York Catholic District School Board: 2014 - 2015

Project Title	**Expansion of Blended Learning (with D2L as the LMS) from Kindergarten to Grade 8**
Description	This innovative research project sought to test the impact of a capacity-building model on the adoption of a learning management system (i.e., Desire2Learn) by teachers within the elementary panel as a catalyst for the expansion of "blended learning" practices from Kindergarten to Grade 8. This Round 4 Innovation Research Project was undertaken as a follow-up to our Round 3 project, with an emphasis on the "spread" of <u>ONE</u> particular technology tool to large numbers of teachers across grades and schools, K-8. This project was limited to teachers from 41 elementary schools where there was no history of training on the Desire2Learn (D2L) platform and no classroom accounts. Our capacity building model was characterized by the following: 1. A four-person, cross-divisional team of teachers from each of the schools 2. A full-day, hands-on in-service 3. Follow-up, site-based support (as requested). Workshops were planned for September 2014 for elementary principals to familiarize them with the power and potential of Desire2Learn (D2L). Principals were then provided with an information sheet to help assess the school's readiness for training and information to post at their schools to enable teacher-volunteers to make an informed decision about their involvement. Each of the 41 principals selected a four-person team to attend a full day training session.
Context	*Number of students*: 4025 *Number of teachers*: 175 *Number of schools*: 41 *Grades/Program*: Grades K-8
Impact on Students	The primary focus of this Innovation Research Project was to test a professional development model aimed at "spreading" the use of a specific learning management system to support blended learning approaches from K-8. As such, our findings focus mostly on the "spread" element among teachers (i.e., system scaling). To the extent that our data helps us understand the impact on student learning, findings include: • 45% of respondents indicated their students were using D2L in the classroom • 45% of respondents indicated their students were using D2L at home • 44% of respondents observed their students viewing the calendar • 27% of respondents observed their students accessing course content and links • 21% of respondents observed students using the Drop Box to submit work

Impact on Instruction	The primary focus of this innovative research project was to test a professional development model aimed at "spreading" the use of a specific learning management system. To the extent that our data helps us understand the impact on teacher practice:
	By June 2015, findings included the following with regards to their use of D2L:
	• 78% felt confident using the Calendar feature;
	• 57% reported using this feature "Occasionally" or "Frequently"
	• 75% felt comfortable using the News feature;
	• 59% reported using this feature "Occasionally" or "Frequently
	• 58% felt comfortable creating Widgets;
	• 47% reported using this feature "Occasionally" or "Frequently
	• 62% felt comfortable inserting Files;
	• 55% reported using this feature "Occasionally" or "Frequently
	• 31% felt comfortable using Discussions;
	• 21% reported using this feature "Occasionally" or "Frequently
	• 25% felt comfortable using the Drop Box feature;
	• 26% reported using this feature "Occasionally" or "Frequently
	Respondents reported their primary use of D2L as follows:
	• 39% indicated they use D2L as a Communication tool
	• 26% indicated they use D2L as a Demonstration tool
	• 25% indicated they need additional training before they can introduce D2L
Impact on System	Teachers were surveyed before and after their training:
	• 16% indicated they "know a little about D2L but do not feel comfortable explaining how to use it" – a pre-post **decrease of 23%**
	• 53% indicated they "know a fair amount about D2L and understood how to use it" – a pre-post **increase of 44%**
	• 23% indicated they "know a lot about D2L and have shared how to use it with my colleagues at my school"
	• 12% indicated they "know a great deal about D2L and have helped colleagues in my school use D2L"
	Note - The latter two figures indicate that 35% of respondents report having played an active role in "spreading" their enthusiasm and knowledge to others; thereby contributing to system scaling.
	An analysis of unique system user data within D2L indicates the following:
	• From November 2014 to March 2015, 175 teachers from 41 elementary schools received direct D2L training from our Board's Technology Enabled

	Learning and Teaching Contact as part of this research project.
	• There were 175 "Teacher Activations" within D2L to enable the teacher-volunteers to participate in the training that formed the basis of this research project.
	• By May 2015, the total number of "Teacher Activations" at those 41 schools had increased to 608.
	• Between November 2014 and May 2015, 433 "Teacher Activations" were initiated at the 41 schools for teachers who DID NOT receive direct D2L training from the Board's Technology Enabled Learning and Teaching Contact.

NOTE: Information in the summary is taken directly from the data contained in the final project report.