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RICHMOND COMMUNITY LITERACY PLAN

Developed for the:
Richmond Literacy Now Committee
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INTRODUCTION

Literacy is...

- Being able to read at a level where you can function in society (at your full potential)
- To access any information you need
- Beyond the printed word
- Experiencing exposure to language at an early age (songs, rhymes, play)
- Being able to fully function in society
- Something that can be attained when the foundational elements are in place (e.g. housing, food, access to education, sense of belonging to the community)

As a community, Richmond boasts a rich, diverse make-up of residents (where the majority are foreign born) and has a strong family make up where the vast majority of residents are tied to some form of a family structure. This is a community where there are more than seventy-one accessibly literacy programs available to community members and 93% of high school students graduate. In an effort to continue capitalizing on their many assets and to help position Richmond as one of the most literate communities in the province, the Richmond Literacy Now committee commenced their planning process in September 2008 where a consultant was brought on to carry out a comprehensive community consultation and to assist the committee with developing key priority areas and relevant action plans for Literacy in Richmond.

The planning process included the development of Community Profiles for the Richmond. These profiles looked at statistics around a number of key areas which included: languages, education level, early childhood development indicators, and the uptake of lifelong learning by adults in the community. The community profiles also included a compilation of statistical profiles for census tracts in Richmond that mapped to an elementary school in the community. This document includes data on roughly 46 neighborhoods in Richmond and the hope is that it will help literacy planners and community service agencies to develop programs and initiatives that are relevant to the neighborhoods they serve. This document can be found in Appendix J.

An inventory of current literacy programs and services was also compiled for this report. Roughly seventy-one services are included in this inventory and the hope is that this document will be a "living document" that will be added to by the future literacy coordinator and will possibly be housed and accessed through the Richmond Literacy Centre.

The consultation phase of this project included a number of mediums to ensure that the consultation process was open and inclusive to the entire community. This process included focus groups, online surveys, in-person and telephone key informant interviews, a public dialogue and simple one-page surveys for program clients and staff. The consultation process helped to develop a key set of Vision Statements that will help to guide the implementation of the Richmond Literacy Plan. These Vision Statements can be found in this report.

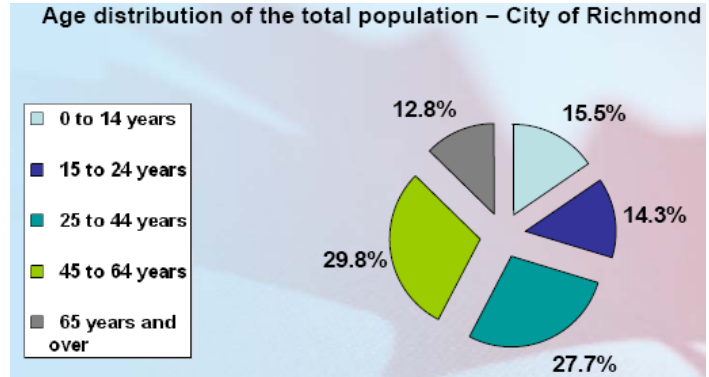
Through this comprehensive process, quite a few common themes for Richmond's literacy priorities emerged that were linked to the Vision Statements mentioned above. The

overarching priorities that were developed to further the literacy movement in Richmond include:

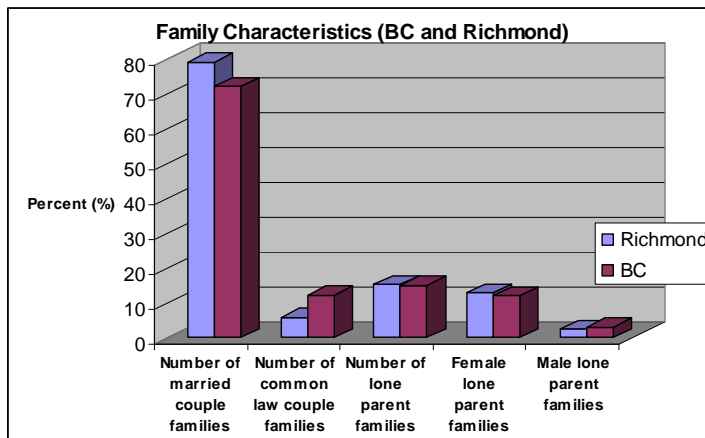
- Coordinate and streamline Richmond literacy activities and resources (development of a Richmond Literacy Centre).
- Promote the importance of literacy and lifelong learning to all residents in Richmond
- Increase access to literacy initiatives and services for “hard to reach” populations
- Capitalize on the strong family structure in Richmond to promote literacy to the community
- Increase the health literacy of Richmond residents
- Increase the literacy levels of entry-level workers in Richmond and increase the capacity of workplaces to provide literacy resources and opportunities
- Organizations in Richmond will work together in a collaborative fashion to increase literacy in Richmond
 - A *Partnership Opportunities* section was also developed for this report for suggested collaboration and partnership opportunities between various sectors in Richmond.
- Connect with recent immigrants to provide information and resources on literacy initiatives and services in the community
- All non-English speakers should have an understanding of the importance of literacy in their first language
- Carry out research to ensure that the best literacy programs are offered and the needs of the community are fulfilled

RICHMOND COMMUNITY PROFILE

Richmond is the 4th largest municipality in the Vancouver Census Metropolitan area and boasts an extremely diverse population and strong family structure. As of the 2006 census, there were exactly 174,461 residents in Richmond, a growth of 6.2% since 2001. This growth is somewhat slower when compared to other similar municipalities such as Surrey which experienced a growth of 14.1% between 2001 and 2006.



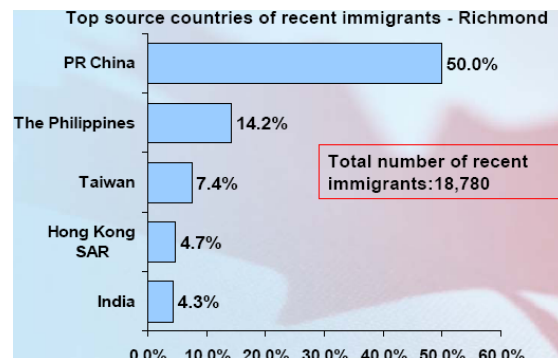
In terms of age characteristics, 1 out of every 8 residents in Richmond were classified as seniors over the age of 65, a trend that points to the aging demographic that is being seen across the province but slightly more pronounced in Richmond where the median age (40.7) is slightly higher than a number of other large communities including Vancouver, Surrey and Burnaby. This increasingly aging demographic shows a need for more seniors-based literacy programming. Another age characteristic that points to a need for directed literacy programming for children and youth is that 15.5% of the population are under the age of 15.



Family structure and make-up is a definite asset in Richmond where there are a higher proportion of traditional married-couple families (79%) when compared to the rest of BC (72%). This family structure can often help to lay the foundation that is needed for literacy and social development in children (and adults). However, Richmond has a slightly larger proportion of lone-parent families (15.1% as compared to the

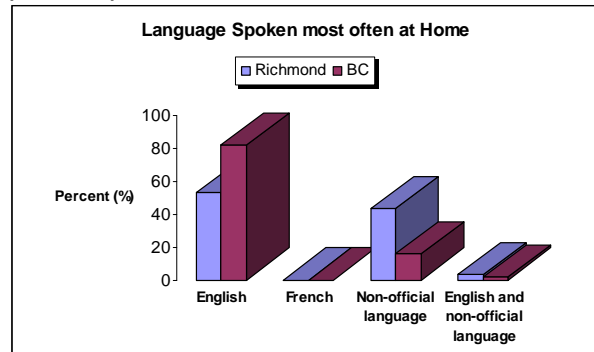
provincial average of 15%) so literacy programs that fit a working parent's schedule and budget are needed.

One of the key unique features of Richmond that distinguishes it from other municipalities is its extremely diverse cultural make-up. Roughly 60% of residents were not born in Canada which is the highest proportion of foreign born for a municipality in this country. Immigration has been noted to be the driving force behind almost all of Richmond's population growth as there is



an ever decreasing trend of babies being born. In fact, were it not for immigration, the population of Richmond would have likely declined. While the province of BC saw 15.9% of immigrants enter between 2001 and 2006, Richmond experienced 18.8% of immigrants entering during this time period. However, it should be noted that as a proportion of the population as a whole, immigration has been declining as immigration from Hong Kong has dropped and at one point had served as a major source of immigrants. The top source countries of recent immigrants include the Peoples Republic of China at 50% of all immigrants, followed by the Philippines and Taiwan at 14.2% and 7.4%, respectively.

In terms of language characteristics, the following table illustrates the language profile of Richmond in regards to mother tongue, knowledge of official language and languages spoken most often at home and at work:



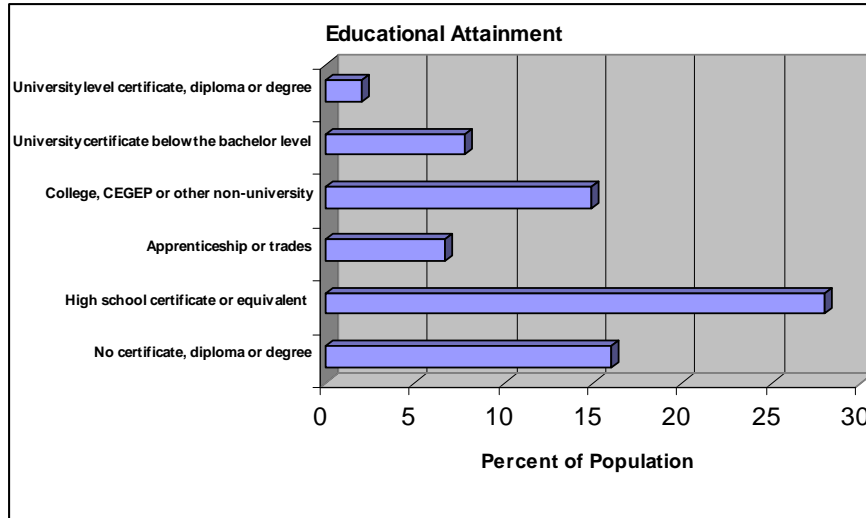
In terms of mother tongue, knowledge of official languages and language spoken most often at home,

| Mother Tongue | Richmond | British Columbia |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|
| Total population | 173,565 (100%) | 4,074,380 (100%) |
| English only | 67,040 (39%) | 2,875,770 (70%) |
| French only | 1,155 (6.6%) | 54,740 (13.4%) |
| English and French | 120 (0.06%) | 5,920 (1.4%) |
| Other languages | 105,250 (60.6%) | 1,137,945 (27.9%) |
| Knowledge of official languages | Richmond | British Columbia |
| Total Population | 173,565 (100%) | 4,074,385 (100%) |
| English only | 148,310 (85.4%) | 3,653,365 (89.7%) |
| French only | 50 (0.03%) | 2,070 (0.05) |
| English and French | 9,955 (5.7%) | 295,640 (7.2%) |
| Neither English nor French | 15,240 (8.7%) | 123,305 (3%) |
| Language spoken most often at home | Richmond | British Columbia |
| Total population | 173,565 (100%) | 4,074,385 (100%) |
| English | 92,130 (53%) | 3,341,285 (82%) |
| French | 265 (0.15%) | 15325 (0.37%) |
| Non-official language | 75245 (43.3%) | 639,380 (15.7%) |
| English and non-official language | 5790 (3.3%) | 73,730 (1.8%) |
| Language used most often at work | Richmond | British Columbia |
| Total population 15 years and over (who worked in 2005) | 99,105 (100%) | 2,419,215 (100%) |
| English | 84,190 (84.9%) | 2,308,370 (95.4%) |
| French | 185 (1.8%) | 5,525 (2.2%) |
| Non-official language | 11,400 (11.5%) | 79,415 (3.3%) |
| English and non-official language | 3,195 (3.2%) | 22,435 (0.93%) |

English is spoken at a predominantly lower frequency in Richmond when compared to the provincial average. When looking specifically at mother tongue, roughly 61% of Richmond residents speak another language as compared to the provincial average of 27.9%. English as the language spoken most often at home is only spoken by 53% of Richmond as compared to the provincial average of 82%. As aligned with the high proportion of immigrants and diversity in languages, Richmond also boasts a rich diversity in visible minorities who make up 65% of the total population. This is the second highest proportion of visible minorities in a municipality in Canada. In terms of top visible minority groups, the Chinese make up 43% of the total population, followed by the South Asian and Filipino communities which make up 7.9% and 5.5% of the population, respectively.

Richmond's education

characteristics for the population aged 25 – 64 show that 1/3 of the population has a degree which is higher than the provincial average and 32.5% of this population has a masters or PhD. The table to the left depicts the educational attainment of the population aged 15 and over. Also, for those residents with a post secondary diploma, 43% received their diploma from outside of Canada which is significantly higher than the provincial average of 23%.



Richmond's labor characteristics:

| | Richmond | British Columbia |
|-------------------------------------|----------|------------------|
| Total population 15 and over | 146,525 | 3,394,910 |
| Employed | 87,175 | 2,092,770 |
| Unemployed | 5,290 | 133,615 |
| Unemployment rate | 5.7 | 6.0 |
| Work in Richmond | 39,020 | |

The average employment growth rate in Richmond is 1.9% which is slightly slower than the lower mainland average of 2.1%. Out of the 87,175 people in Richmond who are employed, 45% work in Richmond and the rest travel outside of the community for work. The median income for all census families is slightly lower in Richmond when compared to the provincial average:

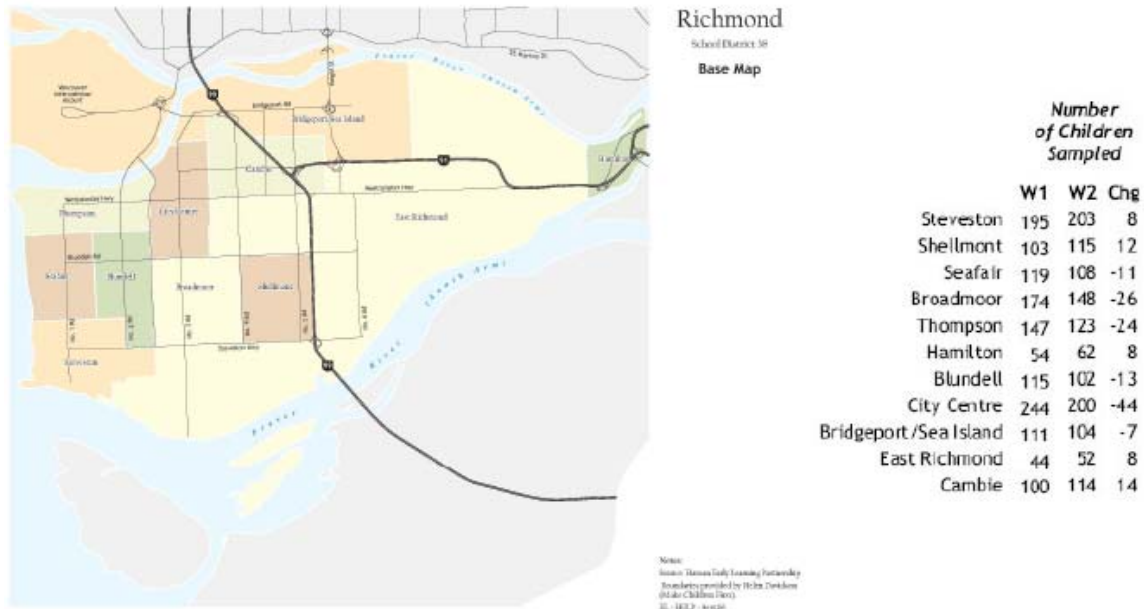
| 2005 income data | Richmond (\$) | British Columbia (\$) |
|--|---------------|-----------------------|
| Median income for all census families | 56,285 | 62,346 |

The low-income cut off (LICO) is defined as the income threshold below which Canadians are estimated to devote at least 1/5th more of their income to necessities such as food shelter and clothing when compared to the average Canadian family. Richmond has a higher than average low income population when compared to the provincial average which points to the necessity for literacy programs to be free and accessible in order to reach this large population in Richmond.

| | Richmond | British Columbia |
|---|----------|------------------|
| % in low income before tax – All persons | 26.1 | 17.3 |
| % in low income before tax – Persons less than 18 years of age | 31.4 | 19.6 |

HUMAN EARLY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP (HELP) – Early Development Instrument (EDI) DATA FOR RICHMOND

Neighborhood divisions and sample sizes:



For the EDI data collection, Richmond was divided into the eleven neighborhoods/ areas noted above and the data collected for each child was mapped to their area of residence (not the area where they go to school).

General Domain Descriptions:

1. Physical health and well being: assessment of motor development, levels of energy, washroom independence and daily preparedness for school.
2. Social competence: assessment of cooperation and respect for others, the ability to work within the school environment, socially appropriate behavior at school and self control and confidence.
3. Emotional maturity: assessment of pro-social behavior, aggressive behavior, anxiety, inattention, hyperactivity and informal peer to peer interaction
4. Language and cognitive development: assessment of an interest in books and other language related activities, an ability to recognize letters and read simple words, an interest in simple math related activities and numeracy skills

Province-wide Vulnerability Cut-offs:

| EDI Scale | Cut-off Value |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Physical Health and Well-being | 6.92 |
| Social Competence | 5.58 |
| Emotional Maturity | 5.83 |
| Language and Cognitive Development | 5.38 |
| Communication and General Knowledge | 3.89 |

5. Communication skills and general knowledge: assessment of the ability to clearly communicate in English, clear articulation, active participation in story-telling and interest in and knowledge about the world.

Each EDI domain is scored between 0 and 10 where a higher value is indicative of more vulnerability in each domain and the vulnerability threshold is an EDI score that distinguishes the bottom 10% of children in the province from the other 90%.

| | Physical Health and Well Being | | | Social Competence | | | Emotional Maturity | | | Language and Cognitive Development | | | Communication Skills and General Knowledge | | | Neighbourhood Vulnerability on One or More Scales | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-------|--------|-------------------|-------|--------|--------------------|-------|--------|------------------------------------|-------|--------|--|-------|--------|---|-------|--------|-----------------------|
| | Wave1 | Wave2 | Change | Wave1 | Wave2 | Change | Wave1 | Wave2 | Change | Wave1 | Wave2 | Change | Wave1 | Wave2 | Change | Wave1 | Wave2 | Change | |
| Steveston | 7.8 | 6.4 | -1.4 | 7.7 | 8.9 | 1.2 | 10.3 | 7.5 | -2.8 | 6.2 | 5.4 | -0.7 | 10.3 | 10.8 | 0.6 | 20.5 | 24.1 | 3.6 | Steveston |
| Shellmont | 10.7 | 5.3 | -5.4 | 9.8 | 12.2 | 2.4 | 8.9 | 8.7 | -0.2 | 4.9 | 9.8 | 4.9 | 10.8 | 15.0 | 4.3 | 22.3 | 25.2 | 2.9 | Shellmont |
| Seafair | 10.9 | 9.3 | -1.7 | 16.8 | 14.0 | -2.8 | 8.4 | 7.4 | -1.0 | 7.6 | 5.6 | -2.0 | 9.2 | 15.0 | 5.7 | 28.6 | 25.9 | -2.6 | Seafair |
| Broadmoor | 7.5 | 6.8 | -0.7 | 8.6 | 12.9 | 4.3 | 8.8 | 12.5 | 3.7 | 8.7 | 6.4 | -2.2 | 12.7 | 18.6 | 5.9 | 25.3 | 27.7 | 2.4 | Broadmoor |
| Thompson | 11.6 | 4.1 | -7.5 | 19.2 | 8.9 | -10.2 | 6.8 | 5.7 | -1.1 | 12.3 | 9.8 | -2.6 | 20.4 | 22.3 | 1.9 | 38.1 | 28.5 | -9.6 | Thompson |
| Hamilton | 7.4 | 9.7 | 2.3 | 14.8 | 16.1 | 1.3 | 16.7 | 9.7 | -7.0 | 9.3 | 4.8 | -4.4 | 14.8 | 12.9 | -1.9 | 31.5 | 29.0 | -2.4 | Hamilton |
| Blundell | 7.8 | 5.9 | -1.9 | 14.0 | 17.6 | 3.6 | 9.6 | 10.9 | 1.3 | 13.0 | 4.0 | -9.1 | 13.9 | 18.8 | 4.9 | 31.3 | 30.4 | -0.9 | Blundell |
| City Centre | 12.7 | 5.5 | -7.2 | 13.1 | 13.0 | -0.1 | 12.5 | 11.5 | -1.0 | 11.3 | 6.5 | -4.7 | 21.9 | 20.7 | -1.2 | 36.1 | 33.5 | -2.6 | City Centre |
| Bridgeport/Sea Island | 14.4 | 11.5 | -2.9 | 16.2 | 16.3 | 0.1 | 16.2 | 15.5 | -0.7 | 16.4 | 14.4 | -1.9 | 16.2 | 22.1 | 5.9 | 35.1 | 34.6 | -0.5 | Bridgeport/Sea Island |
| East Richmond | 13.6 | 3.8 | -9.8 | 25.0 | 11.5 | -13.5 | 22.7 | 19.2 | -3.5 | 18.2 | 5.8 | -12.4 | 18.2 | 13.5 | -4.7 | 43.2 | 34.6 | -8.6 | East Richmond |
| Cambie | 5.0 | 8.8 | 3.8 | 25.0 | 15.8 | -9.2 | 17.2 | 18.4 | 1.2 | 15.1 | 12.3 | -2.8 | 19.0 | 17.5 | -1.5 | 40.0 | 35.1 | -4.9 | Cambie |

Dark outlines indicate neighbourhoods with statistically significant change between Waves.

Sorted by

EDI Data Summary

- Between Wave 1 (2001 – 2004) and Wave 2 (2005 – 2007), there was a 1.5% decrease from 31.5% to 29.5% in the percent of children who were vulnerable on at least one domain of development
- Richmond is the 34th least vulnerable out of 59 school districts in the province
- There were no neighborhoods in Richmond with lower than 24% of children vulnerable.
- In terms of the Physical Health and Well-being domain, Richmond is the 6th least vulnerable on this domain
- In terms of Social Competence, Richmond is the 34th least vulnerable in this domain and district wide, 12.9% of children were vulnerable in Wave 2 (a decrease of 1.2% from Wave 1)
- In terms of Emotional Maturity, Richmond is the 25th least vulnerable district in this domain and Wave 2 showed a 0.4% decrease in vulnerability from 11.4% to 11%.
- Language and Cognitive development show a more pronounced area of vulnerability for Richmond where the district only ranks as the 9th least vulnerable district. However, it should be noted that there were decreases in vulnerability in almost all neighborhoods between Wave 1 and Wave 2
- Communication Skills and General Knowledge is also an area that shows greater vulnerability where Richmond only ranks as the 8th least vulnerable district and 17.2% of children district wide are vulnerable. In addition, between Wave 1 and Wave 2, seven of the eleven neighborhoods experienced an increase in vulnerability on this domain

School District 38

In terms of student successes within the Richmond School District, there are quite a few notable achievements:

- An extremely high graduation rate of 92.5% which is significantly higher than the provincial average of 80.4%.
- Across the board achievements in FSA scores for grades 4 and 7 in comparison to the provincial average
- Roughly 75% of graduating students enter a post-secondary program within a year of graduation which is roughly 20% higher than the provincial average

Vital Signs 2007

The Vancouver Foundation's "*Metro Vancouver's Vital Signs Report 2007*" provided some additional summary information in terms of Richmond's position in the area of Richmond.

Continuing Education:

As a measure of lifelong learning in the community, there were approximately 452 adults in Richmond who were participating in continuing education programs. Internal records show that Richmond Continuing Education had 11,594 course registrations during 2007 and had 12,987 during 2008. Approximately two thirds of these registrations were from adult students and the remainder from school age students. Courses offered span the domains of K – 12 academic courses, arts/ crafts, career/ professional, ESL, health, personal development, home arts, international initiatives, languages and youth programs.

Library Use:

In terms of library use, Richmond boasts one of the highest visits per capita at 10.44 and saw a 19.2% increase in visits per capita between 2000 and 2006. In addition, roughly 60% of Richmond residents have a library card. Richmond also has the largest circulation per capita where in 2006 the average person borrowed 24 books as compared to the Metro Vancouver average of 16. It should also be noted that Richmond's library experienced a phenomenal 33% increase in circulation between 2000 and 2006 which was much higher than other reporting libraries.

Please note that all data and graphs for the Richmond Literacy Inventory can be found in Appendix A and a full compilation of compiled Census Tract data for neighborhoods in Richmond with elementary schools can be found in Appendix J.

RICHMOND LITERACY VISION AND DEFINITION

Through the Richmond Literacy Plan consultation phase, respondents were given the opportunity to give their thoughts on how they viewed literacy in their community and their Literacy Vision for the community. This feedback was gathered to develop a more comprehensive definition of literacy and to develop a number of Vision Statements that will guide the implementation of the Richmond Literacy Plan.

Literacy is...

- Being able to read at a level where you can function in society (at your full potential)
- To access any information you need
- Beyond the printed word
- Experiencing exposure to language at an early age (songs, rhymes, play)
- Being able to fully function in society
- Something that can be attained when the foundational elements are in place (e.g. housing, food, access to education, sense of belonging to the community)

Where do you want Richmond to be in terms of Literacy five years from now?

- People would know where to go for the services they need. There is access to translation services.
- More opportunities available to English as a second language learners
- We should have everyday conversation circles (even for children)
- Involve parents more in their children's learning
- The majority of people could read and write (in any language)
- There is a system in place for those with disabilities to access services
- Increase access to service available over the internet
- We will have methods and the capacity to reach the hard to reach kids – break the cycle of marginalization by promoting literacy and reading.
- A literacy centre is up and running with a strong volunteer core
- More programs for women and adults – equitable distribution of programs and services
- Work to provide more accessible support and workplace literacy initiatives to the pockets of poverty in Richmond
- See literacy levels in Richmond approaching 100% at appropriate levels for each individual (ideally in more than one language)
- Family support for literacy and children are entering school more prepared
- Increased literacy levels for families
- Strength based literacy learning
- All partners are at the table and part of the dialogue for increasing literacy in Richmond
- All children are encouraged to read for pleasure
- Community mobilized to meet the literacy needs of ethnic seniors
- Richmond as a community celebrates literacy

METHODOLOGY

In an effort to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive consultation process, the following methods were used to gather information on the current climate of literacy in Richmond and to consult with a wide range of stakeholders in the community:

- An online survey mechanism was used to gather information about current programs and initiatives that promoted literacy in the community. This also included the gathering of information and stories on literacy successes experienced by service providers in Richmond. A template with questions that were used to gather such information can be found in Appendix D.
- Key Informant Interviews were carried out with a wide variety of stakeholders from the community and various sectors (e.g. education, public health, non-governmental organizations etc.) A listing of questions that were used for the key informant interviews can be found in Appendix E.
- Focus groups were held with staff and volunteers at various service organizations to gather information on how organizations felt they contributed to literacy in the community. A sample of questions used in these focus groups can be found in Appendix F.
- Topical surveys on a number of literacy-related topics were developed to gather more specific information on: The Role of the Education Sector in Literacy, Health Literacy, The Role of the Library in Literacy, The Role of the Service Agency in Literacy and Workplace Literacy. These surveys were disseminated using survey monkey (www.surveymonkey.com)
- A public dialogue was carried out at the Richmond Public Library to allow for the general public to have an additional opportunity to provide input into the Richmond Literacy Plan. This dialogue was promoted through the Richmond Literacy Now committee, posters and a press release in the local paper. Questions that were used during the public dialogue can be found in Appendix G.
- A simple one page survey was developed and disseminated to service organization in Richmond to gather information from clients, volunteers and other staff. This survey was devised to give the community a time-friendly, plain language way to give their input on literacy in Richmond. This survey was disseminated in English and Chinese. Samples of the survey can be found in Appendix H(a) and H(b)

A full summary of the consultation data that was gathered from all of the methods listed above can be found in Appendix B. This data was used to develop the Richmond Literacy Plan Vision statements, priorities, action plans and the current literacy assets and gaps in Richmond.

RICHMOND LITERACY INVENTORY

A compilation of current literacy programs and initiatives was developed to meet the following needs:

- To gain a deeper understanding of the breadth and quantity of literacy programs in Richmond
- To assess whether there were areas or certain target groups who could benefit from an increase in literacy programs
- To gain a better understanding of the types of organizations that are currently offering literacy programs (independently and in partnerships)

The information compiled for the inventory will help to build the foundation for the Richmond Community Literacy Plan (in conjunction with the community profiles and stakeholder consultations).

Inventory Methodology:

A current database of literacy programs and initiatives had been started previously by the Literacy Now committee. An online method was subsequently created to allow for more organizations and individuals to input information about their literacy program/ initiative. This method allowed participants to also give their feedback on resources that could enhance their service and to tell what their greatest program success was. This inventory is a living document and will surely be added to on an ongoing basis. The full literacy inventory can be found in Appendix C.

COMMUNITY LITERACY ASSETS AND GAPS

As outlined in the methodology explanation, a number of sources were used to provide information on the current assets and gaps in the Richmond Literacy Realm. The Richmond Literacy Inventory (Appendix C) provided a quantity based look at the reach literacy programs had into a number of target groups and gave a look into the types of organizations that were implementing literacy programs. The inventory collection itself also provided a qualitative look into the breadth of these programs in terms of their successes, community partnerships and impact on the community. From the inventory it is clear that there are a large number of programs and organizations that are making a difference in literacy for Richmond residents. The Topical Literacy Surveys also provided a look into the assets and gaps that existed within these specific areas (education, library, services providers, health literacy and workplace literacy).

What have we learned from the Literacy Inventory?

More than 71 programs and initiatives are included in the literacy inventory and these programs are offered by a range of organizations and sectors. In an effort to identify which target groups were served by literacy programming, a program count was carried out with the results below. Please note that, multiple target groups or sectors were counted if a program affected both (e.g. a literacy program for immigrant women was counted for both immigrants and women):

| | Early childhood (0 - 6) | Middle childhood (6 - 12) | Youth (13 - 18) | Adults | Seniors | Immigrants (specifically) | Men (specifically) | Women (specifically) | All (general population) | Persons with disabilities |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|--------|---------|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Literacy programs serving this population | 29 | 17 | 12 | 5 | 7 | 14 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

These counts highlighted a few key points:

- There is a wide range of programs and services that are available for the early childhood stage of life. However, as an individual ages to go through the middle childhood, youth and adult phases of life, the availability of literacy programs tapers off substantially. In order to foster an interest and purpose for lifelong learning, it may be necessary to assess the need for and perhaps offer an increased number of literacy programs for other age groups.
- Conventionally, men are often not the first target group who will attempt to access literacy programs if they are needed. This literacy inventory found that there are currently no literacy programs specifically for men (from the programs included in the inventory). This may indicate the need to conduct an assessment to see if there is actually a need for such programs and if there is the possibility of delivering programs at places where this target group would best access them (e.g. at the workplace, library, service organizations etc.)

A count of programs offered by various sectors was undertaken with the results below. Public Health included Richmond Health, Public Health and Vancouver Coastal and "Education Sector" included the school district, individual schools and the Ministry of Education. Please refer to the "Literacy Partnerships" section of this report for a discussion on future opportunities for partnerships between these sectors.

| | Public Health | Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) | Library | Community Centers | Education sector | Other (including individuals) |
|--|---------------|---------------------------------------|---------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Literacy programs offered by this sector | 6 | 27 | 27 | 6 | 14 | 6 |

In addition to these program counts, a rough count of people in the community who were impacted directly by literacy programs in the community found that approximately 25,000 people a year were accessing currently running literacy programs. Please note that this was a rough count that only accounted for values given during the literacy inventory as a cumulative value. This count also did not account for the unintended benefits that are often seen as a result of literacy programs such as the positive effect literacy skills have on the family as a whole.

Organizations and individuals who gave information about their literacy programs were also asked about successes that they had experienced from hosting these programs. These successes illustrate assets far better than program numbers and counts ever could. Some of the heart-warming quotes that embody such successes are included below:

One of the greatest successes our literacy program has achieved is:

"Watching women take back control and feel supported and watching the confidence grow as the participants take part in the program"

"Having our participants publish their poetry"

"6 community members told their personal stories of change and immigration and developed their own creative outlet of playwriting. All are still involved in the arts in a meaningful way after our project"

"Giving healthy snacks and new books to children who otherwise wouldn't have them"

"Many children in the program move on to regularly attend storytimes and other library programs and share their love of reading with staff"

"The successful inclusion of children with disabilities"

"Our program has a 6-week work experience component to allow for additional opportunities for language learning and for making connections with the community. Students love this part of the program and come back much more confident and competent language users"

"Securing employment for persons with disability"

"The fostering of relationships between mentees and mentors, and the development of an interest in reading and sharing books"

"Opens a new means of communication for seniors and immigrant groups"

What have we learned from the Topical Literacy Surveys?

Some of the assets that were identified by respondents included the following:

- Innovative programs that focus on reading, listening, speaking and writing
- Workshops offered to support program providers
- A wide range of programs for adults and children
- The Richmond School District and almost all schools have identified literacy as a key focus in both achievement areas and professional development
- Books and other materials are available for all age groups through literacy programs and the library
- Library programs such as Storytime, Reading Buddies etc. for young children and teens
- Workshops are provided by the library on how to read with your child
- Summer reading programs
- After school programming where literacy and homework programs are important parts of the curriculum

The Topical Literacy Surveys essentially provided a snapshot of key assets that were identified by stakeholders that currently existed in the community. As mentioned above, Richmond already contains a wealth of meaningful and impactful literacy programs and

services in the community. This is a community that is truly poised to capitalize on its current assets to become a truly literate community.

What are the implications of all of this?

As mentioned above, Richmond is a community that is well poised to further literacy for its residents. There are so many valuable and impactful programs currently running in the community that there should be a mechanism in place for service providers, clients and the community to share best practices, coordinate efforts and avoid duplication to allow for an equitable distribution of literacy programs and services. A priority area that was also identified by numerous stakeholders throughout this process is that there needs to be more emphasis on the promotion of programs...a great program/ service is only effective if it is reaching its target audience, so how do we let the community know what is out there in an uncluttered, clear and simple form? As will be seen in the Priorities and Actions section, there have been numerous recommendations for a central Literacy Centre/ Hub in Richmond, and with the provision of space and other resources by the Richmond Public Library, this will be a key recommendation for the Richmond Literacy Plan implementation.

The Richmond Literacy Inventory itself could also serve as a valuable document for service providers and organizations throughout Richmond. It will allow for these stakeholders to access information about literacy programs and services throughout Richmond in one central place (this inventory could also be housed in the Richmond Literacy Centre). In terms of the general population, the inventory itself could be fairly daunting to individuals who are seeking help with their literacy skills. Therefore, there should be a mechanism in place that allows for accessing this information in the simplest form possible. This could take place through referrals by community organizations (who would provide personalized information to individuals), or as mentioned above, the Inventory could be housed and updated at the Richmond Literacy Centre where trained staff and/ or volunteers would have the skills and ability to help individuals navigate through the inventory to find suitable programs and support.

COMMUNITY VOICE: WHAT DID RICHMOND TELL US ABOUT LITERACY AND THEIR COMMUNITY

As mentioned in the Methodology section, a number of methods were used to consult with the community of Richmond as a whole (residents, organizations, other stakeholders etc.) This section will delve deeper into the feedback that the community provided for the development of the Richmond Literacy Plan. Common themes will be discussed here, for a full copy of the consultation data, please refer to Appendix B.

When asked what in the community could be enhanced to further literacy for the residents of Richmond. Some common themes arose that are outlined below:

- Enhancement of adult education – In referring back to the community profiles, the Metro Vancouver’s Vital Signs report showed that a fairly low number of adults were enrolled in public continuing education programs. This pointed to the need to find ways to enhance promotion and access of lifelong learning to adults in the community. Enhance adult education programs for new immigrants by re-working programs to fit the needs, experiences and skills of new immigrants.
- There should be a continuity of support for children who have difficulties with literacy as they become youth and then adults. There is a lot of literacy support for younger life stages, but this support tapers off as individuals age and the onus falls on them to access their own support in the community (which can be fairly difficult when literacy is an issue)
- We need to ensure that literacy programs and initiatives that are developed and implemented involve the community as a whole. Programs should enable people of all ages to learn to read and promote lifelong learning. People, corporations, community groups, parents and families should all be a part of furthering literacy in Richmond.
- A Literacy Centre/ Hub should be developed to centralize and coordinate information about literacy in Richmond and to provide visibility to the importance of literacy in Richmond. This literacy centre should also oversee the Literacy Inventory (through a variety of means including print and online).
- A Literacy Conference should be held where all literacy providers gather to share and learn from each other.

Although reading is not the only component of literacy, it is one of the core literacy related skills that individuals should have. Surveys that were disseminated to the public found that the majority of people who enjoyed reading enjoyed how it broadened their views, increased their knowledge and was a good way to spend leisure time. The majority of those who enjoyed reading stated that a family member or their entire family were major influencers in their love for reading. Some quotes that best illustrate this are below:

What or who influenced how you feel about reading?

“My mom! We sat on the porch reading books and having snacks”

“My father and elder sister like reading. We have a good reading atmosphere at home”

“My mother had a great influence on my enjoyment for reading at an early age. Our weekly family trips to the public library were both educational and fun.”

“Good teachers in high school – without their influence I likely would not enjoy reading as much as I do”

Health, Workplace Literacy, Literacy for Newcomers and English as a Second Language were seen as areas of literacy importance in Richmond. The following feedback was given by respondents on ways to enhance these areas in Richmond.

Health Literacy:

Respondents believed that health literacy encompassed the following:

- The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions
- Being able to understand what is written on a drug prescription and understand any conversations with doctors and pharmacists
- Learning ways to take care of one’s health and access to local resources for health care

Richmond has a fairly high proportion of residents who do not have adequate health literacy skills. A few key strategies were identified as ways to increase the health literacy (and subsequently the health) of Richmond residents.

1. Information needs to be available in a number of different languages
2. Supports that are available for those with low literacy skills or English as a second language should be visible and accessible
3. Service providers need to have an understanding of the culture of new immigrants so that health issues can be related to them from their perspective
4. Utilize community resources such as the library as health resources that are often more accessible and safe for people to research health issues. On the flipside, staff at these community resources should be trained to be able to show clients how to research credible and true health information.

Workplace Literacy:

Workplace literacy has been referred to at a few points in this report. Workplaces can be extremely good locales for educating employees and employers on ways to increase literacy skills and for job advancement. Essentially, employees who are more literate and possibly more productive, confident and able will result in a win-win situation for both the employee and employer. Workplace literacy was defined by respondents as “having the capacity to function affectively in accomplishing workplace tasks and being able to operate within an area of expertise.” Specifically when speaking about Richmond, the following areas were as potential strategies for how workplaces could increase the literacy levels of their employees:

- Workplaces should partner with community organizations to disseminate information about community literacy resources to their employees
- Employers should take the initiative to provide skill building to their entry level employees to assist them with advancement and to show what literacy could mean to that advancement (this will also help to giving a “purpose” to employees for why they should increase their literacy skills). This will help with retention of workers as well.

- The Richmond Chamber of Commerce should also be involved in the promotion of literacy programs and workshops to their members
- Kwantlen University in Richmond could serve as a tremendous asset to workplace literacy in as a possible organization that could provide essential skills training in partnership with workplaces and other organizations in Richmond.

Newcomers:

New immigrants were often indicated as a group that consultation respondents believed needed more support and services to help them increase their literacy skills. This is not at all surprising considering the diverse make-up of Richmond. However, a common theme that came out strongly from the consultations was that many new immigrants are highly educated people who need better focused ESL programs so that they can learn English. As one respondent stated:

"IT is silly to have a well educated person parrot "How are you", "I am fine thank you" over and over when they are in need of vocabulary to go about their daily life"

ESL needs to be a priority as all of these individuals and families who are new to Richmond will only find everything else to be more of a challenge if they are lacking in English skills. ESL classes in general need to be given more funding and a higher priority so that this skill building opportunity can be more accessible for newcomers. Newcomers should also be empowered to know that they can access free ESL programs up to a set number of years that they are considered a "new immigrant". Once the threshold has passed, the classes are no longer free and this could greatly hamper the accessibility of these classes.

English as a Second Language

As the community profiles show, a large majority of Richmond residents were not born in Canada and a large proportion of these individuals either do not speak English at all or have very little grasp of the language. This group is different than the "Newcomers" discussed above in that many in this group may have lived in Richmond for a number of years, but have been able to go through life in this community without the need for English. Increasing literacy skills with this particular group will be fairly tricky in that there needs to be a level of respect and understanding for the first language of origin while at the same time giving this group a purpose and reason for why they may also want to increase their English language skill level. One area that may help to increase the English skill level with this population could be within the workplace sector where employers could help their employees develop literacy skills that will help them to advance beyond entry level positions. Anecdotal feedback collected during the consultation phase of this report illustrated the concerns felt by some stakeholders that many within this population of people enter the workforce and cannot move beyond their entry level positions because of their low English literacy skills. As one respondent stated:

"Levels of literacy are important for advancement beyond entry level in every worksite so workplaces could have advancement strategies for individuals that included literacy. This could greatly help immigrants and lower educated staff."

Another concern that was voiced had to do with seniors within this group (i.e. have little to no English skills) and how we could increase their literacy skills. One suggested strategy pointed to setting up a program to attract non-English speaking seniors to engage more with other Canadian seniors or even youth. This is group that certainly needs attention as it is

often the grandparents who are caregivers for their grandchildren while the parents are working. If the grandparents are not comfortable with their own literacy skills (even in their first language), it may affect the development of literacy skills in their grandchildren.

BUILDING A CULTURE

The consultation process also provided a plethora of input and ideas from respondents on the best way to develop a culture in Richmond that promotes and values literacy. It is only with the development of such a culture that a holistic and meaningful approach to literacy will occur in Richmond. The priority action plans outlined later in this report will flourish in a culture that values literacy for all residents.

“We need to and want to...”

- ❖ **Create opportunities** and meeting spaces for people to dialogue around literacy and to build bridges (opportunities for people to work together on literacy)
- ❖ Develop a **physical literacy center** to help the community understand just how important literacy is
- ❖ **Bring together organizations** (service organizations, library, school, private sector etc.) to work towards a tangible literacy goal
- ❖ **Expand and enhance** the programs that are working well (e.g. Conversation Circles) and continue to improve what already exists
- ❖ Develop and maintain **partnerships**
- ❖ Suit initiatives to each individual's **needs**
- ❖ Build and promote a common **“driving force”** to develop a culture of literacy
- ❖ Promote literacy and learning in a **non-threatening** way (in and out of the school system)
- ❖ Use more mediums to promote literacy (radio, TV) – **media** will help to reach the illiterate
- ❖ Provide literacy **where the people are**
- ❖ Find and promote **role models** to promote literacy!
- ❖ Use **the ingredients that are already there**. We need to use them to build: 1) Awareness 2) Find ways to work together, 3) Coordinate
- ❖ Have tangible **short and long terms goals** (literacy development won't happen overnight)
- ❖ Use community centers and parks: These are **inviting environments** and can help to promote literacy
- ❖ **Celebrate** all of the successes (no matter how big or small)
- ❖ Sustain an action-oriented **working advisory group** for Literacy in Richmond
- ❖ Develop and disseminate **promotional materials** for the literacy cause
- ❖ **Encourage parents** to make suggestions and recommendations on programs
- ❖ **Listen to those we want to help**
- ❖ **Work together** (and let go of “territorial” issues) as organizations to develop a sense of common purpose and help each other

RICHMOND'S LITERACY WISH LIST

The questions was also asked of respondents to outline what they would like to see happen in Richmond for literacy if there were **unlimited resources** to put towards this area. The following depicts a Literacy Wish List that arose from the feedback garnered from this question.

- Develop programs for completely illiterate seniors
- Reach the hard to reach communities (people who are not looking for service such as the immigrant community, seniors, youth out-of-school and the homeless)
- Develop a wider range of language specific programs (more languages)
- Make the Richmond Community Literacy Inventory more accessible (to all in Richmond) and train organizations on how to use it
- Offer more literacy programming and services through culture and recreation programs
- Develop "Buddy System" programs so all those with literacy difficulties have ongoing support
- Set up mentoring programs that focus on literacy for marginalized/ at-risk youth
- Ensure that all in Richmond have the "foundational" elements and needs in place (e.g. housing, living wage) as without these developing literacy skills will be difficult
- Ensure all children have literacy support from the beginning to prevent them from going off on the "wrong path"
- Have more financial support for programs
- Develop a program/ portal that is available to connect everyone who does not read (or has difficulties) for support
- More opportunities for literacy teachers and service providers to network (and make it convenient)
- Expand library programming in all areas in Richmond and make all literacy programs and services accessible and affordable
- Train all organizations on the ability to identify the "signs of reading difficulties" and arm them with the resources and knowledge to help
- Have an annual literacy sharing event/ trade show for all relevant organizations and sectors

LIFELONG LEARNING

As defined by Wikipedia, Lifelong learning recognizes that learning is not confined to childhood or the classroom, but takes place throughout life and in a range of situations. It includes learning that is achieved through life experiences, family experiences, community experiences and career experiences and can often not be quantified through grades or GPAs. Conventional types of lifelong learning include:

- Adult education
- Continuing education
- Work-based learning
- Personal learning environments

There are a number of organizations in Richmond who are striving to promote and provide access to lifelong learning for residents. As mentioned in the Community Profiles section of this report, the Richmond School District's Continuing Education department had close to 13,000 students enroll in continuing education classes in 2008 and two thirds of these students were adult learners. In addition, organizations such as Kwantlen University offer academic and career preparation to students.

As lifelong learning is an extremely important part of human existence and the overall wellness of a community as an indicator of individuals having the ability to engage in the community. The promotion of lifelong learning in the family structure in Richmond will also assist with the promotions of literacy overall within families and will help to paint a picture of learning beyond the classroom setting as a norm.

Lifelong learning in Richmond could be promoted through the following strategies:

- Make it a point to celebrate and encourage lifelong learning as a City
- Increase promotions of lifelong learning as a recreation activity for residents
- Develop a social marketing campaign to overcome the stigma of "coming back to complete high school"
- Begin encouraging lifelong learning starting at the core K – 12 level as a societal norm
- Reward organizations that encourage and support lifelong learning
- Promote that graduated adults can now access upgrading courses on a tuition free basis

TARGET GROUP STRATEGIES

The strategies below were highlighted throughout the consultation phase of this project. These strategies may be implemented in conjunction with the actions outlined in the Richmond Literacy Now priority planning section. These strategies were developed to give the Richmond Literacy Now committee options for how the literacy levels of these specific groups could be enhanced while the Priority Planning actions will allow for a more holistic enhancement of Literacy for Richmond.

FAMILIES WITH BABIES/ PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

| Needs | Strategies |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Parents need a strong understanding of literacy (and in their language) -Child-minding -Food -How do we reach the “hard to reach” families -Some families are isolated -Need to understand “strength” based literacy development -Sometimes need assistance identifying the kinds of books that are useful for this age group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Encourage parents to read every night with their families -Provide parents with programs to brush up on language and parenting skills -This is a ripe market for family literacy initiatives -Combine and integrate strategies of the school sector and the broader early childhood development (ECD) committee -Develop and implement a “gentle” assessment to do with the family to get them to think about what they can do -Partner with public health nurses (PHN) on the “Ready Set Learn” program – PHNs can conduct an informal assessment on developmental markers with families -Promote programs that are baby-specific -Increase accessibility (times and places that programs are offered) -Give them common meeting places -Develop programs that are appealing cross-culturally |

SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

| Needs | Strategies |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Need to find ways to connect immigrant and low-income families with community programs -Need to have language around them -Parents need support in understanding the school system -Need to find a way to increase literature and books that are not linked to television shows -Dependence on technology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Need more people at the school level to help facilitate connections -Work with organizations who have contact with low income and immigrant families -Strengthen partnerships and collaboration between organizations -After school programming (the “community school/ hub model) -Parent support series -Promote storytime and theme-packages of books which help to promote family literacy time -Encourage immigrant parents to join PACS |

YOUTH

| Needs | Strategies |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Program delivery needs to be in the schools -Do not like “organized” programming -Dependence on technology -Need role models | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Need to ensure that youth are linked to positive role models for literacy support (especially marginalized and at risk youth) -Find ways to encourage lifelong learning -Engage them to volunteer in literacy programs -Access through community centers -Perhaps try and work with the technology dependence to promote literacy -Encourage youth to develop reading materials that would be “fun” for children (e.g. comics) -Positive ticketing (RCMP) initiative: Should encompass literacy and reading as well -Need natural places to come together -Appeal to their own motivation and needs (make literacy tangible and worthwhile – find ways to recognize youth for literacy participation or contribution) |

ADULTS

| Needs | Strategies |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Focus on adults caught in a cycle of poverty -Career services -Workplace literacy -Need to feel connected to the community -Working adults do not have much time to read or come to the library | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Promote the fact that literacy skills can offer people other options and life opportunities -Educate employers on identifying the need -Promote Conversation Circles for immigrant parents to participate in at schools (after they pick their children up or right before) -Community literacy dinners for parents (similar to a “Lunch and Learn” but in the evening with child minding) -Assist with providing a reason for literacy (e.g. you need this to get somewhere) |

SENIORS

| Needs | Strategies |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Technological literacy skill development -Need to be encouraged to participate in literacy (intergenerational programming) -Often require home services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lots of potential in terms of volunteering in literacy programs -Get them involved -Intergenerational programs with children and youth -Educational workshops on financial literacy -Provide information on opportunities and literacy at doctors offices |

NEW IMMIGRANTS

| Needs | Strategies |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Connect with programs and need help learning English -Most recent immigrants don't have strong understanding or English (but want to learn) -Need to learn about community resources -Child subsidy grants and information about housing -Assistance needed with government forms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Connect with programs that are free -New immigrants need to feel welcomed into programs so they are not embarrassed to be there and maintain dignity -Link with other multicultural groups/ organizations -Translate government forms and promote the usage of plain language -Education around Canadian cultural literacy -Provide and promote different forms of literacy (including the promotion of "literacy in their first language" -Give all new immigrants a book to promote reading -Use workshops and other communication methods to teach them about the local community and the work environment |

PRIORITY ACTION PLANNING

The following action plans were developed for each of the Richmond Literacy priorities that were identified for the Richmond Literacy Plan. These priorities were developed through careful analysis of all consultation data, community assets and gaps and were approved by the Literacy Now Richmond committee on November 24, 2008. These priority plans provide the following information for how these priorities could best be implemented:

- Priority description
- Goals – What are the goals within this priority?
- Rationale – Why is this a priority
- Who should be involved/ consulted with
- Actions – What should we do to carry out this priority
- Evaluation indicators – How can we measure our progress?

It should be noted that these priorities were developed as overarching priorities that would assist Richmond with becoming a more literate community. These priorities may change with each year. In addition, the Target Group Strategies section contains more specific strategy options that the Richmond Literacy Now committee may choose to also implement to help enhance the literacy of specific target groups.

The hope is that during the implementation phase of this project, the Richmond Literacy Now committee can prioritize the goals they hope to achieve at the 1, 3 and 5 year timeframe. Appendix I contains a template that was used for this priority Action Planning. The priorities with developed action plans (below) include the following (please note that this listing is not in order of importance):

- **Coordinate and streamline Richmond literacy activities and resources**
- **Promote the importance of literacy and lifelong learning to all residents in Richmond**
- **Increase access to literacy initiatives and services for “hard to reach” populations**
- **Capitalize on the strong family structure in Richmond to promote literacy to the community**
- **Increase the health literacy of Richmond residents**
- **Increase the literacy levels of entry-level workers in Richmond and increase the capacity of workplaces to provide literacy resources and opportunities**
- **Organizations in Richmond will work together in a collaborative fashion to increase literacy in Richmond**
- **Connect with recent immigrants to provide information and resources on literacy initiatives and services in the community**
- **All non-English speakers should have an understanding of the importance of literacy in their first language**
- **Carry out research to ensure that the best literacy programs are offered and the needs of the community are fulfilled**

Priority Action Plans:

| Priority | Coordinate and streamline Richmond literacy activities |
|---|---|
| Goal(s) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To develop a central, physical place for the coordination of all literacy activities and access to literacy initiatives and services in Richmond 2. To bring on a Richmond Literacy Coordinator to implement and evaluate the Richmond Literacy Plan 3. Ensure an equitable distribution of literacy programs and services for demographic groups and neighborhoods |
| Rationale | <p>-As shown by the Richmond Literacy Inventory, there are a great number of programs and services that exist to enhance literacy for Richmond residents. However, navigating this inventory, updating the information and providing suitable and accessible information to individuals could be fairly difficult. If all of this information is housed, updated and accessed in a central location, it will allow for more user-friendly dissemination of literacy resources to the community</p> <p>-Developing a physical Literacy Centre will increase visibility of literacy in Richmond and will reinforce the importance of literacy to organizations and individuals</p> <p>-Volunteers, programs and services could be housed within the Literacy Centre. The promotion of one centre as the place to access information about all literacy programs and services will be easier for the general public to understand.</p> <p>-Assess if current programming for under-served groups exists in the community that could be enhanced by further partnerships or funding</p> |
| Who should be involved/ consulted with | <p>-All organizations (service, governmental, health, educational etc.) that are currently running literacy programs should be consulted and included in the development of the Richmond Literacy Centre to ensure that all current literacy activities can be accessed through this centre.</p> <p>-The community at large should be consulted to gather information on specific ways that the literacy centre could benefit and provide information to them.</p> |
| Actions | <p>This centre may house the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A literacy coordinator to oversee the implementation of the Richmond Community Literacy plan ● An up to date Richmond literacy inventory ● Planning and implementation of an annual literacy sharing/ trade show event ● Volunteers to assist with promoting literacy in the community and to serve as volunteer tutors for the community ● Develop and deliver training on literacy sensitivity, plain language and integration of literacy into community programming to community organizations ● Promote the literacy centre heavily in the service organization community to ensure that those who require literacy help are referred to the literacy centre ● Explore the possibility of setting up after-school reading programs at libraries/ community centers/ organizations in Richmond |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a literacy website to house online training modules and information about literacy programs in the community • A central phone number that the public can call to ask literacy-related questions • A hot line for residents to find the appropriate program in their area. • Training for volunteer tutors • Dissemination of target group strategies to organizations implementing literacy programs in the community (for program enhancement) |
| <p>Evaluation Indicators</p> | <p>The following indicators may be used to measure the progress and reach of the Literacy Centre.</p> <p>During the Literacy Centre set-up phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organizations involved in planning the Literacy Centre • Number of literacy programs added to the literacy inventory • Number of volunteers/ staff recruited <p>During the Literacy Centre implementation phase:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of volunteers active • Number of programs developed that filled a current gap in the community • Number of service provider literacy trainings developed • Number of literacy program requests received from the public • Number of media hits about the literacy centre • Number of clients accessing resources at the literacy centre • Number of service provider forums held |

| Priority | Promote the importance of literacy and lifelong learning to all Richmond residents |
|---|---|
| Goal(s) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Literacy awareness should on par with other social issues such as Health 2. All residents in Richmond (regardless of literacy levels) should have knowledge about literacy programs and services in Richmond (or at least know where to find this information – Literacy centre) 3. Lifelong learning should be heavily promoted so that all walks of life in Richmond and age groups understand the importance of literacy and learning to their own lives 4. Other mediums should be used to promote literacy to the community (e.g. radio, local television etc.) |
| Rationale | <p>-A literate community will essentially result in a more productive community and a community where all residents feel like they are an active part and will be able to fully participate in community life.</p> <p>-Literacy is one of the basic foundational needs that Richmond residents require to flourish. This is especially important for a community such as Richmond where an extremely high proportion of residents are foreign born and may have lower English and first-language literacy skills.</p> |
| Who should be involved/ consulted with | <p>-The community as a whole – each individual needs to be given a purpose for why literacy is important to them</p> <p>-The media or media relations volunteer to provide input on the best way to form key messages about the importance of literacy in Richmond.</p> <p>-Service providers and other stakeholders to asses the best way of promoting literacy to clients and more “vulnerable populations”</p> |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the local media to promote literacy events and to highlight local literacy programs and services • Work with all relevant sectors (education, library, service providers) to strategize the best ways to promote lifelong learning to Richmond residents • Explore the opportunity for a public education campaign on the importance of reading and family literacy on the local cable TV and radio (both ethnic and mainstream) • Promote literacy and reading to residents of Richmond through displays, fact sheets and other collateral distribution at local malls, parks, community centers etc. • Identify local (or organization specific) role models to help promote the importance of literacy and reading to the community and to promote the Literacy Centre as the literacy “hub” in Richmond. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Explore the possibility of using local success stories in the media and promotional collateral • Use mediums such as Facebook and YouTube to promote reading and literacy to school aged children and youth • Use locations such as corner stores, grocery stores, post offices, gas stations, faith locations etc. to promote literacy and the Literacy Centre to help reach hard to reach |

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| | <p>populations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have literacy programs available in a variety of learning settings, allowing access for all. |
| Evaluation Indicators | <p>The following indicators may be used to measure the progress and reach of this priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communications and media plan developed for promoting the importance of literacy to all Richmond residents (both English and non-English speaking) ● Collateral developed (that is culturally sensitive and in Plain Language) to promote the importance of literacy ● Number of media hits during literacy weeks and during other pertinent literacy events ● Number of residents who participate in literacy week and other literacy related events ● Number of adults and seniors who enroll in literacy and learning classes (possibly through public continuing education or private workshops/ classes) ● Number of residents who access the literacy centre |

| Priority | Increase access to literacy initiatives and services for “hard to reach” populations |
|---|---|
| Goal(s) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To reach out to adults with low literacy skills or little English skills to promote literacy programs and services available in the community 2. To partner with community organizations to reach vulnerable populations 3. To investigate opportunities and funding to provide travel and childcare subsidies to increase accessibility to literacy programs |
| Rationale | <p>-In many instances, it is the more “hard to reach”, vulnerable populations who are more likely to have low literacy skills (for any number of reasons).</p> <p>-Vulnerable populations are often lacking in the fiscal resources needed to access services such as private tutors and literacy classes so they need to know where to access information about free and accessible literacy programs and services</p> <p>-Vulnerable populations also encompass newcomers who are likely already struggling with becoming accustomed to Canadian life. This struggle will only be compounded by low literacy skills</p> |
| Who should be involved/ consulted with | <p>-Service organizations that work with vulnerable populations</p> <p>-Representatives from “vulnerable” communities should also be consulted with and should be a part of the development of programs and services</p> <p>-Government agencies that provide social services (to help access vulnerable populations and provide them with localized information on literacy programs and services)</p> |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote literacy programs and services at common areas frequented by all adults such as grocery stores, churches, food bank, the mall, community centers, banks etc. • Work with the school sector to provide literacy information, workshops and other education to parents and families • Ensure sharing and information flow between organizations who provide literacy programs and those who serve “vulnerable” populations so that clients can be referred to programs when needed • The Literacy Centre should be promoted as a safe and non-judgmental place for individuals to access literacy services • The Literacy Centre/ Literacy Coordinator should partner with the food bank and other service organizations to access and support vulnerable families. |
| Evaluation Indicators | <p>The following indicators may be used to measure the progress and reach of this priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organizations consulted with • Number of organizations involved in helping to provide literacy services to this population • Needs assessments carried out to determine the best way to support vulnerable populations in enhancing their literacy skills • Funding or sponsorship obtained to provide childcare, travel |

| | |
|--|--|
| | subsidies etc. to increase accessibility of literacy programs and services |
|--|--|

| Priority | Capitalize on the strong family structure in Richmond to promote literacy to the community |
|---|--|
| Goal(s) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote family literacy programming and opportunities 2. Develop family-friendly events and initiatives that focus on literacy 3. Explore opportunities for integrating literacy into already established family events and programs |
| Rationale | <p>-Family structure and make-up is a definite asset in Richmond where there are a higher proportion of families (80 %+) when compared to the rest of BC (72%). This family structure can often help to lay the foundation that is needed for literacy and social development in children (and adults).</p> <p>-Children are often seen as a motivator for increasing literacy in the home and can help to motivate parents to attend literacy events. This could very well help parents with reading difficulties gain the momentum to find ways to increase their own literacy skills.</p> <p>-Most respondents who stated why they enjoyed reading pointed out various family members who were major influencers in fostering their love for reading</p> |
| Who should be involved/ consulted with | <p>-Organizations who are currently executing family events in Richmond to assess the opportunity to integrate literacy into these events</p> <p>-Service providers who work with families who may be interested in helping to host family literacy events</p> <p>-The educational and library sector to help reach families and host events</p> <p>-Families to help develop events that are truly "family-friendly"</p> |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partner with sectors such as the library, school and Public Health to plan family-friendly literacy events ➤ Explore the opportunity of integrating "positive reading experiences" into Public Health Nurse visits with new families ➤ Promote family reading time within the promotional campaign (as mentioned above) – link it back to the family structure |
| Evaluation Indicators | <p>The following indicators may be used to measure the progress and reach of this priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of family-friendly literacy events held • Number of organizations involved in hosting these events • Number of existing family events that have integrated literacy into them • Number of families attending events |

| Priority | Increase the health literacy of Richmond residents |
|---|--|
| Goal(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To provide health information in a variety of languages and at a low enough level that the general public can understand it ➤ To use innovative community outreach techniques to educate the community (especially those vulnerable and most at-risk) about health and accessing health information in Richmond |
| Rationale | <p>-Roughly 65% of Richmond residents do not have adequate health literacy skills</p> <p>-The majority of Richmond residents are foreign born and may have low literacy skills which would likely compound their ability to access health resources</p> |
| Who should be involved/ consulted with | <p>-The health sector</p> <p>-Service agencies that work with vulnerable populations</p> <p>-Richmond residents</p> |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Search out opportunities for obtaining additional funding or in-kind support to have more health-related materials translated ➤ Develop, promote and execute a health literacy workshop for new immigrants ➤ Work with the Richmond Public Health unit to explore opportunities for further educating patients and the community on ways to increase their health literacy ➤ Ensure the literacy centre has credible resources for accessing health information ➤ Facilitate the integration of health related information into current literacy and ESL classes for new immigrants and those with low English levels ➤ Facilitate the promotion of health literacy related information in ethnic centers (churches, grocery stores etc.) |
| Evaluation Indicators | <p>The following indicators may be used to measure the progress and reach of this priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of health related brochures and other information translated ● Number of health related workshops presented at ESL classes and other locations ● Number of library staff trained on accessing credible health information ● Number of Richmond residents who utilize the library and Literacy Centre to access health information ● Number of Richmond Residents who report an increase in their ability to access and understand health information |

| Priority | Organizations in Richmond will work together in a collaborative fashion to increase literacy in Richmond |
|---|---|
| Goal(s) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Richmond Literacy Now committee should be expanded to include representation from all sectors and target groups in Richmond 2. Best practices sharing and networking methods should be developed 3. Tangible short term and long term goals should be developed that focus on meeting the Richmond Literacy Now five year vision 4. Literacy Now Richmond will develop and implement an "advocacy" component to advocate for the "foundational elements" that individuals need to have in place to enable the development of literacy skills (concurrently or after) |
| Rationale | <p>By working together in a coordinated and collaborative fashion, organizations in Richmond will be able to best meet the literacy needs of their community. Richmond is already well-poised to capitalize on the many literacy assets that exist in terms of programming and organizations involved in literacy that by working together in a more coordinated approach will help to avoid duplication of services and misuse of resources.</p> <p>Within their literacy definition, the Literacy Now Richmond community has included that Literacy needs can only be met once foundational elements are in place (e.g. housing, food, access to education, sense of belonging to the community)</p> |
| Who should be involved/ consulted with | <p>-All organizations involved in Literacy in Richmond -Various levels of government who are involved in ensuring access to "foundational elements" for Richmond residents</p> |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All organizations should have a listing (inventory) of all the organizations that are currently working within the literacy realm (or if the literacy centre is developed – there will be an understanding that all information is housed and accessible through the center) ➤ A caregivers gathering should be planned and executed to introduce caregivers in Richmond to organizations who provide literacy services and to provide information on how to integrate literacy into their programming. ➤ As mentioned in the Literacy Centre priority area, an annual Literacy event/ trade show should be planned for organizations to showcase their literacy programs, explore opportunities for sharing and collaboration and to discuss progress of the Richmond Literacy Plan on a yearly basis ➤ Explore opportunities for collaborative "advocacy" for increased literacy programming funding ➤ Explore the opportunity for developing a Richmond Literacy Community of Practice to deepen the interactions between organizations involved in literacy. ➤ Please see the "Partnerships in Literacy" section for more possible collaboration opportunities between various sectors |

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| | <p>involved in literacy within Richmond.</p> <p>➤ The collaborative Richmond Literacy Now committee should develop a report to illustrate the links between the foundational elements and literacy and how attaining these elements and literacy skills will help residents to thrive and flourish in the community. This report should be sent to government representative at all levels</p> |
| <p>Evaluation Indicators</p> | <p>The following indicators may be used to measure the progress and reach of this priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organizations on the Literacy Now Richmond Committee • Number of new partnerships and collaborations developed in the pursuit of a literate Richmond • Community of Practice developed • Number of organizations participating in an annual literacy conference/ tradeshow |

| Priority | Increase the literacy skills of entry level workers in Richmond and increasing the capacity of workplaces to provide literacy resources and opportunities |
|---|---|
| Goal(s) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workplace literacy should be promoted to help workers thrive at their current place of employment (and to help develop their future employability skills) 2. Workplaces are seen as a place to disseminate information on literacy programming and services to residents and families in Richmond in a non-threatening way. |
| Rationale | Workplaces can be extremely good locales for educating employees and employers on ways to increase literacy skills and for job advancement. Essentially, employees who are more literate and possibly more productive, confident and able will result in a win-win situation for both the employee and employer |
| Who should be involved/ consulted with | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Richmond Chamber of Commerce -Small and large business owners -Union representatives -Richmond residents -Service organizations -Education and library sector |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide resources to workplaces on how to provide public speaking and leadership training to employees ➤ Educate employees (through a public education campaign) on the importance of gaining literacy skills (in terms of what the literacy skills could mean to their employment and/or job advancement) ➤ Explore the possibility of partnering with the Richmond Chamber of Commerce to promote workplace literacy and resources to all members |
| Evaluation Indicators | <p>The following indicators may be used to measure the progress and reach of this priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of businesses participating in providing literacy resources to their employees • Chamber of Commerce promotions of literacy to their members • Number of unions participating in providing literacy information to their employees • Number of workshops and resource information developed on workplace literacy • Number of partnerships developed with the private sector and the Literacy Now Richmond committee |

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|---|--|
| Priority | Connect with recent immigrants to provide information and resource on literacy initiatives and service in the community |
| Goal(s) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All recent immigrants should have an understanding of the importance of reading and literacy 2. Recent immigrants will know how or where to access literacy services in Richmond |
| Rationale | <p>-New immigrants are sometimes not aware of the free programs and services that are available to them for a limited time that could assist with increasing their cultural, social and other literacy skills</p> <p>-A lack of literacy skills may compound other struggles faced by most new immigrants</p> |
| Who should be involved/ consulted with | <p>-Service organizations that serve new immigrants</p> <p>-Immigrants who have gone through the process of becoming accustomed to Canadian customs and working through the system</p> <p>-Institutions such as schools that will be providing education to new immigrant families (via SWIS workers)</p> |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Investigate the opportunity of providing books to new immigrant families (similar to how books are provided to new BC Babies) ➤ Strengthen partnerships with organizations like SUCCESS to integrate literacy into ESL and other programs ➤ Explore the opportunity to increase ESL classes (through funding opportunities) for the community ➤ Work with the school district and SWIS workers to promote “positive reading experiences” to new immigrant families ➤ Develop and disseminate information on Canadian Cultural Literacy to new immigrants (through organizations like SUCCESS) in English and translated versions ➤ Work with programs frequented by new immigrants (e.g. Community Kitchens etc.) to facilitate the promotion of literacy programs and services available in Richmond |
| Evaluation Indicators | <p>The following indicators may be used to measure the progress and reach of this priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new immigrant serving organizations partnered with to support new immigrants in accessing literacy information • Number of resources disseminated to new immigrants on literacy services in Richmond • Number of programs, workshops etc. developed to fill any gaps that exist in terms of reaching new immigrants • Number of SWIS workers partnered with to reach new immigrant families • Number of books secured and given to new immigrant families |

| Priority | All non-English speakers should have an understanding of the importance of literacy in their first language and English |
|---|--|
| Goal(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promote the importance of reading through translated collateral at common areas for target groups (ethnic grocery stores, churches) ➤ Partner with conventional service organizations and non-conventional partners (e.g. businesses) to promote literacy ➤ Find ways to give a purpose to non-English speakers to enhance their literacy skills in their first language and in English (e.g. through workplace literacy techniques) |
| Rationale | -All residents in Richmond regardless of the origin of their first language should have an understanding of the importance of literacy. This is especially important in the family setting where parents and grandparents need to be encouraged to read to their children/grandchildren in both their first language and English when possible to help form literacy skills. |
| Who should be involved/ consulted with | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Organizations who work with non-English speakers -Service providers -Non-English speakers |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Work with organizations who work with non-English speakers and new immigrants to develop relevant and appropriate literacy promotional materials ➤ Develop a database of areas of interest that are frequented by target group to disseminate literacy information ➤ Explore the possibility of recruiting volunteers to deliver workshops and seminars in other languages on the importance of reading and literacy in the first language and English ➤ Develop fact sheets in a number of languages on the importance of literacy, language and reading |
| Evaluation Indicators | <p>The following indicators may be used to measure the progress and reach of this priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of organizations partnered with to reach this population group • Collateral developed on the importance of literacy in any language • Collateral disseminated through service organizations • Database of possible locations to disseminate information developed |

| Priority | Carry out needed research to insure the best programs are offered and the needs of the community are filled |
|---|---|
| Goal(s) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Richmond offers accessible, effective, state of the art literacy program to its residents ➤ Richmond is a model of a literate community |
| Rationale | To ensure that all residents have access to evidence-based, meaningful programs that will help them to reach their full literacy potential. |
| Who should be involved/ consulted with | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -All literacy service providers -Provincial and national best practices (literature review) -All relevant sectors -Program clients |
| Actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research best practices in literacy • Conduct needs assessments and compile summaries from assessments that have been conducted • Consult with program clients and the community • Carry out program evaluations with a variety of programs targeting a variety of target groups with the goal of finding out how to make programs even better |
| Evaluation Indicators | <p>The following indicators may be used to measure the progress and reach of this priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review completed • Number of needs assessments carried out • Number of program evaluations completed • Number of key recommendations made • Number of program developments/ enhancements carried out • Number of organizations involved in collaborating in this process • Number of community members and program clients involved in the process |

RICHMOND LITERACY PLAN – PRIORITIZING STRATEGIES

For any well-laid out plan to be truly effective, there needs to be a clear set of priorities for all identified strategies. The Richmond Literacy Now committee embarked on a prioritizing journey for the identified literacy strategies through an online voting mechanism. Committee members were asked to rank the Richmond Literacy Now priorities from 1 – 10 and give a rationale for their top three priority choices. The table below depicts the ranking results. There were twelve respondents in total and top percentages in each position were used to define the final ranking of the Richmond Literacy Now priorities. These are fairly tentative results and should be the topic of further in-person discussion for the Richmond Literacy Now committee during their implementation phase:

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Coordinate and streamline Richmond literacy activities and resources | 60.0% (6) | 10.0% (1) | 10.0% (1) | 10.0% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 10.0% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) |
| Promote the importance of literacy and lifelong learning to all residents in Richmond | 37.5% (3) | 0.0% (0) | 12.5% (1) | 12.5% (1) | 12.5% (1) | 12.5% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 12.5% (1) |
| Increase access to literacy initiatives and services for "hard to reach" populations | 9.1% (1) | 36.4% (4) | 9.1% (1) | 18.2% (2) | 0.0% (0) | 9.1% (1) | 9.1% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 9.1% (1) | 0.0% (0) |
| Capitalize on the strong family structure in Richmond to promote literacy to the community | 12.5% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 12.5% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 25.0% (2) | 12.5% (1) | 25.0% (2) | 12.5% (1) |
| Increase the health literacy of Richmond residents | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 30.0% (3) | 10.0% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 40.0% (4) | 20.0% (2) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) |
| Increase the literacy levels of entry-level workers in Richmond and increase the capacity of workplaces to provide literacy resources and opportunities | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 18.2% (2) | 27.3% (3) | 18.2% (2) | 18.2% (2) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 9.1% (1) | 9.1% (1) |
| Organizations in Richmond will work together in a collaborative fashion to increase literacy in | 0.0% (0) | 22.2% (2) | 11.1% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 33.3% (3) | 22.2% (2) | 11.1% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|----------------------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Richmond | | | | | | | | | | |
| Connect with recent immigrants to provide information and resources on literacy initiatives and services in the community | 0.0% (0) | 20.0% (2) | 0.0% (0) | 20.0% (2) | 10.0% (1) | 10.0% (1) | 10.0% (1) | 20.0% (2) | 0.0% (0) | 10.0% (1) |
| All non-English speakers should have an understanding of the importance of literacy in their first language | 9.1% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 9.1% (1) | 9.1% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 27.3% (3) | 36.4% (4) | 9.1% (1) |
| Carry out research to ensure that the best literacy programs are offered and the needs of the community are fulfilled | 0.0% (0) | 30.0% (3) | 10.0% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 10.0% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 10.0% (1) | 10.0% (1) | 30.0% (3) |

Ranking of strategies (in order of priority)

1. Coordinate and streamline Richmond literacy activities and resources
2. Promote the importance of literacy and lifelong learning to Richmond residents
3. Increase access to literacy initiatives and services for “hard to reach” populations
4. Increase access to literacy initiatives and services for “hard to reach” populations
5. Increase the literacy levels of entry level workers in Richmond and increase the capacity of workplaces to provide literacy resources and opportunities
6. Organizations in Richmond will work together in a collaborative fashion to increase literacy in Richmond
7. Capitalize on the strong family structure in Richmond to promote literacy to the community
8. Connect with recent immigrants to provide information and resources on literacy initiatives and services in the community
9. All non-English speakers should have an understanding of the importance of literacy in their first language
10. Carry out research to ensure that the best literacy programs are offered and the needs of the community are fulfilled

The hope is that this ranking in conjunction with the priority plan section of this report will greatly assist the Richmond Literacy Now committee to move forward with the implementation phase of this project.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR LITERACY IN RICHMOND

The following section illustrates possible partnership opportunities for various sectors that were indicated by respondents during the consultation process. Please note that this is simply a suggested list of opportunities (some of which may already be occurring) and that the dialogue between organizations will allow for the best practices for partnerships and collaboration to emerge. This section was developed to augment the Priority Planning Action Plan for the *“Organizations in Richmond will work together in a collaborative fashion to increase literacy in Richmond”* priority.

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| <p>Education Sector</p> | <p>-Search out the opportunity to partner with the other sectors to provide guest speakers and workshops to address students in class. -Have municipal librarians come into the school to share information about the library system with students -Offer weekend and evening workshops and information sessions at the library (this may help to promote lifelong learning and adult education possibilities to adults) -Invite people and parents to come in and read to students</p> <p>Kwantlen University has a well-established campus in Richmond that could partner with community agencies in a number of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community agencies can refer clients to Kwantlen programs • Kwantlen program faculty can refer students to agencies • Kwantlen students can be volunteers in Richmond agencies • Students could be trained as literacy tutors for the community literacy hub • Kwantlen could offer essential skills training in partnership with employers in Richmond to increase workplace literacy access in the community |
| <p>Library Sector</p> | <p>-Host “field trips” to the library from school classes and client groups from service organizations to familiarize them with the library system. -In consultation with all other sectors, establish a Literacy Centre where all relevant agencies and sectors can share and coordinate sectors. -Partner with health focused organizations to train staff on accessing and using reliable health information (that can then be taught to library clients) -Connect with workplaces to create a more accommodating philosophy outreach through programs at work. This will help to educate workers at work on enhancing literacy skills and on community resources. -Work with multicultural agencies and corporate sponsors to provide books to new immigrants</p> |
| <p>Service Organizations (non-governmental)</p> | <p>-Invite speakers from other sectors (e.g. Library, Health) to give short workshops to program clients on resources and services in the community -Service organizations have access to volunteers that could help to implement relevant literacy programs or services in the community -Promote city wide meetings with other service providers to find ways to coordinate efforts for promoting literacy</p> |

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|------------------------------------|--|
| | -Share space, expertise and materials with other sectors |
| Health Sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Work with the other sectors to provide community outreach to populations recognized as at risk. This could take the form of home visits, visits to places of worship, community centers etc. -Develop (or enhance) partnerships with K – 12 school librarians and other school faculty to introduce health related tasks into the curriculum. -Health information classes at the public library -Partner with workplaces to provide information and programs related to health literacy -Continue to work with the library to enhance referrals from health practitioners to the library for health information -Work with multicultural agencies to give workshops and translated information on basic health information |
| Workplaces (Private sector) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Investigate the opportunity to provide books and materials to the libraries and schools as corporate sponsors. -Work with other sectors to offer education in and out of the workplace to help employees gain skills and advance in the workplace. |
| Government Sector | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Positive ticketing program with the RCMP: partner with the library to offer more literacy based prizes and to find ways to recognize literacy and reading as “positive” acts. -Work as a part of the Richmond Literacy Now committee to ensure that all Richmond residents have access to all foundational elements (e.g. affordable housing, food security, etc.) -Work as a part of the Richmond Literacy Now committee to develop and implement a public education campaign on the importance of literacy and possibly to promote the Richmond Literacy Centre |
| All | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Work together to co-host community events, workshops and guest speakers -Investigate the opportunity to develop a Literacy Richmond Community of Practice where sectors will have the chance to come together and find meaningful collaborative opportunities and share best practices. -Utilize the Richmond Literacy Inventory as a source of information and to help refer clients to other programs in the community that will help to enhance literacy skills. |

RICHMOND LITERACY COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

As shown by the Richmond Literacy Inventory, there are a number of organizations and initiatives that are currently working to increase the literacy levels of Richmond residents. Many of these programs are extremely successful and there is a need for organizations and service providers to find ways to share best practices; network and find ways to work towards common literacy goals for Richmond.

| Why focus on communities of practice? | |
|---|---|
| short-term value long-term value | |
| members | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help with challenges • access to expertise • confidence • fun with colleagues • meaningful work |
| organization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal development • reputation • professional identity • network • marketability |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • problem solving • time saving • knowledge sharing • synergies across units • reuse of resources |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strategic capabilities • keeping abreast • innovation • retention of talents • new strategies |

A Community of Practice (CoP) is essentially a network of community developers/ service providers who work together in a meaningful way to achieve common goals. A Community of Practice for the Literacy community in Richmond would allow for community developers to develop common literacy goals (as sourced from the Richmond Community Literacy Plan) and work towards those goals in a collaborative fashion.

As defined by Etienne Wagner, one of the earlier pioneers of the Community of Practice Method, there are three crucial characteristics for the development of a Community of Practice:

1. *The Domain:* The members of a Community of Practice will identify themselves by a defined and shared domain of interest (which in this plan's context will be Literacy). Membership itself will imply a commitment to the domain.
2. *The Community:* In working within their domain, CoP members will engage in joint interactions, sharing and discussion to pursue their related interest and common goals. Relationships are built between members that will help them learn from one another.
3. *The Practice:* As members in a CoP, members are practitioners who share experiences, resources, stories etc. in the pursuit of common goals within a shared domain. This sharing and pursuit of common goals requires frequent and sustained interactions between practitioners.

Wagner's "Community of Practice" start up guide was utilized to develop the following plan for developing a Richmond Literacy Community of Practice.

| | |
|---|---|
| Set a strategic context: To help communities find a legitimate place in the organization | |
| Richmond Community Literacy Plan Actions | |
| Articulate a strategic value proposition | The Richmond Literacy Now Community of Practice will work to increase the literacy of community residents in a collaborative fashion. |
| Identify critical business problems | The Richmond Literacy Now Community of Practice will work to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate and enhance current literacy programs and services • Promote literacy and its importance to the general community |

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| Articulate the need to leverage knowledge | The Community of Practice will ensure frequent and sustained interactions where best practices, resources, success stories and other experiences will be shared and stored in some form of sharing medium (e.g. an intranet site, website, at the Richmond Literacy Center etc.) |
| Educate: People need to understand how a CoP will fit in their work | |
| Educate organizations and potential members | The Richmond Literacy Now Committee (through the coordinator, volunteers etc.) will develop educational workshops and other collateral to educate service agencies and other literacy serving organizations on the uses and importance of a Richmond Literacy Community of Practice. These educational materials will be used to initiate dialogue around the development of this CoP. |
| Establish a common language to legitimize members and their place in the organization | Facilitate dialogue about the importance of developing their common language for the Richmond Literacy CoP so that when developing shared goals, there is full understanding as to the work and desired outcomes of the Richmond Literacy CoP. This could be communicated through a simple glossary sheet or uploaded onto a future intranet site. |
| Support: Development of infrastructure (e.g. technology support) and CoP guidance | |
| Provide process support, coaching and logistic assistance | A key recommendation for the development of a Richmond Literacy CoP is that the Richmond Literacy Now committee should investigate the opportunity of bringing in a Community of Practice champion or experienced practitioner to help coach the group through the initial stages of developing this network. |
| Identify needs and develop simple infrastructure | As mentioned earlier, developing an online portal that is simple to use and navigate such as a website or intranet would help to store best practices and would allow access of these resources from any member at essentially any location. |
| Get Going: Begin Cultivating your Community of Practice | |
| Gather a core group to launch the CoP process to all potential members | Now that the leg-work and initial dialogues have taken place, a core/ executive group should work together to plan a launch meeting for the Richmond Literacy CoP where members will come together to meet, network, celebrate current work and start analyzing their common ground to prepare for setting and working towards future common goals. |
| Conduct activities to start defining common ground between members | As mentioned above, there is a need for members to understand what their common ground is in terms of literacy (i.e. why they are running literacy programs/ initiatives, what their purpose is in participating in a Community Literacy Plan for Richmond etc.) Team-building type activities and dialogues can be used to establish this common ground. |
| Help members to start articulating common goals | As common ground is established, members should also start coming together to establish common goals that can be pursued to implement the Community Literacy Plan for Richmond. These goals will help give members an opportunity for more meaningful work and interactions. |
| Encourage: Celebrate and reinforce meaning of the Community of Practice | |

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| <p>Value the work of the Community of Practice and member organizations</p> | <p>The Richmond CoP core committee should establish mechanisms for recognizing the work and contribution of members in the pursuit of meeting shared goals.</p> |
| <p>Publicize successes</p> | <p>Successes (small and big) experienced by the CoP should be publicized to other members and the public through a newsletter, news releases etc. Celebrating “quick wins” will help to reinforce the commitment of members to the literacy cause and the Richmond Literacy CoP.</p> |

CONCLUSION

The community of Richmond is well poised to help all residents meet their literacy potential. This is a community that has an extremely diverse make-up, a plethora of accessible literacy programs and services and a number of key organizations and other stakeholders who are keen to move the literacy agenda forward.

A number of key priorities arose from the consultation strategy which will hopefully help Richmond to meet their literacy goals in a sustainable and holistic manner. These recommendations centre on the development of a central Literacy Centre/ Hub that will be a benefit to both the community and organizations in that there will be one central place where literacy information can be stored and accessed. In addition, a number of key strategies were identified for specific target groups (based on demographic factors) that can be communicated to service providers via the Literacy Now committee to help these existing organizations enhance their services. This plan was developed as to recognize and work with the unique assets and needs in Richmond and also offers a number of partnership and collaboration opportunities between the number of sectors that work with literacy (or should work with literacy) in Richmond.

This report was developed through a open, inclusive and collaborative approach that garnered feedback, ideas and experiences from as many stakeholders from as many realms as possible.

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