

SSUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Report No:
Date: December 5, 2014

TO: Chair and Members of the
Superior-Greenstone District School Board

FROM: Nicole Morden Cormier, Superintendent of Education

SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Board Learning Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Student Achievement and Well Being

Background

The Board Learning Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being (BLPSA), formerly known as the Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being (BIPSA), is a document that reflects the specific learning focus for the district and is a tool used to plan how this learning is going to be monitored. This document operationalizes several aspects of our Strategic Plan including our “Promise to Students” which outlines our commitment to “professional development and technical expertise that will continue to improve program delivery and build our reputation for excellence” (SGDSB Strategic Plan, 2012) and ongoing, professional learning to ensure that staff have “opportunities to continually improve their pedagogy through professional development, co-teaching, collaboration and classroom visits” (SGDSB Strategic Plan, 2012).

The BLPSA is a document that is responsive to both the student and adult needs in the district, as student learning needs are a proxy for adult learning needs. The System Implementation and Monitoring Team has carefully deconstructed and analysed our student achievement and well-being data from sources such as the Tell Them From Me survey, Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) achievement and perceptual data, results from District Support Visits, qualitative academic data from staff, and surveys of staff and students regarding mental health and well-being. This data was used to strategically determine the areas of greatest need for students and staff and detailed “work plans” were then created by our system leads to address the most urgent needs.

Current Situation

SGDSB SMART Goal: By June 2015, ____% of the learners (inclusive of all adults and students) in SGDSB will demonstrate growth in their efficacy towards learning (growth mindset - which is foundational to our Conditions for Learning) as measured by their attitudes and behaviours through the growth mindset survey, Tell Them From Me data, EQAO Student Surveys and Professional Learning Exit Cards (through the Assessment for Learning Phase).

SGDSB Theory of Action: If we foster learner centered environments and pedagogy, then learners will possess an increased sense of belonging and be motivated to learn.

As a district, we have come to recognize that lasting change takes time to occur. Thus, the goals and theory of action contained in the 2014-2015 BLPSA are a continuation of the work that we began two years ago aimed at further enhancing the culture of learning in each of our schools. Our long term goal is to ensure that our pedagogy and our environments are completely learner centered. This means that we are naturally responsive to the needs of our learners’, we ensure they are fully included and engaged, and that their strengths, learning preferences, needs and cultural perspectives are attended to. Last year, we collectively learned about and created a tool called *Our SGDSB Conditions for Learning*; a document that outlines the characteristics that need to be in place for optimal learning to occur. When we pay

particular attention to the components outlined in the *SGDSB Conditions for Learning* when structuring learning, we are well on our way to creating this learner centered environment.

This year, we are focusing on deepening our understanding of one particular aspect that underlies each one of *Our Conditions for Learning*. Growth Mindset, or the belief that intelligence can be grown with hard work and determination, is an area that has been identified as a significant need, both for adult and student learners. Consequently, we have focused our Board Learning Plan SMART goal around growth mindset; with particular emphasis around developing this mindset in the Numeracy work plan. You will note that the percentage for the growth target has yet to be included; we are in the process of analyzing available data relating to growth mindset in order to determine a current baseline. The target will be established prior to the Christmas Break. We believe that the achievement of this SMART goal is a critical factor in influencing our ultimate target of creating a learner centered environment and pedagogy.

Next Steps

Ongoing professional learning is not only an expectation of the Ontario College of Teachers, but foundational to the vision of continuous improvement and goal attainment. The BLPSA work plans provide for a large number of opportunities for staff to be engaged in learning throughout the school year. These work plans include each of the following target areas:

- ✓ Numeracy (Kindergarten-Grade 2 Inquiry, Primary Inquiry into Math, Junior Inquiry into Math, Grade 7 to 10 Inquiry into Math)
- ✓ Mental Health Learning
- ✓ Positive Behaviour Supports
- ✓ Aboriginal Education
- ✓ French As A Second Language
- ✓ Special Education
- ✓ E-Learning
- ✓ Board Leadership Development (includes the Leadership Learning Team and Problem of Practice Learning Sessions)

For principals, enhancing school instructional leadership continues to be an area of focus. To support leaders, the following structures have been put into place:

- ✓ Numeracy Learning (through participation in Numeracy Learning Sessions from above)
- ✓ Tuesday and Thursday Morning Teleconferences
- ✓ Leadership Learning Team Meetings
- ✓ SEF Support Visits (face-to-face and Adobe Connect)
- ✓ School Based Inquiries/School Improvement Inquiry
- ✓ Problem of Practice Learning Sessions
- ✓ District Support Visits and Learning Fairs

Student achievement and well-being will be monitored frequently and in an embedded manner throughout the school year to assess the degree of implementation of the BLPSA. We have learned that it is important for all stakeholders to be able to “see” the target in order to achieve the target; thus once again this year we have included “look-fors” in the BLPSA that outline expectations regarding leadership and essential conditions for learning. This year, we have expanded this to also include criteria for modelling a growth mindset; criteria that will become increasingly precise as we learn more about growth mindset and its impact on learning. All staff are able to use these look-fors to monitor their work and the district will continue to use them to provide feedback to schools. The monitoring structures also include the analysis of student work in all learning sessions, exit cards detailing new learning from staff, board generated assessments, District Support Visits and surveys.

Respectfully submitted by:

Nicole Morden Cormier
Superintendent of Education