



South Shore

Regional Centre for Education

Collaborative Learning Teams

What they mean for your child

Together. Inspiring students to reach their full potential.

Your child's health, well-being and learning are very important. Our goal is that students receive the best possible education in an environment that is welcoming, fair and supportive, and where everyone has high expectations and works together for the good of all.

The most important factor for student learning and well-being is the quality of teaching. To improve teaching quality, teachers need ongoing professional learning.

"Teaching quality exerts greater influence on student achievement than any other factor in education - no other factor even comes close."

Darling-Hammond, 1999; Hanushek, Kain, O'Brien & Rivkin, 2005; Thompson and William, 2007

To ensure our teachers get this professional learning, we have adopted a collaborative learning structure in our schools. Teachers are organized into small groups (based on grade, subject, etc.) that work together to discuss curriculum, examine teaching techniques and review student data. The benefits to teachers include:

- they learn from other teaching styles
- they receive regular feedback
- they discuss teaching and learning with colleagues
- they can problem solve, exchange strategies and work together to grow as professionals

To allow teachers the opportunity to participate in collaborative learning time, our schools have embedded this time into the school day. On 14 days of the school year, the school day has been reduced by 90 instructional minutes for students. To ensure your child doesn't miss any instructional time, all other school days have

been extended by an average of seven to 10 minutes for the entire school year. The 14 meeting dates can be found via [this link](#).

Evidence-based research shows the following benefits to students and their families:

- Improved student engagement
- Increased student learning in all areas
- A classroom environment where students can work using their preferred learning styles and talents
- Decrease in the number of times teachers are away from their students for professional development
- Enhanced examination of student work so supports are in place sooner
- Improved instruction and assessment practices
- Improved relationships and social emotional competencies

Feedback from your children's teachers shows that being part of a collaborative learning team is allowing them to grow as teachers and showing them how to adjust their teaching practices to improve student engagement and achievement.

To view an example of a collaborative learning team conversation at one of our schools, [click here](#). This is a short clip of a conversation about trying to improve a student's literacy levels. These conversations usually last about 90 minutes and involve two to six teachers. If you have any questions, please contact the principal.

"Quality teaching is not an individual accomplishment, it is the result of a collaborative culture that empowers teachers to team up to improve student learning beyond what any one of them can achieve alone."

Carroll, 2009
