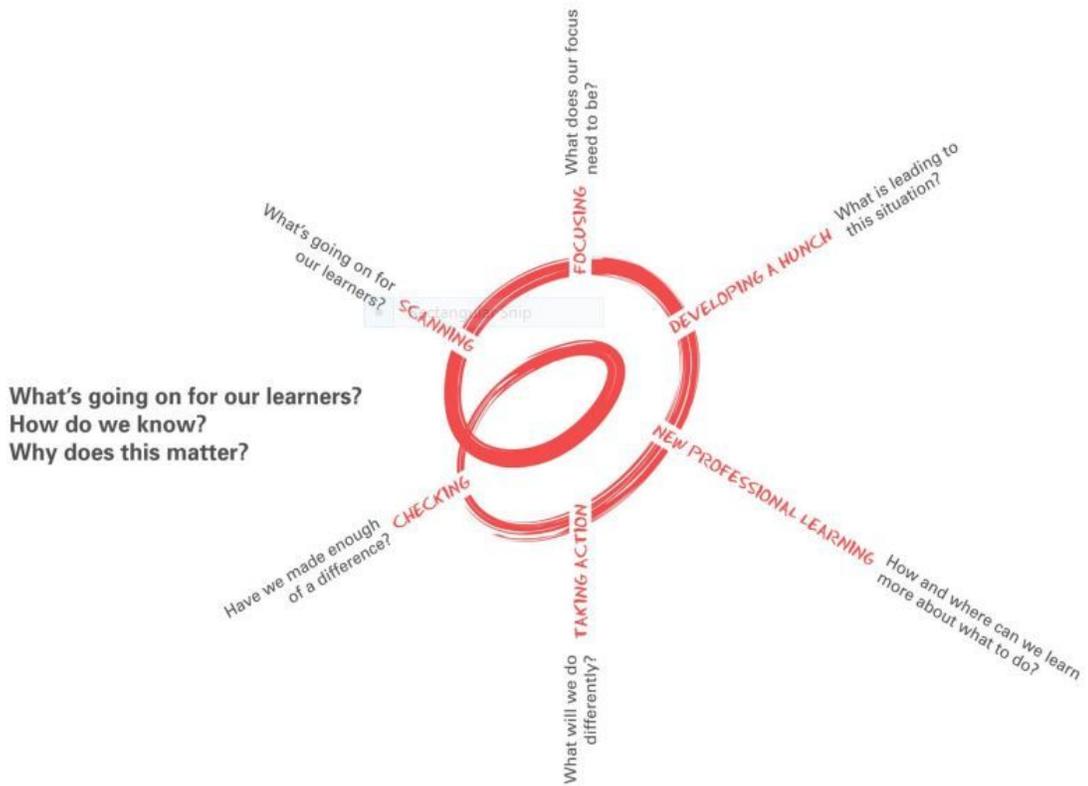


# SCHOOL GROWTH PLAN – INQUIRY MODEL

## Salt Spring Elementary - School District 64 (Gulf Islands)



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

# Salt Spring Elementary

## School Growth Plan – SSE September 2017 – September 2018

### **SCHOOL CONTEXT**

**School population**

**Vision/Values/**

**Mission**

**Program Offerings**

**Code of Conduct**

**Aboriginal Education**

**Technology**

**4Learning**

Salt Spring Elementary is located in the heart of Ganges on Salt Spring Island. We enroll approximately 195 Kindergarten to Grade 5 students in our eight multi age classes. Built in 1940, our school is a beautiful old building with wide hallways, large classrooms, and big windows. Some of our students are third generation SSE learners. The school is within walking distance of the swimming pool, ArtSpring arts centre, the public Library, Mouat Park, the heronry, beaches and the downtown core. Our classes regularly take walking excursions to many of these locations to enhance their educational programs. Salt Spring Elementary has a long standing partnership with the Salt Spring Island Conservancy who provide ecological programs for our students each year.

We have a strong music program including a choir that represents our school with community performances. Each weekly whole school meeting begins with our students singing, and our students present two musical performances for parents each year. Our students enjoy daily physical education in our spacious gym and have the opportunity to participate in basketball and volleyball in grades 4/5. We have a well-equipped adventure playground where active play is encouraged during our three daily recesses. We have recently acquired an outdoor classroom to extend our learning beyond the building and to provide shelter for outdoor play during inclement weather. We are building two gardens.

Our staff strives to make Salt Spring Elementary a welcoming place. Our mandate is, "Be Caring, Be Respectful. and Be Safe." We employ the Virtues project and the WITS program to help our students learn problem solving skills. Our Parents' Advisory Council is a supportive and dynamic group who work

to enrich the education of our students and make this school one of the best on the Island. Salt Spring Elementary is an inclusive school that welcomes all ages including babes in arms in our Early Learning facility, High School peer tutors and community volunteers.

**Vision and Values:**

Salt Spring Elementary has a whole child focus: intellectual, social/emotional, physical, cultural and artistic development. We strive to provide each learner with a sense of belonging, success and positive self esteem.

**Our “Rules”**

We have three main expectations at Salt Spring Elementary School

- Be Caring
- Be Respectful
- Be Safe

**Problem Solving**

We encourage children to use their WITS if they encounter a problem

- Walk Away
- Ignore
- Talk it out
- Seek help

**Mission:**

*Salt Spring Elementary cultivates a safe and caring environment that involves parents and the local community in promoting and inspiring active learning and social responsibility.*

**T4L:** see attached document.

**Code of Conduct:** see attached document

**Aboriginal Education:** we weave Aboriginal ways of knowing into our daily lessons.

## SCANNING

“What’s going on for our learners?”

Useful information is gathered on key areas of learning

Broad perspective

Willingness to listen to learners & their families

We plan to ask students these key questions:

- *Can you name two people in this school who believe that you will be success?*
- *What are you learning and why is it important?*
- *What are your next steps?*

Our current Data and Scanning reveals the following:

### Reading

Report Card marks for the last two years show that the majority of students are meeting or exceeding grade level expectations in reading.

2015-2016 76% Meeting or Exceeding

2014-2015 77% Meeting or Exceeding

*We are troubled that almost ¼ of our students are in the approaching or Not Yet Meeting category according to Report Card marks.*

FSA results show the following for reading:

2015-2016 95% Meeting or Exceeding

2014-2015 87% Meeting or Exceeding

### Writing

Report Card marks for the last two years show that the majority of students are meeting or exceeding grade level expectations in writing:

2015-2016 63% Meeting or Exceeding

2014-2015 70% Meeting or Exceeding

*We are troubled that about ⅓ of our students are in the approaching on Not Yet Meeting category according to Report Card marks.*

FSA results show the following for writing:

2015-2016 87% Meeting or Exceeding

2014-2015 80% Meeting or Exceeding

Report Card marks for the last two years show that the majority of students are meeting or exceeding grade level expectations in Numeracy:

2015-2016 79% Meeting or Exceeding

2014-2015 78% Meeting or Exceeding.

FSA results show the following for Numeracy:

2015-2016 83% Meeting or Exceeding

2014-2015 87% Meeting or Exceeding

### Social Responsibility

Report Card marks for the last two years show that the majority of students are meeting or exceeding grade level expectations:

2015-2016 83% Meeting or Exceeding

2014-2015 86% Meeting or Exceeding

**Satisfaction Survey (Grade 4 students)**

	<p>Do adults at your school care about you? (percentage responding 2 or more adults)  2013/14 81%  2014-2015 95%</p> <p>Do you like school?  2013/2014 35%  2014/15 47%  <i>We are troubled by this low percentage.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Staff Observations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● During Parent interviews, parents consistently say that the they want their kids to be happy.</li> <li>● Increased inclusiveness, connectedness, pro-social behaviour observed at the beginning of this year as compared to previous few years.</li> <li>● Fewer students without someone to play with at recess than in previous years. Everyone seems to have a friend.</li> <li>● Students are energetic, generous, helpful (older students are helping younger ones).</li> <li>● Social scene is a dominant force.</li> <li>● Increase in student anxiety observed over the last several years.</li> <li>● Many students are hungry and use the food cupboard.</li> <li>● Although many students have good literacy skills, too large a number do not.</li> <li>● Some students are consistently late and have poor attendance.</li> <li>● Some students seem tired.</li> <li>● Several students come in during recess even though they know the rule is to stay outside.</li> </ul>
<p><b>FOCUS</b></p> <p>“What does our focus need to be?”</p> <p>Goal statements help to focus priorities for improving student learning.</p>	<p>To increase students’ happiness and sense of connection to school, community and the environment (belonging, unity, community, self esteem).</p> <p>To improve students’ foundational skills (reading, writing, numeracy) across the grades.</p>

<p><b>HUNCH</b></p> <p>“What factors are leading to the situation?”</p> <p>“How are we contributing to it?”</p>	<p>Students need to have their basic needs met (food and safety) before they are able to learn. We need to help students meet their basic needs by providing food and a safe, nurturing environment.</p> <p>Students who struggle with academics feel less happy at school. Supports need to be put into place, so that all students feel successful.</p> <p>Regular exercise and activities in nature will help students develop greater self-regulation skills. Continue to take learning outdoors, and continue to include regular “brain breaks” in class time.</p> <p>A strengths based approach will lead to greater self esteem. Teach students about multiple intelligence and growth mind set.</p>
<p><b>LEARNING</b></p> <p>“How and where can we learn more about what to do?”</p>	<p><b>Areas that we need to explore more deeply as a staff:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Growth Mind Set</li> <li>● Personal and Social Competency</li> <li>● Foundational Skills</li> <li>● Aboriginal Ways of Knowing</li> </ul> <p><i><u>This area is in progress; more work and detail needed.</u></i></p>
<p><b>TAKING ACTION</b></p> <p>“What will we do differently?”</p> <p>“With what and how?”</p> <p>Strategies: Clearly articulated strategies connect school efforts and activities with desired student results. Strategies are presented as succinct statements outlining actions and activities, directed toward student learning, that</p>	<p>Provide each classroom with a budget to provide food for students.</p> <p>Continue to build a sense of community and belonging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Whole School meetings (increased student participation)</li> <li>● School, reading blitz, read-ins, math blitz and theme days</li> <li>● School wide theme</li> <li>● Big sisters/brothers, peer tutors, buddy classes</li> <li>● Whole school caroling</li> <li>● Clubs (choir/SPIRITS)</li> <li>● Morning greetings and daily riddle</li> <li>● Environmental stewardship projects (Kids for Creeks,</li> <li>● Salmon in the Classroom, Heronry)</li> </ul> <p><b>Further develop Social/Emotional skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● WITS program</li> </ul>

<p>clearly link to achieving school goals and objectives.</p> <p>Structures: Structures focus on activities that align school resources, time, personnel and organizational planning to support achievement of goals and objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social Thinking curriculum</li> <li>● Virtues program</li> <li>● Friends program</li> <li>● PBS</li> <li>● Growth Mind Set</li> <li>● Class meetings</li> <li>● Roots of Empathy program</li> <li>● Each class taking a service role in the school</li> </ul> <p><b>Use Technology to increase success, engagement and motivation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Use apps and computer programs that motivate students to practice and develop foundational skills (for example Book Creator, Read and Write or Operation Math)</li> <li>● Use apps and computer programs as a tool for students to express their learning in deep and creative ways (for example: explain everything).</li> <li>● Use camera and video functions on I-pads for students to use to document, share and self assess their learning.</li> <li>● Adopt a child program where teachers make a point of connecting with select students on a daily basis.</li> </ul> <p><b>Further develop Foundational Skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● School wide use of writing notebooks to celebrate writing</li> <li>● Invite mentors, including more peer tutors, into the school to enhance literacy development</li> <li>● Look at creative ways to provide learning support to classrooms</li> <li>● Continue to highlight and celebrate foundational skills: Reading Blitz, Author visits, Stories at Whole School Meetings, Math Blitz.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CHECKING</b> “Have we made <i>enough</i> of a difference?”</p> <p>Changes in practice don't always lead to substantive improvement or useful innovations- in this part of the inquiry</p>	<p>Re-checking our data: report cards, scanning questions, FSA's, satisfaction surveys, and observations.</p> <p><u><i>This area is in progress; more work and detail needed.</i></u></p>

that asks whether we are making *enough* of a difference



## CONNECTIONS

“How are we part of a bigger whole?”

Partnering with community organizations (Big Brothers/Sisters, Salt Spring Conservancy and Salt Spring Literacy) and like minded schools.

### **Summary of Inquiry Question:**

How can we increase student happiness and success at school?