BOARD IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL-BEING

Living Document

2013-2014

Superior-Greenstone District School Board
System Implementation and Monitoring Team
This document represents the improvement work that is being monitored and measured in the district.

MONITORING:

Black – 10/24/2013 Making Our Plan Visible

Red – October 2013

Blue -

Superior-Greenstone District School Board is located in northwestern Ontario and covers a vast area of 44,100 square kilometers. The board is responsible for providing public education, and its 17 schools are proud to serve the communities of Beardmore, Geraldton, Longlac, Dorion, Nipigon, Red Rock, Schreiber, Terrace Bay, Marathon, Nakina, and Manitouwadge. The board office is located in Marathon on the beautiful north shore of Lake Superior. There is a total enrolment of 1548 students; 718 at the elementary level and 830 at the secondary level. There are approximately 55 elementary classrooms. Many of our students are of Aboriginal ancestry and live both on off reserve. Enrolment continues to decline as the region struggles with economic challenges in the forestry and mining industries.

Caring   *Fairness*   *Empathy*   *Honesty*   *Responsibility*   *Resiliency*   *Respect*   *Perseverance*   *Innovation*
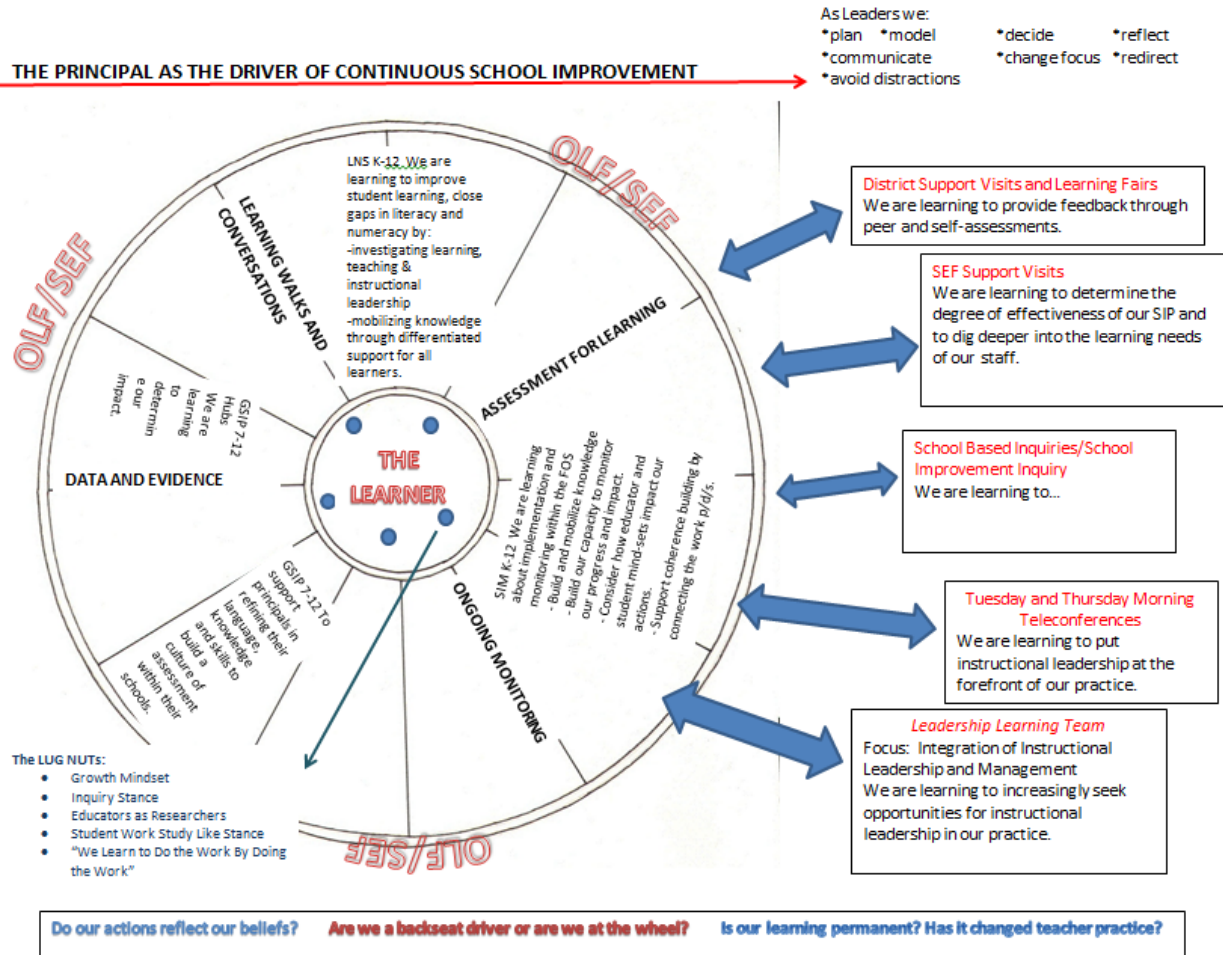
"...leadership is second only to teaching in its impact on student outcomes" (OLF, 2012).

"...a commitment to ongoing professional learning is integral to effective practice and to student learning" (OCT, 2012).

THE PRINCIPAL AS THE DRIVER OF CONTINUOUS SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

As Leaders we:
- plan
- model
- decide
- reflect
- communicate
- change focus
- redirect
- avoid distractions

LEARNING WALKS AND CONVERSATIONS

OLF/SEF

OLF/SEF

LNS K-12. We are learning to improve student learning, close gaps in literacy and numeracy by:
- investigating learning, teaching & instructional leadership
- mobilizing knowledge through differentiated support for all learners.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

GSIP 7-12 Hubs. We are learning to determine our impact.

DATA AND EVIDENCE

THE LEARNER

SIM K-12. We are learning about implementation and monitoring within the FOS:
- Build and mobilize knowledge
- Build our capacity to monitor our progress and impact.
- Consider how educator and student mind-sets impact our actions.
- Support coherence building by connecting the work p/d/s.

GSIP 7-12 To support principals in refining their language, knowledge and skills to build a culture of assessment within their schools.

ONGOING MONITORING

OLF/SEF

District Support Visits and Learning Fairs
We are learning to provide feedback through peer and self-assessments.

SEF Support Visits
We are learning to determine the degree of effectiveness of our SIP and to dig deeper into the learning needs of our staff.

School Based Inquiries/School Improvement Inquiry
We are learning to...

Tuesday and Thursday Morning Teleconferences
We are learning to put instructional leadership at the forefront of our practice.

Leadership Learning Team
Focus: Integration of Instructional Leadership and Management
We are learning to increasingly seek opportunities for instructional leadership in our practice.

The LUG NUTs:
- Growth Mindset
- Inquiry Stance
- Educators as Researchers
- Student Work Study Like Stance
- "We Learn to Do the Work By Doing the Work"

Do our actions reflect our beliefs?   Are we a backseat driver or are we at the wheel?   Is our learning permanent? Has it changed teacher practice?

SUPPORTING STRUCTURES for TEACHING, LEADING AND LEARNING
School Leaders and educators will engage in the following professional learning strategies, most of which have a COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY approach as a foundation to learning. The student is at the center of our learning.

System Learning:
- ✓ Early Years Inquiry
- ✓ Growing Success Implementation
- ✓ Grade 4-10 Collaborative Inquiry
- ✓ Primary and Junior Inquiring into Math (3/6 Collaborative Inquiry/CIL-M)
- ✓ System Implementation and Monitoring Team
- ✓ Leadership Learning Team
- ✓ Principal PLC (supporting their Annual Learning Plan)
- ✓ SEF Support Visit PLC
- ✓ District Support Visits
- ✓ Special Education Learning
- ✓ FSL Inquiry
- ✓ NTIP

School-Based Learning (funding will be differentiated depending upon the needs of the school and the number of students)
- ✓ School Based Inquiry Hubs (responsive to student learning needs)
- ✓ Learning Fair – to share learning
- ✓ Job-embedded co-learning through SWST/CIL-M

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Summary (Observing, Describing, Analysing and Reflecting)

	Demographic Data: What is our context?	Student Achievement Data: How are our students doing?	Program Data: What instructional/assessment strategies do we have in support of achievement?	Perceptual Data: What do our students, parents and staffs think?

What are our areas of strength?	**Current Context:**
	a) Isolation – the geography of the board is 44,100 square kilometers
	b) Economic instability
	c) Population Instability – populations are increasingly transient and thus, increasing number of high risk students
	d) Diversity – Our schools are comprised of many different ethnic and racial backgrounds. Aboriginal populations represent approximately 70% of our students. We are currently engaged in collecting voluntary self-identification data.
	e) Special Needs Students (based on FTE)
	   i. Elementary Level – 12.5% are identified as exceptional; of this 60% are LD
	   ii. Secondary Level – 15.5% are identified as exceptional; of this 58% are LD
	f) Pathways – in several secondary schools, the applied level pathway continues to be increasingly selected by students.
	
	Strengths:
	g) Focus – we are making progress in connecting the critical work (improvement) to the needs of the students.
	h) Mindset – many staff members are curious about how we teach a growth mindset to our learners.
	i) Data – our ability to personalize data based upon our small size.
	j) The district is endeavoring to support the learning of all through a commitment to fostering a climate of trust and collegiality. More openness to share information between colleagues (greater willingness).
	k) Distributed Leadership for Learning – this has been recognized as key to the requirement of our Principals/Vice-Principals to manage multiple sites and to maintain a strong knowledge of all areas (e.g. special education). An area for emphasis is to have the secondary Program Leaders engage in the school improvement processes.
		Primary and Junior Division Learners have demonstrated:
		• Knowledge and understanding of mathematical content and comprehension of its meaning and significance.
		• Relative strengths in the number sense and numeration (primary) and patterning and algebra strands (both primary and junior).
		• The ability to understand explicitly stated information and ideas.
		• The ability to use knowledge of words and cueing systems to read fluently.
		
		Intermediate and Senior Division
		• 54% of the First Time eligible and fully participating Special Needs students were successful in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test which was a 20% increase from the previous year.
		• Board wide we had an 86% graduation rate in June 2013 which aligns with the Ministry's commitment of reaching 85% province wide graduation rate.
		• Credit Accumulation Data for grade 9 has remained relatively constant (73% of students achieve 8 credits)
		• Success rates for dual credit and SHSM courses are positive.
		
		District Support Visit Data
		• Shows a collective emphasis on the assessment for learning process.
		• Schools are attempting to determine impact.
		• Students have an awareness of the language of the assessment for learning processes.
		• Schools have a structural understanding of the need to monitor the impact of their improvement efforts.
		• Schools are beginning to see the relationship between achievement and well-being.
			Initiatives
			• Aboriginal Education Strategy (Proposals, Self-Identification, Development of Cultural Handbook)
			• Growing Success Implementation: Building Capacity in Assessment Project Year 3
			• Mathematics Initiatives (Collaborative Learning and Inquiry into Mathematics, Small and Northern Boards Numeracy Initiative, Early Learning Collaborative Inquiry in Math, school based PLCs focused on Math)
			• Student Work Study Teacher Inquiries
			• Leadership Learning Team (formal and informal leaders)
			• School Based/Hub Inquiries (literacy and numeracy focus)
			• School Effectiveness Support Visits (critical friends, Tuesday and Thursday morning teleconferences, District Support Visits)
			
			Programs
			• Special Education in all schools – beginning to understand the benefits of full integration
			• Premier Literacy – is becoming more readily available and used in certain schools
			• Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) continues to be well accessed in schools where running.
			  • Dual Credits expansion
			  • Co-operative education/Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP)
			  • E-Learning is offered (partnership with NW Consortium)
			  • Learning Management System– in 2012 – 2013, 26% of our students have accessed the Learning Management System (LMS) which is a 1% increase from the 25% goal set out set by e-Learning Ontario.
			  • Blended Learning is used as a tool for teachers – initial awareness.
			  • Re-engagement support for students in grade 12 and 12+ has been increasingly successful.
				Results from Student Survey: Although these are seen as relative strengths, we know that there continues to be room for improvement.
				Elementary
				Students feel safe at school as well as going to and from school.
				• 88% of students felt safe attending the school
				• 87% of the girls and 89% of the boys felt safe attending the school.
				Students are interested and motivated in their learning.
				• 69% of students were interested and motivated;
				• 73% of the girls and 66% of the boys in this district were interested and motivated.
				Students find classroom instruction relevant to their everyday lives.
				• students rated Relevance 7.9 out of 10;
				• Relevance was rated 7.7 out of 10 by girls and 8.1 out of 10 by boys.
				Students find the classroom instruction is well-organized, with a clear purpose, and with immediate and appropriate feedback that helps them learn.
				• Students rated Rigor 8.1 out of 10;
				• Rigor was rated 8 out of 10 by girls and 8.1 out of 10 by boys.
				Students feel teachers are responsive to their needs, and encourage independence with a democratic approach.
				• Positive Teacher-Student Relations were rated 8.4 out of 10;
				• Positive Teacher-Student Relations were rated 8.5 out of 10 by girls and 8.3 out of 10 by boys.
				Secondary
				Students feel safe at school as well as going to and from school.
				• 80% of students felt safe attending the school;
				• 83% of the girls and 77% of the boys felt safe attending school
				Students find classroom instruction relevant to their everyday lives.
				• Students rated Relevance 5.8 out of 10;
				• Relevance was rated 5.9 out of 10 by girls and 5.7 out of 10 by boys.
				Students find the classroom instruction is well-organized, with a clear purpose, and with immediate and appropriate feedback that helps them learn.
				• Students rated Rigor 6 out of 10;
				• Rigor was rated 5.9 out of 10 by girls and 6.1 out of 10 by boys.
				Students feel teachers are responsive to their needs, and encourage independence with a democratic approach.
				• Positive Teacher-Student Relations were rated 6 out of 10;
				• Positive Teacher-Student Relations were rated 5.9 out of 10 by girls and 6 out of 10 by boys.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Summary (Observing, Describing, Analysing and Reflecting)

	Demographic Data: What is our context?	Student Achievement Data: How are our students doing?	Program Data: What instructional/assessment strategies do we have in support of achievement?	Perceptual Data: What do our students, parents and staffs think?
What are our areas of greatest need?	**Culture of Learning for All** • We have identified the need to shift from a culture of teaching, to a culture of learning/thinking. Thus, the need to focus on student work is a seen as imperative. • Teachers have identified the need to develop their own content knowledge. This is seen as necessary to engage in responsive education and to better instruct in multi-grade groupings and combined pathway classes. • Staffs are beginning to see the connection between how adults learn and how students learn. • Many of our students do not seem to be engaged in the learning process. • Parental engagement in learning requires additional support. • There is a need to inspire and co-create a collective vision and associated values within each school that is reflective of the need to have shared responsibility.	Primary and Junior Division Learners have demonstrated the need to be increasingly supported when: • Representing their thinking (fully) when engaged in multi-step, multi-strand problems • Deconstructing multi-step, multi-strand problems **District Support Data** • The School Improvement Plan is seen as a structure rather than a way of thinking. Monitoring is infrequent. • Assessment for learning processes are, at times, understood and complied with. The focus is on learning goals and success criteria; we need to ensure that the entire framework is in place to measure the strongest student impact. • Both formal and informal leaders require support to engage in school improvement; the emphasis is on developing content knowledge in math and literacy, as well as in the Assessment Framework. Monitoring continues to be an area of focus; moving into monitoring as a stance, rather than an activity. • Leadership is grounded in the management approach for the most part. Instructional leadership opportunities have yet to be prioritized. **Intermediate and Senior Divisions** • We have noted a disconnect between success rates for the grade 9 English courses and the OSSLT results. • Applied Mathematics is an area of concern. Students have demonstrated the need to be supported in their ability to deconstruct multi-step, multi-stand problems, and to represent their thinking (all stages).	**Program Needs:** • Credit Rescue/Recovery programs require clarification of requirements to have consist implementation board wide. • Credit extension based on the guidelines of the Growing Success document. • Implementation of Career Life Program Planning (IPP). • Second Step School Culture Program (beginning implementation) • Building capacity in staff (particularly in Guidance, Special Education and Student Success) • Technology access and integration continues to be a challenge.	<u>Elementary</u> **Bullying and Exclusion** Students are subjected to physical, social, or verbal bullying, or are bullied over the Internet. • 37% of students were victims of moderate to severe Bullying in the previous month; • 36% of the girls and 38% of the boys in this district were victims of moderate to severe Bullying in the previous month. **Students are interested and motivated** • 81% of students were interested and motivated in Grade 4. By Grade 5 this drops to 59% <u>Secondary</u> **Intellectual Engagement Composite** Students are intellectually engaged and find learning interesting, enjoyable, and relevant. • 54% of students are intellectually engaged. • 54% of the girls and 53% of the boys in this district were intellectually engaged. • 50% of the students were intellectually engaged in Grade 9. By Grade 12 this drops to 34%. This is a significant drop when compared to where the students are in Grade 4.
Identified Areas of Focus from SEF	**INDICATORS** 1.2 A variety of relevant and meaningful assessment data is used by students and educators to continuously monitor learning, to inform instruction and to determine next steps. 1.3 Students and educators build a common understanding of what students are learning by identifying, sharing and clarifying the learning goals and success criteria. 1.4 During learning, timely, ongoing, descriptive feedback about student progress is provided, based on student actions and co-constructed success criteria. 3.1 The teaching and learning environment is inclusive, promotes the intellectual engagement of all students and reflects individual student strengths, needs, learning preferences and cultural perspectives. 4.2 A clear emphasis on high levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy is evident throughout the school. 2.1 Collaborative instructional leadership builds capacity to strengthen and enhance teaching and learning. 2.4 Job-embedded and inquiry based professional learning builds capacity, informs instructional practice and contributes to a culture of learning.			

BOARD IMPROVEMENT PLAN GOAL

By June 2014, through a focus on Assessment FOR Learning strategies, there will be a 10% upward shift of the number of students moving into the next level of achievement on the Primary, Junior, Grade 9 Mathematics and OSSLT EQAO assessments.

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL (Theories of Action to Guide our Work)	SUPPORTING STRUCTURES TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL (Work Plans as Attachments)
✓ If we co-construct success criteria using exemplars/anchor papers, then the success criteria will be increasingly aligned with grade level standards. SEF 1.3 ✓ If we provide ongoing feedback linked to success criteria, then students will become skilled in their ability to think and to respond critically to learning tasks. SEF 1.3 and 1.4	— Growing Success Implementation — Primary and Junior Inquiring into Math (3/6 Collaborative Inquiry/CIL-M) — SEF Support Visit PLC (refer to BLDS) — Learning Fair — District Support Visits — Principal PLCs (Tuesday and Thursday Morning Teleconferences) (refer to BLDS) — FSL Inquiry — NTIP
✓ If we increase our understanding of student conceptual knowledge development and critical learning phases, then students and teachers will be better able to set individual learning goals and meet the needs of all learners. SEF 1.2 October 2013 -If we increase our understanding of student conceptual knowledge development and critical learning phases through deep analysis of student thinking, feedback will be more responsive and intentional and student thinking will be extended.	— Grade 4-10 Collaborative Inquiry — Primary and Junior Inquiring into Math (3/6 Collaborative Inquiry/CIL-M) — Early Learning Inquiry — NTIP
✓ If we foster student centered learning environments and pedagogy that is inclusive, promotes intellectual engagement of all students, and reflects individual students' strengths, needs, learning preferences and cultural perspectives, then students will become increasingly motivated to learn. SEF 3.1 October 2013 - If we foster student centered learning environments and pedagogy that is inclusive, promotes intellectual engagement of all students, and reflects individual students' strengths, needs, learning preferences and cultural perspectives, then student will assume increasing ownership of their learning and take more risks.	— SEF Support Visit PLC(refer to BLDS) — Leadership Learning Team (SIM and K-12 Numeracy/Literacy) (refer to BLDS) — Learning Fair — Special Education Learning — Principal PLCs (Tuesday and Thursday Morning Teleconferences) (refer to BLDS) — SWST Inquiry — FSL Inquiry — NTIP

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT/FOCUS

Our Commitment To Learning Excellence is supported by the following principles:

Every decision is grounded in the best interests of students and student achievement.

All students can achieve high expectations given sufficient time and support (growth mindset).

FORMAL MONITORING STRUCTURES	EXAMPLES OF OBSERVABLE ACTIONS PRACTICING Success Criteria	SUPPORTING STRUCTURES (These support our Theories of Action)

School Visits (all voices heard)
• Superintendent and Director Visits
• School Effectiveness Support Visits
• District Support Visits
 	
School Based/System Inquiries Evidence based on Student Work
• Evidence of impact of School Based Inquiries (December, February, May)
• Report back at Principal PLC
• Marker student progress
• Samples shared and moderated during Principal PLC/Thursday Morning Teleconferences
• Learning Fair sharing
 	
Leadership
• Conversations, demonstrations, participation, engagement in school improvement processes and learning.
• Learning Walks
• Co-Learning during Inquiries/PLCs
• Feedback for Annual Learning Plans
• School Improvement Planning, Monitoring, Feedback, Reflection
• District Effectiveness Survey (Formal and Informal Leader Feedback - October 2013)
• Tell Them From Me Survey (Parent, Student and Staff Feedback)
	When we monitor, we are seeking evidence of and providing feedback for the following criteria for success:
	
	Conditions for Learning:
	
	3.1 *The teaching and learning environment is inclusive, promotes the intellectual engagement of all students and reflects individual student strengths, needs, learning preferences and cultural perspectives.*
	
	At the School:
	• Educators collaborate to identify and implement evidence-based conditions that support the intellectual engagement of students (e.g. learning experiences that are clear, meaningful, interesting, motivating, challenging, productive and include ongoing descriptive feedback and opportunities for metacognition)
	• Engaging learning experiences ensure all students use higher-order thinking skills, solve complex problems, develop increased understanding, and construct new knowledge.
	• Instruction is differentiated and curriculum materials, digital tools, human and a range of other resources are provides to support student strengths and needs.
	• The environment promotes strong, positive, relationships between students, teachers and leaders that is conducive to learning.
	
	Students:
	• Are able to see themselves, their values, culture and interests reflected in their learning environment.
	• Assume ownership in learning experiences that are collaborative, innovative and creative.
	• Willingly participate in feedback processes to refine thinking and learning.
	
	4.2 *A clear emphasis on high levels of achievement in literacy and numeracy is evident throughout the school.*
	
	At the School:
	• A comprehensive literacy and numeracy focus supports student achievement through use of the current Ontario curriculum and associated resource documents.
	• Literacy and numeracy instruction is inquiry-based, intellectually challenging and developmentally appropriate for all students.
	• Instructional practices are strategically used to meet the diverse learning needs of students (e.g. Assessment Framework is fully implemented).
	
	Leadership (formal and informal)
	
	2.1 *Collaborative instructional leadership builds capacity to strengthen and enhance teaching and learning.*
	
	At the school:
	• School Improvement Planning:
	   o Involves all staff in planning, implementing, monitoring and refining the SIP, based on analysis of the current needs assessment that is drawn from a variety of data sources (e.g. perceptual, demographic, program, achievement)
	   o Identifies areas requiring an instructional emphasis (e.g. through the development of a small number of goals based on current student achievement data)
	   o Communicates progress in improving student achievement and meeting targets to parents and the school community (eg newsletters, school council agendas, school website)
	   o Informs the school budget
	   o Is supported by school leaders through "open-to-learning" classroom visits and conversations.
	   o Includes the review of student achievement data, including evidence from collaborative inquiries at specific times throughout the year, to ensure that schools can demonstrate progress in meeting the targets and goals in all classrooms for every student.
	   o Includes student input.
		School Leaders and educators will engage in the following professional learning strategies, most of which have a COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY approach as a foundation to learning:
		
		System Learning:
		✓ *Early Years Inquiry*
		✓ *Growing Success Implementation*
		✓ *Grade 4-10 Collaborative Inquiry*
		✓ *Primary and Junior Inquiring into Math (3/6 Collaborative Inquiry/CIL-M)*
		✓ *System Implementation and Monitoring Team*
		✓ *Leadership Learning Team*
		✓ *Principal PLC (supporting their Annual Learning Plan)*
		✓ *SEF Support Visit PLC*
		✓ *District Support Visits*
		✓ *Special Education Learning*
		✓ *FSL Inquiry*
		✓ *NTIP*
		
		School-Based Learning
		(funding will be differentiated depending upon the needs of the school and the number of students)
		✓ *School Based Inquiry Hubs (responsive to student learning needs)*
		✓ *Learning Fair – to share learning*
		✓ *Job-embedded co-learning through SWST/CIL-M*
		
		Ministry Supports
		• Funding for release and resources
		• Leadership Development through LLT
		• Commitment to supporting the learning at all schools and teachers through funds for release time
		• Time for collaboration for planning and sharing
		
		Board Supports
		• Providing professional learning opportunities to small groups of teachers.
		• Providing release time for (inquiring) thinking and learning together.
		• Providing release time for collaborative planning.
		• Specific resources provided to schools

	- A school improvement team supports the principal/staff to collaboratively develop and monitor the goals in the school improvement plan and to complete the School Self-Assessment, based upon the SEF - Professional learning priorities are based upon the needs that emerge from the analysis of student work and are aligned with the goals in the SIP. - Structures are in place to ensure that school leaders actively co-learn with staff. - A collaborative learning culture (e.g. a commitment to continuous improvement, a collective focus on student learning for all, deprivatization of practice and reflective dialogue) is evident. (This is about genuine collaborative rather than the culture of "niceness".) *2.4 Job-embedded and inquiry based professional learning builds capacity, informs instructional practice and contributes to a culture of learning.* At the school: - The vision that underlies "a culture of learning" is explored and consensus is built/co-created with staff – what does this vision look like and sound like in our school? - Professional learning is inquiry-based and responsive to student assessment data (schools utilize the Collaborative Inquiry Continuum to assess the degree of collaboration and to determine next steps). - School leaders are engaged in professional learning with staff. - Conditions (e.g. time to meet and talk, common planning time where possible) that promote collaborative cultures are established. - School leaders regularly visit all classrooms to engage in ongoing inquiry regarding effective instructional practices and how to increase their impact on student learning. - School leaders seek out relevant professional learning and resources (e.g. curriculum and resource documents, webcasts, monographs, podcasts, ministry websites, community visits, online professional learning networks, etc) to support educators. - Evidence of student learning (e.g. writing samples, mathematical representations of thinking, running records, class profiles) is shared as a catalyst for professional dialogue. - Professional dialogue, based on research literature and learning in the field, supports the use of consistent language and practices.	**School Supports** - School leaders participate as co-learners in learning and inquiry sessions (both formally and informally) - School leaders support additional members of staff who express interest in inquiries/projects.