GULF ISLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT 64

Salt Spring Elementary

SIGNATURES

PRINCIPAL

PAC CHAIR

TEACHER

STUDENT

OUR SCHOOL

SCHOOL IDENTITY/CONTEXT

Located in the heart of Ganges, SSE enjoys easy access to the local pool, public Library, community theatre, parks, forests and beaches. Walking field trips are big part of the school experience for our students. With two lush gardens and an outdoor classroom, our school community is commited to providing outdoor learning opportunities for our children. We have a dedicated PAC and enjoy partnerships with several community ogranizations including Big Brothers/Sisters, The Circle, The Salt Spring Conservancy. SSE is a vibrant and dynamic learning community.

"I like the supportive community, how everyone is friendly, the passion the teachers have, the incredible activities, such a safe and nurturing school." SSE parent (2023 Parent survey)

OUR STORY

The last few years were unprecedented in many ways. In addition, to navigating changing protocols and systems during a global pandemic, our school district underwent a configuration review that saw SSE move from a K-5 English school of about 160 students to a K-6 English and Late French Immersion school of about 200 students in 2021/22 and then move to a K-7 English and Late French Immersion school of about 245 in 2022/23. Like every sector in our province, 2022/23 saw staff shortages within our district, especially for on-call staff.

Students, staff and parents showed incredible resiliency and flexibility throughout the many changes and challenges. Not only did students survive the school year, they thrived. The school community kept student learning and joy at the centre, even in difficult times. Staff dug deep and continued to enhance their professional practice. At the beginning of 2020, SSE intermediate teachers noticed a huge range of numeracy abilities in their classes. After researching best practices and a great deal of collaboration, several SSE teachers engaged in an Epic project that focussed on implementing math workshop as a structure to differentiate and target numeracy instruction. In 2021/22, this project grew from a few teachers to a whole school initiative, with full teacher engagement. In 2022/23 Numeracy remained the goal area, but the scope broadened to other instructional practices including vertical non permanent surfaces math, the research based initiative attributed to Pete Liljedahl (SFU). This year however, SSE did not have an on-site teacher assigned to Epic math support and the project loss momentum as a result. The use of TTOCs was unpredictable and led to in consistency in implementation. We have learned from this. We have also learned that although fluency improved, application of mathematics remains a growth area. Moving forward, staff recognize that students need more work in the area of problem solving, not only in numeracy, but in all areas: socially, emotionally, relationally and academically.

AREAS OF STRENGTH/GROWTH

Strengths:
-Hard working and active PAC
-Experienced and dedicated staff
-Central location with easy access to rich learning opportunities in the community
-Strong Music, Gardening and Nature Based learning programs
-Sustained professional development and emphasis on mathematics instruction
-Welcoming and friendly culture
-Strong literacy achievement
Growth Areas:
-Strategies to develop student number sense, problem solving and flexible thinking in mathematics
-Common language and approach to problem solving
-Supporting students with anxiety, difficulty self-regulating and social/emotional challenges

FOCUSING DIRECTION

PROCESS FOR REVIEWING/REVISING/DETERMINING

Parents, students and staff were consulted in the development of this plan. Multiple sources of data were considered, including report card marks, FSA, grade 4 and 7 learning survey, PAC and staff meeting discussions and school created parent and student surveys.

The school growth plan team includes all school staff with contributions from students and parents.

Timeline/process:

Late Spring: review yearly data, consult with partner groups and draft goal area

Early Fall: revise and finalize plan; gather formative data; implement strategies

Mid Year: check data; revise plans as necessary

Late Spring: administer summative assessments, review yearly data, consult with partner groups and draft goal area.

PURPOSE / DATA RATIONALE

As indicated in the FSA results below, SSE students in grade 4 performed better on the Numeracy FSA than students in grade 7. Teachers have observed test anxiety among students. As well, teachers have observed that many students struggle with applying their mathematical skills. The curriculum becomes more abstract at the grade 7 level and we suspect that is a factor. Students have made gains in fluency, but application is still an area for growth for many.
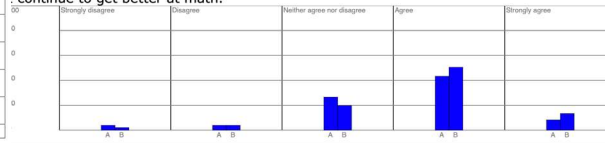

Grade 4 FSA
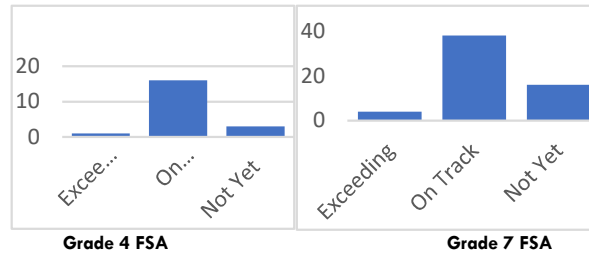
Grade 7 FSA

Similarly, as indicated on the BC Learning Survey, more students in grade 4 than grade 7 felt they were improving in math.

I feel I am getting better at math.
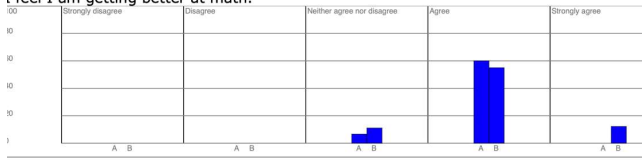
continue to get better at math.
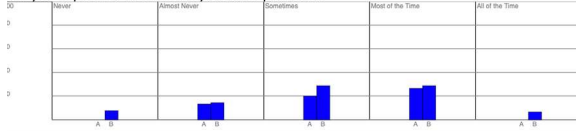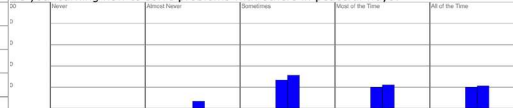
Grade 4 Learning Survey

Grade 7 Learning Survey

SSE students in grade 4 had a lower rate than the district in the area of solving problems on the BC Learning Survey.

Can you explain to others how you solve problems?

Are you learning how to solve problems with others in peaceful ways?

A= SSE B=District

Summative ipass data below shows that SSE students have greater competency in mathematical accuracy than in application.
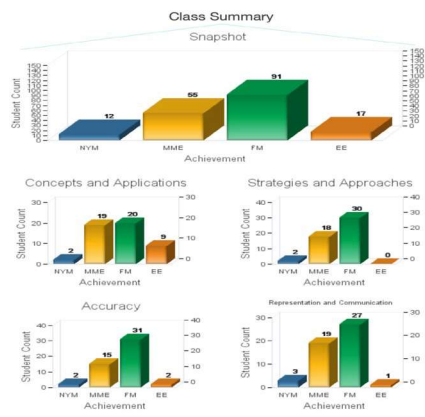
Summative report card results below show that students show greater achievement in Reading than Numeracy at SSE.
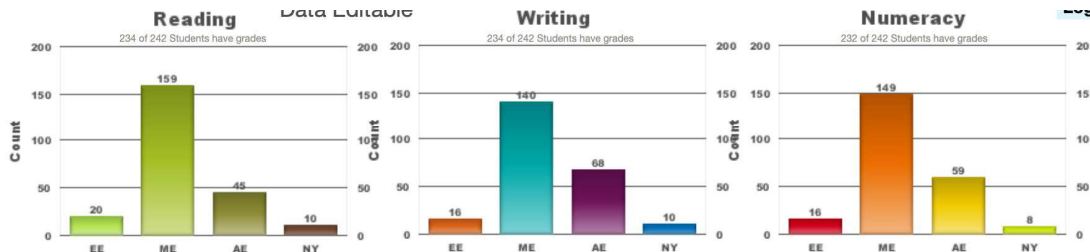
The dip in Numeracy achievement in higher grades, coupled with staff and parent feedback identifying an increase in student disregulation, anxiety and social conflict, led staff to recognise the need to develop a holistic approach to problem solving in all areas.

-Collaborate and establish a unified approach to problem solving
-Share problem solving approach with families
-Train leadership students to help other students problem solve minor social conflicts on the playground
-Have school wide "problem of the week" for students, staff and families to tackle
-Encourage a growth mindset
-Directly teach self regulation strategies
-Explicitly teach problem-solving strategies in Numeracy
-Assess students for targeted intervention

COLLABORATIVE CULTURE

STAFF/SHARED WORK

-Admin team to continue to update PAC about school goals at PAC meetings
-Review progress, strategies and challenges with staff at monthly meetings
-Meet with staff on Framework day to further enhance the plan
-Survey students, parents and staff to get input for school goals
-Share progress and ideas in school newsletter and on the website
-Enlist student leadership club to peer mentor problem solving strategies

DEEPER LEARNING

WHAT WILL STAFF NEED TO KNOW TO LEAD/PERFORM THIS WORK?

Topics and Areas of Professional Learning:
-Best practices in Mathematical Problem Solving
-Best practices in conflict resolution
-Strategies for teaching self-regulation
-Trauma and anxiety informed practices

WHAT SKILLS WILL WE FOSTER WITH STUDENTS FOR THEM TO EXPERIENCE SUCCESS?

-Flexible thinking and growth mindset
-Attitude that problems are solvable and challenges are exciting
-Self regulation and anxiety reducing strategies (self soothing)
-Conflict resolution strategies
-Can do attitude!
-Self confidence
-Strategies to approach academic problem solving

APPROACH TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING?

-Staff will work collaboratively to review assessment results and plan next steps for learning
-Staff will explore best practice and current research in problem solving
-Teachers will engage in team teaching and model lessons
-Staff meeting time will be allotted for discussions about assessment, instruction, and student progress
-Staff will pursue common professional development through professional book club and school based pro-d
-Staff will develop a unified approach to social problem solving
-Provide teacher collaboration and support time to create structures for problem solving instruction that will build capacity and allow for the program's sustainability

TAKING ACTION

How will the school structure an approach that can be measured in short formative cycles?
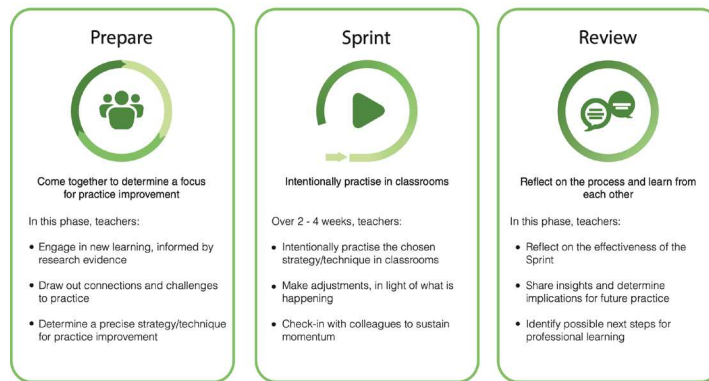*How will the school foster a sense of partnership to achieve a common goal of increased student achievement?*

LEARNING SPRINT APPROACH

Staff will engage in 2 to 3 sprints to measure student success in the area of problem-solving. At minimum, they will engage in one Fall and one Spring sprint. We will follow an adapted version of the Breakspear Model, illustrated below. As noted in our reflections, having a on-site staff member assigned to support our Epic project and learning sprints is key. This person can support teachers with planning, co-teaching, gathering resources and documenting the journey.

The Sprints will involve the following steps:

1. **Prepare**: SSE staff teams will meet together and engage in data-informed dialogue to determine a focus. Collaboration time will be provided for this stage.
2. **Sprint:** Over a period of 4-6 weeks, teachers will intentionally implement their chosen strategy. They will make adjustments as needed and check in with colleagues to maintain momentum. Collaboration time and implementation support will be provided for this stage.
3. **Reflect:** Teachers will be given time to reflect on the effectiveness of their sprint, gather data, share insights with colleagues and staff meetings, and plan for next steps. Support will be provided to allow time to gather and share this information with colleagues.

Prepare — Come together to determine a focus for practice improvement

In this phase, teachers:
- Engage in new learning, informed by research evidence
- Draw out connections and challenges to practice
- Determine a precise strategy/technique for practice improvement

Sprint — Intentionally practise in classrooms

Over 2 - 4 weeks, teachers:
- Intentionally practise the chosen strategy/technique in classrooms
- Make adjustments, in light of what is happening
- Check-in with colleagues to sustain momentum

Review — Reflect on the process and learn from each other

In this phase, teachers:
- Reflect on the effectiveness of the Sprint
- Share insights and determine implications for future practice
- Identify possible next steps for professional learning

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ACCOUNTABILITY

HOW WILL WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL?

Success will look like all students making significant gains in their numeric problem-solving skills. We would see increased achievement on mathematical tasks involving application of skills. In time, the achievement gap between early grades and later grades would shrink. Student confidence in their ability to tackle problem solving tasks would increase.
This can be measured by classroom based assessments, FSAs and report card marks.

Success would also look like students having greater indepence in social problem solving and conflict resolution. We would see fewer office referrals and greater indicators of happiness, sense of belonging and safety among our students. This can be measured by school based surveys, the BC Learning survey and SBT referrals.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA

We will collect data from the following sources:
- Student survey
- Parent survey
- Staff survey
- Ipass achievement data
- Report card marks
- FSA
- BC Learning survey
- Class reviews
- SBT referrals
- Staff meetings
- PAC meetings

STUDENT EXPERIENCE EVIDENCE

Success would be demonstrated by:
- greater student confidence and enjoyment in engaging in mathematical problem solving tasks
- less test anxiety
- students peacefully resolving minor social conflicts independently
- students better able to focus and self regulate in class
- increasing student achievement, confidence and efficacy in upper intermediate math
- high participation in the "problem of the week" activities

EPIC STORY

STORY

Please see open this link for reporting on our 2022/23 Sprint Reflections:
https://www.canva.com/design/DAFiZy85Z8w/mrmoX1D3T963aZ4rHfjLMg/view?utm_content=DAFiZy85Z8w&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink#5

Our Epic journey began in 2020 around a staffroom table with a few teachers reflecting on the huge range in student skills and confidence in mathematics. Those conversations lead to a small group of teachers collaborating, researching and implementing "math workshop" in their classes as a way to differentiate instruction. This was supported by district funding.

The success enjoyed by this small group of educators inspired more teachers to take a risk and try new practices in mathematics instruction. Through continued district support for these initiatives, this project grew to a school-wide initiative with 100% of classroom teachers at SSE engaged in professional development and teaching sprints to improve student achievement, confidence and their own increased efficacy in mathematics instruction.
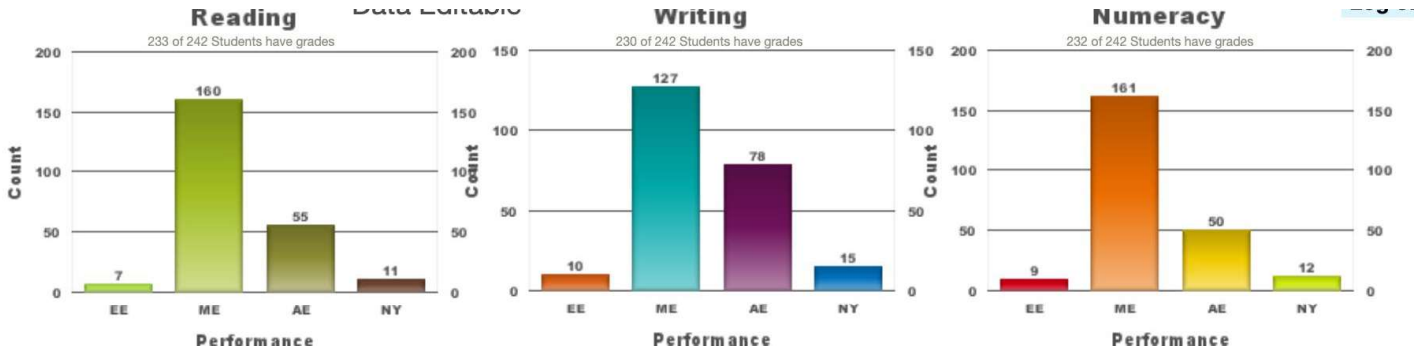
The 2022/2023 school year brought a new set of challenges as the school district experienced greater shortages in on-call staff. This led to a decrease in momentum as release time was difficult to rely upon or secure. Staff learned that having an on-site staff member assigned to the EPIC project was vital to success.

As we begin to look to the 2023/2024 school year, staff are excited to expand our EPIC visions to the area of problem-solving in more global terms. Our data shows that application of mathematics is an area needing development and our observations reveal a need for a unified, research-based approach to conflict resolution and relational problem-solving. We are inspired and eager to begin these next steps.
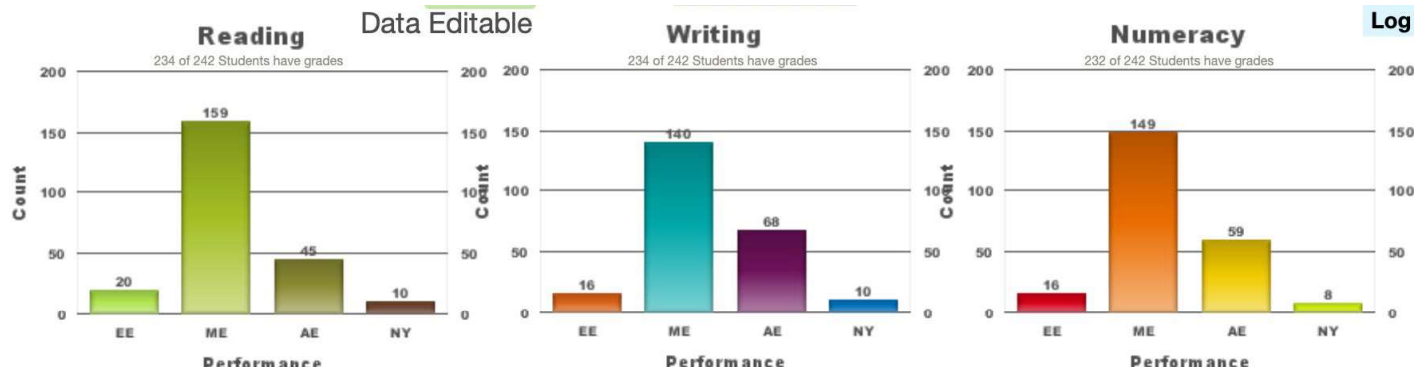
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Here is some more school data for reference:

Reading
233 of 242 Students have grades

Performance	Count
EE	7
ME	160
AE	55
NY	11

Data Editable

Writing
230 of 242 Students have grades

Performance	Count
EE	10
ME	127
AE	78
NY	15

Numeracy
232 of 242 Students have grades

Performance	Count
EE	9
ME	161
AE	50
NY	12

Log

Term 1 Report Card Marks

Reading
234 of 242 Students have grades

Data Editable

Performance	Count
EE	20
ME	159
AE	45
NY	10

Writing
234 of 242 Students have grades

Performance	Count
EE	16
ME	140
AE	68
NY	10

Numeracy
232 of 242 Students have grades

Log

Performance	Count
EE	16
ME	149
AE	59
NY	8

Summative Report Card Marks

There was an increase in achievement in all academic areas. Fewer students NY meeting expectations and more students exceeding expectations.

7. My child likes math... (0 point)

More Details

●	A lot	19
●	Sometimes	21
●	A little	12
●	Not at all	6

8. I like math (0 point)

More Details

●	A lot	8
●	Sometimes	5
●	A little	3
●	Not at all	3

8. My child's math has improved this year... (0 point)

More Details

●	A lot	14
●	Somewhat	35
●	A little	6
●	Not at all	2
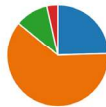
9. My math has improved this year (0 point)

More Details

●	A lot	8
●	Somewhat	8
●	A little	2
●	Not at all	1
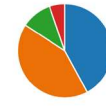
10. I feel that my math skills are (0 point)

Parent Survey Information   **Student Survey Information**

It is encouraging to see that a majority of students enjoy math and feel like they are improving. More work to be done, here, though.