

District Literacy Plan

School District #83 North Okanagan Shuswap

Note – history of district and aboriginal info from Irene to go here



North Okanagan-Shuswap School District #83 is an area of 8,500 square kilometres located around the Shuswap Lake and North Okanagan. It is an area rich in natural beauty and an area with strong interests and traditions in academics, arts and athletics.

Retail, tourism and manufacturing are large employers in the area. Other significant employers include forestry, the retirement community and agriculture.

The school district encompasses the distinct communities of Malakwa, Sicamous, Grindrod, Enderby, Ashton Creek, Kingfisher, Armstrong, Spallumcheen, Falkland, Rancho/Deep Creek, Silver Creek, Salmon Arm, Carlin/ Tappen, Sorrento, Celista, and Seymour Arm.

The school district includes four First Nations bands - Spallumcheen, Adams Lake, Little Shuswap, and Neskonlith. Comprehensive local education agreements and strong ties have been developed with the bands, which have resulted in both academic and cultural benefits.

There are a significant number of district students with Metis heritage/non-status, with representation on the First Nations Council.

Trying to offer the widely-distributed student population as many choices as possible, the district has both an early and late French Immersion program. Offered as second languages in the district are French, Japanese, Spanish, German and American Sign Language.

In the career area the district has a comprehensive program seeking out career exploration and preparation opportunities for students as well as a strong secondary school apprenticeship program.

There is a strong focus on literacy, numeracy and social responsibility (including student leadership), with the district striving to maintain tried and true teaching methods while introducing new tools, developed through proven research, to help student achievement.

Highlights this year include workshops in differentiated instruction and assessment for learning, restitution, control theory, literacy, and numeracy (focussing on the new K-8 IRP).

The district follows an inclusive model with itinerant professionals providing support services to students at their neighbourhood school.

Student Population and Composition

Elementary	2,947
Middle & Secondary . . .	3,845
Alternate Programs	525

(As of April 30, 2008)

Student Diversity

14.5% of students are Aboriginal learners
18.5% of students are Special Needs learners

No. of schools: 28

Elementary	18
Secondary (8-12)	2
Secondary (9-12)	2
Middle school (6-8)	3
Storefront	3
Continuing Education Centre (Gateway)	1
Distributed Learning Site	1
Alternate Programs	6
High Potential Programs	1

Total area 8,500 sq. km

Schools at outlying parameters

(Distance from school board office)

North Shuswap Elementary	70 km
Falkland Elementary	25 km
Pleasant Valley Secondary	40 km
Malakwa Elementary	45 km

Buses:	42
Daily Km travelled	9,200
Students who ride the bus daily	3,900

Pillar #1: Increase the number of children entering school ready to learn

Early Learning in SD #83

In our initial stages (2007/08 school year), we formed a liaison with the Early Childhood Development Committees in Salmon Arm, Sicamous and Enderby. As a result of community collaboration, ECD committees are now in the early stages of formation in both Sorrento and Armstrong. Our rural school district also includes the communities of Falkland and North Shuswap. We met with all community stakeholders on September 26, 2007 to form a committee which includes all communities to discuss and distribute Early Learning Grant Funding. Proposals from each community were supported based on their diverse needs using Early Learning Grant Funding .

We are thrilled to have had our first “StrongStart” program open in Enderby in Spring, 2007, with our second opened in Sicamous in September, 2007. We chose these communities based on greatest need as demonstrated in our EDI results. In addition, we opened a program with similar attributes to StrongStart at Salmon Arm West on November 1, 2007, using a variety of grant funds. We are hopeful that further Ministry of Education “StrongStart” funding will allow for the program at Salmon Arm West, as well as additional programs in downtown Salmon Arm and Armstrong to open as StrongStarts in the

2008/09 school year (in a perfect world, we believe a “StrongStart” program would exist in each neighborhood school!). Our proposal is included in this section.

Programs and plans include:

- Working closely with Early Childhood Development committees in our district (widely spread – Salmon Arm, Sicamous, Armstrong, Sorrento, etc.) to conduct Ready, Set, Learn workshops as teams, determine needs in our 0-5 population, and increase “team” approach to include public health, mental health, OT/PT, SLP, MCF
- Presenting workshops to pre-school parents on literacy, numeracy and social responsibility
- PALS in 18 of our 18 elementary schools. Early Learning Grant funds in the 2007/08 school year were used to hire Early Learning Helping teachers to build capacity with kindergarten teachers in their own schools, and coordinate resource packages for families at the district level. In the 2008/09 school year, each elementary school will run PALS sessions, the majority led by the kindergarten teacher in their home school with support from the Early Learning Team
- Saturday sessions will continue in each community (piloted this year using Vancouver Foundation Grant and Early Learning Funds)

Please see appendix #1 for R,S,L and PALS district wide plan for the 2007/08 school year. The 2008/09 plan includes three support sessions for Kindergarten teachers who will then offer PALS in their own school. EDI results are included, as is our StrongStart proposal. Also included is the letter outlining the distribution of the community portion of our Early Learning grant Funding.

Pillar #2 Increase the number of children who read successfully

K-12 Learning in SD #83

We have been able to, largely through the Ministry of Education’s Literacy Grant, offer many initiatives which supplement the learning environment. An overview is below:

- Bring Adrienne Gear to Salmon Arm (130+ teachers) in Spring 2007, Fall 2007, Spring 2008 and Summer 2008
- Purchase “Reading Power” books for all K-8 teachers
- Provide helping teachers to conduct Writing, Reading Power and SMART lessons K-12 using three day format:
 - 1) Mentor teacher teaches lesson
 - 2) Mentor and classroom teacher plan next lesson
 - 3) Mentor and classroom teacher co-teach
 - 4) Mentor and classroom teacher plan next sequence

(Comments from side by side teaching very powerful, eg: “to have Steve teaching with me in my own classroom and planning with me has been the most useful and motivating pro-d I have experienced in 30 years in the classroom.”)

- Sponsor five teachers to attend “Interactive Innovations” each year

- Provide in-service on Reading Power (local facilitators), Assessment for Learning, PM Benchmarks, “Reading for Information”, “Words Their Way”, and the BC Performance Standards
- Provide mentor teachers to work with classroom teachers using Cathie Peters’ “Reading for Information” assessment (gr. 3-8)
- Provide mentor teachers to work with primary teachers using the PM Benchmarks for classroom assessment
- Provide mentor teachers for writing workshops
- Conduct four Literacy Team meetings for planning and review of district initiatives
- Provide “Board of Education” information session on “Reading Power” to trustees and parents
- Work with community groups (ECD and OUC) to plan future initiatives
- Sponsor teachers to attend “Leadership for Learning” sessions
- Continue to support Four Blocks, Words Their Way, Write Traits

This is in addition to the regular teaching and learning in our classrooms and is enhancing the learning environment for students and teachers. Please see the Long Term Literacy and Assessment In-Service Framework included in this section, as well as our Achievement Growth Plan.

Pillar #3 Community Literacy Plan

VISION – A community which

- Values literacy
- Understands levels of literacy
- Embeds literacy in daily living

Through our liaison with Okanagan University College, we completed our Literacy Now proposal in Spring of 2007. Consultation took place through three community meetings during the 2005/06 and 2006/07 school years. At our May 14, 2007 meeting, to which representatives from the school district, early childhood, our First Nations bands, local businesses, Okanagan University College, RCMP, Public and Mental Health, Ministry of Children and Families were invited, our task force was finalized.

Our task force completed our proposal in June, 2007. We were pleased that the community chose to have the proposal represent the areas encompassed by our school district, as recommended by Leona Gadsby of Literacy Now. As a result, our Community Literacy Coordinator, Bev Routledge, was hired in January 2008 to conduct a needs assessment of the many communities and their diverse needs represented when funding the proposal (North Shuswap, Sorrento, Falkland, Carlin, Salmon Arm, Sicamous, Malakwa, Enderby, Armstrong, Ashton Creek). A summary of the many meetings chaired by Bev is below. This initiative will support adult literacy in all of our school district communities, as well as

address the individual needs of each diverse area in Early Learning, K-12, and Aboriginal learning learning.

We feel fortunate that the timing of our Literacy Now grant has allowed us to work as a team to combine our community plans with our district plans, from the beginning of the project.

Community Consultation Opportunities

Meetings

- Feb 5th ECD
- Feb 7th – Seniors Branch #109
- Feb 18th – Lynda Wilson
- Feb 19th ECD retreat
- Feb 21st – Literacy team Meeting
- Feb 22nd – 1st Nations Parenting Conference
- Feb 28th – Lit Now Forum
- March 4th – CYC and ECD meetings
- March 10th – Sorrento ECD
- March 13th – Literacy Task Group
- March 13th – SAFE Society
- March 27th – The Employment Place
- March 28th – Sicamous Health Fair
- March 31st – Community Futures
- April 1st – Enderby Interagency & Enderby Lit Now
- April 2nd – Lit Now (SA)
- April 7th – Sicamous Interagency & Sicamous BC Healthy Communities
- April 8th – IHA
- April 9th – 1st Nations Education council & Playgroup DAC
- April 11th – The Employment Place Team Meeting (Marty Bootsma)
- April 14th – Sicamous BC Healthy Communities
- April 15th – Social Issues Committee
- April 21st – Sicamous BC Healthy Communities
- April 22nd – Enderby ECD
- April 23rd - Sorrento Group
- April 28th – Enderby Lit Now @ Spall Hall
- April 30th – Kindergarten Health Fair
- May 30th – Community Facilitated Meeting

TOTAL – 29 Community Meetings

Summary of Meetings

LONG-TERM GOALS

- Increase awareness – inventory of community programs (question – how to publish/circulate/access to information); ongoing literacy “events”; continuation of process already begun with Planning Phase (more in-depth connections in Falkland, Armstrong, Malakwa and North Shore); linking programs
- Form centralized literacy service – resource place/person – responsible for: training/education of service providers (ie. literacy/essential skills involved in workplace/school and home life); organizing awareness events; participating in interagency meetings; training volunteers; documenting training events and activities; creating a literacy “hub”
- Increase dialogue between educational organizations and community – ie. Linking programs with community “experts” and linking programs
- Ensure access to programs – support current programs to “upgrade” literacy aspects; create new programs to fill in gaps (particularly youth, adults & seniors); “rekindle” the idea of the schools as a community gathering place (Family Literacy Nights; Family Movie Nights; Children’s Literary Festival; Author’s Tours (especially more remote outlying communities); reduce barriers
- Think “big picture” –
 - eg. Link Literacy Now with BC Healthy Communities for possible outcomes such as: demonstrates principles of collaboration at higher levels, provides leverage of funding, creates more stable funding channels.
 - Link literacy with OCP – bookstores, libraries, civic involvement, town square with high-tech information system, “literacy” tourist booth...
 - Develop a repertoire of ideas to “repackage” literacy programs to be universally appealing rather than “target” certain people

SHORT-TERM GOALS

- Plan awareness events
- Develop a training program which identifies literacy skills required for daily living (eg. Setting an alarm clock – numeracy; taking contraceptives – reading, listening, critical thinking, decision making, numeracy)
- Develop Essential Skills Program (Employment Place)

- Sicamous – Develop literacy strategies to include in new Community Vision; develop strategies in planning/training to create Parks and Rec programs (already using school)
- Sorrento – Form new Sorrento Community Resource Society; access funding opportunities; encourage involvement from North Shore
- Enderby – Develop program to train volunteers (or whatever) to fully utilize computers provided by Industry Canada; assist in promotion and development of Bridging Communities Program
- Armstrong – Form local literacy task force
- Malakwa – Join Sicamous OR form local literacy task force

Please see this section for our original proposal, as well as the draft plan which Bev Routledge , our Community Literacy Coordinator, is “fine tuning” with final consultation from all communities in our district.

Pillar #4 Increase the number of aboriginal students who read successfully

Aboriginal Learning in SD #83

In August, 2007, we were fortunate to hire Irene LaPierre, District First Nations Administrator. In our transitional DLP, we had separated this pillar from the other three, however, Irene’s work in our district this year demonstrates the importance of “weaving” our goals for Aboriginal learners into all of the pillars. As a result, you will see specific Aboriginal goals marked by an asterisk in the Early Learning, K-12 and Community Pillars



The Plan:

Pillar #1: Increase the number of children entering school ready to learn

- Continue with early learning programs PALS and Ready, Set, Learn (appendix 1)
- Continue with StrongStart in Enderby and Sicamous
- Open StrongStarts in Salmon Arm West, Salmon Arm and Armstrong
- Continue to work with Community Literacy Plan on needs assessment and planning in each community encompassed by our school district
- Include this pillar in our final Community Literacy Plan

Pillar #2 Increase the number of children who read successfully

- Continue with long term literacy and assessment frameworks(appendix II)
- Apply for Ministry of Education Literacy Grant to fund programs in place
- Continue to assess programs based on district wide performance standards assessment, Cathie Peters "Reading for Information" classroom based assessments, PM Benchmarks and FSA
- See Achievement Growth Plan Appendix II
- Pro-d Calendar for 2008/09 to all staff by August, 2008 (see Appendix II for 2007/08 sample)

Pillar #3 Adult/Community Literacy

- Continue with Literacy Now task force
- Continue to work with Community Literacy Plan on needs assessment and planning in each community encompassed by our school district
- Include this pillar in our final Community Literacy Plan, which will represent all four pillars

Pillar #4 Increase the number of aboriginal students who read successfully

District First Nations Administrator will continue to:

- Provide administration services for the First Nations Education Council
- Co-ordinate the implementation of the Education Enhancement Agreement
- Liaise with representatives of the Aboriginal communities
- Assist the First Nations Teacher-Counsellors and First Nations Support Workers
- Attend all required Principal/Vice-Principal District Meetings
- Attend all First Nations Education Council meetings
- Attend and represent First Nations visibility in all Aboriginal gatherings, both locally and provincially
- Assist in the process of implementing the local Education Agreement (2007-2012)
- Prepare minutes and reports to ensure accountability to the school district Aboriginal communities, and the Board of Education
- Develop and strengthen relationships between school based administrators and Aboriginal parent/students
- Continue to weave Aboriginal learning into each of the four pillars

