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***A Broadly Shared Mission, Vision and Goals Founded on the
Aspirational Images of the Educated Person
Surrey School District – British Columbia
Refreshing Our Vision and Refocusing Our Leadership Capacity: A Surrey Story***

Background

Surrey School District is the largest school district in British Columbia and one of the largest in Canada. We are home to 73,000 students in 130 school sites. Our population is highly diverse and Surrey is one of the fastest growing municipalities in the nation with a growth of over 18% in the past 5 years. We have a young population with our median age being 37.5 years compared to a provincial average of 41 years. We are growing fast and we are growing young.

With such rapid change, our school district has become one where change and adaptability are the norm rather than the exception. We are one of the very few districts in British Columbia with a growing student population base. In the past 20 years, Surrey School District has built or significantly renovated 19 secondary schools. Many of our schools are still over capacity and this is a significant pressure for our district to meet the needs of our diverse population.

With our rapid growth, it has been important for our district to be highly declarative about our direction and our focus. We have a proud history of deep work in collaborative inquiry, differentiated instruction and assessment and we have recently embraced the power and promise of technology to support the learning journey.

Surrey School District also has seen significant changes in district leadership. Our district senior leadership team includes 11 individuals (Superintendents and Directors). Only 3 members of that team are still in the same position that they were three years ago. All individuals are either new to the team or have moved to different roles within the team as a result of retirements. As we emerge as a new team, how can we be sure that we have adequately aligned our core beliefs about learning and leadership? If we are the ones entrusted with supporting the district and schools with the vision ahead, how can we make sure we are all on the same page?

Our success to date has been a source of pride, however, we have recently talked openly and widely about our need to focus the plethora of opportunities we have into a more coherent path. We have diversified and broadened our vision, but this broadening comes at the cost of a loss of focus and a difficulty in clarifying for the field exactly what direction we are pursuing and what type of leadership we need to get there.

This case study is intended to weave together our journey of refocusing our district direction and vision while at the same time reconsidering our leadership

framework. The direction and leadership work to date has served us well but in a time of curriculum transformation and substantial district growth, it is important to ask ourselves the basic questions of:

1. Are we still headed in the right direction;
2. How clear is that direction to our staff and community; and
3. Are our leaders aligned with that direction and how do we ensure our leadership is focused and supported?

With the above, our two areas of focus for this case study are:

1. Establish broadly shared mission, vision and goals founded on ambitious images of the educated person
2. Use a comprehensive performance management system for school and district leadership development

Why These Characteristics?

British Columbia is in the midst of curriculum reform. Our entire curriculum framework, which, in the past, has had a traditional focus of subject areas and numerous discreet learning outcomes, is moving in the direction of core competencies and big ideas. In areas where there were hundreds of learning outcomes, we now are giving teachers the flexibility to teach to core competencies, which span all curricular areas. The competencies are:

1. Thinking, both creatively and critically;
2. Communicating with others including the use of digital technologies; and
3. Personal and Social competency.

The entire curriculum for grade four Mathematics, for example, fits on one page and can be viewed [here](#). Gone are the massive numbers of outcomes breaking tasks down into bite-sized chunks. The intent is to teach to broad conceptual areas and to provide teachers with the flexibility to pursue areas of passion for themselves and their students within a curricular framework. The Grade 5 Social Studies Curriculum is encompassed by 4 big ideas, which are:

1. Immigration and other demographic changes can shift cultural identities within a society.
2. The legacies of colonization continue to affect contemporary society and cultures.
3. The development of natural resources has shaped the economy of different regions of Canada.
4. Land use and ownership is an enduring source of conflict in Canada.

These big ideas are supported by curricular competencies (a total of 7) and Concepts and Content (again a total of 7).

The reason to give a detailed description of where we are going with curriculum is to demonstrate the extent of the moves on the curriculum front, which are a very significant shift. We are moving to embrace the notion of a core set of competencies that will be required for the future. Our province is in the review stage of the curriculum and there is broad acceptance of the coming changes. In schools around

the province, people are looking to move beyond the philosophical statements and descriptions to a place of looking for specific examples of practice that demonstrate what the new curriculum looks like in action.

With such a change in direction provincially, the timing is right to reengage with our district to ensure our direction fits and will align with the future of the province.

This was part of the major emphasis on refreshing and renewing our district direction.

With a newly revised provincial curriculum and a fairly new senior leadership team including a new superintendent in January 2014, the timing is right to focus on reaffirming our direction as a district and then reviewing our leadership programs and supports to ensure that we are fostering and supporting the leadership we need to support our direction.

The Status of These Characteristics When We Started

We have a strong history of focusing on what we call “priority practices.” The practices were:

- Collaborative Inquiry
- Assessment
- Differentiated Instruction
- Social and Emotional Learning

What has become clearer over the past few years is that these practices were not well understood. Over time, our core beliefs about assessment and collaborative inquiry had become less well understood all through the natural processes of turnover and a diffusion of practices. We ran a learning series for all school-based administrators where we wanted to provide clarity on what we meant by these terms. The sessions were beyond capacity. There clearly was a desire to go deep, be clear, and to have practical examples of what each of these practices meant for participants leadership growth.

What was also clear was that there was a definition of priority practices, but there was no overall subsequent understanding of what type of learner these practices led to. We had a vision statement as a district, but it did not resonate with the field, as is the case in many districts. We had a vision for strong practices, but we had no subsequent vision for the 21st Century learner who would graduate with dignity, purpose and options.

Parallel to our desire for describing the learners we wanted, we also needed to describe the leadership attributes we desired. In leadership development, we have deep networks of professional learning within the district and have many structures that connect teachers and administrators with each other. Through action research, study groups, focus teams, networks of inquiry and more, we have heavily invested in professional development.

Surrey School District also has a long and proud tradition of leadership development and our framework of Leading for Learning, mentorship and professional partnerships have served us well. However, similar to our district direction, through time and turnover of personnel, our focus has become less laser-like. We provide a

broad range of learning opportunities but there is overlap, there is redundancy, and we felt the need to clarify what opportunities we offered, to whom, and what was their intent?

The two focus areas of vision and district leadership aligned perfectly. At the same time that the principals and vice-principals were looking for clarity and coherence, our senior leaders in the district wanted an opportunity to collaboratively look at our direction and to discuss our core values on learning. They wanted a chance to work closely together, to build our team, and to be champions for the learning journey ahead.

Steps Taken to Address These Issues and Unexpected Events Along the Way

Last summer (2013), as we prepared for the coming year, we focused on “clarity.” The reason for this was a focus on the work of Patrick Lencioni, which suggests that a focus on organizational health is the best way to leverage the wisdom and skills within an organization. Lencioni proposes that the path to organizational health is to:

- Build cohesive teams
- Create Clarity
- Communicate Clarity
- Reinforce Clarity

To begin down the clarity road, we asked principals and vice-principals to provide us feedback on which aspects of our district direction they felt we were most unclear. We held three half-day sessions (about 60 participants each day) where administrators generated questions for us to pursue. Assistant Superintendents then analyzed these questions for the themes that emerged. What was resounding was a call for a description of what transformative and innovative learning looks like in the context of our current school life. We were given license by school administrators as a senior leadership team to focus their themes. We then booked a facilitator for a day and a half with our senior team to review the direction given to us by administrators and to refresh our district direction.

In the day and a half – we grappled with key questions such as:

- What do we mean by personalized learning?
- What do we mean by innovation, transformation?
- What role do we feel technology plays in supporting learning?
- What core instructional strategies are we championing to support our learning direction?

Our goal for the sessions was to leave with a clear and concise statement of district direction. We wanted to build on the momentum given to us by principals and vice-principals, to use their questions and themes as the launching point, and to solidify our understandings and directions on those themes.

Along with seeking clarity, we also were paying attention to the notion of building cohesive teams. As stated earlier, we have seen significant shifts in our senior leadership team. I wanted to review my own leadership with my new team and to

get feedback on what the district needed in me as their leader coming into the role in January 2014. I felt the timing was right; I was well known but still fairly new to the district having come in 2012. We hired a consultant to conduct 45-minute interviews with about 20 members of my most senior leadership team across both the business and education side of the organization. The intent of the interviews was to provide me with feedback and advice on what people were looking for in my leadership. I felt that whatever emerged for me would not only be about my leadership, but about the direction of the district.

One of the themes that emerged was that the senior team really wanted a chance to “refresh” our district direction. While it was well understood, they felt that they wanted to have an opportunity to re-engage in the conversation as a way to build our team around our core beliefs and to define our direction ahead together; this was a perfect match for the work of building a cohesive team.

Parallel to the processes of refreshing our district direction, the interview of senior leaders in the district revealed another powerful theme. Senior leaders wanted more direct time with the superintendent. The time they wanted was to discuss direction, to learn together and to ensure that our directions were aligned across the organization. The comments were extremely supportive, but people were looking for the gift of time together to reaffirm our clarity and direction.

To support this theme of time and clarity, we embraced the concept of executive coaching and, specifically, the work of Marshall Goldsmith. Marshall Goldsmith has a six-question executive coaching framework that calls for multiple meetings a year with your direct reports focusing on the alignment between the organization, between individuals and to ask what individuals needed from the superintendent to support their own leadership.

Significant Turning Points

All of the above work occurred under the backdrop of a full-scale teacher strike. Beginning in April and ending in late September, we saw escalating job action, which culminated in a full walkout on June 16th followed by a government lockout. The issues were not resolved until September 22nd when teachers returned to work. One of the most significant realities of the strike is that teachers are at a sensitive place, especially considering anything that has government direction linked to it. The new direction in curriculum had emerged over the past couple of years with wide support from teachers. They still have many questions and concerns, but teachers were in many cases excited about the developments. One of the consequences of the strike is that the new curriculum, branded by the government as the British Columbia Education Plan, is a sensitive topic for many reasons. It is very important for us, as we move ahead, to be extremely careful about the language we use as we talk about curriculum and the British Columbia Education Plan. All of this refreshing of our direction needs to be carefully crafted in the current context. On the leadership front, with such major changes to our team, people were excited about the opportunity for the interviews from the consultant. To be asked over 45 minutes about the direction of the district, about my leadership in particular, it was a great opportunity to get everyone’s voice into the mix. One of the turning points in this process was a meeting that I held with all those who were interviewed and I

presented the findings of the interviews back to them. It was the recommendation of the consultant that I share the findings personally with the whole group. No individual comments were used or identified. The whole work of the consultant was to identify themes and to report back. When people saw the themes that emerged in the presentation, they were reaffirmed that they were heard, they were excited about the direction, and there was a great willingness to get on with the coaching dialogue. People asked to build our direction together and to get personal time, and these both were going to happen immediately.

Status at That Point

The net result of our day and a half working session on district leadership is that we have developed a series of statements about learning and our district direction. These statements have been carefully reviewed and crafted and we are excited about their clarity, their honouring of the past, and about their potential to crystallize our focus for the coming years.

Recalling that we developed these statements in line with the themes from the work with principals, we are excited about now brining this work full circle back to principals for their reflection and refinement. We also developed a fourth theme, which was a communication plan. How do we intend to share our results, with whom, and at what time? We have reached out to different groups, and have booked a series of sessions to engage them in the process, to gather their feedback, and to ensure that we all have been part of this conversation. Teachers, parents, administrators, support staff, all need to be part of the feedback and journey. We also began our coaching dialogues on leadership in September and all are completed. The interviews are focused on Goldsmith's six questions and their subsequent focus:

1. *Where are we going?*
 - What is the direction of the district?
2. *Where are you going?*
 - In what direction are you or your department going?
3. *What is going well?*
 - Talk about a few highlights in your work, things of which you are most proud.
4. *What are some key suggestions for improvement?*
 - If you were your own coach, what advice would you give yourself?
 - What things would I like to see demonstrated in the future?
5. *How can I help?*
 - What do you need from the superintendent to show support for your work?
6. *What suggestions do you have for me?*
 - What are some things I could do differently to help support the direction as a district?

Each person was interviewed and we have created electronic portfolios for each member of the senior team so that they can access their responses and have a chance to provide further reflections and comments. People have their own login and access and can reflect on their comments and direction. The electronic portfolio also allows me with mobile devices to add to the portfolio anytime, anywhere. If I see a piece of work that I like or want to comment, I can simply add the note on the spot and they will see it, whether this be a picture, an anecdote, or an audio comment. This is a great way to provide ongoing support for my colleague's work. The online portfolio has been extremely helpful as not only can people see their responses and reflect more but these responses also provide me with great ongoing feedback about what I can do to support our leaders and also to set the stage for the next conversations, which are occurring three times per year. Providing dedicated 1:1 time with myself and my colleagues, with focused questions and concrete feedback both ways has been an enormously rewarding experience.

Advice For Others

The most significant issue that helped provide direction was our workshop with principals and vice-principals where we asked their advice on which portions of our district direction was the least clear. I would have said that our direction as a district was well known and broadly communicated. However, when we gathered people together over three sessions, we formed them into groups and asked them to come up with 1 question as a group. What we wanted from them was a response to: When you consider our current direction as a district – what is one area where would you like more clarity and what would your question be?

In our process, we then did a carousel activity where principals saw all the questions and got to vote on their top priorities. The results were absolutely crystal clear. There was about three or four areas that they wanted clarity, and they gave the senior team license to go and clarify then come back to them. We shared all their questions, we shared all the themes that emerged and we kept them informed along the journey. Now we are ready to go back to them and they feel that their voices were honoured and that they shaped the direction.

My advice on the visioning process is to make it transparent and inclusive. Make sure people are visible in the process, honour their voices, and then focus relentlessly on clarity which all can support. My other advice is do not assume that your direction is well understood - get beyond the words, go for clarity. Do people really know what you mean? The only way to find out is to ask.

In leadership coaching, it was one thing to share with everyone that we were going to do personal coaching dialogues with every member of the senior team and the superintendent but it was another thing to actually do the interviews. I can honestly say that the process of interviewing all senior staff and documenting their responses to a structured set of questions is one of the most rewarding things I have done in my time as a superintendent. To give each member of the team 45 minutes to an hour, to listen to him or her, to ask what he or she need from me to support his or her work, it all has been fantastic. I could not suggest this any more strongly to my colleagues and I look forward to round 2 and 3 of the interviews in the months to come.

My advice on the coaching dialogues is simply to do it. Use the questions that work for you. Give people the time, listen to them, and remember it's a two-way process. It is not the CEO coaching or playing mentor to others. It is the CEO asking how they can help, asking how **their** behaviour can support the direction of district leaders and the district as a whole. Document the process and reflect on the documentation. It is tremendously revealing and rewarding. People will feel included and will feel honoured to have your time.

Summary

I am confident that every district in the nation has embarked upon a visioning exercise. I also believe the vast majority will have recently or in an ongoing way considered the leadership they need. I also have done this activity many times. What made this adventure unique was our relentless pursuit of clarity. In the past, the process has always seemed to morph to vague motherhood statements that satisfied many goals. That was necessary and good work. However in this case, we pursued a clear line of thinking. Who is the learner we want? What types of learning experiences are we going to design? What practices will get us there? And what leadership will enable us to pursue that direction? It seems like a tighter package and our process really allowed us to scratch the underbelly of our core values and beliefs about learning.

In the end, not only are we better positioned as a direction, but our communication is better, people feel more included and direction is aligned, we have a more cohesive and focused senior team, and we have a process in place to coach each other and hold our collective selves accountable for the journey ahead. In addition, if the leadership journey is all captured in individual electronic portfolios for us to follow/review and to reflect on our progress. It feels clear, clean and purposeful. There are other offshoots although not central to this post. For me, personally, I have taken the core themes that emerged from the interviews of senior staff in the spring and have rolled them up to form a personal professional development framework for myself. I have hired an executive coach to work with me and my deputy superintendent so that we stay focused on the journey as well and we continue to lead in coherent and clear ways.

For the first time in my professional life, I feel that I have a tight personal professional growth plan linked directly to the focus of the district and my colleagues and coach will hold me to it. It is transparent for all to see. This has been an outstanding growth opportunity for myself as leader. . I want to model what I am asking others to do. If all my team is in coaching dialogues, I want to be in it as well. No longer am I simply doing a series of conferences or workshops in a year. I have a plan, it makes sense, it is purposeful and my team and colleagues inform it. If clarity and cohesive teams are at the core of what we intend to do, then the processes on which we have embarked have certainly produced that for us. I look forward to our road ahead, we know what the path looks like, I have no doubt there will be bumps along the way, but I feel very well positioned as a district to weather any storm and to lead together toward a future full of promise.

Prologue: Where Are We Now?

The above account of Surrey School District's leadership journey was written a year ago (the fall of 2014). At the time, I talked about the emergence of new provincial curricula, the presence of a largely new leadership team, and of a need to refresh our district's direction. This is an update to that account, a "where are we now" synopsis, providing the chance to reflect back and to look ahead. In doing so, I write about the current status of the themes that were discussed in the original case.

District Vision

The work on focusing the district vision has been extremely well received. We took the work from our session with the senior team and we spend careful time on a way to capture that work and communicate it publicly. In the end, our focus questions for senior team were:

- Personalized Learning - What does it mean to you?
- Transformation - How is it different from implementation, and how do we engage with it?
- Technology - What place does technology play in learning and schooling?
- Communication - How do we widen the circle and invite others into the journey ahead?

Remembering that our work was to be viewed through Lencioni's lens and we hoped to clarify, simplify and communicate.

In very short summary we said:

- Personalized learning – can we please stop talking about personalized? It is a distraction from our core work, which is learning. Let's clarify, simplify and talk about learning. Focus #1 - Learning
- Transformation – all of our conversations about transformation actually focused on structures that get in the way of a focus on learning. Timetables, structured time, hierarchies, policy, bureaucracy, our own mindsets, the physical constraints of learning spaces and the design of space. In our clarification, we said that we wanted to talk about the structures that get in the way of realizing our dream of powerful learning environments. We want to give people permission to stretch and bend the boundaries of the structures (personal and physical) that limit possibilities. Focus #2 – Structures (and implied permission to challenge)
- Technology – as with the above. Why do we talk about technology? We talk about learning and designing engaging learning environments. To do this, teachers, as designers of curricula and instruction need access to tools. Some of these tools include information and computing technology and we do indeed acknowledge the changes that come with globalization and the digital age. However, the tools teachers use extend beyond digital technologies. Trumpets, chisels, tennis rackets, and the plethora of other things people need all support learning. While we weren't thrilled with the word "tools" it has resonated extremely well with the field. Focus #3 – Tools

- Communication – these conversations include how do we take the above and have an inclusive process. We took the above and spent considerable time again refining and creating language that we felt was simple, and inclusive. In the end, we designed the following statements to be shared out:

Learning

- Honours our diverse cultures and traditions and is:
 - Inspired by individual passions and interests.
 - Connected to real-world experiences and challenges.
 - Demonstrated in powerful ways both individually and in groups.
 - Supported by all who work with, and for our students.

Structures

- We believe that time, physical space, access to information, and connection to community should provide the flexibility to support our vision for powerful learning.

Tools

- The tools that enable digital citizenship support access to information, and demonstrations of learning.
- Tools to support learning extend beyond digital technologies.

Clarity

- Our vision for learning is:
 - collaboratively developed.
 - communicated in a manner that is easily understood.
 - reinforced through our actions.
 - dynamic and evolving.

If these are our overarching set of beliefs, then what do we expect of our teachers? We decided that we wanted to articulate that teachers are designers of engaging learning environments. We formed statements about our beliefs of teachers, students and classrooms themselves.

| Our Teachers... | Our students | Our classrooms |
|---|--|--|
| Design learning conditions that are student- centered, inquiry-focused, engaging, and steeped in real-world experiences. We support teachers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embrace Technologies • Innovate • Connect Learning to the Community | Access learning according to their passions, curiosities, and needs. | As places where teachers, support staff, and students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquire • Imagine • Design • Think critically • Reflect • Learn together |

Finally, all of the above is toward a specific goal. “To what end” we asked ourselves. This was our response:

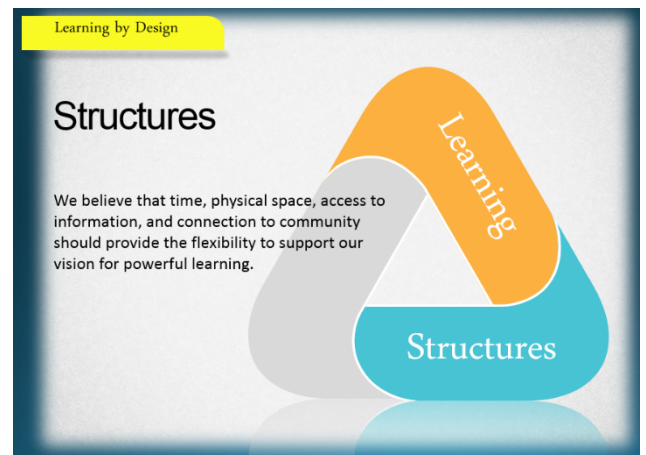
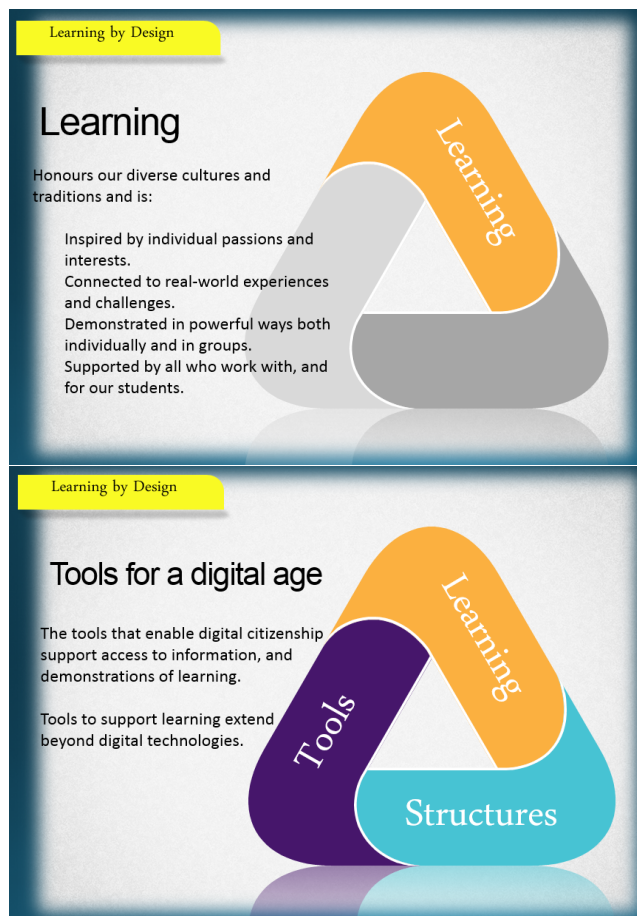
We prepare our learners for a digital world in which they think creatively and critically, communicate skilfully, and demonstrate care for self and others.

We do this through:

- Curriculum Design
- Quality Assessment
- Instructional Strategies
- Social Emotional Learning

All of the above is carefully crafted in that the final statement is a return with slight rewording to our original district priorities from the past. So this is not a “new” direction. It is tagged “refresh, refocus, refine.” What we wanted to do was to go deeper and not to come up with something new.

Our next step was to articulate that vision and series of statements with a graphic for simplicity.



The end result is a graphic that captures our work and as a Mobius strip represents the recursive nature of learning and principles of inquiry.

From there, we took our work and shared as part of our communication plan. We shared this with executives and groups that include all partner groups. We have covered many times all possible points of the organization with the exception of students.

In each case, we ran the groups through an appreciative inquiry interview matrix process to ask the four following questions:

- What do you identify as strengths in this refreshed vision?
- What concerns do you have regarding this vision?
- Do you believe that this vision will assist you in moving your school forward? Please explain.
- What obstacles might limit “our” vision from becoming a reality?

We have presented this work to well over 1000 people. We have done interview matrices with well over 400 people. We have summarized the feedback and are now in the process of feeding that information back to them. To date, our feedback can simply be summarized as the following. These are the quotes that I used in a presentation to over 300 teachers and administrators:

- Thank you for the soft, vague inclusive language that reflects our practice.
- No thank you for the soft, vague, inclusive language that actually does reflect our practice.
- Where is the time?
- Where is the money?
- Some may perceive this as top down.
- There won’t be buy in from everyone.
- How will I do “This” when I am jumping from class (or closet) to class in a facility that is already stretched to the max?
- But thank you for trying....

Overwhelmingly, the presentations and feedback have been extremely well received. Recall that the above quotes are a summary of the feedback to the 4 questions above, so the actual strengths of the vision are no surprise and neither are the challenges (e.g. soft inclusive language).

People are not so concerned about the vision. They want to see what it means for their practice. Beginning in May, we will hold sessions for over 200 departments heads from our schools to talk about their feedback, the practices that have emerged and how we, as a district, actually have moved forward in many ways in response to their requests.

On April 28th, I will present a budget document that previously would never be shown to teachers, which shows how we targeted millions of dollars in January and February based on their feedback. The accountability and transparency of sharing such a document is important to me and I look forward to this moment of where I believe it will go towards further building trust.

We have also refreshed our Board’s guiding principles for their governance work to align with this work. The Board was incredibly supportive and the entire district structure is more focused and more aligned.

We also are in process of pulling together focus groups of teachers and administrators to develop concept papers of how this vision unfolds as practice. If the devil is in the details, we will give the details in a separate but linked set of documents, which will be collaboratively developed.

Leadership Development

We continue to do regular interviews of senior staff as outlined in earlier documents. This still is extremely rewarding and I am working to create digital portfolios of each person as an ongoing reflection of their work. In May, I will do round 3 of the interviews and while I don't think that I have got as much out of this portion of the work that I might, one of the main outcomes of the original feedback was that every member of senior leadership wanted more direct time with me. Each person has 3 formally structured 45-minute interviews with me. This has been fantastic because the team have felt listened to??

We have also restructured our senior leadership team to include 2 people from the business section of the organization. Previously not included at the senior leadership table, we have our Assistant Secretary-Treasurer and our Director of Information Systems now at the table. They are senior leaders, their voice and perspective is valued, and it has been a great addition.

In January, we arranged for 2 days for myself and the Deputy Superintendent to work directly with an executive coach on how we can work together to move our strategic plans forward. This was great work and we are in process of arranging the third session. We already have a strong team but the focus on taking specific time away together with an external coach who now knows the district well has supported our shared goals.

Other

We continue to have a focus on innovation in our district and I felt it important to include a piece about how this is growing. A major initiative we have in place for rethinking student assessment and reporting has been a phenomenal success. We told teachers that we would stand by their side if they wanted to develop digital portfolios for learners as a way to communicate in an ongoing way to parents about where their child is in his/her learning. Stand by their side means that we allowed them to not send home structured formal report cards mid-year. Working very closely with our parent community and teachers, we have completely revamped our reporting practices. With no "formal" district declaration and deep teacher involvement, we now have over 1500 teachers in grades K-10 now using this option. This is a whole story of change unto itself.

Much due to the above, we applied to a major post-secondary prize that acknowledged the most significant contribution to public education in British Columbia. The prize was designed for post-secondary research that impacts practice. We entered and won which is a major statement about this work. On the legislative side, while we continue to press the boundaries of legislation on report cards, which has its own risks, we strategically requested that the Ministry of Education be one of the nominators for our work in application for this award and we received that support and nomination. As I write up this paper, I have just

returned from a request from the Ministry of Education to speak to 9 school districts about this work.

In addition, confidential at the time of this document, we have just been awarded a major international prize for innovative uses of technology in education. We will be the first school district outside of the United States to win this major international award.

Conclusion

There is much work to do and I could write extensively about all the little things we do. For example, in support of our refreshed vision which obviously includes innovation, I personally sent an email to our over 5500 teachers asking if they would invite me to their classroom to see lessons in action and to discuss innovation and transformation. I have been swamped with requests, have visited numerous classrooms and continue to blog and talk about the impact of these visits.

Our work is a pleasure and we acknowledge the outstanding work of schools in so many ways. The above is simply an update of our work that continues to evolve on a daily basis.