George Street Middle School

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

2016-2017

At George Street Middle School, we believe that all students can learn and we will work to help them achieve high standards of learning.

We are committed to do what it takes for our students to become responsible and resourceful life-long learners.

Student Achievement for All

Within an Inclusive Setting

2016-2017

Goal 1: By June 2017 we will have measured improvement in all curricular areas compared to pre data collected in fall 2016

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Goal 2: By June 2017, we will see a 5% improvement in student engagement as measured by TTFM student perception survey. During the Fall of 2016 we will determine which data points we want to focus as related to student engagement report (Dec. 2015)
Currently most indicators are above Canadian norms.

Establishing clear goals for student learning has a measurable impact on student achievement.

Marzano 2003

Goal 1 By June 2017 we will have measured improvement in the following areas compared to pre data collected in fall 2016:

- a 10% improvement in student achievement in Cardio – Strength – Flexibility as part of our Physical Education fitness tests.

- 80% of targeted students will increase their reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension and be at an appropriate reading level (based on provincial reading guidelines) for our FILA classes.

- 80% of students will score a 3 or higher on the ''Me and My World'' conversation warm-up questions in our Post Intensive French Class

- more (to be determined) students will be able to think critically about non-fiction writing in our social studies classes.

- 85% of our students will achieve a level 3 or higher in scientific literacy.

- 60% of a cross-section of students in PRA (Technology, Art, Music or Health) will be able to identify/explain three curriculum outcomes acheived

- at least 85% of our students reaching grade level achievement in skills using fractions

- 85% of students will have a 3 or 4 on question 2 (main idea/supporting details) on the Spring OCA.

Complete plans found in Appendix   **Admin and teaching teams will monitor progress**

Indicators of Success	Strategies/Actions	Monitoring	
• School wide time set aside to create and measure success. • Content teachers using data to measure success. • Teachers are using current research to improve instruction. • Analyze the results of various assessments and group into appropriate interventions offered.	• Use Spark, Intervention blocks, Teacher PD Days, and release time to create measure and assess for success • Work with staff on ways to collect data –share 'best pratices' on data collecting • Ensure time is allotted to have all subject areas reading and sharing at least one area of change. • Intervention plan created and submitted to help students with non-success.	• **Sept. – Nov. 2016 Teams to plan and establish goal and pre-data sets** • **Admin to work with staff to align professional Goals with subject goals** • **January –Feb. 2017 Each team will update goal and data** • **April 2017 Tracking time** • **June 2016 Final reports of success**	

Goal 2: By June 2017, we will see a 5% improvement in student engagement as measured by TTFM student perception survey. During the Fall of 2016 we will determine which data points we want to focus on from the student engagement report (Dec. 2015)

Currently most indicators are above Canadian norms. Leadership teams (TALLet al) will take responsibility

Indicators of Success	Strategies/Actions – what will we change in our practice to achieve our goals		Monitoring – Example: Team minutes – Data Pre and Post	
Students will Be involved and engaged at GSMS – Both through extra-curricular activities and within class lessons.	**We will** - Investigate a way to identify quickly the students who are disengaged. - Promote ways at each team meeting to connect with the students		- **Team meeting minutes** - **TTFM data to track year to year trends**	
Be able to articulate their learning targets and identify next steps.	- Work on building higher student and teacher efficacy for assessment capable learners		- **Admin to work with staff on Hattie/Davis research on Assessment capable learners.**	
Staff will: Visit each other's classroom and share ways they have engaging lessons	- Learn to visit each other's class using a walk-through model 'Observe N'Learn' and a rubric to create discussion and share ideas - Observe each other teach and learn from each other how to engage students		- **TALL and admin to work and provide right conditions for observations**	
Learn as a staff about and apply growth mindset strategies	- Do a book study and share of growth mindset strategies		- **Grade 7 book study data** - **Staff sharing at meetings**	

SIP Goals data analysis 2015-2016

PRA SIP Goal

60% of a cross-section of students in PRA (Technology, Art, Music or Health) will be able to identify/explain three curriculum outcomes

Total Average Pre-data (Rotation 1) The following percentage of students in a sample class per grade level were able to identify 3 curriculum outcomes they had met in their current PRA class and explain, in their own words, how they had met that outcome during class time:

Grade 6 - 51%
Grade 7 – 42%
Grade 8 – 52%

Total Average Post-data (Rotation 3) The following percentage of students in a sample class per grade level were able to identify 3 curriculum outcomes they had met in their current PRA class and explain, in their own words, how they had met that outcome during class time:

Grade 6 - 45%
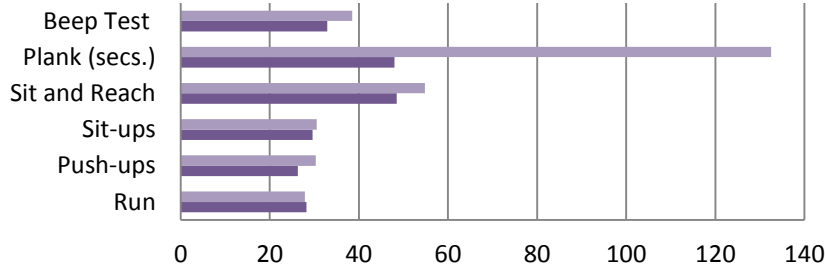Grade 7 –53%
Grade 8 – 46%

It was determined by the team that the vast majority of students do value and understand how the PRA subjects relate to their overall education- yet they have difficulty articulating it in the short time frame we have each class.

PE SIP Goal

a 10% improvement in student achievement in Cardio – Strength – Flexibility as part of our Physical Education fitness tests. Note second Beep Test Taken in Winter not Spring
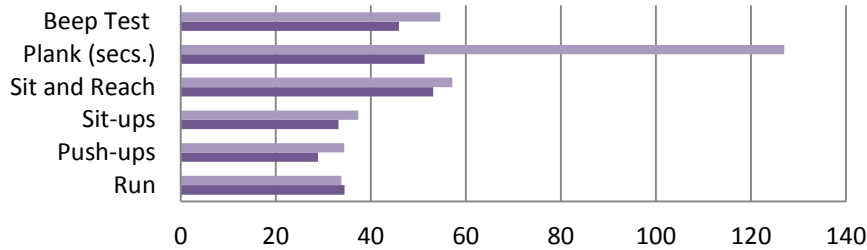
Overall data (found on next page) show improvements between 2% and 17% except in the run – overall drop by 2.3%.
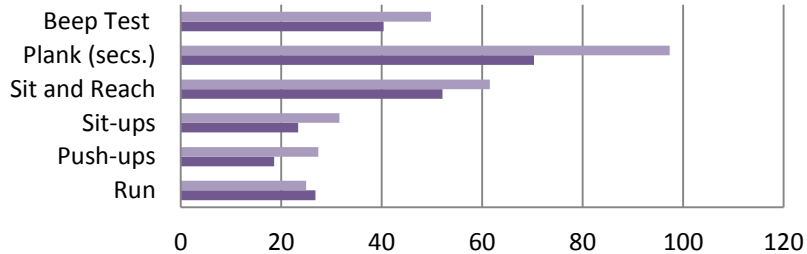
Fitness Data - Grade 6

	Run	Push-ups	Sit-ups	Sit and Reach	Plank (secs.)	Beep Test
Grade 6 Spring 2016	27.9	30.3	30.5	54.8	132.5	38.5
Grade 6 Fall 2015	28.2	26.3	29.6	48.5	48	32.9

Fitness Data - Grade 7

	Run	Push-ups	Sit-ups	Sit and Reach	Plank (secs.)	Beep Test
Grade 7 Spring 2016	33.8	34.4	37.4	57.2	127	54.6
Grade 7 Fall 2015	34.5	28.9	33.2	53.1	51.3	45.9

Fitness Data - Grade 8

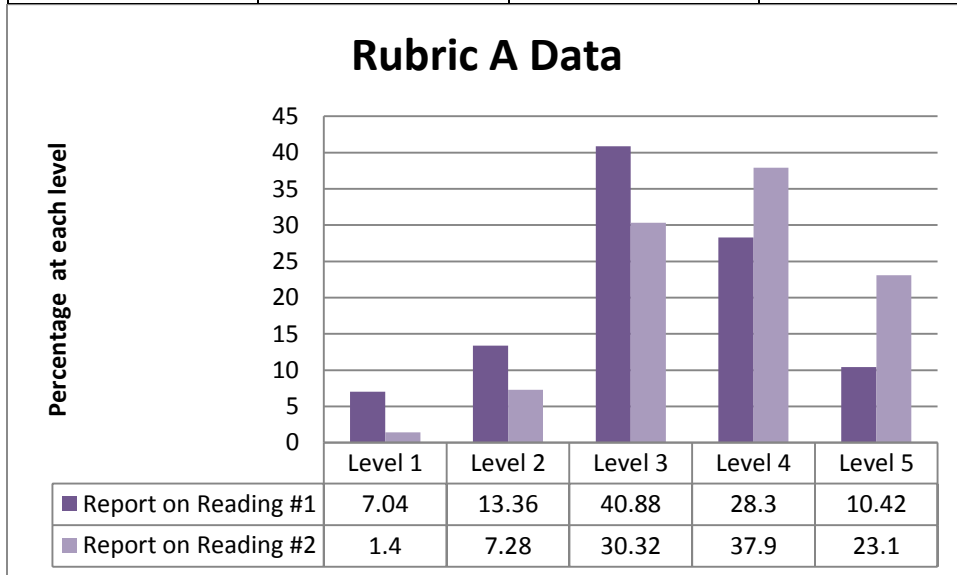|	Run	Push-ups	Sit-ups	Sit and Reach	Plank (secs.)	Beep Test
Grade 8 Spring 2016	25	27.4	31.6	61.5	97.3	49.8
Grade 8 Fall 2015	26.8	18.6	23.4	52.1	70.3	40.4

Language Arts SIP Goal

- 10% increase in student self-selected/ independent reading.

Students self-evaluated using a sliding scale to measure their reading habits. The goal was to see a shift. 10% of students would move up the scale.

Achievement: There was a distinct move away from the fall 1,2,3 scores and shift toward 3,4 5, in the spring.
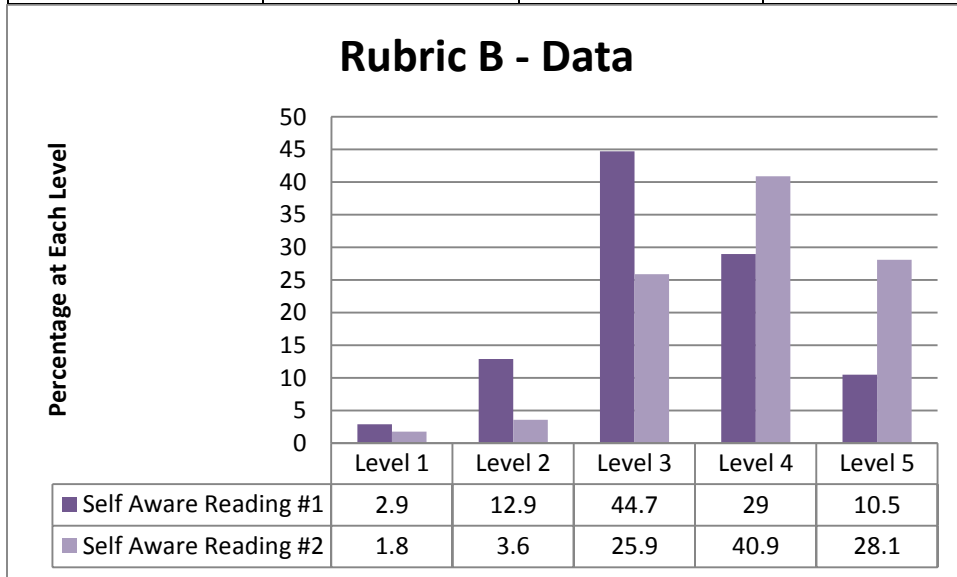
Rubric A - Time: The student reports reading

1……………………………2………………………………3………………………………….4…………………………….5				
Never, they don't use class time, lots of avoidance	May read as requested in class but sometimes avoids. May take months to read a novel.	Sometimes, reads as requested in class but usually not at home. Average completion time may be 4+weeks	Often, reads as requested, occasionally at home, may have peak times like holidays. Average completion time 2-4 weeks.	All the time, they read a lot at home and maximize school time, may binge read. Average completion time less than 2 weeks.

Rubric A Data

Percentage at each level

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Report on Reading #1	7.04	13.36	40.88	28.3	10.42
Report on Reading #2	1.4	7.28	30.32	37.9	23.1

A shift of 22.3 % of readers reported time reading at the higher scales (4 and 5) in Spring 2016 as compared to fall 2015.

Reading Self Awareness

1..................2..................3..................4..................5				
Very little, student reports having never read a book, does not have a favorite title/author/genre. Unable to engage in reading conversations.	Limited, student reads occasionally but often does not complete books, may report class novels/readalouds as favorite. Limited contribution to reading conversations.	Some, student has read assigned books and may have a favorite title/author. Some participation in reading conversations	Significant, some (perhaps) limited)variety of authors and genres, knows preferences, able to engage in reading conversations	Eats books, reads a variety of authors and genres, knows preferences, contributes meaningfully /significantly to reading conversations. Has plans and goals for next book.

Rubric B - Data

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Self Aware Reading #1	2.9	12.9	44.7	29	10.5
Self Aware Reading #2	1.8	3.6	25.9	40.9	28.1

A shift of 30.5 % of readers were self-aware and planned for reading at the higher scales (4 and 5) in Spring 2016 as compared to fall 2015.

Mathematics SIP Goal

at least 85% of our students reaching grade level achievement in skills using fractions

Percentage of students meeting grade level fractions outcomes

Pre-data collected fall 2015

Post-data collected prior to June 2016

	Pre	Post
Grade 6	64.0%	83.0%
Grade 7	70.8%	86.7%
Grade 8	74.5%	72.5%

Social Studies SIP Goal

have achieved a 25% improvement in geographical knowledge in our social studies classes

Congratulations folks, as a grade 7 social studies team our goal was to improve the student's knowledge of geography by 25%, you improved it by 71%! The average mark in the post data was 86%!

Science SIP Goal

By June 2016, 75% of students will achieve a level 3 or higher in scientific literacy.

Congrats! As a school wide team 84% of students achieved a level 3 or higher in scientific literacy!

Here is the grade level breakdown by specific literacy areas:

Grade 6: 75% of our students will be able to create a graph from data presented in a table of values.

2016 GSMS grade 6 results: 91% of our students will be able to create a graph from data presented in a table of values. Grade 6 teachers surpassed their goal by 16%

Grade 7: 75% of students are able to correctly identify the three types of variables in different scenarios.

2016 GSMS grade 7 results: 86% of our students will be able to create a graph from data presented in a table of values. Grade 7 teachers surpassed their goal by 11%

Grade 8: 75% of students can successfully identify the main idea and supporting details of a scientific article.

2016 GSMS grade 8 results: 74% of our students will be able to create a graph from data presented in a table of values. Grade 8 teachers missed their goal by only 1%.

FILA Goal- at least a 15% improvement in Early FILA and 10% in Late FILA in writing conventions

Overall Improvement Achievement = 17.8%

PIF Goal - at least a 15% improvement in student reading accuracy/ pronunciation of 15 specific French sounds in our Post Intensive French Class

Overall Improvement Achievement = 34.5%

PIF	FILA
Sollows-Astle 6J : 44% to 72% = 28% 6K: 41% to 65% = 24% VanSnick PIF : 14% Boucher 6A 33% to 52% =19% 6B 44% to 61% = 17% Fraser 7A 52% to 78% = 26% 7E 59% to 73% = 14% 7F 57% to 73% = 16% 7G 53% to 65% = 12%	VanSnick FILA : 15% Martin-Keilty FILA: 85 to 89% =81% Francoeur 7B 76% to 90% (14% increase) 7C (early) 72% to 90% (18% increase) 7D (early) 73% to 91% (18% increase 7H (late) 61% to 79% (18% increase) Reynolds 6C – 44.6 to 76.1% (31.5% improvement) 6D – 43.7 to 80.9% (37.2% improvement) 6E – 44.1 to 67.8% (23.7% improvement) 6F -32.5 to 63.2% (30.7% improvement) Boudreau 6G 17% to 33% = 16% 6H 5% to 15% = 10% 6I 9% to 33% = 24%
PIF grade 6 Report an overall improvement of 22.4% PIF grade 7 Report an overall improvement of 17% PIF grade 8 Report an overall improvement of 14% **PIF across the grades – improvement of 17.8%**	FILA grade 6 Report an overall improvement 24.7% FILA grade 7 Report an overall improvement of 30.8% FILA grade 8 report an overall improvement of 48% **FILA across the grades – improvement of 34.5%**

Appendix A – Specific Plans

A - Mathematics

Goal : For Mathematics – we want to see at least 85% of our students reaching grade level achievement in skills using fractions by June 2017.		
Indicators of Success What will students know/do/demonstrate	**Strategies/Actions** – what will we change in our practice to achieve our goals	**Monitoring** – Example: Team minutes – Data Pre and Post
Students will - apply grade level outcomes using fraction skills - be able to self-monitor and indicate what next steps needed to succeed with skill sets requiring fractions - use a variety of mental math strategies when working with fractions - easily convert fractions into other numerical forms	**We will** - start the teaching of fractions earlier and continue throughout our school year. - embed throughout the school year fractions within our Numbers and Operations as well as for Mental Math exercises - share data from previous grades fraction's achievement and use results to design grade level interventions on fractions - apply growth-mind set to mathematics instruction - create a key steps fraction map (wall and personal copy) for students and teachers to use - celebrate fractions during school-wide events - provide examples of where other subjects can embed a bit of math in their subject area. - collaborate and share teaching and formative assessment techniques to enhance student achievement in fractions. - Investigate ways to inform parents about the teaching and learning of mathematics	Meetings in 2016-2017 October 6th and 7th – To share and start considering intervention strategies Mid November meeting to collaborate and share Intervention block Dec, 2016 Meetings in 2017 January 7th – Agenda TBA Winter SPARK SLM time Winter Intervention block Post data results and analysis April - May

B – Specific Language Arts SIP

Goal 85% of students will have a 3 or 4 on question 2 (main idea/supporting details) of the Spring OCA.			
Indicators of Success What will students know/do/demonstrate	**Strategies/Actions** – what will we change in our practice to achieve our goals	**Monitoring** – Example: Team minutes – Data Pre and Post	
• By the end of November, 100% students have been introduced to graphic organizers as a way to organize their thoughts. • By the end of February, 85% of students will be able to identify the main idea in their Article of the Month. • By the end of April, 85% of students will be able to identify the supporting details and main idea in their Article of the Week.	• Teachers will share graphic organizers • Teachers will use a variety of graphic organizers in class that focus on main idea and supporting ideas • Teachers will use *Articles of the Month* to practice the skills discussed	• OCA in September will be used for our baseline data. • OCA in May will be used for our summative data. • Articles of the Month, Reading Conversations, and graphic organizers will be used as formative assessment.	

C –Social Studies

Social Studies SMART goal 2016-2017			
By June 2017, more students will be able to think critically about non-fiction writing.			
Indicators of Success	**Strategies/Actions**	**Responsibility**	**Monitoring**
• Teachers will share best practices on how to help students improve their critical thinking skills. • This will improve our practice and overall student learning/skill development.	• Pre-testing by giving students exits slips with higher order thinking questions on material covered in class. • Using the "6 Pillars of historical thinking" as a teaching model • Teachers have agreed to send each other relevant material on teaching critical thinking skills. • End of year test to measure improvements in critical thinking skills. • Most teachers plan to use the "What in the World" material.	• Teachers will all do at least 2 units of study using "What in the World" or other similar non-fiction writing. • Teachers will monitor results of student' ability to make inferences and analyse the material. • Teachers will meet to discuss their progress, share what works and what does not work.	• Record data from pre-test. • formative assessments used throughout the year to note improvements • SLM meeting time to discuss progress. • Re write a similar pre-test at the end of the year-record results to measure improvements.

D – Physical Education

Goal: Within the 2016-17 school year we will have a 10% improvement in total student achievement in each of the following fitness areas (compared to Sept. 2016):		
Indicators of Success: **What will students know/do/demonstrate**	**Strategies/Actions:** **What will we change in our practice to achieve our goals**	**Monitoring**
Improvement of personal fitness: • Cardio (beep test), • Strength (sit-ups) • Flexibility (sit and reach) Proper techniques performed for each activity.	We will complete fitness test 3 times a year for all students: • Mid and late September • late January (formative for students to assess improvement) • mid and late May Components of the test: • Beep test (distance measured) • Sit and reach (best of 5) • Total sit ups per minute	• Students each have a log card to enter their results and can see their progress. • Video and check points provided for students working in groups to assess proper form.

E – Science

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">School Wide Science Goal:

By June 2017, 85% of students will achieve a level 3 or higher in scientific literacy.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Indicators of Success:
What will students know/do/demonstrate</td><td>Strategies/Actions:
What will we change in our practice to achieve our goals</td><td>Monitoring:
Example: Team minutes – Data Pre and Post</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6:
85% of our students will be able to create a graph from data presented in a table of values.</td>
<td>Strategies and Actions

•Pre-test – students are given a table of values and asks to make a graph
•The teacher will model how to make a graph (bar graph, double bar graph, line graph) – making table of values, drawing a graph
•Look at a variety of graphs (warm-ups)
• Practice
Graphing during science experiments (min. 3 experiments)
Scientific Inquiry steps booklet
Sharing of best practices
Annotating graphs (title, axis labels, etc.)</td>
<td>.
• Teachers will keep track of individual student progress
• Discuss Pre-test results and next steps at winter SLM
• Minimum 3 graphing experiments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7:
85% of students are able to correctly identify the three types of variables in different scenarios.

We are looking for level 3 or higher to indicate having met the expectation.

.</td>
<td>Step process:

1. Handout and demonstration completed to give example of steps.

2. Pre-test completed to assess understanding of the three variables.

3. Complete multiple labs, mini-lessons focusing on the steps, regular use of the vocabulary throughout the year, word wall (FI)

4. Complete post-test to assess understanding of variables after Heat unit.</td>
<td>Pre and post data on variables assignment.

Team discussion during SLM and informal meeting times throughout the year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 8:
85% of students can successfully follow the main steps of scientific methodology in a lab context.</td>
<td>Grade 8 SLM team will pre-assess student comprehension of scientific methodology during the lab stations of the first unit and subsequently will assess it during the second and third units.

Based on observed gaps, teachers will model weaker steps of the scientific method and use independent mini-labs to address those gaps.</td>
<td>Grade 8 SLM team minutes: 3 sets of data will be used to compare results. (one pre-data assessment and two post data assessments).

Team discussion during SLM and informal meeting times throughout the year.</td>
</tr>
</table>

F – FILA SIP

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">FILA GOAL: By the end of June 2016, 80% of targeted students will increase their reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension and be at an appropriate reading level (based on provincial reading guidelines).</td></tr>
<tr><td>Indicators of Success
What will students know/do/demonstrate</td><td>Strategies/Actions – what will we change in our practice to achieve our goals</td><td colspan="2">Monitoring –
Example: Team minutes – Data Pre and Post</td></tr>
<tr><td>-Students will use more reading strategies to understand what they read.

-Students will be able to articulate their reading strengths and weaknesses.

-Students will progress in their reading levels.</td><td>-PD session with Ann to learn the basics of benchmarking our FI students . (release time requested for this PLEASE ☺)

Late FILA: Benchmark all late FILA students to know their reading levels.

Early FILA: Benchmark only those students that are struggling with reading.

-Coaching with Ann to learn how to benchmark our students and interventions strategies to implement.

-Targeted intervention strategies as designated by the benchmarking results will be implemented.

-Second Language French Monitor (Elliott) as additional support.

-French Mentor (Kathy) may be of help (not sure when she is here)</td><td colspan="2">-SLM time during winter SPARK?

-Pre, Mid and Post data: benchmarking with students (some release time needed)

-Michelle can assist by helping to cover classes.</td></tr>
</table>

G – PRA – TECHNOLOGY – ART – MUSIC

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">PRA SIP Goal for 2016 – 2017:

By May 2017, 80% of students in a sample class per grade level will show, through a written student reflection, that they feel engaged in their current unit of study in their Music, Art or Technology class.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Indicators of Success
What will students know/do/demonstrate</td><td>Strategies/Actions – what will we change in our practice to achieve our goals</td><td colspan="2">Monitoring –
Example: Team minutes – Data Pre and Post</td></tr>
<tr><td>Students will demonstrate engagement through class activities, discussions and journal reflections.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of how their in-class endeavours connect to the learning targets set forth by their teachers, and will be able to explain in their own words what engaged them or how they were engaged, in a particular lesson or unit of study.</td><td>The PRA teaching team will continue to build on their practices of connecting class content to curriculum learning targets (in student friendly language). Last year we learned by working on our SIP goal that while students understand the connection between content and outcomes, they sometimes struggle to recall activities or lessons from days or weeks ago that met a given outcome.

We have broadened our definition of engagement to understand the fact that students can be engaged and describe their engagement without having to list specific learning targets they have covered, although many are able to do do.

The PRA teaching team will incorporate more exit slips to formatively assess student engagement. (Ex: asking students to answer "I felt engaged today because…" or "the learning target I met today was… because…")</td><td colspan="2">Ongoing exit slips, checklists and check-ins at teacher's discretion

Pre-data: November 2016
-    Student reflection at end of final unit "The reason I felt engaged in this unit of study was…"

Post-data: April 2017
-    Student reflection at end of final unit "The reason I felt engaged in this unit of study was…"</td></tr>
</table>

H – Post Intensive French

Goal: By June 2017, 80% of students will score a 3 or higher on the "Me and My World" every day conversation warm-up questions.			
Indicators of Success What will students know/do/demonstrate	**Strategies/Actions – what will we change in our practice to achieve our goals**	**Monitoring –** Example: Team minutes – Data Pre and Post	
Students will score 3 or higher to the conversational questions. Students will independently respond appropriately to the questions pertaining to the topic "Me and my World".	We will make this topic a focus of our warm-ups; We will collaborate and develop a bank of activities that can be used and share them with each other. We will develop a common bank related to the questions.	Pre, mid and post data will be developed by tracking responses (to the questions) and using a 4 point scale	

Appendix B –Engagement Report

Students in **George Street Middle School**
Student Engagement (2016/2017)

The Learning Bar

Student engagement is "a disposition towards learning, working with others, and functioning in a social institution".[1] It includes students' sense of belonging at school, the extent to which they value schooling outcomes, and their psychological investment in learning. Measures of these aspects of engagement can be classified as social engagement, institutional engagement, and intellectual engagement. Engagement and learning go hand-in-hand: engagement begets learning and learning begets engagement. This dynamic and interactive process begins early - during the primary grades or even earlier - and continues through to adulthood. Student engagement needs to be considered an important schooling outcome in its own right, sitting alongside academic achievement as a key measure of student success.

Key Findings from the Research

- A study conducted by the Canadian Education Association, in collaboration with Galileo Educational Network and The Learning Bar, found that all three types of engagement markedly decline as students progress through middle and secondary school. For example, in Grade 6 about 60% of students were considered to be intellectually engaged, but by Grade 9 the percentage was about 30%.[2]

- Students who are intellectually engaged are more likely to feel confident in their skills and challenged in their classes. Students who lack confidence in their skills are more than one-and-a-half times as likely to suffer anxiety problems during middle and secondary school.[3]

- Data from the *OurSCHOOL* survey in 2009-10 found that Aboriginal students and students from low socioeconomic families are less likely to be engaged at school. Immigrant students tend to be more engaged than non-immigrant students on measures of institutional and intellectual engagement, but this is not the case for measures of social engagement. Girls have higher levels of engagement than boys.

- Schools make a difference. There is considerable variation among schools in their levels of engagement, even after taking account of the family background of students attending each school.

- Some of this variation is attributable to five "drivers of student outcomes": quality instruction, teacher-student relations, classroom learning climate, expectations for success, and student advocacy.[4]

- Data from students can help school staff develop policies and practices that increase student engagement.

In George Street Middle School, 605 students completed the *OurSCHOOL* survey which included ten measures of student engagement alongside the five drivers of student outcomes. This report summarizes the results.

1. A Framework for Assessing Student Engagement

The *OurSCHOOL* Effective Schools Survey includes nine measures of student engagement, categorized as social, institutional and intellectual engagement.

Social Engagement Student is involved in the social life of the school	Institutional Engagement Student values and strives to meet the formal requirements for school success	Intellectual Engagement Student makes an emotional and psychological investment in learning
Sense of Belonging at School	Values Schooling Outcomes	Interest and Motivation
Participation in Sports and Clubs	Attendance	Effort
	Positive Behaviour	
Positive Friendships at School	Homework and Study Habits	Appropriately Challenged

For each aspect of engagement, students were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements, such as "I get along well with others at school." Their scores were scaled on a 10-point scale, and students with scores above 6.0 (i.e., a mild to moderately favourable view) were considered engaged. Similar criteria were established for participation in sports and clubs and school attendance.

2. Social Engagement

Students who are *socially* engaged are actively involved in the life of the school; their friends are there and they are involved in sports or other extra-curricular activities. This involvement can give them a sense of belonging at school and increase academic motivation. Figure 1 shows the percentage of students in George Street Middle School that were socially engaged compared with national norms for students at the grade levels assessed in this school.

Figure 1: Percentage of students socially engaged at George Street Middle School
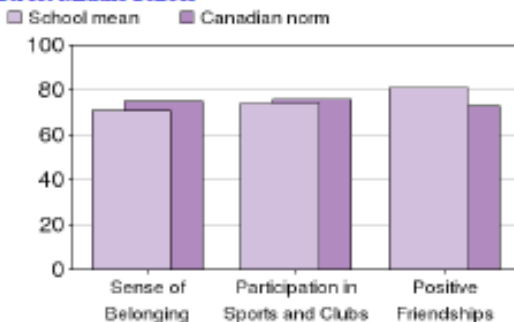
3. Institutional Engagement

Students who value schooling outcomes and meet the formal rules of schooling are considered *institutionally* engaged. These students feel that what they are learning at school is directly related to their long-term success, and this view is reflected in their school and class attendance and their effort in doing homework. Levels of institutional engagement in George Street Middle School are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Percentage of students institutionally engaged at George Street Middle School
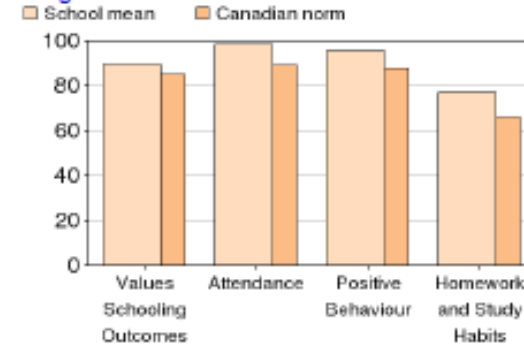
4. Intellectual Engagement

Some students meet the institutional demands of school, but they are not truly engaged in their learning. Intellectual engagement entails a serious emotional and cognitive investment in learning, using higher-order thinking skills, to increase understanding, solve complex problems, and construct new knowledge.[2] Students are more engaged when their level of skills is consistent with the challenges presented to them in their classes.[5] These students are often deeply absorbed in academic activities. Figure 3 displays the results for George Street Middle School on the three measures of intellectual engagement.

Figure 3: Percentage of students intellectually engaged at George Street Middle School
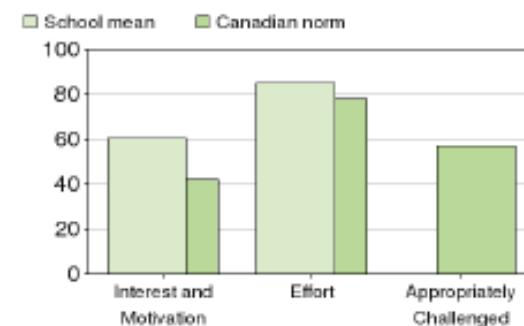
5. Equality of Engagement Outcomes

'Equality' refers to differences in social outcomes among sub-populations, such as differences between students from low and high socioeconomic backgrounds. A measure of socioeconomic status (SES) was derived from students' reports of educational and cultural possessions in the home, their parents' level of education, and whether they were living in a two-parent family. Students were classified into three groups, which are referred to as low, middle, and high SES. Figure 4 shows the extent of equalities among these socioeconomic groups in George Street Middle School for three measures of student engagement.

Figure 4: Extent of equalities in student engagement among socioeconomic groups at George Street Middle School
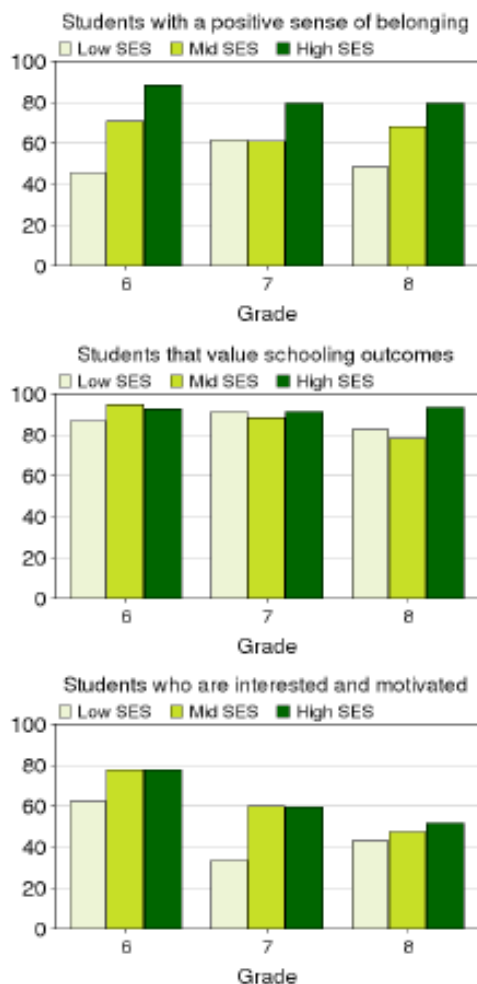
6. Drivers of Student Engagement

Findings from Alberta's *OurSCHOOL Project: Measuring Student Engagement* found that there were considerable differences among schools in their levels of engagement and only some of this variation was attributable to students' family backgrounds. Four school-level factors were consistently related to student engagement: quality instruction (averaged across students and three key subjects), teacher-student relations, classroom learning climate, and teacher expectations for success. Figure 5 compares George Street Middle School to national norms for each factor on a ten-point scale.

Figure 5: School-levels factors associated with student engagement at George Street Middle School
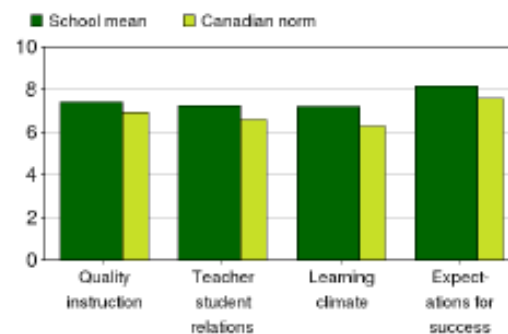
7. What Schools Can Do

Rather than seeing student engagement as an immutable *trait* of students, it is better to think of it as a fluid *state of being*, which can change as students proceed through school.[6] The onus to succeed at school rests with the student, but peers, families, and school staff can play an important role in shaping student engagement. Research conducted by The Learning Bar provides compelling evidence that schools vary substantially in their levels of engagement, even when students' backgrounds are taken into account. Moreover, school staff can take concrete steps towards increasing student engagement.