

2021 PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT (PLGR)

LIBRARY NAME

BURNS LAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY

CHECKLIST

For the PLGR to be considered complete, please ensure you have provided information for each of the following sections. Suggested word counts have been included for each question, but feel free to include more or less text as needed – text boxes will expand as you type. Click on a title in the list below to jump to that section of the document.

- ☐ [1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE](#)
- ☐ [2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS](#)
- ☐ [3. KEY CHALLENGES](#)
- ☐ [4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL](#)

1. INTRODUCTION - LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

Provide a brief description of the community and library, focusing on what has changed in the past year (up to 500 words).

Burns Lake Public Library strives to have the community see our library as more than just a place to get books, but rather as the community hub. Crucial to our mission, our library seeks to reach out to our community in a relevant and meaningful way, by delivering stimulating programs and services needed after seeking the public opinion and recognizing trends in the community.

2021 was the second year with strict and constantly changing public health orders and restrictions.

Considering the continuously changing landscape of the pandemic, we were still able to deliver meaningful programs and projects to the community such as the Garden/seed project, Cognitive Kits Collection, expansion of online resources, installation of a new security system, and finish one of our largest projects – the renovations and soft opening of our MacEwen Children's Library.

Burns Lake is located in the North-Central Interior of British Columbia, on Hwy 16, midway between Prince George and Smithers. Burns Lake became an incorporated village in 1923. According to the 2021 Census, the village population has been estimated to be 1,659, a decline of -6.7% from 2016 Census. Burns Lake Public Library, founded in 1944, also serves the Electoral Areas B & E, within the Regional District of Bulkley Nechako. This includes the six First Nation communities of Lake Babine Nation, Wet'suwet'en First Nation, Ts'il Kaz Koh First Nation (Burns Lake Band), Cheslatta Carrier Nation, Skin Tahi Nation, and Nee Tahi Buhn. The total population we serve is approximately 6500.

We have two First Nations reserves that are part of the town, and another four in outlying areas, making it one of the few communities in the province that has an almost equal population of both Indigenous and European descent. The village is renowned for its rich First Nation heritage.

Industries that support local families include ranching, logging, and varied businesses related to the forest industry, farming and tourist enterprises.

Burns Lake Public Library entered the first year of the new **2021-2023 Strategic Plan** that focuses on three key objectives:

- **Building Capacity** - supporting the delivery of quality programs and services that our residents and patrons depend on by investing in training and professional development opportunities for both staff and board members.
- **Building Relationships** - partnering with other organizations in the community to increase our resources and support the work towards common goals.
- **Safe and Welcoming** - focusing on improvements to our physical location to enhance patrons' experience so that all users feel a sense of ownership and pride in their library.

2. MAJOR PROJECTS/PROGRAMS

Please describe any new or major ongoing projects/programs the library has delivered in the past year. To report on multiple projects/programs, "copy" the blank table below and insert additional tables as needed using the "paste" function. Use one table per project/program.

PROJECT #1
Project/Program Name
MacEwen Children's Library Project
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.

The Burns Lake Public Library received a grant from the MacEwen Committee/Burns Lake Rotary Club in the amount of \$42,000 to be used for the renovation of the children's area. The plan was to create an enchanted forest environment for our youngest patrons to explore the world of reading. Included was an expansion of the circulation service specifically to this area by adding a circulation desk designated for families with children.

Soft opening of the MacEwen Children's Library took place on January 12, 2021. Although, we were excited and pleased to be able to open the absolutely stunning children's library, we were also saddened that the grand opening of this significant accomplishment has been nowhere near the celebration of which it is so deserving. The online response to our soft opening:

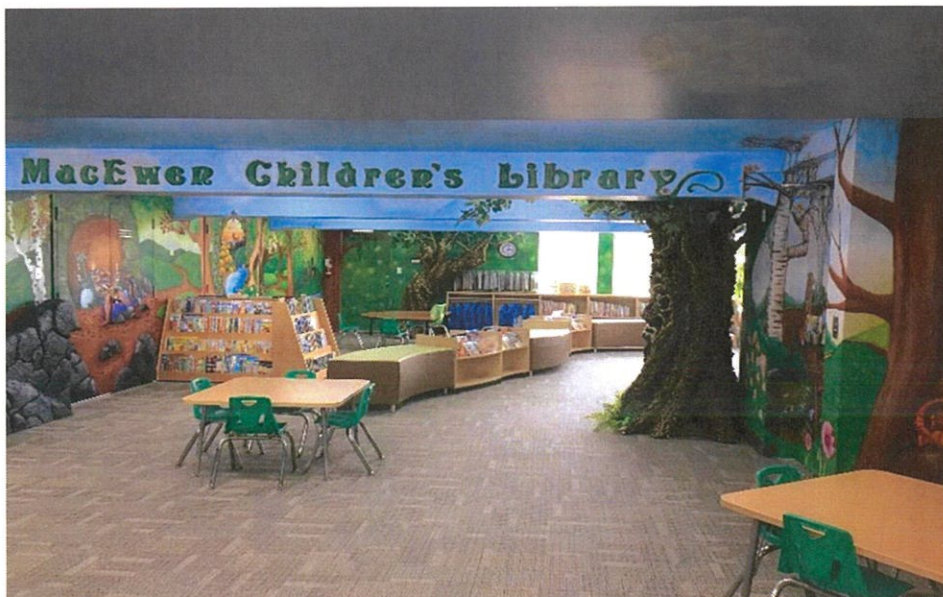
5,851 visited the post

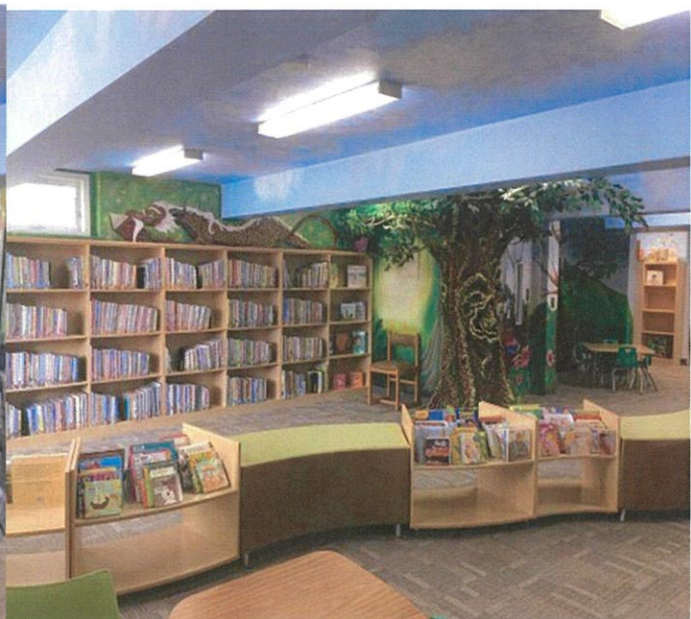
70 positive comments and 194 positive reactions

68 shares and 1,925 engagements

Some of the improvements to the MacEwen Children's library include:

- Installed custom-built circulation station
- Installed new birch cabinetry for story kits
- Installed new birch cabinetry for music kits for easy browsing
- Installed new birch bookshelves for children
- Custom-built mobile shelving for the youngest for easy browsing
- Custom-built seating
- New carpet on floor
- Additional tables and chairs for children
- Mother-child story corner
- Creative mural and custom-made artifacts such as trees

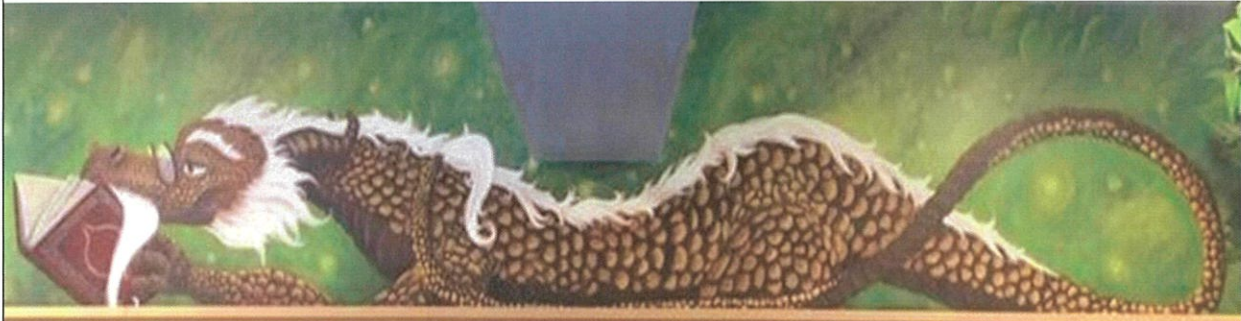




How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?

This project supports our third strategic objective:

Safe and Welcoming - focusing on improvements to our physical location to enhance patrons' experience so that all users feel a sense of ownership and pride in their library.



The community was involved in naming the two main characters, a big tree – Grandfather Oak and a dragon- Bookie McMaster.

How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.

1. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	Adding a new circulation station specifically designated to the youngest patrons with their families will allow us to better serve the younger population.
2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	N/A
3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	<p>This newly created space is more inviting and comfortable for families wishing to visit the library. It creates specific areas where children can read with their parents and siblings while simultaneously discovering the beautiful characters on the walls that stimulate their imagination.</p> <p>Once the pandemic restrictions are lifted, this will attract families for additional programs the library is offering.</p>
4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	N/A

What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.

Immediate Outcomes

- Easier access to the resources
- Realignment of staff duties
- Comfortable use of the circulation desk
- Improved aesthetics

Intermediate Outcomes

- Enhanced experience for patrons
- Inviting and interesting for children
- Improved browsing of library materials
- Families spend more time in this area, especially in winter months

Ultimate Outcome/Impacts

- Improved conditions/ value-added
- Addition of tangible assets
- Our youngest patrons encouraged to spend more time in the library

Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?

This project was delivered entirely due to the generosity of our long-standing partner and supporter, the Burns Lake Rotary Club, who financed the entire project in the amount of \$42,000.

PROJECT #2
Project/Program Name
Cognitive Care Kits
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.
<p>Burns Lake Public Library is proud to announce a new resource available to our patrons supporting those with cognitive decline and their caregivers.</p> <p>In partnership with Northern Health, the Alzheimer Society of BC and a grant of \$6,681.00 from United Way of Northern BC, the Burns Lake Public Library created a total of fifteen kits. These kits are geared to stimulate the brain activity in people experiencing cognitive decline, including memory loss and forms of dementia like Alzheimer's disease. Each kit is designed to help people who require different levels of support and include activities, games, puzzles and workbooks that encourage mind, body and social engagement by providing meaningful daily activities. These kits are available to all library patrons.</p> <p>Early in 2021 some of our staff members attended a two-day long training session to learn more about dementia and memory loss. The training came from DementiAbility.</p> <p>The same concepts were incorporated into training videos for caregivers to watch before using the kits with their loved ones. Once in-person programming starts at the library there will be additional training offered by Northern Health on how caregivers can use Cognitive Care Kits with their loved ones and even instruction on how to create their own individualized kits.</p>



Cognitive Kit #4

These are just a few examples of what we have available.



Cognitive Kit #11

contact us
for more
information



Cognitive Kit #13

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COGNITIVE CARE KITS



Cognitive Kit #1

COGNITIVE CARE KITS

AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT THOSE
WITH COGNITIVE DECLINE AND
THEIR CAREGIVERS

In partnership with Northern Health, the Alzheimer Society of BC and a grant of \$6,681 from United Way of Northern BC, the Burns Lake Public Library has created 15 cognitive kits.

WHO ARE THEY FOR?

These kits are geared to stimulate the brain activity in people expecting or experiencing cognitive decline, including memory loss and forms of dementia like Alzheimer's disease.

EVERYONE WITH A LIBRARY CARD
WILL BE ABLE TO ACCESS THE
COGNITIVE KITS



Cognitive Kit #2



Cognitive Kit #3

WHAT DO THEY CONTAIN?

Each kit contains an instructional DVD for caregivers to watch before using the kits with their loved ones.

Every kit is designed to help people who require different levels of support and include activities, games, puzzles and workbooks that encourage mind, body and social engagement by providing daily activities.

How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?

This project supports two of our strategic objectives:

- Building Capacity

Staff received training in DementiAbility Methods: *The Montessori Way* provided by the Northern Health, giving staff more confidence in dealing with patrons with dementia and their caregivers.

- Building Relationships

Through work on this project, we created two new valuable partnerships in the community and the province: Northern Health and BC Alzheimer Society. Working together with these two organizations, we hope to reach an expanded demographic in the community offering this important service.

How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.

1. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	The cognitive care kits engage those who otherwise may not use our services due to impairment following dementia or Alzheimer's resulting in further cognitive decline negatively impacting their everyday activities.
2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	Staff received training in DementiAbility Methods: <i>The Montessori Way</i> provided by Northern Health.
3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	Partnering with the Alzheimer Society of BC and Northern Health in sharing knowledge and resources on dementia and cognitive decline. The cognitive care kits encourage engagement and participation with both the caregiver and their loved ones, creating positive and healthier relationships.
4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	N/A

What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.

Immediate Outcomes

- Expansion of the library's collection
- Reaching out to a specific demographic in the community
- Outreach to community organizations working with those experiencing cognitive decline

Intermediate Outcomes

- Enhanced experience for patrons
- Provides resources to caregivers that are otherwise unavailable in the community
- In coordination with Northern Health, the library provides training to caregivers

Ultimate Outcome/Impacts

- Helps to deliver the library's strategic goals such as Building Capacity and Building Relationships
- Improves access to specific resources to community members
- Addition of tangible assets
- Reaching out and directly engaging with the more vulnerable of our senior population

Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?

We partnered up on this project with Northern Health and BC Alzheimer Society. Both organizations helped us with planning of the kits as well as the information on its content.

United Way of Northern BC supplied us with funding in amount of \$6,681.00

PROJECT #3**Project/Program Name**

Additional Online Resources, Website and social media, Office for virtual meetings

Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.

In 2021 Burns Lake Public Library focused on achieving additional online resources to better serve our community. The new resources added throughout the year included:

- Lynda.com/LinkedIn Learning
- Niche Academy
- Tumbler Books
- Advantage Overdrive Collection in coordination with North Central Library Federation
- KnowBC

This year we focused on changes to our website and an increased presence on social media. To make our website more current, vibrant and user friendly, we commenced a significant overhaul to the graphic design as well as updates to the information. Although very important, the constantly changing information for the public, with regards to the new PHO orders and restrictions, took an inordinate amount of staff's time.

We still managed to create an easy access to our online services, databases and library resources. Since a lot was shifted to online communication, we made it our priority to convey all events and programs as well as some daily activities to our social media. Our staff attended additional training in this regard.

In December as our community had been hit by the Omicron variant, we ran a month of *Elf on the Shelf* series on our Facebook platform.

During the first few months of 2021, we created a new space for virtual meetings. This space is equipped with a computer, double screen and a webcam. It is available to the public for virtual meetings, classes and invigilation. Creation of this room will help us by making a small increase to our self-generated revenue.

How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?

This project supports our first strategic goals:

- **Building Capacity** by making high-quality resources needed within the community not only more easily available, but also available in a more-timely manner.
- **Building Relationships** by coordinating with organizations such as College of New Caledonia where students accessed new job opportunity training through Gale Courses offered by the Burns Lake Public Library.

How does this project/program support the [B.C.'s strategic goal\(s\) for public library service](#)? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.

<p>1. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>Our community struggles with connectivity. Our patrons living in Regional Areas B and E are dealing with either a very slow connection or none at all. Having a large number of homeschooling families, the online resources are crucial. Patrons, especially from Area E were very happy to be able to access the virtual meeting office. In the past year this office was used for meetings and also some doctor consultations, which would otherwise have been unavailable. This is especially convenient for our senior citizens.</p> <p>Thanks to North Central Library Federation's Advantage Overdrive collection, our patrons had a shorter waiting time for Library To Go resources.</p>
<p>2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>Staff accessed training in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Cataloguing and Classification course – Info People • Library Technology Topics – Kootenay Library Federation • Niche Academy training • Catalogue training and exercises – Sitka • Report training and exercises – Sitka • Circulation policies updates - Sitka • Social Media Workshop – Netsurf Marketing • Adding widgets to website – one-on-one Library Cooperative • Social Media account online training (Facebook and Instagram)
<p>3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>Regular updates about the PHO orders and restrictions were accessible for the public on our website.</p> <p>Additional online resources were helpful for those who decided to move towards homeschooling in our community.</p> <p>Easier online access has been especially helpful to our more remote patrons in numerous ways.</p>

4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)	N/A
What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.	
<p><u>Immediate Outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good feedback from public on additional office space for virtual meetings • Positive feedback from homeschooling families • Positive feedback from patrons using resources for private issues – doctor consults, etc. <p><u>Intermediate Outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorter waiting time for Library-To-Go resources • Patrons with slow or non-existing internet connection able to use the office for zoom conferencing both commercial and private. • Encourages our senior citizens to venture further into the digital world, while feeling they are in a safe and helpful environment. <p><u>Ultimate Outcome/Impacts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping to deliver the library strategic goals: Building Capacity and Building Relationships. • Helping to deliver the provincial strategic goal to improve access for British Columbians. • Strengthening our relationship in general with our patrons and community 	
Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?	
<p>Advantage OverDrive collection was possible thanks to North Central Library Federation.</p> <p>Additional online resources in coordination with Library Cooperative.</p>	

PROJECT #4	
Project/Program Name	
Enhancing Governance	
Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.	
<p>In January and February 2021 BLPL Board of Trustees worked on updating our Human Resources Policy as well as creating a Disability Management Program. Both Policies were adopted on February 26, 2021, at the regular board meeting.</p> <p>In July a new Communicable Disease Safety Plan, which was adopted at the July 8, 2021 board meeting.</p> <p>The end of October, the board created a Finance Committee developing a Terms of Reference and BLPL Financial Reserves Policy presented to the Board in November and adopted on December 7, 2021 by the Board of Trustees at the regular meeting.</p> <p>Board members accessed training through BC Library Trustees Association on topics such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Effective Board and Role Clarity • Chairing and Leading: the mechanics • Chairing and Leading: the art • Hiring a New Library Director • Shifting Governance, Important Conversations for Our Times: Anti-oppression • Advocacy from the Heart <p>BLPL Chair attended two Trustees Meet-ups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Acknowledgements • Q&A with Mari Martin 	
How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?	
These activities support the first goal of BLPL – Building Capacity by providing professional development to board members and working governance improvements for the library.	
How does this project/program support the B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.	
1. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)	N/A
2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)	Training informs, reminds and re-enthuses board members of their duty to the public and the oversight of the Library Director.
3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)	N/A

<p>4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	<p>A better-informed board of trustees will help to ensure that funding can be allotted and deployed with increased confidence.</p>
<p>What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.</p>	
<p><u>Immediate Outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training allows Board members to be more aware and enthused about their duties and responsibilities. <p><u>Intermediate Outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating of policies and guidance documents to be clear, current and relevant might make it easier to attract and retain trustees and/ or staff. <p><u>Ultimate Outcome/Impacts</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping to deliver the library strategic goal - Building Capacity by accessing training for the board members. • Helping to deliver the provincial strategic goal to improve access for Enhancing Governance by developing the best practices 	
<p>Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery?)</p>	
<p>N/A</p>	

PROJECT #5

Project/Program Name

Summer Reading Club

Provide a brief description of the activities involved in this project/program.

Summer Reading Club throughout the months of July and August are one of the most enjoyable, yet busiest times in the library. Once again, the SRC had to be adjusted in accordance with the PHO orders and restrictions. We've started offering limited in-person programming to children. To keep staff comfortable while delivering this program as well as considering public safety, we decided the in-person programming will take place outside. This will need adjusting to accommodate weather conditions. We realized that not everyone was in the same comfort zone regarding public gatherings, so we've decided to offer take-out craft packages as an option.

The children's librarian has contacted six First Nation communities and talked to them about the programming available over the summer months. Five out of the six communities, took advantage of the programs offered. We had 192 children enrolled, almost doubling the number from the previous year. However, due to the connectivity issues in our rural area, we had only one online registration and 191 in-person. The high number of participants and the hybrid module of programming required all hands-on deck. The in-person programming was not very well attended and had to be cancelled a few times due to weather conditions. We offered 9 sessions with a total attendance of 49 children. However, the uptake in literacy/craft packs was enormous.

Table below showing the number of packages picked up every week

Week #1	Week #2	Week #3	Week #4	Week #5	Week #6	Week #7
143	178	187	172	172	172	172

The packages to the First Nation communities and other residents on the Southside were delivered via WOW bus. Without the Lakes Literacy and its Words on Wheels bus (WOW bus) service, we wouldn't have been able to reach our patrons across the lake on such a regular basis. However, the weeks in which the WOW bus was not driving, required an exceptional effort to make deliveries to the Southside possible.

This year we offered again the teen challenge that proved popular last year. We had many interesting submissions from this age group that did not make it easy for us to choose the first, second and third place winners.

In addition to the summer programming for children, we offered a Reading Bingo for all age groups; children, tweens, teens and adults. At the end of this program we ended up with:

- ✓ 295 entries for children
- ✓ 175 entries for tweens
- ✓ 183 entries for teens
- ✓ 195 entries for adults

<p>At the end of our summer programs, many of our patrons who participated, left the library with a big smile on their face.</p> <p>For the staff, as much as it was rewarding to see the high numbers of participants this year and the happy faces, it was also extremely exhausting to offer the programming both ways (in-person and take-out).</p>	
<p>How does this project/program support the library's strategic goals and/or community?</p>	
<p>This project supports two of our strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Capacity by delivering a high-quality program that the residents can depend on. • Building Relationships by coordinating with Lakes Literacy organization while working towards common goals. 	
<p>How does this project/program support the B.C.'s strategic goal(s) for public library service? Please provide information for as many goals as applicable.</p>	
<p>1. Improving Access for British Columbians (e.g., connectivity, digital collections, shared services)</p>	<p>Through sharing the common goals with Lakes Literacy, we were able to reach the remote communities with high quality programming.</p>
<p>2. Building Capacity for library staff and directors (e.g., training and professional development)</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>3. Advancing Citizen Engagement (e.g., helping people access government services/resources, fostering community knowledge-sharing, and supporting reconciliation)</p>	<p>Close work with the First Nations communities in our region such as: Ts'il Kaz Koh First Nation, Lake Babine Nation, Skin Tyee Nation, Cheslatta Carrier Nation, and Wet'suwet'en First Nation. Even though some of the communities are in very remote areas, we were still able to provide them with materials and activities throughout the entire summer.</p>
<p>4. Enhancing Governance of the library system (e.g., board/trustee training, developing best practices, strategic planning)</p>	<p>N/A</p>

What are the key outcomes of this project/program? Please refer to the logic model in the appendix of the 2021 PLGR Guide for examples of how to write short, medium, and long-term outcomes.

Immediate Outcomes

- Increased number of participants in Summer Reading Club
- Build closer connection with First Nation communities

Intermediate Outcomes

- Reaching our patrons and residents in remote areas
- Delivering programming that the community can depend on

Ultimate Outcome/Impacts

- Helping to deliver two of libraries strategic goals: Building Capacity and Building Relationships.
- Helping to deliver provincial strategic goal Improving Access to British Columbians and Advancing Citizen Engagement

Did the project/program involve any partnerships? If so, what was the partner's role (e.g., funding, outreach, service delivery)?

We were able to deliver this program with financial support from North Central Library Federation and Lakes Literacy, as well as sponsorship from BCLA and CUPE BC

3. KEY CHALLENGES

The following topics have been identified as recurring themes in previous years' PLGRs. The intent of this section is to collect detailed information in a structured, consistent format.

Please select the most significant challenges that the library has faced in the past year that you wish to comment on. Leave any other listed topics blank.

Use the 'Other' row to include any ongoing or past challenges that are not included in this list. If you have more than one 'Other' item to add, please insert additional rows into the table.

Challenge	Briefly describe how this challenge has impacted the library/community, and what steps the library took to address it in 2021. Please specify if any provincial funding was used, e.g., annual library funding, the technology grant, other non-PLB provincial grants (up to 250 words per topic).
COVID-19 (e.g., safety protocols, proof of vaccination)	The COVID-19 pandemic caused a major upheaval in the library's ability to provide services in 2021. Throughout the year we were adapting to ever-changing regulations and the health situation in our community. We went through stages of curbside service in the beginning of the year then moved to a hybrid model including curbside service and in-person (outdoor) programming. Towards the end of the year, as the health situation worsened in the community due to high numbers of Omicron, we had to adjust once again offering curbside programming only.

	<p>Our community still struggles with connectivity. Over half of our population has limited or no internet connection so the curbside service was still the best option to deliver our programming.</p> <p>Even though it seems like the online resources are the best option in these uncertain times, many of our patrons depend on the library visits and use of public computers.</p>
Emergency response (e.g., fires, floods, extreme weather)	N/A
Financial pressure (e.g., rising costs, reduced revenues)	<p>The second year of pandemic had a significant influence on our self-generated income. Even though it increased by 8% from 2020, we experienced a total of 64% decrease in comparison to 2019 pre-pandemic year.</p> <p>This decrease was due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less people using our printing services • No room, tables and chairs rentals • Cancellation of fundraiser activities
Staffing (e.g., recruitment and retention, mental health and wellness)	<p>According to Work BC in Burns Lake, our community experienced difficulties in finding employees willing to take up work and employers were not able to fill vacant positions. The Canada Emergency Response Benefit CERB, offered by the government during the pandemic as well as the low wages offered, played a big role in this regard. The library struggled with retention of part-time staff. Since we were offering a minimum wage for the part-time and casual staff, we experienced people leaving for a better paid job after investing time and money in their training.</p> <p>This past year has been very difficult on staff dealing with a massive load work, filling in the gaps while we were short-staffed. There was an enormous increased number of responsibilities and just the overall strain dealing with a stressed-out public, on top of dealing with their own private stress issues COVID has brought to each and every one of us, led to serious mental exhaustion.</p>
Disappearing services in the community (e.g., government, banking, health)	<p>Northern communities are experiencing a vast shortage in medical staff and health care workers. The pandemic magnified this issue even more.</p> <p>Banking service is changing their approach and moving more towards online services. This is very difficult in a community struggling with internet connection. Increased numbers of seniors in our community require help with day-to-day banking operations. We started a conversation with the local</p>

	RBC branch to offer scam-awareness training as well as digital literacy sessions in 2022.
Connectivity (e.g., low bandwidth, lack of home internet in the community)	As a rural northern community, Burns Lake struggles with internet connection. While the Village of Burns Lake enjoys the high-speed internet, the surrounding areas still have great difficulties. Over half of the area we serve has very slow or no internet connection. Many of our patrons depend on public computer access in the library, especially filling out government applications that are time limited. As a result, the library continues to provide many services in a traditional way.
Aging/damaged facilities (e.g., need for repairs, renovations, upgrades/expansions)	In the past two years we were able to renovate and upgrade certain areas in the building such as new carpeting on both levels, additional office space, total renovation to children's area and upgrading aging furniture, exchanging all lights for more efficient LED energy, adding a storage area in the building and an outside storage building. We are gradually upgrading towards a newer look and more comfortable setting. However, as the indoor area is getting transformed into a more functional, comfortable and aesthetic space, the outside area around the building is crying for help. The library is surrounded by a concrete parking lot with no seating possibilities for people who would like to access our free WiFi. We are experiencing some issues with water drainage around the building and are in desperate need of landscaping.
Community access to the library (e.g., geographic isolation, lack of local public transit, building accessibility)	Burns Lake Public Library is fortunate to be a free-standing building in a central location. Since Burns Lake is devoid of public transportation, all library users depend on their own transportation. Some of our patrons who live in electoral area E are across the lake and have to take the ferry to access the north shore. Many of them are travelling to town only once every other week or less; for many, this is over a two hour drive, one way. To make our services better accessible, the library has a designated drop box at the Southside Health and Wellness Centre as well as the WOW bus service going out to this community every Monday and stopping at three different locations. This way our patrons and families can receive new materials or return them via the bus.
Vulnerable communities (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, addiction, mental health crisis)	<p>The Village of Burns Lake is facing a rising number of people experiencing homelessness. The lack of facilities such as homeless shelters, resulted in people living on the library's outside deck for two months. The challenge was to find a men's shelter since there are none available between Prince George and Terrace. Fortunately, the local agencies are in the process of developing a facility and a few temporary units were made available for the winter months.</p> <p>We have a caring and compassionate staff but dealing one-on-one with a patron that is about to move into a full-on panic attack has taken its toll. COVID's constantly changing restrictions, along with exorbitant cost of living</p>

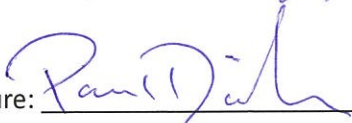
	increases has dramatically influenced the community's mental health overall. Our staff has even taken courses in dealing with the public's high level of anxiety and fragile mental health. We have seen a high increase, especially in our senior population, of people just wanting to connect on a human-to-human level. It can not be stressed enough, that the overload of work responsibilities due to COVID's constantly changing restrictions, along with the myriad other changes that are continually being put onto staff, has created strained mental health throughout.
Other (please specify)	

4. SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

Electronic signatures are acceptable where physical signatures are not feasible.

Library Director Signature: 

Date: March 15, 2022

Board Chair Signature: 

Date: March 15 / 22