



SUN WEST
SCHOOL DIVISION

Success for all

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For Immediate Release

Sun West School Division Receives an Honourable Mention for CEA's "Innovation That Sticks" Initiative

The Sun West School Division recently received an Honourable Mention in the Canadian Educators Association's initiative "Innovation That Sticks" for the division-wide blended learning system

In order to infuse 21st Century skill development in all aspects of learning within the division, the SWSD Board established a \$1,000,000 innovation fund for a 3-year period as a lever to encourage schools to develop innovative projects focused on improving student learning and teaching. This focus on 21st Century Competencies (21CC) coupled with the Distance Learning Centre digitized supports and added financial incentives have created a real appetite for enhanced PD opportunities.

A 21st Century Educator position has been created within each school to focus on providing support to teachers. A number of Division Learning and Technology Coaches provide 21st CC sessions (2 days/teacher) and infuse the workshops with strong curriculum, instruction and assessment pedagogy.

The SWSD is building a Distance Learning Centre (DLC) housing 100 online teachers for asynchronous program development and delivery embedded within the division's collaborative model. The DLC has 35 online teachers housed 12-to-a-room so that their program development and delivery is conducted within a cooperative physical space. This structure is very conducive to supporting and mentoring teachers new to online instruction. The DLC has developed more than 100 online courses. Core programming in Grades K-12 and numerous electives at the middle and high school levels are complete. Many dual credit course options are available to high school students.

[Sun West DLC Video](#)

Specially trained Education Assistants (EA's) (teacher aides) have been placed in every Sun West school to supervise students who are learning independently via online DLC courses. This practice has increased student completion rates of online courses from the previous 30% average to presently between 80-95%. Every teacher in the SWSD has access to the DLC programming and is encouraged to use any aspects of the online courses for their own instruction within their face-to-face classrooms. This support has encouraged many more teachers to explore blended learning environments.

(Source: <http://www.cea-ace.ca/programs-initiatives/innovation-sticks-school-district-case-study-program>)

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