

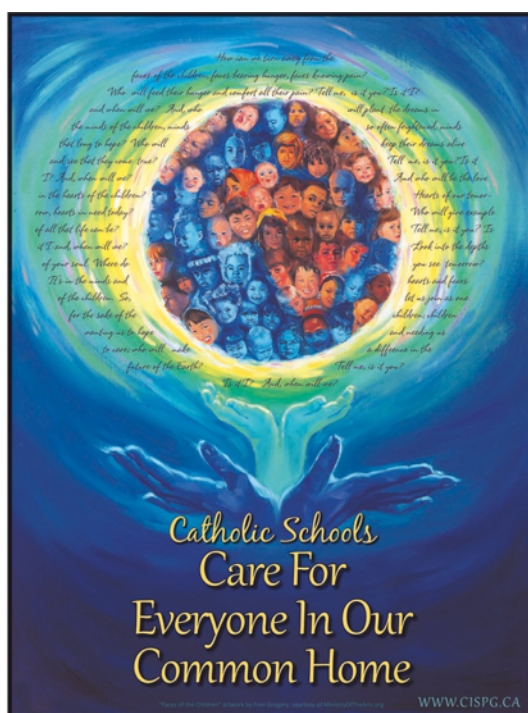
CISPG LEARNING PLAN 2017-2018

Catholic Independent Schools, Diocese of Prince George (CISPG) comprises the northern half of British Columbia and includes eight Catholic schools located in the communities of Prince Rupert, Terrace, Kitimat, Smithers, Prince George and Dawson Creek - a geographic span of 1200 kilometres. We respectfully acknowledge that we work and learn on the following traditional territories: the Lheidli T'enneh people in Prince George; the Tsimshian Nation in Prince Rupert and Terrace; the Haisla Nation in Kitimat; the Wet'suwe'ten Nation in Smithers; and the West Moberly and Saulteau First Nations in Dawson Creek.

Our Catholic school communities include students with unique learning needs and varied cultural backgrounds. We enrol approximately 1600 students in grades K-9 and, depending on the school and region, 31-69% of our students are Catholic. CISPG schools have supportive families and dedicated staff who are role models of the Catholic faith.

This learning plan provides a framework for CISPG learners (both students and adults) so that we may inquire, collaborate and plan to meet the challenges of the redesigned BC curriculum within the life and mission of our Faith. In this plan, we encourage all educators to build learning communities where our students may thrive in inspiring, innovative and inviting Catholic environments.

The theme for our provincial Catholic learning community in 2017-2018 is "Care For Everyone In Our Common Home". This theme will be incorporated into all that we do this year.



The learning plan is presented using an adapted "spiral of inquiry" model (Kaser and Halbert, 2012) as the spiral is well-suited to a learning plan that is dynamic and relevant and always a "work in progress". (See diagram next page).

the spiral of inquiry

OECD seven principles of learning

- Put learners at the centre
- Emphasize the social nature of learning
- Understand that emotions are central to learning
- Recognize individual differences
- Stretch all learners
- Use assessment for learning
- Build horizontal connections

Source: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation

First Peoples Principles of Learning

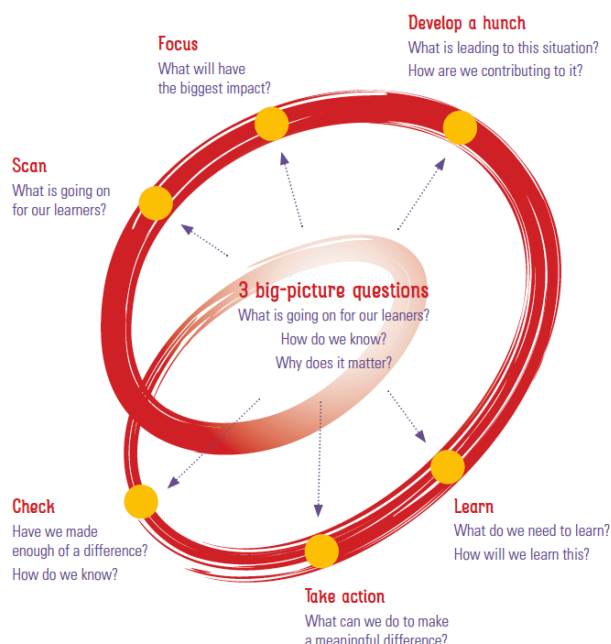
Learning...

- ▶ supports the wellbeing of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors
- ▶ is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational
- ▶ involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions
- ▶ involves generational roles and responsibilities
- ▶ recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge
- ▶ is embedded in memory, history, and story
- ▶ involves patience and time
- ▶ requires exploration of one's identity
- ▶ involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred

Source: First Nations Education Steering Committee, British Columbia
(For the full text go to fnesc.ca/learningfirstpeoples)

4 key questions for learners

Can you name two people in this setting who believe you will be a success in life?
What are you learning and why is it important?
How is it going with your learning?
What are your next steps?



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The Spiral Playbook is available at c21canada.org/playbook

Inquiry
is about being open to new learning
and taking informed action.

SCAN: What's going on for our learners (both adult and student)?

Kaser and Halbert (2012) state that scanning involves inquiry and "evidence-seeking" rather than simply reinforcing the status quo. Scanning should focus on all aspects of learning and include the perspectives of the learners as well as the teachers. In the words of Andreas Scheicher, (OECD), "Without evidence, you are just another person with an opinion."

With regard to our student learners, CISPG schools currently collect evidence using a variety of data and measures of success. To date, the consistent measure across all schools is the Foundation Skills Assessment (see Appendix). These standardized tests in Grades 4 and 7 have been revised to better reflect the redesigned curriculum and the research on best practice.

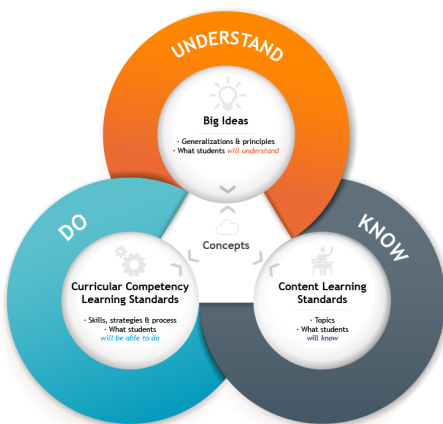
In general, CISPG students meet and exceed expectations with regard to reading, writing, and numeracy. However, we do not yet have evidence regarding a deeper focus on learning: e.g. Can our students think critically or creatively? Can they problem solve? Can they collaborate? Can students self-assess? Do they "own" their learning?

In 2017-2018, we invite CISPG educators to continue to explore various ways of "scanning" that reflect a wider focus on learning and include the perspectives of the learners and their families/communities as well as the professionals.

FOCUS: What does our focus need to be?

Focusing involves using information from the scan to identify an area for concentrated team learning or inquiry. Build on strengths or positives as well as challenges. Identify a common area that the team can work on together (Kaser and Halbert, 2012).

As mentioned previously, our learners generally meet or exceed provincial standards for literacy and numeracy – the foundational skills. However, the new curriculum has “raised the bar” in terms of WHAT and HOW we teach and learn. The BC Ministry of Education has redesigned the curriculum to better engage students in their own learning and to foster the skills and competencies students will need to thrive in a complex, ever-changing global society. The three-dimensional “Know-Do-Understand” model must be one that is learner-centered and flexible and maintains a sound focus on literacy and numeracy while supporting deeper learning. The redesigned curriculum must also support the development of citizens who are proficient thinkers and communicators and personally and socially competent in all areas of their lives (core competencies).



Classroom assessments are an integral part of the instructional process. As a result, the redesigned curriculum highlights the importance of formative assessment (or assessment for learning – AFL) as an instructional approach that strengthens teacher practice and ultimately student learning. These AFL strategies include:

- Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success
- Providing feedback that moves learning forward
- Strategic use of questioning
- Students as learning/teaching resources for one another

Many CISPGEducators currently share learning objectives/intentions with students. In 2017-2018, teachers are encouraged to continue to integrate AFL strategies into their classroom practice: e.g. share or co-create criteria with their learners; increase emphasis on descriptive feedback that is

tailored to individual students; use questions/inquiry to deepen student understanding; utilize more frequent student self-reflection/self-assessment and thereby facilitate a corresponding increase in student voice and ownership of learning.

The new curriculum also supports a shift from the reporting of student progress at various “fixed” intervals to “communicating student learning” on an ongoing basis using current pedagogy and authentic assessment practice. Reporting must be based on “wise” classroom assessment such as the strategies mentioned above.

The curriculum redesign incorporates Aboriginal voice and perspective and ensures that aboriginal understandings are part of the learning journey for every student. Aboriginal perspectives are now clearly embedded in all strands of the BC curriculum in authentic and meaningful ways. An important aspect of aboriginal worldviews is place-based learning where teachers are encouraged to teach in ways that respect the uniqueness of students’ “place” and to teach both within the school and the wider community.

As a result of this transformative shift in curriculum and the theme for our provincial Catholic community, CISPGE will focus on three areas of inquiry for 2017-2018:

1. How do we embed the use of formative assessment strategies in every classroom?
2. How do we embed and extend aboriginal worldviews and cultural learning experiences into our school environments in an authentic, meaningful way?
3. How do we move from reporting as a fixed event to communicating student learning (CSL) as an ongoing process?

LEARN: How and where can we learn more about what to do?

According to Kaser and Halbert (2012), “professional learning is the core business of all educators” and should be directly linked to the focus identified above and sustained and supported over time.

In 2017-2018, CISPG schools are invited to:

1. Work within Professional Learning Communities/Inquiry Networks to implement teaching/learning practices that are integral to the new curriculum: e.g. understanding and using assessment for learning strategies such as clarifying and sharing criteria for success, descriptive feedback, questioning/inquiry and student self-reflection pertaining to the Core Competencies. This type of work could be facilitated using structures/models such as:
 - early dismissal days
 - scheduled school release time for collaborative learning
 - demonstration lessons
2. Examine critical resources (e.g. staff book study) that support the redesigned curriculum such as:
 - Dylan Williams “Embedding Formative Assessment: Practical Techniques for K-12 Classrooms”
 - Shirley Clarke “Outstanding Formative Assessment: Culture and Practice”
 - Ron Berger’s “Leaders of Their Own Learning”
 - Myron Dueck’s “Grading Smarter, Not Harder”
 - Tom Schimmer’s “Grading From The Inside Out”
 - Trevor Mackenzie’s “Dive Into Inquiry”

Once again, this type of work could be facilitated using structures/models such as: early dismissal and scheduled release time for collaborative learning.

3. Begin to shift from the reporting of student progress at various “fixed” intervals to “communicating student learning” using current pedagogy and authentic assessment practice (see CISPG Communicating Student Learning Guidelines 2017-2018).
4. Explore ways to embed and extend aboriginal worldviews and cultural learning experiences into school environments in an authentic, meaningful way.
5. Purchase current resources and documents that support the redesigned curriculum and areas of focus (see the new CISPG website).
6. Access the new CISPG website for information about curriculum planning, updates, and samples of provincial “exemplary” work.
7. Invite “experts”/facilitators to assist with initial exploration of particular topics – e.g. Misty Paterson to introduce concept-based inquiry; community elders and other facilitators on indigenous ways of knowing; representatives from the Critical Thinking Consortium ...
8. Share professional learning and expertise across the Diocese by:
 - inviting teams of educators to visit other schools to present/collaborate with colleagues on significant topics
9. Apply for a Learning and Innovation Grant (worth \$500) to support a school-based inquiry (or learning goals) related to current themes and topics in education.

TAKE ACTION: What will we do in 2017-2018?

Kaser and Halbert (2012) state that “taking action” should focus on deep learning and understanding why some practices are more effective than others – not simply “trying things out”. The effectiveness of new practice should be judged by the impact on the learners and their learning, rather than simply refining a new strategy.

To support schools in 2017-2018, CISPG will continue to:

1. Offer/support cross-diocese professional learning sessions on the BC curriculum during designated Curricular Implementation Days or other non-instructional days -

CONCEPT-DRIVEN INQUIRY: MISTY PATERSON

- **Date:** Friday, September 29, 2017
- **Time:** 8:45 am – 3:00 pm
- **Location:** Prince George: University of Northern BC – The Gathering Room
- **Description:** Misty has been very well received and has presented in many Catholic schools. She is described as a “thoughtful educator with a deep passion for student engagement”.
- This session will be streamed to Catholic Schools and any other independent schools in our Diocese.

WEAVING THE WAYS: DEEPENING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF ABORIGINAL WORLDVIEWS

- **Presenter(s)** TBA
- **Date:** Friday, April 20, 2018
- **Time:** 8:45 am – 3:00 pm
- **Location:** Terrace: Veritas School
- **Description:** The BC school curriculum has been redesigned to include aboriginal worldviews and, as a result many educators are grappling with the following question: How do we embed and extend aboriginal perspectives and authentic cultural learning experiences into our classrooms? We are currently looking for a presenter/facilitator who has some understandings of indigenous perspectives and will be able to assist us with "balancing" both a Catholic and an aboriginal worldview in our classrooms.

NICE (NORTHERN INDEPENDENT CONFERENCE FOR EDUCATORS)

- **Date:** Friday, May 18, 2018
- **Time:** 8:45 am – 3:00 pm
- **Location:** Immaculate Conception School
- **This session is hosted by the Professional Development Committees of Sacred Heart, St. Mary’s and Immaculate Conception School.**
- **Presenter(s)**

- **Kimberley Schonert Reichl**

Dr. Schonert-Reichl is a renowned expert in the area of social and emotional learning (SEL) research with children and adolescents, particularly in relation to the identification of the processes and mechanisms that foster positive human qualities such as empathy, compassion, altruism, and resiliency. For more than two decades, Dr. Schonert-Reichl’s research has focused on the social and emotional development of children and adolescents in school and community settings.

- **Sister Eva Solomon**

Sister Solomon’s work involves travelling extensively to communities in northern and western Canada, serving as pastoral visitor, lecturer and workshop leader to aboriginals and non-aboriginals in 17 Catholic dioceses. She will share her stories and help participants to reflect on creating respectful connections and “building bridges” between traditional aboriginal worldviews and Christianity.

2. Offer/facilitate a series of sessions to CISPG educators on assessment for learning (AFL) practice. These sessions will be open to any interested educators and will occur at a time that is convenient. Teachers implementing standards-based (“gradeless”) assessment are encouraged to take part in these sessions.

The sessions will be based on the BC Education Ministry Classroom Assessment Video and Booklet Series: a multi-modal resource that will provide a series of five videos and accompanying booklets to support classroom assessment. The videos and booklets will answer essential questions around each assessment topic, providing a variety of perspectives, ideas and expertise from BC teachers and assessment experts in the area of classroom assessment. Each short video and accompanying booklet will outline ways for teachers to apply classroom assessment strategies within their classroom. The series will feature the following topics:

- Introduction to the Classroom Assessment Series
- Assessment and the Learning Cycle
- Student Self- and Peer Assessment and Reflection
- Documenting and Using Evidence for Assessment
- Designing Classroom Assessments

Videos and booklets will become available during the 2017/18 school year. Meeting times/dates will be discussed as soon as information from the BC Ministry is available.

3. Facilitate an “instructional rounds” model in schools (by invitation) whereby CISPG and other educators share their learning with colleagues. These demonstration lessons could include: various assessment for learning strategies (e.g. sharing learning intentions and criteria, self and peer assessment using criteria, descriptive feedback etc.); embedding the Core Competencies into classroom practice; and weaving aboriginal perspectives into lessons.
4. Support/assist schools as they move from “reporting” to “communicating student learning”: e.g.
 - Implementing the CISPG Communicating Student Learning Guidelines 2017-2018
 - Implementing standards-based assessment/reporting with a particular focus on Grade 4 teachers and “gradeless” pilot schools
 - Incorporating student self-reflection and “voice” into the reporting process (e.g. through the Core Competencies)

CHECKING: Are we making enough of a difference?

*Kaser and Halbert (2012) state that checking is fundamental to the process of inquiry. As well, there are “high expectations that inquiry, new professional learning and action make a substantial difference for **all** learners – not just a little difference for some learners.” Checking is done on a regular basis so that modifications/adaptations may be made in a timely fashion.*

In terms of “checking”, CISPG sessions will be adapted/modified according to feedback received after each session. As well, throughout 2017-2018, we will continue to explore authentic evidence of student learning across the Diocese in order to more effectively determine whether or not our practices are making a difference for our learners.