

Section 1: Project Information

Project Stream / Focus: Place-Based Education	
Your Project Title: Studying the impact of development on the native Flora and Fauna of Central Saanich	
School: Stelly's Secondary	District: Saanich #63

Team Contact Information			
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Section 2: Project Overview

Project Description	
<p>Summary/vision: Students will have a deeper understanding of how human populations impact the local environment.</p>	
Goal	Evidence of success
Our vision is students in grade 9-12 developing a clear understanding of the local flora and fauna and the impact of development on our environment.	Students completed a variety of outdoor experiences in the neighbourhood of the school. We focussed on ways for students to document their learning using the technology, especially the cameras.
As their knowledge deepens, so will their understanding of which environments need to be protected, and how balance can be achieved.	Students are planning an environmental student conference to take place here next year. Their motivation is due in part to their increased understanding of the impact of development in our surrounding community.
Our team goal is to become more confident with technology and cross-curricular integration	As we learned more about technology, we were able to make connections with other schools and community agencies who also use similar technology. We found that as we increased our own capacity in using the technology, we also had more questions. We felt that we have only just chinked the iceberg on what we can do with the cameras and MacBooks.
<p>Description of project program/class/participants: The classes involved ranged from grade 9 to grade 11 Social Studies, Science and English. Class composition was typical of a BC high school with a few students representing each ministry category: special needs students, first Nations students, gifted,</p>	

etc. Class size ranged from 24-31. All teachers have taught for many years and experienced few behavior challenges.

A description of how the project proceeded – what, if any, training took place, how was the technology introduced to students, how was it used during the project by the teacher(s) and the students, how were the project activities completed?

Our goal was to get more students outside into the local area in-order to document how humans are impacting the local environment. We took walking field trips to many of the local beaches and parks. We investigated streams and took Ph measures to document changes over time.

A description of the main challenges encountered during the project and how they were overcome.

Our equipment did not arrive until midway through the first semester. This delay impacts semestered secondary schools, much more than it would an elementary or year long school timetable. By the time staff and students learned how to use the equipment, since they only have 80 minutes a day and still have the content to learn, the semester was over. My recommendation is that SET BC consider having the equipment ready to ship at school start up or the week prior to September, so that teachers can get going right away.

Semester two was a much smoother implementation as teachers were familiar with the equipment, and could teach their students quickly rather than learning on the fly as it was in semester two. Also, by semester two, we had a routine of procedures that we were getting used to.

At the time of application, we were under the impression that we had to have a large group of teachers to be approved for this project. We found that our large group whittled down to a more manageable group of Science/Social Studies teachers with the support of our school technology teacher. In future, I would not try to be so large scale in our involvement across the school, but would focus on 2-3 teacher participants.

We had a lot of students do a lot of activities, however a focus on one or two classes might have been easier to manage. However, because so many teachers were involved students were better able to

make cross-curricular connections, which is a strength or a larger group of teachers.

A description of the main successes of the project and what was achieved overall.

1. Staff capacity in using technology and getting out into the community was increased dramatically. This increase in capacity will be long lasting, and it had the result in increasing student engagement in the courses that participated.
2. Through the project we were able to create connections with a variety of local environmental agencies, the University of Victoria marine research, LEO network and we also benefited from Canadian Geographic training in using Google Earth. These connections will be long lasting. Students were more able to recognize careers in geography/science and teachers were more able to see how the curriculum skill sets are intertwined and as students age what we see as silos of knowledge, are in fact wholistic entities.
3. Because a large number of teachers and classes were involved in our project, students really saw how content is interconnected. They were able to use their social studies skills in mapping in science to document changes over time.
4. Our culminating activity outside the school was at the TSAWOUT tidal estuary with 100 students, a number of local elders and First Nations families was wonderful. Students participated in stations of activities related to the ecosystem and local land/resource use, elders spoke about treaty rights, and we roasted salmon on a beach fire in the traditional way.
5. Our in school final activity was a gallery walk of student presentations, visit by numerous other groups, including local elders.

Recommendations for other groups.

1. Recognize that the more teachers/classes involved the less manageable the project will become, however this is balanced by the strong connections that build via the professional

discussions and sharing. On the whole, the larger group created a really cool dynamic of sharing and 'oh we could do this too' thinking which was great for students to see.

2. Share your professional learning with students so that they are able to see that as an educator you are not 'perfect' and that as a team you are going out on a limb.