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(Read only/Print view)

 Edit

Section A: Project Information

1. Project ID

0151.5.01

2. Project Title

Balanced Literacy and 21st Century Learners

3. Host School Authority

Calgary Arts Academy Society [0151]

4. Host School Authority Contacts

Michelle Stonehouse / mstonehouse@calgaryartsacademy.com / (403) 532-3020

5. Brief Description

Our cycle 4 project was very large in scope when it comes to Literacy. Our focus was primarily on identifying at-risk learners at setting up Early Reading Intervention/ Reading Recovery for those students. While this was an effective project, it created the opportunity to look further into teaching practice in the early years. In doing so, we identified a new area for growth, being the implementation of a Balanced Literacy Specialist to collaborate with teachers in the effective and sequential instruction and use of Balanced Literacy and Literacy across the Content for Kindergarten to Year 3. We will continue with our practice of identifying at-risk learners and will move forward to refine our Intervention programs.

6. Keywords/Themes

Balanced Literacy, Literacy Specialist, Effective Instruction

7. Project Status

Submitted

8. Schools Involved

One School

9. Grades

K-3

10. Open to Cross-School Authority Collaboration?

- YES
 NO

11. Is Cross-School Authority Collaboration Established?

- YES
 NO

Section B: Project Parameters

1. Project Duration

2012/13
2013/14
2014/15

2. Schools Involved

School Authority Filter

Calgary Arts Academy Society [0151]

Schools

0151 - Calgary Arts Academy [1126]

Number of Schools

3. Grades Involved

Grade	Number of Students		
	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
1	50		

2	50		
3	50		
Total	150	0	0

4. Research Leadership

a. Source of Research Leadership and Support *(Check all that apply)*

Internal Research Expertise

b. Brief Description Of Research Leadership

Provide a brief description of how your school authority will address research leadership.

Calgary Arts Academy will use internal research expertise within the administrative team.

Section C: Project Design

1. Project Overview

Provide a brief general overview of the AISI project including the following:

- *background or context for the project*
- *purpose*
- *scope*
- *student learning goal(s)*

Note: Please keep the summary brief, but at the same time, provide sufficient information for others to understand what the project is about.

Our cycle 4 project was very large in scope when it comes to Literacy. Our focus was primarily on identifying at-risk learners and setting up Early Reading Intervention/ Reading Recovery for those students. While this was an effective project, it created the opportunity to look further into teaching practice in the early years. In doing so, we identified a new area for growth, being the implementation of an Instructional Literacy coach to collaborate with teachers in the effective instruction and use of Balanced Literacy and Literacy across the Content for Year 1 to Year 3. The purpose of this systematic focused Balanced Literacy implementation is to further refine differentiation in the classroom and ensure all learners are provided with best practices. We will continue with our practice of identifying at-risk learners and will move forward to refine our Intervention programs.

2. Statement of Student Learning Goal(s)

Provide a statement about the improvements in student engagement, learning and performance that are anticipated as a result of the project.

The purpose of our project is to determine whether we can improve student achievement through improvement of teacher consistency, mindfulness and deepening implementation of best practices associated with Balanced Literacy.

We hope to improve student achievement by focusing on Balanced Literacy best practices and the implementation of Balanced Literacy Specialist. Our goal is to have all teachers

collaborating and practicing all components of Balanced Literacy instruction with scope and sequence.

Specifically we aim to increase student achievement in Language Arts (Reading and Writing) in Year 1 through Year 3.

3. Research Question(s)

What question(s) is the project designed to address?

Note: The research question(s) must focus on impacts on student engagement, learning or performance and be strongly linked to the student learning goal(s) for the project.

To what extent does student achievement, as measured by formal reading and writing assessments and student and teacher surveys, improve by implementing a whole school Balanced Literacy approach? This will be done based on a systematic approach supported a Balanced Literacy Specialist.

4. Literature Review

Provide a brief account of what has been published by scholars and reported in AISI projects relative to the area of inquiry for this project.

Note: The literature review should:

- *be related directly to the research question(s)*
- *synthesize results into a summary of what is known and what is not known*
- *include an explanation of how the literature will influence the AISI project*

A Balanced Literacy approach teaches students to become independent, strategic and enthusiastic readers and writers. Through intentional observation and assessment, the teacher identifies strategies and skills that will move students forward. The teacher is then able to select the most appropriate method for teaching the skill or strategy with scope and sequence. This approach employs a balance of modeled, shared, guided, and independent literacy activities that meet the diverse needs of students.

The International Reading Association published the definition of a Balanced Reading Approach in 2003:

*A balanced reading approach is research-based, assessment-based, comprehensive, integrated, and dynamic, in that it empowers teachers and specialists to respond to the individual assessed literacy needs of children as they relate to their appropriate instructional and developmental levels of decoding, vocabulary, reading comprehension, motivation, and sociocultural acquisition, with the purpose of learning to read for meaning, understanding, and joy. (From *A Balanced Approach to Beginning Reading Instruction: A Synthesis of Six Major U.S. Research Studies.*)*

We have informed our project with the works of Regie Routman's Reading Essentials (2003) and Writing Essentials (2005); 6+1 Traits of Writing by Ruth Culham (2005); Literacy Place For the Early Years Program by Anne Brailsford and Tony Stead. All works support the Balanced Literacy approach and help create a literacy program that has researched scope and sequence.

Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment

Fountas and Pinnell

The Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System, can monitor reading level three times each year. This assessment yields level (with equivalent grade levels), accuracy, fluency, and detailed information and scores on comprehension. This system has been extensively field-tested. Students can complete a writing prompt to further assess comprehension. There are optional assessments to monitor progress in phonemic awareness, phonics, letter learning, and high frequency word knowledge. The assessment will be helpful to:

- Determine students' independent and instructional reading levels.
- Determine reading placement levels and group students for reading instruction.
- Select texts that will be productive for student's instruction.
- Assess the outcomes of teaching.
- Assess a new student's reading level for independent reading and instruction.
- Identify students who need intervention.
- Document student progress across a school year and across grade levels.
- Inform parent conferences.

Literacy Place for the Early Years

Anne Brailsford and Tony Stead

Literacy Place for the Early Years provides multi-level, high-interest materials for both reading and writing, with many cross-curricular connections. The teacher- support materials are designed to help teachers manage differentiated, small-group instruction. They provide a range of strategies and prompts to use with students who are at differing stages on the literacy continuum, suggested differentiated learning opportunities, and a wide variety of assessment tools for proof of students' current understanding and future instructional needs. Consistent structure and teacher language is provided to support students as they progress through Kindergarten to Grade 3.

6+1 Trait Writing

Ruth Culham

The 6+1 Trait Writing model of instruction and assessment emphasizes instruction in which teachers and students analyze writing using a set of characteristics, or "traits," of written work, including: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions. These Traits **provide a common language for teachers and students to communicate about the**

characteristics of writing and establishes a clear vision of what good writing looks like.

Writing Essentials

Regie Routman

Writing Essentials specifically and explicitly demonstrates practical, easy-to-do strategies that turn your writing instruction practices into best practices. Follow Routman's path for successfully leading all students—including English language learners, writers who struggle, and students coping with learning disabilities—from first draft to publication. You'll find expert advice and specific demonstrations on a wide variety of techniques, including:

- demonstrating your own writing process for students
- organizing and managing the writing classroom
- conducting effective, efficient writing conferences
- creating meaningful rubrics for better assessment
- teaching various forms of narrative and informational writing—and poetry
- applying shared writing across the grades and across the curriculum
- teaching editing and revision

Reading Essentials

Regie Routman

Based on her continuing work teaching in schools, Routman proves that good teaching doesn't have to mean lots of hours spent planning. What's necessary is good thinking—thinking about what matters to kids, what kids need to know, how we can move them forward, and how to ensure that they comprehend and enjoy what they read—including struggling students. Routman provides discover research-based strategies, immediately doable ideas, and detailed lessons—all based on an instructional framework that includes:

- demonstrations
- shared demonstrations
- guided practice

- independent practice.

5. Methodology

Describe how data will be gathered and analyzed to answer the project research question(s).

This may include:

- the data source (describe the population or the kind of sampling procedure that will be used (e.g. random sample, volunteer sample, stratified sample)
- the kind of measurement instruments that will be used
- the techniques and tools that will be used to analyze and present project findings

The data source will be purposeful sampling and will include the Year 1, 2 and 3 students. There are approximately 50 students in each grade. The turnover rate every year is approximately 2-3%.

The types of measurement instruments used will be student and staff surveys, Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment, Writing Assessments, PATs.

6. Significance of the Research Study

Write a few sentences to explain why the project is important and of benefit to the engagement, learning and/or performance of the selected students.

Describe how this project may contribute to the advancement of teaching and learning in Alberta

This project is important to the student achievement and engagement in Language Arts. However, the improved literacy results will reach into all content areas. The students who we predict will benefit the most are those students who need a systematic, explicit approach to literacy learning.

7. Scope and Limitations of the Project

What specific areas does this project address? (e.g. student competencies)

What specific groups of students are being selected for the study? (e.g. grades, ages, characteristics, abilities)

To what extent can the results and conclusions from this project be transferable to other contexts?

What does it not address?

With our focus on Balanced Literacy best practices and the implementation of Balanced Literacy Specialist, our goal is to have all teachers collaborating and practicing all components of Balanced Literacy instruction with scope and sequence. Student reading and writing skills will be assessed. Students in Year 1 through Year 3 will be selected. Only students that are enrolled in the first year of this cycle will continue to be followed in the remaining years of cycle 5.

Section D: Project Strategies and Implementation Plans

1. Student Learning Goals, Measures and Strategies

Student Learning Goal

Students in Year 1 through Year 3 will increase achievement in their Reading skills.

Current Situation/ Baseline

We have seen an increase in the number of students who are below skill level in reading achievement and are referred to Reading Recovery. Our focus is to provide staff with Professional Development to implement a sequential Balanced Literacy Approach in the classroom.

Measure

What tools / instruments / data sources will be used to measure student progress toward the goal?

Literacy Place for the Early Years Reading Assessments.

Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Reading Assessment.

Year 3 Provincial Achievement Test.

Student Surveys

Teacher Surveys

Evidence

What evidence will indicate success?

Reading Assessments at the Year 3 Provincial Achievement Test will indicate an increase in student achievement and an increased ability to use a broad range of reading strategies.

Student and Teacher feedback will demonstrate a stronger knowledge of Balanced Literacy and Reading strategies.

Strategies

What strategies will be implemented to achieve the goal? How will they be implemented?

Through the implementation of a Balanced Literacy Specialist, teachers will collaboratively plan a Balanced Literacy Approach with assessment for learning using the Literacy Place for the Early Years as a guide.

Student Learning Goal

Students in Year 1 through Year 3 will increase achievement in their Writing skills.

Current Situation/ Baseline

We have seen an increase in the number of students who are below skill level in writing achievement and are referred to small group writing. Our focus is to provide staff with Professional Development to implement a sequential Balanced Literacy Approach in the classroom.

Measure

What tools / instruments / data sources will be used to measure student progress toward the goal?

Literacy Place for the Early Years Writing Assessments.

6+1 Writing Traits Assessments.

Year 3 Provincial Achievement Test.

Evidence

What evidence will indicate success?

Writing Assessments at the Year 3 Provincial Achievement Test will indicate an increase in student achievement and an increased ability to use a broad range of writing strategies.

Student and Teacher feedback will demonstrate a stronger knowledge of Balanced Literacy and Writing strategies.

Strategies

What strategies will be implemented to achieve the goal? How will they be implemented?

Through the implementation of a Balanced Literacy Specialist, teachers will collaboratively plan a Balanced Literacy Approach with assessment for learning using the Literacy Place for the Early Years as a guide.

2. School Community Engagement Plan

Description Of Activities <i>Who will be involved? How? What systemic supports for community engagement are planned?</i>	Timeline <i>Dates and/or frequency of activity</i>	Lead <i>Who will be responsible?</i>
<p>A Literacy group was set up last year to talk about literacy in our school and across divisions. Any staff member interested could attend. The goal was to identify where we were at and how we needed to move forward. These meetings were shared with other staff, administration and school council. It was these meetings that informed our project.</p>	<p>Monthly Last Year</p>	<p>Michelle Stonehouse</p>
<p>All staff work collaboratively in 'Teams.' Team Leaders and Administration share all information/ideas/concerns at weekly Team Leader meetings that continue to inform our project.</p>	<p>Weekly</p>	<p>Michelle Stonehouse</p>
<p>All staff meet weekly in Team Meetings with our Balanced Literacy Specialist and plan together for the week. These discussions that fine tune the direction of the project.</p>	<p>Weekly and Daily</p>	<p>Chelsea Mills</p>
<p>Principal Josh Van Beers attends monthly Board meetings, School Council meetings, meets with the Superintendent on a regular weekly basis and with the administrative team weekly to ensure open communication about our Literacy Goals.</p>	<p>Monthly and Weekly</p>	<p>Josh Van Beers</p>

3. Professional Learning Plan

Description Of Activities <i>Who will be involved? How will learning be integrated? How will leadership capacity be developed?</i>	Timeline <i>Dates and/or frequency of activity</i>	Lead <i>Who will be responsible?</i>
<p>We have hired a Balanced Literacy Specialist who will share and collaborate with teachers to develop best practices when it comes to Balanced Literacy Instruction.</p> <p>Our Literacy Specialist meets weekly afterschool with teachers to develop reading and writing long term and short term plans. With each new literacy goal, the Specialist works in the classroom to model the lesson/activity with each teacher and then guides the teacher to further understanding/implementation about the Balanced Literacy components. The specialist also suggests resources and strategies that match the literacy goal.</p>	<p>Daily</p>	<p>Chelsea Mills</p>
<p>We have booked Miriam Trehearne to coming in to do a two day workshop with Staff. Our goal is also to have new staff attend BER 6 +1 Write Traits workshops. Our Literacy Specialist is also promoting reading and writing workshops that would move individual teachers forward in their learning. When staff members attend an external workshop, they will present their learning/ ideas to their team.</p>	<p>As the opportunity arises.</p>	<p>Michelle Stonehouse</p>

4. Data Collection and Analysis Plan

Description Of Activities <i>What data will be collected? From whom? How will it be analyzed? Who will be responsible?</i>	Timeline <i>Dates and/or frequency of activity</i>	Lead <i>Who will be responsible?</i>
<p>Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Reading Assessment from individual students. Only students attending full time in the first year of this cycle will be tracked.</p>	<p>Beginning of the year and at the end of each of the three terms.</p>	<p>Michelle Stonehouse</p>
<p>Literacy Place for the Early Years Reading Assessments from individual students. Only students attending full time in the first year of this cycle will be tracked.</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout the term.</p>	<p>Michelle Stonehouse</p>

Literacy Place for the Early Years Writing Assessments from individual students. Only students attending full time in the first year of this cycle will be tracked.	Beginning of the year and at the end of each of the three terms.	Michelle Stonehouse
Year 3 Provincial Achievement Test from individual students.	Once per year.	Michelle Stonehouse
6 + 1 Writing Traits Assessments from individual students. Only students attending full time in the first year of this cycle will be tracked.	Three times per year.	Michelle Stonehouse
Teacher Survey. Classroom teachers in Year 1 to Year 3.	Twice per year.	Michelle Stonehouse
Student Survey. Individual students. Only students attending full time in the first year of this cycle will be tracked.	Twice per year.	Michelle Stonehouse

5. Knowledge Mobilization Plan

Description Of Activities <i>What strategic plans are anticipated for knowledge dissemination and mobilization?</i>	Timeline <i>Dates and/or frequency of activity</i>	Lead <i>Who will be responsible?</i>
School Newsletter	Three times per year.	Michelle Stonehouse
School Council Meetings	Three times per year.	Michelle Stonehouse
Board Meetings	Twice per year.	Josh Van Beers
School Bulletin Board	Ongoing Literacy Bulletin Board.	Chelsea Mills

Section E: Project Staffing and Budget

1. Project Start School Year 2012/13

2. Staffing Requirement

FTE Allocations						
Personnel Types	Project Management / Administration	School Community Engagement	Professional Learning Delivery	Research Leadership / Support	Classroom Instruction / Specialized Services / Supports for students	Total FTE Allocation
AISI Coordinator/Project Leader	0.02					0.02
Lead Teachers / Coaches / Mentors / Consultants / Teachers			0.40	0.40	0.30	1.10
Teaching Assistants						0.00
Other Professionals (e.g., Researchers, Social Workers, Psychologists, Liaison Workers, Speech Pathologists)						0.00
Administrative Support Staff						0.00
Total FTE	0.02	0.00	0.40	0.40	0.30	1.12
Estimated Total Cost (Based on Salaries and Benefits)	\$1,620	\$0	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$16,200	\$65,820
Comments:						

3. Revenue

Revenue Source		Budget
1	AISI Funding Requested	\$34,621
2	Contributions from Equity of Opportunity Funds	

3	Additional Funds from Alberta Education <i>(For Alberta Education use only)</i>	
4	Funding from Other Sources	\$38,099
5	Less Transfers to Other Approved AISI Projects	
6	Transfers from Other Approved AISI Projects	
7	Unexpended Funds from Previous Year	
8	Total Revenue	\$72,720

Comments:

Funding from other sources will come from Instruction Block Funds.

4. Expenses

	Budget
1 Salaries and Benefits	\$65,820
a Project Management/Administration	\$1,620
b School Community Engagement	\$0
c Professional Learning Delivery	\$24,000
d Research Capacity/Leadership/Support	\$24,000
e Classroom Instruction/Specialized Services/Supports for students	\$16,200
2 Professional Learning <i>(excluding salaries)</i>	\$5,400
a Professional Learning Materials/Resources	\$0
b Travel/Accommodation/Meal and other related costs for Professional Learning including sub costs/release time	\$2,700
c External Consultants, Registration fees, etc. for Professional Learning activities	\$2,700
3 Research Activities <i>(excluding salaries)</i>	\$0
a Literature Review, Data Collection and Analysis, Reporting; Other	\$0
b External Research Consulting	\$0
4 Project Management Costs <i>(excluding salaries)</i>	\$0
5 School Community Engagement Costs <i>(excluding salaries)</i>	\$0
6 Instructional Materials and Resources for Students	\$1,500
7 Equipment/Capital Expenses	\$0

8	Other expenses	\$0
9	Total Expenses	\$72,720
10	Unexpended Funds	\$0

Comments:

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5. Project Expenses Percentages

Expenses	Amount	% AISI Funding	% of Total Expenses
Professional Learning	\$29,400	85	40
Research	\$24,000	69	33
Project Management	\$1,620	5	2

Comments:

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