

STUDENT SUCCESS

OCTOBER 2009



Never accept a situation as unchangeable. All change starts with daring to consider the possibilities.

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS FOR 2009/2010

- Differentiated Instruction and assessment practices in Mathematics
- An expansion of career exploration and pathway learning experiences
- Increased student leadership opportunities
- Refining literacy instructional practices
- Backward Design Unit Planning

STUDENT SUCCESS AND THE BOARD IMPROVEMENT PLAN

On October 8th Board Improvement Team members met with Student Success and the Literacy/Numeracy Secretariat staff for a feedback session on the preliminary submission of our board improvement plan. Feedback was positive and provided suggestions as to how we can sharpen our focus within the smart goals developed based on our board data. As the plan outlines our specific goals and actions the following provides suggestions specific to meeting the needs of intermediate students within the plan.

- While the needs of intermediate students were identified in the strategies of each smart goal we need to reflect them more clearly in the wording of the actual goal
- Ensuring accurate and varied assessment data is available to support students with meeting expectations as outlined in the smart goals of the plan.
- Support the refinement of precision within instruction and assessment to ensure we are moving students forward (curriculum expectations)
- Support teachers and administrators with refining differentiated instructional practices

- Focus on the student voice aspect of our community culture and caring goal for all students
- At the school and board level identify precisely which students need to be supported and implement the effective strategies that match these needs.

Teachers and administrators will ask themselves the following questions when reflecting on board and school improvement planning;

1. What are the needs of the students?
2. What do teachers need to learn/do to address these needs?
3. What do administrators need to learn/do to support teachers and students in addressing these needs?
4. What might be the impact on student learning and how will we measure the impact?

Student success funds have been allocated to support the implementation of school and board improvement plans. Support will take the form of job embedded professional development for teachers and administrators. Targeted resources will also be purchased to support the improvement planning process.

Differentiated Instruction Professional Learning Strategy

Once again the Ministry of Education has supported the development of differentiated instructional strategies for grades 7-10 by providing specific funds to school boards. The key goals of the DI Professional Learning Strategy are to increase instructional knowledge and skills of intermediate educators, to build awareness of Differentiated Instruction as a Framework for planning and implementing effective instruction, assessment and evaluation practices as outlined in the Ontario Curriculum and to facilitate and support job-embedded professional learning opportunities based on collaborative inquiry.

Currently, the Student Success leader is developing the Board Differentiated Instruction Plan for submission to the Ministry by October 30th. The plan will outline our next steps in the differentiated instruction strategy which is now in year three. While we have had outside experts lead us in the past two years 2009/2010 will focus on the integration of differentiated instructional strategies in daily cross curricular instruction. Teachers and administrators will be supported by the Student Success leader in engaging in job-embedded professional learning at the school level using Ministry and board purchased differentiated instructional resources.

Schedule of Events OCTOBER

- 5 -LEADING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT—TORONTO
- 8 - BOARD IMPROVEMENT PLAN FEEDBACK SESSION WITH STUDENT SUCCESS AND LNS.
- 13 —REVISIONS TO THE BOARD IMPROVEMENT PLAN (AM). PRINCIPALS MEETING (PM)
- 13 TO 15 - NOEL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE (Thunder Bay)
- 19 —SUPPORTING DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION @ ST. EDWARD SCHOOL
- 28 & 29—EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS SESSION (Thunder Bay)

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY FOR OCTOBER

CONSTRUCTING MEANING WITH DURING—READING STRATEGIES

It is more critical for dependent readers to talk about texts during the reading experience than after it.

The following during reading activity called "Say Something" comes from *When Kids Can't Read; What Teachers Can Do , A Guide for Teachers 6-12.*

Say Something is a simple strategy that interrupts a student's reading of a text, giving him/her a chance to think about what is being read. Students work in pairs or triads and take turns reading a portion of a text aloud. As they read they occasionally pause to "say something" about what they have read. They make a prediction, ask a question, clarify a confusion, comment on what is happening, or connect what is in the text to something they know. The reading partners offer a response to what was said, then a different student continues the reading until the next time they pause to "say something".

Putting the Strategy to Work

1. Model the strategy for your students (include another colleague to be a reading partner)
2. Explain the procedure to students (provide an anchor chart with the procedure outlined)
3. Dependent readers often need help with making their Say Something comments. Provide students with a list of stem starters (see student success section of board web site for these)
4. Students need to begin this strategy using a very short text. This allows them to become familiar with the strategy.
5. As with all strategies the teacher must model it several times and revisit it from time to time to develop student understanding.



Dear Mother Mary

Be our Mother. Share with us your limitless faith. Take and keep us within your protective arms in a world that has largely lost faith and abandoned hope. Petition for us from your Son--as once you did so powerfully at Cana of Galilee--an increase of vocations to the priesthood and the religious life so that the Church may flourish in our time and thereby magnify his name. Touch the hearts of all our youth that they may see in every walk of life an opportunity to serve.

Diann L. Neu