



Networks of Inquiry and Innovation **Aboriginal Enhancement Schools Network**

2016 - 2017 AESN / NOII Case Study

School Name: Fraser Heights Secondary School

School District: SD#36 Surrey

Inquiry Team Members: Brenda Sampson, Aboriginal Teacher Advocate; Kevin Wesley, Aboriginal Enhancement Worker; Elaine Wong, Science Teacher; Chris Pocock, Socials Department Head; Norma Nickel, Art Teacher; Angela Monk, Teacher Librarian; Ami Kambo, English/SJ/FNS Teacher; Pam De Luca, Vice Principal.

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Type of inquiry: AESN

Grade levels: Secondary (8 - 12)

Curricular area(s): Cross Curricular Connections

Focus area(s): Aboriginal understandings (for example, Traditional Knowledge, oral history, reconciliation), Community-based learning, Land, Nature or Place-based learning, Social and emotional learning

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

Our focus this year was to build cross-curricular connections to enhance learning and growth for students and staff, and continue building a strong relationship between our school learning community and the Katzie First Nation.

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?

Scanning process: Interviewed some of our identified Aboriginal Students. Spoke with Aboriginal Students, Classroom Teachers, and some Katzie Parents after various events and activities. Spoke with some students who haven't formally self-identified. Spoke with Katzie Council Members, Elders, Staff. Feedback across learning activities suggests building level of connections and building sense of learning community. Some of our Aboriginal students struggle on multiple levels to find relevance and/or success in school, some felt connections with specific friends or one or two teachers at start of school year, the two interviewed find they feel support from range of staff now.



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

We were hoping to build overall levels of knowledge and understanding of Indigenous Culture today, as well as build the level of comfort Aboriginal students feel so that students see all teachers as having interest, caring and knowledge of current Indigenous issues, increase the level of trust and support students feel from all staff at our school, while strengthening students', especially Katzie First Nations students', feelings of pride and self-worth.

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.

A few teachers had some Indigenous knowledge, an interest in building additional knowledge, as well as building a level of interest on the part of Fraser Heights teachers to find interesting curriculum connections so that Indigenous content can be built into the curriculum in meaningful and clearly connected ways. Building and maintaining strong community connections with Katzie First Nation is important to our school.

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?

Katzie Long House - 58 Fraser Heights administration, teachers and staff went to a pro d Aug. 31st.

School based Aboriginal Pro D September 1st looking at the First Peoples Principles of Learning and making connections with the New BC Curriculum.

Sept 26th Teacher Pro D workshop on ways to integrate First Peoples, Metis, Inuit topics across a range of subject areas.

Pinterest boards built to have links to resources for teachers.

Department Head Release Days used to build school drums, to build lesson plans around Oral Tradition to support the use of Drums in a range of subject area classrooms.

Surreyschools.ca "My Groups" feature now being used to share and electronically store lesson plan materials to support the range of print resources available at the school so that teachers can easily find and use the resources within their curriculum.



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

Variety of cross curricular learning initiatives—some completed now, some in process, some to be repeated next year.

Katie Longhouse - year two - 330 Students from Fraser Heights and Frank Hurt Secondary Schools Oct. 19 and 20th - whole group traditional welcome, calling of witnesses, welcome from Chief and Council, elders sharing teachings, then breakout sessions on topics such as archeology, traditional plants, current health care issues, business initiatives, salmon/fishing, drumming/oral tradition. Elders made lunch, whole group closing with calling of witnesses for the days' events. (Students across grades 9, 10, 11, 12 - English, Science, Socials - attended).

Aboriginal Reads Contest -- year three -- Learning Commons hosted three week reading contest, students read book and enter to win prizes (\$5 gift card/simple items from Native Northwest - pens/hats/water bottles). All subject area teachers encouraged to bring classes/sign out books/link to classroom units of study.

Ethnobotany Activity Stations 2.5 hour long sessions Sept and June (Senior Foods, Biology 11, First Nations 12 classes) rotating through stations re: making food, learning about traditional plants, tasting tea, tasting fiddleheads/asparagus/wild rice/salmon/bannock, finding and identifying traditional plants on school grounds (huckleberry, thimbleberry, salmon berry, ferns, skunk cabbage, etc.).

Math 9/SS possible unit looking at the size/location of reserves/population density and compare to the surrounding settler lands as well as looking at cut off lands/McKenna-McBride Commission/how reserves came to be allotted. Possible connections have students analyze re: statistics/measurement/history/inequity/treaty. Interested Math teacher started some planning with FNS12 teacher, but math teacher moved school districts partway through year—will restart this initiative next year.

Textiles/Senior Art/First Nations - Coast Salish Loom Weaving, spindle whorls (shop classes made), traditional dying with lichens, berries, ground walnut shells. Possible connections next year to science classes.

Drums - class set made that can be used in all subject areas - lesson plan materials just being drafted, possibly use with PE classes and FNS or SS classes with hoop dancer at end of June (money/space logistics to be worked out), Aboriginal students to also make song group (possibly bring a friend song group) and learn songs with the drums. Bring in Katie Elders and do a ceremony to celebrate the new school drums.

Thinking about having a school song composed and have the verse translated so that the song could be sung duo language in various subject areas (eg Japanese, French, Spanish



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and English subject area classes).

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

Checked with two of our Aboriginal Learners, informal feedback conversations with various stakeholders (parents, cultural workers, Katzie staff) to better understand if on the right track, to find what should be changed, modified, or adapted to take it to the next level next year. Both Aboriginal learners commented about how they feel strongly supported, and that the overall tone/environment of the school is positive--a positive place to learn. Two Katzie Parents commented about how they find the initiatives supportive of their learners. Katzie Elders, Staff, Chief and Council have been enthusiastic supporters of a range of initiatives. Comments from stakeholders about valuing the variety of rich Indigenous content to be found in various subject classrooms. Teachers have explored a range of new learning opportunities to bring the curriculum to life.

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.

Many hands make light work, and many brains bring great ideas. It takes time to set up and organize events and activities, everyone pitching in to take on parts of the overall job really helps, still need to oversee the whole event and check in and check back with all stakeholders to see what ran smoothly, what needs improvement, etc. Even when something has been done 6 or 7 times, there are always new ways of seeing how to organize/adapt to better fit and meet the changing needs of our learners. The team will look at making the Katzie Longhouse event grade specific so that it could be formally structured as an annual event. Under the current cross grade approach, some youth have multiple classes across multiple years signing up to go. Coast Salish Loom Weaving - it takes time to build teacher skill and knowledge so that youth can be mentored to then spin and dye wool. Limited number of days access to cultural workers. Possible solutions have Cultural Workers do the weaving/design/history part of the overall unit, and have students do the spinning and dye process beforehand to build enthusiasm/interest—this part takes more time than teachers had thought (felt rushed this year) needed 3 or 4 class blocks not just 2 to do the spin and dye. Also found preparation time needed for set up/logistics/material gathering/sharing of supplies. This logistics part always needs more time than originally anticipated for any of these initiatives. Fraser Heights Aboriginal Reads Initiative will now become an annual Surrey District Initiative supported with funding from the District Aboriginal Education Department. The team will continue working to ensure all curriculum areas have cross curricular opportunities.