

## Final Report 2018 – 2019 PDIG# 18530

<b>Project Name</b>	PLC-Math Leadership Team
<b>Grant Type</b>	Professional Development
<b>Start Date</b>	September 4, 2018
<b>End Date:</b>	April 26 2019
<b>Project Manager</b>	<a href="mailto:dingmanm@edu.etsb.qc.ca">dingmanm@edu.etsb.qc.ca</a>
<b>Number of Substitution Days</b>	6 per teacher

### **Team Members (email)**

<a href="mailto:hendersond@edu.etsb.qc.ca">hendersond@edu.etsb.qc.ca</a>	6/6 days
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<a href="mailto:beaulnem@edu.etsb.qc.ca">beaulnem@edu.etsb.qc.ca</a>	6/6 days
Total Days	26/42

### **School Administrator**

[zarahc@etsb.qc.ca](mailto:zarahc@etsb.qc.ca)

### **Subject Area(s) of the Project Levels**

**Mathematics  
Kindergarten & Elementary C1 C2 C3**

Three Math Pathways were successfully completed for 61% of the students at Princess Elizabeth Elementary school during the 2018-2019 school year. This number is 39% lower than originally anticipated and a bitter reminder that a school's culture is not changed overnight. The good news is that the teachers and students who participated in the Pathways, from start to finish, are motivated, engaged and excited about the positive changes. Changes in planning, teaching, learning and assessment which took place have given rise to student growth in academic and also in areas like growth-mindset, stamina and perseverance. The participating teachers are eager and excited to tweak and continue to improve what is already working for the next school year. Students are asking "are we reshuffling today?" "Are we going to do another Pathway this year?" These are important and motivating signs of the beginning of real change. However, it remains clear and more important than ever, that this is not a one or two-year project. We have begun a systematic change in the way that we plan, teach, and provide resource to our students in order that all may be successful. The teachers who have seen the difference are not willing to go back to the way things were. This is a clear indication that, despite the setbacks and disengagement on the part of some teachers, the Professional Learning Community framework works and will only get better in time. The pathways are providing us the foundation to ensure success at high levels for all our students.

As the school year began, under new administration and with new staff members, it became clear to the Leadership team that some teachers were even less

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on board with the PLC than they were in June. The school schedule was restructured to ensure 1 hour of common teaching time would take place every day, in each cycle, for math. This would allow teachers more time to work in tandem during reshuffling and the pathways. The intention was to move away from viewing the students as “my students/your students” to a collective view of OUR students. The team had hoped that the new year would bring renewed energy and motivation, but this was not the case. In addition to this, two of the initial Leadership team members decided that their implication in the PLC leadership team was not as necessary as they originally thought, and therefore, they withdrew themselves from the Math PLC meetings and planning process. Despite this fact the leadership team moved forward with the planning, preparation and implementation of pathway 1.

Despite the Leadership Teams preparations and staff presentations, the first pathway began with more questions than answer and teachers were very apprehensive and resistant on moving forward, even with reassurance and support from the Leadership team. For the Leadership team, it was clear that we would make mistakes along the way and need to adjust and readjust. Even so, it seemed as though the cycle teachers wanted all the answers right away which caused some slow-down and some feelings of disengagement on their part and frustration on the part of the Leadership Team members. When a hick-up in scheduling or timing presented itself, the team was met with impatience and demands to fix the problems. Team work and a solution oriented mindset was not the norm.

In October, the leadership team’s six members and principal attended a Solution Tree All Things Assessment conference. This was a vital turning point. Going in, the team knew it was time to find answers or teachers would begin to disengage entirely from the PLC. Answers were indeed found at this conference and with the new knowledge gained the team went back to the school reinvigorated. What was not clear in September and even at the end of the 2016-2017 school year, was that our assessments were still reflective of our misconception of teaching the essential knowledges identified through aligned curriculum. We were simply trying to evaluate too many essential knowledges which meant too much time was spent assessing and not enough time was spent teaching and mastering what is actually essential. It became clear that we needed to do a few things successfully first in order to move forward successfully. Then we could continue to expand our teaching and student mastery of the essential knowledges in our aligned curriculum. We were trying to eat the elephant instead of taking the important first bite. When the team came back to the school, eager and excited to share the good news (less time assessing, more time teaching, simplified reshuffling and more chances of success or students) we were not met with the same enthusiasm. We were instead met with frustration, questions about the validity of all the work that had been done, unwillingness to make changes mid-way and beginning signs of teacher disengagement. In addition, the two members of the Leadership team withdrew themselves completely from the process. This enticed other teachers, those already on the fence, to become even less engaged.

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Regardless, the Leadership team and the teachers wanting and willing to continue carried on undeterred and unwilling to give up until we have given this process our very best efforts.

The Leadership Team reevaluated the list of essential knowledges and, with input from the cycle teachers, identified a priority list within the list. This would allow us to plan, teach and assess starting from the basic and moving towards the more complex in each pathway. In the future as students become more and more successful as our teaching becomes more and more specific to the target essential knowledge, we can then re-tweak the pre-mid-post assessments. In essence, the team gave themselves more work in the beginning but we also were able to see the big picture. So, the team tweaked every assessment that was created to lighten the teacher work load, this was a big concern to many teachers, and to create assessments that would better guide and summarize the learning taking place.

By the end of the first Pathway it became clear that a change needed to happen in order to proceed positively and effectively. Teachers on the fence were holding back those wanting to move forward and the negative atmosphere was turning an important process into something disheartening and potentially a waste of time. It was at this point the Leadership Team met to discuss if and how to move forward. The team then met with the principal and it was decided that teachers would be given the opportunity to withdraw from the process or remain active on a voluntary basis. Every teacher would still be accountable to the principal for changes in their planning, teaching and assessment. This was a big setback and a created a sense of failure for the Leadership team. The team decided, that it would be better to take a step back, work more closely and effectively with a few teachers over forced participation and negativity from disengaged teachers. The Leadership Team decided to persevere and let the data speak for itself.

Of the teachers still participating in the Cycle teams, with support from the Leadership team, three pathways were completed in this same manner. Tweaking the assessments, reshuffling based on those participating, discussing and planning together throughout the pathway to ensure that we were doing everything we could to create a learning environment where all students could achieve high levels of understanding.

Looking back, it seems there is a stigma attached to the Leadership Team. At Princess Elizabeth Elementary school there is a misguided conception that leadership is something negative. Those who are eager and motivated to change and challenge the status quo are seeking a position to dictate and decide for everyone what is best. When in fact, the leadership team is a group of teachers wanting to create change because they agree there is a problem or that something more can be done. A group of teachers dissatisfied with the status quo and seeking better avenues, through research and proven methods, to ensure real change in planning, teaching, assessment and intervention happens for all students.

### **Synthesis of Journal Entries**

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### DAY 1 September 10th

An initial meeting was held on September 4<sup>th</sup> during common planning time. The team welcomed Michele Beaulne who joined the team as a new teacher. The first meeting day began with a series of questions and a solution finding session. The staff had been coming to the Leadership team with questions as early as the first planning days. The leadership team found this positive and encouraging as it showed engagement and solution-oriented teachers-in-action. The team prepared documents and tools, and prepared a staff meeting presentation and schedule for the first pathway.

### DAY 2 November 27th

The team created a re-aligned plan for all pathways. Taking into account the information gathered at the conference. Creating from the aligned curriculum the essentials and ordering them in what we should be achieved first, second etc. The team created the first questionnaire, adjustments were made to all the assessments and the reshuffling tool. The data collected thus far was evaluated and discussed in an effort to identify how best to move forward.

### DAY 3 December 11th

During this meeting the team worked to analyze and look at the results that were collected. The comments of 9 out of 15 teachers who answered the survey were reviewed and discussed. There were positive and negative responses. It was clear from the responses and the discussion that took place, that we have come to a point in the first year of PLC at PEES in which proceeding as is, is no longer an option. This was a difficult meeting for the entire team. We reviewed results and assessments to prepare for the next pathway.

### DAY 4 February 28th

Some questions were raised by teacher and the team took time to review the QPAT norms and Memo from union. We are following all of the aspects of a PLC laid out by the QPAT. More data was analyzed and survey results were reviewed. Each time the team met we looked at where we were, where we needed to go, and how we could support our teachers and students.

### DAY 5 March 18th

The team created the questionnaire for pathway 3. Discussion took place and the team decided it would be important for all teacher to complete the survey. Time was also spent trying to find ways to create more resource time from the available resource time. The team also began to plan for better resource time distribution and time was spent looking at possible scheduling for RTI support in all subjects for the 2018-2019 school year.

### DAY 6 April 26th

The team reviewed the year with PLC process and Pathways. Data - Tables were created for each cycle to represent the growth, in each pathway, throughout the entire year. Changes to scheduling next year; Much discussion took place concerning this as

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many teacher changes across cycles will be implemented next year. RTI grouping discussions took place to begin the school year without delay. Discussion and planning took place to ensure that groups could be created to start right away in start in September 2020.

The project goals included a priority list for the essential knowledges, a clear picture of scheduling, a system for reshuffling students and interpreting the data collected from assessments, tools and resources to support their teaching during the reshuffling teaching time and a support system for when things got difficult. The initial goal was that all the staff, the students, and the community work together to attain success for ALL our students through the PLC framework. This would require a change in the school culture and create a foundation for a cohesive and collective school team. Every effort was made to maintain these goals. However, there came a time when the Leadership Team made the very hard choice to give each teacher the choice to continue or to withdraw from the pathways. The fundamentalists were simply too much to support and carry along through the process this year. Once this was done and the remaining teachers regrouped and realigned themselves the pathways, planning, teaching, reshuffling and assessments continued on smoothly. The surveys were not completed by all teachers but proved to be an effective way to collect the information and a valuable tool moving forward even into next year.

As the Leadership team reflected on the goals and achievements of the year, one thing was very clear; perseverance is key! The year presented many challenges that were not completely anticipated but the perseverance and motivation to continue from the Leadership team and the active participant teachers, made the hard work well worth it. When teachers spoke to their students about the PLC and the Pathways their responses clearly indicated that they too felt a sense of success.

Below are links to the data for cycle one, two and three collected and used throughout the three pathways. In addition, tables have been created to clearly show the student growth over the year. The data collected will also serve to craft initial groupings for RTI and resource at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year.

### Cycle One Data

[PDIG18530/Pathway 1 Cycle 1 Growth Data.pdf](#)

[PDIG18530/Pathway 2 Cycle 1 Grade 1 Growth Data .pdf](#)

[PDIG18530/Pathway 3 Cycle 1 Grade 1 Growth Data.pdf](#)

### Cycle Two Data

[PDIG18530/Pathway 1 Cycle 2 Growth Data.pdf](#)

[PDIG18530/Pathway 2 Cycle 2 Growth Data.pdf](#)

[PDIG18530/Pathway 3 Cycle 2 Growth Data.pdf](#)

### Cycle Three Data

[PDIG18530/Pathway 1 Cycle 3 Growth Data.pdf](#)

[PDIG18530/Pathway 2 Cycle 3 Growth Data.pdf](#)

[PDIG18530/Pathway 3 Cycle 3 Growth Data.pdf](#)

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Below is a link to the survey results collected and used throughout the three pathways.  
[\*\*PDIG18530/PDIG18530 Questionnaire Responses.xlsx\*\*](#)

The Leadership Team is convinced that the work done this year was a vital first step in creating real change within our school. Over the next years we will continue to track our progress in planning, teaching and assessing. We are working to create concrete, sharable tools, assessments, data gathering methods for assessment and reshuffling that can be shared with teacher teams and schools that are not yet using the PLC and Pathways.

We have truly seen the benefits of working together as a teaching team. There is so much more important work to be done! Teacher teams need to work to achieve so much more than simply activities, field trips and fundraisers. Student success is at the heart of what we do at Princess Elizabeth Elementary school. We are excited to continue and to share our path to teacher and student success. Planning for the 2019-2020 school year is already taking place and this is a sign that teachers are passionate, motivated and have come to see and appreciate the benefit of the PLC model and the pathways.