

NANAIMO LADYSMITH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EDUCATION COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING

INFORMATION SHEET

DATE: October 6, 2021
TO: Education Committee
FROM: Deputy Superintendent, Tim Davie
Department of Learning Services
SUBJECT: Introduction to Compassionate Learning Systems

Board of Education Strategic Plan – Board Goals & Objectives

Continuous improvement of instruction and assessment.

Safe, caring and healthy learning and working environment that is inclusive of the diversity of our entire learning community.

- Increasing awareness and capacity in mental health and wellness
- Increase employee engagement
- Improve opportunities for early intervention and learning

Background

We are embarking on a system-wide collaborative process to enhance and nurture system understanding of a Compassionate Systems Leadership Framework. In addition to ongoing work with our Principals and Vice-Principals, this framework will become the foundation of the Manager's Learning Series this year. A number of individuals from DLS and other departments have taken, or will be taking, a four-day training to support this work.

The **Compassionate Systems Leadership (CSL)** approach comprises an integrated framework for the development of capabilities and knowledge that strengthen the capacity of individuals and collectives to effectively progress systems change initiatives. CSL builds skills and practices in three interconnected domains: personal mastery, reflective or generative interactions and systems thinking. CSL draws on practices that are effective in building individual insight and well-being and extends them to include the strengthening of interpersonal relationships while deepening the understanding of how the whole system contributes to outcomes.

The **CSL Framework** is a set of interconnected domains which are intended to support system transformation in a compassionate and sustaining way. It is focused on four domains:

- What are we seeking to accomplish? (*Practice*)
- What are we seeking to learn, especially that can benefit others beyond ourselves? (*Research*)
- How do we need to learn and grow, individually and collectively, to be successful? (*Capacity building*)
- Who is the “we” and what is the quality of the relational space we create? (*Community building*)

Measuring the effectiveness of this type of initiative is very challenging. To support our work, we are utilizing an approach which allows us to collect information, artifacts and quantitative data in a holistic, collaborative way.

In a Compassionate Learning System, some illustrative examples of these levels of data include:

- **Level 1 (Satellite Data):** absenteeism rates, recruitment/retention rates, staff satisfaction surveys
- **Level 2 (Map Data):** artifacts illustrating the use of framework models being utilized, evidence of inter-departmental processes/structures, adaptive responses to long-standing challenges
- **Level 3 (Street Data):** leaders/managers being able to define a “Compassionate Learning System,” narrative evidence and knowledge of the patterns and themes individuals have shared regarding our system and ways we may approach our work in more compassionate ways

Appendix A contains a graphic which outlines the types of data being explored, Appendix B a description of the underlying values and beliefs to this approach.

Implementation Approach

As members of DLS have reflected on various training and in-service opportunities, and after lengthy discussion and collaboration, it has been determined that our implementation will take a parallel approach.

- Through the Managers Learning Series, there will be a specific and targeted focus on building capacity in compassionate systems leadership approaches.
 - These sessions will provide opportunities for our managers and leaders to reflect on ‘how they show up’ for their staff, students, and communities.
 - Tools and strategies from the Compassionate Systems Leadership will be explored and utilized with our larger team.
 - The capacity built through this approach will be reflected in all areas of leadership within a school and/or department, not just when discussing social emotional learning.

- Concurrently, we will work with our Principals and Vice Principals to work with their school communities to advance the work with social emotional learning. This will take a multi-layered approach to include, but not limited to:
 - Create Social, Emotional, Academic Learning Teams (SEAL Teams) with their schools. These teams may include teachers, admin, students, CUPE staff, counselors, etc.
 - Through a variety of means, use the NLPS version of the CASEL pie plate (Appendix C) as a foundation to collect street data on what is currently happening in their schools to support various aspects of social emotional learning.
 - Using resources from CASEL, do a school inventory of resources and personnel to support social emotional learning.
 - Create and implement a survey or other collection mechanism to gather information from the school community in regards to effective impact of current supports and future/ongoing needs.
 - Create a plan for school specific next needs that reflect the unique characteristics of each of our school communities.

Appendix A: Levels of Data

Appendix B: Excerpt from Street Data, Shane Safir

Appendix C: NLPS Social Emotional Learning Foundation

