



Networks of Inquiry and Innovation Aboriginal Enhancement Schools Network

2016 - 2017 AESN / NOII Case Study

School Name: Fairview Community School

School District: SD#68 Nanaimo-Ladysmith

Inquiry Team Members: Steve Holmberg - Jane Kruks - Arlene McGuff - Craig Dick - Noreen Keen - Gary Chantrell

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Type of inquiry: NOII

Grade levels: Intermediate (4 - 7)

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): Core competencies (for example, critical thinking, communication, problem solving), Differentiated instruction, Formative assessment, Inquiry-based learning, STEM / STEAM, Universal design for learning

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

Will students become more active and reflective learners if they regularly document and share their learning through authentic use of embedded technology.

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?

During our scanning phase we investigated the ways students demonstrated learning. We found that the static pen and paper approach was not always the right “fit” for every student. We also realized that not all students were engaged in their learning and some struggled to fully realize their potential by filling out a worksheet or writing in a paper based journal.

Our curiosity surrounding this theme was sparked by the re-designed curriculum and its focus on embedding authentic technology use into classrooms. We believe that using



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technology as a tool for ePortfolios and video documentaries will prepare our student for the future.

While engaged in our scanning phase, we framed our questioning/thinking around the following OECD principles:

1. Learners are different = different tools and environments must be used.
2. Learners at the centre = student voice (ePortfolios).
3. Assessment for Learning = what form factor serves descriptive feedback.
4. Students need to be stretched = creative thinking (building ePortfolios)

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

We determined our focus through the scanning phase because we believe that:

1. Technology is an ubiquitous part of our students lives, we need to teach them how to use it ethically and purposefully
2. Our team is united in the belief that technology must be used authentically as a way to show learning
3. technology will allow kids to demonstrate future focused competencies (Communication, Personal/Social, Creativity)
4. Technology is a tool that will enable success for all learners via differentiated learning environments.

Through this inquiry, we were hoping that technology use would engage all learners and enable them to become passionate about learning and successful in meeting all learning standards.

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.

Even though our district is becoming tech forward we are still witnessing a fair amount of static paper and pencil writing/journaling and as a result, we see a lot of disengaged learners. We have had an influx of a substantial amount of technology into our school, but we wonder if the technology at our school is being used in authentic and meaningful ways that showcase student learning. We see technology used as a “keep them busy” device or a reward to be used during playtime. We want to ensure that this does not happen at



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Fairview and by proceeding with this inquiry we will ensure that technology is used to showcase student learning in formative ways.

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 are passionately involved in the SD 68 District implemented Google Classroom initiative. Through connections with district staff and colleges at other schools we are learning about the technology in our building and focusing on technology use as assessment for learning.

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

In-order to embark on our inquiry we did the following:

1. Secured an amount of technology (1 iPad cart & 3 Chromebook carts) so all intermediate teachers were able to have access to technology 60-75% of their weekly teaching time.
2. We agreed that we would use technology for content creation, producing work, and writing.
3. We used pre and post data to check our progress (video interviews with students, google forms etc.)
4. As our inquiry progressed, we shifted our focus to a reporting district initiative (OCSL - Ongoing Communication of Student Learning). ePortfolios (Google Sites) became our digital tool to produce and show student learning.

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

As mentioned above, our focus shifted to ePortfolios (Google Sites) to show OCSL. Using the google environment (GDrive, Google Classroom, etc) made a huge impact on our learners. We discovered that when students use technology:

1. Written output dramatically increased. (Grit!)
2. Voice to text & read write enables ALL learners to become writers. (Learners are different)
3. Within the ePortfolio environment student voice (students at the centre) is clear and evident.



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4. Within the ePortfolio environment students have an opportunity explain their work, self assess, and reflect on their learning (assessment FOR learning)

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.

We learned that "Yes, technology engages learners". As a result of this timely realization, and the support of our school district we were able to shift our focus to OCSL via Google sites (ePortfolios). We plan to fully implement Google sites as our OCSL tool at Fairview at the Intermediate level in Sept 2017. Within our Google environment we will strive for consistent student voice, authentic evidence of learning, connection to curricular competencies and descriptive feedback. All of this will be student driven.

Our advice to other schools embarking on a technology based inquiry:

"Not too much only when necessary make digital learning deep, personal and meaningful".