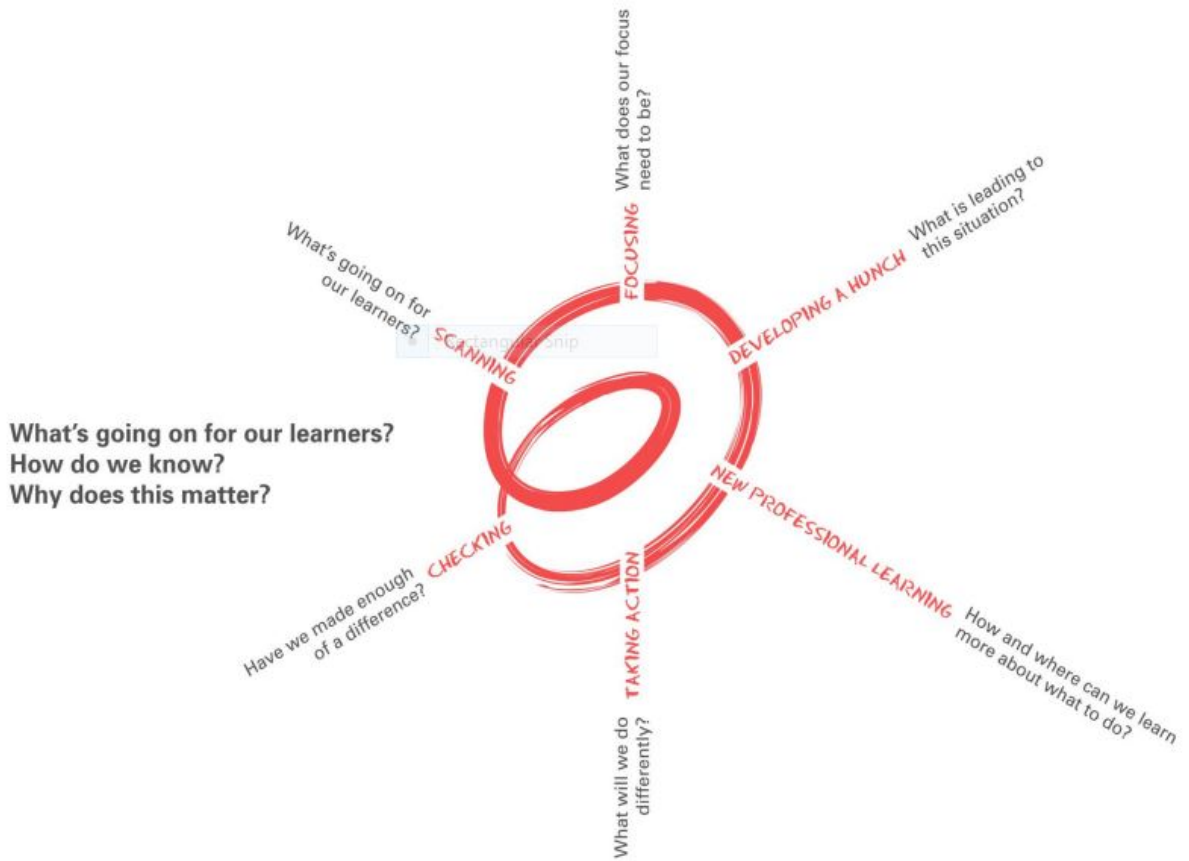


# SCHOOL GROWTH PLAN – INQUIRY MODEL

## SATURNA Island Elementary Secondary School School District 64 (Gulf Islands)



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



# Saturna Elementary School/SEEC

## Framework for Enhancing Student Learning – Saturna Island Elementary Secondary School



September 2016 – September 2017

### ***“What is Saturna Island School?”***

#### **Our School Context:**

Formal and informal schooling have been on Saturna Island for more than 100 years. The present island school age population is 15 children K – 12. The SD64 school boat provides transportation to and from programs situated at other islands. 8 Saturna youth travel off island to these other programs. Saturna Elementary is a multi-age classroom K-5 currently attended by 6 children. In addition the Saturna community has 9 young children birth to age four. Among the local student population of 15 there are 6 students with declared aboriginal ancestry.

*Saturna Ecological Education Centre (SEEC)* is our Secondary School with 14 youth from off island attending the outdoor school site and using the island ecology as their classroom for 3 days and nights each week.

**Programs:** include: K-8 elementary and middle school, Strong Start ELF program for pre-school children, Ecological Education Centre, hosts to several visiting program from SD64 such as Windsor House, OIMY, Pender Ecological Program and mySEEC.

**Vision:** *The School is a learning place with natural opportunities to study the wonders of our local ecosystems and the world at large. Each child's learning needs are met in individual ways. Through exploration and guidance students can develop a greater understanding and respect for their place in community and use the gifts of their environment to grow and contribute.*

**Code of Conduct** link: <http://sd64.bc.ca/saturna-school/>

Aboriginal Education is important for Saturna Elementary and SEEC students as the First People's principles of knowing exemplify a place-based tradition of learning.

## ***“How is Digital Citizenship part of Learning at Saturna?”***

### **Technology for Learning (T4L):**

The 21st Century learner is surrounded by a wide range of technologies designed to enhance student learning. Into this fast paced world students must navigate the appropriate ways to be a *digital citizen* and learn to make wise use of their resources. At present there are T4L opportunities at Saturna, with plans for improvements.

### Learning Resources:

The school has various learning technologies to support literacy, numeracy as well a student research and demonstrations. The current iPad set, laptop computers, Smartscreen TV, digital projector and ILS listening technologies are available to support learners in accessing and utilizing content to enable learning.

### T4L in the current year:

To improve access to literacy opportunities our Early Primary literacy program encourages personal reading for enjoyment. With the addition of a student listening-centre and headsets, early readers will have more opportunities to listen to CD stories and read along. In keeping with the Ministry of Education guidelines our school is training intermediate students to do “computer coding”. Outstanding training materials are available at [www.code.org](http://www.code.org) but require consistence high-speed internet access.

Our PC lab with 8 laptops has a variety of software; MS Office, PowerPoint, OneNote, MS Office, minecraftEDU and online freeware. However, at present the cost of online software subscriptions is avoided as a result the school has no current subscription software. The intention this year is to obtain subscription software for Adobe Suite, Adobe Voice and Prez!

### T4L into year 2

Instructional success with technologies and a greater utility of the class set of iPads, depends on the introduction of a consistent district Classroom Management Software. Once this is available it will be incorporated into the management and access of software during teacher-directed lessons. As well, once the Internet firewall is fully operational we will have the ability to screen specific websites and direct learning to the tasks desired. Both of these hardware interventions restrict access, but the ideal *digital citizen* is one who self-regulates their personal access and use of the net. It is expected that within the next year trends in Educational Robotics and Coding kits will increase robotic and coding learning activities at our school. A Laptop replace program is needed by year two with a fully equipment recycling expected of 2 computers per year.

Saturna Tech Plan link: <http://sd64.bc.ca/saturna-school/>

## ***“What’s going on for our learners?”***

### ***What was happening before?***

During the previously 10 months **SCANNING**, it was observed from our students;

- No consistent respect for authority and avoidance of simple learning tasks
- Adult relationships tolerated but not always respected when difficulties were presented which required “student risk-taking” with learning challenges.
- Weekly event of a full group mutinee (not coming in or refusing to follow basic requests)
- Staying attentive and doing tasks for any period of time (Poor self-regulation)
- Little or no perseverance with work at their proximal learning
- Anxious and Shy behaviour commonly express toward the teachers when learning challenges occurred
- little risk taking, with a preference to repeat know activities, read from the same book, and avoid basic grade specific challenges designed to move learning forward
- Inability to self-organize materials or tasks, inability to stay on task using self-regulation. (executive control was adult oriented)
- few reading attempts, unreadable lettering, and poor written engagement

### ***What’s happening currently?***

During the first 6 weeks **SCAN** of this school year, it has been observed from our students;

- Stability (less busy brains, brain noise does not intrude on learning, rather it excites learning)
- More and longer engagement at tasks
- Frequency of rewards or the reduce need for self-rewarding behaviour, all indicate student locus of control moving inward
- Teacher wait time during transition has been reduced (students show immediate return to task abilities now)
- Students express a desire and willingness to attend school and learn

## ***“What does our focus need to be?”***

### ***What was the Focus before now?***

The previous **FOCUS**, addresses how the physical environment was or was not a predictable learning environment, and an ordered classroom where routines and expectation were understood and followed by the students and the adults. Therefore the first focuses were:

- was classroom management obvious
- were there physical or emotional impediments to successful learning
- did the students have a “self-belief as learners”
- could we identifying the emotional barriers to becoming “engaged learner”

- should a priority be placed on structural processes (routines) before curriculum content
- were there opportunities for high success and reduced risk-taking anxieties.
- was the multi-age classroom an inclusive learning place

***After a year's review, what is our current focus?***

The current **FOCUS**, goes beyond the observations and actions from last year. The learning environment is well established with clear expectations and routines designed to enhance learning in a multi-age class setting. Therefore the current focuses are:

- needs for maintaining routines, and procedure the students enjoy
- determining if students can gain greater clarity around social and personal responsibility based on "individual needs" rather than what "everyone else is doing"
- increase each learner's self-awareness and ownership of their self-regulated learning.
- develop an understanding of a "personal continuum of learning"
- provide more self-reflection with use of "I" statements
- will greater choice on personal learning increase student centered learning instead of teacher centered task compliance
- does individual improvement of self-regulation yield improved social and emotional learning

***"What factors are leading to the situation?"***

Based on a focused review of student-learning for both the Elementary and Secondary groups, it is our **HUNCH** that the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) dynamic is foremost to eliciting improved learning. That the SEL dynamic is a balancing of 'brain' readiness, 'self-image' and 'emotional road blocks' against school driven curricular tasks. Therefore, how each individual approaches their self-guided interests, handles critical thinking tasks, and is willing to work at their proximal zone of learning is directly dependent on willing brains to achieve growth in learning.

Factors necessary:

- emotional social learning can be improved by conditions at school
- meaningful learning feedback can strengthen the learners self-image
- instructional tasks must encourage purposeful engagement
- common expectations and simple routines reduce Fear-Flight-Fight response
- Happy Brains = growth in learning
- Minds-up Brains = willingness to listen and learn

## ***“How are we contributing to it?”***

Among our **HUNCHES** are the following Teacher behaviours:

- Rushing instructional time (adult focused agenda vs. child centered needs)
- Curriculum pressure over a limited time period
- Not allowing the learners to say when they are ready to proceed
- Assigning too much to do without sufficient direction and guidance
- Forgetting home life has its own needs and pressures that are part of the learners lives
- Teaching to the curriculum instead of learners abilities and needs
- A belief that Homeschoolers miss foundational steps in self-learning (have big gaps in understanding)
- Not enough Formative assessments to determine where literacy and math skills are
- Our teaching behaviour (habits) makes students anxious
- The Secondary program is not sufficiently defined for the students to follow
- Students are not told the learning intention of each lesson (purpose unknown)
- Failing to provide 3 separate form of details/instruction to learners (multiple intelligences)
- 

## ***“How and where can we learn more about what to do?”***

### **LEARNING**

Our inquiry team is ready to engage with specific tasks designed for professional learning.

### **2016-2017**

- Continue to attend talks on ADHD and suggested instructional adaptations
- Pro-D opportunities for classroom strategies for students with ADHD
- Find opportunities to find Peer-Peer support for Ecological activities
- Visit other Outer Island schools to observe possibilities
- Pro-Growth application for the Ecological Teachers to collaborate

## ***“What will we do differently?”***

### **TAKING ACTION**

This is where we find ourselves working at present in the Fall 2016. Based on the current successes it is time for us to evaluate the impact in our learners and to understand the basis for new ways of being proactive.

- We want to find out what is going on for our learners, so we will ask them.
- Student survey and questionnaire
- Look at their work
- Observe them
- Using different instruction strategies; see if their work and content improve
- Video tape and discuss the observations collaboratively

**Last year's** actions included several simple management processes. Looking back and moving forward now we wish to strength many of as they have proven essential to a productive classroom climate:

(1) establishing **expectations** for desk time and free time using shorter intervals

- on task attention regulated by work-reward cycle (visual timer)
- brain breaks and nutrition breaks
- Minds-up! Morning carpet check-in and temperature check
- routines and respectful behaviour (listening & speaking to each other)

(2) providing more scaffolding for **self-regulation**, during instruction

- teaching Zones of regulation and vocabulary to talk about energy levels
- Brain based practices: Judith Bradley FPPL (foundational physical ?
- Integrated Listening System (ILS)
- focus on consistent transitions without upsets, and respectful responses
- coaching “no” responses instead to; “maybe no, maybe yes”
- reading aloud while students are eating, learning to eat and stay in place

(3) providing regular **communication** with parents including daily feedback

- FEBA (Focus Effort Behaviour Attitude) coding used to give realistic snap-shot of learning day
- use of student planners for written communication and homework

(4) celebrating successful student work with **student led presentation** and portfolio

- genius hour self-choice topic for a show & tell self-directed presentation
- building a learning community in language, expectations and positive feedback

(5) ensuring all students to feel an **emotional connection** to the adults in their learning environment, not just their classroom teacher

- regular, end of day, meaningful feedback to children about their learning behaviour (FEBA)
- active adult demonstrating significant and meaningful relationships outside of the school
- multiple staff have regular and engaging activities (cooking, outings, Early Years Centre).

## ***“Have we made enough of a difference?”***

### **CHECKING**

Our 2015- 2016 actions can now be view looking back and have lead to several substantive improvement in student behaviour and attitude toward learning;”

- Upon return to school in September the general classroom routines were immediately followed, and in many cases requested by students
- Last year’s Mean FEBA scores were 2.5 and this year through September and October the Mean score has been 3.5 (on a 4 point scale this is 25% improvement in opening months)
- Student’s response to the regular behaviour feedback and understand they are the owners of their behaviours.
- Students understand and use the language from the Zones of Regulation
- On the playground more multi age group play is common verse isolated participants
- General classroom tasks are completed during 20 minutes timer cycles
- Increasingly students stay at work situations and the need for a consistent timer cycle is not needed
- All students are consistently transitioning between tasks, and changes in physical location
- Students communicate an excitement and greater willingness to come to school each day.

## ***“What Connections can be made across the Gulf Island School District?”***

### ***“How are we part of a bigger whole?”***

Across SD64 there are many school with similar a focus on Social Emotional Learning

There are professional learning opportunities for teachers to better understand the dynamics of student mental health.

Across SD64 there is a continuous focus on student success and a desire to strengthen learning in a place-based context such as the nature or ecological programs similar to Saturna’s.



--

**Summary of Inquiry Question:**

**What’s going on for learners?**

*Scanning, Focusing and Hunches* frame how we continue to monitor our students. We need to check that our knowledge about our learner’s experiences is authentic. We believe now that having established routines and expectations and focusing on effort to reduce the anxiety for students; how to increase learning needs to be explored further:

- (1) How can we now move to have greater intellectual rigor and increase the “challenge of instructional content” for our learners?
- (2) Will we be able to increase student awareness of the core competencies by greater self-awareness of work quality and self-regulation for habits of mind?

**How do we know?**

We will continue to *Learning* new practices, *Taking Action* and *Checking* for the evidence of success for improving educational outcomes for all our students K- 12. Whether it is our elementary classroom program, Early Years Strong Start program or the place-based ecological program (SEEC), we will continue to engage our students by listening to them, observing their actions and asking for their input as we gather the evidence of their success and ultimately ours as a school.

Plan submitted by:

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Signature</b>
Principal	Bruce Inglis	
Teacher(s)	Dorianna Chessa, Alison Bain	
PAC Chair	Alexia Danyliw, Michelle Davies	
[Student(s)]	Sinead Strijack	

Date: \_\_\_\_\_