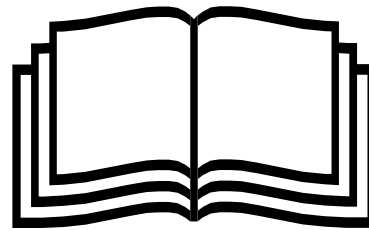

School District #22
District Literacy Plan Update
July, 2011

**Vernon, Coldstream, Lumby, Lavington,
Cherryville**



We honour and respect the diversity of our communities.
Our vision is to meet the literacy needs of all.

Prepared by: Debbie Schiller - Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Editing support from Task Group members - Maureen Curry and Chandra McCann

2006 and 2008

Literacy Plan Focus Areas

1. Increase **awareness** of literacy issues.
2. Improve **access** to and **communication** between programs and service providers.
3. Address **funding** and other supports.
4. Establish a **Literacy Centre**.

Reflections on the 2010 – 2011 year

1. **Community Context:** What has happened in the community over the past year that impacts people in the community and the ability of organizations to support literacy development?

- Okanagan College reports that the average age in their Fundamental English program (grades 1 to 10) is less than 25 years
 - their ABE classes were well attended all year (demand is high for upgrading and learning essential skills) partly due to the unemployment rate in the region
- School District #22 reports that school enrolment is expected to decrease by 173 students in the 2011/12 school year - creating a deficit of \$1.7 million. Currently:
 - 19% of the population in the district is school age
 - 21% is seniors
 - enrolment will continue to decline until 2014 and then gradually increase at the elementary level
- the Vernon Branch of the Okanagan Regional Library system has the highest usage of all 29 branches
- more Christmas food hampers were distributed in December 2010 by all agencies than ever before
 - the Salvation Army Food Bank reports more people who work (working poor) are in need of food hampers to get through each month
- we have several major construction projects underway (provincial or private funding)
 - new Vernon Branch library
 - new hospital tower
 - legal office building (4 stories) and Kal Tire Administration offices
 - major highway projects in Coldstream and Vernon
 - new secondary school
- new home construction and home sales remain at low levels – an effect of our recovering economy

These changes provide us with opportunities to develop new literacy initiatives which contribute to the health and resilience of the community during difficult economic times.

2. Task Group Who Takes Part?

Our Task Group consists of people who represent programs, services or age groups within each pillar.

Birth to 6 Years:

- Early Childhood Development Coalition: Coordinator
- Boys and Girls Club: Area Manager

School Age:

- (3) School District #22: Director of Student Learning, District Literacy Coordinator, Principal – Lavington Elementary School
- Retired Principal and Educator, volunteer with the One to One Children’s Literacy Program
- Junction Literacy Centre: Skills Boost Program Coordinator
- Community Futures: Manager, Youth Employment program

Adults:

- (2) Okanagan College: Adult Basic Education Coordinator, Volunteer Tutoring Program Coordinator/Instructor
- Retired Probation officer

Aboriginal

- SD #22: Principal, Aboriginal Programs
- Okanagan Indian Band: Education Director

All Ages

- Okanagan Regional Library (Vernon Branch): Head Librarian

The Task group’s role is to:

- support the work of the LOC
- provide insights into individual areas of work and interest
- identify gaps in literacy services that the LOC should attend to
- suggest how gaps can be filled and what partners/collaborations/resources are needed

NOTE: The LOC is an employee of the Junction Literacy Centre and networks regularly with other literacy service providers. She provides monthly reports to the Junction's Board of Directors. The LOC attends monthly community table meetings with 95% of the Task Group members and an extensive list of other community partners. As a result, the Task Group meetings have become redundant. Starting in September 2011, the community tables and Literacy Centre Board of Directors will fulfill the role of the Task Group. The LOC will also host semi-annual meetings with other literacy service providers to review their services, discuss gaps and stay connected.

3. Community Development and Literacy Coordination

The following page provides a list of the essential ongoing collaborations that began during the 2010/11 school year. Collaborations work well when partners have a vested interest in the task at hand. They remain motivated when discussions become actions and actions produce results. Another aspect of community development is community engagement. This year, the LOC made literacy presentations to:

- S.O.L.D. (Society for Open Learning and Discussion) – retirees meet twice a month to discuss topics and listen to guest speakers
- (3) Rotary Clubs – members are always interested in the topic and regularly provide financial support
- Public Health Nurses

The LOC facilitated six Plain Language Writing workshops in Vernon and Lumby this past year. She incorporates information about literacy levels, approaching people about their literacy skills and providing a literacy-friendly environment. The workshops help her to engage with business, policing, government, not-for-profit and other sectors that were difficult to reach in the past.

New Projects for 2010/11	Collaborations involving the LOC	
Screen Smart – ad campaign, posters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Development Coordinator • Vernon Science Centre • Vernon Branch Library • Child Care Resource and Referral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metis Association Coordinator • Interior Health Authority (IHA) • <i>Morning Star</i> newspaper
Books for Toddlers and Books for 5 year olds Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Vernon Branch Library □ Community Health Nursing (IHA) □ Junction Literacy Centre <p>Kalamalka Rotary Club & Vernon Teachers' Association provide funding</p>	
After School Reading Clubs – 3 elementary schools After School “Language of Mathematics” Program – 3 secondary schools (grades 8 & 9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School District #22 Principal of Aboriginal Programs (funds, both programs) ○ three SD #22 elementary schools (reading) ○ three secondary schools (math) ○ SD #22 Literacy Coordinator ○ Junction Literacy Centre Skills Boost Coordinator 	
Young Moms – Baby Steps to Grad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Junction Literacy Centre – LOC ❖ Early Childhood Development Coalition ❖ SD #22 (Director of Instruction, Counsellors, Principal of Alternate Programs) ❖ First Nations Friendship Centre & Pre-natal Nutrition Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ North Okanagan Youth & Family Services Society ❖ Ministry of Child and Family Development (regular and Aboriginal services) ❖ Women’s Transition House ❖ Public Health Nursing (IHA)
Literacy At Work: Information for Employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Okanagan College ➤ Community Futures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ GT Hiring Solutions ➤ Independent Living Vernon
Literacy and Learning Plan for Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ OKIB - Director of Education ✚ Okanagan College Volunteer Adult Literacy Tutoring Program - Coordinator 	

4) **Goals, actions and indications of success for the current year.** Please see previous page for a list of partners/collaborations.

- * indicates an initiative that was reported on in the 2010 DLP report (Page 20)
- ** indicates an initiative that arose this year from discussions at community tables, where gaps in services were identified

Programs/projects in 2010/11	Actions Taken
<p>*Rhymes, Songs, Stories and Play</p> <p>Goal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support all-day Kindergarten teachers with a language enrichment program that meets the provincial requirements for physical exercise (3 year project). 	<p>Lack of funding prevented this project from getting started. In September, Kindergarten teachers received training and attended workshops to ensure all day Kindergarten programs had a play-based learning focus.</p>
<p>*Expanded Use of Ages and Stages Questionnaires</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parents and child care providers will learn how to use the tool so they can identify children’s development milestones 2. Developmental delays will be identified and dealt with prior to age 5. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SD #22 had all Strong Start facilitators trained ○ multiple other partners ensured staff were trained and the questionnaires were made available to parents
<p>*Screen Smart campaign during Family Literacy Week</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide parents with information about the effects of screen time on their children (birth to 6 years). 2. Provide suggestions for screen-free, child-friendly activities. <p>Indications of Success: There is huge demand for rack cards and posters from all ECD service providers. See appendix A for posters.</p>	<p>A Screen Smart committee met monthly from Oct to May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • series of 10 Screen Smart ads developed by the committee and published in local paper throughout January 2011 • developed 2 Screen Smart rack cards (10,000 distributed) • Ads converted into posters and widely distributed throughout Success by 6 and N Okanagan region • ECD Coordinator writes a monthly column for the local paper – full of “screen free” activities. • the Committee will continue meeting to maintain a strong Screen Smart focus in the region

<p>*Skills Boost – One-on-one/small group tutoring after school</p> <p>NEW OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>**After School Reading Clubs (3 elementary schools)</p> <p>Goal: Provide fun, focused reading practice to children in grades 2 & 3 for 1 hour, 2 days a week.</p> <p>** “Language of Mathematics (LOM)” (3 secondary schools)</p> <p>Goal: Provide after school math support to Aboriginal Youth in grades 8/9 for 1 hour, 2 days a week.</p> <p>Indications of Success – please see Appendix B The reading program will be expanded to 4 schools next year.</p> <p>The math program is expected to continue at 3 high schools next year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Junction Literacy Centre hired 2 teachers and 1 volunteer per school and coordinated their activities ○ children attended from October 2010 to May 2011 ○ station format using guided reading methods, games, and listening stations with a focus on fun ○ LOM training provided by Principal of Aboriginal Programs ○ students attended from November 2010 to May 2011 <p>Indications of Success: Grade 9 student feedback:</p> <p><i>“This program helped me ... pass my grade 8 math exam and helped me pass grade 9 math and will deffinatly pass the rest of my math in grade 10, 11 and 12 and in the rest of my life.”</i></p>
<p>*Grade 1 Parent Workshops: Come Read with Me and You Can Count on Me</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide parents with information about how to support their child’s early reading and math skills. 2. Facilitate the program at 5 elementary schools. <p>Indications of Success Please see Appendix B for comments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ last year, the workshops were provided to parents at 3 elementary schools ▪ this year, in partnership with SD #22, all 14 elementary schools offered the workshops <p>NEW OPPORTUNITY arose when Learning Resource Teachers agreed to facilitate the workshops (funds were no longer needed to pay an outside facilitator)</p>

<p>**Young Moms – Baby Steps to Grad</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that all young mothers know what help is available when they are ready to return to school. 2. Identify easy-to-access locations that have space for child minding, computer access and tutoring supports. 3. Develop a rack card with information about community support services for young mothers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ monthly meetings of service providers who work with pregnant and parenting teens ❖ NEEDS: child care specific to young moms and their babies, tutoring support, computer access, child care subsidies, school options, transportation ❖ two locations identified that can provide space for free child minding, computer access and one-on-one tutoring ❖ Junction Literacy Centre identified as the go-to place for help returning to school
<p>*Literacy and Learning Plan for Okanagan Indian Band</p> <p>Goal: Develop a “Literacy Now” style literacy plan and implement it.</p> <p>Indications of Success: still in the planning stage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ meeting held with 11 members of the OKIB ✚ created a list of assets and needs ✚ 2nd meeting to discuss how to address the needs ✚ continue talking/planning, then implement over the next year
<p>*Literacy supports for men living at Howard House and others whose criminality has been influenced by their lack of literacy skills.</p> <p>Indications of Success: still in the planning stage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ meetings with Howard House staff member and a retired probation officer ➤ LOC stays in touch as these two determined ladies sort out the best way to provide literacy supports

What are the things that support literacy work?

1. Learner motivation

- make sure children who participate in programs are well fed, have fun, and read books at their appropriate reading level
- provide adults with learning opportunities that have a purpose (improve their job-related skills, help their children with early reading and math skills, finish high school in order to access further training)

2. **Collaborations** with active partners who will see the program or project through to the end. Dynamic partnerships have formed for all new programs and participants have committed to continue meeting to ensure the programs' success.

3. **Core funding of three to five years** is mandatory to move forward or expand programs. A perfect example is the Books for Babies project which has a 5 year funding commitment from Nixon Wenger Lawyers. The LOC was able to use their fine example to encourage other funders to support Books for Toddlers (Rotary Club) and Books for 5 Year Olds (Vernon Teachers' Association) programs. The VTA views their commitment as long term.

4. **Sharing the workload** saves money. In 2010/11, the Come Read with Me and You Can Count on Me parent workshop funds were primarily used to pay a facilitator to provide the workshops at 3 schools. This year, SD #22 Learning Resource teachers became the facilitators. The savings allowed the Junction Literacy Centre to focus funds on purchasing books and other materials and the workshops expanded to every school in the district.

5. **Passionate people.** More people with a variety of education and life experiences are taking part in literacy discussions, volunteer programs and other literacy services. This is an exciting time to be in the literacy field.

6. A Literacy Centre with core funding and the flexibility to take on projects that other organizations can't manage. The Junction Literacy Centre is a resource centre for information about all literacy programs and services in the region. Calls for information have increased by 50%. This coming year, the literacy centre will host two new programs:

- Young Moms: Baby Steps to Grad
- Seniors' Computer Support – see page 12

Currently, the literacy centre manages:

- One to One Children's Literacy Program – in every elementary school in the district (including private schools and the Okanagan Indian Band Cultural School). 200 trained volunteers read with over 350 children a year.
- Skills Boost program – qualified teachers provide one-on-one and small group tutoring to children whose families are not able to pay
- Books for: Babies, Toddlers and Five Year Olds
- Workshops for parents with children in Grade 1 (Come Read with Me and You Can Count on Me)
- Family Literacy Week – media campaign, Screen Smart awareness and children's book exchange

Challenges:

What are the difficulties?

We can't predict what new challenges will appear in 2011/12 but we will continue to steer a steady course! With an LOC in place to move community meetings from conversation, to planning, to action, more people and organizations are willing to get involved.

What Would Help?

Regional LOC meetings that include staff from Literacy Now are extremely helpful and need to continue. Discussions include:

- Family Literacy Day/week activities, fundraisers, etc
- parent workshop concepts, materials, power points
- Seniors programs – outlines, training, power points, etc
- Plain Language workshops – manuals, power points
- Spelling Bee fundraiser - logistics
- working with Aboriginal communities
- working with a Task Group, creating a Society, building new partnerships, advertising, media and much more

Reliable, Stable Funding

Sometimes, gaps can be filled without the need for new funding sources. The Baby Steps to Grad program is one example. However, many programs struggle to get off the ground without a reliable funding source.

Goals and priorities for the coming year

1. Seniors Literacy – computer and technology support provided by volunteers

The Junction's Executive Director is looking for funds to pay a coordinator for this program. The need is huge in this community with more than 21% of its population over age 65.

Goal: adopt programs that run successfully in other communities (e.g. Salmon Arm, Revelstoke) with a January 2012 start date. Funds required: \$8,000

2. Expand the Skills Boost program to students from lower-income families in Lumby/Cherryville area
Goals: work with the SD #22 alternate program in Lumby to identify students, recruit retired teachers who live in the area and match students to tutors. Funds are available to support adults and youth involved in alternate programs.

3. Continue to work with partners on projects that are just getting off the ground such as:
 - Okanagan Indian Band Literacy and Learning Plan
 - funding needs will have to be addressed this year
 - Howard House literacy program for men involved in the judicial/penal system
 - funding may not be needed
 - Young Moms: Baby Steps to Grad
 - funds for child care may be needed, although volunteer child minding is an option

4. Stabilize funding to maintain core operations of the Junction Literacy Centre
 - Spelling Bee Fundraiser – increase revenues to \$25,000 in the next 2 years
 - Action: find a Presenting Sponsor that will pay \$5,000 per year for at least 3 years
 - Family Literacy Week sponsorship – maintain a positive relationship with presenting sponsor, VantageOne Credit Union
 - Action: work together on advertising/media campaign to keep them involved
 - Sell literacy programs and services:
 - Plain Language Workshops and editing services
 - Action: encourage more contracts for on-going services (current contracts are with Interior Health and the Hospice House Society)

- One to One Children's Literacy program – expansion to other communities
 - Action: work with LIFT Philanthropy to develop a business plan
- tutoring service fees include an administration fee
 - Action: maintain a \$5 per hour admin fee for tutoring services

In order to **meet the goals and effectively employ actions** for the coming year we will need to:

- maintain excellent communications with partners/collaborators
- adjust and expand partnerships as we address new issues that can side-track programs
- address funding needs as they arise

Fundraising is a big issue. Much time is put into securing small to medium sized, one-year funding commitments. Typically these funds are available from service clubs and foundations that have little appetite for 3 or 5 year commitments. The LOC predicts we will soon need a major fundraiser to support Family Literacy programs.

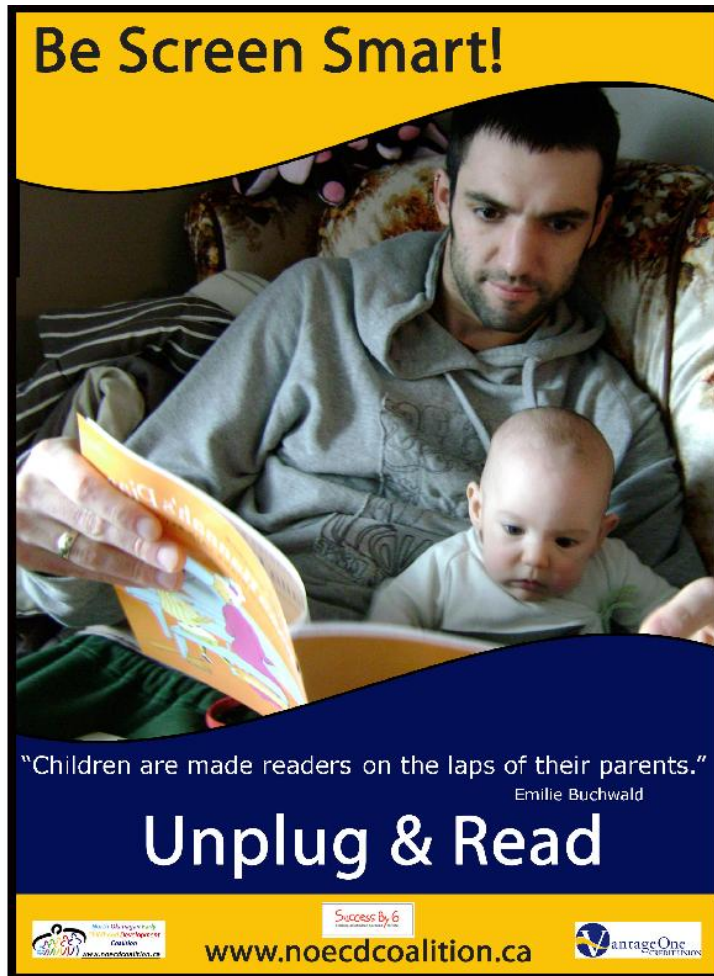
Fundraising Goal: \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year

- Programs managed by the Junction that will be stabilized:
 - Books for: Babies and Toddlers
 - Grade 1 parent workshops
 - Baby Steps to Grad
 - Seniors Computer Support Program

Appendix "A"

Two Screen Smart Posters

To view all 10 posters, check the Screen Smart link on our website: www.junctionliteracy.ca.



Be Screen Smart!

“Children are made readers on the laps of their parents.”
Emilie Buchwald

Unplug & Read

www.noecdcoalition.ca

Success By 6
VantageOne

North Okanagan Early Childhood Development Coalition
www.noecdcoalition.ca

A poster with a yellow top section containing the text 'Be Screen Smart!'. Below this is a photograph of a man in a grey hoodie sitting on a couch, reading a colorful book to a baby who is sitting on his lap. The bottom section of the poster is dark blue with white text. It includes a quote by Emilie Buchwald, the title 'Unplug & Read', and logos for 'Success By 6', 'VantageOne', and 'North Okanagan Early Childhood Development Coalition' with the website 'www.noecdcoalition.ca'.



Be Screen Smart...

“Imagination is more important than knowledge.”
-Albert Einstein

Unplug & Dress Up

www.screensmart.ca

Success By 6
VantageOne

North Okanagan Early Childhood Development Coalition
www.noecdcoalition.ca

A poster with a yellow top section containing the text 'Be Screen Smart...'. Below this is a photograph of three children smiling and wearing large, colorful costumes: a yellow chicken, a brown bear, and a grey penguin. They are sitting behind a white wooden block. The bottom section of the poster is dark blue with white text. It includes a quote by Albert Einstein, the title 'Unplug & Dress Up', and logos for 'Success By 6', 'VantageOne', and 'North Okanagan Early Childhood Development Coalition' with the website 'www.screensmart.ca'.

Appendix “B”

Indications of Success

1. After School Reading Club at Harwood Elementary School

Please note: the children attending the after school reading programs also: receive in-class instruction, participate in home reading programs and may also participate in Learning Assistance programs.

Attendance (9 children registered): varied from 34 to 38 days

Improvements in Grade Reading Levels – based on PM Benchmarks and Sight Words

Grade	Sept PM Benchmark	May PM Benchmark	# Sight Words 1 st test	3 rd test
2	4	14 (+10 levels)	84/100	100/100
2	4	16 (+12 levels)	75/100	98/100
2	3	5 (+ 2 levels)	9/25	38/50
2	4	6 (+ 2 levels)	40/50	87/100
3	8	16 (+ 8 levels)	79/100	98/100
3	n/a	1	2/15	n/a
3	16	28 (+12 levels)	95/100	99/100
3	10	14 (+ 4 levels)	74/100	97/100
3	20	28 (+ 8 levels)	90/100	98/100

Student Comments

- I have more confidence. I didn't read a lot until I came here. My reading is better because of better practising, focussing and skills. My mom noticed that I have done better. My mom and dad have noticed I'm doing better.

Parent Feedback

- “A” has improved by leaps and bounds thanks to the (program). She has learned new ways to figure out words if she can't sound them out. Her new outlook towards reading is fantastic to see, she is so enthusiastic.
- His reading has improved so much after doing this program. He enjoys reading more, making it not a chore. I think the program is wonderful and I am very glad “P” was in it.

School #2 – Alexis Park Elementary

The program ran for 46 days with grade 2 students, many from the same class. This program received funding support from the SD #22 Aboriginal Department and from a business donor.

Students: 7 – Aboriginal, 6 – non-Aboriginal

Reading levels indicated are PM Benchmarks instructional levels, not independent levels.

Student	Attendance /46	Sept. PM Benchmark	May PM Benchmark
#1	39	2	14
#2	40	2	15
#3	45	2	28
#4	40	3	7
#5	41	2	28
#6	44	3	20
#7	34	2	16
#8	42	3	17
#9	39	3	24
#10	40	2	28
#11	45	3	24
#12	44	2	12

Lead Teacher Comment

The children’s success is not only evident in their increased benchmark reading levels, but also in their behaviour and their attitudes about themselves as readers.

Grade 2 Student Quote

*I feel like I’m in a war against reading
... and I’m winning!*

Responses to Books for Toddlers Program

Key Message included in every book

Read books and talk about the pictures to help your busy toddler:

- calm down for naps, meals & bedtime
 - learn new words
 - spend special time with you

For as long as your toddler will listen,
share books EVERY DAY

With best wishes, Kalamalka Rotary Club



Public Health Nurses report:

- the books support the messaging they provide parents during the 18 month visit
- parents appreciate the books and are seen reading to their toddlers while waiting 15 minutes after the vaccination
- the Speech and Language department is very pleased with the program, as it assists with language development

Responses to Grade 1 Parent Workshops

Come Read with Me and You Can Count on Me

Workshops provided in all 14 elementary schools, with about 55% of parents attending. Materials and simple instructions are sent home to parents who are unable to attend.

Learning Resource Teacher Comments

- Parents would like more in-services like this to help them support their children in higher grades ... confusion about how to support children learning math is rampant.
- It was a joy to present this workshop to parents – thank you!

Sample Parent Comments from Evaluation Forms

- Very valuable information and I like that we walk away with some tools (word cards with magnets and book) that we can put into use. Thank you also for providing childcare, that was very helpful.
- Fantastic, I wish I had this knowledge when my Grade 3 student was in Grade 1.
- This is very important and a useful tool to help our children grow and advance, and to help parents such as myself who didn't have this type of home interaction, to be able to be involved at home with our children.
- Very important, we as parents really benefit from knowing what the outcome of grade 1 should be and what they should know by beginning grade 2.
- Critical to have parents understand what success looks like for the child. Parents will be able to help in a consistent way.
- I think it's great to come in and interact with my child and her peers and to learn myself how to make math positive and fun.