

Completed Google Classroom project will have positive impact for high school teachers and students into the future



This group of Chinook's Edge teachers participated in provincial marking of the most recent Diploma Exams in Edmonton in January. This opportunity allows teachers to gain a deeper understanding of what is required on English, Social, Science and Math exams which creates greater success for their students. A new and exciting element this year was that these teachers, who are flung far and wide across the large Chinook's Edge school division, knew one another because of their collaborative work together on the extensive Google Classroom project over the last two years.

A large project has now concluded, but has only just begun to benefit teachers and students across Chinook's Edge. The Google Classroom project was led by 14 master teachers and involved over 160 high school teachers from across Chinook's Edge, who focused their efforts together during the division's Collaborative Days. By pooling their resources and sharing expertise in their subject areas, comprehensive materials for 64 core courses and specialty areas to enhance the work of teachers in the classroom have been created.

Teacher resources include course outlines, lesson plans, rigorous assessments, and supplementary materials such as videos, articles, handouts and suggestions for classroom activities. Through the division's collaborative culture, and as fellow teachers access and add to the materials, each Google Classroom will continue to grow.

"The Google Classroom collaborative time provided opportunities for teachers to come together with colleagues from outside their building, sitting side by side to discuss the best resources and instructional strategies we can use to support student learning," said Mike Garrow, Principal of École H.J. Cody High School, as he reflected on the value of the project as a teacher and a school leader. "It provided an opportunity to build connections with other teachers around the division who have different skill sets, knowledge, backgrounds and expertise to learn how they teach the different outcomes of their curriculums."

"New teachers or those new to the topic are finding the classrooms beneficial as they are given access to much-needed material, allowing them to focus on teaching students rather than on the creation of material," said Diane Sewell, Olds Koinonia Christian School teacher. "The videos posted in the Google Classrooms give teachers the flexibility to watch the lecture themselves or to use them as a resource for substitute teachers, which is a huge bonus. Experienced teachers are accessing the classrooms to provide supplementary materials to add to their established curriculum, so all of this hard work is benefitting many teachers across the division. The process of creating these classrooms has also provided many opportunities for teachers to discuss best practices, assessments, rigor and alignment between grades. These are valuable discussions."

"The intention is to create a wealth of high quality teaching materials for each course so that our high school students are learning from these wonderful resources, along with connections to the people who created them," said Karyn Barber, Associate Superintendent of System Services. "This means teachers are not spending time creating materials that already exist. This is the true goal of collaborative work and we hope it will benefit teachers across the division, as we navigate increasing complexities in our classrooms."

"COLT appreciates the significant time and effort our high school teachers and administrators directed to this project. Whether teaching physics or music, when teachers ignite their love of the subject with like-minded professionals an invaluable synergy is created, which is in the best interest of the students we serve."

Substitute Teachers' Appreciation Week, March 13 - 17

Chinook's Edge honours the vital service that our substitute teacher colleagues provide to teachers, staff and families in schools across our division. Thank you for all you do!