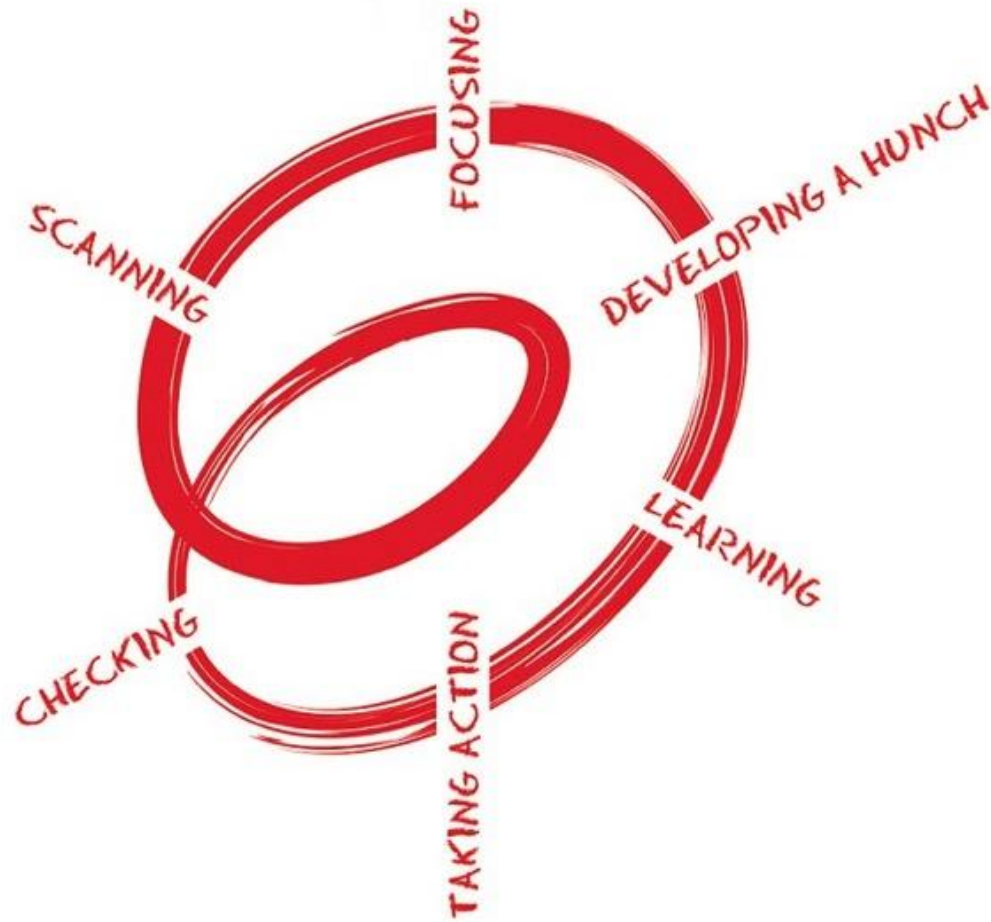




School District No. 67 (Okanagan Skaha) School Growth Plan



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

Draft Plan developed by:



School: Summerland Middle School

School Context:

School District 67 (Okanagan Skaha) and Summerland Middle School wish to recognize the Okanagan (Syilx) People and our local nation, the Penticton Indian Band, on whose territories we live, learn, and do our work. Summerland Middle School is a dual track (English and Late French Immersion) school with 305 students. Students come from one of our two feeder schools and there is a strong sense of community in our school. Starting in 2016 we started re-visioning our school using the Spirals of Inquiry. We spent considerable time wondering what was going on for our students and how we could make a difference in their learning. After spending a year scanning, focusing and taking on new learning we entered the 2017-18 school year ready to take action and see what difference it made with our students.

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

Based on the work we did in 2016-2017 we wanted to focus on developing Caring, Confidence and Responsibility within our students. Early in the year we recognized work we were already doing with hopes that the table below would offer a “menu” of sorts where teachers could choose an area of focus.

<i>What are we already doing?</i>	Caring	Confidence	Responsibility
	Connecting with kids	Growth Mindset	Establishing and maintaining consistent expectations
	Creating a safe environment	Providing second chances- fair and meaningful assignment resubmission/testing	Making time for pep talks
	Teaching and using the Zones of Regulation	Scaffolding projects	Providing timely and positive feedback
	Practicing stress management, breathing and relaxation strategies	Providing opportunities for problem solving- maker space/ breakout activities/ coding	Ways of reflecting on progress- interim report reflections, portfolios (freshgrade)
	Developing a bank of brain breaks- physical, movement based lessons	Providing second chances- fair and meaningful assignment resubmission/testing	Ways of communicating with parents
	6 ways to calm	Creating a culture of effective self-assessment	

In the middle of October Linda and Judy came to consult with our school teams. Our school shared our story and talked about the journey we had taken. We shared the list above and asked for some advice regarding how to implement some of the ideas school wide. When we shared the story and some of the data we collected in our scanning last year – particularly the fact that 80% of kids could name two adults that thought they could be successful – they stopped us and told us that was where we should focus. If 1 in 5 kids cannot name two adults who believe they can be successful, then that should be the area of focus.

Our goal(s); we will...

Reduce change to increase improvement. Instead of focusing on too much, we narrowed the focus and put our energy towards what we knew to be most important. We focused on caring by purposefully connecting with kids and creating a safe environment.

Caring
Connecting with kids
Creating a safe environment

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

Successes

During the 2016-17 school year we went through the Scanning phase. However, we did ask the 3 questions at the beginning of this school year to ensure that things had not changed significantly. We asked kids if they could name two adults that thought they would be successful. We dug down further in our notion of caring and asked kids how adults show care for students, how students care for themselves, how they demonstrate caring for others and if they could name two students who cared about them.

Challenges

The results came back and indicated that approximately 82% of our students could name two adults that thought they would be successful, which was not significantly different than the previous year. Students were able to identify a number of ways adults demonstrate care, ways that they care for themselves and how they care for others. The challenge is how to move from what we know and understand into action.

Taking Action: What will you do differently?

As a staff we decided to pursue the idea of Caring. This manifested itself in two ways: creating a safe environment, and connecting with kids. As such we took on a number of different initiatives.

- 1) During the October implementation day our Gr. 6 team came up with the having the students self-reflect on the different ways they demonstrate “care” (care for themselves, others, their mental health etc.). Each month we chose a different theme and teachers talked about it during advisory and students did personal reflection on colored recipe cards. Each month the cards were put up in our multi-purpose area and eventually spelled the word CARE.
- 2) The October implementation day also hatched the idea of multi-grade triads with the idea of building community for our students. We put classes together with one student from each grade (6/7/8) and had a morning of fun activities. We also ran a school wide “fun” activity day in May. The idea was to put groups together in the beginning of the year and get together regularly in order to develop authentic relationships with students from other classes and grades.
- 3) Our Me To We club organized a Survivor Challenge week. Students were encouraged to sign up in multi aged groups and compete in fun events over the course of 2 weeks. Teams were eliminated and there was one eventual winner. The emphasis was not on the competition, but encouraging everyone (teachers too!) to come out and enjoy the fun activities at lunch.
- 4) Staff 2 x 10 challenge. Instead of choosing from a list of strategies, we asked teachers to try the 2x10 (spend two minutes a day for 10 days talking with a student to build a relationship) with someone in their classroom for the month of January.

These are activities that are above and beyond what we typically do. We also had a number of assemblies and activities that would make connections and create safe environments, but they are things that are part of the “norm” of our school.

Check: (Have we made enough of a difference? How do we know?)

In May we took the time to check in with our students. We used the same survey as we did earlier in the year. When we collated the data we found that 83.5% of our students could name two adults that believe they could be successful. While it demonstrates growth, we feel there is more work to do.

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?)

Evidence/Data to support:

Although we did see some improvement in our data, we felt there was more work to do. We tried a number of things, but we weren't sure they had the impact we intended. We utilized other sources of data (MDI and Student Learning Survey) to look for other trends. We found that when compared to the district our students are healthier in the four domains (peer relationships, adult relationships, after school activities and nutrition and sleep). They also reported healthier peer interactions online, and face to face. However, when we mined a bit deeper we found that 8% of our student report ongoing negative verbal interactions. This is below the district average, but concerning. When we dug deeper into the Student Learning Survey 33% of our students reported high levels of anxiety which is on par with the district, but also concerning.

Developing a Hunch: What is leading to this situation?

The more we discussed what was going on for our students we realized that by focusing healthy relationships (both peer and adult) may help with the negative interactions and levels of anxiety that our students are feeling. Our hope is that if we have a school wide focus on what healthy relationships look like and give students strategies to support them in developing healthy relationships. By doing this students will feel more connected to the school, their peers and the adults in the building.

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.)

We have put a committee together to help coordinate the curriculum around this initiative and we will deliver it school wide through our advisory program. We will start the year with lessons focused on the individual with lessons focused on Zones of Regulation, Growth Mindset and Mind Up. We will then move into positive peer relationships using resources from Social Thinking, Social You and Tribes. Eventually we will cover all the Assets (Peer Relationships, Adult Relationships, After School activities and Nutrition and Sleep) outlined in the MDI.

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

We feel we need to do a better job engaging our parents in the work we are doing at school. Next year the principal will send a monthly email home updating parents on the

progress the school is making and the themes we are focusing on. Our hope is to increase the amount of dialogue between parents and students, but also between the home and school. We are hoping to increase dialogue and engage our parent community as partners in this work.

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

Our work ties in directly with the District goal of focusing on inclusionary classrooms (and relationships) that will enable to students to complete school with a sense of dignity, purpose and options. Students who do not have the ability to self-regulate and maintain healthy relationships are at risk of not completing school.