

School District #53 – Okanagan Similkameen

Enhancing Student Learning – YouLearn.ca Staff Inquiry

2021-24

School-Wide Inquiry Question

How do we connect with students 'where *they* are' to improve student engagement?

Focus Areas

1. Goal Setting.

2. Response to Intervention and Positive Behaviour Intervention Strategies.

1. Our School – Who are we?

YouLearn.ca is School District #53's Online Learning (DL) and Continuing Education (CE) School. We provide online learning options to school age and adult learners. In addition to offering distinct K-7, 8-9, 10-12 and adult programs, we also work with complex youth and adults in partnership with the Okanagan Correctional Centre (OCC) and Venture Academy. Over the past four years, we have worked collaboratively with local brick-and-mortar schools to enhance our services to local learners. In 2018, we started a distinct Inclusion Program focused on helping some of our district's most vulnerable learners, the majority of whom have been unable to succeed in, or attend, traditional systems. Our Inclusion students pose for us some of our greatest challenges and rewards. Supporting students for whom all other supports have failed is both demanding and complex. Reengaging and empowering them is nothing short in many cases of saving their lives. From our Inclusion students, we continue to learn who and how we need to be, to not only help them, but improve education for all.

Constantly, our population and demographics shift and change. As of September 29, we have a total headcount of 405 students composed of 63.6 new full-time equivalent (FTE) DL students, 5.0 FTE new CE students, and 38.1875 Gr. 10-12 carry over students working to complete courses started last year.

DL numbers overall are down from last September, continuing the declining enrollment experienced last year, as our school shifts to being a Provincial Online Learning School (POLS) to a District Online Learning School (DOLS).

Inclusion enrollment is up from last September 32%. Our current 2022-23 headcount sits at 37 students, with only one student being out of district. Our two previous Inclusion September counts were 16 (2019-20) and 28 (2020-21) students.

CE numbers, which come exclusively from OCC, are up 43% from last September. However, OCC enrollment remains down approximately 70% from September 2018. We are hopeful growth in the prison will continue, as YouLearn staff is physically back fully in the prison and our programs and classrooms are restarting. We recognize, however, conditions favourable to increasing enrollment are not entirely within our control.

2. Our Learners – What is going on for our students?

Although we feel we know our learners, we need to return to scanning for two reasons. One, we need to hear our students' voices; we need to

- integrate student strategies and suggestions on what works for them into our system of support.

Two, we need to

- gain a better sense of what (the inclusion barriers, hurdles, and opportunities) is going on for our Indigenous learners and families.

Beyond not knowing why our Indigenous students are not successfully engaging, we also do not know why in a disproportionate amount they are disengaging from our district brick-and-mortar secondary schools.

3. Our Hunch – What is leading to this situation?

Our ability to personalize learning is one of our greatest strengths. Over the past few years, we have focused on improving student engagement through focusing on relationships and connections. However, our students' situation has not improved as much as hoped because our work is not done. Continuing our student engagement journey is important; refining what we have done and coordinating it with what remains is what is now needed. Our hunch, or missing piece:

If we can create a multi-tiered system of support, which staff can consistently use, both proactively and reactively, to increase student engagement, student success will follow.

4. Our Focus, Actions and Checking – Where can we make the biggest impact? What specifically can we do? How will we know we are making enough of an impact?

Inquiry School-Wide Focus: *How do we connect with students 'where they are' to improve student engagement?*

- **Focus 1 – Goal Setting**

- Integrate a system of goal setting across K-9
- Create a system whereby students, parents, and teachers routinely revisit, assess, and adjust student goals
- Explore ways to integrate goal setting cross-curricularly, specifically into Careers and Physical and Health Education.

Checking

- Quantitative: number and grades of students who set goals; number of times goals are revisited (students, teachers, parents), number of courses and cross-curricular connections to goal setting, number of courses and course activities whereby student goals are referenced.
- Qualitative: student, parent, and teacher survey results – has focusing on goal setting made a difference? increased engagement? Increased submissions and course completion for courses where integrated such as Careers and PHE?

- **Focus 2 – Create a tiered set of Response to Intervention (RTI) and Positive Behaviour Intervention (PBI) supports and intervention system.**

- Create list of RTI and PBI supports specific to online students and teachers to use systematically when working with students who become disengaged
- Explore proactive measures and create a similar list to the one above
- Train teachers on any interventions that are complex or unclear
- Complete staff Motivation Interview training to build staff capacity with engaging and motivating students
- Extend students' PLPs and IEPs to be robust communication tools that promote the above and their consistency of use
- Work collaboratively with our local partner schools to list out their interventions and uncover gaps between our systems that need to be filled to better support students.

Checking

- Quantitative: number of new student supports created (at YouLearn and other schools); number of staff using interventions and our intervention system; number of students receiving interventions and the number of adults (teachers, elders, caseworkers) working in unison to support student success; effectiveness of intervention communication system between staff, schools, and agencies (such as IEP and PLP use data).
- Qualitative: student, parent, and teacher survey results – evaluate the success of specific supports implemented; teacher and admin survey data – evaluate our new support system (such as the effectiveness of communication, ease of use, and consistency of use).

5. Our Indigenous Learners – How do we meet the needs of our Indigenous learners?

Inquiring specifically into what our Indigenous learners, families, and communities need from us is a key element of our school plan. In addition, so too is uncovering the processes and protocols that will empower our Indigenous students and communities to co-construct the next iteration of our school.

YouLearn is committed to reexamining its processes and structures to be more inclusive and moving forward on our journey to Truth and Reconciliation.