

# DISTRICT LITERACY PLAN



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We Can.

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School District #28 – Quesnel

Demonstration District  
Submitted December 21, 2007  
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# District Literacy Plan – Quesnel

December 21, 2007

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The District Literacy Plan is a statement of our commitment to collaborate with key community stakeholders to improve literacy within our community. It has been built collaboratively on an evidence-based assessment of needs and priorities in Quesnel and surrounding area. We are committed to the development of a District Literacy Plan that will include the key elements as identified in the District Literacy Plan Guidelines.

## Development Process:

- School District #28, Quesnel is a provincial demonstration district and has been participating in provincial and regional meetings.
- The Quesnel 2010 Legacies – Literacy Now Community Plan has been submitted and accepted. It is now in its implementation stage. Many of the recommendations have been already been accomplished. These recommendations include hiring a community literacy coordinator, securing a working space for the coordinator and creating a partnership between the School District and the Community Plan Task Force.
- A District representative, the District Literacy Resource Teacher, has been involved in the 2010 Legacies – Literacy Now Community Literacy Planning committee from its inception. This representative has been and will continue to be a member of the Task Force.
- The Superintendent and Director of Instruction-Curriculum met the members of the Task Force ie. Chair/SD representative, Quesnel Community Literacy Coordinator (CLC) and our Regional Literacy Coordinator (RLC) from Literacy BC. The Superintendent, Director of Instruction and Board Chair plan to be part of the “community partners” group that will be meeting every three months.

## District Literacy Plan Partners and Stakeholders:

- Stakeholders in this plan are members of the Community Literacy Task Force, Community Partners and School District #28. They include representatives from: Cariboo Regional Library, College of New Caledonia – Quesnel Campus, Aboriginal Education, Child Development Centre, Child Care Resource and Referral, Business, the community at large, Literacy BC, Public Health, Ministry of Children and Families, and members of the Child, Youth and Family Network.

## I. Context and Demographics:

The city of Quesnel is the commercial centre of the North Cariboo. It is located in the Central Interior of British Columbia at the confluence of the Quesnel and Fraser Rivers. According to the City of Quesnel's 2005 Annual Report, Quesnel's population is 10,481 with another 16,630 people located within a 50 kilometer radius of the city centre.

The community is situated on the traditional lands of the Carrier and Chilcotin Nations. Including the four resident First Nation Bands, the District serves students of 52 Bands representing more than 20 First Nations and each of the eleven major Aboriginal language families. This diversity is further enriched by a majority Métis population representing a blend of numerous Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ethnicities. Quesnel has a relatively small number of visible minorities (5.7%) compared to the provincial average (21.6%). In contrast the number of people who have self-identified as aboriginal (8.8%) are twice the provincial average (4.4%).

Quesnel is a community of approximately 27,000 people. Our age distribution is similar to the provincial average with the majority population between 25 – 64 years (54.3%) followed by children under 17 (17.5%). Young adults 18-24 years account for 11.5% of our population with seniors accounting for almost an identical percentage of 11.7%. Our school age group includes 3892 F.T.E. students in 18 schools. We have approximately 235 continuing education students enrolled at the Helen Dixon Centre. Our school district also encompasses the communities of Wells and Barkerville, 80 kilometers to its east and Nazko and Kluskus, 100 plus kilometers to the west of the town center.

According to BC stats 2001 - the Total Census Families, of the 7030 families in Quesnel, 4320 (61.5%) had children at home. 1225 (28.4%) of those families were headed by a single parent.

The average family income in 2000 was \$56,551, falling well below the provincial average of \$64,821. Female lone parents' income averaged almost \$10,000 or 27% below BC's average of \$33,829. The census showed that 15.3% of Quesnel families' income is below \$20,000.

## **II . Alignment of the District Literacy Plan with the K-12 literacy plan as outlined in the District Achievement Contract**

The District Literacy Plan is built on 4 Pillars of ReadNow BC:

- Early Learning,
- School Years,
- Adult Literacy and
- Aboriginal Reading Success.

Our Achievement Contract specifically addresses three of the four pillars ie. Early Learning and the School Years with Aboriginal Reading Success being embedded in all that we do (see graphic on following page)

### **District Achievement Contract – K-12 Literacy Plan:**

#### **GOAL 1: To Improve Student Achievement in Literacy**

*Objective 1.1:* To improve primary students' reading and writing skills (grades K-3).

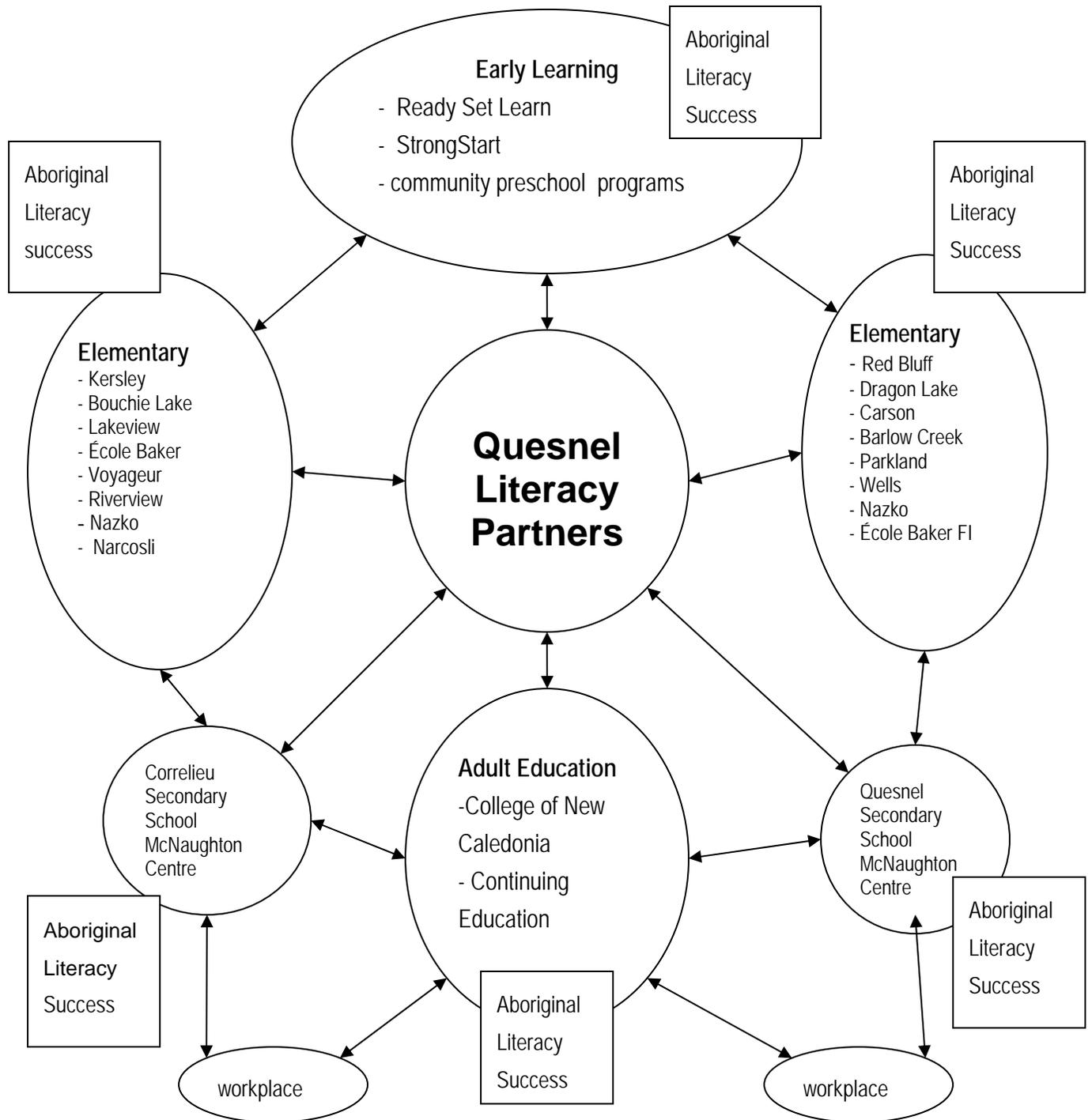
*Objective 1.2:* To improve intermediate students' reading and writing skills (grades 4-7).

*Objective 1.3:* To improve students' reading comprehension skills (grades 8-12).

*Objective 1.4:* To prepare preschool students to be successful Kindergarten.

Adult Literacy will become the new piece of the District Literacy Plan as we develop goals, objectives, strategies and structures to support our community members after they have left the formal school system. At the present time, the School District's Continuing Education program offers the majority of Quesnel's Adult Literacy Education programming. These programs are offered at a number of sites: Helen Dixon Centre in downtown Quesnel, on the Nazko Reserve, at the Nazko Band Office in downtown Quesnel and at the Friendship Centre on the West side of the city.

## The 4 Pillars and their Links



Quesnel Literacy Partners include representatives from: School District #28, 2010 Legacies Now – Literacy Now Task Force, College of New Caledonia, - Quesnel Campus, Cariboo Regional Library, Aboriginal Education, Child Development Centre, Child Care Resource and Referral, Literacy BC, Public Health, Ministry of Children and Families, Business, the community at large, Aboriginal Community.

### **III. Alignment between our Community Literacy Plan and the District Literacy Plan**

#### **Community Plan Goals:**

##### **GOAL 1:**

Establish a vibrant welcoming literacy centre that connects people and groups while also increasing access to programs and information for all literacies for all community members.

##### **GOAL 2:**

Increase literacy awareness through community partnerships and promotion of literacy issues to create a literacy-minded community in which all members support life-long learning.

#### **District Literacy Plan:**

Our District Literacy Plan is organized into the 4 Pillars of ReadNow BC.

##### Early Learning:

An Early Learning Steering Committee is being created to establish goals, actions and evaluation to support the Early Learning Pillar. Stakeholders will include representatives from: School District #28, the StrongStart Centre, Community Early Child Development facilitators, Kindergarten Screening partners, Child Development Centre, Child Care Resource and Referral, Aboriginal Family Centre, Public Health, the Public Library and the Community Literacy Coordinator.

***Goal 1: Improve Literacy in the Early Years (0 – 5)***

##### School:

The Plan will encompass the goals from the School District Achievement Contract and the Literacy Innovation Grant proposal. The District Literacy Resource Teacher will be the link between the School District, the Community Literacy Task Force and the Community Partners.

***Goal 2: Improve Student Achievement in Literacy***

##### Adult:

An Adult Literacy Focus Group will be established to investigate present programming and identify gaps. Stakeholders will include: School District #28, College of New Caledonia – Quesnel Campus, Continuing Education and Aboriginal Service providers and the Community Literacy Coordinator

***Goal 3: Improve Adult Success in Literacy***

##### Aboriginal Literacy Success:

This pillar will be embedded in the other three Pillars. Representatives from School District #28, Aboriginal Council and Aboriginal Service Providers will work together to identify programs and services provided by the Aboriginal Community that are not presently identified in the Community Literacy Plan.

***Goal 4: To Support Literacy Success in Early Learning, School and Adult Programs for our Aboriginal population***

## **IV. Board's process for consultation with key literacy stakeholder groups**

The Superintendent, Director of Instruction-Curriculum and Board Chair will be part of the community partners meetings that will be held every three months. The District Literacy Resource Teacher is a member of and Chair of the 2010 Legacies Now – Literacy Now Quesnel Task Force.

## **V. Goals and Objectives to improve community literacy**

### **GOAL 1: To Improve Literacy in the Early Years (0 – 5)**

#### **Rationale:**

- approximately 18% of Kindergarten students are not meeting reading readiness expectations at the end of Kindergarten 2008(17% in June 2007; 20.5% in June 2006)
- the 2001 Canada census states that of the 7030 families in Quesnel, 61.5% had children at home. 28.4% were headed by single parents
- from the Literacy Now Community questionnaire: "We work with children who have special needs – many come from families of low socio-economic status. Families that are struggling to survive are unable to promote literacy in their children, especially when they do not have strong literacy skills themselves."

#### **OBJECTIVE 1.1**

**To help parents build understanding and increased awareness of the importance of family literacy in the early years**

#### **Actions:**

- Ready Set Learn six-week programs will be offered in every elementary school
- StrongStart Centres located in two schools
- an Early Learning Steering Committee with community partners meets regularly
- Roots of Empathy will be implemented in most elementary schools in the district.
- Welcome to Kindergarten offered in all elementary schools
- district involvement in the community Early Learning Expo and Success by Six Program committee member and participant in initiatives
- District Literacy Resource Teacher facilitates Ready, Set, Learn and Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) initiatives
- participation in the ongoing HELP Project Early Development Instrument (EDI)
- Kindergarten Screening for all children entering school
- Partners in Education (PIE) Kindergarten pilot at Bouchie Lake Elementary School (partnership with Literacy BC)

## **OBJECTIVE 1.2**

**Continue and create partnerships with existing early years programs and services to support literacy as a component in their program or service**

### **Actions:**

- work with community partners to establish an Early Learning Steering Committee
- continue to work with community partners on Success by Six initiatives (eg. Three Year Old Screen)
- continue to work with community partners in planning and participating in the Early Learning Expo
- explore a partnership with the Recreation Centre to bring literacy into their “building”
- make more formal connections with our Public Library
- Parent Child Resource Team as part of the Quesnel Child Youth Family Network
- collaboration between School District #28 Literacy Resource Teacher, Regional Literacy Coordinator (RLC) – Literacy BC and Quesnel Community Literacy Coordinator (CLC)

## **GOAL 2: To Improve Student Achievement in Literacy (K – 12)**

### **Rationale:**

- Aboriginal students’ participation rate in English 12 (2006–2007) was 71%
- approximately, 18% of Kindergarten students are not meeting reading readiness expectations at the end of Kindergarten June 2007 (20.5% in 2006)
- June 2008 literacy assessment found 16% of the grade ones were not meeting the reading target and benchmark
- June 2008 literacy assessment found 18% of the grade twos were not meeting the reading target and benchmark
- June 2007 district early literacy assessment found 17 % of Kindergarten Aboriginal students were identified as being at risk
- FSA results have been consistently below provincial average in reading and writing
- it is critical that we improve our high school completion rates. Six-year Dogwood completion rate 2006-2007 is 77% for non-Aboriginal students and 54% for Aboriginal students

## **OBJECTIVE 2.1**

**To improve primary students’ reading and writing skills (Grades K – 3)**

### **Actions:**

- District Literacy Resource Teacher provides classroom support, consultation, in-service, and assessment support for teachers
- District Aboriginal Early Literacy Resource teacher supports Aboriginal primary students who are at risk
- Aboriginal readers who are at risk are supported through the English Skills Development Program

- literacy teacher representative in every elementary school to facilitate networking, sharing of information, resources and current literacy research
- supporting a balanced literacy program in all kindergarten – grade 3 classrooms
- using classroom assessment data to inform instruction following the cycle of instruction (1. Assessment, 2. Analysis, 3. Planning, 4. Teaching)
- facilitating and supporting the use of BC Performance Standards for Writing to inform writing instruction in the classroom
- providing inservice and support in using resources such as and the 6+1 Writing Traits, Writing Anchors, and What’s Next for this Beginning Writer
- district wide use of PM Benchmarks and Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA)
- district wide use of BC Performance Standards for grade 3 - reading for information assessment using District Assessment of Reading Team (DART), Standard Reading Assessment, or Alberta Diagnostic
- support for DART assessment using a team approach to whole school oral reading and conferencing (Spring) and marking sessions for elementary schools
- utilizing cross-age reading support (letter/word/ guided reading buddies)
- professional development activities; collaborative planning and assessment marking, book clubs and in-class demonstration lessons
- offering ½ day-every day kindergarten in a school with a high proportion of at-risk students. (All other schools presently offer full day/alternate day kindergarten implemented 6 years ago as a cost-saving measure.)
- establishing and continuing to build book rooms of grade appropriate, and leveled texts in every school
- Daily Five workshop teaching student skills to work independently
- Assessment for Learning (AFL): webcasts and follow up ie. supporting teachers in seeing the overlap between the Big 6 AFL strategies, Reading Power, 6+1 Writing Traits and DART reading strategies
- introduced Reading Power by Adrienne Gear through a series of four after school sessions. Book tubs were provided for all elementary schools to support “powers” in the classroom.
- support for new teachers of English Skills Development (for Aboriginal students) - resources and strategies
- Partners in Education (PIE) Kindergarten pilot at Bouchie Lake Elementary School (partnership with Literacy BC)

## **OBJECTIVE 2.2**

### **To improve intermediate students’ reading and writing skills (Grades 4 - 7)**

#### **Actions:**

- District Literacy Resource Teacher provides classroom support, consultation and in-service for teachers on analysis of assessment data, planning and instruction
- professional development activities; collaborative planning, assessment marking, webcasts, book clubs, in-class demonstration lessons and support

- intermediate literacy representative established in each school to facilitate networking, sharing of information, resources and current literacy research
- using classroom assessment data to inform instruction following the cycle of instruction (1. Assessment, 2. Analysis, 3. Planning, 4. Teaching)
- the use of the BC Performance Standards to inform writing instruction in the classroom
- implementing Writing Anchors and the 6+1 Writing Traits
- district wide use of BC Performance Standards for grades 4-7 – reading for information using District Assessment of Reading Team (DART), Standard Reading Assessment, or Alberta Diagnostic
- support for DART assessment including; a team approach to whole school oral reading and conferencing, and marking sessions for elementary schools
- implementation of writing frameworks i.e. 6 + 1 Writing traits, Writing Anchors
- focusing on reading in the content areas through the implementation of literacy materials that are leveled, and that integrate with the Science and Social Studies curriculum
- establishing and continuing to build book rooms of appropriate, and where applicable, leveled texts in every school
- literature circles and guided reading supported through provision of resources and demonstration lessons
- Aboriginal readers who are at risk are supported through the English Skills Development Program
- Assessment for Learning: webcasts and follow up ie. supporting teachers in seeing the overlap between the Big 6 AFL strategies, Reading Power, 6+1 Writing Traits and DART reading strategies

## **OBJECTIVE 2.3**

### **To improve students' reading comprehension skills – grades 8 – 12**

#### **Actions:**

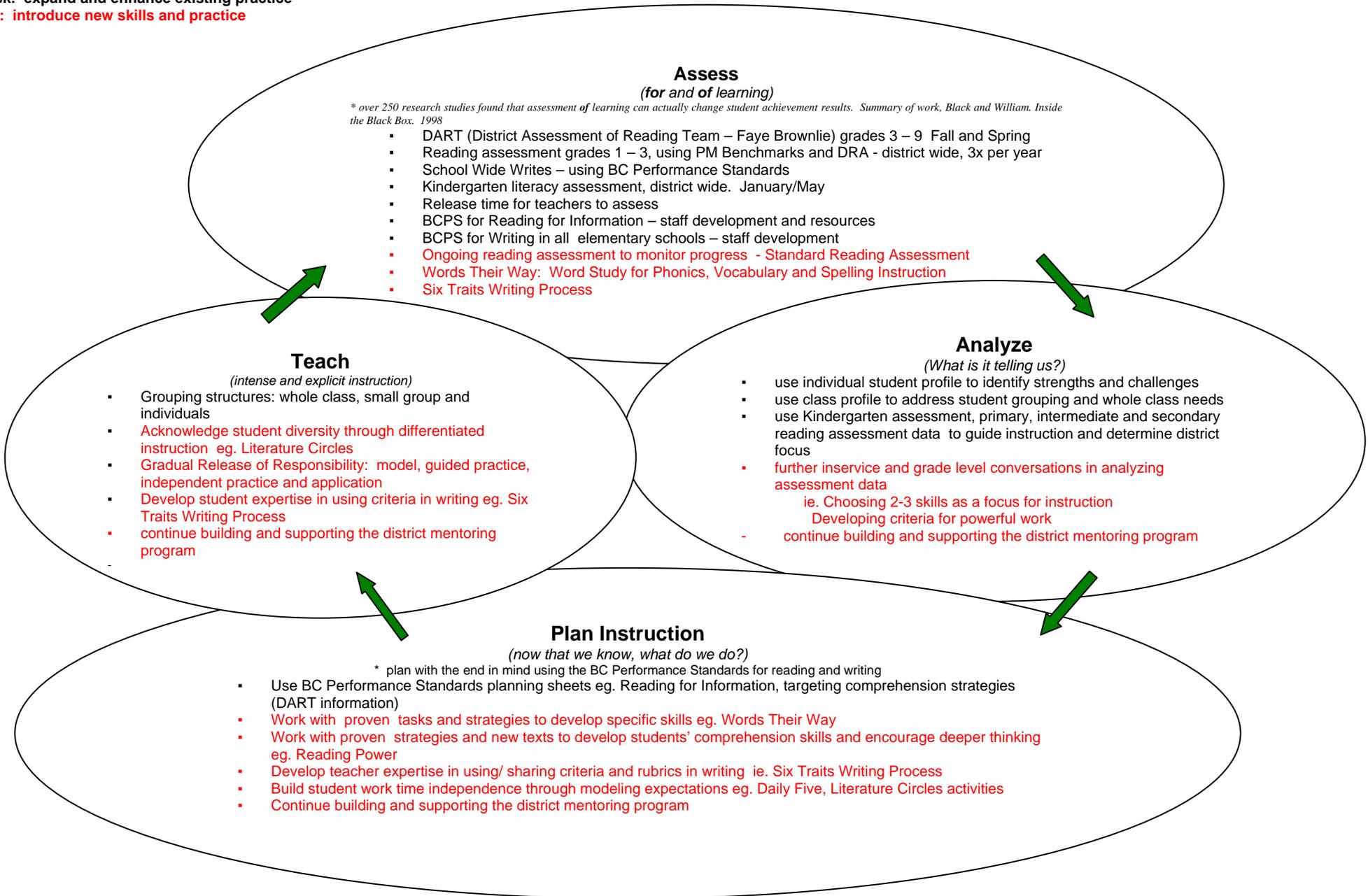
- District Literacy Resource Teacher provides support, consultation and in-service for teachers
- district wide assessment of grade 8 and 9 students' reading for information skills (using District Assessment of Reading Team - DART)
- Assessment for Learning: webcasts and follow up ie. supporting teachers in seeing the overlap between the Big 6 AFL strategies, DART reading strategies
- Leadership for Learning Academy and BCSSA Zone sessions on AFL for Secondary Teams
- ongoing workshops on reading comprehension strategies in the content areas
- providing in-service on BC Performance Standards through implementation of DART
- professional development sessions on collaborative planning and marking, lunch hour video presentations
- providing alternatives to text books through the use of supplementary reading

materials to support low level readers such as Kurzweil Software program used to adapt textbook to speech

- Universal Designs for Learning (UDL) Pilot Project 2007-08 at Quesnel Secondary School supported by Ministry of Education and Set BC - has developed into a SmartBoard project to using differentiated instruction to meet the needs of students with a wide range of needs in the intermediate and secondary grades.
- full year course pilots for grade 8 & 9 – English/Math, Social Studies/Science with a focus on supporting literacy development.

**Literacy Initiative 2007-2008 Project Plan  
Quesnel School District No. 28's Cycle of Instruction**

**Black:** expand and enhance existing practice  
**Red:** introduce new skills and practice



## **GOAL 3: To Improve Adult Success in Literacy**

### **Rationale:**

- the majority of our present population and our projected population is in the 24 – 65 year age range (2006 – 54.3% 2016 – 56.2%)
- 25.2% (average 2004-2006) 18 year olds did not graduate from Grade 12 (provincial average of 20%)
- 54.5 % of our Aboriginal students graduate with a Dogwood Certificate
- 57.7% of 25 – 54 year olds did not complete grade 12 (2001) – one of the provinces' lowest completion rates for that age category
- Literacy Now questionnaire “ many of our clients struggle with child care subsidy forms due to their poor literacy skills”

### **OBJECTIVE 3.1**

**To create partnerships with existing programs and services to encourage literacy as a component in their program or service**

### **Strategies:**

- establish an adult literacy focus group that includes membership from School District, Continuing Education, College of New Caledonia – Quesnel Campus, Aboriginal Programs and Services, seniors groups

### **Structures:**

- School District #28
- Regional Literacy Coordinator (RLC) – Literacy BC
- Quesnel Community Literacy Coordinator (CLC)
- New Focus Society – ESL program
- Community Kitchen/ Justice Committee – Aboriginal programs
- College of New Caledonia – Quesnel Campus

## **GOAL 4: To Support Literacy Success in Early Learning, School and Adult Programs for our Aboriginal population**

### **Rationale:**

- June 2007 district early literacy assessment found 17% of Aboriginal Kindergarten students were identified as being at risk (June 2006 – 38% at risk)
- June 2006 district early literacy assessment found 29% of grades one and two Aboriginal students were not meeting target expectations
- the 5 year average (2001-2006) of Aboriginal student participation in English 12 is 50% with a 97% pass rate for those students
- Dogwood completion rate for Aboriginal students is 54.5%
- self-identified Aboriginal population is 8.8% - double the provincial average of 4.4%

#### **OBJECTIVE 4.1**

**To identify literacy programs and services provided by the Aboriginal community that are not already identified in the community literacy plan**

**Strategies:**

- ensure Aboriginal representation on Early Years and Adult Literacy Committees

**Structures:**

- will be identified through Early Years and Adult Literacy Steering Committees

#### **OBJECTIVE 4.2**

**To identify the literacy needs of the Aboriginal Community that are not being presently being addressed**

**Strategies:**

- ensure Aboriginal representation on Early Years and Adult Literacy Committees

**Structures:**

- will be identified through Early Years and Adult Literacy Steering Committees

### **VI. Evaluating for effectiveness**

- record meeting minutes and ensure they are received and shared with all
- Identifying numbers of Early Learning, Adult and Aboriginal partners attending steering committee meetings
- ensuring that the Adult and Aboriginal Learners in our community are aware of the plans for and opportunities available for Literacy support and enhancement ie. Investigate the ways that the Aboriginal community gets information and how they can give input
- create a listing of Literacy service providers that can be shared with the community and use this list to assist with identifying next steps for service

### **VII. Process for approval of the District Literacy Plan**

This plan will be submitted to the School District Board of Education for approval and then shared with the community through the Literacy Now Task Force and the Community Partners meetings.