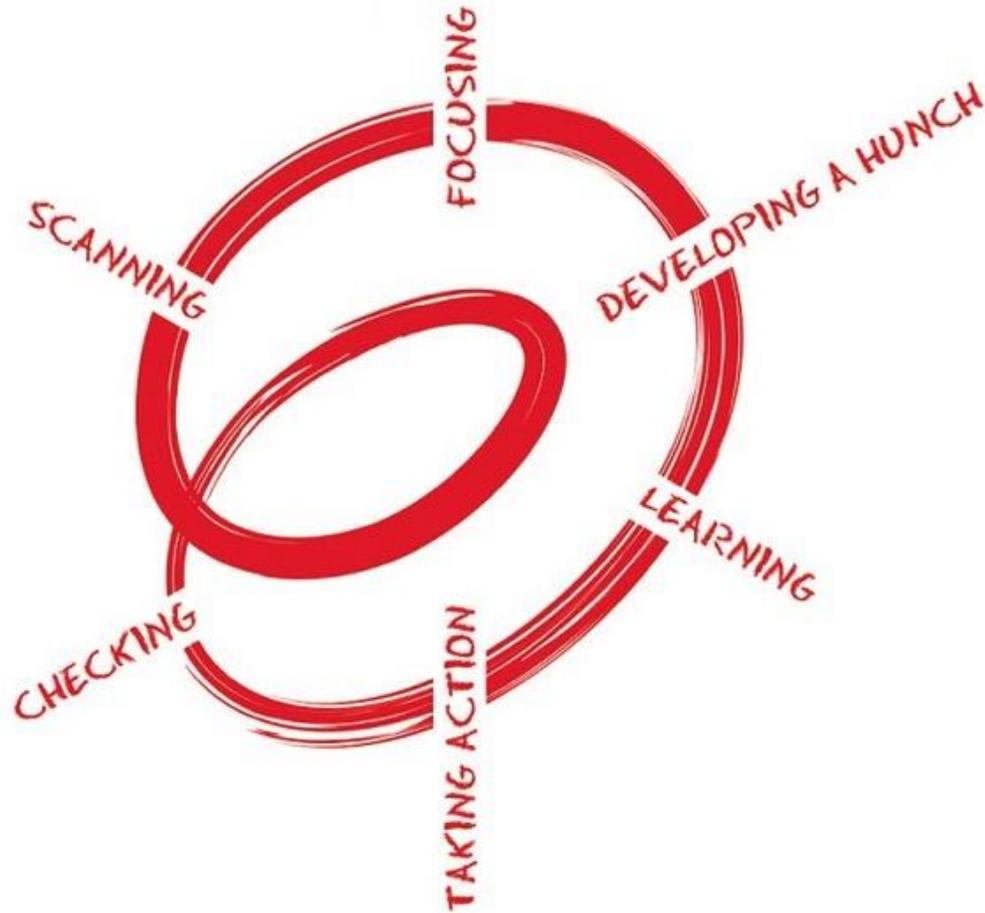




## School District No. 67 (Okanagan Skaha) Carmi Elementary - School Growth Plan



*"Spirals of Inquiry for equity and quality"*  
Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser



## School: Carmi Elementary

### **School Context:**

Carmi Elementary School provides education to approximately 150 students in Kindergarten through Grade 5. We value and pride ourselves on bringing an inclusive approach to education, where all students are welcomed and appreciated for the various strengths and talents that they bring. Our school also houses a StrongStart Centre which serves as an excellent resource for parents and their preschool aged children.

Parents and staff share the following core values:

- We strive to ensure that individual students experience personal success
- We value open and timely communication with parents
- We value and encourage parental support and involvement at the school
- We are dedicated to the preparation of caring and responsible learners

### **Inquiry Question: What do you think is driving your plan for student success?**

If we identify specific students K-5 who we are worried about, and we put specific strategies in place to connect with those students, will students demonstrate an increased sense of belonging?

**Our goal(s); we will...**

- **Increase our students' sense of belonging, providing them with strategies and confidence to be productive learners.**

**Scanning: (What do you know about your students – their successes and challenges - what's going on for them?)**

### **Successes**

School wide approaches are used to provide consistency and support students learning appropriate behavior in classes, outside, and during transitions. School wide multi-age colour teams are used for regular events and themes to promote connectedness across the school. Monthly themes are displayed around the school and students create items to place on our "theme" tree in the entry to the school

## Challenges

We are seeing increasing numbers of students with anxiety and emotional issues. We are hopeful that continued supports to improve a sense of belonging will help them develop resiliency and strategies to manage in school and the community. We will use our core competency self-assessments, MDI, and attendance data to monitor how students are doing. Attendance continues to be a concern and we will continue to engage parents and work on strategies to emphasize the importance of being at school every day.

### **Focusing: (Identify the most important work you can do to improve the success of your students. On which key areas of learning will you focus?)**

We have developed school wide approaches and plans. Teachers are working on their own plans in parallel with a school plan outlining how we will support students. Teachers have identified students they feel are most vulnerable and other teachers have agreed to build relationships with these students. Poor attendance is a concern for too many students. We have identified this concern to families and will work towards supporting students and families to work together on having students attend every day. *We will develop a student survey to add to our MDI and learning survey data to hear student voices and their sense of belonging.*

### **Evidence/Data to support:**

We will identify the students we are most concerned about and monitor their academic progress, providing additional supports as needed and as available. We are using our core competency self-assessments (social responsibility and personal awareness and responsibility) to create class profiles to monitor how students are feeling. We will also use our MDI data and Learning Survey results to help understand our Grade 4 students better and our attendance data to ensure that we are creating a welcoming learning environment for all students.

### **Key Learnings:**

The Spirals of Inquiry process encourages an ongoing look at how we are doing. Scanning and noticing what is going on for our students at the centre is key. This wide perspective allows us to find out what the learners think and feel about their learning. Our focus is on our students' sense of belonging, and how that will impact their successes. The staff is committed to school wide approaches and expectations, creating a consistent environment for all students. These approaches are reviewed and discussed as a staff regularly.

### **Developing a Hunch: What is leading to this situation?**

We are noticing a number of students who are struggling, both academically and socially/emotionally. We believe that creating a strong sense of belonging can build resiliency and confidence for all learners. We are seeing increasing numbers of students with growing numbers of absences – we need to address this and find ways to determine the reasons for the absences to see if it is related to students' sense of belonging. We need to hear from students to know if our strategies are impacting their sense of belonging.

### **New Professional Learning: (Summarize new areas for professional learning and how you will go about designing new learning for yourself and your staff that will impact your learners).**

Our staff has made a commitment to work together to develop strategies and plans during our Pro-D days this year. My focus for the coming year will be to continue to work collaboratively with the staff and to find ways to share and discuss our data regularly to monitor how we are doing. I will work on developing ways to involve families to promote better attendance, and as this has been discussed as a concern at other schools, will network with colleagues to share ideas around addressing this. We will work together to create our new survey, and look at our results to guide future strategies to promote an increased sense of belonging.

### **Taking Action: What will you do differently?**

This year has been productive, with all teachers involved in the development of our plans. We are streamlining our collection of data (using information we already collect) to inform us about how our students are feeling and doing, and using this information to put strategies in place to support students who are struggling. Attendance will continue to be a focus. We will add a student voice survey to assess how our strategies are impacting their sense of belonging at Carmi.

### **Check: Have we made enough of a difference? How do we know?**

Our year end assessment asking if students can identify at least two adults who care about their success will allow us to see if students feel they belong, and are cared about at Carmi Elementary bschool. Combining our core competency assessments with our MDI and attendance data will inform us better to see where there are overlaps, and to ensure that we are supporting students appropriately. This year we will add our student voice survey to try to gauge if all our students are showing an increased sense of belonging.

**Communication Strategies: (How will you communicate your inquiry and your results to the school community)?**

We will share our plan with our parent community through our newsletters, and encourage ongoing dialogue at our PAC meetings. Staff meetings involve regular discussions about our students who are deemed to be most at risk.

**Parental/Community Involvement: (How will you work together as a school community to do this work)?**

Our PAC meets monthly. Parents are encouraged to share ideas, questions and concerns. We will continue to share our school plan, and invite input and feedback. We will share information through our monthly newsletters as well. Once our year end data is collected, we will share these baseline findings from our new survey with parents as well.

**Connection to the District Goals: (How does this plan connect to our district goals)?**

**Connection to the 7 Principles of Learning: (How do each of these principles align with your plan)?**

1. **Learners at the centre**
2. **Social nature of learning**
3. **Emotions are integral to learning**
4. **Recognizing individual differences**
5. **Stretching all students**
6. **Assessment for learning**
7. **Building horizontal connections**

1. Our plan is focused on our students, and their sense of belonging. We are hoping that with a focus on how our students feel, we can impact their learning and success.
2. A sense of belonging is entirely social. We believe that the interactions that students have with adults and peers during their school day, has a big impact on how they feel, and ultimately how successful they are.
3. Our school wide approaches are built to provide a consistent, caring, safe environment for all students.
4. Staff will be identifying students that they are concerned about. In so, doing, we are recognizing that some students have more difficulties “belonging” within the school community. We believe that identifying these students and their needs will better allow us to implement appropriate strategies to support their success.

5. Strategies that are implemented to support students who have been identified, are also used, and will be beneficial for all students. Over time, this will improve the caring culture within the school.
6. Assessment strategies that provide ongoing feedback to students, and provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways will celebrate their strengths, further improving their sense of belonging.
7. A sense of connectedness is key to a sense of belonging. Our relatively small school means that everyone knows, and interacts with everyone. Our staff have a community approach, and the level of caring within classes and the school is evident in their interactions with students. Classes are often involved in activities with their classmates, with other classes, and with the school as a whole.
8. We believe strongly in the feeling we have at our school – outside presenters and replacement staff often comment on how calm and welcoming our school feels.
9. Our monthly themes and colour team activities allow students to connect across all grade levels to give them more connections, and we see students excited to share with parents what they have done during those events where we work together.
10. We have introduced units on Okanagan cultural language and students performed a song using this language at our Christmas presentation.