

# **PDIG Project: The Preschool Program: A Deeper Look (Kindergarten Cycle Curriculum Alignment)**

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*1. Project Description Describe/show to what degree the project was carried out as planned. Include what went well and what proved to be a challenge. Include a synthesis of your journal entries.*

The primary goal of our PDIG project was to have dedicated time to work collaboratively as a team of preschool teachers, consultants and professionals in order to develop a common understanding and implementation of the new preschool program. The PDIG allowed us to align the program from K4 to K5 and ensure the students are ready for grade 1, all while respecting developmentally appropriate expectations, strategies and activities.

The primary focus of our PDIG had been to focus on developing a deeper understanding of the new Preschool Cycle Program, however, after delving into our project the team agreed that focusing on the three orientations in support of the Preschool Cycle Program was the best way to centre our project and build supporting resources.

We feel that the project was carried out as planned and that we met the objective that the project would increase teacher understanding of the preschool program. All of the teachers involved walked away with ready-to-use resources and documents to support their teaching practices and program implementation. The most beneficial aspect of this project was the opportunity to carry out in depth conversations regarding topics that we face everyday in our classrooms. We feel that the documents that we created will help create consistency within our preschool cycle, and we hope that by sharing these documents we can create greater consistency within our board. One challenge that we faced was time constraint. Given the different roles and experience of the members involved and the rich discussions that we engaged in, even with the release time we feel that we used a lot of personal time to compile and

complete the documents and resources. We also feel that some documents are not as complete as we would like them to be but these are documents that we can continue to add and build to as we move forward.

### **Journal Entries Synthesis**

Over a series of meetings, The kindergarten cycle teachers and members of the PDIG met at St. Francis Elementary School. It was agreed that this PDIG would be a wonderful opportunity for members to take a deeper look and gain a thorough understanding of the new preschool program, consolidate learning of developmentally appropriate expectations and to share knowledge with others in the Preschool sector. Once the common vision for the project was well established, members discussed goals and formatting ideas for how to best organize the information as the team sifted through the preschool program documents. A graphic organizer was created to help team members to reflect upon and record insight, clarify understanding of terminology, share best practices and provide teachable opportunities.

Our next step was to create a Pacing Guide that outlined essentials for teaching K4 and K5. Our goal was to make it easy to understand for new teachers and well organized so the information is specific and provides a strong overview. Once the common vision for the Pacing Guide was established, we were able to follow through with this aspect of the project. The overview gives us a good idea on what to teach and includes all the competencies in our teaching. It is also easy to refer to a specific section of the Program.

From here we broke into teams to begin developing specific resources for the different components of our project. Our focuses were on: learning and teaching essentials, developmental grid of observable behaviours, and reference guides relating to literacy, numeracy, social emotional learning and motor development. Our discussion led to classroom organization and how to best create a tool to support inclusive learning. It was decided to create a specific piece for Inclusion. Our final steps were setting up the final project document and linking documents, finalizing the developmental continuums and grids, organizing the pacing guide and working through chronologically and

formatting the curriculum maps by theme. As this is a living and growing project we plan to continue to add and build to this as if it were our “preschool toolbox”.

*2. Project Goals Describe/show to what degree the goals of the approved project were met. If the goals were only partially met or not met at all, describe the reasons for this.*

Our overall project goals were:

- All teachers will have a deeper understanding of the expected outcome of each competency.
- All teachers will have documents and resources to support their teaching.

With a focus on:

- the play-based approach to ensure healthy development
  - Joyful Literacy Interventions
  - TQE Math Tasks
  - Social Emotional Learning
  - Universal Design for Learning
  - Differentiated Instruction
  - Attachment-based developmental approach - Dr. Neufeld, Hannah Beach and Deborah McNamara
- All teachers will have access to the learning and teaching essentials.
  - All teachers will have access to a pacing guide and tools for assessing progress in their teaching and learning.
  - All teachers will have opportunities to fully identify, understand, and incorporate activities to suit all developmental levels/needs.
  - A questionnaire will be provided to all preschool teachers within the ETSB at the beginning of the PDIG to identify questions or needs surrounding the new Preschool Program. Time and attention will be given to this questionnaire and a follow-up will be provided to support their teaching and learning.

Over the series of sessions the team worked to meet the approved goals. Through rich discussion and shared resources we developed a greater understanding of the new Preschool Program. We were able to create and

compile documents supporting and relating to the goals of our project. We feel we successfully met our goals, however, as lifelong learners we are excited to continue to grow and develop our best practices and continue to add to these documents on a regular basis.

*3. Project Outcomes Describe/show the gains that the participating teachers achieved through this project.*

The ultimate gain from this project was the time to engage in rich discussion with colleagues, consultants and professionals from our school board. The teachers involved completed the sessions with a thorough understanding of the competencies of a developmental curriculum, and walked away with practical tools to use in the classroom.

*4. Reinvestment*

*Clearly describes how the resources created and/or the learning achieved by the participants can be of benefit to the educational community at large. Make sure you include these resources with your report. If applicable, comment on whether or not this project should be carried out by other teams.*

Within our school community, we have shared the results with our cycle one teachers so that they are aware of the expected foundations of the students entering their class.

Through working closely with our preschool consultant and professionals we will be able to collaborate and share the resulting curriculum alignment and pacing guide to all of the preschool teachers and principals within the board. Our Schools Transition Agent/Community Development Agent gained an understanding of the program and is now able to better provide services to match the needs of our students. She is also able to share this information with community partners during workshops and meetings they attend together. Included is a pdf with our final project and affiliated links.