

Educator as Researcher Project
South Island Distance Education School
May 2016

Our question this year was “How do we adopt a standards-based mindset in a distributed learning model?”

Our plan was to explore new avenues in assessment and grading, using a formative paradigm in our secondary program; however, with last summer’s announcement of a new curriculum for September 2017, our focus shifted to our math, science and social studies courses at the middle-school level.

We have used the funding this year for the following projects:

Middle School Math Assessment Model

Teachers have planned and implemented a new assessment approach for middle-school math, which provides students with a number of opportunities for formative feedback in every lesson, rubrics that are outcome-specific, and tests which are organized outcome-by-outcome, so that should students need to rewrite, they can just focus on those skills they have not yet mastered. Teachers have also planned alternative assessments with unit projects.

Grade 8 and 9 Science Assessment Model

Teachers have planned and have begun implementing an assessment model with a greater emphasis on formative work and with the introduction of competency-specific rubrics that will be used with slight modification throughout the secondary sciences.

Middle School Social Studies

Teachers have planned and have begun implementing a formative approach that supports the development of competencies and scaffolds learning as students take on more independent inquiry.

Because of the time pressures of developing a new K-9 program for the fall, our focus this year has been on planning new models and putting the structures in place to support delivery of the new program in the fall. We will continue to meet next year to assess how effective our new approaches are.