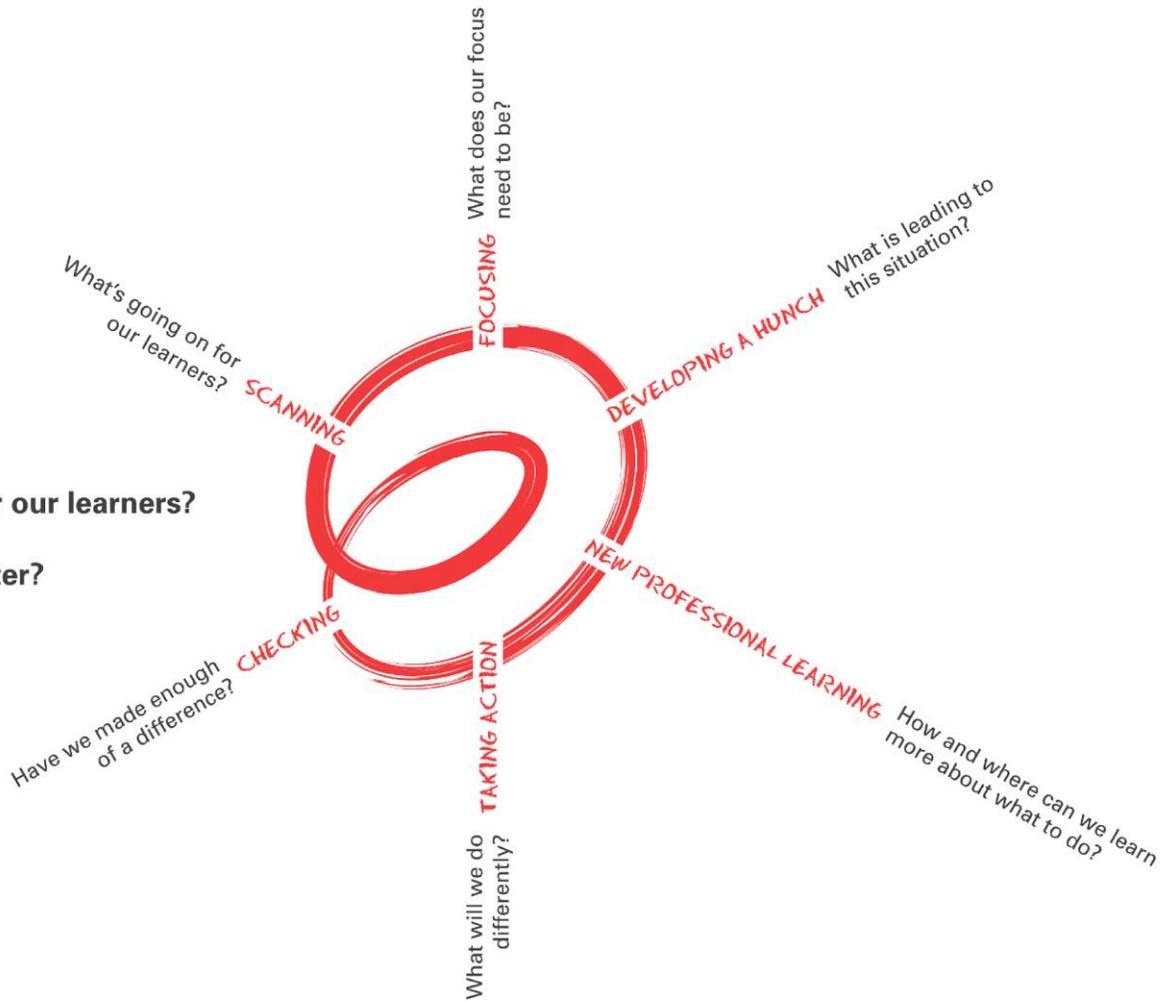


# SCHOOL PLAN for MAXIMIZING STUDENT LEARNING

## Gray Elementary School

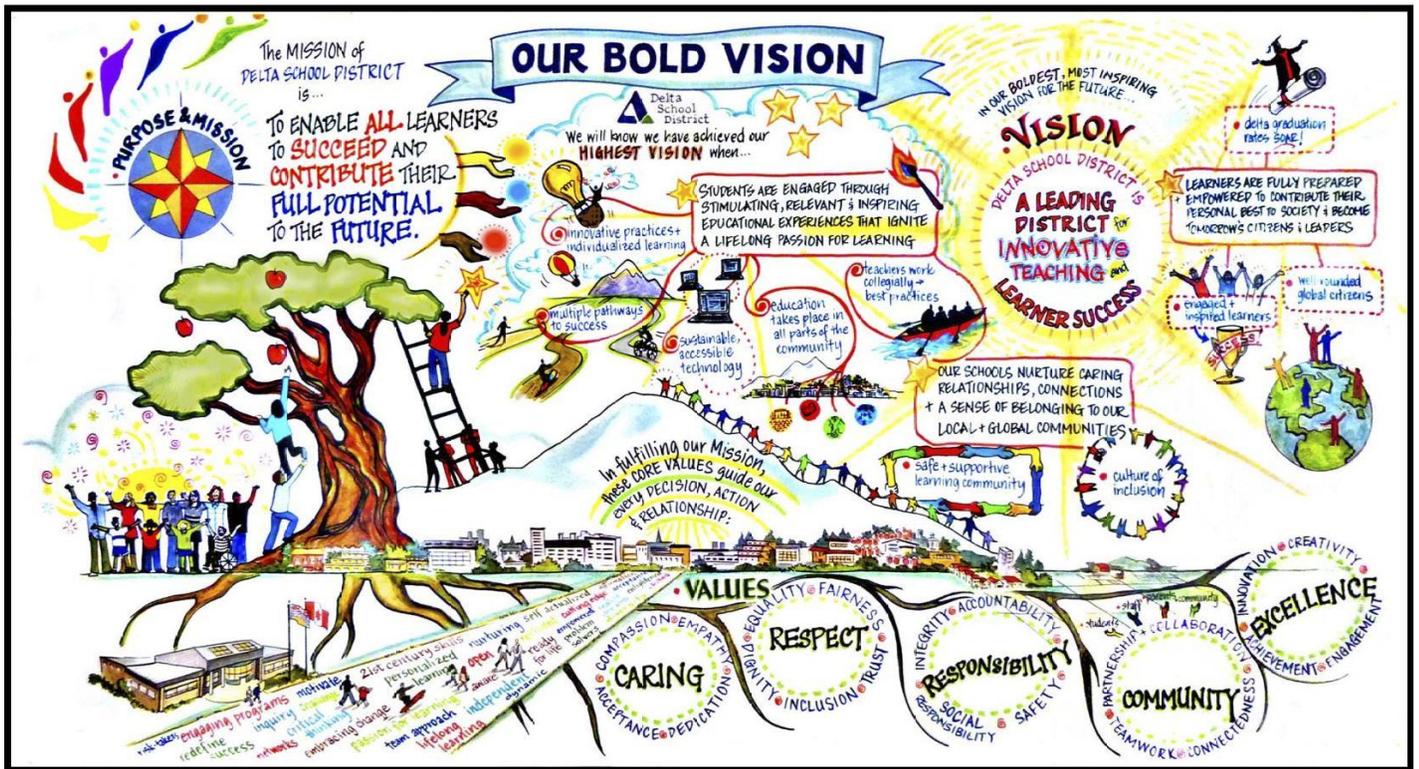


**What's going on for our learners?**  
**How do we know?**  
**Why does this matter?**

\*Based on the book by Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser:  
"Spirals of Inquiry for equity and quality"



**Delta School District**  
*Inspired Learning*



The Vision of the Delta School District is to be "A Leading District for Innovative Teaching and Learner Success". To that end, the following definitions may be useful:

### Innovative Teaching:

Innovative teaching involves continuous reflection and evolution in classroom practice in order to increase the intellectual engagement of students. Through the creation of deep learning tasks that foster curiosity, creativity and inquiry-mindedness, innovative educators take risks in order to positively impact the learning experience and outcomes for all students.

### Learner Success:

Learner Success is built upon an intrinsic, deep desire to learn and a feeling of confidence in knowing how to learn. Successful learners develop the mindset and competencies needed to

engage deeply in their learning. Educators create the conditions for learner success by ensuring students know where they are with their learning, where they are going with their learning, and how they can get there. Learner success is enhanced when students feel a deep sense of connectedness and the adults supporting them express their belief that the students will contribute positively to society and be successful in life. The result is all students graduating with dignity, purpose, curiosity and options.



**School Plan  
Gray Elementary  
September 2017 – June 2020**



\*Based on the book by Judy Halbert and Linda Kaser:  
*“Spirals of Inquiry For equity and quality”*

**Goal Area(s):**

There are two aspects to our school goal. Our academic focus is for all students to become self-directed, critical thinking, engaged learners. The Human and Social focus is for all students to become self-regulating learners who can manage their emotions, make strategic choices, and are able to make goal-directed plans. We plan to use Assessment for Learning, the BC Curriculum Core Competencies, and Self-Regulated Learning strategies to challenge all students and engage them in the learning process.

**School Context:**

Gray Elementary is a school in North Delta that currently enrolls 530 students. The neighbourhood is undergoing significant growth in population, resulting in rapid changes to the size of the school and the diversity of the school community. The school is projected to continue its growth over the next few school years. In addition, the positive reputation of the school attracts many students from other catchment areas and school districts.

During the past five years, Staff has been highly engaged in integrating the inquiry process of learning into their teaching as a route toward achieving our vision of helping students develop a mindset of lifelong learning and achieve greater success in life. As a community, staff and parents are very proud of the work that is being done in teaching and a wide variety of school events to ensure that students feel connected to their school and are more highly engaged in their learning.

**Scanning: (What’s going on for our learners and how do we know?)**

Over the course of the past year, our scanning has shown that, while inquiry has become embedded as a form of instruction in most classrooms, and the level of engagement has risen,

students are not yet taking ownership of their learning. Teachers have begun asking the three big questions of students: What are you learning, How is it going, and Where to next? In general, their responses indicate that they still need the teacher to tell them what is going on for them in their learning. Through our work with parents, we are finding that parents have a very traditional understanding of what academic success means and how it is reported.

**Focusing: (What does our focus need to be?)**

The teaching Staff has been delving into one of the Seven Principles of Learning, Formative Assessment, during the course of this school year. We have come to the realization that students need to be directly involved in the assessment of their learning, to learn the difference between the learning process and the content of their learning, in order to understand what it is truly about and how to take it further and apply it in other contexts. By focusing on Assessment for Learning, we will build on our developing school culture of inquiry.

The work that school teams are doing with Learning Intentions is intended to aid them, and especially our LST teachers, better support our most vulnerable learners. The more widespread mindset of inquiry as an approach to teaching is helping all our students to be more highly engaged in their learning. The integration of the strategies and tools of assessment for, of, and as learning into our daily practice will help students to move from a focus on content to one on the process of learning. The world is rapidly changing and students will need to be proficient in 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and the core competencies of the curriculum. That will ultimately lead to greater achievement and success in life. If we truly want parents to be partners in their children's learning, we need to come to a common understanding as a school community of what constitutes student success. Therefore, as a school, we need to work on building those connections between the classroom and the home.

**Developing a Hunch: (What is leading to this situation and how are we contributing?)**

The shift from traditional teacher-led instruction to teachers as facilitators of learning is means that teachers are learning how to allow students to take more responsibility for learning. We wonder if that is contributing to our feeling that students are not able to articulate their learning. If we purposefully articulate and teach good, clear, learning intentions to students, will that help them to know where they are in their learning, how it's going, and where to take it to next? As well, if we purposefully educate parents in what and how we are teaching, will their fears subside?

**New Professional Learning: (How and where can we learn more about what to do?)**

- Creation of Professional Learning Teams, comprised of 4-5 teachers each, to work with a District Literacy Coordinator on various aspects of Formative Assessment
- Release time for PLT approximately every 4 weeks to work with the Literacy Coordinator, provided through access to District Learner Grants and school based funds
- Follow-up lunch time sessions with the Coordinator for teams to discuss progress
- Purchase of Embedding Formative Assessment, for each teacher to use as a guide for our work
- School team of eight teachers working with the District Principal for Inquiry and Innovation and the District Literacy Coordinator on implementing use of the Big Three Questions
- Focus professional development days on various aspects of Formative Assessment
- Share related articles and videos at monthly teacher meetings
- Learn more about about creating classroom routines and adaptations with our vulnerable students in mind

**Taking Action: (What will we do differently?)**

- Focus on using Curricular Competencies as vehicle for teaching of Core Competencies, requires shift in thinking and approach to teaching
- Teachers commit to trying one strategy learned during sessions with Coordinator over the course of the intervening weeks
- Use of Enhancement Teacher to work with classroom teacher on implementation of assessment strategies and collection of evidence of learning
- Integration of the work of the Coordinator of Inquiry with the work being done on Formative Assessment to further our understanding and integration into practice
- Use of collaboration time to allow PLT to discuss progress
- Share progress at monthly meetings and brown bag lunches
- Design lessons with multiple entry points to address our struggling and most vulnerable learners
- Allow for alternate work spaces, seating options, access to assistive technology, task choices
- Plan with students' interests and ideas in mind for greater inclusion
- Increase communication with parents regarding Formative Assessment work through class newsletters, blogs, school newsletter, PAC meetings, parent information sessions
- Implementation of Communicating Student Learning process of reporting to parents

**Checking: (Have we made enough of a difference? How do we know?)**

- Begin using Big Three Questions with students on a regular basis to check developing understanding
- Perception checks between student self-assessment and teacher assessment of same task
- Student use of quality evaluative language in self-assessments
- Use of strategies such as Ticket out the Door, Big Four assessment, visual scans, to ascertain level of understanding
- Surveys

- Progress over time in quality of answers to Big Three questions
- Students are independently making realistic, confident choices in their learning and are self-correcting and re-learning to a greater degree
- Students independently extending their learning
- Students are able to independently use and articulate self-regulation strategies
- On-task, focused conversations in student work groups

**Sharing:**

- Brown bag lunches
- Regular information at staff meetings
- School blog
- Conference on staff site for sharing apps and other tech tips
- Regular information in school newsletter
- School Twitter feed
- Information at PAC meetings
- Ongoing communication with parents regarding Formative Assessment work through class newsletters, blogs, Twitter

**Parental/Community Involvement:**

- Parent information sessions
- Open house
- Invite parents into assemblies
- Using parents as experts in the classroom, as fits their field of work
- Invitations to parents to class events, presentations
- Use of Google Classroom
- Meaningful suggestions of how to help at home