

Term 2 - 2012

SABBATICAL research project REPORT

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Acknowledgement

Without the support of the Evans Bay Intermediate School Board of Trustees, I would not have had the opportunity to have a sabbatical in Term 2, 2012. I owe my Board of Trustees, a huge thanks.

My fantastic Deputy Principal, Marie Okeby took the helm and kept our waka steady in my absence and I hugely appreciate the extra load that she carried during this time.

The Ministry of Education provided the funding for this special time out and so I owe them a big thanks too.

The School Trustees Association also had an input into the process of selecting people to be granted a sabbatical. I have attended six NZSTA Conferences and these have always been great times for getting together with other Boards and other Principals. I wish to thank the School Trustees, in particular Lorraine Kerr, for all that she does, in her role with NZSTA.

The NZEI had input too into my selection for a sabbatical and so my thanks therefore must go to my Union for selecting me for this wonderful experience.

The Sabbatical Term 2, 2012, was a re-energising time.

Purpose

The purpose of my Sabbatical was to find out: *how well our school is meeting the learning needs of students, to identify areas where we may need to focus attention and to provide feedback to schools in the Cluster about the achievement of their students that come on to EBIS.*

Background

I have been Principal at Evans Bay Intermediate School for the last six years. We regularly talk about how well we are meeting the learning needs of our children and we wanted to know how we are doing as a Cluster of schools.

Having competence in Reading, Writing and Mathematics is essential for students to be able to have success in every other learning area. Science, Social Sciences or Health for example, are learning contexts for Reading, Writing and Mathematics. For this reason, our most important learning and teaching has got to be in these areas.

Since the implementation of the National Standards at EBIS, we have not changed what we do in terms of the curriculum that we deliver. We believe that we have however, become determined to see all students lift their achievement levels in Reading, Writing and Mathematics. We have become far more proactive in getting parents involved in their child's learning. I would go even further and say that we have become determined about this!

Being an Intermediate School, our students are only with us for 2 years. It is essential that we make a difference to their learning in those two years. A lot of historical debate lives on about transition and how intermediate schools are the place where student achievement *falls off* or *does not continue* over time. This is an ongoing challenge therefore, for every intermediate school around the country.

METHODOLOGY

Evans Bay Intermediate School uses PAT tests and also asTTle at the start, and end, of the school year. In the beginning of the year these tools are used as a diagnostic tool to help identify student learning needs and goals for the year. At the end of the year, they are used as a mastery test to see what value has been added to student learning.

In March 2012, after the whole school assessments were completed to identify next learning steps for students, achievement data was gathered and collated.

A staff member at EBIS was given a special new role that we called the Year 7 Dean. Her role was to set up closer liaison with the Contributing Schools. She went and visited the schools, talking with students etc. She also took part in a Cluster Day where transition was the focus. She took on the job of collating the data after the March Testing to look specifically at achievement levels in Reading.

The Year 7 student achievement data in March was grouped according to the Contributing Schools where students had come from. This was so that this data could then be given back to the schools. The local Cluster of Schools were interested in having feedback about their students. Any testing in March after all, is a reflection of value added to learning from the Contributing School where students have come from.

Findings

Reading was the key area that we focussed on. As all schools know, the most important thing our children need, is to be able to read if they are to access all other areas of learning.

There are 7 schools that make up the Cluster of schools that feed into Evans Bay Intermediate. The numbers of Year 7 students that come from each school varies, as does the size of each of the schools. In order to keep the individual school information anonymous, the schools were in public reporting back, simply named **Schools A,B,C,D,E,F and G.**

In order to make a judgement as to whether students were achieving where they should be or not, our measuring stick was a ***PAT Stanine of 4 or better*** and also having an ***asTTle Level 3P or better***.

SCHOOL DATA

Percentage of students achieving ***where they should be or better*** in ***READING*** on entering EBIS:

School A = 85%
School B = 81%
School C = 90%
School D = 94%
School E = 75%
School F = 100%
School G = 100%

The high number of students achieving where they should be from each school, was exciting to see. This was very affirming for the Cluster. In a combined Cluster function, held as a Wine and Cheese at EBIS, this information was shared.

The two schools that had 100% were the smaller schools as was the school with the lowest percentage.

Overall there were **10.8%** of students entering EBIS not yet where they should be in **Reading**.

The next thing we then looked at was how well the Year 8 students were achieving according to the same March test data. As numbers of students vary each year and some students do not even come from any of our Cluster Schools, this comparison was really simply a very general idea, rather than being an accurate piece of data for comparison. The Year 8 percentage came out at **12.2%**.

Reading in the Cluster is an area of strength. Overall the School data shows this.

Conclusion

The next challenge for the School in 2013, is to find out what the March achievement data tells us about Year 7 and Year 8 students but also, what the data looks like for students in Year 9.

In 2013 another EBIS staff member has been given the role of Year 9 liaison person. This role involves them gathering achievement data on the EBIS 2012 Year 8 students.

This is really, a work in progress that will continue as the links between the schools in the Cluster become stronger. It is also only at the very beginning stages. Achievement data on Maths will be added in 2013.

The local Cluster, by the end of 2012, had worked together to develop a Cluster Transition Form for any student in the Eastern Suburbs going on to Year 7 or Year 9. This has been a very positive thing. It ensures that worthwhile, valid and consistent assessment data is provided and shared between schools. This will also reduce time spent at the start of the year testing new students.

In asking the question how well are we meeting the learning needs of students in our Cluster, the answer has to be, we are doing well as a cluster in Reading, but there is room for improvement.

We believe, and hope, that the March 2013 data will show continuing achievement success and progress for all students.

Evans Bay Intermediate School staff and Board, are passionate about

“ value being added to student learning”.

