

Principal Qualification Program

**LEADERSHIP  
PRACTICUM  
FINAL REPORT**

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FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

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### Statement of Intent

For my practicum I established two Collaborative Inquiry Teams that worked to enhance our understanding of the principles found within the *Growing Success* document. Additionally, one team implemented specific assessment strategies at Belle River District High School (BRDHS) within the Canadian and World Studies Department. A second PLC/ Collaborative Inquiry Project was established with History Teachers from various schools within the Greater Essex County District School Board (GECDSB). Identifying Learning Goals, co-constructing Success Criteria, and providing Descriptive Feedback are effective practices put into action within our classrooms to positively impact student achievement. Working under the Assessment for Learning theme, teachers were provided training on developing Learning Goals and Success Criteria directly tied to the Curriculum strands. Subsequently, students were provided with training on positive self and peer assessment while teachers received training around the positive implementation of descriptive feedback. The expressed goal is for students and teachers to share a common interest, understanding and investment in the learning process. These strategies worked to meet the goals found within the BRDHS School Improvement Plan, GECDSB Board Improvement Plan along with the policies and procedures on Assessment and Evaluation from the Ontario Ministry of Education.

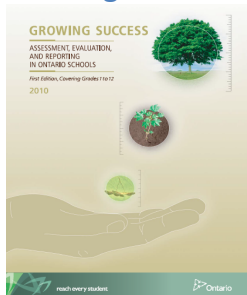
## Collaborative Inquiry Teams

GECSB Team	OCT#	School
Ryan Gray – Lead	478339	Belle River High School
Lori Sousa*	193453	Essex District High School
Kim Schweitzer	436637	Walkerville Collegiate Institute
Matt Biggley*	492781	Massey Secondary School
Beverlie Stewart	460589	Program Consultant
*(DH) = Department Head		

BRDHS Team	OCT #	Subject Area
Ryan Gray – Lead	478339	History
Andrew Pula (DH)	445104	Geography
Christa Molnar	428871	History, Philosophy
Kelly Melo	494531	History
Keith Slatford	451039	Geography
Rebecca Miller	494979	Individual and Society
Desiree Chevalier	622795	Individual and Society
Josh Muldoon	535284	Geography, Science
Hannah Garton	580242	Individual and Society, Science

## Relevant Legislation, School Board Policies and Literature

### Growing Success



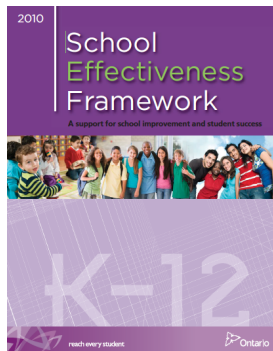
The Growing Success document focusing on Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting is the current focus of the Ontario Ministry of Education. This document was the guiding document for this practicum and its specific focus on Assessment for Learning, specifically Learning Goals, Success Criteria and Descriptive Feedback.

Students' interest in learning and their belief that they *can* learn are critical to their success. After reviewing the impact of testing on students' motivation to learn, Harlen and Deakin Crick (p. 203) recommended the use of assessment *for* learning and *as* learning – including strategies such as sharing learning goals and success criteria, providing feedback in relation to goals, and developing students' ability to self-assess – as a way of increasing students' engagement in and commitment to learning.

(Growing Success, pg. 35)

As teachers' transition towards an *Assessment for Learning* instructional model, collaboration with colleagues will be essential towards effective teaching skill development and student learning. Prior to the implementation of the Collaborative Inquiry, the teachers' competency levels with the Assessment for Learning Initiative varied. Utilizing the Collaborative Inquiry Process, teachers were able to receive Professional Development Training followed by focused attention on developing their teaching skill sets within a collaborative team setting. Finally, these Collaborative Inquiry Teams focused on active student engagement within the learning process through Success Criteria development and Feedback opportunities. These several points continual addressed the stated Ministry priorities by implementing the Growing Success Document.

**SEF document**



The School Effectiveness Framework is a major Ministry of Education initiative being rolled out to school boards over the past four years.

The GECDSB was one of the first school boards to implement the new policy throughout its schools and within its long range planning

initiatives. The following table identifies the SEF indicators of success

met through this practicum.

**Table 1 - SEF Indicators**

	<b>SEF Indicator</b>
<b>Assessment for Learning</b>	1.1 – Students and teacher share a common understanding of the learning goals and related success criteria
	1.2 – During learning, students receive ongoing, descriptive feedback based on the success criteria, from the teacher and peers
	1.3 – Students are taught, and regularly use self assessment skills to monitor their progress toward achieving learning goals, and to set their own learning goals within the context of the Ontario curriculum and/or Individual Education Plan
	1.4 – Assessment tasks are aligned with the curriculum, collaboratively developed by teachers and the resulting demonstrations of student learning analyzed to ensure consistency with success criteria.
	1.6 – Assessment of learning provides evidence for evaluating the quality of student learning at or near the end of a period of learning.
	1.7 – Ongoing communication is in place to allow students, teachers and parents to effectively monitor student learning.
	<b>School and Classroom Leadership</b>
2.2 – Processes and practices are designed to deepen content knowledge and refine instruction to support student learning and achievement.	
2.4 – Job-embedded and inquiry-based professional learning builds capacity, informs instructional practice and contributes to a culture of learning.	

**Connections to the school/district Plan**

The GECDSB continues to heavily invest in the principles contained within the School Effectiveness Framework K-12 initiative (Appendix A) The SEF criteria can be found within both the board improvement plan and the school improvement plan. As such, the SEF

indicators of success identified within the previous section directly connect to both the board and school improvement plans.

The GECDSB has placed a priority on providing students, parent guardians and relevant stakeholders with timely and effective feedback (Greater Essex County District School Board, 2011). As such this project sought to enhance the amount of feedback students received on their assessments from self, peers and teachers at all stages of the assessment process in relation to previously established learning goals and success criteria. These priorities are repeated within the board and school improvement plans, See Appendix A & B.

### **Evidence Based Practice**

The three styles of data utilized during these Collaborative Inquiries were Perceptual Data, Student Learning Data and School Process Data. For an understanding of what encompasses each type of data, please see Appendix C.

#### **Perceptual Data**

The types of Perceptual data collected included questionnaires, interviews and observations from both teaching staff and students. At the start of the collaborative inquiries, teachers completed surveys in order to provide us with a baseline for data. The survey's focused on the current level comprehension level of Learning Goals, Success Criteria, Descriptive Feedback and the overall Growing Success Document. Appendix D contains an example of the initial survey and a tally of the results. Trends that emerged



focused around the limited amount of Professional Development provided on the Growing Success document specifically Learning Goals and Success Criteria.

“We have received one half day of PD on these topics and my Instructional coach did not have an exact method of implementation” (Sousa, 2011)

“There are a number of interpretations at the board level. Representatives from the Program Department will be heading to Toronto next week for additional Ministry PD on this topic” (Stewart, 2011)

These comments were repeated during the introduction session with the Collaborative Inquiry Team at BRDHS. This data was used to work with the GECSB program department in an effort to address the specific “Look-fors” of Learning Goals and Success Criteria within the CHC2D (Canadian History Academic Level) curriculum.

Perceptual data at the end of the Collaborative Inquiries focused around teacher reflection on their own growth and teaching styles. Completed towards the end of the inquiry process along with a student opinion survey (Appendix E and F respectively).

### Student Learning Data and School Process Data

Teachers utilized Student Learning Data and Process Data to inform their practice and refine the Learning Goals, Success Criteria over the course of these Inquiries. The types of Student data suggested to teachers included the following:

Tests    Description of tasks assigned to students  
Report cards    Attendance records    Student work  
Results from large scale assessments

Figure 1  
(Learning Forward Ontario, 2011, pg. 24)

These types of data collection allowed teachers to refine the use of Learning Goals and Success Criteria. Additionally, teachers described an improvement in their styles and skills of Descriptive Feedback following receipt of Student Work or other types of assessments.

When I received the work from the kids, I realized what they understood as what I wanted, was different from what I understood. Next time I will change my explanation of the task. (Biggley, 2012)

At the beginning of each PD session, participants were given an opportunity to share their experiences with implementing the teachings of the previous sessions. Each teacher provided a good point, bad point and a point for discussion with the larger group. These *Sharing Opportunities* allowed for self and peer reflections on how teachers and students benefit from this initiative. Teacher observations also drew upon data sources outlined below:



A word cloud of data sources used in teacher observations. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern and include: Meeting logs, Minutes from Professional Learning Communities, Day books, Mark books, Lesson plans, Portfolios, and Self assessments.

Figure 2  
(Learning Forward Ontario, 2011, pg. 24)

Teachers would often reflect upon Collaborative Inquiry PD during lesson design and assessment creation (Muldoon, 2012). The BRDHS Collaborative Group included experienced teachers (7+ years of experience) and New Teachers (0-2 years of experience). This difference allowed us to develop some rich conversations surrounding our experiences within the classroom.

## Connections to Standards

### Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession

<u>Ethical Standard</u>	<u>Practicum Connection</u>
<b>Leadership in Learning Communities</b> Members promote and participate in the creation of collaborative, safe and supportive learning communities. They recognize their shared responsibilities and leadership roles in facilitating student success. Members maintain and uphold the principles of the ethical standards in these learning communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The role of the Collaborative Inquiry Process is to bring together a group of educators to learn about and implement a new area of practice. The final goal for each of the Inquiry Teams from this Practicum was to impact student achievement through Professional Development.</li></ul>
<b>Ongoing Professional Learning</b> Members recognize that a commitment to ongoing professional learning is integral to effective practice and to student learning. Professional practice and self-directed learning are informed by experience, research, collaboration and knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Personal Professional Development occurred:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Introduction to the Collaborative Inquiry Process</li><li>➤ Further understanding of the Growing Success document, Student Assessment and Professional Leadership</li></ul></li><li>▪ Staff Professional Development occurred:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Understanding of the Growing Success document, Student Assessment and Professional Leadership</li><li>➤ Collaboration with colleagues and research when working within the Inquiry Teams</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>Professional Knowledge</b> Members strive to be current in their professional knowledge and recognize its relationship to practice. They understand and reflect on student development, learning theory, pedagogy, curriculum, ethics, educational research and related policies and legislation to inform professional judgment in practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The Growing Success Document for Assessment and Evaluation is the recent standard for Teaching and Learning within Ontario. The document contains expected procedures for teachers to utilize within their classrooms. While working within these Collaborative Inquiry Teams, teachers actively utilized and implemented all of the criteria found within this expectation.</li></ul>
<b>Professional Practice</b> Members apply professional knowledge and experience to promote student learning. They use appropriate pedagogy, assessment and evaluation, resources and technology in planning for and responding to the needs of individual students and learning communities. Members refine their professional practice through ongoing inquiry, dialogue and reflection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Following the PD sessions, teachers implemented these initiatives within their classrooms.</li><li>▪ Reflections both self and peer, were conducted at regular intervals during this process.</li></ul>

## Leadership Framework for Principals and Vice-Principals

The following Standards from the Leadership Framework were met during this practicum:

<b>Building Relationships and Developing People</b>	<b>The Principal:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ is able to lead professional learning</li><li>▪ engages staff in professional learning</li><li>▪ develops, empowers and sustains individuals and teams</li><li>▪ has knowledge of adult learning and models of professional development</li></ul>
<b>Developing the Organization</b>	<b>The Principal:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ builds a collaborative learning culture within the school and actively engages with other schools to build effective learning communities</li><li>▪ challenges thinking and learning of staff to further develop professional practice</li><li>▪ can build and sustaining a professional learning community</li><li>▪ has knowledge of ministry policies and procedures</li></ul>
<b>Leading the Instructional Program</b>	<b>The Principal:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ develops professional learning communities to support school improvement</li><li>▪ demonstrates the principles and practice of effective teaching and learning</li><li>▪ can access, analyze and interpret data</li><li>▪ can initiate and support an inquiry-based approach to improvement in teaching and learning</li><li>▪ has knowledge of strategies for improving achievement</li><li>▪ can demonstrate effective pedagogy and assessment</li><li>▪ has knowledge of curriculum design and management</li><li>▪ has knowledge of tools for data collection and analysis</li><li>▪ has knowledge of strategies for developing effective teachers and leaders</li><li>▪ has knowledge of project management for planning and implementing change</li><li>▪ demonstrates commitment to raising standards for all students</li></ul>

## Benefits

### Board Level

- The benefits of these Inquiries to the GECDSB include an alignment of Learning Goals and Success Criteria within the Canadian History (CHC2D)
- Development of relationships for similar subject teachers across schools within the board which will reduce isolation

### Belle River High School

(Note: Teachers within the board level PLC also demonstrated the same benefits)

- Teachers developing professional knowledge of how to work within a collaborative environment
- Development of teaching skills for use with the Growing Success Document
- Teachers further understanding of the themes found within ministry curriculum documents
- Development of teaching pedagogy to reflect the current level of Professional knowledge present within the literature and required by the Ministry of Education
- Professional Development on providing effective Descriptive Feedback
- Reflection on Teaching Practice (self and peer) with Peer Feedback

### Students

- Explicit teaching of Learning Goals and Success Criteria to be utilized in assessment evaluation
- Explicit communication of the relevance of learning and course material
- Incorporation of descriptive feedback (self, peer, teacher) along with instruction on their effective use

## Application of Theory to Practice

The role of the Principal and other leaders within the school is secondary only to teachers on student achievement in the classroom. This practicum addressed a variety of factors in relation to the Leadership Framework for Principals (See Connection to Standards above).

When working within the Collaborative Inquiry Teams, I relied heavily on the document *Collaborative Inquiry: A Facilitators Guide* (Learning Forward Ontario, 2011). This document gives a clear explanation on effective methods for leading a collaborative inquiry

research project. Additionally *Powerful Designs for Professional Learning* (Easton, 2008) contains several chapters that influenced my role in leading these teams. Most notably:

- Content: Connecting data, professional learning and student achievement by Lois Brown Eastman
- Accessing Student Voices by Harvetta Robinson and Shirley Hord
- Action Research by Cathy Caro-Bruce
- School Coaching by Patricia McNeil and Steven Klink

Finally *Leading Every Day* (Kaser, Mundry, Stiles, & Louchs-Horsley, 2006) was a reference for me during this practicum. I referred to the chapter on Building a Professional Learning Community often when faced with a challenging task.

## Improving Teaching and Learning

### Teaching Pedagogy

During this process, teachers consistently reported increased reference to the curriculum documents. This was an advantage because many of the teachers were experienced teachers who had been teaching their particular courses for many years. As is often the case, reference to the curriculum documents declines as the years pass teaching a particular course. Increased reference to the Growing Success Document (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010) allowed teachers to absorb and utilize the strategies present within their classroom. Additionally, teachers began to incorporate the new style of assessment strategies into their regular teaching strategies (Exit Survey, 2012).

### Teacher Collaboration

Enjoyment when working with colleagues was sighted on a number of exit surveys completed by Collaborative Inquiry Participants (Exit Survey, 2012). Often teachers within

a department rarely get time to experience the expertise of their colleagues beyond the quick casual conversations. Within the BRDHS Collaborative Inquiry Team, teachers have taught beside each other for 5+ years with limited interaction on curriculum based teaching strategies. In the larger Board level Team, members were looking for ways to break out of the teaching isolation of schools. They wanted more time to interact with their History colleagues from other schools (Pula, 2012). Our board is geographically very large with large distance between schools. Having the time to interact with colleagues was of great benefit both to others and myself.

### **Descriptive Feedback**

A key component to the *Growing Success* initiative is the use of Descriptive Feedback strategies including Self, Peer and Teacher Feedback prior to and after submission of the assessment. This practicum sought to introduce these strategies to the classrooms of the BRDHS Canadian and World Studies Department. Descriptive Feedback strategies have been proven to dramatically increase student achievement and student skill development long after the student leaves the course (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010). The assessments developed during this practicum were limited in scope however the teachers benefitted from the provided Professional Development and opportunity to work with colleagues in Critical Friends Groups (Easton, 2008). These skills will then influence their approach to future assessment techniques.

### **Student Achievement**

Impacting student achievement is the number one reason why we invest our time each day teaching. The results of the survey given to students at the end of the Collaborative Inquires

regarding their opinions of Learning Goals and Success Criteria demonstrate that they see value in these strategies (Gray, 2012). As student became more familiar with these strategies they understood their role in the learning process (Molnar, 2012). Specifically students enjoyed the chance to impact assessment during the Success Criteria development phase of the assessment. Additionally, students enjoyed the opportunity for differentiated instruction provided by the use of Success Criteria (Gray, 2012). Achieving student “buy-in” to the instructional and assessment process is an important part in increasing student achievement (Easton, 2008). This practicum began the teacher and student training with Learning Goals and Success Criteria along with Descriptive Feedback. The future impact will be increased student achievement.

### Effective Practices

- The most relevant portion of the PQP course content was on PLC, TLPC and Collaborative Inquiry Teams. Several of the group assignments over the course focused on the use of these collaborative groups as a method of achieving positive change in the school. By working within these groups great change is possible for both teachers and students.
- The PQP course focused on the importance of Ministry Documents in the effective leadership and operation of a school. Documents such as Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario's Schools, First Edition Covering Grades 1 to 12, govern the methods for effective teaching in Ontario. By basing the Collaborative Inquiries around foundational Ministry documents, I was able to



ensure “buy-in” along with board provided funding for Professional Development.

Additionally, the board provided “area experts” from the program department as key resources and consultants as we progressed.

- As referenced in the above section, Relevant Legislation, use of the School Effectiveness Framework allowed me to draw connections between subjects, school and the Ministry. The PQP content, Leadership Framework – Setting Directions and SEF indicators guided my development of Professional Development and the direction of study. As we progressed through the Inquiries, I was reassured to know that our group was achieving the principles laid out by BRDHS, the GECDSB and Ministry.
- Building relationships was a consistent theme throughout the PQP courses and within the Leadership Frameworks. As the inquiry teams were coming together, I was relying on my previously established relationships to recruit colleagues. During the group activities these relationships continued to pay dividends as teachers engaged in the active use of PD under examination.
- Identifying and Planning for Student Improvement – In the conceptualization portion of the Practicum I was able to use the PQP content to identify an area of need within my own teaching practice, the teaching practice of my department, school and even the larger history teaching pedagogy (board level). The leadership framework states that effective Principals need to be able to identify Areas of Need and develop strategies to address them. This Practicum demonstrated these indicators of success.

- Transformational Practices – was a presentation my group completed early on in PQP Part 1. Although these were Peel School Board strategies they corresponded would work effectively within the GECDSB system as well. One of the components within *Leading the Instructional Practice* is for effective Principals to maintain ongoing knowledge of effective teaching pedagogy. Making use of this Peel initiative and adapting it for our schools and system allowed me to move my Inquiry Teams along and improve student achievement.

### Personal Professional Learning

My own Professional Learning has grown by leaps and bounds through this process. Starting within the classroom, I am now more familiar with the Assessment and Evaluation Process. As this process continued on through the semester, I found myself actively lesson planning around the principles of Growing Success specifically with Descriptive Feedback. The PQP course was essentially a Leadership training course and as such the Professional Learning for leadership was endless. I really benefitted from this course and they were the best AQ courses that I have taken. The impact on my approach to the practicum has been significant. The leadership required to complete the Inquiry Process has allowed me to plan, employ and reflect up on a variety of leadership strategies. The Professional Learning about the Collaborative Inquiry process has allowed me to plan ever increasingly important initiatives for the school and board level. These larger initiatives will have a larger impact on student achievement and teacher skill development. Finally this practicum has benefited

my Professional Learning by stimulating a drive for the future. As I plan for the future of my career, I would like to see myself in larger Positions of Responsibilities.

## Results and Recommendations

### Teaching Pedagogy

The results of this study can be classified into three areas of impact on the educational environment within Canadian History classrooms. The first area of improvement focused on the teachers' understanding of the themes within the CHC2D curriculum. One of the main principles followed in the development of the Learning Goals and Success Criteria was to create the goal and criteria directly based on a curriculum expectation. As a result, Figure 2 demonstrates increased teacher reference to the curriculum during the Inquiry process. As a

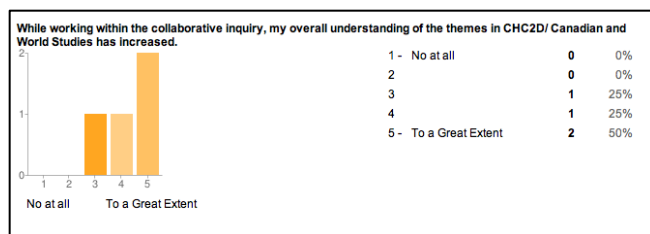


Figure 3

by-product of their increased curriculum use, the overall understanding of the overall themes within the curriculum showed a corresponding improvement,

Figure 3. The long-term impact on

teaching practice will enhance teaching pedagogy for years to come with a direct benefit on student achievement.

### Resource Development

An expected outcome of this Inquiry Process was the development of Learning Goals and Success Criteria for the major units within the CHC2D curriculum. These resources focus on identifying the larger themes of each unit, Appendix A. An example of this can be found within the World War Two unit, under the topic of *Propaganda Use*. The Learning Goal is directly developed from the curriculum documents, while the Success Criteria from individual

expectations. The theme of Propaganda Use is a very large one throughout the war. Teachers often identify negative propaganda use from both sides of the conflict along with positive propaganda examples. This theme is examined within multiple lessons throughout the unit.

Providing this style of Learning Goal and Success Criteria use explicitly reveals to students the

intended Learning expectation from the lesson

topic in student friendly language. Additionally, the

Success Criteria reveals to students where within

the unit, information can be drawn from to

effectively demonstrate their understanding of the

curriculum.

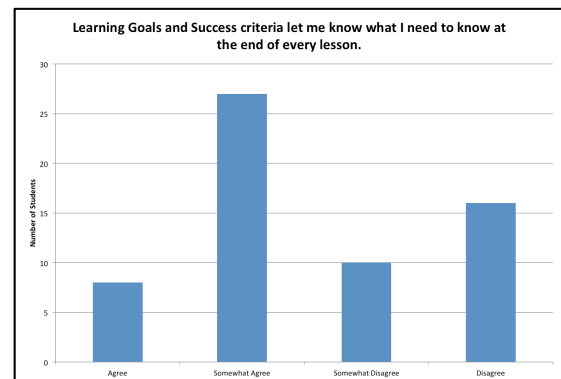


Figure 4

### Student Achievement

Learning Goals and Success Criteria offer students

and increased ability to address the key aspects of

learning within their work products. The results

from our study show mixed results when students

were asked about the role played within the learning

process. Strong results were recorded in student

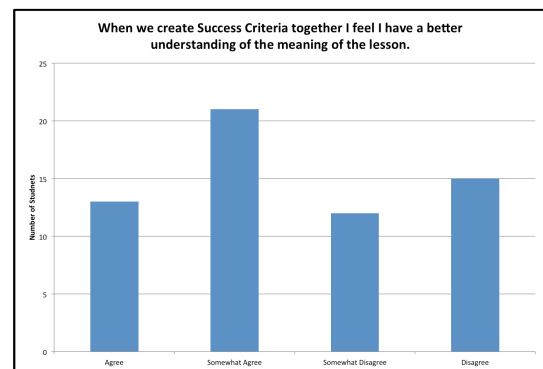


Figure 5

understanding of lesson topics and themes, Figure 4. Often history lessons can revolve around specific events, while student understanding of the connection to other events can be lost in the

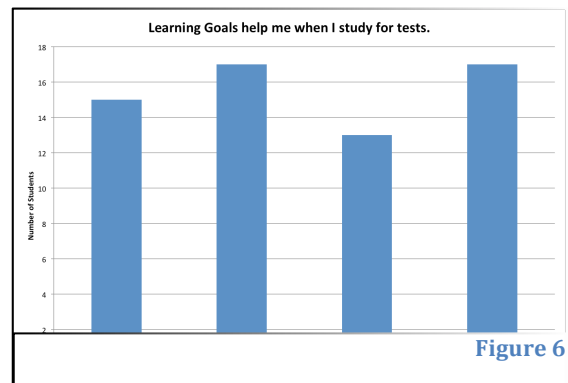
learning process. Additionally, when co-constructed, the development of the Success Criteria

can aid student understanding of the lesson and/or assessment (Figure 5). Increased teacher

Professional Development and use within a class will continue to improve student and teacher

understanding in this area. Finally, students reported the use of Learning Goals and Success

Criteria were an effective technique for studying (Figure 6). Although the results were equal through the available response categories; not all study techniques are effective for all students. The results indicate 50% of the students' found Learning Goals and Success Criteria enhanced their preparation for tests.



### Recommendations

Consistently through the process from both Inquiry Teams, teachers expressed their number one challenge encountered was with the available time to collaborate with colleagues (Exit Survey, 2012) (Molnar, 2012) (Pula, 2012) (Sousa, 2011) (Biggley, 2012). As an initial reaction, I am happy to hear that all teachers found value in the Collaborative Inquiry Process under my leadership. Moving forward, additional time needs to be set aside for collaborative discussion. Teachers benefit most if the Professional Development time is during their regular day, however given financial constraints release time is not always possible. More time should be set aside to meet following school. In the future, I would even suggest meeting at a centralized school or a local restaurant to continue the professional dialogue.

In an effort to expand the impact on student achievement, the use of Learning Goals and Success Criteria should be expanded to all Grade 9 and 10 teachers through the use of Collaborative Inquiries. This would allow teachers to work with colleagues in a similar discipline and within their school. Students therefore, would experience Learning Goals and

Success Criteria in all subjects (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010). This would address the challenges expressed by students who found benefit with the Learning Goals and Success Criteria in the second units where they were utilized after they experienced how these strategies would appear on assessments. Additionally, the Descriptive Feedback process needs to be expanded as teachers reported this having a large impact on student achievement. The goal of the process should be for students to engage in self and peer feedback naturally without teacher direction.

## Observations

### Vice Principal Reflection

Observing the Vice Principal's at BRDHS while they handled a variety of situations was a unique glimpse into the job duties of a VP. Their balancing of empathy and stern judgment of students intrigued me as their work required the pendulum to swing within a few short minutes of each other based upon the students' situation. Their ability to develop relationships with students, within a small window of time is very important to their ability to do the job. Although my time with them was limited, I got to learn more about addressing the "complete child" than I see in my classroom on a daily basis. This experience reminded me of my first teaching year at the local Alternative School where I came to understand the type of home life many students have and how much "baggage" they carry around.

Negotiating all of these factors plays a role in how the VPs handle many situations and converse with a variety of people (students, teachers, parents, board provided resources, community experts, etc.) throughout their day.

### Prom

Prom is a special event for students and even the VPs. It's an opportunity to see students with whom they have had discipline problems in a different setting. For many of these students their problems do not go away at this one event. I found the VPs utilizing the relationships built up over the course of years to control student behaviour and minimize potential student conflicts. Prom presented some unique challenges as some of the problem students were from outside of the school or outside conflicts found their way into the event. Additionally the VPs were consistently dealing with student "drama" common to high school functions. All in all, 95% of their night was consumed by 5% of the students. Their mitigation of potential conflicts ensured that the majority of the students enjoyed the evening. Overall, my time with the VPs and as a Teacher in Charge has only strengthened my desire to move in the direction of School Administration in the future.

### Reflective Journal

#### Personal Growth

Areas for personal growth include Relationship building with colleagues within my school and throughout the board. The opportunity to work within our department and align teaching practice has been a wonderful experience. Utilizing the skills and techniques from the PQP courses including many of the academic pieces by Leithwood, allowed me to effectively set up a Collaborative Inquiry Team with objectives and direction in mind. Additionally as the process unfolded, the newly acquired skills allowed me to identify areas for attention and new directions for growth based upon feedback received from the teams.

Working with the board level team, taught me about the benefits to be gained by expanding my collaboration. I came to understand about the isolation that can develop within schools between teachers, without a continual input of teachers new to the school, stagnation could result within the department. Colleagues at the board level showed me new ways to approach old topics and teaching strategies.

### Difficulties Experienced

The largest difficulty experienced during this process was the misunderstandings surrounding the use of Learning Goals and Success Criteria (Stewart, 2011). Although the GECDSB Program Department had provided Professional Development to all secondary teachers in the previous month, their own staff could not come to a consensus on how these teaching strategies were to be used consistently. Therefore, in discussion with the board level collaborative inquiry team, we were able to setting upon the effective use of Learning Goals and Success Criteria within History classrooms. These strategies were then translated for use within the Canadian and World Studies Department at BRDHS.

Smaller difficulties were experienced within staff motivation to take on the process of implementation in their classrooms. These staff members (2) would attend the PD provided by myself without implementation in their classrooms. Through increased attention by myself, such as “check-ins”, one of the two staff members began implementing the strategies. As the semester wore on, the challenges with the other staff member were revealed to be the result of union seniority issues unrelated to the goals of the collaborative



inquiry. In consultation with my principal we decided to move on without her participation in the process.

### Successes Experienced

The most useful success experienced during this process was the development of standardized Learning Goals and Success Criteria for the CHC2D course based upon the curriculum expectations. Appendix G contains a demonstration of the type of resources developed during the GECDSB Collaborative Inquiry. These Learning Goals and Success Criteria were rolled out to all schools within the GECDSB for use by history teachers in the upcoming year. Occasionally, History courses are used to “fill up” teacher timetables resulting in teachers teaching the course without previous university training. These resources will allow teachers to understand the larger “themes” found within the various units and an increased understanding of the curriculum.

## Leadership Practicum Log

### Board Level Collaborative Inquiry

**Meeting One (05 October 2011) (½ Day Release Time)** – During this meeting we all attended a guided Professional development session run by the program department of the GECDSB. This session allowed the team to develop our research question and discuss our goals for the upcoming year. A decision was made to develop resources for the CHC2D course rather than the CHC2P course since the 2D course is taught the most often. Teachers

for the CHC2P course/ curriculum would then modify resources. This half-day session will be further developed in one week.

**Meeting Two (13 October 2011) (½ Day Release Time)** – This session again was lead by the GECDSB Program Department. It allowed us to discuss the first steps in resource development, additional PD the group members should engage in the upcoming weeks. Time was spent on understanding the types of data that could be drawn from at the end of this project. Team members will work in the coming weeks to develop some learning goals in their classrooms. A timetable was established for development of Learning Goals and Success Criteria for the World War Two unit within the CHC2D program.

**Meeting Three (15 November 2011) (½ Day Release Time)** – This was our first session without the Program Department although we had the Canadian and World Studies Program Consultant within our group. The session was productive. Over the previous few weeks, resources for the WW2 unit were developed and shared over email between the group members. We took the opportunity to discuss “What classroom implementation would look like”. Agreement to begin implementation with the WW2 unit and continue development of resources for the other units. Appendix H contains some of the resources culled by me for use during this session *Secrets to Success Criteria*.

**Meeting Four (19 December 2011) (½ Day Release Time)** – In our last meeting of the semester all of the resources for the CHC2D course were brought together. Group members would roll out the resources in a full course beginning in semester two (February 2012).

Time was spent discussing how the implementation of the WW2 resources went in each of our classes. Teacher observations and critiques were incorporated in the refinement of the WW2 resources and the remaining resources.

**Meeting Five (11 April 2011) (½ Day Release Time)** – Group members shared their experiences with implementation of Learning Goals and Success Criteria in their courses. Teacher observations were shared on the topics of Teacher reflections, student usefulness, impacts on student achievement and future use. Tasks were assigned for the group members to complete in preparation of the final report to the board.

**Meeting Six (9 May 2011) (½ Day Release Time)** – The group reconvened with the larger board program team to share the Collaborative Inquiry with other teams from the board.

### **Belle River District High School Collaborative Inquiry**

**Meeting One (December 2011)** – Meeting with Bill Toews about the direction of the BRDHS Collaborative Inquiry. Semester Two was selected as the start date for the Team as I was required to wait for PQP Part Two to begin.

**Meeting Two (13 February 2012) (½ Day Release Time)** – Introductory meeting with the department to establish the goals and expectations for the group this semester. Time was spent addressing how learning goals and success criteria could be implemented in each classroom. Teachers paired off with each other by subject discipline to develop learning goals utilizing the curriculum documents. Appendix I and J contain a copy of the PowerPoint

Agenda utilized during this meeting along with resources utilized for developing Learning Goals.

**In Between Meetings** – Various weekly check-ins were completed by me to see how the implementation process was going. These meetings allowed me to address any questions that had developed over the previous week. These sessions would last from only a few minutes through detailed instructional conversations.

**Meeting Three (17 April 2012) (½ Day Release Time)** – based upon the progress over the previous weeks, this meeting focused on rolling out another key component of the Growing Success document focusing on the forms of Descriptive Feedback. We looked at methods to incorporate descriptive feedback, Learning Goals and Success Criteria within an assessment rich activity for students. At the end of the session teachers broke away with plans to implement a complete assignment within their class. Appendix J contains a copy of the PowerPoint presentation utilized during this meeting.

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