

CAPE: Centre for Academic and Personal Excellence Charter School

**Follow-Up Actions
to Recommendations and
Required Changes
From the
Charter School Evaluation
May 29, 2019**

Alberta  Education

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions From the Charter School Evaluation – May 29, 2019

Completion Date of This Document: November 9, 2019
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Criteria 2: The school operates in a manner consistent with all applicable provincial requirements

Recommendation: First Nation, Metis and Inuit Knowledge

CAPE staff develop and enhance background knowledge and understanding of First Nation, Métis and Inuit cultures to build capacity in preparation for the implementation of the Teacher Quality Standard in September 2019.

Follow Up Action:

1. CAPE will be working towards establishing a partnership with Mother Earth Charter Academy. Through this partnership we are aiming to foster the building of relationships between our diverse student population and the Mother Earth Charter Academy First Nations students and staff. Unfortunately, the pandemic has interfered with our plans. Once face-to-face classes resume as near normal as possible, we shall pursue the establishment of this partnership.
2. Past efforts to establish a successful and sustained partnership with area First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples were minimally successful. Renewed efforts have led to a contact individual (Indigenous Student Specialist, Student Development, Student Engagement) in the area. CAPE is going to pursue this avenue in an effort to establish a relationship with First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples. Unfortunately, the pandemic has interfered with our plans. Once face-to-face classes resume as near normal as possible, we shall pursue the establishment of this partnership.
3. CAPE will continue to offer Indigenous Studies projects at all grade levels and offer increased professional learning for teachers to present indigenous perspectives. This has continued during the 2019-2020 academic year (till March 2020) and will be in place again for the 2020-2021 academic year depending on the pandemic situation.

Once the foundations are established, initiatives will be developed and implemented on a yearly basis to continue to strengthen the foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit.

Additional Comments: CAPE has continued during the 2019-2020 academic year and will continue the work that has already been done in this area, such as the acquisition of print and visual resources and the inclusion of foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit within core and projects at all grade levels.

We are beginning with ...We have engaged in a school-wide Orange Day series of activities (spearheaded by the First Nations Team). The school purchased orange shirts for every student and adult. The older students will engage in art integration projects and generate designs to recognize the legacy of residential schools and the reinforce the belief that every child matters. There will be a contest (staff, parent and student voting) and the selected design will be applied to the orange shirts. A fundraiser can then follow in September 2021 to support both CAPE and the *Every Child Matters* organization.

A First Nations Team has been structured. The superintendent is leading the team; 5 teachers have volunteered to be part of this team. Two of these teachers are currently taking a course through the University of Lethbridge. They will develop and enhance their background knowledge and understanding of First Nation, Métis and Inuit cultures. They will identify curriculum areas that are ideally suited for integration of First Nation, Métis and Inuit cultures and pilot such integration this year, if possible. They will also act as resource to colleagues. One teacher is a lower elementary/ kindergarten specialist and will pilot activities and act as the resource person for the lower elementary teachers. One teacher is taking on the role of community liaison and reach out to the local First Nation, Métis and Inuit population. One teacher is ideally positioned to establish connections with Mother Earth Charter Academy.

Criteria 2: The school operates in a manner consistent with all applicable provincial requirements

Requirement: New Quality Standards

That CAPE Charter School staff demonstrate the requirements of the Teacher Quality Standard, Leadership Quality Standard and System Leadership Quality Standard when it comes into effect in September 2019.

Follow Up Action:

Over the last two years the CAPE administration has been actively following the ministry's work on the Quality Standards. Using the Teacher Standard, an evaluation document was developed. The latest draft was developed in January 2019. All four of these documents are parallel documents are designed to align with the Quality Standards while providing the CAPE Board and administration with working, applicable, useful, meaningful tools for the supervision & evaluation of its staff.

These documents was to be used during the academic year 2019-2020, reviewed for effectiveness and usefulness and revised, if necessary. This did not happen due to the suspension of face-to-face instruction. It will take place in 2020-22.

Additional Comments: This work will continue during the 2020-2021 academic year. COVID 19 has significantly hindered our movement in this area.

The work described in the previous section will address Teacher Quality Standard Applying Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit #5. A teacher develops and applies foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit for the benefit of all students as well as parallel sections of the Leadership Quality Standard and the System Leadership Standard.

Criteria 3: The students, parents, staff, school council and community members consider the school program to be successful.

Recommendation: Technology plan

It is recommended that staff continue to build understanding of how technology can be implemented to support the individualization of the learning experience for students. The capacity of staff to maximize technology use is varied. The Alberta Education Learning and Technology Policy Framework (2013) is a resource to inform technology policies, practices and outcomes. It can be found on the Alberta Education Website.

Follow Up Action:

1. 2019-2020 will see CAPE moving forward with the work initiated in previous years and described below. The focus is on
 - (1) teacher effective use of technology as a teaching tool;
 - (2) not only the student effective and efficient use of technology to enrich and expand learning but also the ethical use of technology as it pertains to social media.

Additional Comments: Parent, staff and student feedback during the 2017-2018 academic year alerted the CAPE Board to the need for clarity and uniformity in the technology area. As a result, the CAPE Board developed several documents during the 2018-2019 academic year. These are:

- 7.09 Digital Citizenship policy
- 7.09 Digital Citizenship Procedures
- CAPE Network Resources Acceptable Use Protocol for Staff
- CAPE Network Resources Acceptable Use Protocol for Students
- iPad rules

These documents were developed from a review of the Alberta Education Learning and Technology Policy Framework (2013), the Digital Citizenship Policy Development Guide (2012) and policies and procedures from other charter boards and public jurisdictions.

The documents have been shared with all stakeholders and some have been posted in classrooms and common areas of the school. They will be reviewed regularly, especially since implementation began mid-year, spring of 2019.

The plan was derailed due to the suspension of face-to-face instruction. What this unexpected happening cause was a drastic and sudden need for technology as a teaching and learning tool school-wide. It forced the acquisition of technology skills among all staff members so that the students could be supported while learning from home. Because of the speed at which we were required to adapt, several tools were used depending on what each staff member felt the most comfortable with. We learned that this was neither effective nor efficient and caused much confusion. Feedback from staff, parents and students brought about the adoption of a school-wide system that facilitates online learning for those choosing to learn at home, supports those students that are learning face-to-face and addresses the needs of students that are absent. One platform for everyone reduces the workload of the teachers, provides one point of contact for those working from home, prevents students falling behind when absent. Teachers and support staff were provided with paid time in school to learn the system together and build capacity among the whole staff.

CAPE expects to see positive outcomes but is prepared to assess and respond, if needed.

Criteria 4: The school is financially viable and responsible

Requirement: Monitor Student Enrolment and Building Operation Costs

It is recommended that moving forward, the school monitor its finances and the repercussions that a decline in enrolment and cost of owning a building will have on its ability to balance a budget.

Follow Up Action:

1. The CAPE Board has re-designing its Finance Committee structure. The committee's new name is Finance/Audit Committee and includes, as of September 2019, two individuals that are not directors/board members and not employees of the Board. One is from the business community and one is from the adult learning community. The purposes of this re-designed committee, in addition to those already established for the Finance Committee, is to recommend external auditors to the Board, to review the board's annual financial statements and report on same to the Board, and to undertake other matters as determined by the Board.
2. CAPE has been successful in recruiting an individual with expertise in finance and accounting as part of its Board of Directors.

Having this type of expertise on the Board and on the Finance/Audit Committee provides for intense oversight of the CAPE budget and ensure as much as possible the financial viability of CAPE while continuing to provide the outstanding personalized program that our students need.

Additional Comments:

The CAPE Board has monitored very closely its finances, student enrolment, cost of owning, and cash flow. This has been a practice necessitated by CAPE's size/enrolment and the very significant cost associated with providing a personalized program to a very diverse and challenging student body. The cap on our classes is a major factor in the provision of the personalized program as well as financial constraints that CAPE has faced and will continue to face in the future. 2019-2020 is a particularly difficult and significant year as CAPE is now managing its own financial resources (the transfer has been completed and CAPE is now the owner of both the building and the land).

This work continues in 2020-21.

Criteria 6: Student achievement at the charter school is consistently strong or improving.

Recommendation: Develop more local measures

It is recommended that CAPE consider exploring other ways to represent student success and improvement. For instance, an examination of literacy and numeracy data to determine ways to represent information to staff and parents. To share publically the research and data that is guiding their planning and assessment of student progress. What should this say??

Follow Up Action:

1. Prior to September 2019, the CAPE administration has reviewed the latest Education Plans. The goal was to streamline the plan, to review the measures currently within the plan with an eye on relevancy, on demonstration of achievement of the CAPE charter goals i.e. student academic and personal success and improvement.

As a result, some measures have been relocated to an appendix as additional data. Some have been shifted to a different outcome because the data are more relevant to that outcome. Some measures have been refined or amended.

This review process is currently still in progress. Current 2018-2019 data is being analyzed and taken into account.

2. The AERR Summary is also being reviewed. The goal is to integrate the research and data that guides the planning and assessment of student progress into this summary information. It seems that this summary is the ideal tool for this purpose as most readers prefer “bites” of information to a lengthy text.

Additional Comments:

The AERR and Plans undergoes a yearly review and changes are made as deemed necessary and appropriate. However, the current review is more significant in depth and scope.

COVID-19, the move to on-line teaching and learning, and planning for the re-entry have brought about a review of our Literacy and Numeracy Programs. The focus is to restructure these in order to effectively support our students as they re-enter the face-to-face learning after about six months away from formal learning. The second goal is to adhere to the health requirements and safeguards that must be in place as we re-enter. This unexpected journey has brought about reflection, assessment, modifications and adaptations.

The Annual Education Results Report is being developed based on analyses of data collected during the first 6 months of the 2019-20 academic year. CAPE is also currently engaged in the development of a stand alone Education Plan for submission at the end of November 2020. It is anticipated that the Plan will be reviewed and revised during the 2020-21 year. This plan is being developed in consultation with the CAPE School Council, community and other stakeholders. Engagement of parents, students, staff and other key stakeholders on board matters and plans crucial to shared governance.

Criteria 8: The charter school shares its innovative practices and learning outcomes with others in the educational community.

Recommendation: Working relationship for student transitions

Continue the development of working relationships with the local schools to support transition of CAPE students in and out of their school.

Follow Up Action:

1. CAPE has structured a grade 9 project for the fall of 2019 with a focus on transition into high school. This is a mandatory project for grade 9 students and open to other students in grades 7 and 8. This project facilitates understanding of the high school programs, graduation credit requirements, core and elective subjects strands, and timetables. Students visit each of the local high schools, meet counsellors and participate in Q & A sessions. Students also experience the development of their timetables based on an exploration of their strengths and weaknesses, aptitudes and interests and set tentative goals for themselves.

Parents have the opportunity to be involved so that they may acquire knowledge of relevant information to support their children in the transition.

The staff of CAPE and the local high schools have the opportunity to share information about their respective programs so as to better support the students during transition and high school completion.

This pilot project will be assessed for effectiveness and modified accordingly.

Additional Comments: This program has been implemented in the fall of 2019. Feedback from students and parents has been extremely positive. It will continued in 2020-2021 and beyond.

Criteria 11: The school is administered effectively.

Recommendation: Student Voice

That school administration explores ways to enhance opportunities for student voice.

Follow Up Action:

1. In 2019-2020, students in grades 4-9 will be polled regularly for their input on activities in conjunction with School Council. These items will include social events such as dances and movie nights, as well as opportunities to volunteer.
2. In 2019-2020, CAPE will explore the possibility of a Principal Student advisory Council.

Additional Comments:

The CAPE annual grades 4-8 student survey has purposefully included questions to solicit student opinions on all aspects of the school. The re-establishment of projects was a direct result of this student voice.

The annual CAPE survey 2018-2019 was modified to include more overt opportunities for student voice. Questions pertaining to projects have been included to gather feedback re preferred projects from the previous years, gather ideas for expansions of these projects and about future projects. Student feedback as to benefits of the projects is solicited. The data were analyzed and considered when planning projects for the 2019-2020 academic year.

This has and will continue in future years.