



Lake Trail Community Middle School Journey

INQUIRY MINDSET

“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning.”

- ALBERT EINSTEIN

“Learn from yesterday, act for today, prepare for tomorrow. The important thing is to maintain a relentless restlessness and never stop questioning and learning.”

Weaving three ways forward

Build on the strengths of the past

Use the knowledge of the present

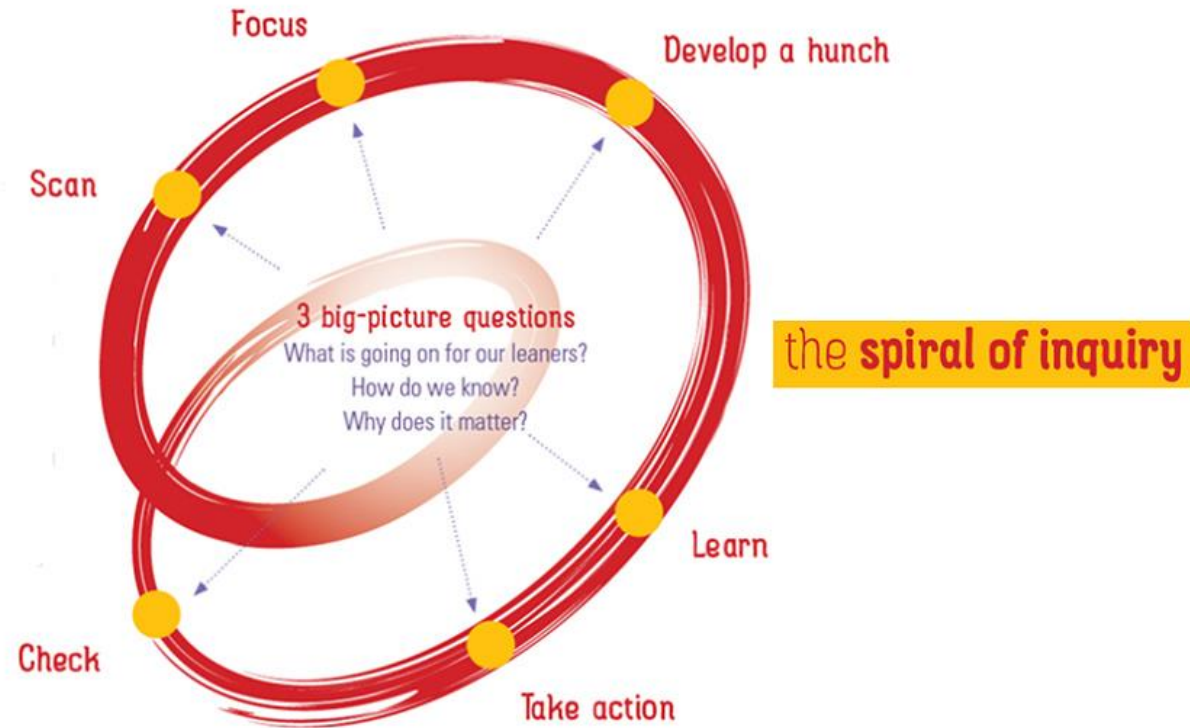
Design for the future

Inquiry Mindset

“Inquiry demands that educators actively scan their environments, generate questions, try new approaches, observe and collect evidence, synthesize information from a variety of sources, draw conclusions and generate new questions.”

- *Spirals of Inquiry: For equity and quality*

Spirals of Inquiry



Key Questions

Can you name two people in this school who believe that you will be a success in life?

Where are you going with your learning?

How are you doing with your learning?

Where are you going next with your learning?

What's going on for our learners?

How do we know?

Why does it matter?

Scanning

What's going on for our learners?

Situation:

- grades 7-9 – functioning as a Jr. Secondary
- ambiguous past 10 years
- low socio-economic community
- Board suspensions
- caring staff with severe compassion fatigue
- lack of vision, core beliefs
- diversity
- toxic staffroom

Process:

- staff focus on needs at each staff meeting
- parent surveys, PAC, conversations
- student surveys
- student focus groups
- evidence – suspensions, grades, school completion

Focusing

Where are we going to place our attention?

Identify a goal: To be unique, valuable and attractive to our community. To do this we must meet the needs of our students.

District Vision: A learning community that embraces diversity, honours relationship and prepares all learners for a changing world.

Redesigned Curriculum – intent, spirit, background

- Choice
- Flexibility
- Electives
- Passion-based – specialty courses
- Work ethic focus
- Meeting kids where they are at
- Citizenship skills
- Life skills – practical
- Safety
- Learning to learn
- Understanding their learning journey
- Connected learning
 - Global
 - Community
 - The why

Developing a hunch

What is leading to this situation?

How are we contributing to it?

Staff:

High care → compassion fatigue

Conflicting beliefs about student needs

Insecurity, anger, and frustration

Lack of trust

Students:

Low self-esteem

Low social supports

Stratified population

Lack of engagement or purpose

Compounded lagging skills

Professional Learning

How and where will we learn more about what to do?

First Peoples Principles of Learning

Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.

Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.

Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.

Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.

Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.

Learning involves patience and time.

Learning requires exploration of one's identity.

Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

Professional Learning

How and where will we learn more about what to do?

10 Principles of Modern Schools

Have clearly articulated and shared beliefs about learning that are lived in every classroom.

Live a mission and a vision deeply informed by new contexts for learning.

Have cultures where personal, self-determined learning is at the center of student and teacher work.

See curriculum as something that is co-constructed to meet the needs and interests of the child.

Embrace and emphasize real-world application and presentation to real audiences as assessment for learning.

See transparency and sharing as fundamental to a powerful learning environment.

Use technology first and foremost as an amplifier for learning, creating, making, connecting, communicating, collaborating, and problem solving.

Develop and communicate in powerful ways new stories of learning, teaching, and modern contexts for schooling.

Encourage community wide participation in the equitable, effective education of children.

Embrace and anticipate constant change and evolution.

Professional Learning

How and where will we learn more about what to do?

This We Believe: Keys for educating young adolescents

- Essential Attributes
 - Developmentally Responsive
 - Challenging
 - Empowering
 - Equitable
- Characteristics of Successful Schools
 - Value young adolescents
 - Active learning
 - Challenging curriculum
 - Multiple learning approaches
 - Varied assessments

Professional Learning

How and where will we learn more about what to do?

First Peoples Principles of Learning

10 Principles of Modern Schools

This We Believe: Keys for educating young adolescents

Work implementing Redesigned Curriculum

- Results and learning after first year of implementation

Taking action

What will we do differently?

Changing mindsets

- Fixed → Growth
- Punitive → Individual
- Teachers → Learners

Meet Basic Needs – Maslow’s Hierarchy

Trauma Informed Practice

“How do we make each child’s life better?”

Create a Timetable that honours and reflects best practices, research, and goals based on the feedback we’ve received.

Align our language of instruction with Executive Skills.

Develop a behaviour management plan.

Ongoing communication of student learning

Taking action

What will we do differently?

Opportunities outside of our control

Grade 6's were added

Construction announced

Supreme Court ruling

Staffing based on union contracts

Plan

Split all classes – 6/7 & 8/9

Teacher teams – all core curriculum

Common preps

Younger grade stays with Homeroom teacher

.40 Exploratories/Electives

Learning – started with 2 day retreat

E-portfolios

Trauma informed learning

Core courses

Checking

Have we made a big enough difference?

Measures

Surveys

Student feedback

Parent feedback

Focused questions at staff meetings

Observations, conversations, and feedback

Measures

Dramatic reduction in suspensions

More cross-boundaries in than out

Declining PAC attendance

Staff choice to maintain structures

Improved student performance at Vanier

Student Learning Surveys 6 – 9

Next Steps

Based on Checking = Scanning

Reflection

Don't need to go back to beginning...we reviewed Professional Learning and designed actions

Too ambitious

“How do we make each child's life better?”

- Increase feelings of connectedness our students feel
- Reduce feelings of bullying our students experience
- Increase student learning in core areas
- Increase student learning in Core Competencies
- Improve executive functioning skills in all students

Adaptive Expertise – Inquiry Mindset

“Adaptive experts are deeply knowledgeable about both the content of what is taught and how we teach it. They are aware of their assumptions underpinning their practice and know when they are helpful and when to question them and, if necessary, to let them go. They become expert in retrieving, organizing and applying professional knowledge in light of challenges and needs presented by the students they teach.”

- Helen Timperley

Use the Spirals for our annual planning

Our teachers have started leading collaborative inquiry teams, modelled on the Spirals

Use the structure when addressing their own professional challenges

Reflective practitioners and open questioners – significant change in culture

We are all learners
and our kids
deserve our best

Thank you

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