

## SUPERIOR-GREENSTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

Report No: 72

Date: November 18, 2013

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

**FROM:** Nicole Morden Cormier, School Effectiveness Lead/Early Years Lead

**SUBJECT:** 2013-2014 Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being

**STRATEGIC  
PRIORITY:** Student Achievement and Well Being

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### **Background**

The Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being (BIPSA) is a commitment to improve success for each student in the Superior-Greenstone District School Board. The plan is grounded in the Strategic Priorities which reflect the belief of ongoing improvement in learning; that everyone is a learner within an “institution of learning” (SGDSB Strategic Plan, 2012). Each year our plan is collaboratively enhanced based on an assessment of needs and priorities for students, as articulated by schools and available student achievement data. The plan incorporates and guides the work at all levels to attain systemic improvement for all students. It identifies goals of focus and related theories of action for the improvement of student achievement, describes our strategic actions and outlines processes for monitoring, making adjustments and evaluation of the effectiveness of the plan.

### **Current Situation**

The 2013-2014 BIPSA is reflective of several key themes; understandings which are necessary to support improved school cultures. Initially, the work that we began last year in the area of *mindset*, or the belief that intelligence is not fixed and thus that all of our students can learn to high standards, is one that is foundational to learning. The *teacher as researcher* is another theme; a stance that we have learned about from our Student Work Study Teachers as they carefully observe, analyse and respond to student thinking. We know that the *principal as lead learner* is a critical concept to support, as is ensuring that *parent and student engagement* is a focus.

This year’s BIPSA reflects a deeper understanding of the essential nature that monitoring plays in this process, both in a formal and informal way. We are focused on providing feedback to our staff throughout this year in an ongoing way, rather than simply during the formal visits that we make to schools. To allow us to do so, we have embedded specific *look-for’s* that will not only enable us to monitor the degree to which we are achieving our goals, but also the impact that our work is having on both the environment and the leadership in the schools.

As well, this year’s plan also demonstrates our ability to increasingly narrow the focus on specific learning needs of our students (which reflect the learning needs of our staff). The learning needs for the students and the staff will be addressed with the continued focus on the *Assessment for Learning* process that takes place while students are engaged in learning (developing common goals for learning, setting precise targets to know when the learning has occurred successfully, and finally, giving, receiving and acting upon feedback from the teacher and peers); as “studies have shown that the use of assessment for learning contributes significantly to improving student achievement, and that improvement is greatest among lower-achieving students (Black & William, 1998, in Learning for All, 2010, pg. 26)”. For teachers, the continuation of this high-yield instructional focus is critical as it provides the time necessary to learn, practice and fully embed the assessment for learning strategies into their practice.

## Next Steps

The BIPSA provides for a large number of opportunities for staff to be engaged in learning. For principals, continuously enhancing school leadership is an area of focus as “effective school leaders are key to large-scale, sustainable education reform.” (Fullan, 2002).

To support leaders, the following structures have been put into place:

- Tuesday and Thursday Morning Teleconferences
- Leadership Learning Team Meetings
- School Effectiveness Support: 4 Adobe Connect Learning Sessions  
(followed by 4 Program Leaders Sessions)
- SEF Support Visits (face-to-face and Adobe Connect)
- School Based Inquiries/School Improvement Inquiry
- Growing Success Implementation Project
- District Support Visits and Learning Fairs

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 following chart outlines the learning supports that teachers will be offered this year.

Learning Goal	Participants	Structure for Learning and Ongoing Monitoring
We are learning to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Create environments that promote thinking in children.</li> <li>❖ Play with math and notice, name and respond to children’s thinking in the area of counting</li> <li>❖ Provide feedback through meaningful questions in the Number Sense and Numeration and Geometry and Spatial Sense strands</li> </ul>	Kindergarten Teachers Early Childhood Educators Grade 1 Teachers (Partners with Brass Bell/ Best Start and Child Cares)	Early Years Inquiry
We are learning to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Increase our understanding or what it means to “know mathematics for teachers”.</li> <li>❖ Develop an understanding of a balanced numeracy program.</li> <li>❖ Create a learning environment conducive to risk-taking &amp; learning (grounded in growth mindset).</li> <li>❖ Ensure students are successful in making their thinking visible through complex problems.</li> </ul>	Grade 3 and 6 Teachers	Primary and Junior Inquiring into Mathematics
Goal #1: Increased number of students on IEP’s meeting provincial standard on province wide EQAO & OSSLT assessments Goal #2: Clarify policies and practices Goal #3: Increased Parent Confidence and Support for Education	Special Education Teachers	Special Education Face-to-Face Meetings and Teleconferences
We are learning to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Determine the impact of the Assessment Framework on classroom learning.</li> </ul>	Grade 7-12 Teachers	Growing Success Implementation Project: Hub Learning Sessions

We are learning that: ❖ Numeracy and literacy – varies from school to school based upon most urgent student learning need	All Teachers	School Based or Hub Inquiries Supported by Student Work Study Teachers and Numeracy Facilitators
We are learning to: ❖ Use data to deconstruct and respond to the needs of our students in both academic and applied math.	Grade 4-10 Teachers in the Geraldton Region  Grade 7-10 Teachers in the Marathon and Nipigon Regions	Regional Based Inquiries

In The Six Secrets of Change, Fullan (2008) tells us that “the learning is the work” (pg. 73). To achieve the goal and theories of action articulated in the BIPSA, this district recognizes that everyone needs to be engaged in this work. Our BIPSA requires us to monitor this work in an ongoing and transparent way and to model the actions of the assessment for learning phases; we will set learning targets, detail the criteria that we must meet in order to succeed, and provide, accept and act upon feedback from staff and students.

**Administrative Summary**

The report entitled 2013-2014 Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being if presented to the board for information

Respectfully submitted by:

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David Tamblyn  
 Director of Education

References

Fullan, Michael (2002). *The Change Leader*. Educational Leadership. May, 2002.  
 Fullan, Michael (2008). *The Six Secrets of Change*. California: Jossey-Bass.  
 Ontario Ministry of Education (2011). *Learning for All*. Toronto: Queen’s Printer.