

Peel DSB

The Director Innovation Fund was used to send a team to Surrey B.C. from June 5th to the 9th, in order to investigate Surrey's use of e-portfolios, the implementation of the new grades 1 – 9 curriculum and the pending implementation of the new 10 – 12 curriculum.

Through Jordon Tinney, several Peel supervisory staff had an opportunity to hear about the work going on in Surrey. Peel is currently engaged in a re-refresh of our 21C/Global competencies vision and the work in Surrey will help to inform that vision moving forward. The team who travelled to Surrey were Hazel Mason, Superintendent of Education and 21C lead, Patrika Daws, Superintendent of Education on the 21C team, Adam Hughes, Peel's new CIO, an Elementary and a Secondary Principal, plus two staff from curriculum with Assessment and Evaluation responsibilities.

The Senior Team of Surrey BC hosted the Peel team. The agenda put included visiting 3 elementary schools and 4 secondary schools. The visits were extremely valuable and expanded on the use of e-portfolios, the use of technology in an inquiry based classroom, cross-curricular projects, and the inclusion of the voice of the teachers and students to design the path for moving forward. It was also interesting to see how Surrey uses school design and unconventional class groupings to support student learning.

It is clear a critical part of the Surrey work involved really understanding assessment, what constitutes a good piece of assessment to populate into an e-portfolio and how to develop the ability of students to self and peer assess. There was evidence

of clear learning criteria and exemplars of excellent work. When the Peel team spoke to students in both the elementary and secondary schools, they could clearly articulate what they were learning, why they were learning it and they could describe what a particular artifact was demonstrating. It was also interesting to talk to them about how their parents felt about the e-portfolios. The students felt their parents were more in tune with their learning than they had been under the traditional report card structure.

The learning from the trip was significant and the task now is to look at how we can capitalize on the learning. The team will be preparing a report focusing on the following areas:

- use of school space and new school designs
- assessment as opposed to evaluation
- cross-curricular projects
- bringing student voice into assessment and program design
- the use of family groupings at elementary and secondary
- creating a criteria for inquiry based learning
- e-protfolios
- rethinking grades

Members from the Surrey Board are expected to make a visit to Peel to continue the collaboration and learning. Visiting another school board and learning from the teachers and students was an extremely valuable learning experience and one Peel hopes to replicate. The folks from Surrey suggested visiting the Calgary Science school would be a good next step. They believed it would really help us consolidate our vision of inquiry based learning within our 21st Century teaching and learning focus.