# Greater Victoria School District No.61

# DISTRICT/COMMUNITY LITERACY PLAN JUNE 30, 2008

## "Committed to each student's success in learning

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# INTRODUCTION

This report documents the 2007 – 2008 progress of the Greater Victoria School District and its community partners towards creating collaborative community literacy plans. As a large school district, there are many literacy providers and advocates within our school borders. There has been considerable action this past year in establishing the intent to collaborate, establishing the key partners, and beginning an outreach program to various agencies whose key mission is literacy. As all involved in creating these plans realize, it is valuable in the early stages to provide time to create the mission, to establish the norms, and to clarify the involvement of stakeholders. It is also important to be inclusive to all community members and to welcome newcomers into all stages. This report chronicles this year's work towards a community literacy plan.

## DISTRICT CONTEXT

## Demographic Data

The Greater Victoria School District serves students from the municipalities of Saanich, Esquimalt, View Royal, Oak Bay, the Highlands, the City of Victoria, and the following Nations and Aboriginal organizations: Esquimalt Nation; Songhees Nation; Métis Nation of Greater Victoria; Métis Community Services; Victoria Native Friendship Centre; First Nations Interagency Team; and Hulitan Social Services.   Schools draw from urban, semi-urban, and suburban areas.

Five MLAs represent the Greater Victoria area.   Approximately 197,000 people reside within the School District.  Of these:

- 8% of the homes are non-English speaking
- 2.5% of the homes are Aboriginal
- 7% of school-aged children have Aboriginal ancestry

In British Columbia, visible minorities represent 21% of the population.   In the Greater Victoria School District, 10.9% of the population represents visible minorities, in contrast to 59% of the Richmond School District and 48% of the Vancouver School District population.

Students come from diverse socio-economic levels with 25 schools qualifying for CommunityLINK (Learning Includes Nutrition and Knowledge) funding.   Of the families living in the Greater Victoria School District, 11% are considered low-income.

### Enrolment 2007-2008

Our September 30, 2007 enrolment was 19,223 Full-Time Equivalent Students (FTE).   This represents an enrolment decline of 98 FTE students from the 2006/07 school year. The enrolment in the Greater Victoria School District has been declining since 1996.  It is projected to decline each year to 2010 when enrolment will likely be less than 18,000.  We enroll:

- 7380 FTE Kindergarten through Grade 5 students
- 4395 FTE Grade 6 through Grade 8 students
- 7167 FTE Grade 9 through Grade 12 students

Included in the above enrolment are the following students:
- 1370 Aboriginal ancestry students
- 609 International students
- 14 Home-school students
- 563 Students registered in Distributed Learning Programs
- 1343 Students with English as a Second Language
- 2516  Early French Immersion students
- 227 Late French Immersion students
- 2235 Students designated for Special Education Services

# DISTRICT AND COMMUNITY LITERACY PLAN

## History

### 2006

 Camosun College hosted a forum of literacy educators, service agencies, school districts, and a temporary regional literacy coordinator to discuss regional literacy needs on south Vancouver Island. Greater Victoria School District was invited to this forum.  A   subgroup met throughout the summer to identify gaps and priorities and became the Regional Literacy Advisory Group.

### 2007

In January 2007 British Columbia school districts were mandated by the Ministry of Education and to create a community literacy plan, to be revised and submitted on an annual basis in July of each year.

## Current Actions

### 2007

1. In October 2007 The Ministry of Education provided a Vancouver Island SD orientation to the new district literacy planning process in Campbell River.  Island school districts and the regional literacy coordinators discussed beginning plans for community collaboration.

2. In December 2007 twelve draft district literacy plans were submitted to the Ministry of Education in December and were available as a resource to other school districts in January 2008.

3. Victoria SD 61 received $10,000 in provincial funding to create a district literacy plan.

## **2008**

1. In January an orientation to literacy planning guidelines was provided to all provincial school districts. School districts and communities were in a variety of stages in literacy collaboration and were encouraged to proceed at the pace set by the community.

2. In January Community and SD Literacy Planning Guideline booklets (2) were provided for community and school district literacy planning.

3. In February the Regional Literacy Coordinator (RLC) met with Eileen Eby of SD 61 to discuss potential processes for developing the literacy plan e.g. the Regional Literacy Advisory Group (RLAG) agreed to work together to apply for Legacies Now funding.

4. In March SD61 and RLAG met to discuss working together, including applying for funds from Legacies Now to augment the SD61 funding. A proposal with a budget was written, reviewed and submitted to Literacy Now by RLAG, which includes Eileen Eby, for the purpose of the literacy planning initiative. The funding request was for $20,000. The request was submitted by Literacy Victoria, as steward of the funds.

5. In February, March and May the RLC held 3 regional literacy roundtable meetings. One of the primary purposes of the meetings was to inform the community of the community planning initiative and request a) participation on the Steering Committee and/ or b) availability for tasks and resources for the initiative. Leona Gadsby of 2010 Legacies Now and Diana Twiss of Literacy BC attended the first meeting to provide further detail and answer questions about the literacy plans. These meetings served as a launch of the literacy planning initiative.

6. In April the RLC attended a SD Public Education and Policy meeting to discuss the role of the RLC and the literacy planning initiative. Literacy Victoria received confirmation of the $20,000 Legacies Now funding. Involved agencies discuss implementation plans.

7. In April RLAG and SD 61 met to discuss a process for working together including a) pooling Legacy Now and School District funds and b) contracting a literacy planning coordinator. Subsequently, terms of a literacy coordinator contract, including deliverables and timelines, was completed.

8. In May a Community Literacy Planning Steering Committee was formed and includes members of RLAG and 2 other community members. The steering committee is open to new members.

9. In May funding was secured from Literacy Now for community literacy planning. Literacy Victoria is the steward of the funds.

10. In May the steering committee met twice and then with the contractor to review purpose, mandate, principles, scope, membership, accountability. (Appendix A)

11. In June the contractor prepared the first deliverable which includes:
    a) A review of the literacy planning process to date
    b) A community profile template (Appendix B)
    c) A data source list for the community profile
    d) A literacy asset inventory template (Appendix C)
    e) An inventory data source list

12. In June the steering committee and the contractor met to review deliverable #1. The committee approved the elements of the profile and asset inventory templates. Additional data sources and ways of organizing were discussed.

## Current Organizational Structures

All members of the public are welcome to attend all sessions by all groups. Membership is actively sought for the following groups.

**Regional Literacy Advisory Group (RLAG**): This group advises as to mandate, membership, and actions for improving literacy at all ages in all communities. The members all represent agencies or services directly related to the provision of literacy. RLAG recommends and participates in opportunities for agency and community consulting and cooperation. This group has applied for and received Legacies 2010 funding to pursue community literacy.

**Community Literacy Steering Group**: This group is a subgroup of RLAG and takes responsibility for administering the Legacies Now and School District 61 funds.

**Focus Groups**: These may be existing tables (eg: Early Learning) that members of RLAG attend to discuss assets and needs. They may also be ad hoc groups briefly created to provide information regarding particular aspects of the community literacy plan.

**Community Groups**: As the asset mapping and needs assessment progresses, communities will be invited to bring together interested members to work with RLAG to create new action plans for their particular needs and priorities.

# Next Steps

The coordinator will take the lead with the following actions, at all times consulting with RLAG and reporting to the Community Literacy Steering Committee. She will review existing data as well as bring together focus groups.

| | |
|---|---|
| July 2008 | Community Profiles for five (5) municipalities delivered to Community Literacy Steering Committee for review and advice <br> Discussion and plans for sharing |
| August 2008 | Inventory of Literacy Assets completed and delivered to Community Literacy Steering committee for review and advice <br> Literacy Community engagement strategy and schedule developed |
| September 2008 | Community engagement meetings continue <br> Steering Committee monitors plan |
| October 2008 | Engagement Report #1 completed and delivered to Community Literacy Steering Committee for review and advice <br> Report shared with RLAG <br> Community engagement meetings continue |
| January 2009 | Engagement Report #2 completed and delivered to Community Literacy Steering Community for review and advice <br> Report shared with RLAG <br> Community planning with one or more communities solidifies |
| February 2009 | Draft Community Literacy Plan delivered to Community Literacy Group for review and advice <br> Plan shared with larger groups and relevant neighbourhoods |
| March 2009 | Community Literacy Plan and recommendations for School District #61 catchment area delivered to Literacy Now <br> Funding applied from Literacy Now for phase 2 of implementation |

# Appendix A

**Terms of Reference**
**Community Literacy Steering Committee**
**Greater Victoria School District  61**

## 1. Purpose/Mandate

The mandate of the Community Literacy Steering Group is to provide guidance to the Greater Victoria School District Literacy Now community literacy planning initiative.

The steering group will guide this planning initiative, identify priorities, and, based on community consultations, make recommendations on program and/or system needs. A report on the planning process and outcomes will be submitted to SD #61 for the District Literacy Plan report required by the British Columbia Ministry of Education.

## 2. Principles

The Steering Committee operates on a set of guiding principles:

- Provide opportunities for all community members to be included in literacy planning process.
- Operate in ways that are uniquely responsive to each community.
- Network and collaborate with interested individuals, groups, programs, organizations, and businesses that support literacy and life long learning
- Maintain a participatory and democratic organizational structure.
- Increase awareness of the importance of literacy and continuous learning opportunities across the community.
- Incorporate an inclusive understanding of literacy: early years and youth, family literacy, adult, Aboriginal, immigrants, ESL, and workplace.
- See literacy as part of community capacity building without duplicating services.
- Maintain a learner focused approach as planning process.
- Work collaboratively to address gaps.

## 3. Scope

The Steering Committee focuses on planning for:

- Aboriginal learning
- Adult literacy, including seniors
- Child and Youth literacy
- Continuous learning
- Family literacy
- Workplace literacy
- Immigrants including ESL

The Steering Committee has responsibility for:

- Assessing needs, interests, and priorities in the communities

- Developing recommendations for literacy initiatives, based on community consultations
- Supporting and working with community organizations, practitioners and community members
- Reporting to the community through personal and work contacts
- Hiring a coordinator
- Guiding and overseeing the Coordinator in the delivery of the Literacy Now planning project as outlined in the Community Literacy Planning guide
- Building partnerships for lifelong learning.

## 4. Membership

Membership in the steering committee is diverse, reflecting history, programs, and community characteristics and can include representation of any number of early years, K-12, adult, and Aboriginal groups. New members are welcome to join the Steering Committee at any time.

## 5. Accountability

The Steering Committee is accountable to the community and to 2010 Legacies Now for ensuring the completion of the community literacy planning process. The Steering Committee is fiscally accountable to 2010 Legacies Now for the funds allocated to it. Funding is stewarded by Literacy Victoria.

# Appendix B

## Community Profile Template

Introduction to the Geography of SD 61.

For each of these municipalities in SD 61:  Victoria, Esquimalt, Oak Bay, View Royal, South Saanich, the following framework will be used to gather information. Data source lists include, but are not limited to those on list.

I   Geographical Setting
- Location boundaries for each municipality
- Relationship re: location to other SD's on South Vancouver Island (map)?

    Data Sources:
- SD 61 office
- CRD
- Municipal offices
- Maps

II   Historical Setting
- Brief history of municipality, including aboriginal population

    Data Sources:
- City of Victoria
- Chamber of Commerce
- Tourist Bureau
- Parliamentary archives
- Provincial Museum
- Aboriginal community groups in each municipality (Lit. Vic. Alegha Van Hanuse (SILC); SD 61 Transition Accountability Contract 2007-2008; appropriate individuals)

III  Social Setting
- Demographic scan including age distribution, marital status, ethnic backgrounds
- Comparison of above with other municipalities in SD 61 and provincial averages
- Identify trends based on most recent census data
- Compare level of schooling of this area with other areas in SD 61 and provincial averages
- Identify special needs groups
- Identify main social issues/challenges that may be addressed by literacy initiatives/programs

Data Sources:
- Stats Canada
- Stats BC
- City of Victoria (Active Living Guide)
- CRD (Demographic Atlas current year?), "For Your Information", Regional Information Services
- SD 61
- Camosun College (Disability Support, Research and Planning, School of Access)
- UVic
- Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria
- Canadian Council on Learning
- Immigration Canada
- RLAG
- Literacy Victoria
- READ Society
- Inter-Cultural Assn.
- Guide to Community Agencies
- Library
- Task Group Steering Committee
- Victoria Foundation
- Volunteer Victoria
- Bridges for Women

IV  Economic Setting
- Identify main industries/businesses
- Unemployment rates and trends
- Compare both of the above with provincial averages
- Identify economic issues/challenges that may be addressed by a literacy initiative

Data Sources:
- Municipal, provincial government ministries
- Victoria Chamber of Commerce
- Business associations (e.g. VEDC)
- Stats Canada
- BC Stats
- Canadian Labour Force Development Board
- Conference Board of Canada
- Occupations Outlook
- Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre
- HSRDC
- City Councils
- Bridges for Women
- Chamber of Commerce
- City of Victoria Planning Dept.

# Appendix C

## Community Literacy Inventory Template

Inventory of Literacy Assets in SD 61, Victoria, BC:

The following will be headers in an Excel spreadsheet for inventory list:

- Name of Organization or Group
- Program/Service
- Population Served
- Municipality
- Address
- Contact Person/Title
- Phone
- Fax
- Email
- Website
- Cost
- Goals
- Number served
- Staffing" Paid and volunteer
- Resources
- Funding

Further details for assets framework will be integrated into Community Engagement Reports.

- Greatest Successes
- What more would you like to do?
- How make service better
- What are the current partnerships?
- What are possible links to existing pgms.
- Who are potential users of services?
- Training offered and cost

## Community Literacy Planning Data Source List

1. Aboriginal community groups in each municipality (Lit. Vic. Alegha Van Hanuse (SILC); SD 61 Transition Accountability Contract 2007-2008; appropriate individuals)
2. Bridges for Women (Community Services Directory)
3. Business Associations (e.g. Victoria Economic Development Commission)

4. Camosun College (Disability Support, Research and Planning, School of Access)
5. Canadian Council on Learning (Composite Learning Index etc.)
6. Canadian Labour Force Development Board
7. Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre
8. Chamber of Commerce
9. City of Victoria-Planning Dept and other resources
10. Community Literacy Planning (CLP) Steering Committee
11. Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria
12. Completed Provincial Community Literacy and SD Plans
13. Conference Board of Canada
14. CRD (incl. Demographic Atlas current year, "For Your Information", Regional Information Services) and other resources
15. Creator of MapsWest-map of literacy assets Charles(?) incl uvic url
16. Current literacy asset documents (e.g. Songhees)
17. Each pgm./organization as source of referrals to other organizations and resources (e.g. reports/documents)
18. HRSDC
19. Immigration Canada
20. Inter-Cultural Association
21. Internet websites (e.g. 2010 LegaciesNow and individual organizations)
22. Library
23. Literacy Victoria
24. Maps
25. Municipal offices
26. Municipal, provincial government ministries
27. National Adult Literacy Database (NALD)
28. Native Friendship Centre SD 61 (Family Literacy)
29. Occupations Outlook
30. Our Place
31. Parliamentary archives
32. Provincial Museum
33. READ Society (incl. Family Literacy Guide)
34. Recreation Centers
35. Regional Literacy Advisory Group
36. Regional Literacy Coordinator
37. SD 61 office
38. Stats BC
39. Stats Canada
40. Telephone Directory
41. Tourist Bureau
42. UVic
43. Victoria Foundation
44. Victoria Learning City Report