



**WEST VANCOUVER
SCHOOL DISTRICT**
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District Literacy Plan

July 15, 2008

A. THE PLANNING PROCESS

West Vancouver School District has entered into a process for the development of our District Literacy Plan with a spirit of openness toward this opportunity for increased collaboration and connection with the Municipalities within our School District (Bowen Island, Lions Bay, and West Vancouver) and with the North Shore community. Our focus is on developing avenues of communication, and finding ways to work supportively so that services align and become more seamless between the school district and the wider community: for our school-aged learners; for early learners; for adults; and for aboriginal learners.

The development of our plan is less a destination than a journey, and is an opportunity to identify and reduce redundancies, to address gaps in service and to create new pathways for supporting literacy strengths among all members of our community. Our approach will continue to be responsive to ideas and input from the other literacy stakeholders with whom we are involved, as we begin to define goals and actions for increasing the literacy capacity of our community.

B. ALIGNMENT OF THE DISTRICT LITERACY PLAN AND THE COMMUNITY LITERACY PLAN

A cornerstone of this process is our participation on the Steering Committee for the North Shore Community Literacy committee, which includes representatives from the North Vancouver City and District municipalities, public library services, multicultural services, the early and middle years' networks, Capilano College, non-governmental agencies, and provincial government agencies. Because our district works closely with the West Vancouver Municipality, we have agreed that the school district will act as the primary liaison for West Vancouver on the Steering Committee.

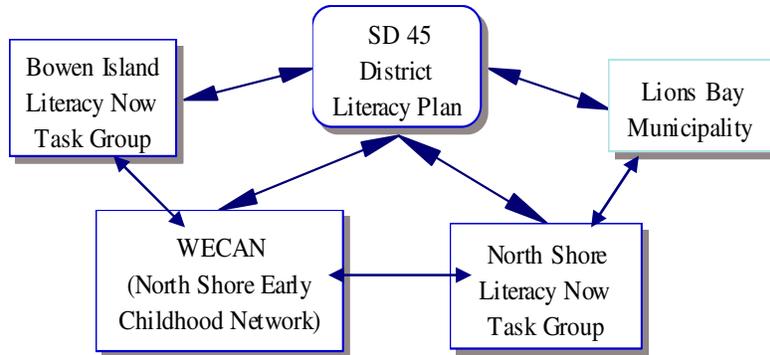
This committee has participated in monthly conference calls throughout the year, and held a 'visioning' event in February 2008, which involved partners across the community and across the spectrum of literacy services on the North Shore. Kathy Coyne, our facilitator for North Shore Community Literacy committee, has led the data collection and analysis process and the development of processes for inviting community input. Ms Coyne has conducted interviews and focus groups to gather data related to literacy issues on the North Shore.

Upcoming on June 12, 2008 is a Community Open House for North Shore Community Literacy committee, which is a further opportunity to allow broader community input to the planning process.

The Bowen Island Community Literacy committee is holding a Community Forum on June 7, 2008 for public input, and is working to complete their plan for the fall of 2008.

Because we liaise with so many of the same governmental and non-governmental agencies, we also have found it especially worthwhile to work closely with the North Vancouver School District through our participation in the early year and middle years' tables, and through the newly-formed North Shore Community Literacy committee.

Both the community plan and our District Literacy Plan are in the early stages of development, so we see an opportunity for working collaboratively to map our community literacy assets, needs and gaps, and to develop our respective plans.



C. DEVELOPING GOALS FOR THE DISTRICT LITERACY PLAN

Our current goals for the District Literacy Plan remain broad in nature as we continue to work through the community planning processes to access data on community literacy assets, and needs and gaps, and to determine specific actions.

Therefore, we will:

- continue our support of early learning initiatives with our partners in WECAN
- continue to focus on the development of assessment, instructional and intervention strategies within the K-12 system, related to the District Achievement Contract
- continue to :
 - participate on the Steering Committee of the North Shore Community Literacy committee in the development and implementation of the Community Literacy plan;
 - develop connections with Lions Bay Municipality to identify its specific literacy needs in relation to the broader North Shore Community Literacy plan
 - liaise with the Bowen Island Community Literacy committee to assist in the development of a continuum of service between the school and the community

D. ACTIONS TO DATE

As we work with the community to determine future directions, we continue to pursue initiatives that have proven to be effective in addressing the 4 Pillars of ReadNow BC.

School Readiness in Young Children

1) Continue to work with WECAN (North Shore Early Childhood Network) in support of early learners:

- Understanding the Early Years Project. WECAN is in the process of developing its action plan.
- WECAN established a WHEELS project to bring resources and parent information to all corners of the North Shore, Bowen Island, and Lions Bay.
- West Vancouver School District, with WECAN's organizational support, has accessed funding from our Early Learning Grant to undertake these initiatives since November 2007:
 - organized a successful West Vancouver Early Childhood Education Fair on Saturday, November 3rd at Park Royal Mall, involving our community partners and featuring information on programs in West Vancouver, such as: Ready, Set, Learn; StrongStart; Welcome to Kindergarten; West Vancouver Family Place; Books for BC Babies, Mother Goose. The coalition has agreed to present a similar fair in fall of 2008, with the inclusion of parental information related to children's development in the Middle Years (ages 6-12).
 - provided funding to offer four Mother Goose programs for parents and children; at Bowen Island Elementary School, Chartwell Elementary School, Westcot Elementary School, and on the Squamish nation band land. For fall of 2008 we have confirmed a Mother Goose session for our Farsi-speaking families at Hollyburn Elementary School.

2) Continue to offer early learning experiences to children and families

- Annual Ready, Set, Learn program is offered at all elementary schools
- Expansion of Welcome to Kindergarten to all English-language elementary schools
- Build on the success of the Hollyburn StrongStart Centre by offering a second site in West Vancouver (subject to Ministry of Education approval)
- Investigate the possibility of a StrongStart Centre on Bowen Island, in cooperation with Bowen Island Family Place. A meeting is scheduled for July 9, 2008 for this purpose.

3) Promote community awareness and understanding of the importance of early learning

- Sponsored a Board of Education *Dialogue on Student Achievement* May 15, 2008, focusing on the importance of the early years, and featuring Dr. Clyde Hertzman

- Participated on the Municipal Child Care Services Working Group, which includes community members, a school trustee, municipal councillor, school and municipal district staff, in order to consider implications to municipal policies, bylaws, and practices related to supporting child care needs in West Vancouver.
 - Collaborated with the Municipality to develop grant applications to increase available childcare spaces and to develop Community Hubs for early learning. Although the West Vancouver School District was not allocated a grant, we were pleased to see that the Municipality was successful in being awarded grants for two locations, and that our collaboration on the grant preparation ultimately has benefited children and families in the community.
- 4) Participate with the North Shore Community Literacy committee in the development of a continuum of family literacy programming opportunities.

Reading Success in Schools

- 1) Focus on the literacy goals in our District Achievement Contract
- Develop students' reading comprehension skills, including a focus on:
 - ◆ early literacy readiness at the Kindergarten and Grade 1 levels;
 - ◆ increasing reading comprehension levels of all students;
 - ◆ minimizing transition issues between Kindergarten and Grade 1, and Grades 7 and 8.
 - Increase the reading proficiency of ESL students
 - Improve writing proficiency of all students
 - Establish baseline information on the success of Aboriginal students in the areas of reading and writing, in order to determine future performance targets
- 2) Provide staff support for literacy instruction and assessment
- Created a .4 FTE Elementary Literacy Support teacher position to work with teaching staff around the support of literacy instruction and assessment at the classroom level.
 - Appointed a Coordinator of Student Support Services to work with School Based Teams to identify, track and plan for teaching interventions with students who are "not yet within" or "minimally meeting" expectations for literacy achievement
- 3) Collaborate with community partners to provide broader support for K-12 learners
- Partnered with the West Vancouver Memorial Library, and the West Vancouver Memorial Library Foundation to present BOOKtopia, the West Vancouver Children's Literature Festival. This annual festival of children's literature promotes literacy, celebrates language arts and cultivates creative thought in West Vancouver. BOOKtopia offers a series of events for preschool, elementary and secondary school students at the Kay Meek Centre and the West Vancouver Memorial Library. Events include author visits, illustrator's workshops, poetry readings, storytelling, poetry slams and other spoken word events.

- Liaised with West Vancouver Memorial Library to:
 - ◆ have an annual meeting of school librarians and public librarians to share information on programming, resources, summer programs, and opportunities for collaboration
 - ◆ support Ready, Set, Learn, and Welcome to Kindergarten events; and provide support to Hollyburn StrongStart Centre

Reading Success for Adults

We are working through the North Shore Community Literacy committee to assess needs, assets, and gaps in relation to adult literacy issues on the North Shore.

Information gathered through interviews and focus groups indicate that there is a need for coordinated, sustained literacy support for adult English Second Language learners. This would include services focused on the needs of newcomers, seniors, and small business operators and employees. We have heard that support and services are needed for women who have English as a second language, particularly those who may be home with young families, and who have limited exposure to situations where English is in general use.

Both the North Shore Community Literacy committee and the Bowen Island LiteracyNow task group have identified a need for services for senior adults, either for English as a second language support (North Shore) or development of technical literacy skills (Bowen Island).

The North Shore Community Literacy committee will be proposing a series of actions in its plan, to provide a range of literacy programs for seniors, for adults who have English as a second language, and for adults who require specialized programs which address specific learning challenges.

Reading Success for Aboriginal People

We will be working through the North Shore Community Literacy committee to assess needs, assets, and gaps in relation to adult Aboriginal literacy issues on the North Shore.

As a district we have begun the process of developing our Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement. We have hired a consultant to assist in this process, and are working in cooperation with the North Vancouver School District, in order to keep coherence and to have effective supports in place, for aboriginal learners across the North Shore. The current goals for our K-12 Aboriginal learners are embedded in our District Achievement Contract.

E. REPORTING

The plan will be presented to the Board of Education and submitted to the Ministry of Education by July 15, 2008. Copies will be shared with our partner organizations.