

# SCHOOL DISTRICT #81 FORT NELSON

## District Literacy Plan June 2011



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### Introduction

The Fort Nelson Board of Education recognizes the importance of improving access to literacy programs for all. *“As a community of learners we embrace opportunities to build successful futures.”* (S.D. #81 Mission Statement) The District Literacy Plan is a statement of our commitment to work collaboratively with key community stakeholders to improve literacy within the Fort Nelson community.

Action planning has continued to focus on enhancing and integrating our work on the four pillars of Literacy: Early Literacy Success for Young Children, Reading Success in Schools, Reading Success for Adults and Reading Success for Aboriginal People.

### Reflecting on the 2010/11 Plan:

This year our priority has continued to be to increase outreach, engagement and awareness in our community. The Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society has had programs at their in-town location, in partnership with Northern Lights College, through the Fort Nelson Aboriginal Friendship Society, Family Development Society and at Prophet River First Nations. Special events have taken place at the Fort Nelson Public Library, Chalo Independent School at Fort Nelson First Nation, Phoenix Theatre and S.D. # 81 Fort Nelson schools.

One of our biggest challenges continues to be increasing and maintaining participation in literacy programs and events. We have continued to be attentive in seeking input before scheduling times and locations of events/programs. This information is obtained by having participants complete an evaluation form after any major literacy event. We have also continued to promote awareness of literacy services being offered in our community by having a presence at many community events and by jointly coordinating events with other agencies and service providers.

The Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society continues to grow and expand on its many programs, engagement and awareness activities. As a result of this growth, the Society moved to a larger location this year. This movement in itself was an awareness activity as the new location offers more visibility while providing much needed space for tutoring and programs.



We continue to use participation rates as part of our evaluation along with Community & Adult Learning Program Benchmarks (CALP) as well as intake and exit assessments. Our schools continue to use a combination of provincial, district and school data that includes: Benchmarks, DRA, Yopp-Singer, FSA and Provincial exam results, Smart Writing and Great Leaps data.

The Literacy Outreach Coordinator position, as part of the Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society, has allowed for increased collaboration with community partners in helping our focus on the four pillars of success.

The literacy programs offered on-site at Prophet River First Nations is an initiative that is promoting family literacy and increasing literacy for vulnerable learners. This year Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society and School District #81 are working together to provide extra tutoring services to Prophet River students attending Fort Nelson Secondary School.

Participation in regular Community Round Table meetings and Northern Rockies Children and Family Action Committee meetings continues to build collaborative and positive working relationships, develops a better understanding of community perspectives and literacy needs and increases awareness of literacy programs provided by organizations throughout the Fort Nelson community.

We are very proud of the many literacy events, on-going programs and awareness events undertaken this year. The following are 2010/11 highlights.

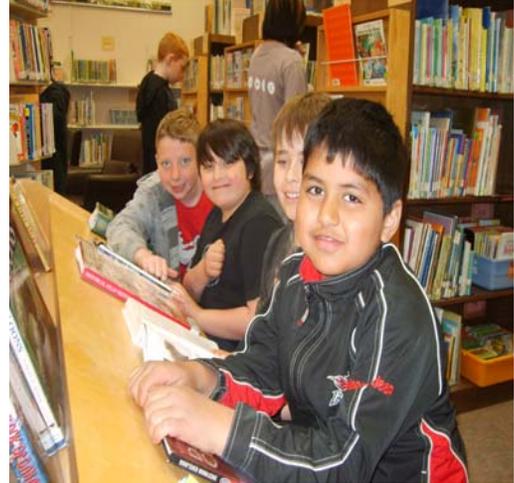
- The week of October 25<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated Wordfest. With the support of EnCana Corporation, Wordfest brought witty crime novelist, William Deverell, artist extraordinaire, Genni Gunn, beloved children's author Hazel Hutchins, and Objibway storyteller and accomplished journalist, Drew Hayden Taylor to eager Fort Nelson audiences at School District #81 Schools and Northern Lights College as well as to community events that supported the Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society.



- The Fort Nelson Women's Weekend took place on February 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 with support from the Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society. Three literacy workshops were included this year to provide and enhance planned engagement, networking and confidence building. This event is designed to provide a safe and

nurturing environment for women to explore their potential and learn new skills while building relationships with other women in the community.

- On January 27, 2011, we celebrated Family Literacy Day by “playing for literacy – active reading” with elementary and preschool students in our community. The Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society staff led community members, staff and students from the School District and Chalo School in reading and doing actions to two Robert Munsch books. Fun activities included Word Relays and Word Bingo. The goal of Family Literacy Day is to promote literacy in families and encouraging reading as a bonding activity as well as an educational activity.



- Northern Lights College’s Career and College Prep continues to offer continuous intake literacy courses for adults, which includes computer literacy.
- In-town tutoring for adults, ESL and skill upgrading continued to be available through the Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society. An ESL Conversation Group is on-going with up to 6 participants interacting at one time. As well, a pilot program has just been implemented to offer job seeking mentorship to new ESL community members.
- Family Adult Literacy Programs were held both in town and at Prophet River First Nations. These programs are designed to enhance the lives of families by embedding literacy into activities that take into consideration the diversity of our community. We also create awareness and promote additional adult education opportunities available through community partners.
- The Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual International Adult Learner’s Week celebration at the Phoenix Theatre. An awards ceremony was held to recognize learner success in many categories. A highlight of this year’s ceremony was a play titled, “Half Full” that was enacted by the Career and College Prep class at Northern Lights College. This was a powerful production highlighting the emotional highs and lows of people upgrading due to loss of work, lack of reading skills and/or lack of success in high school settings.
- S.D. #81 Fort Nelson continues to use the Great Leaps Reading Program with students from grade 1 to 12. Students practice reading fluency with an Educational Assistant on this weekly program. Many students have continue to make “Great Leaps” in their reading and gone up many reading levels. The school district continues to research and implement interventions to support student achievement. This year they were happy to once again achieve top scores on the grade 4

provincial Reading Assessment, FSA, as well as on the grade 7 assessment. A new Attendance Policy was implemented for second semester at FNSS and we are excited to see if attendance and therefore achievement will show improvement.

- Sponsored in part by Children First and Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society Traditional Parenting and Storytelling workshops were held at the Fort Nelson Aboriginal Friendship Centre and at Prophet River First Nations.
- Science World came to Fort Nelson sponsored by Imperial Oil. Science stations and shows were set up at Northern Lights College and enjoyed by students and community members. School District #81 and Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society were part of the action committee in charge of planning and promoting this event.
- The Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society promoted awareness through assisting in the organization, planning, advertising and support of many community events and committees including: Northern Health's first Fort Nelson Health Fair, the Fort Nelson Social Planning Council and the Preschool Health Round Up.
- Ready Set Learn continues to be held for preschoolers in all of our elementary schools to engage parents in play and literacy activities they can use at home.
- Fort Nelson's EDI (Early Development Inventory) scores show less vulnerability for kindergarten students. The director of the Fort Nelson Children and Families Action Committee, The Fort Nelson Community Literacy Executive Director and representatives from Northern Lights College, School District #81 and the Fort Nelson Family Development Society attended a video conference to discuss EDI results and community issues and plans with participants from UBC.



## Thinking about the 2011/12 Year:

The Fort Nelson Literacy Society's Strategic Plan is aligned with our Community Plan that was developed in 2005.

Long Term Goals:

- Have appreciation for and build upon the strengths of existing



learning programs and resources that allow all community members to become literate and develop enthusiasm for lifelong learning.

- Create learning programs and resources to support youth and adults who are not well served by the mainstream learning programs.
- Embed learning and literacy activities in all community settings, for example: workplace, senior's complex, recreation pursuits, youth programs, health programs, churches.

For 2011/2012:

Fort Nelson is projecting future growth due to the Horn River Basin shale gas development. At the present time, much of the Horn River Basin development consists of camps, two hours or more out of town, with many workers flown in from Alberta, other provinces and communities. In light of this increase in transiency and potential economic growth, a community Social Planning Council has been developed in Fort Nelson. Participation in this council will be key in helping provide solutions to current and potential social problems that may arise in our community. This council will allow the community to pool our resource and expertise in order to maintain a safe and healthy community in Fort Nelson. On April 28<sup>th</sup>, a facilitated meeting was held to begin the development of a community plan.

We are looking forward to continued partnering and collaboration with the Fort Nelson Community Literacy Society, Northern Lights College, and the many community partners working to enhance literacy in Fort Nelson.

