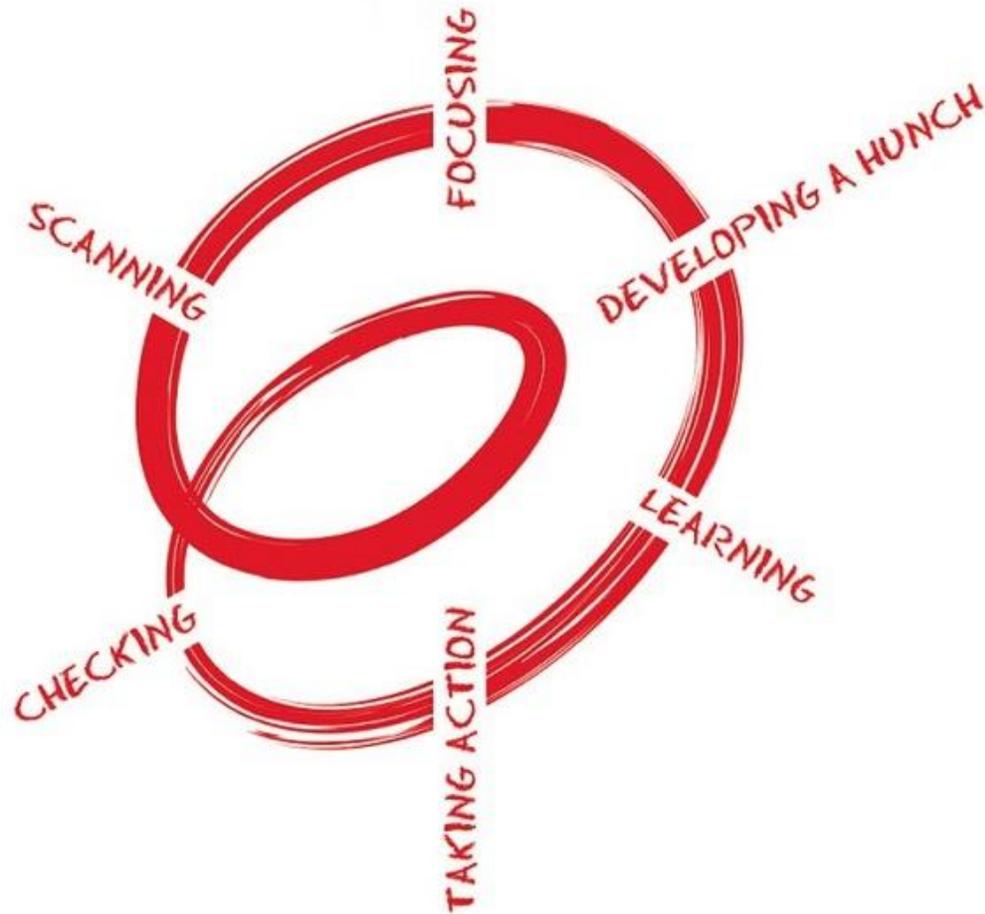




School District No. 67 (Okanagan Skaha) KVR Middle School Growth Plan



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



School: KVR Middle School

School Context:

KVR is a dual-track school that offers a Late French Immersion program at the Grade 6 to 8 levels. This configuration offers a blend of students from all the elementary schools in the district. Our catchment feeder schools are Carmi, Queen's Park, Uplands and Naramata Elementary Schools. KVR Middle School enjoys strong community and parent support, and actively responds to high expectations.

Established in 1997, KVR currently has a staff of 46 serving 530 pupils and has successfully established a middle school program based on the Exemplary Middle School Model.

At KVR Middle School, we offer a variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities with this goal in mind: there is something for everyone. From the Me to We Club to rugby, and Climbing Club to math contests, there are a variety of activities to meet the needs of our diverse community.

KVR Middle School Mission Statement:

TO PROVIDE A SAFE, CARING, AND CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENT THAT WILL ALLOW OUR STUDENTS TO DEVELOP SELF-ESTEEM, BECOME LIFELONG LEARNERS, AND HEALTHY, PRODUCTIVE, RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS.

School-wide Inquiry Question:

How do we create a community where everyone feels successful?

Our goal(s): we will... *continue to focus on the following emerging and ongoing themes:*

- Inclusive practices
- Co-planning / Co-teaching
- Implementing First Peoples Principles of Learning & Indigenous Education
- Mental Health Literacy training and initiatives
- Response to Intervention (Academic and Behaviour)
- Applied Design and Skills Technology in Curricular Areas
- Assessment and Evaluation

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

1.] **Class Reviews:** Mid-September, when classroom teachers have had the opportunity to begin to understand the composition and complexities of their classes, they are invited to participate in class reviews. These meetings consist of the classroom teacher(s) and Support Services Team (Special Education Teacher, Learning Resource Teacher(s), Counsellor, and Administration). At these class reviews, class strengths and stretches are discussed and the opportunity is provided for the team to strategize a plan to meet the needs of the students in the class. Class reviews are also conducted mid-year to re-examine class strengths and stretches and potential ways to support.

2.] **Class Data Tracking Sheets / Watch Lists:** Teachers complete/update data tracking sheets for their classes twice each year. Student performance, which is based on Provincially recognized performance standards for literacy (reading and writing) and numeracy, are provided using the following scale (Not Yet Meeting Expectations, Minimally Meeting Expectations, Fully Meeting Expectations, and Exceeding Expectations). Information on work habits, attendance, and whether a student is receiving targeted or intensive intervention is also provided. Students who are Not Yet Meeting Expectations, or for whom there are concerns in certain areas, are placed on a 'Watch List' and monitored. Learning goals are set based on this information.

Watch List Data – Information in this chart indicates students at each grade level and by language track who have been identified by teachers as 'Watch List' students. These students may be 'Not Yet Meeting Expectations' in literacy and/or numeracy, and/or have attendance or behavior concerns. The numbers in brackets (in red) identify students of Aboriginal ancestry.

Grade / Track	Total # – 2016/17	Percent- 2016/17	Total # – 2017/18	Percent- 2017/18	Total # – 2018/19	Percent- 2018/19
Gr. 6 English Track	23/90(6/15)	26% (40%)	37/96 (9/20)	39% (45)	23/84 (3/11)	27% (27%)
Gr. 6 French Imm	19/90(5/10)	21%(50%)	17/87 (5/14)	20% (36)	20/83 (5/11)	24% (45%)
Gr. 7 English Track	18/82(4/14)	22%(29%)	32/90 (6/13)	36% (46)	33/97(13/23)	34% (57%)
Gr. 7 French Imm	16/60(3/8)	27%(38%)	20/85 (4/9)	24% (44)	24/82 (6/11)	29% (54%)
Gr. 8 English Track	20/115(7/19)	17%(37%)	20/97 (5/15)	21% (33)	38/104(7/13)	37% (54%)
Gr. 8 French Imm	15/76(2/8)	20%(25%)	12/55 (2/6)	22% (33)	21/77 (2/9)	27% (22%)

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?

- When we look at the cohort that is currently in Grade 8, we see that there continues to be an increase in numbers of 'Watch List' students from Grades 6-8. What are some contributing factors?
- Fewer students with Aboriginal ancestry are on the 'Watch List' in Grade 8 than were in Grade 6. What are the contributing factors?

- There are high numbers of students displaying signs and symptoms of anxiety and/or mental health issues, especially in Grade 6 French Immersion classes. Will training students and teachers in evidence-based mental health language help reduce feelings of anxiety and improve mental health for students?

Evidence/Data to support:

- There are questions around the level of success our Grade 7 students feel. 75% of Grade 7 students have a high academic self-concept (beliefs about their academic ability, including their perceptions of themselves as students and how interested and confident they feel in school); however, only 43% of them feel a high level of positive school climate/tone (overall tone of school environment, including the way teachers and students interact and how students treat each other.)
- The MDI data does not differentiate between students who do and do not possess Aboriginal ancestry, so we examined our Watch List data. We see that 54% of our Grade 7 students are on the Watch Lists for academic, behaviour or attendance concerns.
- Of the 19 students on Watch Lists from Grade 6 French Immersion classes, 11 students have been identified as students struggling with anxiety or mental health issues.

Key Learnings:

These are the areas that were highlighted at our May and June staff meetings (April, 2018):

- There is a continued need to explore the issues of mental health and anxiety in our students.
- There is a continued need to increase levels of self-efficacy amongst our Aboriginal student population. This needs to occur through information and opportunities to learn in nature.
- There is a continued need to provide more opportunities for students to connect to their learning in meaningful ways.

Developing a Hunch: What is leading to this situation?

Our next step(s) is to discuss collaboratively at our October 2019 staff meetings to see what we think might be impacting our learners in our three identified areas.

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.

The following are ongoing professional learning opportunities that teachers, education assistants and administrators participated in during the 2018-19 school year. These will continue and we will add to the list as we investigate further:



- Ongoing ‘Go To Educator’ Pro-D at monthly staff meetings to support teachers
- Ongoing ‘Go To Educator’ Pro-D at monthly EA meetings to support EA’s
- WE Schools: Promoting Well-being Through Education Pilot Group
- One Student at a Time Group
- EASE (Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators) Training
- Teaching Sexual Education to Grades 6-10 workshop
- ADHD: Making ADHD Work 4U Seminar with Dan Duncan: BC Interior ADHD Clinic
- Participation in Aboriginal Education partnership group
- Team of teachers participating in Shelley Moore sessions on inclusive education with a focus on Response to Intervention (RTI) Model
- Learning and growing from opportunities provided through the District, in the area of Aboriginal Perspectives and Principles of First Nations Learning
- Continued participation in ‘Through a Different Lens’ inquiry with Judith King and inquiry group led by Leyton Schnellert.

Taking Action: What will you do differently?

The following are examples of programs that we have introduced or approaches we have taken to address some of the focus areas for the 2018/19 school year.

Focus on Mental Health – implement a plan for the 2018-19 school year to address this topic:

- “Go to Educator” training delivered monthly to all staff. These sessions have included presentations on Mental Health Literacy: distress vs disorder, terminology, stereotypes, stigma, bias, ADHD, and anxiety.
- Mental Health Moments with Mr. Korvin. A series of short video lessons prepared by our counsellor which highlight and identify some key topics relating to mental health. These topics range from simple awareness and self-regulation to be shared by classroom teachers to stimulate discussion.



- Open environment where CYMH clinicians, Pathways Outreach, CMHA, and community support workers are welcome to collaborate on core plans and access space inside the school to meet with our students who are on caseloads.



- Focus on kindness learning and opportunities:
- Grade 6 teachers involved in an inquiry around empathetic learning that focuses on kindness.
- Grade 6 teachers piloting WE Well-being lessons on Gratitude



- Staff and student involvement in Kindness Week: appreciation jars, letters to strangers, Valentines for Veterans, appreciation letters to emergency responders, "Tell Me Something Good" activity, random acts of kindness, expressions of gratitude in our community, pay it forward event, and cyber-bullying.
- Language for Lex and #KVRROcksKindness projects to promote inclusion and diversity.



- Teachers have focused teaching on self-care strategies such as mindfulness and yoga.



- Provide time and opportunities for classroom teachers to collaborate, co-plan, and co-teach with our Applied Design and Skills Technology building experts to provide 'hands-on' real life learning opportunities to supplement core curriculum with



Grade 7 students designing wind turbines to generate power and measuring and generating power from moving water as part of electricity unit.

focus on the practical skills associated with STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math).



Grade 6 students working on 'egg cars' that demonstrate laws of physics as well as engineering. In this challenge students design and create a car which transports an egg down a ramp into a wall. The challenge is to see if the egg survives!



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

- Conduct class reviews in the fall and again in the spring to identify class strengths and stretches
- Mental Health Literacy survey /checking in periodically throughout year
- Continue to monitor class 'Watch Lists' to identify students 'at risk'
- Use Data gathered through Middle Years Development Index (Base line this year) – May and June staff meeting time set aside to scan this information as we look to September 2019

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

- Ongoing communication through Parents Advisory Council (monthly updates)
- Newsletter updates regarding programs and opportunities
- Monthly Mental Health Literacy focus and resource shared with parents
- KVR Facebook page
- Email / call-outs regarding upcoming events, programs, and opportunities

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

- Continue to provide information regarding strategies implemented.
- Investigate how to improve parental / community involvement (looking for input and feedback)

Connection to the District Goals: How does this plan connect to our District goals?

With regard to our Ab Ed focus and our District goal around Aboriginal students' school completion rates, we are looking at feelings of success and connectedness to school for all students, but have isolated information regarding our Aboriginal students to see if there is a way to increase / improve this in Middle School. We will continue to look at ways that we can connect with all students in the area of First Peoples Principles of Learning. We believe that by doing this we will have a positive impact on how our students with Aboriginal ancestry connect to their school and their education.

At KVR we have introduced and supported several activities. Some of these activities targeted our Aboriginal population but most were class room, grade based, and school-wide initiatives for all students. These were held in collaboration with our SD67 Ab Ed team and included, but were not limited to...

- Metis Day for all Grade 6 students. The learning experiences that were provided support the goals of SD67's Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, including the District's commitment to "raising awareness and understanding of Aboriginal history, traditions and culture for all students and staff"
- Traditional story telling sessions
- Partnership with PIB's salmon enhancement program and ONA fish hatchery; incorporation into Science 7 curriculum
- Presentation on traditional hunting and foods



- Regalia presentation
- Residential Schools Series
- Field Trips including Archaeology Field Trip, Buckbrush Tea harvest, and Sage harvest, planting mulx seeds



Grade 6 students have the opportunity to contribute to the community and work to sustain *mulx* ecosystems. Students plant *mulx* seeds and repot growing riparian plants at the



En'owkin Centre greenhouse and nursery facility. Students learn about the importance of restoring riparian and wetland habitats from local knowledge keepers.



KVR's Aboriginal Education Team and Grade 8 students make and sell bannock to help raise funds for Ab Ed Field trip to Nk'mip

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**

We continue to be very proud of the work we are doing at KVR Middle school and believe that much of the learning that occurs here aligns with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Developments Seven Principles of Learning. Our teachers are learning with our students as we explore new curriculum. Teachers are involved in collaboration and when the opportunity presents itself they engage in co-teaching. In particular, our teachers are working together to provide unique, hands on learning opportunities for our students in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). These activities are highly engaging and provide a 'real world' element to the core curriculum. We continue to explore the realm of social and emotional learning, especially in two of our identified areas of focus: mental health and resiliency. Teachers are using programs to develop self-regulation skills often in conjunction with our counsellors. We are also working to promote self-efficacy in our Aboriginal student population. From our class-reviews and collaborative planning sessions we continue to strive towards fostering growth in all members of our community and believe that we are working towards creating a community where everyone feels successful.