

**Ottawa Region- Managing Information for Student Achievement
(MISA)
Collaborative Inquiry
2016-17 Proposal**

**HOW DO WE KNOW WE ARE CLOSING THE GAP?
PUTTING THE EVIDENCE INTO ACTION**

The Ottawa Region MISA Professional Network Centre (PNC) will be supporting inquiries in utilizing evidence-informed decision-making (EIDM). Your inquiry will align with the Ministry 'Achieving Excellence' document, local Capacity Building Priorities and/or Board Improvement and School Improvement plans.

Focusing on building teacher and administrator capacity, the inquiries will provide release time for collaboration to study strategies that bring EIDM to the classroom, change practice and most importantly close the gap in student achievement for those subgroups identified by the Ministry. Up to \$10,000 will be provided for inquiries that engage in activities directed at using evidence-based decision-making to improve student achievement. Funds may be used for release and related meeting costs but not capital expenditures.

Inquiry teams will attend a regional session in October 2016, that will allow teams to outline new tasks, and find others with similar themes, as well as learn more about the collaborative inquiry process, data literacy and using evidence to improve student achievement. These teams will be school based so both teachers and administrators are invited to attend.

Inquiries will be shared regionally with other school boards at a May 15, 16, 2017 Symposium.

Director's Signature _____

Board Contact /Project Liaison Name and Email address:

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Please e mail this Proposal, with a scanned page of your Director's signature, to David Fox, MISA PNC Coordinator. Funds will be allocated very soon. Further information is found at the end of this Proposal Form.

A. INQUIRY FOCUS:

Supporting the development of reading in Primary and Junior classes.

B. INQUIRY ALIGNMENT

Which Ministry area from Achieving Excellence does your inquiry address?

- By focusing on developing the reading skills of struggling students we are committed to “ensure that students achieve at high levels, acquire valuable skills and become engaged members of their communities”, as identified in the Ministry goal of **Achieving Excellence**.
- This inquiry also supports the Ministry goal of **Ensuring Equity** by focusing on narrowing the gap between current reading levels and grade expectations of struggling readers.

What aspect(s) of your School Improvement Plan and/or Local MISA Capacity Building Priority does your inquiry address?

This inquiry supports the following Board goal: *Using a comprehensive approach, student achievement will improve in reading and writing through a sustained and deliberate focus on the development of skills necessary for critical thinking.*

C. INQUIRY QUESTIONS

What problem of practice or student learning need is the basis for your inquiry? What questions are guiding your inquiry?

Many of our students are having difficulty with reading and with pre-reading skills. Teachers have observed that language comprehension is often stronger than decoding, letter/sound recognition and sound skills.

Describe how MISA support might assist you in assessing the impact of your inquiry work.

MISA support will allow us to work collaboratively to develop our understanding of reading development, our skill in the use of diagnostic tools, and how to identify and implement appropriate instructional strategies for the specific student need.

D. INQUIRY DESCRIPTION:

Please describe your inquiry including:

- **the initial data/evidence that supports your inquiry focus**
- **the data/evidence that you intend to collect to gauge the ongoing impact of your work**
- **those who will participate in the work**
- **intended activities, products/deliverables**

This inquiry will focus on narrowing the achievement gap for students who are more than one grade below in reading or those that have low sound skills and phonic knowledge.

Teacher observations indicate many students in the early grades struggling with reading and that students behind in reading often struggle with sound skills and phonic knowledge more than language comprehension. In EQAO grade 3 reading assessments the 3-year average proportion of students at provincial standard was 51% compared to 62% for the board and 72% for the province indicating that many students at these schools continue to struggle up to grade 3. On the EQAO student survey 51% of grade 3 students in these schools felt that they were good at reading compared to 64% for the board indicating many students in these schools are not confident in reading up to grade 3.

Seven Classroom and Student Success Teachers from three schools will work collaboratively with the Elementary Literacy consultant. Participants will gather assessment information identify target students. Teachers will then use diagnostic assessments (phonics screener) to identify specific student needs and plan appropriate next steps for their instruction.

The intended outcomes for this inquiry are:

- Students will develop better sound skills and phonic knowledge;
- Students will narrow the gap between their current reading level and grade expectations;
- Teachers will become more precise and intentional in their reading instruction for struggling readers.

We also hope that students will become more confident as readers and that they will be able to participate in more class activities independently.

How are you intending to collect evidence of student growth? (e.g., journals, portfolios, observation, interviews, student voice)

- A diagnostic assessment of phonic knowledge will be used to track growth in students' sound skills.
- Teachers will assess student achievement of reading expectations from the curriculum.
- Students will be interviewed about their feelings about reading.
- Teachers will record observations of growth in student reading skills and reading confidence.
- Teachers will complete reflections about their learning and changes to their practice.

E. BUDGET PLAN

The main focus of the budget should be on teacher face-to-face collaboration. Budget items may include teacher release, along with some **non-capital materials** (not hardware) and support in developing resources and the production of a final report to support the collaboration. (Please provide itemized costs for the inquiry---funding will not exceed \$10,000).

Item	Purpose	Cost
Release Time	7 teachers x 5 days release time	\$9600.00
Resources and Materials	Materials for meetings and final presentation	\$100.00
Travel	Mileage for travel to central sessions.	\$100.00
Meeting Costs	Lunch and work materials for full day learning sessions	\$200.00
	Total	\$10 000.00

F. INQUIRY REPORTING

An interim report (progress check) will be prepared by the Researcher by January 19th, 2017.

A final financial statement is due no later than Wednesday, May 31st 2017.

The final report is due no later than Friday, June 30th 2017.

Actual Outcomes and Measures (What changes/achievements resulted from the outputs? What data/evidence supports these results?)

The knowledge of phonetic code improved for all participating students. The average score on the Phonics Inventory increased from 22 to 45.5 and the 75 percentile score improved from 46 to 79.75. The impact of targeted work on knowledge of phonetic code on reading scores was evident in teacher observations as well as in improved scores on diagnostic tests. At the beginning of the project 13 of 15 grade 1 students in the target group were not able to be scored using standard diagnostic test. The mean reading level on the first diagnostic was 0.6. By the end of April, 12 of those students became readers and 10 were now in the range considered to be at grade level for grade 1 students. The mean reading level at the end of April was 7.7.

Similarly, in the grade 4 class, the 7 target students all started well below grade level (mean reading level 12.1) and 5 of 7 improved to grade level and 1 improved to above grade level (mean reading level 16.4)

The teachers reported that they were now better able to provide precise, targeted instruction to students in whole class, small group, and in one to one instructional

settings. They also reported that they were better able to see the impact they were having on students.

An additional benefit observed by teachers was a positive impact on writing. Many students that refused to write or were limited to one or two words could now write sentences independently.

Did your inquiry change from your original plan? If so, how?

The goals and strategies did not change significantly throughout the project. We made an adjustment in the structure by adding two school visits with the Literacy Consultant to provide support for in class instruction. This personal attention and on-site support made a big difference to the growth of participants.

Lessons Learned/Promising Practices (What lessons learned/promising practices have emerged and can be shared?)

Targeted instruction on the knowledge and application of phonetic code can have a big impact on the growth of struggling readers.

Having precise assessment about a student's phonetic knowledge allowed teachers to provide meaningful personal instruction for students with poor attendance.

Building knowledge of phonetic code has benefits to both reading and writing.

Sharing Results

As well as providing the preceding final report, inquiry teams will present at the Ottawa Region PNC May 15th and 16th, 2017, Symposium. A template for the interim check-up and the final sharing, as well as guidelines for the Symposium presentation will be provided at the regional Orientation Day.

G. SUBMISSION

Please send this Proposal, signed by your Director, to David Fox, MISA PNC Coordinator by e mail cedarlanesolutions@bell.net as soon as possible and no later than Monday, November 7th, 2016.