Sweet’s Corners Elementary School
Presentation to the Board of Trustees

THE LEARNING CYCLE

- Examine evidence and determine areas of need (PLAN)
- Teach, monitor, and support student learning (ACT)
- Share observations and analyze results to determine next steps (REFLECT)
- Gather evidence of student learning (OBSERVE)

Communication | Resources | Educational Programs | Wellness

Sweet’s Corners Elementary School
2016 March 02
Sweet’s Corners Elementary School opened its doors to the Lyndhurst community 44 years ago in 1972 and is currently a JK to Grade 6 place of learning with 119 students.

We have a staff of 17 dedicated professionals and seven vibrant classrooms (JK/SK, 1, 1/2, 3, 4, 5/6, Core French).

We offer academic programs that honour Upper Canada’s model of inclusion and focus on the needs of the individual learner, as guided by our vision and mission statement.
Slide 2: The Story of Our Learners as Readers, Writers and Problem-Solvers

Sweet’s Corners Elementary School - EQAO Year by Year View

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Legend
% students at levels
3/4 Reading
Writing
Math
N/R = No Results

Range
90 – 100%
75 - 89%
50-74%
Under 50%

Needs:
Reading: inferencing
Writing: organization
Math: estimation, math vocabulary/talk, sharing of solutions to authentic, open-ended problems, higher-level thinking skills

M = Measurement
N = Number Sense & Numeration
Our school team is in the act stage of the Learning Cycle in the areas of literacy and mathematics, and it’s important to note that the purpose of these meetings is to establish change that applies to daily instructional practices.

**Our Theory of Action for Literacy (from our SIPSA) is:**
If learning goals and success criteria (what success looks like) are co-created with students prior to learning and assessment is used to inform instruction, then there will be an increase in student achievement in writing, including writing in other subject areas.

**To achieve our first literacy goal,** by the end of the first Learning Team block, students will advance by at least one increment within an achievement level (i.e., from 2 to 2+) in their organization of a written piece.

**To inform our theory of action and decisions,** as a learning team, we are improving our competence to analyze data of student work over relatively long periods of time and to assess current, student work in real time to guide daily instruction. We are also building on high-yield strategies of assessment and instruction that are based on reliable research and our own qualitative and quantitative observations. We are determining explicit teaching strategies, searching for appropriate resources, co-creating success criteria with students, which is helping students understand what they need to do to be successful, providing exemplars and anchors, and including our Learning Resource Coach and Learning Partner in the planning and implementation stages.

**In response to our theory of action, we are observing** that students produce higher quality written work when they have a better understanding of the purpose of their learning and the criteria for success. Improved understanding of these essentials is achieved when the learning is authentic and when the success criteria are co-created by students and teachers. These learning conditions are crucial to improved student engagement.
Our Theory of Action for Mathematics (from our SIPSA) is:
If learning goals and success criteria are co-created with students prior to learning and assessment is used to inform instruction, then there will be an increase in student achievement in math problem solving.

To achieve our first literacy goal, by the end of the first Learning Team block, students will advance by at least one increment within an achievement level (i.e., from 2 to 2+) in their use of estimation skills, sense of number, and in determining reasonableness of answers in math problem-solving.

To inform our theory of action and decisions, as a learning team, we are conducting assessments of student work to determine strengths and weaknesses of individual students and grouping students according to needs. As explained in the previous slide for literacy, we are determining explicit teaching strategies, appropriate resources, co-creating success criteria with students, providing exemplars and anchors, and including our Learning Resource Coach and Learning Partner in the planning and implementation stages.

In response to our theory of action, we are observing that students who struggle with multi-step math problems lack either the skills or the commitment to critically examine their work and make necessary adjustments in their efforts through the problem-solving process to improve their performance. A clear awareness of learning goals and success criteria are fundamental steps to closing these achievement gaps.
Slide 5: Our Learning as a School Team

The Learning Cycle: Plan, Act, Observe, Reflect

Question: What is helping us to start, stop, continue, repurpose or abandon?

Insight: Albert Einstein’s quote:

*Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.*

Our Answer: The realization that we must accept doing some things differently to improve student achievement.

Question: What elements of CREW will help us get to the next step?

Answer: Good communication, appropriate resources and sound educational programs are not so much a mystery. We have demonstrated considerable control over those three considerations, but a desirable state of wellness is a very personal matter and can be stubbornly elusive for some. It is a prerequisite for all of our students and a high priority for those students who are struggling emotionally, socially or academically. For now at Sweet’s, all of us on staff are striving for innovation and precision with our instructional practices, and we are mindful of the need to, with open hearts, contribute thoughtfully to the wellness of our students, their families and to each other.