



Nelna Bessie John 2010 Review Report

Nelnah Bessie John

Fall 2010

Date of Review: September 23, 2010

School Principal: Joy Cochrane

Date of Report: September 23, 2010

School Review Team:

Penny Prysruk: School Superintendent

Christie Whitley: Assistant Deputy Minister

Meetings:

Meeting with the principal: September 23, 2010

Meeting with the School Council: September 23, 2010

Meeting with students: Observations September 23, 2010

School Context:

Beaver Creek is a small northern rural community, near the Alaska border, which is home to approximately 140 people. Nelnah Bessie Johns School is situated in Beaver Creek, Yukon. It is a K- 9 school that currently has 2 K/4 students, 1 kindergarten student, 2 grade 2 students who will be moving at the end of the week to Whitehorse, one grade 5, 7 and 9 student, and a high school student who will be transitioning into the work place in the spring. NBJ is a large three-room school with additional facilities for gym and library area and a stage for performing arts.

School Norms and Culture:

Characteristics: Continuously improving schools are socially and culturally inclusive with high expectations for each learner. A focus on continuous improvement is evident.

Observations of the team:

- Nelnah Bessie John School has a warm and welcoming atmosphere of shared respect that contributes to each learner doing their personal best.
- Work is differentiated and meets the needs of each individual student.
- Social interactions were reinforced throughout the day, and a cultural theme of “bears and berries” was evident in the hallways, classroom and in the Upper Tanana.
- Although inclusiveness is a shared norm, there was also evidence of the intermediate students having personal responsibility and accountability for their work.

Recommendations for moving forward:

- Continue to strive for high expectations for each student, and moving them forward at their individual grade levels.

School and Community:

Characteristics: In continuously improving schools, there is a shared commitment to success for each learner. Relationships are developed and maintained to support students. Ongoing parent/community involvement is embedded in school culture. The school collaborates and communicates in multiple ways about the work to support student learning. Input and dialogue is actively sought and valued.

Observations of the Team:

- The students enjoyed an invitation for the school to attend the ceremony of the first Beaver Creek Ranger Patrol.
- Parents, students and community members were honored to be present at this historical event.
- The school seeks and values family and community involvement. The school has reached out to the community for the Culture Camp, and is developing a positive working relationship with the White River First Nations.
- The administration is very organized and information is shared with parents and the Department in a timely manner.

Recommendations for moving forward:

- Continue to reach out to the community, including elders, as support for the school, and as members of the School Growth Team.
- Encourage community voice and dialogue to support student success.
- Include student voices in supporting school improvement and the School Growth Team as well.

School Organization:

Characteristics: Continuously improving schools organize structures, actions, and interventions to ensure success for each learner. Work in the school is coherent and aligned to focus on improvement. Actions and interventions include effectively differentiating resources, time and professional development to get results. The Department supports the school and makes connections across the Territory to build capacity.

Observations of the team:

- It was evident that the principal/teacher has a clear understanding of each student and their needs and vulnerabilities.
- Thematic planning encompassed cross-curricular learning outcomes, including the Upper Tanana language.
- Students were knowledgeable of the routines and procedures of the school and their classes.
 - One example was the lunchroom routine, which included dialogue amongst all students and staff.
 - Another was the grade nine student who accessed video classes for math with Haines Junction.

Recommendations for moving forward:

- Continue to access Department personnel to build primary programming for the kindergarten students.
- Develop clear transition plans for the two students who will be transitioning from NBJs in the spring.

Processes and Progress:

Characteristics: Improving schools improve outcomes for students. They use evidence to guide decisions and actions and have processes in place to collectively monitor progress and make adjustments in key areas of their work. They demonstrate improvement over time – for individual students, groups of students, and the school.

Observations of the Team:

- Administration was organized with students' profiles and had a very good understanding of student strengths and vulnerabilities.
- Instruction was differentiated to meet the needs of the various grade levels and student needs.
- The teachers provide students with activities and assignments that are rigorous and engaging and that extend their learning, and are committed to closing the achievement gap.

Recommendations:

- Work with Department consultants to:
- Use the student profiles to guide decisions about actions and strategies to use to support each students' learning, for example the K 4/5 reading levels and formative assessments,

- Monitor individual progress over time and adjust strategies to improve outcomes for students.

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Conclusions:

Monitoring progress and adjusting strategies on an ongoing basis will help ensure that Nelnah Bessie John students have the skills needed to be successful in the next grade and also when they transition into high school and the work place.

Practices to share:

The focus on differentiated instruction for each child, and use of technology for grade nine mathematics. Creating a climate that encompasses culture and language into all aspects of the school.