



COMMUNITY LITERACY PLAN

REPORT TO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(A SUMMARY TAKEN FROM THE REPORT SUBMITTED
TO 2010 LEGACIES NOW AND TO SCHOOL DISTRICT
#35'S BOARD OF EDUCATION)

Langley School District completed a comprehensive Community Literacy Plan for the July 2008 submission to the Ministry of Education. The community still sees the original plan as viable and supports the ongoing work planned in that document. This report summarizes the progress made over the past year and the community's intentions for the upcoming year.

Submission Date to Legacies Now:
Submission Date to Board of Education:

April 30, 2009
June 2, 2009

THE COMMUNITY OF LANGLEY

1) Changes that have been observed since completing the community plan include:

- A greater awareness of the issue of poverty and homelessness. Both have become more visible and concerning to the community as a whole.
- Population growth in one area of the Township of Langley is attracting a more multi-cultural population than Langley has been used to. This has led to greater awareness around the diversity of needs in the ESL population.
- A substantial group of refugees from Burma (Myanmar) have become part of the community, sparking a greater awareness of refugee issues, and the need for community collaboration.

LANGLEY'S PLAN

2) Priorities/objectives and actions from the 08/09 school year's community literacy plan that have been addressed are:

- Successful Literacy Summits, with broad representation from throughout the community, took place February 2008 and May 2009.
- The initial Summit resulted in the establishment of a Langley Literacy Now Community Steering Committee with a mandate to direct and oversee implementation of the Community Literacy Plan.
- The Community Steering Committee has been meeting on a regular basis since February 2008.
- Three working groups, representing the three pillars - early childhood, K - 12 and adult literacy - were established. Consultation with the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee led to a desire on their part to be represented on each pillar group, rather than as a separate Aboriginal pillar.
- A consultant was hired to do a more in-depth investigation of adult literacy needs, including a workplace survey. That work was completed and a report written.
- The Literacy Inventory was reviewed and revised.
- An application for a Community Adult Literacy Program (CALP) grant was successful and a Volunteer Literacy Tutoring program is now in place.
- Adult tutoring services are accessible to, and reaching, those who need them most.
- The CALP grant application was a joint project of the Langley Literacy Association, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, and Aldergrove Neighbourhood Services. The project works with a variety of community organizations to find learners and tutors.
- The Langley Literacy Association teamed with the Christmas Bureau and refugee settlement workers, to provide specific books for Karen Refugee children.

- Little Readers' Club provides a new free literacy service to pre-schoolers and their families.
- A literacy outreach coordinator was hired in February 2009.
- The Langley Literacy Outreach Coordinator (LOC) has established a working relationship with the Kwantlen Regional Literacy Coordinator (RLC).
- The CALP coordinator attended the Langley Volunteer Fair, and used the occasion to recruit adult literacy tutors.
- An arrangement is in place with the Salvation Army Gateway of Hope, set to open in October 2009, to provide literacy tutoring services at that facility.
- The LOC chairs the Adult Literacy Pillar.
- There are a number of other initiatives in progress:
 - The Langley City Library is continuing to investigate ways to provide library services to the Kwantlen First Nation Reserve.
 - A Karen speaking settlement worker has started the training process to become an adult literacy tutor.
 - Application has been made to re-new the CALP grant.
 - A Kwantlen co-op student has been hired, and the RLC will assign that person to work with the LOC around showcasing and marketing literacy initiatives.
 - Pictures are being collected for a Literacy display board that will go to a variety of community events over the next year. A list of events is being compiled.
 - Each of the pillar committees reviewed and revised goals specific to their area in May 2009.

3) Major impacts of this work include:

- A greater awareness of, and focus on, adult literacy issues throughout the community.
- The needs of low-level adult learners are beginning to be addressed through the Adult Tutoring Program.
- The Adult Volunteer Literacy Tutoring program is proving successful both in reaching the learners who need the help and the volunteer tutors willing and able to share their expertise and time.
- There is greater awareness of the multicultural population and their needs.
- Relationships have been established with various organizations that work with adult learners so that adult literacy needs are better identified and served.
- There is better coordination around literacy initiatives.
- There is greater awareness of the particular needs of the Aboriginal community and the challenges around identifying and meeting those needs.
- The Community Literacy Plan, although not perfect, provides a direction for literacy work in the community.
- The Community Literacy Steering Committee brings together a broad-based representative group and focuses attention on literacy concerns and initiatives in a new way.

4) Adjustments that have been made to the community plan are:

- The need to focus on low-level literacy learners is even more important than originally anticipated.
- ESL literacy services need to be tailored to the varied needs of ESL learners - from no literacy in any language to very literate, but needing practice with English.
- Some of the timelines are too ambitious and will need to be extended.
- Aboriginal literacy issues in Langley are more complex than originally anticipated and will require time and effort to address appropriately and effectively.
- The School District's literacy goals have been added to the plan. However the "melding" of district and community initiatives requires further work.
- There may be opportunities in looking at multi-age or linkages between child and adult literacy programs.

TASK GROUP AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

5) Vision and mission statement:

Vision Statement: "To Weave Literacy, in all its forms, throughout the fabric of the community, creating learning opportunities for all."

Mission Statement: "Langley Literacy Now is committed to building on community strengths to encourage lifelong learning by ensuring that residents of all ages have access to sufficient and appropriate information, services, and support, to meet their literacy needs."

6) Number of people participating in the Community Literacy Task Group or Advisory Committee:

There are twelve members of Langley's Literacy Now Community Steering Committee.

7) Sectors involved in the Task Group include:

School District #35
 Kwantlen Polytechnic University
 Township of Langley
 Kwantlen First Nation
 Lower Fraser Valley Aboriginal Society
 Langley Child and Youth Committee
 Langley Early Childhood Education Committee
 Fraser Valley Regional Libraries
 Langley Literacy Association
 Aldergrove Neighbourhood Services

8) Number of times that the Task Group/Advisory Committee met:

The Advisory Committee met seven times between January 2008 and April 2009.

9) **Examples of statements/actions that indicate a shared understanding of the issues and needs:**

- There is more discussion and greater awareness of adult literacy issues than previously.
- There is more discussion around, and understanding of, what encompasses literacy. For, example the Township of Langley representative has provided a number of pictures of children at Municipal Government Awareness Day, engaged in learning about the functions of local government.
- There is an increased understanding across a broader spectrum of the community around the importance of literacy at all ages, not just for school age children.

LITERACY OUTREACH COORDINATION

10) **The Literacy Outreach Coordinator position enhanced literacy work in Langley by:**

- Enabling the Committee to hire a consultant to further “flesh-out” adult literacy needs in Langley.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator was hired as of February 2009.
The LOC:
 - Helps to “weave” and “connect” literacy initiatives
 - Chairs the Adult Literacy Pillar
 - Works closely with the coordinator of the Volunteer Literacy Tutoring program
 - Reviews the Community Literacy Plan and monitors progress, in preparation for discussion with the Pillar Groups and at the Summit
 - Helps organize, and helped conduct, the Literacy Summit
 - Establishes relationships with the Kwantlen RLC and Delta LOC
 - Is instrumental in putting together and writing the original CALP grant and current renewal.

COLLABORATIONS

11) **Number of organizations involved in collaborating in service/event delivery:**

- There are at least 12 community organizations collaborating around a variety of literacy initiatives.

12) **Examples of collaborations:**

- The Literacy Now Community Steering Committee is building awareness of literacy issues among groups that would not normally be focused on literacy issues. It is also enabling sharing of ideas, perceptions and resources.
- Examples:

- The partnership that successfully applied for, and implemented, the Volunteer Literacy Tutoring program
- The sharing of adult tutor resources between the CALP program and Kwantlen Polytechnic University
- The Volunteer Tutor program coordinator co-hosting Kwantlen Polytechnic inaugural Big Open House and helping to recruit Kwantlen volunteer tutors
- The Kwantlen RLC and Adult Tutor program coordinator sharing a presentation to the Fraser Valley Regional Library
- The first Literacy Summit took place at the Langley Library, the second one was hosted by the School District, and for next year the Township of Langley Presentation Theatre has been offered as a venue

INITIATIVES

13) New initiatives have been instituted include:

- Volunteer Adult Tutor Program
- Literacy Now Community Steering Committee
- Annual Literacy Summit
- Moe the Mouse Early Literacy Program
- Little Reader's Book Club
- "Zine" Workshops for youth at the ANS Youth Drop-In program

14) Initiatives that have been expanded or continued are:

- Langley School District now has 6 Strong Starts.
- The Aboriginal Kindergarten, Eagles Program, has expanded to a second school
- The library's partnership with the Aboriginal Play group.

15) What programs/projects/events have ceased to exist in the community?

- N/A

16) What was the most successful aspect of initiatives this year?

- The Volunteer Adult Tutoring Program
- A "robust" Community Literacy Steering Committee
- The Literacy Summit

17) Challenges were as follows:

- Translating awareness, goodwill and good ideas into tangible projects.
- Ensuring that the right people are at the table, and that they are interested and committed enough to stay there. Keeping diverse groups and interests focused on literacy goals and their importance.
- Engaging the business community.

- Truly engaging the Aboriginal population. Our Aboriginal on-reserve populations are small and the human resources over-taxed. The off-reserve Aboriginal population is diverse and scattered, making it difficult to clearly identify their needs and desires. The Education Coordinator for Kwantlen First Nations, and the president of the Lower Fraser Valley Aboriginal Society, sits on the Steering Committee and discussion is ongoing.
- “Melding” the school districts goals with the community plan.
- Keeping track of everything that is going on, in the pillar groups and throughout the community. This should improve as the LOC picks up this role.

RESOURCES

Grants that were applied for to support initiatives were:

18) Number of successful grant applications:

- CALP (Community Adult Literacy Program)

19) Total value of successful grant applications:

- CALP grant was approximately \$20,000.

What have the partners contributed?

20) **Value of in kind resources contributed from organizations that participate in program and event delivery:**

- Most of our support is in-kind - meeting space at the libraries, at the school district administrative office, and other organizations, refreshments for meetings, photocopying, clerical help, etc.

21) **Fundraising events that were held included:**

- The Langley Literacy Now Steering Committee has not yet held any fund raising events however we are researching an Adult Spelling Bee, Scrabble tournament or Trivial Pursuit Game.
- The Langley Literacy Association fund raises each year to buy books that are given to children and youth as part of the Langley Christmas Bureau activities each December.

LINKS

Langley Literacy Now website - www.langleyliteracynow.com

Little Reader’s Book Club website - www.littlereadersbookclub.com