

A Community/District Literacy Plan for Sea to Sky Lower Stl'Atl'imx Region



Prepared

By the

Sea to Sky Lower Stl'Atl'imx Literacy Planning Committee

July 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
Executive Summary and Context.....	5
Task Groups.....	5
Community Development and Literacy Coordination.....	8
Goals Areas and Actions for the Current Year.....	9
Indications of Success.....	12
Challenges.....	12
School District Objectives.....	13
APPENDIX 1: COMMUNITY LITERACY PLANNING COMMITTEE	15
APPENDIX 2: AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS.....	16

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This plan represents the ideas of many individuals and groups who have an abiding commitment to literacy for our communities, many of whom have many competing demands on their time and resources. Some people express this commitment through their day to day work as educators and others integrate literacy into their roles supporting the community in various sectors. We are sincerely appreciative of the significant contribution made by everyone.

Capilano University continues to play an overall coordination and community outreach role. Capilano Campuses in Squamish and Mount Currie have been instrumental in gathering community information and promoting community input. The Regional Literacy Coordinator has continued to work with all communities in the region.

School District 48 has played a valuable leadership role in the overall direction of the planning process and in connecting their plans to this overall community plan. This contribution strengthens the community capacity to work as one.

Aboriginal communities, and individual professionals from those communities, supported the process to understand the connection between literacy and culture and contributed to the plan as whole.

Vancouver Coastal Health, the Squamish, Whistler and Pemberton libraries as well as neighborhood centers such as the Hot Spot in Squamish and the T'zil Learning Centre in Mount Currie continue to be important conduits to community based issues and ideas, linking literacy to overall health and well being.

This year has seen the continued work of community literacy tables with local leaders. The work at local tables is significant as it demonstrates the successful efforts of local capacity building. To this end we continue to grow closer to realizing our vision through the development of more clearly defined infrastructures and the sharing of resources. Our collaboration and community development efforts continue to be strong as we seek to steadily improve our work in local communities.

Our Vision

Our communities work together to foster a learning culture. By sharing resources, all of our people can enhance their basic skills to reach their goals and full potential at home, at work and in the community.

Values that Guide Us

- ◆ Commitment to literacy for all
- ◆ Respect for all people with all levels of literacy
- ◆ Openness to the voices of those who has been silenced
- ◆ Pride in everyone's accomplishments
- ◆ Awareness and sensitivity to the relationship between literacy and individual self esteem
- ◆ Hope that our community can be a place where no one is excluded
- ◆ Recognition and appreciation of Aboriginal cultures
- ◆ Inclusion and appreciation of all cultures in all that we do
- ◆ Family oriented and intergenerational approaches
- ◆ Openness and transparency
- ◆ Recognition that literacy affects all aspects of life; and
- ◆ Action oriented and strategic promoting creating practical solutions

1. Executive Summary and Context

The Sea to Sky Lower Stl'Atl'imx Region is very diverse, culturally, socially, economically and geographically. As a result, the literacy needs in each community are very different. The Sea to Sky Lower Stl'Atl'imx Literacy Plan represents that diversity. This Executive Summary describes the communities involved and the progress made over the past year.

Our Communities

The plan seeks to respond to needs of all communities in our region, build on the assets in that community and promote the direction set by the community planning group. Our communities include:

- **Squamish**
- **Pemberton/Whistler**
- **Northern First Nations Communities:
Mount Currie, N'Quatqua/D'Arcy, Tipella/Douglas
Samahquam/Baptiste, Skatin**

Our Process

This year we entered the second year of Implementation Phase of the Community/District Literacy Planning Process. Through our work in the 2010/2011 year we have worked to bring to life the community proposals that were developed in last year's process. Capilano University continues to be the steward of the plan.

During the fall of 2010 project proposals from all communities were submitted. In December a full day Community Forum was held in Mount Currie to share the work and the challenges that had occurred throughout the region.

2. Task Groups (Literacy Committees):

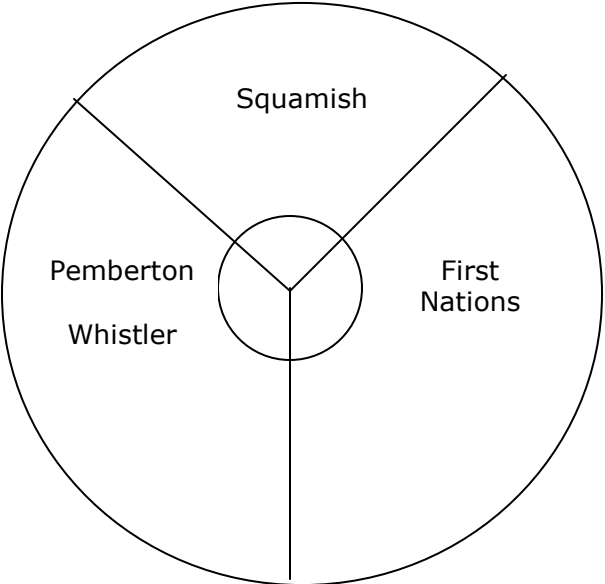
Capilano University continues to play an overall coordination and community outreach role, building on over a decade of community literacy development work through the Regional Literacy Coordination program (no longer funded). There is a Literacy Outreach Coordinator for the entire region, who also acts as the local coordinator for the Squamish Literacy Committee. There is now a local coordinator for the Whistler/Pemberton Literacy Committee. For the Northern First Nations Literacy Committee, coordination was first taken on by a few of the committee members, but this was found to be too difficult to do as an add-on to their regular work. The regional coordinator took on this function for the remainder of this year, and we are looking at the possibility of partnering to provide some local coordination for this table as well.

Squamish: The Squamish table has participants from School District 48, Vancouver Coastal Health, Squamish Public Library, Squamish First Nation, the South Asian Senior Women's Group (SASWG), Howe Sound Women's Centre, and Sea to Sky Community Services Society, Communities That Care Squamish, Hot Spot Volunteer Centre and Capilano University (especially literacy/ESL programs).

Pemberton/Whistler: Participants include representation from the Whistler and Pemberton Libraries, the coordinator of ESL Settlement Assistance Programs in Whistler, Whistler Community Services, Squamish Lillooet Cultural Centre, Sea to Sky Community Services, Resort Municipality of Whistler, Spring Creek Community School, Myrtle Phillip Elementary School, Putting Children first, School District #48.

Northern First Nations: This table has representatives from the Ts’Zil Learning Centre (Mt. Currie), Xit’olawc Community School (Mt. Currie), and from each of the outlying First Nations communities of N’Quatqua, Samahquam, Skatin and Tipella/Xa’xtsa.

Task Group Structure: The entire circle represents the Region/District Wide group. The three sections of the circle represent the three local tables identified. The circle in the middle, consisting of representatives from each local table, represents the District-wide Literacy Task Group. This latter group will oversee the process throughout the district and will direct and advise the Literacy Outreach Coordinator.



An Overview:

Who works together?	Squamish Literacy Committee	Whistler/Pemberton Literacy Committee	Northern First Nations Literacy Committee: Mt. Currie, Skatin, N'quatqua, Samahquam, Xa'xtsa/Tipella	"All of Us" Gatherings	District Literacy Committee
How do people work together?	Local table consists of reps from local organizations; have short meetings; clear focused agenda ahead of time	Local table consists of reps from local organizations; have short meetings; clear focused agenda ahead of time	Monthly meetings with literacy reps from different communities; move the meetings around; stress continuity	District wide info sharing; regional meetings 2x a year; meetings will move throughout the district	A rep from each task group will meet regularly to oversee the activities in the district
Role of LOC	Need LOC to coordinate this table	Need LOC to connect with the table	Want LOC to connect with the table (this is being reassessed)	LOC will organize, with direction from District Literacy Committee	LOC organizes these meetings and receive direction from this committee
Supports needed			Funding to support travel costs	Funding to support bringing the larger group together	Funding to support meetings and/or conference calls

3. Community Development and Literacy Coordination:

Squamish:

The Squamish Literacy Committee has strong and long standing community networks, partnerships and relationships developed over the past decade to support literacy initiatives and programming in our local community. Decisions on program implementation are discussed at the local table and made collaboratively.

Some of the initiatives underway this year that have resulted or benefited from the work of the Squamish Literacy Committee include; Squamish Reads, The Aboriginal Book Project, Nobody's Perfect, Financial Literacy Training, Digital Storytelling Training and a subsequent digital story writing program for seniors at the Squamish Senior's Centre, South Asian Senior Women's Group, Squamish Faces Family Learning program, and progress towards the creation of a Welcome Centre and a range of English as a Second Language and settlement assistance services.

Together the group leveraged Literacy Now Implementation funding to apply for and received one of up to three years of grant funding from the Vancouver Foundation to open the Welcome Centre. An application in partnership with the North Shore Multicultural Society was made to bring a Settlement Worker to Squamish. We are exploring the possibility of collaborating with all local organizations providing community based ESL and settlement services to bring all such services under one roof. Further, we are currently running a Volunteer Connections course to help develop leaders within the new immigrant population who we hope will help to push forward the Welcome Centre idea. Several local organizations on the committee have also partnered with Capilano University as the lead agency for funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada for a large scale, multi-year training initiative, also in support of developing skills and leadership abilities within, but not exclusively to, newcomers to the region.

The Squamish Literacy Committee is working in partnership with the local School District #48 Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement in the development of Aboriginal Books written by local elders and photography done locally as well. They also partnered with School District #48 and the District of Squamish on the successful grant application through the Union of B.C. Municipalities for a Community Learning Hub at Squamish Elementary. This has benefited some new and ongoing initiatives including the Squamish Faces Family Learning Program and the Volunteer Connections program.

Whistler/Pemberton:

The Whistler Task group has also worked collaboratively with its seven partner organizations (Whistler Public Library, Pemberton Public Library, The Municipality of Whistler, Capilano University, Sea to Sky Community Services Society, Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre LCC, Whistler Community Services). This has helped in streamlining the delivery of ESLSAP Programs to new Canadians, as well as ESL to long-term workers and French Canadians. They also partnered with School District #48 and the Municipality of Whistler on the successful grant application for a Community Learning Hub at Myrtle Philip Community School.

Northern First Nations:

This group, comprised primarily of one or two representatives from each community, has worked collaboratively with various organizations including the Education Departments of the Xa'xtsa, Samahquam and Skatin Nations, N'Quatqua Early Learning Centre, Xit'olacw Community School and the Tz'Zil Learning Centre and others to host a Family and Health Literacy Event and run two programs: *Being an Effective Board Member* in Xa'xtsa and Skatin and *Digital Storytelling* at Ts'Zil Learning Centre, Samaquam, Skatin and Xa'xtsa, and undertake other community literacy activities (see local programs below). There is increasing interest in the work of the committee from such other organizations as the Head of the Lake School in Skatin, Rotary (who funds programs in Skatin), the Education and Band Council members in N'Quatqua and others. There are capacity issues in the FN communities; for example, the number of people in the communities able to take on such work is limited and they are often over extended, but interest is growing. We continue to look for ways to improve community development and literacy coordination in this area. We hope to partner with others providing services in the remote communities, for example, to extend our reach and contact in these areas.

Regional:

Our vision includes working together as a region. Some of the regional collaborations that have taken place include two regional literacy meetings. The December meeting was an opportunity for active committee members and interested community organizations to come together to share what's going well, what are the challenges, and how can we support each other. The May meeting was a Celebration of Literacy. This event, open to the general public, was an opportunity to share the work of the committees and showcase some locally produced digital stories by literacy students. We are looking for ways to make these touching and entertaining stories available to a wide audience. Through these stories, we've heard about how our students live with such adversity as dealing with a mother with chronic, severe health issues, having to learn English, and growing up in a sawmill in China. We've also gotten a glimpse into such aspects of Lil'wat culture as mushrooming, smoking salmon and cedar bark harvesting, to mention only a few.

We work together in other ways as well. The Whistler/Pemberton Literacy Committee organized a PALS (Parents as Literacy Supporters) training event. While focused on these two communities, two participants from Squamish were able to take advantage of the training. Ongoing sharing of resources and activities is planned in the future (e.g., to offer further financial literacy training).

4. Goals Areas and Actions for the Current Year

Squamish:

- Newcomers/ESL/Settlement (including support of Welcoming Centre initiative)
- Aboriginal Programming
- Youth/Young Parents
- Learning Hubs
- PALS

Whistler:

- English Language Support
- Adult Literacy
- Family/Intergenerational Literacy
- Computer and Digital Literacy

Pemberton:

- English Language Support
- Adult Literacy
- Family/Intergenerational Literacy
- Computer and Digital Literacy

Northern First Nations Communities:

Mount Currie

- Adult Education
- Family/Intergenerational Literacy
- Literacy Hub

N'Quatqua

- Early Childhood Education
- Family/Intergenerational Literacy
- Adult Basic Education

Skatin/Xa'xtsa

- Adult Education
- Early Childhood Education

Samahquam

- Early Childhood Development
- Cultural Literacy

Local Programs

Squamish:

1. South Asian Senior Women's Literacy project (Squamish Public Library, District of Squamish, Capilano University, Vancouver Coastal Health, community members)
2. Development of an ESL/Newcomers Learning Hub at the Hot Spot (Hot Spot Community Resource Centre, Capilano University, Squamish Public Library, Vancouver Coastal Health)
3. Aboriginal Children's Book project (S.D. 48, Squamish nation, Lil'wat Nation, N'Quatqua In-Shuck-ch Nation)
4. Nobody's Perfect for ESL/young parents (SSCSS, Squamish Faces Family Learning Program)
5. Welcoming Centre Project: Creating a Hub for newcomers at the Hot Spot (Hot Spot, Capilano University, Squamish Public Library, Vancouver Coastal Health)
6. Neighbourhood Learning Hub (Sea to Sky Community Services Society, S.D. 48, Capilano University)
7. Digital Stories for Seniors (Capilano University, Squamish Senior's Centre)
8. Financial Literacy (SSCSS, Capilano University)

Whistler/Pemberton: (Collaborators include Whistler Public Library, Pemberton Public Library, Capilano University, SSCSS, Myrtle Philip Community School, Squamish Lit'wat Cultural Centre, S.D. 48)

1. *Pemberton* Adult ESL project (15 learners currently, one of which is from Birken) for adults whose language levels are too high for ESLSAP program.
2. Applied and received grant for ESL Settlement Assistance Program (ESLSAP)
3. Digital Literacy (technology workshops at the library) (130 attended).
4. Bought 8 computers for community use
5. Ran the PALS Program for 4 year olds as a pre Kindergarten course (*Pemberton*, 10 adults, 12 children)
6. Youth Readers and Writer's Festival
7. *Whistler*: Adult ESL project happened at Myrtle Philip Elementary School in September 2010 to June 2011 to address the need for support for people on long term work visas and others who do not qualify for settlement assistance (22 learners)
8. Digital Literacy (technology workshops at the library) (130 attended – full attendance)
9. Technology workshops at the library
10. PALS Training for facilitators

Northern First Nations Communities (collaborators include Mt. Currie Health Centre, education departments of all communities, N'Quatqua Early Learning Centre, Xit'olacw Community School, Ts'Zil Learning Centre):

Mount Currie:

1. A neighborhood learning hub was created using the library and the computer lab. Librarian and Computer Tech provided instructions for 2 hours a week each Wednesday night to adults. The goal was to engage the adult learners with topics such as "First Nations" and "How To" books.
2. Adult Basic Education at Ts'Zil

Skatin/ Xa'xtsa:

1. Working together to develop an adult learning hub and tutoring program for adult education and Traditional Language.
2. Financial support for a support worker at the Lower Lakes
3. Effective work in the Community Kitchen

Samahquam:

1. Family Literacy event
2. Financial support for a support worker at the Lower Lakes
3. Effective work in the Community Kitchen

District Table Initiatives:

1. Squamish Reads: A Literacy Action Project January 2010
2. Application for a School Community Connections Grant to create Neighborhood Learning Centres (0-100) for Community and School use at Squamish Elementary and Myrtle Philip Elementary.
3. "Celebrating Our Success": May 29 2010 L'il wat Cultural Centre
4. Sponsorship of ESL and Aboriginal PALS Training (parents as Literacy Support)
5. Exploration of systems for evaluation of program efficacy

5. Indications of Success**Squamish:**

1. Squamish Reads raised significantly more money than in previous years.
2. Testimonials from South Asian Women's Group
3. Testimonials from employers i.e., Alpha Laundry
4. Women gaining independence and feel empowered
5. Increased partnering around settlement service provision

Whistler:

1. An increase in the number of people attending programs
2. Increased School District involvement
3. Increased participation and interest in the literacy table and process

Northern First Nations:

1. Community members are now more aware of the library when it is open
2. More parents are reading to their children and borrowing books (Lil'wat)
3. More people thinking about how the School Board should be functioning (Skatin)
4. More collaboration

6. Challenges:**Squamish:**

1. Stable site for Community Learning Hub
2. Gaps in partnership development i.e., Municipality of Squamish, Rotary
3. Involvement of Squamish Nation in local table

4. Capacity issues/people overwhelmed

Pemberton:

1. Unemployment: work skills training needed
2. Settlement issues for adults with ESL needs despite their immigration status. For example, some people only qualify for certain programs based on immigration or settlement status
3. Family Literacy
4. Availability of public space
5. Support from School District, Municipality and Regional District

Whistler:

1. Early Learning
2. Unemployment: work skills, financial state of Whistler
3. ESL: currently a significant number of people working in Whistler with working visas
4. Settlement work/Invisibility of locals and immigrants
5. Participation in local table
6. Community Understanding of Literacy/Community gets lost in the resort
7. Opportunities, gaps and interest in the work of the local table
8. Affordability of housing

Northern First Nations:

1. Time for coordination/capacity
2. Coordination very necessary for programs to work
3. Lack of trained drivers
4. Coordination of activities
5. Lack of computers and internet availability
6. Dependence on people running the programs
7. Activities need to be offered in a variety of places to reach a variety of needs
8. Band Cash Flow

School District Objectives

Children – Prenatal to School Age:

Goal: to improve vulnerability rate in children entering school (at least one domain of development) from 28.1% to 20%

Objectives:

1. Pre School children will demonstrate higher levels of emotional resiliency.
2. Pre School children will demonstrate higher levels of physical health and well being.

Strategies:

1. Parent Education sessions led by Kindergarten Coordinator
2. Health Screening will take place in all three StrongStart Centres
3. Nutrition Education will take place in StrongStart Centres
4. Ready Set Learn Events will Parent Education on Early Childhood Development
5. School District Personnel will work with pre school service providers throughout the pre school year to help with Special Education transition to school

6. Create stronger links between schools, StrongStart Centres, Early Learning programs and Family Programs
7. The EDI Assessment Process will occur annually
8. Putting Children First will act as the Team Leader in the Strategic Planning Process for Early Learning. This will allow resources to be allocated in areas of need and will reduce the overlap in services

Children - Kindergarten to Grade 12

Goal: to improve student achievement in Literacy

Objectives:

1. We will improve student achievement in reading comprehension.
2. We will improve Aboriginal student achievement in reading comprehension

Strategies:

1. School Growth Plans that address literacy
2. District Leadership Coordination and Leaders Team
3. District Literacy Specialist
4. District Assessment-BC performance Standards
5. Grade three reading intervention project
6. Professional Learning Workshops will be offered: SMART Reading, Reading Power
7. District staff will work with schools to identify specific students who need reading intervention support, for instance ESL students.
8. Expand the ESD (English as a Second Dialect) pilot to provide Standard English Language Development Programs to identified students.
9. Build partnerships with community.
10. Support parents through referrals to community based ESL and Literacy and Community Learning programs.

Adults

Goal: to increase the number of opportunities adults have to access literacy development.

Objectives:

1. School District #48 will enroll adult learners who are still aligned with their high school
2. Capilano University will enroll adult learners who are outside of the school setting
3. Capilano University and School District #48 will create a communication system to share knowledge on adult programming
4. Capilano University will provide ESL education, and newcomer literacy.

Strategies:

1. Work with Capilano University in creating adult learning hubs in Whistler, Squamish, Pemberton and Mt. Currie
2. Develop alternate educational secondary programming that provides new pathways for school completion.
3. Increase coordination of programs between community learning institutions

APPENDIX 1: COMMUNITY LITERACY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Michelle Lebeau	Capilano University
Marilyn Caldwell	School District 48
Pat Hodgson	Capilano University
Maureen Painter	Squamish Public Library
Jeanette Green	Xit'olacw School Mt. Currie
Lynda Sampson	Ts'Zil learning Centre
Alma Lewis	Xa'xtsa/Tipella
Carole Stretch	ESL Settlement Services Whistler/Pemberton
Suzie Soman	Sea to Sky Community Services
Pat Pawlett	School District 48
Lynne Bouchard	School District 48
Nadine White	Whistler Public Library
Juanita Coltman	School District 48
Lisa Paterson	Communities That Care
Shannon Ellis	Pemberton Public Library
Michelle Klau	N'Quatqua
Geneva Williams	Skatin
Ramona Linger	Xa'xtsa
John Purcell	Samahquam

APPENDIX 2: AGENCIES INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS

Squamish

- Capilano University
- Squamish Public Library
- Putting Children First Initiative
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Sea to Sky School District
- Squamish Nation
- Sea to Sky Community Services
- Seniors and Aboriginal Community Elders
- Community Members
- Social Planning Council
- The Squamish Chief
- The Hot Spot and the Corridor Volunteer Project

Whistler/Pemberton

- Capilano University
- Whistler Public Library
- Pemberton Public Library
- Sea to Sky Community Services Society
- Community Members
- Putting Children First Initiative
- Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Sea to Sky School District
- The Municipality of Whistler

Pemberton and Northern Communities

- Capilano University
- Pemberton Public Library
- Seniors and Aboriginal Community Elders
- Community Members
- Early Childhood Education
- Putting Children First Initiative
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Sea to Sky School District
- Lil'wat Nation
- Lower Lakes Community Champions (Skatin, Samahquam, Tipella)
- N'Quatqua