable for them. They were also able to readily engage in personal reflections about their learning and the information they gained.

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.

Persistence is key, slowly gently reaching out to engage teachers in working together; in this online learning environment, providing opportunities and gently enticing student involvement through choice is critical (choice in joining, choice in ways of showing their learning..differentiated expression); increase the selection of resources available for teachers to use; collaborating together is also critical (access your local human resources and educate yourself about your local area);