

Vancouver Board of Education

Annual Literacy Report

July 2011

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Vancouver Community Literacy Planning Overview	5
Community Literacy Plan Reports of Progress	6
Downtown Eastside Vancouver.....	7
Hastings Sunrise.....	9
Kensington-Cedar Cottage	14
Kitsilano-Westside	18
Marpole.....	24
Mount Pleasant	29
Renfrew-Collingwood.....	36
South Vancouver	43
Summary of the Community Literacy Plans	57
Vancouver Community College	57
Vancouver Board of Education	61
Vancouver Public Library	63
Conclusion.....	69

Vancouver District Literacy Plan

Introduction

Boards of Education are mandated, on or before July 15 of a school year, to establish and make available to the public a district literacy plan for the school year, setting out the plan for improving literacy in the district. A District Literacy Plan is a statement of commitment by a school district to work with community partners to improve literacy locally in the spirit of ongoing community development.

The purpose of the Vancouver District Literacy Plan is to provide an update on the work and goals outlined in the 2010 Literacy Plan. It continues to be a summary of the collaborative work of the community literacy partners and a blue print for future action. The plan reflects the ongoing energy and commitment of all the partners who are working together to improve the lives of people working and living in communities throughout Vancouver.

For the purposes of the plan, a definition of literacy that has been agreed upon by Literacy Now and ReadNow and that aligns with the VBE Core Purpose is being employed. Literacy is defined as “the broad set of skills that enable people to participate more fully in social, economic, family and community (ReadNow BC Literacy Planning Guide).

This report will provide a context for Literacy Planning in Vancouver, an update on Community Plans, work of the Vancouver Community College, the Vancouver School District, and the Vancouver Public Library

Vancouver – Context

According to the last Census, (Census Data, Statistics Canada) Vancouver has experienced a steady population growth rate of 5.9% since 2001. The population now exceeds 578,000 people. This growth is largely a result of immigration, both from within Canada and from other countries. Vancouver accounts for the second largest population change in Metro Vancouver. Population densities are increasing mainly in the downtown and in areas zoned for apartments. As well, densities are higher in the neighbourhoods on the east side of the city.

The City of Vancouver identifies 23 distinct neighbourhoods that make up Vancouver (City of Vancouver Planning Department). The following table illustrates the population trends within each of the neighbourhoods using census population data. Of note are the population stability and/or growth in all neighbourhoods and the particular growth in density in the Downtown as well as Renfrew Collingwood on the east side of Vancouver.

Neighbourhoods	1976	2001	2006
Arbutus Ridge	12,870	14,515	16,144
Downtown	6,585	27,988	43,417
Dunbar-Southlands	19,635	21,308	21,478
Fairview	16,070	28,308	29,294
Grandview Woodlands	26,740	29,085	28,206
Hastings-Sunrise	28,530	33,055	33,127
Kensington-Cedar Cottage	34,105	44,556	44,664
Kerrisdale	13,410	14,033	14,618
Killarney	11,575	25,785	27,178
Kitsilano	33,910	39,621	40,597
Marpole	17,700	22,416	23,783
Mount Pleasant	19,970	24,539	23,616
Oakridge	10,670	11,793	12,726
Renfrew Collingwood	29,850	44,946	48,885
Riley Park	20,165	21,998	21,815
Shaughnessy	10,370	9,017	8,896
South Cambie	6,940	6,991	7,070
Strathcona	11,545	11,573	11,925
Sunset	24,355	33,423	35,231
Victoria-Fraserview	22,145	27,152	29,196
West End	37,515	42,103	44,556
West Point Grey	11,870	12,676	12,990
Total	426,525	546,976	579,412

According to the latest census data the percentage of the population under 25 years fell significantly from 1961 – 1981 but it has fallen only slightly since then. Because the total population increased between 1981 and 2006 there were 14,500 more children under 15 in 2006 than in 1981.

Housing is a significant indicator of income and social stability. Of the total number of privately owned housing, 48.1% are rented. Apartments account for 59% of all dwellings.

Half of Vancouver's population is made up of immigrants. Of this group 50% settled prior to 1991, 33.4% arrived between 1991 and 2000, and 16.7% arrived between 2001 and 2006.

One quarter of Vancouver's population have Chinese as their mother tongue followed by Punjabi, Tagalog and Vietnamese.

According to Literacy BC, immigrants with a first language other than English have significantly lower literacy than other Canadians, with 60% below Level 3 according to the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey. This proportion does not improve with time and those immigrants who are here for 10 years or more have the same literacy profile as new arrivals. Two thirds of BC's working-age people at Level 1 are immigrants. (Literacy BC *Literacy in British Columbia* www.literacybc.ca).

Vancouver Community Literacy Planning Overview

Each of Vancouver's neighbourhoods is unique in its history, culture and population and each has developed resources and planning processes to meet the needs within their communities and to respond to the varied and significant changes. This has implications for literacy planning. A Vancouver Literacy Plan is a compilation of neighbourhood literacy plans.

But all of the neighbourhoods share similar challenges. High immigration, increasing numbers of seniors as well as young children, the isolation of families and residents due to multiple barriers of language, poverty, and access to transportation, housing, child care, information and appropriate services are issues that all communities face.

Literacy Planning in Vancouver is currently focused in eight neighbourhoods at different stages of planning and implementing. Legacies Now/Literacy Now working in partnership with the Vancouver Board of Education, Vancouver Public Library, Vancouver Community College and neighbourhood representatives identified criteria for allocating Literacy Now funding to support the neighbourhoods in the development and implementation of a Literacy Plan. The criteria included need, current levels of resources, and a community development model of planning within the neighbourhood. Need was determined by population trends, EDI scores, immigration patterns, languages spoken in the home, and the education and poverty levels of the residents. The communities that are part of the Literacy Planning are, Collingwood – Renfrew, Downtown East Side, Hastings Sunrise, Kensington Cedar Cottage, Kitsilano, Marpole, Mount Pleasant, and South Vancouver.

Representatives from all the communities as well as Legacies Now, the Vancouver School District, the Vancouver Public Library, and Vancouver Community College sit on a Coordinating Committee that meets three or four times a year. The meetings provide opportunities to share ideas and celebrate successes.

The funding for development of literacy plans in Vancouver has been allocated incrementally over the past three years so the neighbourhoods are at different levels of planning and implementation.

The Community Literacy Plans: Report on Progress

The following table outlines the eight neighbourhoods, the stewards of the Community Literacy Plans and the Literacy Outreach Coordinators in the neighbourhoods. Following the table are the updates from each of these neighbourhoods. Those neighbourhoods in the planning stage are presented first followed by the update from the neighbourhoods who are in year one and two of implementation.

Vancouver Literacy Neighbourhood Projects

Neighbourhood	Steward	LOC
Downtown Eastside Literacy Roundtable	First United Mission Sandra Severs ssevers@firstunited.ca	Joanna Lemay dtes_literacy@joannalemay.org
Hastings Sunrise	Kiwassa Neighbourhood House Nancy McRitchie Exec. Director NancyM@kiwassa.ca	Meseret Taye MeseretT@kiwassa.ca
Kensington Cedar Cottage	Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House Donna Chang Exec. Director dchang@cedarcottage.org	TBA
Kitsilano	Kits Neighbourhood House Catherine Leach Exec. Director Catherine@kitshouse.org	Emily Palmer Emily@kitshouse.org
Marpole	Marpole Oakridge Family Place Tracy Howard ED@mofp.org	Lee Weinstein LeeWeinstein@shaw.ca
Mount Pleasant	M.P. Neighbourhood House Jocelyne Hamel Exec. Director jhamel@mpnh.org	Tracey Mann tmann@mpnh.org
Renfrew Collingwood	Collingwood Neighbourhood House Jennifer Gray-Grant , Exec Director jgg1@shaw.ca	Wenhuan Ren wenhuanr@hotmail.com (new)
South Vancouver	South Van Neighbourhood House Wei Wei Siew weiwei@southvan.org	Joan Wright joan@southvan.org Chelan Wallace chelan@southvan.org

Downtown Eastside Vancouver

Project Steward: First United Mission

Literacy Outreach Coordinators: Joanna Lemay (planning) & Angelika Sellick (implementation)

Community Served: Downtown Eastside Vancouver

Current Stage: Implementation of Literacy Plan

Reflections on the current year:

Community Context

The Downtown Eastside (DTES) is a dynamic, vibrant, low-income Vancouver neighbourhood located on unceded Coast Salish Territory. Also known as 'the Heart of the City', the DTES has historically been a hub of rich cultural life for Aboriginal, Chinese, Japanese, Latin American, Black, working class, and low income peoples. The strong, community-driven DTES neighbourhood prides itself on insider knowledge, lived experiences, volunteerism, social justice efforts, multicultural diversity, unity and support.

Over the past year (June 2010-May 2011), several major events/decisions have impacted the ability of people and organizations in the DTES community to support literacy development. Increasing gentrification within the neighbourhood has led to spaces being used for retail rather than literacy, and to services being used by students (middle/upper class) that were traditionally designated and accessed by low income earners. Gentrification in the DTES community has also led to rent increases for community groups, as well as displaced low income students away from community support and often without the means to pay for public transport. The movement of social services and other agencies towards conducting business through web based services and telephone has made it increasingly difficult for persons with literacy challenges or language differences to access necessary services. Some literacy organizations reported having to use program and staff time to help people gain access to these service areas.

In contrast, many initiatives within the DTES during the past year have positively impacted people in the community and the ability of organizations to support literacy development. For example, the United Gospel Mission (UGM) moved into a larger building in April 2011 where it now has space to offer more classes. Also in the past year, the Vancouver Police Department held a series of non-hierarchical town hall meetings with a focus on missing women. As always, the rich tradition of self-expression in art and culture throughout the DTES community has continued.

Task Group

The task group for the Literacy Plan is comprised of over 25 adult educators who sit on the DTES Adult Literacy Roundtable and represent a wide spectrum of literacy/ educational organizations in the DTES community. These organizations (in alphabetical order) are: Aboriginal Front Door Society; Capilano University Community Development and Outreach Department; Carnegie Learning Centre; Carnegie Library, Children Need Care Now-Community Action Program for Children; Downtown Community Court; Downtown East Education Centre (VSB); First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council; First United Learning Centre; Frontier College; Harbour Light Learning Centre, Joint Effort; Main Street Education Centre (VSB); Neighbourhood Care International; newSTART; SFU Community Education Program; The Living Room; UBC Humanities 101 Community Programme; UBC Learning Exchange; Union Gospel Mission Hope Learning Centre; WISH Drop-In Society; Vancouver Community College; Vancouver Eastside Educational Enrichment Society; Vancouver Native Health Society.

The work of the DTES Adult Literacy Roundtable is organized through monthly meetings hosted by a rotation of its members. At these meetings, members share new developments in their organizations and the community, as well as offer one another opportunities for professional development and support through workshops and guest speakers. From March to October 2010, the Roundtable focused its efforts on collaboratively developing a Literacy Plan through community consultation, strength-based community mapping, synthesis of what was shared, identifying major themes and ideas, and finally, writing and submitting its Literacy Plan: "A Plan for Strengthening Literacy in the Downtown Eastside".

Community Development and Literacy Collaboration

Some of the important collaborations by the task group over the past year to support literacy in the DTES community include continued networking between members already part of the Roundtable, as well as making links with other groups not directly affiliated. The hiring of Literacy Outreach Coordinators (LOCs) by the Roundtable for the planning and implementation stages of the DTES Literacy Plan was also an important collaborative effort.

The task group feels that these collaborations worked well because members of the Roundtable have great commitment and knowledge of what they're doing and why. The Roundtable has managed to bypass the competition for funding and places a strong emphasis on sharing information, working together collaboratively through dialogue and respect, and fostering relationship between individuals.

Goals and Actions in the Past Year

The major objective the task group has accomplished this past year is the completion of the DTES Literacy Plan in October 2010. Drawing from the community consultations and mappings, the plan defines literacy as much more than knowing how to read and write. Rather, literacy is having the knowledge, skills and confidence to participate fully in our lives. The plan highlights the overarching and interconnected goals for strengthening literacy in the DTES as

self-determination and working together. The plan also outlines six identified actions (or strategies) that can move organizations and individuals in the DTES community towards further strengthening literacy:

- 1) Connect, exchange skills and share ideas
- 2) Support revitalization of Aboriginal languages and cultural practices
- 3) Fund low-income resident teaching and learning opportunities
- 4) Increase awareness of literacy resources
- 5) Expand support for people with learning disabilities
- 6) Create momentum with neighbourhood learning themes/events

In March 2011, the Roundtable task group hired a Literacy Outreach Coordinator, Angelika Sellick, to begin implementing the actions outlined in the plan. In addition, a resident of the DTES community was earlier contracted to create a new website (<http://dteslit.blogspot.com>). A resource guide to literacy services in the community was also created by a member of the Roundtable and circulated 1300 copies in the Carnegie Newsletter in April 2011. The Roundtable's membership and mailing list have both grown in size, and a monthly Roundtable newsletter is currently in the piloting stages.

Indications of Success:

As the task group is still in the early stages of implementing the DTES Literacy Plan, it is too soon to speak towards indications of success.

Challenges

Some of the difficulties the Roundtable task group encountered included members' trying to juggle work pressures with commitment to attending Roundtable meetings. Having limited finances has in addition limited the task group's ability to move towards wider action in regard to the DTES Literacy Plan. Finally, communication with other community services, organizations, and projects beyond the Roundtable has proven challenging and in turn contributes to maintaining the perception of isolated silos in 'housing', 'food', 'health', 'literacy', 'art', and so on, in the DTES community.

For the Coming Year

The task group and the Literacy Outreach Coordinator plan to respond to identified issues in the DTES community by organizing smaller work groups made up of both Roundtable and other community members. One such group will focus on generating further engagement with and by Aboriginal learners through a First Nation language sharing pilot project. Another group will work towards providing support/resources for staff, tutors, and students in the area of learning differences and challenges through a series of guest speakers and workshops. The task group also plans to promote further exchanging of skills and ideas and events, as well as involve local residents and students, through its monthly newsletter and website. Finally, the Roundtable task group will continue to connect and collaborate with one another, other organizations, and students through annual community festivals such as *National Aboriginal*

Day celebrations at Oppenheimer Park (June 2011), the Alley Health Fair (September 2011), Heart of the City Festival (November 2011) and Mother Language Day (February 2012).

Hastings Sunrise

Reflections on the current year:

Community Context:

- a. 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?
- We began the literacy planning for Hastings North in May 2011. We hired a literacy coordinator for 9 hours a week who will be supported with two short-term interns. We created a steering committee of organizations in the neighbourhood and had our first meeting on May 12. We created a work plan and timeline on how we develop the plan and collect the various data on literacy services and priorities in the area.
 - Kiwassa Neighbourhood completed designing a community guidebook which will be published in the next two or so weeks. This guidebook provides a resource list of organizations and programs in the Hastings North area of where community members could access various services and programs. The guidebook also has information on how people can better engage in their community. We have information on block parties, community gardens, community and neighbourhood small grants, government resources, food bank and shelter resources, ESL and other adult literacy programs for new immigrants as well as life skill and employment related support programs for Aboriginal adults and youth.

Task Group:

Who takes part in the task group?

Below are the names and organizations that are in our task group.

Name	Organizations
Nancy McRitchie	Executive Director of Kiwassa
Meseret Taye	Community Developer and Literacy Coordinator of Kiwassa
Jennifer Boundy	Intern for the literacy planning project
Lynn Kennedy	Templeton Community School Team Teacher
Lucy Alderson	Adult Literacy Coordinator of Capilano University
Sana Alam	Social work student and intern from University of Victoria
Sandy Dowling	Alternative High School Teacher with VSB located at Kiwassa
Sheldon Robinson	Program and Services Coordinator of Nisga'a Ts'amiks
Stacy Bestard	Food Programs Coordinator of Kiwassa
Susan Watson	Branch Head, Hastings Branch, Vancouver Public Library

How is the work of this group organized? See Section V and VI for information about how task groups are organized.

The above organization representatives act as the steering committee members. This committee works as the advisory body that helps develop the literacy plan and monitors the

planning process and gives appropriate feedback and suggestions at various stages of the project development. The project has an asset mapping process where more organizations and groups that provide literacy and learning are identified. A Strategic Planning Working Group meeting where the steering committee members and other service providers as identified through the asset mapping process will come together with community members to discuss literacy and learning issues and priorities in our community.

Community Development and Literacy Collaboration:

What are the important collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?

- We are at the initial stage of our project so we are building our collaborations. With our steering committee, we made sure individuals that are involved in formal educational institutions as well as those providing informal literacy and learning services are represented. On our first steering committee meeting, we brainstormed on how each member defines literacy based on their experiences and also discussed what the objectives and outcomes of the literacy planning should be. The steering committee members agreed that literacy has to be broadly defined and that it should include wide range of skills, experiences and styles of learning. Members indicated that the project should use asset based approaches with overall objectives
 - to use the word *Learning* instead of *Literacy* so the concept is easier to understand by everyone
 - to highlight that learning is an every day activity where people share their strengths; skills and experiences with one another and that everyone has something to contribute
 - to decrease the stigmatization and discrimination associated with low literacy
- Additionally, a number of local organizations including schools, churches, a community center provided valuable advice into the community guidebook that is being developed.

What are the essential ongoing collaborations?

In addition to our steering committee, we identified 34 organizations that provide literacy and learning services in various formats. We are currently interviewing each of the organizations to find out what kinds of services they are providing, the demographics and needs of community members they are serving and the literacy related opportunities, challenges and priorities in the community. Many of the service providers are also invited and excited to participate in the Strategic Planning Working Group sessions with community members that we plan to hold in July and September.

What makes collaborations work well?

The collaboration within the steering committee members works well because members of the committee are able to participate in the discussions equitably. On our initial meeting, representatives of the organizations have shown great enthusiasm towards the project and

participants discussed the kinds of outcomes they would like to see from the planning process. The plan will

- help to bring service providers together so they can link up and can refer community members to appropriate resources
- enhance stronger relationships and sense of shared knowledge within the neighbourhood
- identify community strengths and skills and build on them to increase capacity
- need to be neighbourhood based and not a reflection of one organization
- engage everyone working on literacy to participate and give feedback.

Goals and actions for the current year:

a) What actions were taken to reach these? What organizations and groups participated in these actions?

We are at our initial plan development process and we have allocated from May to October 2011 for this process, our work plan is as shown below.

Activities	Dates
Developing a steering committee of organizations and set up regular meetings	May
Inventory and asset mapping of service provider organizations and individuals that provide formal and informal learning	June
Writing a literacy based neighbourhood profile	June
Developing survey questions to be filled out on paper and through survey monkey	June
Learning Day events at a Summer Kickoff and Kiwassa's Open House events	July 9 and September 15
Draft plan will be compiled based on data compiled	August
Two strategic planning working group meetings with community members and service providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The first meeting will be to identify the definition of literacy and community based priorities and ○ second meeting will be to review the draft plan 	July 21 and September 23
Final Report will be ready	October 31

Kensington Cedar Cottage

Reflections on the current year:

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?

Over the past year, the Kensington-Cedar Cottage community (165 people strong) came together to work on a literacy plan. The experience was positive for all who were involved and it helped to raise awareness and interest in the broader community about literacy. The result of the planning phase was both pride and excitement about moving forward with a concrete plan.

In all of the positive efforts, the literacy work was also impacted by the mobilization of residents to speak about school closures and replacement of school playgrounds. In addition, the temporary closure of the community library and the community centre demonstrated to all of us, the importance of our public amenities.

Task Group:

Who takes part in the task group?

The Literacy Task Group Members are made up of residents and representatives from local organizations. They are:

- Amy Lam, Resident and Neighbourhood Pharmacist
- Donna Chang, Executive Director, Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House
- Joanna Lemay, Literacy Plan Facilitator
- Marion Broadbent, School Principal, Laura Secord Elementary
- Tanya Fink, Cedar Cottage Board Member and UBC Masters Candidate in Social Planning
- Suzanne Gessner, Resident and Linguist at First People's Heritage, Language and Culture Council
- Yee Jim, Building Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Coordinator, Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House
- Yukiko Tosa, Branch Head, Kensington Branch, Vancouver Public Library

Community Development and Literacy Collaboration:

What are the important collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?

The Stewardship of Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House and the building on and connecting to other community driven work has enabled the Literacy Project to find a place in the community.

The partnership with the Kensington Library has been nothing short of epic.

The involvement of schools has given the project a degree of creditability because regardless of everyone's broad definition of literacy, it was easier to start with a formal idea of literacy and learning and then with the schools at the table, to broaden the concept with new ideas.

What are the essential ongoing collaborations?

- Community residents
- Kensington Library
- Local schools
- Local organizations and public partners

Goals and actions for the current year:

What priorities, goals or objectives have you addressed this year?

The plan this year was to launch the planning process, form a task group, develop a terms of reference for the task group and engage the community in consultation, data collection, asset mapping, visions, goals, objectives and writing the plan.

All of the objectives were addressed this year.

What actions were taken to reach these? What organizations and groups participated in these actions?

There were three primary actions to reach these objectives:

- Outreach and Community Engagement. There was on-going work to talk to organizations, groups or individuals to present and dialogue about their ideas for literacy, what they could offer to the community, what the community could offer to them and to present and gather input for the plan.
- Weekly work with the KCC Literacy Task Group
- Presentation to the Inter-Agency Network (KCC Area Services)

Participation came from an online survey, dialogue with service providers and a Friday/Saturday Literacy Ideas Fair. The result was input of about 165 people who generously shared their hopes, questions, advice, suggestions, experiences, comments and ideas for strengthening Literacy in Kensington-Cedar Cottage.

Indications of Success:

How do you know that actions taken are working to support literacy? What impact has the literacy initiatives had? It is important to include examples to illustrate the impact.

At this time, the Kensington-Cedar Cottage community has completed the plan and will be hiring an implementation coordinator. A KCC Literacy Poster to promote the plan has been professionally created and a first distribution went out as part of the Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House volunteer driven local newspaper (distribution 15,000 households).

An indication of success is that 3 responses have come back from local residents to indicate their interest to be part of the committee. In addition, schools (Gladstone Secondary ESL teachers, Selkirk Project Teacher and Beaconsfield Principal) have expressed interest in participating.

Challenges:

What are the difficulties?

The creation of a separate Literacy "Table". It will be important for our community to be strategic in our efforts to work with the "competing" interests of other committees and groups in our community.

What would help?

A "picture" of an integrated literacy plan or structure that can work in communities.

For the coming year:

1. Are there new opportunities, challenges, or issues in your community? How will you respond to those?

This year will focus on the implementation of the KCC Literacy Plan. Our challenge is to balance the implementation of activities with the necessary reflection to ensure that there is both the clarity of how the activities impact literacy and what we need to do different.

To respond to this challenge, we will need to be clear on the indications of success but also to be flexible enough so that adequate "course correction" can be made in our plan.

2. What will be required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year?

To meet the objectives for next year it will be important to lay a strong foundation in the community. This puts an emphasis on the strong leadership from the Literacy Coordinator and the KCC Literacy Implementation Committee. To ensure clarity and accountability it is important to develop the necessary tools such as: Coordinator Job

Description, Workplan and Budget, Committee Terms of Reference, Project Timelines, Indications of Success, Benchmarks and Evaluation. While having this foundation it will be important to keep the community informed and engaged throughout this process. And lastly, it will be our intent to build on the incredible work done by an outstanding Planning Facilitator-Joanna Lemay. It is our hope that we can continue on the great work without her!

3. What goals, priorities or objectives will you work on in the coming year? What actions are planned against those goals?

The following objectives are planned for the next year:

- To hire a Literacy Implementation Coordinator (preferably not as contract to build capacity in our community)
- To promote the KCC Literacy Plan
- To develop a KCC Literacy Implementation Committee
- To implement three primary activities from the plan: The development of a First Language Kit, The Love of Learning “Crawl” and to work with Laura Secord Elementary to develop as a community hub.

Kitsilano - Westside (Kitsilano, Arbutus Ridge and Lower West Point Grey)

Reflections on the current year:

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?

In the past year, we have moved into the implementation phase of funding from 2010 Legacies and have worked on the goals set in the Community Literacy Plan- <http://www.kitshouse.org/2010/05/06/kitswestside-literacy-plan/>. This year, new programming such as the Welcoming Neighbour Program (volunteer literacy training, English conversation circles and socials and out-trips) have all been developed to address identified literacy needs.

The continued increase in the number newcomers to Vancouver's Westside has resulted in a high demand for and expansion of newcomer programs to support in particular, English Language learning.

Task Group:

Who takes part in the task group

Emily Palmer	Kitsilano Neighbourhood House	Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Catherine Leach	Kitsilano Neighbourhood House - Executive Director	Task Force Member & Project Steward
Diane Ash	West Side Family Place -Executive Director	Task Force Member
Daniela Esparo	Vancouver Public Library –Area Manager	Task Force Member
Renee Chalut	Vancouver Public Library- Community Librarian	Task Force Member
Greg Laing	Point Grey Community Church -Pastor	Task Force Member
Janet Chung	Vancouver School Board- Settlement Worker in Schools	Task Force Member
Les Smith	Vancouver School Board- West 2 Community School Coordinator	Task Force Member
Susan Declerck	Local resident & ESL teacher	Task Force Member
Morie Ford	Staff at Brain Boost Education & local resident	Task Force Member
Jenn Beavington	Kitsilano Neighbourhood House – Community Organizer	Task Force Member

How is the work of this group organized?

The Task Force developed a terms of reference for the implementation stage of the Legacies 2010 funding and advised the work of the Literacy Outreach Coordinator. The Task force meet on a quarterly basis and are sent monthly or bimonthly updates on the actions of the Literacy Outreach Coordinator.

Community Development and Literacy Collaboration:

What are the important collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?

Through the work of the task group, a connection was made with the Firehall Library (branch of the Vancouver Public Library) to host an English Conversation Circle. English Conversation Circle volunteer leads were trained at Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
Successful funding requests to support the Welcoming Neighbours Program were supported by references from Pacific Spirit Centre- Vancouver Coastal Health and Settlement Workers in Schools (previous and current members of the Literacy Task Force)

What are the essential ongoing collaborations?

- Settlement Workers in schools supported (financially and promotionally) a new Immigrant Women's Support hosted at Kitsilano Neighbourhood House.
- Terra Breads (business) has an informal partnership with the English Conversation Circle hosted there in May/June 2011.
- 2 UBC Summer Interns were placed with the Welcoming Neighbours Program. The intern last year worked on resource development for newcomers and the intern this year is working on out-reach strategies to reach isolated newcomer families.

What makes collaborations work well?

Collaborations in literacy works well when there are mutual benefits to partners, openness, flexibility and on-going communication. A culture of collaboration with service providers was important and the ability to address clearly defined needs. Funding for the literacy outreach coordinator was an essential part of the success in that the work. The work facilitated coordination of the literacy task force and made connections between individuals and organizations.

Goals and actions for the current year:

What priorities, goals or objectives have you addressed this year?

Goal 1: To engage residents in supporting literacy programs through the recruitment, training and support of volunteers.

Goal 2: To support English language literacy programs for those in the greatest need.

Goal 3: To support and enhance current literacy programs and projects through collaboration with partners, sustainability planning and awareness building.

Goal 4: To increase computer literacy among low-income residents and seniors by improving access to training and supports for computer literacy.

What actions were taken to reach these? What organizations and groups participated in these actions?

Goal 1: To engage residents in supporting literacy programs through the recruitment, training and support of volunteers.

This goal is the base of the other community literacy goals. We developed the Welcoming Neighbours Volunteer Program which launched in August 2010. Multiple partners worked on developing training curriculum that includes community literacy, diversity and volunteer skills. There were two training sessions: Fall 2010 & Winter 2011 where a total of 12 people were trained as English Conversation Circle Leads & Cultural Ambassadors. Volunteers contributed to special events, seniors programs, socials & out-trips for newcomers, English conversation circles and community potlucks. Volunteers trained this year in the Welcoming Neighbours Program contributed more than 450 hours to literacy work.

Goal 2: To support English language literacy programs for those in the greatest need.

New programming was started in order to support English Language learning, most notably English Conversation Circles. This year eight conversation circles were led by trained volunteers at Kitsilano Neighbourhood House, Firehall Public Library and local coffee shops. Other new programming, such as the Welcoming Neighbours socials & out trips and Immigrant Women's Support Group, had integrated English Language learning components. We continue to source out new opportunities for supporting language learning as it is a priority area in our community.

Goal 3: To support and enhance current literacy programs and projects through collaboration with partners, sustainability planning and awareness building.

Collaborative work at the Literacy Task Force level has been essential to the success of the other community goals. Other opportunities to raise awareness and support

collaboration have occurred through such networks as the Westside Service Providers network, Vancouver Literacy Support Committee and 2010 Legacies meetings. In terms of sustainability, two successful funding proposals for the Welcoming Neighbours Program (volunteer training, socials and out-trips for newcomers & English Conversation Circles) were secured through Coast Capital Savings (\$10,000) & Vancouver Foundation (\$20,000).

Goal 4: To increase computer literacy among low-income residents and seniors by improving access to training and supports for computer literacy.

Volunteers have been trained and supported in one-to-one computer tutoring placements at Kitsilano Neighbourhood House and Steeves Manor (BC Housing). Training materials were developed in collaboration with the Vancouver Public Library and the Computer Access Internship program. Computer literacy was also supported at MPA (Motivation, Power and Achievement) with the VPL Community Librarian. MPA works with people with mental illness.

Indications of Success:

How do you know that actions taken are working to support literacy? What impact have the literacy initiatives had? It is important to include examples to illustrate the impact.

A monitoring framework was used to ensure goals and outcomes were met in relation to the community goals set in the literacy plan (see attached 2010 report back).

Some narrative examples of the impact of the work this year are as follows:

- Through [the Welcoming Neighbours Program], newcomers have had the opportunity to connect with their community and improve their language skills. Language is one of the hardest barriers that newcomers face as soon as they arrive in Canada, but by participating in the program, they are more confident in expressing their thoughts and ideas and speaking out. Improved English language skills also prepare newcomers for employment. By attending English Conversation Circles, socials, and out-trips, they are able to practice their English with native English speakers and other newcomers, learn about and improve their access to community resources by exploring the city, and build a sense of community by making new friends.
- During the activities, participants have experienced a change in their lives, since most of them were isolated at home without any chance of socializing with other people. Positive change is also experienced by volunteers, as some of them have been stressed due to lack of job opportunities. This program provides them with job experience and, together with the participants, a group of friends to chat and share experiences with. This minimizes feelings of depression and anxiety, which also benefits their families and people around them.

- Through the Welcoming Neighbours Volunteer Training Program and through their experience leading English Conversation Circles and helping out at Socials and Out-trips, the volunteers have learned about literacy, developed their leadership skills, learned more about themselves, gained a better sense of community and feel that they are making a difference. This experience has also led some of the volunteers to pursue additional opportunities to give back to their community, and some are pursuing a career in the field of literacy.
- “Now that I have been participating in all the activities in this program, I have gained confidence and I am not afraid anymore of talking with my children’s teachers.” English Conversation Circle and Socials and Out-trip Participant.

What are the things that support literacy work?

This year the keys elements to support literacy work on the Westside were funding for coordination, commitment of the Task Force and the contributions from volunteers.

Challenges:

What are the difficulties?

The difficulties this year were in terms of time to coordinate collaborations and partnership with limited hours of the literacy coordinator. As only a part-time position is funded it is hard to address the full spectrum of literacy needs & opportunities in the community.

What would help?

Continued funding at the provincial level for both neighbourhood and regional literacy coordination.

For the coming year:

Are there new opportunities, challenges, or issues in your community? How will you respond to those?

The newcomer population continues to grow on the Westside so we will continue to work on English language and community resource needs with this population. In the next year Kitsilano Neighbourhood House (which has housed some programs) will be under re-development so programs will move off the main site. This might provide opportunities for further partnership building and collaboration.

What goals, priorities or objectives will you work on in the coming year? What actions are planned against those goals?

The priority set by the task force is to work on the sustainability of programs and initiatives that have been successfully started this year. Sustainability will take a number of forms including funding requests, program design and building volunteer capacity.

What will be required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year?

For the next year, communication between task force members in terms of collaboration and creatively using resources will be essential. Advocacy for the need of literacy coordination at the community level will also be very important.

Marpole

Goals:

1. To create a communications process that will effectively and efficiently inform community members about programs and services in their community.
2. To ensure the long-term sustainability of current and new programs by increasing the capacity of service provider's access external funding sources.
3. To enhance service access to community spaces.
4. To increase community engagement

Actions:

1. Create a Literacy Round Table to explore opportunities to work together on improving communication with all low literacy community members.
2. Develop a closer connection/network with community's multi-faith groups
3. Create an inventory of community tools, including: print, online, networking etc.
4. Develop an action plan on how to improve communication tools (targeted at ESL families) using survey information and Round Table feedback.
5. Disseminate communication action plan to service providers in the community.

Reflections on the current year:

Community Context:

What has happened in the community over the past year that impacts people and the ability of organizations to support literacy development?

- The Marpole Literacy Task Group (MLTG) appointed a new Literacy Outreach Coordinator in November 2010. It had its first meeting, after an absence of an LOC and meetings for a number of months, in January 2011. The Task Group voted to have meetings every other month thereafter or until it is deemed more valuable to have one every month.
- The Marpole community is on the cusp of economic development on a number of fronts. There are plans approved for development of the Safeway site on Marine Drive and Granville Streets, and more impacting to the community, is the Cambie Street corridor development. A skytrain station and mall development plan has been vetted through the community for their input.
- The resulting changes in Marpole have been a steadily increasing "buzz" that Marpole is changing in significant and irrevocable ways. The challenge for the MLTG is to activate the Marpole community. It is a diverse population and its' identity has been mitigated by the fact that it has been a "drive through" geography for many lower mainlanders.

- All of that speaks to the challenge of not only understanding and “reading” the Marpole community, but doing the community development necessary to engage and animate individuals and families around literacy and healthier communities.

Task Group:

Who takes part in the task group?

The MLTG is comprised of:

- Vancouver Public Library (Marpole Branch)
- Community School Coordinator (District 1), VSB
- Marpole Oakridge Family Place (MOFP)
- Marpole Oakridge Area Council Society (MOACS)
- Marpole Oakridge Community Centre (MOCC)
- SUCCESS
- Vancity Credit Union (Marpole Branch)
- Cornerstone Community Church
- Historic Joy Kogawa House

How is the work of this group organized?

- The MLTG is chaired by the Executive Director of MOFP. The work of the group (agenda, implementation of action items, and implementation of the core recommendations contained within the Community Literacy Report) is executed on a month basis by the LOC. He in turn reports on a weekly basis (both in person as well as with a written report) to the E.D of MOFP (MOFP is the steward of the funding through Legacy 2010 Now).

For the coming year:

Are there new opportunities, challenges, or issues in your community? How will you respond to those?

- The Marpole community is full of challenges and opportunities. As in any urban area, it is a community where you might recognize your neighbour but be unaware that he/she might have the same concerns and interests as you. It is a community that seems to be waiting to be connected.
- In response to the varied and somewhat disparate identities and organizations, the Task Group through its LOC has recruited new organizations to join the Task Group and thereby broadening its appeal and its base. SUCCESS, The Historic Joy Kogawa House, Vancity Credit Union and Marpole Oakridge Community Centre are all new to the Task Group as of the March 2011 meeting.

- Two initiatives were undertaken on behalf of the Task Group at that meeting to address the goal of increasing and animating the Task Group base and the community itself. The first of these initiatives was a proposal for funding through the Community Arts Development funding from the City of Vancouver. The second has been the development of a digital resource map that will be in file form and we anticipate will exist on all Task Group members web sites.

What goals, priorities or objectives will you work on in the upcoming year? What actions are planned against those goals?

The goals of the Task Group attempted to mirror the goals and recommendations listed at the beginning of this document.

The primary actions to implement these recommendations:

- New organizations that have been added to the Task Group
- Development of the digital resource map:
<http://www.interactivistlearning.com/LeeWeinstein/>
- Community Celebration proposal written on behalf of the Task Group (we are awaiting the determination of the funder)

What will be required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year?

- It will be benchmark for the Task Group to form a number of committees to better implement the ongoing plans of the Community Literacy Report.
- The rolling out of the digital resource map will be both a valuable addition to each organization in its relationship to the community they serve as well as an organizing tool to reach out to additional organizations (primarily the faith based community) in Marpole.

Community Development and Literacy Collaboration:

What are the important collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?

- The most important collaboration has been the digital resource map project, not only the end result, but the process:
- The project itself was one that required collaboration. The map will be in the form of a file and be available as a link on all the Task Group organizations' websites. That in and of itself will be collaborative in that all groups will effectively be promoting awareness of all Task Force participants.

- The process of creating and approving each template was one in which each organization engaged in a participatory back and forth with the LOC editing and reediting their template. In all cases it was at least a five step process which served to demonstrate both a collaborative and respectful process.
- In addition, the digital resource map itself will be a tool to recruit other organizations in Marpole. If other organizations see the map as a valuable and innovative tool, they will be get something back (immediately) from their decision to join and participate (getting their template on the map).

What are the essential ongoing collaborations?

- The collaborations in Marpole as part of the MLTG are and will be in the process of emergent design. The ongoing and future collaborations will be informed by the digital map, the celebration grant for Marpole that is being adjudicated by the funder and the eventual reaching out to the faith based communities of Marpole for the purposes of literacy as a community building process.

What makes these collaborations work well?

- Collaborations work well when organizations view it as in their interest to participate in a collective effort for awareness and change. Amongst the resident/citizens of Marpole, collaboration only works when individuals and families see that their lives are enriched through the building of and the living in a more vibrant, healthier community.

Goals and actions for the current year:

What priorities, goals or objectives have you addressed this year?

- To bring a multiple definition of literacy to both organizations and individuals/families in Marpole.

What actions were taken to reach these? What organizations and groups participated in these actions?

- The process of the Task Group meeting themselves
- The work of the Task Group as implemented by the LOC. That work necessarily had to be transparent and critically reviewed. If it was both of those things, then it meant that organizations demonstrated that they felt a sense of ownership of the process and the subject of literacy itself.
- What adjustments were made to the plan? That is, as the year progressed, were there new opportunities or were their changes that did not allow for some actions to be taken?
- One example of that was the area of “financial literacy”. Through the work of Mona Nair, the Task Group member representing Vancity, financial literacy workshops (which had

previously been unknown to many individuals and organizations) were scheduled at SUCCESS (a Task Group organization) as well as for another community (North Vancouver) Literacy Task Group.

- Post-secondary education in a related field (education, social work, organizational planning, etc.)

Mount Pleasant

Reflections on the current year:

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?

The community of Mount Pleasant is experiencing the following changes: Mount Pleasant is a community in transition, with increasing gaps in the socio-economic abilities of our residents. In large parts of the community, housing prices and rents are increasing; and therefore affordable housing for low income families is becoming scarce. While the average income in the neighbourhood increased (according to Census 2006 data), areas in Mount Pleasant—such as the north east and south east areas bordering the communities of Grandview Woodlands and Kensington-Cedar Cottage continue to have large numbers of low income families.

We have also seen an increasing number of homeless (and near-homeless) individuals in the community, and our agency participated in dialogues with service providers and the City of Vancouver regarding emergency supports for the homeless during the winter months. Plans for building social housing with 100 single-room-occupancies (SROs) are in place, and we anticipate that this will be completed in the next two years. This facility will provide 30 SROs for at-risk-youth and 70 for people with mental health challenges. The facility will provide space for one of our community partners—Broadway Youth Resource Centre—who will provide services to the 30 youth. However, the facility will be one block away from Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, thus we anticipate a need for more services to the adult residents once the facility is completed.

The neighbourhood continues to have high numbers of immigrants with second languages other than English, and has one of the highest percentages of urban Aboriginal populations in the City of Vancouver. In our planning process we identified an emerging need for services for immigrant and Aboriginal populations, and some new partnerships have emerged to address these issues.

The new community centre in our community, which also houses the Vancouver Public Library, Mount Pleasant branch, has enhanced our neighbourhood's literacy assets. The community centre and library have worked closely with MPNH to organize outreach and information sessions for seniors related to health literacy. The library has a number of free computers and a warm and welcoming early childhood development space and programming.

Task Group:

Who takes part in the task group?

- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House

- Vancouver Public Library – Mount Pleasant Branch
- Vancouver Community College
- Vancouver School Board – Sir Charles Tupper Community School Coordinator
- Frontier College
- Mount Pleasant Family Centre
- Broadway Youth Resource Centre
- UBC Learning Exchange
- Coast Mental Health

A wide range of organizations are invited to the task group from community service and non-profit organizations, school district, College and University partners, early childhood, children and youth service providers, mental health services, library and public health services. Over 30 individuals participated in the initial planning stages; however, in this second year of implementation, only a small core of community partners made regular commitment to attend task group meetings. Despite avid networking and follow-up, the LOC found it challenging to sustain engagement throughout implementation and attendance at task group meetings was very inconsistent. Our community partners indicated that there were some real practical challenges that prevented them from participating regularly. For example, many partner organizations faced significant cut backs in staff and/or staff hours making it more difficult to have regular participation. There were also several changes in staffing with our community partners and we found it difficult to connect with new staff (for example, a VPL community developer who was really engaged in the process for over 2 years left for another VPL job in a different neighborhood and was never replaced on the task group; because of her active involvement and support, it was a great detriment to the task group.

Furthermore, funding for the second year of implementation ended in November 2010, and thus, the Literacy Outreach Coordinator left her position. With very limited funding, MPNH has only been able to allocate a few extra hours a Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House community developer to sustain some of the work started in implementation. This changeover and reduced hours curtailed our ability to continue to hold task group meetings, and our focus was to maintain the community based computer training project we had launched in the fall.

How is the work of this group organized? See Section V and VI for information about how task groups are organized.

Mount Pleasant has a strong culture of collaboration among service providers which fosters agencies' ability to create partnerships and linkages. The task group met 7 times during this year and there was an average of 4 to 5 people that attended meeting together with the Literacy Outreach coordinator. Although attendance at task groups was limited, there was considerable support for our activities in the community. The LOC conducted outreach to raise awareness of literacy and the work of the MP Literacy Group, and was able to create new linkages and partnerships.

At the beginning of Year Two Implementation (December 2009 to November 2010), the task group reviewed the activities of Year One as well as the initial plan. Together, the task group set priorities for the LOC which formed the basis of her work plan for the year which focused on pursuing activities related to designing and implementing computer training for adults.

Community Development and Literacy Collaboration:

What are the important collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?

- UBC Learning Exchange and Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House partnered to offer training to computer users who have no teaching experience to develop facilitation skills to deliver basic computer literacy classes. Initially our plan was to place volunteer trainers at other agencies in the community (such as Coast Mental Health and Vancouver Public Library); however, to date we have hosted classes at Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House only. We were able to develop and deliver two programs of 6 weeks (1 hour/week) training sessions for our local members that ran February to March 2011 and again from April to May 2011. Our trained volunteers were able to deliver the basic computer training to our community members.
- MPNH partnered with Vancouver Community Network to enhance our free public computers, and hosted an intern that provided one-on-one computer training to adults and seniors.
- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, Frontier College and Langara College collaborated to run *Community Literacy and Learning Circles for Immigrant Women* for a second year. The program embedded literacy and essential skills within a leadership and community development program. For the second cycle, we were able to secure a grant from Vancity that was written by the LOC, which greatly enhanced our ability to deliver the program. (The first cycle was predominantly supported with in-kind supports from the three agencies, and partially funded through funding from Welcome BC through MPNH's Building Welcoming and Inclusive Neighbourhoods project.)
- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House collaborated with Vancouver School Board and Macgregor Childcare Centre (VCC) to host family literacy (Mother Goose) programs delivered at Mount Pleasant Elementary School, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, and Macgregor Child Care Centre.
- MPNH continued to collaborate with other organizations on youth-driven arts-based projects aimed at developing civic literacy and community engagement and continued to provide leadership to the Youth Service Providers Network. In this past year, the City of Vancouver provided in-kind supports to the Network for a project that focused on conducting a train-the-trainer community asset mapping workshops for several youth, who in turn worked with other youth and youth serving organizations to map the resources in our community. Agencies involved included Broadway Youth Resource Centre, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House, Vancouver School Board, Boy's and Girl's Club. The City of Vancouver conducted this process in other neighbourhoods, and the information gathered formed the basis of a recently launched website: <http://www.vancouveryouth.ca/node/691>

- Vancouver Coastal Health, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House, La Bousolle, Broadway Youth Resource Centre, and Mount Pleasant Family Centre have continued to collaborate to support Capacity Corridor, a service provider's network for Midtown, with the focus of bringing community agencies together to build capacity and skills. In this particular year, sessions related to community literacy included Community Literacy (lead by the LOC), Youth and Civic Engagement through Film and Food Security.
- MPNH provided community kitchens through a literacy and food literacy lens for Aboriginal (in partnership with Vancouver Native Health Society) and Spanish-speaking families. MPNH has currently partnered with the Unitarian Church to further enhance our community kitchens and food security programs which will be launched in the fall.

What are the essential ongoing collaborations?

Each of the above mentioned collaborations are ongoing, with the exception of Community Literacy and Learning Circles, which we were unable to continue due our inability to secure funding. The LOC was very involved in helping to write grants for this program, however, these efforts met with no results. Additionally, the intern provided by Vancouver Community Network was for a specific time period only, and, unfortunately, VCN lost funding for the internship program.

However, the main focus of the LOC's work this year was to focus on computer literacy programs for adults and seniors. We had identified that a large segment of this population does not have basic computer skills and there are few opportunities to access free or low cost programs related to computer training. At this time we anticipate that UBC Learning Exchange will continue to collaborate with MPNH to implement the train-the-trainer program, and that MPNH's community developer will continue to organize session for participants with trained volunteers.

What makes collaborations work well?

We learned that for collaboration to work well task group participants as well as community partners need to continue to communicate, reach out and maintain a connection even if it is through email or phone conversations among one another. Often people and organizations are interested and passionate about the issues but they may not have the time or resources to participate in the ways that they would like to. Continuing to be creative in our outreach and engagement of various groups and individuals requires innovation in developing ways to keep members informed and engaged in this process.

Goals and actions for the current year:

What priorities, goals or objectives have you addressed this year?

Supported by the vision and guiding principles, three goals were identified and prioritized based on progressive community development.

1. Improve awareness of community literacy among citizens and service providers in an effort to improve access to services.
2. Establish mechanisms to improve collaboration and communication among service providers that leads to enhanced services and improved access to community literacy for citizens.
3. Support the sustainability of current and new programs through partnerships.

What actions were taken to reach these? What organizations and groups participated in these actions?

Actions

- Developed a network for collaboration.
- Created and supported new partnerships to meet the needs in the community.
- Supported existing programs by seeking out funding.
- Raised the profile of literacy programs in the community.
- Conducted outreach to marginalized communities through literacy programming.
- Developed a partnership with UBC learning Exchange and recruited / trained volunteer trainers.
- Hosted Basic Computer Literacy classes for our community members.
- Hosted information sessions for Midtown Service Providers on Community Literacy.

Community organizations and groups

- UBC Learning Exchange
- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House
- Vancouver Public Library
- Vancouver Community College
- Frontier College
- Vancouver School Board
- Mount Pleasant Family Centre
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- Native Education College
- Alliance for People's Health
- Broadway Youth Resource Centre
- Langara College
- Vancouver Native Health
- Little Mountain Neighbourhood House
- La Bousolle

What adjustments were made to the plan? That is, as the year progressed were there new opportunities or were there changes that did not allow for some actions to be taken?

- Initially, the task group had asked the LOC to develop a training curriculum for volunteers, however, the LOC identified that UBC learning exchange was creating a

“train-the-trainer” manual to provide facilitation skills to volunteers who would, in turn, teach basic computer skills. As such, UBC Learning exchange and Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House collaborated by engaging and supporting volunteers to take the train-the-training program, as well as organizing free computer training classes that these volunteers would lead. Our initial goal was to place trainers at MPNH as well as at other community organizations; however, at this point we have only been able to run the classes at MPNH. This year we were able to support 35 community members to gain basic computer skills from Microsoft Word basics to surfing the internet and using email, to being able to attach documents and download pictures and files.

Indications of Success:

How do you know that actions taken are working to support literacy? What impact have the literacy initiatives had? It is important to include examples to illustrate the impact.

- Despite the turnover in staff (LOC) and the reduction in funding at the end of Year 2 Implementation, MPNH was able to carry through with the partnership with UBC Learning exchange and offered three computer literacy programs for 35 participants.
- While we were marginally successful with our grant writing, we were able to implement a number of activities through the in-kind contributions of our community partners. A few examples include Langara College’s and Frontier College’s contribution to the Community Literacy and Learning Circles (facilitation, tutor matching, etc.), UBC Learning Exchange’s contribution to the computer literacy program (train-the-trainer program for volunteers), and City of Vancouver’s contribution to the Youth Service Provider’s Network (Asset Mapping “train-the-trainer” facilitation and technical support for the website.)

What are the things that support literacy work?

- Ongoing communication and collaboration between local organizations (from non-profit, to for profit to government agencies and institutions) and community member’s willingness to explore other forms of learning and affluence.
- There is a strong culture of collaboration among service providers in our community.
- Ability and willingness of organizations to provide resources (either through staff hours or space allocation) to make it possible to implement activities and programs.
- Funder’s (Legacies Now, Literacy Now) knowledge about community development and their flexibility by placing less restriction in how to apply funds for the delivery and types of activities.

Challenges:

What are the difficulties?

- Despite avid networking and follow-up, the LOC found it challenging to sustain engagement throughout implementation.

- Community partners are stretched and it is difficult for them to attend meetings, particularly for smaller organizations, so participation in the task group meetings was inconsistent.
- Increasing funding cutbacks, shifting priorities and staff turnover of a key public partner (Vancouver Public Library) affected the task group and implementation of our activities. Where the VPL-Mount Pleasant Branch was extremely engaged and supportive of the LOC and the task group activities at the outset and in year one implementation, we were challenged to engage anyone from VPL in Year 2 Implementation.
- VPL's budget constraints have had another impact on our community and literacy implementation activities. VPL has had a long tradition of partnering with nonprofit agencies to deliver Mother Goose family literacy programs at off-site locations, such as Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House and Mount Pleasant Family Centre. However, in this fiscal year, VPL Mount Pleasant Branch will now only deliver these programs at the library itself, which will limit participation of a broader demographic in our community. Additionally, restructuring and funding cuts had an impact on the library's ability to participate on the Mount Pleasant task group.
- Funding for implementation has been discontinued, so it is challenging to sustain the momentum. With only \$5000 allocated to ensure that Mount Pleasant is able to contribute to the district literacy plan, we are very limited in further implementation activities.

What would help?

- Stable funding.

For the coming year:

1. Are there new opportunities, challenges, or issues in your community? How will you respond to those?
 - a. As indicated above, the erosion of funding for literacy implementation will greatly curtail our involvement in community literacy.
 - b. Additionally, the shifting environment regarding the transference of funding from nonprofits to public institutions, such as the VPL for Strong Start programs, erodes the capacity of community agencies.
2. What goals, priorities or objectives will you work on in the coming year? What actions are planned against those goals?
 - With the limited funding, we anticipate that MPNH's community developer will only be able to focus on sustaining the partnership with UBC learning exchange and organizing volunteer lead computer literacy classes for adults.
3. What will be required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year?
 - a. Maintenance of partnership with UBC Learning Exchange; ability to recruit volunteers; identification of facilities; advertising of program.

Renfrew-Collingwood

Reflections on the current year:

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?

- A new literacy outreach coordinator was hired to continue the coordination of literacy work. A mapping coordinator was hired to work on the mapping project, which focuses on collecting and maintaining information of services and programs provided by different service providers around the community.
- A survey carried out by the mapping coordinator on how local residents get access to information about services revealed a variety of ways that service providers can use to inform different age groups of local residents about their programs. The survey is also used to guide our decision about what method to use while promoting our literacy programs.
- An ESL Read On! Page was created in Renfrew Collingwood Community News. Every month, 5,000 copies of Renfrew Collingwood Community News are printed and distributed to local residents. Each monthly issue has an ESL Read On! page with teacher resources and a podcast for learners on the website. Over the year more than 300 people have checked out the website.
- The Community Action for Seniors Independence (CASI), a new project aiming to help seniors live well in Renfrew-Collingwood, started in the fall 2010. CASI provides local seniors with services from seniors community shuttle, light housekeeping service to a seniors walking club. CASI has also built strong connections to many local seniors and brings great opportunities for literacy programs to support them.

Task Group:

Who takes part in the task group?

Steering Committee

- Paula Carr*, Former Executive Director, Collingwood Neighbourhood House (CNH)
- Julie Cheng*, Former Renfrew-Collingwood Literacy Outreach Coordinator, and Editorial Coordinator, Renfrew-Collingwood Community News, CNH
- Zeena Chopra, Office Assistant, CNH
- Melissa Chungfat*, Mapping Coordinator, CNH
- Jennifer Gray-Grant, Executive Director, CNH
- Kulwant Kaur, Director of Operations, CNH
- Anita Kwan, Community Services Coordinator, Learning Disabilities Association Vancouver
- Andrea Little*, Former District Literacy Plan Coordinator, Vancouver School Board

- Christine Macer, Community Schools Coordinator, Windermere Family of Schools
- William McMichael, Former President, CNH, and Language Education Coordinator, UBC
- Wenhuan Ren, Renfrew-Collingwood Literacy Outreach Coordinator
- Linda Tang, Chinese Settlement Worker, CNH
- Vincent Vezina, Library Technician, Vancouver Public Library Collingwood Branch
- Catherine Wong, Local Senior, and Cultural Connector, CNH

Most members from the steering committee also sit in one or both of the working groups. The following people were not part of the steering committee. They were only involved in two working groups (sub-committees, developed to focus on two priority areas.)

Mapping Project Working Group

- Robert Allen, Renfrew-Collingwood CityPlan Visions Committee Chair
- Charito Galling*, Former Community Developer for Seniors, Vancouver Coastal Health
- Paul Reid, Local Resident and Staff Writer & Layout Coordinator, Renfrew-Collingwood Community News, CNH
- Nancy Reynolds*, Former Community Recreation Coordination, Renfrew Park Community Centre (RPCC)

Connect Resident Working Group

- January Wolodarsky, Local Resident and Director of Community Development, CNH

People with a * mark on their names were part of the task group before their positions ended.

How is the work of this group organized? See Section V and VI for information about how task groups are organized.

- Service providers and active members in the community were recruited onto the committee. Apart from the steering committee (the main task group), two other sub-committees were also formed to address the two priority areas in our literacy work. Most members from the steering committee also sit in one or both of the sub-committees. The steering committee meets every other month and the working groups in between.

Community Development and Literacy Collaboration:

What are the important collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?

- Our collaboration with the Cultural Connectors Project in CNH is one of the main connections that brought support to many literacy programs in the community. Cultural Connectors are local residents from different cultural backgrounds who were recruited by CNH as volunteers to help support and coordinate programs and events in the community. Two seniors ESL groups in Renfrew-Collingwood are facilitated by the Cultural Connectors.

- Since one focus of our literacy work is helping seniors, we maintained solid connection with CASI and other senior programs in the community. One ESL project we started last year, the Collingwood Towers Project, actually initiated from our discussion with people from CASI who reached out to the senior's residential building, the Collingwood Towers, and noticed the lack of connection among neighbours and the need for literacy support there. Over time, the Collingwood Towers Project helps maintain the connection between CASI and other senior programs in CNH and the seniors who live in the Collingwood Towers.
- Financial support from 2010 Legacies Now, and free space provided by Collingwood Neighbourhood House, Evergreen Health Centre, and the Collingwood Towers helped us maintain the ongoing programs.
- With members in the task group, the schools and library branches in Renfrew-Collingwood also take an active part in our literacy work. They received training from the mapping coordinator on how to use and maintain the Renfrew-Collingwood Community Services Database.
- UBC Learning Exchange continued to run an ESL conversation group for parents and care givers in Grenfell Elementary School. The coordinator from UBC Learning Exchange also provided informal support to Cultural Connectors in CNH on English teaching materials and strategies.

What are the essential ongoing collaborations?

- Our collaborations with Cultural Connectors, CASI and other projects in CNH are the essential ongoing collaborations. Those collaborations helped build and expand the capacity of local residents and seniors and make use of local resources and network. They are the key to building accessible, sufficient and sustainable lifelong literacy programs for Renfrew-Collingwood residents.

What makes collaborations work well?

- Our literacy programs highly depend on the support of local residents and resources. The residents' capacity building and service network expanding both benefit and are benefited from our literacy programs. Take the Collingwood Towers Project for example: CASI program gave us the initiative, Cultural Connectors Project gives us the volunteers and ongoing support, the Collingwood Towers provides the space for activities. As the program goes on, over 30 seniors who live in the apartment have attended our literacy activities, and many of them also became active participants in other community programs, such as the walking club organized by CASI. One of the seniors from the Collingwood Towers was also recruited as a volunteer in CNH.
- Many members in the task group represent organizations and service providers in the community. Their active involvement in the literacy work and insightful thoughts on community building in general are invaluable.

Goals and actions for the current year:

What priorities, goals or objectives have you addressed this year?

Priority 1: Connect Residents and Service Providers

- Encourage the active participation among local service providers in the community mapping project.
- Ensure service providers and residents within Renfrew-Collingwood know about and have access to community mapping information.
- Link service providers to resident gifts and skills.

Priority 2: Expand Capacity

- Work together to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of existing resources and reduce duplications of resources and service.
- Develop an accessible, comprehensive and sustainable set of program options.
- Foster resident leadership and the collaborative development of local initiatives for sustainable lifelong learning.

Priority 3: Develop Programs

- Address expressed needs for literacy, numeracy and social skills for Canadian-born adults and new immigrants with the initial focus on seniors, adults and immigrants.
- Sustain programs through concrete resources and in-kind support from public, private and community organizations.

What actions were taken to reach these? What organizations and groups participated in these actions?

Priority 1: Connect Residents and Service Providers

- Hired a mapping coordinator, finished the Renfrew-Collingwood Community Services Database and a Renfrew-Collingwood Community Maps website (<http://www.cnh.bc.ca/communitymap/>).
- Staff working at CNH, RPCC, VPL and VSB have received training on accessing and maintaining the Renfrew-Collingwood Community Services Database.
- 10,000 bookmarks were distributed to local residents to promote the Renfrew-Collingwood Community Maps website.
- Many local residents who participated in literacy programs are linked to programs and events offered by other service providers. Some even become volunteers in CNH.

Priority 2: Expand Capacity

- Mapping project helps to gather information about services in the area and to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of existing resources.
- Literacy programs for seniors like the Collingwood Towers Project aim to give seniors accessible and convenient literacy activities.
- Cultural Connectors from CNH support the sustainability of many literacy programs and they are all local residents who become leaders and facilitators in community work.

Priority 3: Develop Programs

- With the support from many task group members who are coordinators in Renfrew Collingwood Community News, and an experienced ESL teacher who were hired to write articles and compile resources, ESL Read On! Page starts to address literacy needs of people from different age groups in the community.
- With the help from Cultural Connectors in CNH, the Collingwood Towers Project provides local seniors with more accessible and friendly English learning opportunities.
- With effective connections to many service providers in Renfrew-Collingwood, the mapping coordinator finished Renfrew-Collingwood Community Services Database, Renfrew-Collingwood Community Maps Website and a survey on how local residents get information about community services.
- With support from CNH and many local residents and artists, the literacy outreach coordinator finished two Renfrew-Collingwood Community walks, and a website of detailed information, photos and maps about the walks (<http://sites.google.com/site/rccommunitywalks/>).
- We provided ongoing support to the ESL class for Chinese and Filipino seniors in CNH.

What adjustments were made to the plan? That is, as the year progressed were there new opportunities or were there changes that did not allow for some actions to be taken?

- We succeeded in keeping track and making progress in all the priorities we set for this year. Priorities from previous years, such as to know our neighbourhood, and to connect residents, were also well addressed in our literacy work, because those priorities are interrelated to each other around literacy building.

Indications of Success:

How do you know that actions taken are working to support literacy? What impact have the literacy initiatives had? It is important to include examples to illustrate the impact.

- Our vision of literacy as a community building tool guided our steps and the programs we developed were not only about language learning but also about knowing the people and the neighbourhood. Our collaboration with other organizations has brought up many new opportunities.
- A group of Chinese and Filipino seniors meet every Monday, Wednesday and Friday to do exercises together. Following the exercise on Fridays, they will meet up in CNH and attend ESL sessions. Throughout the year, over 50 seniors participated in the exercise and ESL sessions. On holidays and festivals, this group of seniors will also get together and celebrate with dancing and singing. English language gives many of them confidence and willingness to communicate with others. Marcela Mancilla-Fuller, the Settlement Program Coordinator, once mentioned to us how surprised she was to see a Chinese senior, who used to avoid communicating with her, actually smiled and responded “fine, thank you!” to her greetings.

- As a result of our mapping project, we developed a community resource directory with an informative online website and a detailed electronic database. Service providers received training on how to get access to the database and update information in it. 10,000 bookmarks were printed and distributed to school students and residents throughout the neighbourhood to promote the website we built for Renfrew-Collingwood Community Resource Map. Several tutorial sessions on how to use the database have been offered to staff working at Collingwood Neighbourhood House, Renfrew Park Community Centre, Vancouver School Board, and the Collingwood branch and the Renfrew branch of Vancouver Public Library. Many service providers and settlement workers said that the directory will make it easier to find and locate services and programs for local residents. Whether doing several simple clicks on the website, or referring to a settlement worker or receptionist in their community centre, local residents will find it easier to access information about programs they are looking for. Thanks to the mapping project, we are able to build an even stronger connection between residents and local service providers.
- Since September 2010, a new senior's literacy program in the Collingwood Towers, a local senior's residential building, started to run once every week. With the support from the Cultural Connectors in CNH, the Collingwood Towers project has attracted over 30 local seniors from many different cultures. For these seniors, this accessible program is a friendly way to learn the English language and also a great opportunity to meet and connect to their neighbours, and to know about services and news in the neighbourhood. When we first heard about the seniors in the Collingwood Towers, they were described as isolated and lack of support. That was the reason why we wanted to bring literacy programs into this building. On the launch day of this program, we were surprised to see a room packed with seniors from diverse cultural and language backgrounds. Since then the literacy program has been added to many seniors' calendar. One of the seniors has become a facilitator in this group, and we also introduced her to many other programs offered by Collingwood Neighbourhood House. She was recruited as a volunteer and continues to make contributions to seniors in this community. There is another senior who never misses our weekly gathering at the Collingwood Towers. The senior is 84 years old. She told us that the program provided her with access to English learning without stepping out of her building, and she also told many of her neighbours about this program and brought new faces to the group.
- During the spring 2011, two community heritage walks that introduce the historical and artistic sites in the community were also developed with websites and downloadable materials. Collingwood Historic Walk focuses on introducing the history and growth of the neighbourhood, and Renfrew Art Walk focuses on the art projects that were created by local artists and incorporated into the neighbourhood. The community heritage walks was promoted in an article in the May issue of Renfrew Collingwood Community News, and we are hoping that more and more local residents will try those walks and get to know the community better. A task group member from the school board said that the walks will be a great resource for school students.

What are the things that support literacy work?

Local Residents

- Cultural Connectors, active local residents in the community, are contributors and facilitators for many of our literacy projects.
- Local residents who agreed to sit in our steering committee and working groups made great contributions to our discussion about their needs.
- Local residents who participated in and benefited from our programs offered impulse and reward to our literacy work.

Local Resources

- Local service providers contributed information to Renfrew-Collingwood Community Services Database, and received training on using and maintaining the database.
- Representatives of local service providers who sit in our steering committee provided guidance for literacy work.
- Collingwood Neighbourhood House, Evergreen Community Health Centre, the Collingwood Towers provided in kind space for literacy projects.

Funding from 2010 Legacies Now

- The mapping project, the Collingwood Towers project and the ESL Read On! Page and many other literacy projects were all made possible by the funding we receive from 2010 Legacies Now.

Challenges:

What are the difficulties?

- Seek other possible funding and ensure the programs are sustainable.
- Find more residents to take on leadership roles without losing the existing ones.
- Lack of professional training and support for volunteers.

What would help?

- Approaching the end of our third year implementation, we absolutely would love to see more funding and support to help us maintain and expand upon our achievements.
- We would love to have more literacy related materials and teaching tools. Resources and supports for both professional and volunteer ESL teachers will help us build more sustained and accessible programs.
- We want to build connections to professional literacy instructors who can give us ongoing support, help coaching volunteers, and provide ideas for our projects.
- Sustained funding.

South Vancouver

Reflections on the current year:

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?

Sunset neighbourhoods collaborated and created innovative and custom literacy events and activities to suit their communities. Neighbors for a Sustainable Future are a group of neighbours in the 41st and Cree Street Neighbourhood who get-together every month for a potluck to discuss various sustainable measures to collaborate on. Applications to Neighbourhood Small Grant were made and \$350 was secured to develop a community garden in the neighbourhood. Park Board granted them permission to plant an herb garden on the 2-foot perimeter of the existing fruit orchard on the former Sunset Community Centre site. Park Board also agreed to provide compost for them to use. Cardboard, newspapers and leaves were gathered by all the participants and a 'Composting Made Simple' and 'How to Start a Garden from Scratch' workshop was held at Sunset Community Centre with 18 children, adults and seniors attending. Immediately following the workshop, they walked over to the former Sunset Pool property to start the new garden. Following the workshop instructions, the cardboard was laid down on the sod, then newspapers, compost was shovelled on by all hands and the last layer of leaves was put on. The garden was left for five months to winter-over. Families who were involved in the making of the garden made regular forays over the winter and spring to see how the garden was forming. On March 29th, a community planting day was held with 28 neighbours digging holes and planting various herbs and vegetables. Replanting and harvesting lettuce and spinach and sharing the produce amongst each other have started and plans are afoot to assist with the Henderson Elementary School garden which is planned for this spring/summer.

The steering committee of four students of the Spirit Leaders (students' council) of Henderson Elementary and the Kindergarten teacher as a sponsor applied and secured \$1250 from the Generation Green Award to construct 2 rectangular food gardens for the 6-12 year old age group on the Southwest side of the school. Following Spring Break, the Kindergarten and Grade 5/6 classes started germinating the seedlings for their gardens.

A UBC Practicum student spoke to businesses and organizations to develop inventories of community spaces and programs. These inventories allow residents and service providers to have improved access to community spaces and programs.

Intergenerational food security programs were started in January 2011 and continue with a monthly cooking club at South Hill Community Church (6 children, ages 7-13 and 10 seniors and a monthly tasting kitchen at Culloden Court with 15 children, ages 7-16, monthly workshops in and around Sunset neighbourhood, attended by 6 children and 25 seniors; a

community garden at Culloden Court with 7 seniors and 15 children, and a monthly mobile market to Culloden Court, a BC Housing site with over 20 in attendance.

Financial Abuse Awareness: Jessie Sutherland, founder of Finding Home™ Dialogues Initiatives partnered with SVNH. 13 South Asian Seniors were recruited in a mentorship program, with a focus on Elder Financial Abuse Awareness. They participated in 4 Dialogues sessions based on: Home Matters, Elder Financial Abuse, Community Resources, and Poster Review and a Generating Ideas session. 13 participated in 4 weeks of Public speaking, created 3 educational posters on 'Why Home Matters' and 'From Selfishness and Greed to Kindness and Caring' in Punjabi and English. Resource kits were developed to inform community members of resources available to those experiencing financial abuse. 2 Seed projects were generated through the dialogues: Created a new cultural ceremony to honour girls living long lives to be held in July 29, 2011, as well as a children's storybook of Punjabi proverbs and stories based on the core values of kindness, caring and equality.

Task Group:

Who takes part in the task group?

The existing task group morphed and decreased with individuals' time and energy. It was composed of 1 school coordinator and 1 school administrator, South Van Family Place ED, SVNH Community Developer, South Hill Librarian, Seniors Programmers at Sunset Community Centre and Moberly Arts and Cultural Centre, 2 residents, UBC Practicum Student, and SVNH Family and Adult Team Leader.

How is the work of this group organized? See Section V and VI for information about how task groups are organized.

Task groups were struck to coordinate each of the five goals. Peer mentoring in financial abuse awareness and food security are larger task groups. The LOC as project team leader and the Elder Financial Abuse Awareness Project Team are members of the peer mentoring task group.

The food literacy task group was composed of 2 school teachers, 5 residents of Sunset who were gardeners and to-be-gardeners, 2 members from Neighbors for a Sustainable Future, YMCA Eco-Justice Intern (funded through YMCA), and SVNH Food Security Outreach Coordinator (funded through UWLM Intergenerational Grant), Seniors Programmers at Sunset Community Centre and Moberly Arts and Cultural Centre, SVNH Family and Adult Team Leader and SVNH Youth Team Leader.

Community Development and Literacy Collaboration:

What are the important collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?

Food Security:

- Moberly Arts and Cultural Society
- Therapeutic Horticulturalist from Farmers on 57th and community residents on the Cultural Herb Garden
- United Way funding SVNH Youth and Seniors Teams on an Intergenerational Food Security Project
- South Hill Community Church and SVNH Food Security Outreach Worker on monthly community kitchen (cooking club)
- Workshop leaders from the Environmental Youth Alliance (EYA), Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC), Master Gardeners Association, the World in a Garden, and Summer Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL)
- Monthly mobile market in partnership with Trout Lake Cedar Cottage Food Security Network
- Henderson Elementary School, VSB and Park Board Grounds people in developing a school garden
- Moberly Elementary School- Strong Start Program and Eco-Justice Intern providing fun activities for the children on 'What is in earth?'

Peer Mentoring:

- Finding Home Dialogues/Worldview Strategies and SVNH and South Asian seniors on Elder Financial Abuse Awareness Project
- Community Schools Coordinator and Vice-Principal at John Oliver Secondary School in providing customized Math and English instruction by tutors to Grade 10 youth who were reading at a Grade 2/3 level
- SVSACS, Southeast Vancouver Seniors Arts and Cultural Society partnering Filipino seniors, South Asian seniors, Chinese seniors, Italian seniors, Aboriginal Elders and Caucasian seniors on a Meals and Memories Project and the creation of a cookbook
- NICE- National Institute for the Care of the Elderly and seniors in the community on Financial literacy project
- Chinese Baptist Church and SVNH on providing programs for Chinese seniors
- SVNH Peer Support Program on providing peer support to seniors needing socialization
- CCPA (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives) and South Vancouver Seniors Council on Train the Trainer in Health Advocacy
- VanCity and service providers on Financial Literacy
- RBC and Elder Financial Abuse Awareness Project on how banking institutions can learn from each other about abuse and misuse of joint accounts and Powers-of-Attorney

Space Inventory

- Community Office of the Honourable Ujjal Dosanjh, MP for Vancouver South and Mable Elmore MLA Vancouver Kensington Community Office providing space for Task Group meetings

Enhancing Existing Programs:

- Moberly Elementary School- Strong Start Program and South Hill Library in providing bilingual library books to the older adults and children
- South Hill Education Centre and SVNH Pre-employment Coordinator in referrals of clients to continuing education courses
- Mable Elmore MLA Vancouver Kensington Community Office providing donations for Volunteer Appreciation event

What are the essential ongoing collaborations?

See list above with the exception of Wai Yeung MP replacing former MP Honourable Ujjal Dosanjh Constituency Office, as well as, Eco-justice intern promoted to Literacy Outreach Coordinator.

What makes collaborations work well?

- Relationship building (trust, lines of communication are open),
- things happen in a timely manner and people follow through with their tasks and assignments,
- energy and enthusiasm (buy-in),
- transparency,
- knowing from the beginning what each stakeholder is able to bring to the table,
- having a clear term of reference (who is going to do what role and expectations),
- leadership (collaborating and delegating actionable items),
- agreement on goals and objectives and the resources- allotment of staff time and resources (not off the side of your desk),
- appreciating and valuing people for the opportunity of working with them

Goals and actions for the current year:

What priorities, goals or objectives have you addressed this year?

- 1) Developed an inventory of accessible community spaces including currently available spaces as well as potentially new spaces. Developed a webpage and uploading it to community websites.
- 2) Furthered development of inventory of programs and services in areas of employment services, youth programming/services (non recreational) family support services (early evening/weekend, school readiness/early development and seniors services and programming.
- 3) SVNH partnered with Jessie Sutherland, founder of Finding Home Dialogue Initiatives to develop a peer mentoring program and training in Elder Financial Abuse Awareness. Peer mentors were trained in public speaking to deliver presentations, information

sessions through a speakers' bureau to community agencies, resident groups in Sunset community, multicultural groups at SVNH, and seniors groups in various locations. A funding proposal for a celebration of daughters' event was made in April 2011.

- 4) To support food literacy in the community in the areas of food security, environmental sustainability and healthy living through developing community gardens, food clubs, monthly mobile market, assisting with school garden and giving regular monthly and ad hoc gardening workshops upon request. Four students of the Spirit Leaders (students' council) of Henderson Elementary and Kindergarten teacher as a sponsor applied and were approved for a \$1250. Generation Green Award to construct for the 6-12 year olds, 2 rectangular food beds on the Southwest side of the school. Henderson Elementary School Teacher and PAC member agreed to coordinate gardening projects; gardening workshops, held talks with VSB Grounds Committee, Park Board for permission to have a school garden, developed small herb garden on grounds of former Sunset Community Centre and held community planting day. Environmental Youth Alliance has agreed to water gardens during May to July.

SVNH Youth Team Leader and LOC applied for funding from UWLM Intergenerational Project and received funding to implement a community garden at one BC Housing site at Knight Road, one food club at South Hill Community Church and a tasting Kitchen at Culloden Court, initiated a monthly mobile market to several BC Housing Sites in Sunset and VFK locations, and monthly gardening workshops to residents who are interested in training the trainer and peer mentoring with the toolkit that is in development.

What actions were taken to reach these? What organizations and groups participated in these actions?

- 1) Re: Space Inventory: Communication was done by UBC Practicum Student by phone, email and in person. Organizations were asked to supply information such as: address, contact person/phone number/email, Space, Size of space, Capacity, What it Includes, Free/Rental, Challenges/Accessibility.

Organizations participating were:

- Bains Travel Ltd.
- Bishop Hills Memorial Church
- CIBC,
- MLA's offices (Mabel Elmore/Ujjal Dosanjh)
- David Thompson Family of Schools
- First United Mennonite Church
- Good Shepherd Day Care
- VanCity
- John Oliver Community of Schools
- Royal Canadian Legion
- South Hill Community Church
- South Van Family Place
- South Van Youth Centre
- South Hill Branch, VPL
- Sunset Community Centre
- Sunset Daycare Centre
- Vancouver Airport Inn Hotel

2) Re: Program Inventory: UBC Practicum Student contacted by email, phone and in person:

- Sunset Community Centre,
- John Oliver School Teams Coordinator,
- Kensington Community Centre,
- Kingcrest International Neighbours,
- Langara College,
- Moberly Arts and Cultural Centre,
- Multicultural Helping House Society,
- Pacific Immigration Resource Society (PIRS),
- Pierre Trudeau Elementary School,
- Progressive Intercultural Community Services (PICS),
- Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS),
- South Community Health Centre,
- South Hill Branch, VPL
- South Hill Community Church,
- South Hill Education Centre,
- South Hill Initiative for Neighbourhood Engagement (SHINE),
- South Van Family Place,
- SUCCESS Employment Services,
- SUCCESS Settlement Services,
- SUCCESS Outreach,
- Champlain Heights Public Library,
- David Thompson Family Schools,
- Faith Fellowship Baptist Church,
- Fraserview Boys and Girls Club,
- Fraserview Library,
- Fraserview Montessori Preschool and Kindergarten,
- Grace International Baptist Church,
- Killarney Community Centre,
- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House

3) SVNH identified best practices in peer mentoring and partnership developed with Jessie Sutherland, founder of Finding Home Dialogue Initiatives who, between 2007 to 2010, had found the issue of elder financial abuse emerged in newcomer immigrant groups. Peer mentors were recruited from the Punjabi-speaking community in the Sunset area. LOC served as Project Team Leader and coordinated the Project Team of 13 Punjabi seniors through the 3 day-long Working group meetings to develop a peer mentoring program and training in Elder Financial Abuse Awareness, 4 dialogue sessions, 4 public speaking workshops and a Celebration of Success Event where seniors were given graduation certificates and individual gifts for the work done. Coordination continues with the seniors who make up the Speakers' Bureau to deliver presentations, information sessions to resident groups in Sunset community, multicultural groups at SVNH, and seniors groups in various locations. Two seed projects were created from the Dialogues. A funding proposal to Citizenship and Immigration was made was made

in April 2011 for the first project, a Celebration of Daughters' Long Lives and Good Health event to be held on July 29th, 2011 in partnership with the Sunset, Farsi and Afghani communities. The creation of a storybook for children to be read by their parents and/or grandparents of fables, stories and proverbs based on the core values of kindness, caring and equality.

- 4) Funding for the SVNH Food Security (FS) Program secured from the United Way of the Lower Mainland in 2010 with a p/t Outreach Worker hired in January 2011.

Work on the program officially commenced 5 January, 2011.

The main program goal is to improve access to increased food security for children and seniors in the South Vancouver area.

Briefly, the program consists of four main activities to be conducted over 2011:

1. Deliver monthly Food Security workshops;
2. Establish two community kitchens for children (ages 8 -14 yrs) and seniors/older adults (55+);
3. Develop four small container garden/garden bed sites; and,
4. Implement a monthly mobile market.

Status of activities: An essential requirement for the successful delivery of the FS program is the recruitment of seniors and older adults to support children on gardening and cooking activities. For the most part, the children are being drawn from existing after-school kids clubs coordinated by SVNH at the South Vancouver BC Housing site of Culloden Court, also the sites for the gardening activities. The seniors/older adults are being recruited through presentations by FS program staff and volunteers and BC Housing tenant meetings. To date, presentations have been made to interested tenants of Culloden Court 47th and Knight Street, as well as one-on-one meetings. Recruitment has also been through the development and distribution of publicity materials and word of mouth.

Workshops: The first "official" workshop 28th February at SVNH. This workshop served as a "soft" launch of the FS program and covered in detail food security issues as well as the main FS activities being implemented by SVNH. Workshops included a session in March on composting by Matthew Kemshaw of the Environmental Youth Alliance, seed starting in April, vegetable gardening in less than ideal places in May and extending the harvest, food preservation, and nutrition in future monthly workshops. Information on upcoming workshops will be posted on the SVNH website.

Community Kitchens (C.K.): The F.S. Outreach Worker attended the C.K. Leadership workshop organized by Fresh Choice Kitchens in early February and a visit to the kitchen of South Hill Community Church was undertaken shortly thereafter. The kitchen at South Hill is completely outfitted and with the support of the Church Pastor, a Community Food Club series (group preferred this name to Community Kitchen) is held on the third Saturday of each month. A "trial" kitchen was held on the 26th of February from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and led by Spanish-speaking seniors experienced in community kitchens. Monthly community food clubs are being held at South Hill with participation by children, adults and

grandparents. Outreach to the community has led to more participants joining the Food Club. In addition to South Hill, a community tasting kitchen is happening at Culloden Court with adults and children.

Gardening: In conjunction with the ongoing after-school SVNH kids clubs, food gardening activities using existing raised beds (~3'X6'), and small containers are being conducted at the BC Housing site at Culloden Court at 47th and Knight. Gardening at SVNH is conducted in cooperation with the SVNH preschool with children from the Sunset area as well as VFK. The SVNH Eco-justice intern has led comprehensive workshops at four housing sites focusing on food security and the importance of healthy eating. Gardening workshops began in January with a soil theme whereby children learned about soil, its importance in the food that we eat, and conducted an experiment on how soil quality can influence plant growth and health. In March, the workshops focused on seeds and planting in the raised beds and containers began. In cooperation with the Environmental Youth Alliance, Youth Leaders support the gardening activities at Culloden Court. April, a Seed Starting workshop by Eco-Justice intern and LOC, June- Natural Pest Control, July – Extending the Harvest, August – SOYL presenting, September – Extending the Harvest, September – Preserving the Harvest, October – Canning, November – Encouraging Bees to Your Garden.

Workshop leaders from the Environmental Youth Alliance (EYA), Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC), Master Gardeners Association, the World in a Garden, and Summer Opportunities for Youth Leadership (SOYL), Garden in Your World.

Monthly mobile market: To understand how pocket markets are delivered, in January, the FS Outreach Worker along with several SVNH staff participated in the monthly pocket market coordinated by Erin Nicholls of the Trout Lake Cedar Cottage Food Security Network at the BC Housing site of Brant Villa. Due to long waits on permitting issues with the City of Vancouver, a decision was made to use the SVNH Youth Van to provide a monthly mobile market to the BC Housing sites and SVNH. Tokens are available at \$1 at each of the sites for BC Housing Tenants and low-income community residents. Other community residents are invited to attend mobile markets and will pay a slight increase. Partnership with Van WholeSale Foods Inc. provides the locally grown fresh produce.

Henderson Elementary School: Collaborations with V.S.B. Grounds, teachers and the Henderson Spirit Leaders (students' council) have led to the development of a school garden. Four students of the Spirit Leaders and the Kindergarten Teacher as a sponsor have applied and been approved for a Generation Green Award for the 6-12 year old age group to construct 2 rectangular beds for a food garden on the Southwest side of the school. Many of Henderson Elementary students did three years of partnership with the U.B.C. farm, with a teacher who is presently on leave, and two of those students are Spirit Leaders. Following Spring Break, the teachers and their students started germinating seedlings for the gardens. The seedlings are being planted at a Community Planting Day on May 28th

An inventory of programs and services beginning with the areas of employment services, youth programming/services) non-recreational, family support services (early evening/weekend), school readiness/early development, and seniors has been developed. An ongoing assessment of resources and needs has identified that a number of John Oliver Grade 10 students in the Sunset and South Hill area have grade 2 and 3 reading levels. They have been assisted over the past 5 years with tutoring assistance in an evening school context. The success of this innovative program has resulted in a rise in graduation rates from 79% in 2005 to 92% in 2010. However, funding for this type of assistance is not within the remit of the School Board and funding has been in shortfall this year. Meetings to discuss fund-raising strategies with the Vice-Principal, School Coordinator and Literacy Task Group have led to students applying for Neighbourhood Small Grants to support this endeavour.

What adjustments were made to the plan? That is, as the year progressed were there new opportunities or were there changes that did not allow for some actions to be taken?

There was an under spend in donations to community groups as there were many grants applied for through our partners, Moberly Arts and Cultural Centre developed a Cultural Herb Garden with a Therapeutic Horticulturalist and had Artists in Residence providing various arts and cultural activities to those living within the Sunset area; South Vancouver Youth Team and LOC applied and received funding from United Way for an Intergenerational Food Security Project that supported children from 7-12 and seniors in food clubs, community gardens, a mobile market and gardening workshops in both the Sunset, Victoria, Fraser and Killarney areas. We knew that we had to hire a coordinator to facilitate the garden workshops, gardens, food clubs and mobile market and there wasn't enough money in the Legacies Now budget to handle the larger costs.

Neighbours for a Sustainable Future (NSF) had applied for a Neighbourhood Small Grant that was approved at the time of the starting of our implementation. I had also received \$1100 through monies not applied for from Neighbourhood Small Grant (NSG). This assisted them to have workshop leaders and to develop their gardens. As well, our under spend was directly attributed to not having to hire or contract a facilitator by having a UBC Masters Practicum Student who facilitated the development of the Space and Program Inventories, assist in developing an inventory of seniors services for a Linking Seniors Services Project spearheaded by VCH Seniors Community Developer. She also facilitated the planning of the Celebration Tea and the Celebration of Daughters event. This event had been planned to occur before March 31st but there were several delays with 3 of our 13 participants away in India for a period of time and one senior whose husband passed away on the day of Celebration Tea. \$1200 had been budgeted for this event.

The School garden project was delayed due to deliberations with VSB and Park Board. Grandparents requested a seating area close to the gardens as they did not have a gathering place other than in the halls of the school, which did not work for the school. \$1500 was budgeted for that project. As well, the students and school teachers at Henderson Elementary applied and were approved for a Generation Green Award for the

6-12 year old age group to construct 2 rectangular beds for a food garden on the Southwest side of the school.

Another adjustment in the plan: Goal ranking according to priorities led us to lead on the Food Security goal and the peer mentoring program. It was decided to do a peer mentoring project on Elder Financial Abuse Awareness and Healthy Living as these issues had emerged as problematic for the South Asian community. A grant was written to Healthy Living and Sport to fund a 12 month long Healthy and Active Living Program with the South Asian Community at Moberly Arts and Cultural Centre. Classes are led by one of the volunteer senior leaders with other volunteers acting as assistants and mentees. Average attendance is 35 South Asian older adults and seniors. This group will be in the right place to take on the dissemination of the food security toolkit when it is completed in mid-June 2011. The food security tool-kit was delayed due to lack of time on the LOC's part.

Goals 1 and 5 were done following start of the Food Security goal and they are being uploaded to community websites. However we have had difficulty finding a person to manage and update each of the space and program inventories once they are uploaded to the websites. We are continuing our search and feel hopeful that we will find a volunteer on Go Volunteer to do this work.

Goal 2 to explore opportunities to work together on improving community communication has been delayed as we had not found anyone who was interested in developing it until recently, a newly-recruited volunteer and South Hill Librarian have offered to create an inventory of current communication tools, develop and action plan on how to improve Sunset communication tools, revise an existing transportation community map with services, link with SHINE, SVNH and area service providers to better utilize these websites, and connect with the communities' multi-faith groups.

Indications of Success:

How do you know that actions taken are working to support literacy? What impact have the literacy initiatives had? It is important to include examples to illustrate the impact.

Goal 1: Although the inventories have not been uploaded to all websites, feedback from those who have viewed it is positive. For several years, the South Vancouver Area Service Providers have been attempting to develop these types of inventories and have never succeeded because of lack of time and initiative of someone to carry on the work. We now have 2 inventories and a third with the Tool Library which will be completed soon. Although they are not all uploaded to all the websites, residents and service providers were extremely relieved that these much-needed inventories will be available on community website. Very soon, they will have access to information that will allow them to access much-needed space and a very extensive age span of programs across Southeast Vancouver.

Goal 3: South Asian seniors involved in the Healthy Living project enjoy the cooking and exercise components of this program. We receive regular comments from the group in

relation to how they are viewing food and exercise. A swimming program was requested and it will start within the next few weeks, walking groups led by the Healthy Living volunteer facilitator have resulted in members releasing weight and feeling much fitter.

The South Asian seniors involved in the Elder Financial Abuse Awareness Peer Support Program have made the following comments:

“Just recently, my husband died. After he died, I was very lonely and upset. Since I have started coming to programs, at the community centre and South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, I have been very happy. When I am here I feel at home and it helps me keep my mind off of things”

“Going out and getting information is what gives us empowerment. Without knowledge, we are not empowered.”

“I found out so much today and it was so useful. It was useful in the sense that the resource people and BC Community Resource Network know about referral services and it has increased my knowledge a lot. I am thankful from the core of my heart and am ready to be helpful to others.”

“I am so thankful for today and for all of the other sessions. When it started, we were not so empowered and now we are. This is helpful for me and my community because if someone needs information I will promptly let them know the information.”

Goal 4: Our attendance at our workshops, community gardens and food clubs has steadily increased because of word of mouth. Comments such as: “I never knew how much fun starting seeds could be.” - A participant at a Seed starting workshop.

“I am learning so much and I want to share it with my friends. I want to start a food club in our common room in our co-op.”

“I love earthworms even when they are wriggly cuz they do lots of good work in the earth” - A 4 year old girl at Moberly Strong Start Program during an earthworm activity.

“I can’t believe you are doing all these things for us. We are usually left out of things like this. Thank you for letting our kids come with us.” - A participant at the Cooking Club at South Hill Community Church.

What are the things that support literacy work?

Asking people if they would like to join fun literacy initiatives (cooking clubs and gardening groups) and having them ask friends and neighbours to join them.

Partnerships with community librarians to develop and promote literacy programs;

Partnerships with credit unions and banks to support financial literacy and reduce financial abuse of Powers of Attorney and joint accounts.

Partnerships with CCPA to involve volunteers in Train the Trainer in Health Literacy initiatives.

Publicize the space and program inventories on bulletin boards, community websites, radio and TV.

Always be vigilant to turn an opportunity from newsletters, newspapers, community bulletin boards or from Church into a literacy activity.

As well, we had the good fortune to have in the neighbourhood, Neighbors for a Sustainable Future, otherwise known as “NSF”. They are a group of concerned neighbours who gather monthly in order to help each other to live more sustainably, to become aware of community initiatives and more informed about environmental issues at large. In their third year, they organize meetings around a topic of interest, and newcomers are always welcome to this informal group. They attempt to involve their children in some discussions and activities as we gather in different members’ homes in a social and supportive environment. Their goal is to combine information-sharing with community action, drawing upon local knowledge and expertise to learn more about health, food security, environmental toxins, recycling, gardening, energy efficiency and community-building. They collaborate with Village Vancouver’s Transition Town, and the South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, to promote food growing and pollination in local parks; a project goal is to create large community gardens at the old site of Sunset Pool. They had already applied and secured funding through Neighbourhood Small Grants to develop boulevard and balcony gardens in some of the apartment buildings nearby them. They collaborated with us to do gardening workshops at Sunset Community Centre and to develop a small garden at the former Sunset Pool site. They were a catalyst for action in many of the projects that took place in South Hill and Sunset communities. This is a model to share with other communities.

Challenges:

What are the difficulties?

People who are not interested in community work or have not captured the vision. There was little input from youth in the original community consultations as they were done over the summer months. This resulted in lack of information and issues regarding youth. A completed number of Literacy Assets Surveys were completed due to our very diverse population in the Sunset area. 11.5% of our population do not speak English, a substantial number of Grade 10 youth read at Grade 2 or 3 level, 34.8% of the population is without high school completion.

What would help?

Monies available would help to provide innovative evening classes for youth unable to read and do math, provide them with tutors and teachers who are patient and the teaching given according to learning styles, (held at high schools). Youth who have participated in such classes have achieved great results. And word spread quickly once they felt successful and empowered. In 2005, 79% of students graduated and 5 years later following implementation of this type of program, 92% of youth graduated. Keeping youth at high school in such an atmosphere with other youth experiencing empowerment in education will give them the opportunity to re-engage with school and complete high school graduation and become responsible citizens.

For the Coming Year

Are there new opportunities, challenges, or issues in your community? How will you respond to those?

Opportunities:

Peer mentors in financial abuse awareness and food literacy will increase their catchment to other communities (Vietnamese, Aboriginal, and Filipino) within the Sunset remit.

Attendance at the Sustainable City with Sustainable Neighbourhoods and a reference to 'tool libraries' encouraged the LOC to research a tool library in west Seattle. Promotion of the need of a tool library as identified in our research of food security resources has brought in aging seniors with the tools they no longer use or need. We have found a volunteer who has offered to catalogue and photograph the tools and upload the inventory to a website. One of our next actions is find a place where they can reside.

Working together on improving community communication has met with opportunities for volunteer involvement through the development by South Hill Initiative on Neighbourhood Engagement (SHINE) of a new project, Inside Stories, in collaboration with SHINE, SVNH and Nettie Wild, film-maker.

A partnership with Moberly Arts and Cultural Centre on digital storytelling is in process. South Asian seniors have been interviewed and are now gathering story ideas. Our next steps are to recruit seniors from the Vietnamese, Filipino, Farsi, Afghani and Aboriginal communities to share their stories of living in South Vancouver.

The development of a Seniors Hub in Southeast Vancouver will give opportunities to engage seniors in identifying and responding to emerging literacy needs, will enable all members to plan together and determine how best to deliver the program, to secure and manage funds and engage children and youth in intergenerational literacy projects and collaborate on common outreach initiatives.

South Vancouver Seniors Council has partnered with Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives in a Train the Trainer Program to build awareness of the home and community care system in BC and to assist with navigating the healthcare system.

Research into low literacy levels for children and youth and apply for funding to support such initiatives.

Challenges: Health cuts to community home support and homecare depend more and more on family members and volunteers to do care-giving. Many of our newcomers and immigrant seniors are sandwiched between caring for grandchildren and their aging spouses. There will be less time for volunteer work.

Grade 10 youth have been identified as having reading levels of Grades 2 and 3. Unless they are assisted, they will not be empowered to complete high school and will be left to finding their sense of self in non-traditional methods.

What goals, priorities or objectives will you work on in the coming year? What actions are planned against those goals?

Goal 2: To create an inventory of current communication tools and who manages them i.e. print, visual, technological tools, etc.; South Hill Librarian and senior volunteer at SVNH have agreed to create an inventory of current communication tools, develop an action plan on how to improve Sunset communication tools; revise an existing transportation community map with services and link with SHINE, SVNH and area service providers to better utilize these websites, and connect with the communities' multi-faith groups.

Goal 4: Complete Sunset food literacy resource kit & training program (scheduled to be completed late June, 2011. Implement training the trainers on Food literacy and resources toolkit to peer mentors at SVNH and Sunset CC. Disseminate information on food literacy kits and how to access resources.

Goal 1 & 5: Upload space and program inventories to community websites. Recreate AreaService Providers website.

What will be required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year?

LOC will coordinate actions to meet the above goals with the assistance of existing volunteers and based on the foundations that have been established over the past year. Existing funds will be used to augment actions.

Application for funding was made to Citizenship and Immigration for the (seed project of Elder Financial Abuse Awareness) Celebration of Daughters to be held on July 29th, 2011. Apply for funding to New Horizons for seniors in September to create children's storybook based on the core values of kindness, caring and equality.

Summary of Community Plans

While each community is clearly unique, there are at the same time similar areas to celebrate and similar challenges to face. All communities are now in the implementation phase of literacy planning. Communities have given literacy the broadest definition possible to support a wide range of the people living in the area. Most have made strides in making current resources more accessible. They have created tools and resources to help connect people in their communities to resources they need. New programs have been identified to fill in gaps. Different populations have been identified as needing support.

One common area for celebration is the collaboration this work has generated. Every community mentioned the value of the new connections made and the additional supports available as a result. Many talk about the capacity building and the expansion of volunteers and peer supports.

At the same time all mentioned the challenges of time to do the work and the funding to continue. This kind of community development is labour intensive. The funds currently allocated are stretched. Nonetheless these funds have permitted a rich array of programming that would not otherwise have been available to people in the communities.

Vancouver Community College

Vancouver Community College, in addition to offering a full range of certificate, diploma and continuing education classes, is the largest college provider of adult literacy programs in Vancouver. It has a long and proud history of collaborating with a wide assortment of community constituency groups. Some recent partners include: the Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services (ACCESS), the Salvation Army, the Vancouver Public Library, the Vancouver Board of Education, Safeway, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and the YWCA.

The following is a snapshot of adult literacy programming at VCC.

The Basic Education Department is the Adult Literacy Fundamental Level program at VCC. It encompasses beginning skills up to approximately Grade 9. Currently, the department has eleven instructors teaching fundamental English and Math. It offers both group-based and self-paced continuous intake classes at the Broadway Campus. Basic Education has well-established adult learning centres at the First United Church Mission in the Downtown Eastside, at Vancouver Public Library's Downtown Branch, and at Salvation Army's Harbour Light, a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in the Downtown Eastside.

The Basic Education Department has also been involved this year in the *Aboriginal Gateway to Health Careers* project that is a federally funded collaborative effort between ACCESS and VCC.

Adult Upgrading

Courses are offered at the Intermediate (Grade 10), Advanced (Grade 11) and Provincial (Grade 12) levels for students wishing to earn credit or obtain academic prerequisites leading to high school completion and the BC Adult Graduation Diploma. Students can complete prerequisites: (1) for entry into institutions such as BCIT, Langara, Kwantlen, etc., (2) in preparation for entry into other VCC programs (e.g. Pharmacy Technician, Practical Nursing, or Electronics) or (3) for entrance into academic, career, or technical programs.

Intermediate Program for Youth: Broadway Youth Resource Centre

The ABE Youth Program offers an Intermediate ABE Certificate Program (Grade 9/10) and Advanced ABE courses (Grade 11) at the Broadway Youth Resource Centre. The ABE Youth Program offers individualized and self-paced instruction in English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies in a structured and supportive educational setting that allows youth to achieve their academic goals to develop the skills to be productive and responsible individuals. The Youth Program prepares students to enter adult graduation programs, public secondary schools, career and skills training programs and/or employment.

Essential Skills for College and Career Success

In September 2009, a new Essential Skills Centre opened at the VCC Downtown Campus (250 West Pender). Course offerings include:

- Education and Career Planning; Self Assessment, career Explorations and Interview Skills
- College Success: Active Learning, Study Skills, Goal Setting
- Computer skills: Word, Excel, and Windows.

These courses are being offered in a flexible format that includes self-paced study and scheduled courses at various times to suit the student. Courses are tuition free (college application, student association and college initiative fee are charged).

Harbour Light Learning Centre

Since 2007, VCC has offered the Harbour Light Learning Centre program in partnership with the Salvation Army Addictions and Rehabilitation Centre on East Cordova in the Downtown Eastside. Students are residents of the Rehab Centre and are referred by their counsellors. Students meet with the VCC instructors to discuss an education plan before being assessed and placed into the Learning Centre Program. Harbour Light Learning Centre offers upgrading from beginner level reading, writing and math up to the grade 12 level. It is operated by both the Basic Education and CCA Departments.

English as a Second Language

Renowned for its English as a Second Language training, VCC offers ESL classes for immigrants and refugees living in Canada as well as for international visa students and visitors. VCC also offers the largest English language teacher training ([TESOL](#)) program in Western Canada. VCC ESL offers the following programs:

- ELSA - English Language Services for Adults - Broadway Campus
- English for Career Preparation and Advancement
- ESL at VCC - Literacy, Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced - Broadway and Downtown Campuses
- ESL Literacy Classes in the Community
- Classes for ESL adults who have limited literacy skills in their first language as well as English are available through VCC's ESL Outreach Department. Classes are available at community locations as well as at the Downtown Campus for students who are at a pre-beginner level in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Two more classes, one at Broadway and one Downtown, are available for those who have intermediate listening and speaking skills (CLB 4) and very low-level English reading and writing skills. Classes are offered mornings or evenings. There are three 12-week terms starting January, April and September.
- ESL Classes in the Community - Literacy, Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
- ESL – Homefront Learning
- Homebound adult ESL students living in Vancouver or Burnaby can receive two free hours of English instruction per week in their homes by a trained volunteer tutor. Students can study at any level: Literacy, Beginner, Intermediate or Advanced. Students can stay in the program as long as they are eligible and a tutor is available.
- ESL Learning Centres in the Libraries
- In partnership with the Vancouver and Burnaby Public Libraries, VCC operates nine ESL Learning Centres. Eight are located in Vancouver and one in Burnaby. Learning Centres in Libraries provide free one-on-one and small group tutoring in ESL to adults. Each Learning Centre has various operating hours and is
- staffed by experienced Instructional Assistants with ESL training.

World Beat

Vancouver Community College (VCC), in partnership with S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and YWCA, is offering an innovative new project for vulnerable young immigrants and refugees. Called World Beat, this project combines educational, career and life planning with learning in music, literacy, language and essential workplace skills to engage and support the project participants in finding suitable paths for personal and career development. The program is open to young immigrants and refugees (aged 15 - 25), having been in Canada for 5 years or less, who have low language and literacy levels, are no longer attending school, and have little awareness of how to access skill upgrading and career education opportunities. They may also face multiple barriers to settlement. Instructors from the VCC School of Language Studies and School of Music will deliver an integrated 16-

week bridging program that is designed specially for youth. Outreach workers from S.U.C.C.E.S.S and YWCA will provide ongoing support to the project participants and connect them with community resources for their long- term development.

Initiatives focused on Aboriginal Learners

Vancouver Community College is committed to increasing the participation and success rate of First Nations learners and provides First Nations learners with academic and cultural support. Aboriginal academic advisors assist with liaising with band administration, elders, sponsoring agencies, and referral to community resources, pre-admission advising, orientation to VCC facilities and resources, and advocacy. Recognizing that Vancouver Community College serves a large Aboriginal population that is under-represented in post-secondary education, priority registration will be given to qualified Aboriginal students in all courses and programs at VCC.

The Aboriginal Gateway to Health Careers was a recently completed partnership between Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services (ACCESS) and VCC, School of Health Sciences and School of Arts & Science. This federally funded project was designed to prepare and support urban Aboriginal people towards entry into health sciences career training programs. Students explored the professions and research the education they needed to get a start in this field while also working on ABE Skills Upgrading and e-portfolios. The course was designed to assist in the student's personal, cultural and emotional development through interaction with role models and health care professionals in the Aboriginal community. This pilot project of three cohorts was successfully completed in March 2011. ACCECC and VCC hope to embark upon a new partnership in the next academic year.

VCC is a partner of the *Coastal Corridor Consortium (C3)*. The goals of the Consortium are:

- to create better cultural connections between and among the C3 post- secondary institutions and the Aboriginal partners
- to ensure a strong and consistent Aboriginal voice
- to remove barriers for Aboriginal learners to access quality higher education with focus on enhanced learner services and supported outreach programs
- to offer programs that meet the needs of Aboriginal learners and their communities, providing pathways to employment and/or further learning.

Courses for Students with Disabilities

These programs are designed to meet the specific needs of students with disabilities. VCC provides opportunities for students by offering skills and learning that will enhance career opportunities, personal potential and academic success. Adult Special Education courses are designed for students with a disability, who wish to establish and/or upgrade pre-vocational skills that would enhance entry into further education or employment. These courses include part-time literacy courses in; Reading and Writing for Every Day Use, Managing Your Money, and Computer Applications. The program also delivers courses in;

Career Awareness (ASE), Clerical Skills (ASE), Deaf and Hard of Hearing - Job Readiness, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Courses, Food Service Careers (ASE), Hospitality Careers (Adult Special Education), Office Administration for the Visually Impaired, Retail Food and Supermarket Careers (ASE), and the Visually Impaired Adult Program.

Family Literacy Certificate Program

Partnering with Literacy B.C., the Centre for Family Literacy and 2010 Legacies Now, Vancouver Community College is proud to host the Family Literacy Certificate Program. Designed for those who currently work or plan to work in family literacy, this certificate program builds knowledge and skills in a wide range of areas that are key to high quality programs and services. Unique across Canada, this credential offers an excellent curriculum facilitated by leaders in the family literacy field. All courses are available online.

The Vancouver Board of Education

Literacy K – 12

There are 74 elementary schools, 17 elementary annexes and 18 secondary schools serving approximately 56,000 students in the Vancouver School District. In addition, there are over 60 district programs connected to the schools that address a wide range of student needs from enrichment to remedial.

The Board of Education annually submits to the Ministry an Achievement Contract which we call our “District Plan for Student Success”. The overall goal of that plan is success for each student with a focus on literacy. Specific areas of ongoing work and adjustments were identified as important to supporting success in the classroom and for each student in literacy:

- expanding early intervention
- continuing to ensure school are safe and supportive environments for children to work in
- continuing to focus on strong relationships with parents and caregivers
- differentiating instruction for all students according to their learning and behaviour needs, including making assessments for learning part of each classroom
- providing additional supports for Aboriginal students who are at risk
- implementing technology to support learning
- providing collaborative professional development funds for teachers to access in their work to support learners

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement

The Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement provides direction for the district focusing on three main goal areas: Belonging, Mastery, Culture and Community. The goals align with

the district initiatives strengthening literacy skills, social and emotional learning conditions and using assessment for learning to ensure positive educational experiences for all learners. Action Plans have been developed through consultation with the Aboriginal Communities to provide a framework and a shared commitment.

School Libraries

Teacher librarians continue to be integral to the literacy goals both within the school community and the community at large. Teacher librarians contribute to the development and promotion of literacy in many ways. They work collaboratively with classroom teachers to develop programs that build in literacy, promote reading for pleasure and information, integrate strategies to build multi-literacies in students, and engage in and support school-based, school-wide and district initiatives that promote literacy.

Over this school year, we began to move to a model of a Learning Commons. This is both a real place and a virtual space. It is characterized by flexibility enabled by its movable furnishings, wirelessness, a variety of print and digital resources and up-to-date technologies, 24/7 access to resources and assistance, sufficient allocation of time for inquiry-based learning, as well as a service-oriented, tech-savvy, collaborative and qualified teacher-librarian.

The Learning Commons represents teaching and learning that is being transformed and is transformative, innovative, and responsive to the needs of the community. It is a common place for information that supports learning and differentiation to meet the unique and personal needs of all students and teachers and every classroom. The Learning Commons provides accessible resources and custom-designed learning opportunities that enable students and teachers to develop sophisticated information and technology skills.

We believe this new vision of school library will enhance the learning of all students and support literacy in its broadest sense. Over the next school we will expand on this work. Some funds have been set aside to support the work of Teacher Librarians in this direction.

Early Learning

The VSB maintained a strong commitment to supporting early learning in the district this past year. In addition, there were new initiatives:

- Welcome to Kindergarten in 72 elementary schools and annexes
- A pilot project with the VPL as an extension of the Welcome to Kindergarten program
- Ready Set Learn in every school
- Successful application for a new Strong Start in Strathcona
- A move to transition the other 18 Strong Start Centres to a direct service delivery model where the facilitators are Vancouver School District employees
- The reinstatement of an Early Learning Coordinator

Adult Literacy

The VBE continues to operate six Adult Learning Centres in Vancouver providing adult learners with educational opportunities ranging from beginner literacy levels in English, Math

and Computer Technology to high school completion. The six Centres provide courses to an estimated 7,000 students annually. The student population reflects the cultural, linguistic and economic diversity of the city and the students' ages range from sixteen to over seventy-five years old.

The Adult Education program that takes place in partnership with ten elementary schools in the District continues to provide access to adult education to the adult family members of the students attending the school.

Vancouver Public Library

Children's & Youth Services

The Vancouver Public Library is committed to advancing literacy and lifelong learning for all Vancouver's citizens. Children's and Youth Services at VPL focuses on developing those literacy skills that enable children to grow into adulthood with the capacity to participate in the social, economic, political, cultural and intellectual life of the city. Such a commitment is best achieved in partnership with other community groups and organizations. Working with the Vancouver Board of Education helps both the VBE and the VPL achieve their goals in the community.

VPL programs and services are the building blocks for strong communities, a vibrant society and an engaged citizenship. VPL has a strong tradition of serving children and teens throughout the city with innovative programs and culturally relevant services. Committed staff serve the children and teens with dedication, knowledge and compassion. VPL's collections reflect the City's diverse cultural heritage.

VPL provides a variety of programs and services throughout many types of locations with a multitude of partners. Literacy based storytimes are offered at Foodbanks, neighbourhood houses and in public housing as well as in library branches. Community partnerships are formal and informal and include Vancouver Coastal Health, Aboriginal service providers, Qmunity, BC Housing, YWCA, and, importantly, the Vancouver Board of Education. With community partners the library supports initiatives such as the Early Years Community Program and online Teen Reading Clubs. Our Storybus can be seen at local community events, parades and civic celebrations. With the VBE, branch libraries deliver programs for Summer Reading Club, Grade Seven Library Skills, Welcome to Kindergarten, and Ready Set Learn. Children's librarians visit schools for a wide variety of events, and participate in Strong Start programs and Neighbourhood Centres of Learning & Development.

Today teens have new virtual and physical spaces throughout the Library system. At teens.vpl.ca youth can share reviews, enjoy blog entries and make Library purchasing suggestions. Vancouver teens and the Library's Teen Advisory Group (TAG), comprised of VBE and other students, provided input for the library website's redesign and for a new teen section at the Central Library. There are also dedicated teen areas at the new Mount Pleasant and Kensington branches as well as at Oakridge, Renfrew, Kerrisdale and Britannia branches,

to name a few. Plans are also underway to offer a teen area at the new Terry Salman Branch scheduled to open in the fall of 2011. VPL also provides outreach to non-traditional users, such as teens at the Broadway Youth Resource Centre.

Children's

Programs and services at VPL help prepare students for kindergarten and for school. Innovative programs for babies, toddlers and preschoolers include Storytime Kits, Mother Goose, Man in the Moon (male caregivers and children), as well as a newly developed program for parents and children with speech and language delays called the Language Fun Storytime. In this program, VPL partners with Vancouver Coastal Health Speech Language Pathologists.

Children's and Teen Services have the experience and capacity to touch the lives of significant numbers of Vancouver's children. In 2010 over 7,500 children signed up for Summer Reading Club. VPL strives to meet every child in the city and have every child benefit from an ongoing relationship with the library.

The Early Years Team Community Project

Many families in our communities are isolated. Barriers such as poverty and health issues have impacts on families' daily lives, making activities that some of us take for granted simply impossible to provide for their children. The Early Years Team places vulnerable families at the top of their priority list. Early Years librarians work in community settings and are uniquely equipped to meet the needs of families who need extra support in their children's early years. For example, the team participates in a weekly storytime program at YWCA Munroe House, a shelter for mothers who are leaving abusive relationships. The team also runs two storytime programs at family food banks and a number of BC Housing complexes. These sessions include healthy food, arts and crafts, as well as storytimes. Feedback from participants and partners has been universally positive.

Team members are frequently asked to contribute to the professional development of family support workers, family childcare providers, and early childhood educators via a number of interactive workshops on topics such as early literacy, bilingualism, diversity and Aboriginal resources.

Alligator Pie

In 2010 VPL received outside funding to deliver a series of literacy based, library storytimes to children who are in childcare programs. Alligator Pie will launch in 2011 and will focus on children in childcare programs who do not have the opportunity to attend and benefit from library storytimes. Emphasis will be placed on reaching Vancouver's most vulnerable children in high needs neighbourhoods, specifically the Downtown East Side and Strathcona communities.

Teens

Teen Talent

There is no doubt that Vancouver teens have talent.

Two exciting Library contests in 2010 showed just how much talent there is among teen artists, filmmakers, writers, actors, dancers, computer programmers and musicians.

In October, the fifth annual Express Yourself Bookmark Contest invited young artists aged 13 to 18 years to use their creative flair to design a bookmark inspired by French philosopher Jules de Gaultier's quote: Imagination is the only weapon in the war against reality.

By far, the Library's most popular contest for teens, hundreds of extraordinary entries were received from across the city. In November, winners in two categories were selected based on creativity and artistic merit: Anita Sun (age 13) took top prize in the Best Hand-Drawn design and Michelle Zheng (age 16) won for Best-Computer Generated design. At the request of the Library's Teen Advisory Group, two runners-up were also chosen in each category: Minju Roh and Jasper Wong (Hand-Drawn) and Yvonne Liu and Danielle Ragas (Computer-Generated). Thanks to support from the Friends of the Vancouver Public Library, the winners received a cash prize of \$250 each and their winning bookmarks were professionally printed and distributed to all 22 VPL locations across the city.

Young videographers also competed in 2010 with public libraries across the Lower Mainland sponsoring the first Reel Teen Video Contest. Aspiring directors, aged 12-19, were encouraged to showcase their filmmaking chops by creating a short YouTube video trailer to promote their favourite book. Contestants competed at their home libraries and then the top three from each moved on to the Lower Mainland competition.

Tag! You Could Be It

Adults are not always the best people to determine what teens want so the Library's Teen Advisory Group (TAG) works with Teen Services staff so that collections, programs and services for teens reflect what teens really want and need.

Throughout the year, TAG members accompany Teen Services staff to purchase books, CDs, DVDs and even video games. Programs are also created just for teens with their input and include video game tournaments, author readings, drawing workshops, anime film festivals and graphic novel book clubs.

Check us out at <http://teens.vpl.ca> or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/vancouverpubliclibrary#!/TeensAtV>

Writing & Book Camp

Who Should Come

We all know kids who keep diaries, write and illustrate their own imaginative stories, create homemade novels and feverishly devour works by their favourite authors at school and at home. Vancouver Public Library's Writing & Book Camp was created for just such young bibliophiles to encourage them to become lifelong readers and writers. At the Writing & Book Camp, young people spend a whole week writing, reading and in conversation with some of Canada's best authors writing young adult fiction and non-fiction and experts in almost every aspect of the writing field. The goal of the Writing & Book Camp is to connect children and teens who have a passion for reading and writing with well-known authors and illustrators in a fun, creative workshop environment where they can develop their skills. This camp is for enthusiastic readers and eager writers who love writing, who have questions to ask and who want their work recognized – people who feel the need to read and write!

How the Writing & Book Camp Started

When the Canadian Book Camp started 9 years ago, it was the first of its kind in Canada. It was founded in 2000 through a partnership with Vancouver Public Library, Simon Fraser University's Master of Publishing Program, publishers, authors, illustrators and literacy advocates with the aim of connecting book-loving kids to Canadian writer mentors. Since 2001 the camp has been a project of the Vancouver Public Library and in 2010 the name changed to the Writing & Book Camp.

Why is it the best camp for young readers and writers

The Writing & Book Camp exposes young readers and writers to a variety of authors, books, writing tools and members of the publishing industry while giving them opportunities to express themselves through the written word. Working with a core group of experts and authors, the camp offers interactive sessions designed to pique young people's interests and develop works-in-progress. It also provides a wealth of resources to allow young writers to pursue individual projects outside of camp itself. Programming exposes campers to a range of author opinions and genres while providing strategies that foster imaginative expression of their unique visions. The Writing & Book Camp is Canadian, inclusive, non-competitive, inspired, fun and youth-centred while respecting each camper's goals and work.

The Library's Great Resources

Campers also learn how treasured a resource the Library is for writers. Library staff conduct tours of the Literature & Social Science department that houses extensive writing and research resources, children's and teen librarians deliver book talks about the current crop of popular books for kids and teens and campers can access Library computer labs to research and write. The 2011 camp is scheduled for August 8th – 12th.

Examples of other Literacy In-roads

Children's:

- Promotion of a low literacy-high interest series - the Hank Zipzer series – Britannia Branch Children's Librarian and the Britannia Elementary Teacher Librarian in Fall 2010;
- Invited Frontier College to do a "reading tent" inside the library in of Summer 2010
- Grade 9 get carded/books talks to teens at Britannia Secondary (2011)
- At Champlain Branch, staff facilitated a "Ready to Read" Program run by the Killarney Youth group run out of the community center. This group approached us for help with picking appropriate level reading materials and for library space and time.
- The "Ready to Read" program is a buddy system program which has older youth (vetted by the community center) help younger children (grade 1-2) with their reading. The younger children all have problems with their reading skills. The Killarney Youth Group runs the program once a week over a number of weeks in the Champlain meeting room that we provide for free. The Children's librarian helps by picking books at the appropriate reading level for the kids to choose from as well as giving an introduction to the library and the occasional story time as requested.

Adult Programs:

- Computer instruction - Britannia Library partnered with Britannia Secondary's Community Education Department's CAP program to offer one-to-one computer instructions to the public from Fall 2010 to Spring 2011. (Cathy do we have data on this?)

ESL programs:

- VPL hosts a number of ESL programs for adults including: ESL learning labs led by the Vancouver Community College are held in five branches and at the central library. Several ESL conversation programs or ESL book clubs were underway in collaboration with community partners such as Mosaic, Success or Neighbourhood Houses. These were held at central library, Firehall, Fraserview, South Hill and Britannia branch.

Healthy Living Promoted at the Alley Health Fair

Thanks to funding from the VPL Foundation, in mid September 2010, full-day Alley Health Fair filled the area beside and behind the Carnegie Centre at Main and Hastings Streets.

Rather than providing Downtown Eastside residents with pamphlets, recommended websites and other written material, staff of the Library's Carnegie Reading Room worked with

community partners to transform the sidewalks and alleys around the Carnegie Centre into a hub of information about healthy living possibilities. Over time, because of how Library staff work in this community, they have found this approach more successful than traditional library service since residents often share information by word-of-mouth.

Because there is lower-than-average print and computer literacy in this community, therefore, websites and leaflets aren't always helpful or accessible.

The Downtown Eastside is often called Canada's poorest postal code and in order to share interactive health information with participants, market-like stalls lined the sidewalk and provided services like point-of-care HIV, blood sugar and blood pressure testing. Students provided massages, haircuts and even ear acupuncture.

Many Downtown Eastside residents experience isolation and loneliness and for some a pet is their closest companion. The SPCA brought information about dog care, much-appreciated free dog food and even a dog for people to pet.

The Downtown Eastside is home to many Aboriginal people and local Aboriginal drum groups provided music. In keeping with Aboriginal tradition, Vancouver Coastal Health's Aboriginal Wellness program smudged participants and helped them make tobacco bundles.

Easily accessible information is often all that prevents Downtown Eastside residents from accessing some of the services they need so at the Alley Health Fair participants were able to sign up for welfare, enroll on the BC Housing list and obtain information on a wide range of health conditions from Alzheimer's disease to Hepatitis C. The Vancouver Network of Drug Users (VANDU) provided support and information for drug users and a number of groups that provide services and information for sex-trade workers were also present. As in the Library, all activities were free and open to everyone.

Aboriginal Story Teller

Henry Charles is the last surviving member of the Musqueam Nation to have lived in the endowment lands adjacent to the University of British Columbia.

"I gained a rich knowledge of my culture from the time I spent living there... with my grandparents", says Mr. Charles whose Musqueam name is tecelgen, which translates as porcupine.

Today, Mr. Charles is a Musqueam Speaker and Aboriginal Greeter and he has welcomed numerous visitors and dignitaries to traditional Musqueam territories speaking his native language.

Vancouver Public Library created the First Nations Storyteller in Residence program to enhance and establish new relationships with Aboriginal and First Nations communities in Vancouver, and to make the Library a more-inclusive and welcoming place for people of

Aboriginal and First Nations heritage. It is the first such program at a public library in British Columbia and only the second in Canada after Regina Public Library.

The First Nations Storyteller-in-Residence Program is generously supported by The Vancouver Foundation and the Vancouver Public Library Foundation.

Conclusion

Members of the Coordinating Committee have met recently to celebrate the literacy initiatives in the various communities of Vancouver. Comment about the nature of the work, the breadth of the work, and the reach of the work were noted. Three years ago as this work began, the group had only imagined the possibilities. To see the communities reach this level of involvement and support has been remarkable. The need for stability in the funding will allow expansion of the programming. The partnerships with the School District and the Library have grown through this process. The links with the community have been extremely important and valuable for the growth of literacy and for other important engagements.