



School District 58 • (Nicola-Similkameen)
Merritt Bench Elementary Enhancing Learning Plan
 2017-2018 *“Success for ALL Learners Today and Tomorrow”*

MERRITT BENCH ELEMENTARY

Inquiry 1

Inquiry statements foster educator curiosity and help to focus priorities for improving student learning.

Learning (Foundational Skills) Inquiry question:

How can we ensure continuous improvement for literacy learning for all students at Merritt Bench Elementary School?

1. Early Primary Staff’s Question:

Will implementing Joyful Literacy centres continue to help our vulnerable children succeed in literacy and thrive in school?

2. Primary Staff’s Question:

Will explicit teaching of reading skills, through small Guided Reading groups move us closer to our goal of all students reading by the end of grade 3?

3. Intermediate Staff’s Question:

How can we ignite our students’ passion to produce quality writing for a variety of purposes?

Scanning (Rationale)

What’s going on for our learners? Scanning is all about collecting a variety of rich evidence about what is really going on for our learners.

Assessments:

Joyful Literacy strategies/centres and Guided Reading are collaborative programs which were initiated in the 2015-2016 school year and have shown promising results for our learners. Assessments used to track progress include:

- Circle Chart Assessment and Tracking Tool (ongoing).
- PM Benchmarks (minimum three times a year).
- QCA and OCA Reading assessments (twice a year).
- Gates Macginitie reading test (a Spring assessment, which we use the following Fall to inform instruction).

This data allows us to know where our learners are and next steps for moving them forward as readers.

Our intermediate students’ writing skills on the FSA (30% of gr. 7s Not Yet or Minimally Meeting) and school assessments continue to indicate that Bench

	<p>staff and students have work to do in this area. Many of our students have an “it’s good enough” attitude towards writing and say that writing is not their preferred activity.</p> <p>We need to get better at adapting writing activities to allow for inclusion of all students.</p>
<p>Focusing</p> <p>Where are we going to concentrate our professional energies so that we can change the experiences and results for our learners?</p>	<p>Staff Meeting Pro D Sessions / School Improvement Nights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative conversations and reflection on our goals. • Conversations about inclusion and programming for our IEP students. <p>Professional Learning Community Time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLC time was built into our school time schedule for 2016-2017 and has resulted in a more cohesive school approach to learning which focuses on current research, programs and collaborative conversation/sharing. • Professional learning and sharing is now embedded into the everyday experience of the school. <p>Family Literacy Evenings to Connect School Learning with Home Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting learning to home will be a priority throughout the year.
<p>Learning and Taking Action</p> <p>How and where can we learn more about what to do?</p> <p>What will we do differently?</p>	<p>Designing Professional Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning focused Staff Meetings/PLC time. • Professional Development opportunities. • Shelley Moore’s district sessions. • Collaborative conversations and reflection on our inquiry questions. • Referencing the new curriculum ways of learning. • Embedding our “question focus” with FN content, culture, literature. • Creating time/space for discussion about literacy inclusion with staff, students and families. <p>Professional Learning Community Time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermediate staff will continue to work with Dr. Simon Breakspear’s “Sprint” process as a Response to Intervention (RTI) Tier 2 for writing. • Primary teachers will meet regularly to delve into assessments, talk strategy, build resources, and tweak instruction/groupings. <p>Taking Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look to Enhancing Learning and Student Support teachers for leadership in this inquiry. • Share lessons/activities with other schools.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work as a team to design lessons that include student choice, inquiry, timely feedback, are authentic, and ignite students’ passion to communicate through writing. • Use our First Nations Support Worker for support and resources. • Time for educators to practice. • Utilize the new BC curriculum core competencies in these inquiries. • PLC time will be collaborative with accountability built in. • Teachers will work with a critical peer to observe and coach lessons.
<p>Checking-In</p> <p>Have we made a big enough difference?</p>	<p>Evidence Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary wide PM Benchmark assessment (baseline, mid-year to direct learning, and summative). • Intermediate students will be assessed three time a year using Writing Traits profiles to track improvement. • Know where our learners are at all times and provide timely feedback/challenge. • Grouping will be fluid as students progress. • Students need to have opportunity to direct their own learning by answering questions such as . . . “What are you learning?” “How do you know?” “Why are we learning this?” “Where to next?” • Teacher reflection time will be built into this inquiry. • Students will be asked to reflect on the whole process. This will give them the opportunity to name for themselves what they are learning so they own the skills and deepen their understanding of how they can use what they learned in other situations. This will also provide teachers with immediate and relevant feedback on our teaching and their learning. Reflection questions will be open-ended and as simple as “How do you feel now about writing?”

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Inquiry 2

Inquiry statements foster educator curiosity and help to focus priorities for improving student learning.

Well-Being Inquiry:

Can we foster well-being and a growth mindset through student leadership opportunities, artistic pursuits and athletic activities?

Focusing

Where are we going to concentrate our professional energies so that we can change the experiences and results for our learners?

Staff Commitment to Providing Diverse Opportunities for Students:

- Ensure that all students have an opportunity to take part in the 2018 Bench artistic performance which will have a cultural focus. (I.e. as performers, stage crew, technical support, props or costume design, etc.)
- Continue the Merritt Bench tradition of excellence in athletics and ensure it fosters an inclusive environment through fair play opportunities.
- Honour students' ideas and choices for leadership opportunities. I.e. Students decided to begin a "Playground Helper" program to ensure play is fair and positive at lunch hour. Another, student driven initiative was to collect coins for Fort McMurray during the fire.
- Intentionally encourage students to take risks and push their boundaries through leadership, artistic and athletic opportunities.

School Improvement Nights & Staff Meetings:

- Collaborative conversation and reflection time.
- Utilize our SELT team for staff learning.

Staff Practice Time:

- Teachers will work in partner groups to support and enhance this work.
- Full staff will be trained in growth mindset teachings and language.

Professional Goals:

- Scheduled meetings to share our growth mindset journey.

First Nations Support

- We will seek to include "FN experiential learning" for our students. These include learning from the land, Elders, traditions and ceremonies.

	<p>Parental Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community experts will be enlisted to share how they overcome challenges and have found “success”. • Regular messages will be distributed to our parents through website, newsletters, language around the school, PAC meetings and conversations with children.
<p>Learning and Taking Action</p> <p>How and where can we learn more about what to do?</p> <p>What will we do differently?</p>	<p>Designing Professional Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most obvious way of applying a growth mindset to teacher professional development is by encouraging teachers to see themselves as learners, and, just like students are all capable of learning and improving. Our PLCs are an arena for taking risks, asking hard questions and feeling safe to be learners. • Our Aboriginal community will be utilized by inviting Elders and Role Models in to share their culture, stories, thinking. • Formative feedback by colleagues after viewing each other’s lessons. • Professional Development opportunities. <p>Taking Action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the Fall of 2017, a student growth mindset survey will be developed and used as our baseline for understanding our students’ attitudes and needs. • Create an environment in which the growth mindset flourishes by providing many opportunities for students to find their passions. • Connect learners to an authentic purpose for their school learning. • Use Enhancing Learning Teacher to co-teach Growth Mindset lessons. • Use growth mindset work to foster a deeper understanding of traditional Aboriginal culture, as well as an appreciation for the contributions of Aboriginal ways of knowing. • Provide many FN artistic and athletic opportunities to all our students. (I.e. Lahal as a PE unit.) • Seek leadership from our SELT team. • Use of Play is the Way by individual classroom teachers. • PLC time for educators to share successes and challenges.

<p>Checking-In</p> <p>Have we made a big enough difference?</p>	<p>Evidence Sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a symposium to hear our students’ voices about their personal journeys to improving their growth mindsets and to acknowledge the challenges they faced this year. • Administer a survey to track students’ growth mindset understanding. Compare results to the pre-assessment to track learning and know where interventions need to still happen. • Liaison with our district SELT team to intervene with vulnerable students. • Teacher reflections on student involvement in leadership, athletics, artistic opportunities. • Parent reflections through conversation and surveys. • Build a master list to check ALL students’ involvement in leadership opportunities, artistic pursuits and athletic activities.
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Principal: _____

Date: _____

PAC President: _____

Date: _____

Superintendent: _____

Board Chair: _____

Date Approved: _____

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