



District Literacy Plan

June 2010

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A. Preparation of District Literacy Plans 2010 - 11

The District Literacy Plan signals a commitment by a school district to work with community partners, in a community-wide process in which a school district is one among many participants. The community literacy planning process continues to be the foundation for district literacy plans. The annual plan is intended to update the previous year's plan and to describe the partnerships, trends in programming, issues, barriers, goals and strategies related to literacy throughout the community.

The provincial government has presented guidelines for preparation of District Literacy Plans 2010, which state:

It is expected that the district literacy plans for 2010 will be an *update* to the 2009 plans. This recognizes that planning is an ongoing annual process intertwined with taking action and evaluating. The plan reflects the thinking of the community group at a given time.

B. Reflections on the 2009-10 year:

Guiding Questions:

What priorities/objectives and actions from your 2009 District Literacy Plan have you addressed this year?

What have been the major impacts or outcomes?

Our community literacy task group has achieved major outcomes in eight key areas. Some of these community actions are specifically related to the West Vancouver School District geographic area. Other actions relate to the whole of the North Shore, in recognition of the fact that many organizations provide services across all three North Shore municipalities along with the Village of Lions Bay, and often include the Municipality of Bowen Island, as well.

Expanded literacy opportunities for low-income individuals and families

- Single parent families at Grant McNeil Housing complex involved in writing group
- Needs assessment for literacy program at Lookout Homeless Shelter undertaken
- Needs assessment of technology literacy needs at Grant McNeil Housing complex undertaken
- Connection initiated with West Vancouver groups to identify areas of need

Expanded Early Learning and Family initiatives

- Increased opportunities for families and early learners (ages 0-5) to access family literacy and early childhood literacy programs situated at the new West Vancouver Child and Family Hub, including;
 - the Friendship Circle, presented in partnership with Gordon House Child Care Centre, Cedardale Child Care Centre, West Vancouver Memorial Library, West Vancouver Family Place, West Vancouver Community Centre, and Early Year's Team-Vancouver Coastal Health
 - cooperative programming between the West Vancouver Memorial Library and the West Vancouver Community Centre, during the Olympic games period and for special events such as Anti-Bullying Day
- Continued WeCAN initiatives at Hollyburn Elementary in partnership with North Shore Family Services and North Shore Child Care Resource Program
- WHEELS (<http://connectforkids.ca/wheels/>) attended John Lawson, Whytecliff and Ambleside parks twice each in summer 2009, and was present at West Vancouver Community Centre for the Harmony Arts Kids entertainment presentation. Vancouver Coastal Health and Child Care Resource and Referral centre staff were also in attendance.
- WeCAN funded several parent/child outreach programs, including
 - Mother Goose program at Woodcroft for 10 sessions, with limited attendance
 - Mother Goose program at Park Royal Community Room, with high participation from Woodcroft families and families from Squamish Nation.
- SummerStart (modeled on StrongStart) was held at Cap Little Ones in summer 2009. This successful initiative was developed in partnership with the Squamish Nation, North Vancouver School District, COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN (CAPC), Family Services of the North Shore (FSNS), WeCAN, and WHEELS.

Involving more seniors in literacy activities

- Over 20 low-income seniors involved in a drop in technology literacy program
- Program for ESL and seniors supported
- Initiation of concept of Seniors and Technology program for West Vancouver

Supporting K-12 Achievement Contract literacy focus

- Continuation of Secondary Futures work, in particular the increased emphasis on student 'voice' in relation to assessment practices
- Development of digital literacy framework for learning, and a draft scope and sequence for K-7 which will be implemented in September 2010
- Introduction of MP Writing Award contest, in partnership with BOOKtopia, providing students in Grades 6/7 with an opportunity to write on a Canadian-themed topic for a public audience

ESL opportunities expanded

- 29 tutors trained to provide ESL support
- Over 50 learners accessing tutor based ESL support
- ESL subcommittee conducting survey of ESL participants to identify needs and program overlaps
- ESL programs planning in a collaborative way, meeting regularly to share information
- Preliminary discussions held on ESL needs of newcomer families in West Vancouver

Expansion of partnerships

- Partnership being formed with Municipality of West Vancouver, West Vancouver Memorial Library, North Shore Community Resource Services, and Park Royal Mall to use Mall space for literacy activities
- New West Vancouver Child and Family Hub is being supported by a partnership with the Municipality, Vancouver Coastal Health, West Vancouver Memorial Library,
- Lookout Northshore Shelter is now a literacy partner and is coming regularly to the Lower Lonsdale Network meetings when they had not previously
- Capilano University faculty from other departments are now volunteering in literacy and community development roles
- Partnership between North Shore Neighbourhood House, John Braithwaite Centre and Capilano University for delivery of Lower Lonsdale Literacy Outreach Program supported and expanded

First Nations community connected with other literacy organizations

- Supporting Tsleil-Waututh Nation to develop a one-on-one literacy support program for people not served through other programs
- Tsleil-Waututh Nation and Squamish Nation together with Capilano University faculty participated in a two day Indigenizing Literacy Workshop
- A three year health literacy process is underway that connects literacy and chronic disease in four communities in the region

Relationships with Businesses Initiated

- Developing concept for a Literacy mall in collaboration with Park Royal Mall
- Dialogue is ongoing with Lower Lonsdale businesses to explore potential for literacy friendly businesses

Integrated Program Planning Initiated

- Through survey of funding cuts, organizations better understand the impact of funding cuts on programs and the community
- Through participation in the [North Shore Welcoming Communities](#) initiative, Capilano University became a partner and hosted a Welcoming Communities forum

- Development Studies Department hosting ESL sub-committee meeting to better link ESL Literacy and other ESL program planning
- Exploring potential for literacy and food security programming in response to needs at social housing complexes

Guiding Question:

What are the factors that contribute to success?

The willingness to work together as a task group is a key factor in the success of our work this year. The Task Group is working in subcommittees where needed, including a West Vancouver Sub-committee and an ESL sub-committee. Where other committees already exist, we are working with existing committees including the Lower Lonsdale Network, WeCAN, the Middle Years' Matters table, and the Welcoming Communities committee.

The willingness of our partners to share existing community resources has also contributed to our success. We have held meetings at West Vancouver, North Vancouver and District of North Vancouver municipal libraries and both School Board offices. John Braithwaite Centre offers their space free of charge. Lookout Northshore Shelter has space that we will be able to use for programming there. North Shore Multicultural Centre hosts ESL and Welcoming Community meetings and ESL programming.

The capacity to support literacy coordination has also been an important factor in our success. North Shore has a team of coordinators who bring specific areas of expertise and interest to the process including community development expertise, regional coordination connections, ESL program development skills and commitments to vulnerable populations. Capilano University, as the steward, also contributed office administration support for the coordination of meetings, record keeping and information sharing.

Guiding Question:

How are you evaluating the effectiveness of community partnerships and development in achieving your goals and objectives?

Our primary way of evaluating the effectiveness of our community partnerships and development has been to regularly check in with our partners and work together to address challenges that emerge. Thus, the evaluation contributes to the ongoing process and relationship building, a key element of community development. We are also using needs assessment tools targeted to specific populations such as ESL learners and the homeless population residing at the Lookout Northshore Shelter.

Guiding Question:

What has changed in the past year that affects literacy in the community? What has been the impact of these changes? How are you addressing these changes?

The biggest change in the community has been the program cuts resulting from Provincial Government budget reductions. The most significant cut was the loss of Regional Literacy Coordination. This cut impacted our ability to connect throughout the region and link our work to provincial level initiatives. Other provincial budget reductions have impacted the availability of family and early literacy programming through the public libraries. In West Vancouver much of this programming has been sustained with other monies raised through the West Vancouver Memorial Library Foundation, however most areas of the North Shore have been more adversely affected.

Many organizations, who work to address the literacy needs of the more vulnerable members of the community, have lost staff through funding reductions. The changes are so significant that the Literacy Now Task Group is not able to address these issues with the limited resources that we have. Despite this, local organizations are working together to support each other and to find new ways to provide services for those in need.

Guiding Question:

What have you learned about collaboration and the community development process?

This process has taught us several things about the role of collaboration and community development in community work to create literate communities. Specific learning includes:

- The importance of focusing on partnerships; as staff members in organizations change, the commitment to the partnership may diminish. It is important to keep the focus on the partnership and the mutual commitment to learners. Otherwise the focus of the dialogue can shift to the space and why one organization gets space free while another does not.
- Most community development work is undertaken off the corner of people's desks by community workers who have a sincere commitment to their community. However, the non-profit sector is over-worked and is at risk of burn-out.
- Educational institutions on the North Shore value the opportunity to connect with community organizations. This process allows them to connect at a community level when the focus of their mandate may necessarily be more focused at an institutional level.
- When community organizations, institutions, and learners communicate, innovative ideas can emerge that allow the community to do what it does best: support each other with limited resources and link various aspects of their lives in integrated ways.

C. Thinking ahead to the 2010 - 11 year:

Guiding Questions:

Are there new opportunities, challenges, or issues in your community?

How will you respond to those?

The Task Group and the sub-committees are working effectively to address issues as they emerge yet some issues are ongoing and require creative and collaborative problem solving. These issues are:

- Access to a computer lab and particularly a mobile computer lab for us at the community level is very limited
- Access to space to run programs where the learners are located is limited; i.e. there is a need for family and child programming in the British Properties area, but a lack of suitable community space in which to do this, such as churches, halls, etc.
- There is significant demand for free ESL programs, some of which is from residents who can afford to pay for ESL courses. With an open door policy, sometimes seats are filled quickly and not available to multi-barriered learners. We are working together to develop a referral process to increase the chance that we are serving our targeted population most effectively.
- As we develop partnerships, we learn of more and more literacy needs and opportunities. However, we do not have the resources to address all these needs in a meaningful way.

In essence, we have the partnerships in place and we understand literacy needs much more deeply than we did when we began. Now more than ever, we need access to resources to take best advantage of the momentum that has been created.

Guiding Questions:

What adjustments have you made to your plan? What new initiatives are planned? What initiatives have been expanded or continued?

Our plan is designed to be responsive to changing conditions, focusing more on broad based strategies. Thus, our strategies will not change but because opportunities and understanding have changed, the actions we will undertake in the coming year will change.

New planned initiatives include:

- Investigate alternate arrangements for delivery of the Bowen Island StrongStart program through partnerships with early childhood learning providers on the island.
- Continued work on the Park Royal Learning Mall in collaboration with the Municipality of West Vancouver, North Shore Community Resources and School District 45
- Coordination of a literacy celebration at the end of each year to recognize the contributions of the partners and the involvement of learners and tutors

- Work with West Vancouver Seniors' Centre and West Vancouver Memorial Library around an expansion of the Seniors and Technology program to West Vancouver
- Implementation of a literacy program at Lookout Northshore Shelter based on the findings of the needs assessment
- Exploration of ways to provide ESL support for parents of children in early childhood programs in West Vancouver
- Expansion of information sharing amongst ESL providers
- Assessment of the needs for a literacy and food security oriented project for low-income families
- Coordination of a region-wide workshop on Indigenizing Literacy to foster greater awareness of the work of North Vancouver Indigenous Teachers (NVIT) on the Indigenization Strategy and promote dialogue among North Shore groups about alternative ways to approach literacy for First Nations in our communities
- Exploration of a drop-in parenting program format, similar to Mother Goose, to address needs at Woodcroft apartments. We know there are approximately 50 families with young children, but there is not a strong interest in receiving community support programs.
- Expansion of Mother Goose programming at Park Royal Community Room to meet increased interest level of participants
- Continuation of SummerStart program at Cap Little Ones for summer 2010
- Continuation of English Corner conversational program at West Vancouver Memorial Library

Guiding Questions:

What will be required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year?

To meet all of our goals effectively, there needs to be a significant increase in public investment in literacy programs. We also need to work with Legacies Now and Literacy BC to build public awareness of literacy needs and opportunities in their communities.

Guiding Questions:

How will you measure or assess your progress?

The next year will focus more heavily on evaluation of our progress to date. We plan to do that by coordinating a partner survey and monitor each initiative funded this year to identify specific learner outcomes.

D. Committee Members

North Shore Community Literacy Task Group:

Pat Hodgson	Regional Literacy Coordinator
Kathy Coyne	Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Beth Beeching	Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Joanne Robertson	North Vancouver School District #44
Maureen Ciarniello	West Vancouver School District #45
Sarah Haxby	Bowen Island Community School Coordinator
Yvonne McSkimming	Bowen Island Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Elizabeth Jones	North Shore Multicultural Society
Fran Jones	WeCAN and Middle Years' Matters Coordinator
Tricia Andrew	North Shore Neighbourhood House

West Vancouver Literacy Sub-Committee

Tara Matsuzaki	West Vancouver Memorial Library
Leanne Sexsmith	District of West Vancouver
Fran Jones	WeCAN and Middle Years Matters
Sarah Haxby	Bowen Island Community School Coordinator
Beth Beeching	Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Maureen Ciarniello	West Vancouver School District #45

Appendix A

DISTRICT LITERACY PLAN REPORT 2009/2010

School District 45 has been an active partner of the North Shore Literacy Now Process. Through this process, we have made significant strides in 2009/2010 toward completing the Strategies outlined in our Community Literacy Plan. This report outlines our progress to date and changes we anticipate as we move forward to the second year of implementation.

PRIORITIES ADDRESSED

Table 1 below shows that the majority of strategy areas have been addressed with the exception of family literacy. Family literacy was not prioritized in this year because there are very active Early Childhood and Middle Years tables in which both School Districts are active players. However, specific family literacy needs have been identified and will be prioritized in the next year.

Table 1: North Shore Literacy Coordination Report

Strategy /Action	Level of Completion
<i>Strategy 1: Build active partnerships between community organizations, First Nations, educational institutions, libraries, hospitals, government agencies and the business community to increase the number and type of literacy opportunities in the community.</i>	
Support Literacy Now Committee	Completed
Support assessment of funding cuts and analyze impacts on literacy	Completed
Support coordination of ESL subcommittee of Welcoming Communities	Completed
Support coordination of West Van subcommittee	In progress
Support partnership with Squamish Nation Health Centre for health literacy activities	In progress
Support development of partnership with Park Royal	In progress
Participate in Interagency meetings and share information on existing literacy programs	In progress
Continue to support funding cut information gathering	No longer relevant
<i>Strategy 2: Promote community awareness of literacy issues and the way in which they exclude people from full involvement in the community.</i>	
Develop pamphlet on literacy programs	Not yet initiated
Maintain BC Literacy Directory database: http://directory.literacybc.ca/index2.htm	In progress
Develop relationships with the Aboriginal community through existing programs providing support and resources where available	In progress
Identify literacy assessment tools and explore how to best make these available to community organizations	In progress
Promote Lower Lonsdale program	Completed
<i>Strategy 3: Develop a comprehensive continuum of literacy programs for all ages through partnerships between community agencies, governments, and educational institutions.</i>	
Coordinate development and implementation of Learning Mall at Park Royal	In progress

Develop Seniors Computer literacy program	Completed in Lower Lonsdale; in progress for West Vancouver
Develop and implement Literacy Outreach in partnership with Lookout and Harvest Project	In progress
Strategy 4: Develop a continuum of community-based ESL programs and supports for all ages and groups.	
Continue to provide ESL volunteer tutor programming through Lower Lonsdale Literacy Outreach	Completed
Link Capilano U to Welcoming Communities initiative	Completed
Work with ESL subcommittee of Welcoming Communities to identify additional ESL programming required in North and West Vancouver	In progress
Strategy 5: Develop and implement a continuum of family literacy programs and support.	
Participate in WeCAN to identify needs and share info	Not yet initiated
Meet with First Nation groups to identify needs and existing strengths	In progress
Connect with schools and organizations to identify any support needed	In progress
Identify funding sources that are not currently being accessed and share info with WeCAN	Not yet initiated
Strategy 6: Work with community agencies to increase capacity for assessment and referral.	
Identify and provide literacy assessment resources	In progress
Make contact with SWIS workers and share information	Not yet initiated
Strategy 7: Develop specialized programs in collaboration with agencies serving people with mental health issues and developmental disabilities.	
Maintain contact and share information	Not yet initiated
Assess any gaps	Not yet initiated
Strategy 8: Support First Nation educational organizations to achieve their educational/literacy goals.	
Outreach to First Nations Health Organizations	Completed
Promote Lower Lonsdale program	In progress
Connect with adult programs and Capilano First Nation Advisor	Completed
Coordinate 2 day Aboriginal Literacy Workshop	In progress
Identify current gaps and address in collaboration with First Nations organizations	In progress
Strategy 9: Monitor outcome achievement and adapt plan as required.	
Develop Outcome Measurement Framework and tools	In progress
Complete report	In progress

Appendix B

History of Development of District Literacy Plans

In 2007, the Ministry of Education introduced a requirement that school districts be responsible for submitting an annual District Literacy Plan that focused on *four pillars* of literacy:

1. Early literacy success for young children
2. Reading success in schools
3. Reading success for adults
4. Reading success for Aboriginal people

The district literacy planning process was intended to build upon the community literacy planning process.

Building on the Community Literacy Plan

In June 2008 the North Shore Community Literacy Task Group submitted its [Community Literacy Plan](#) for the North Shore which contained the following three-year goals:

- Community organizations work together in a collaborative way on literacy issues
- A continuum of literacy supports is available to all residents
- The literacy needs of marginalized groups are understood and acted upon
- Residents support each other in addressing literacy issues
- Individuals, children, youth and families are actively engaged in literacy in increasing numbers

Bowen Island submitted the [Bowen Island Community Literacy Plan](#) in January of 2009 which contains the following objectives:

- Create awareness of the existing resources and facilities on the island
- Ensure access to programs through improved transportation, subsidies for low income residents, and adequate communication about availability of and access to programs
- Ensure sustainability for existing programs through adequate and long-term funding
- Support inter-generational learning and community building
- Strengthen linkages between organizations so opportunities for collaboration can arise

Literacy Outreach Coordinators

The North Shore Literacy Task Group has two literacy outreach coordinators, in a shared position, who focus on different aspects of community literacy development.

Bowen Island Literacy Task Group has hired a literacy outreach coordinator as of April 2010, to guide the facilitation process of its community plan.