

# 2021-22

## Annual School Development Report

### St. Simon & St. Jude Academy

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### St. Simon St. Jude Academy Mission Statement

St. Simon St. Jude Academy is a community of students, teachers, staff, administrators and parents/guardians dedicated to educational excellence in order to enable our students to become confident, self-directed, lifelong learners. Our school community strives for student achievement through a holistic approach. Our goals include:

- Developing in each student the ability to think, inquire and strive for excellence
- To teach societal values and encourage students to apply them to all aspects of their lives in order to be productive and contributing members of society
- To structure programs that provide strong academic skills
- To encourage the fulfillment of individual abilities and social responsibilities

## Strategic Issue/Goal: Changing assessment practices

### Objective:

**Shift to standards-based learning and assessment practices with the goal to build an environment of hope, efficacy, and diverse learning opportunities.**

### How did you know this was a Strategic Issue/Objective? What evidence did you have?

- Significant student population exhibits a variety of exceptionalities that limit the effectiveness of traditional assessment practices (eg: tests)
- Students have expressed interest in greater choice in the manner in which they are assessed; may contribute to increased positivity and confidence (ie: contributes to building hope and efficacy). Greater engagement contributes to deep learning.
- Parents have expressed interest in changing approaches to assessment as a way to better show what their children have learned and understand

### Year-end Summary of Progress. What evidence do you have to support this progress?

**Staff have made some progress reviewing the material on standards-based learning and assessment on the Google Classroom and there have been productive discussions about how to proceed. We have had similar discussions with our neighbour school which is also participating in the pilot, however we both agreed that it is too early to make significant changes to assessment practices. Positive discussions about changing those practices have been had with parents and the students, and we have been introducing some updated practices in the classroom; namely a greater emphasis on formative assessment and feedback discussions after major assessments have been conducted. Students have responded positively to this. The administration has participated in a number of school district meetings with a focus on discussing assessment**

practices; a more detailed conversation was arranged with another school participating in the standards-based learning pilot which provided valuable guidance on how to approach SBL and implement it. We all agreed the focus had to be on learning SBL practices before jumping into any pilot. It was determined that once we were comfortable with SBL practices we should try to employ them in at least one unit of a course later in the school year. We decided to do this with a unit of Social Studies 9. It is still in its early stages, but the teacher found developing the learning goals and defining the outcomes in an accessible way was very helpful for organizing themselves and the students. Student feedback so far has been positive; they like knowing explicitly what they are doing and the expectations. As teachers, we would consider that to be best practices in any case and the thought of expanding these practices in the future seems much less daunting.

### Next Steps...

As we go through the current unit in Social Studies, engagement is a central precept of SBL and we will be closely monitoring student and parent feedback with respect to the learning goals and the assessments used for those goals. This will inform our practices as we proceed through the unit.

We will need to review practices and overall engagement at the very end of the year. For now, we expect the main next steps to be developing learning goals for another unit and/or subject. There is some discussion of engaging the students in developing their own learning goals in the units they are studying. Language Arts and Math were identified as priority areas.