



## District Literacy Plan 2008-2009



**School District 70 (Alberni)**

Port Alberni ■ Bamfield ■ Tofino ■ Ucluelet



*School District 70 (Alberni)*

# District Literacy Plan

## **Overview**

The district literacy plan will be developed through consultation and collaboration with district and community partners involved in providing literacy support and educational programs in the various communities included within School District 70. The Community Literacy Plan for Port Alberni, developed by the LEAP NOW Steering Committee, forms the basis of the District Literacy Plan.

## **Progress to Date**

### **Port Alberni**

To create the Port Alberni Community Literacy Plan, the LEAP NOW Steering Committee guided an iterative public input process. Substantial input was received during a meeting of service providers from many sectors and a community forum. From those attending the meetings, five task forces comprising a total of 30 people were formed. Each task force addressed a specific age group, Early Childhood through to Adults/Seniors. Each task force met, submitted draft plans, revised them, and then prepared a report for a combined meeting involving all participants and contributors. At the combined meeting, participants added further comments and the draft plans were adjusted to reflect additional input and considerations. The LEAP NOW facilitator met with each task force chairperson and with representatives of those organizations substantially affected by the initiatives in the task force plan to receive further comment. The draft plan was then submitted for review by participants in the process.

The work completed on the Port Alberni Community Literacy Plan will form the basis of efforts to extend literacy development activities to other communities within School District 70. The development of the Port Alberni Community Literacy Plan was initiated by the Steering Committee for Literacy and Education for Alberni People (LEAP NOW). The chairperson was Tom Weegar, Principal, North Island College Alberni Campus. The Steering Committee was formed consisting of community partners from School District 70, Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council, Port Alberni Friendship Centre, Make Children First Network, Community Arts Council, Association for Community Living, North Island College, INEO Employment Services, Vancouver Island Regional Library, City of Port Alberni, and three community businesses. The facilitator of the process made a significant contribution to the development of the collaborative process and integrating the perspectives of multiple organizations into the Port Alberni Community Literacy Plan.

Over the past year, Literacy Alberni has been successful in obtaining federal funds through the New Horizons for Seniors Program. The Literacy Alberni program is called “Port Alberni Seniors Training for Literacy” (PAST for Literacy) and is designed to connect seniors to their community through a volunteer

tutoring program. As well, Literacy Alberni has been successful in obtaining some funds from the BC Ministry of Attorney General, Settlement and Multicultural Division, to undertake ESL training in the Alberni Valley. Both of these funding sources have allowed Literacy Alberni to establish a strong and vibrant literacy and ESL program in the Alberni Valley. There are currently over 25 learners matched with tutors, with more learners joining the program each month. There is obviously a strong need for adult literacy and ESL services in the Alberni Valley.

Literacy Alberni has also initiated efforts to develop an adult literacy program to assist adults improve their life circumstances, either through advanced employment or through advanced education. Learners work with a tutor to develop an individual learning plan that will allow them to identify their career or educational goals and establish a plan to achieve those goals. Within the Alberni Valley, there are no other agencies or programs designed to support the learning needs for fundamental-level adult literacy learners. This program will serve as a key link in allowing learners to transition from Literacy Alberni training into more formal upgrading programs.

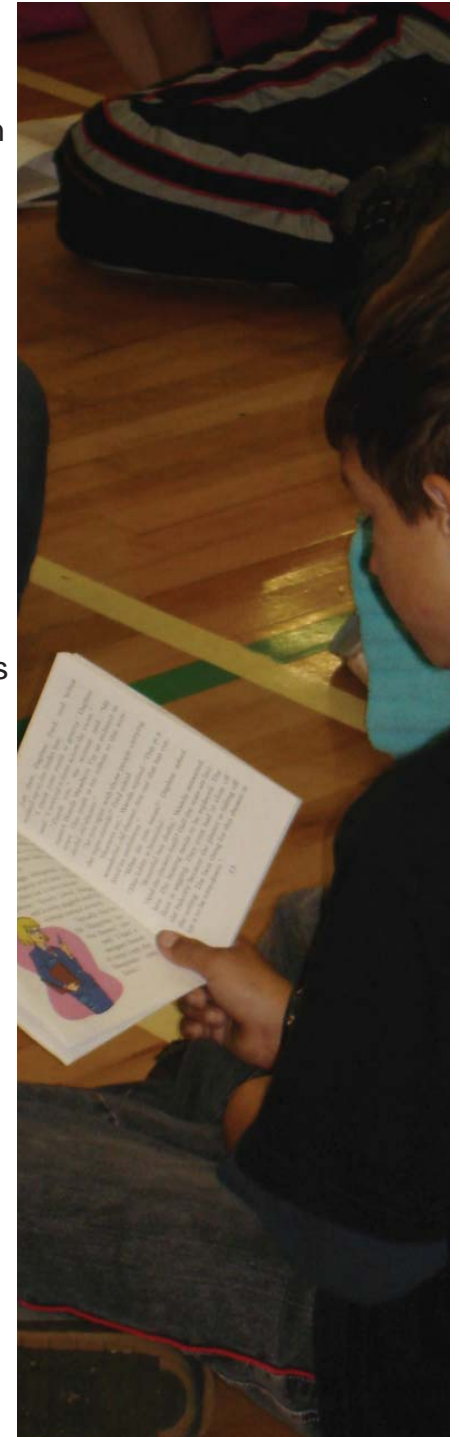
Literacy Alberni has supported or has been involved in various literacy initiatives including: Raise a Reader campaign, funding for the Welcome to Kindergarten program, and establishing a Community Family Literacy program to support family literacy projects within the Alberni Valley. Anticipated programs for Family Literacy include: Outdoor Words and Learning project, Cultural Cooking in a Nutritious Manner project, Family Reading and Picnic Excursions project, and Family Literacy with Bread of Life project.

#### West Coast Communities

Two separate planning processes have been established for the West Coast communities in the geographical area of School District 70. The Bamfield and Anacla/Huu-ay-aht First Nation literacy planning process is coordinated through the Bamfield Community School Association. The Central West Coast Planning Process for literacy in Nuu-chah-nulth and English is coordinated through the Coastal Family Resource Coalition. Each of the planning processes has established a broad definition for literacy and has established strong connections with First Nations communities.

The Central West Coast process will include partners from Hesquiaht First Nation, Ahousaht First Nation, Tla-o-quiaht First Nation, Ucluelet First Nation, and Toquaht First Nation. The Bamfield process will include partnership with the Huu-ay-aht First Nation and is inviting participation from the Ditidaht First Nation.

For both of the literacy planning processes, expressions of interest have been submitted to Literacy Now to begin the development of community literacy plans. The Bamfield Community School



Society received funding from Literacy Now for \$5000 to initiate the literacy planning process for the communities of Annacla/Hu-ay-aht First Nation and Bamfield, and will invite the Ditidaht First Nation to participate. The Coastal Family Resource Coalition launched community consultation meetings in Tofino, Ucluelet, Ahousaht, and Hot Springs Cove at the beginning of June 2008 to begin the process of community collaboration on literacy enhancement.

### ***Anticipated Next Steps***

School District 70 anticipates continued collaboration with community partners to develop a consistent long term approach to the development and implementation of a community plan for literacy development. The district is also committed to working in partnership with agencies or entities involved in literacy development within the geographic area of Vancouver Island Central West Coast.

The district also anticipates continued involvement in the Raise-a-Reader campaign and extending the program to other communities within the geographic area. District resources and programs will also be aligned with other programs that support adult literacy. Additional efforts at improving literacy include expansion of early learning initiatives throughout the district such as the Strong Start programs in Ucluelet and Port Alberni, Welcome to Kindergarten, and Ready, Set, Learn.

In looking forward, opportunities exist for collaboration and cooperation among the three separate community literacy projects: Literacy Alberni, and the planning groups for Bamfield Community School Society and the Coastal Family Resource Coalition. Additionally, School District 70 remains a partner and a participant in the development of Literacy programs for the communities within our geographic location. The district will provide support and resources to coordinate reporting requirements and identify possible indicators to monitor the success of literacy improvement initiatives.

