

School District 87 (Stikine)

District Literacy Plan

2011-2012



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Welcome to the Stikine

1. District and community context and demographics:

Covering an area of over 188,000 square kilometres, the Stikine region boasts several of the largest and most significant parks in Canada. Here can be found the mighty Stikine, Taku and Liard rivers, three of the last free flowing wilderness rivers in North America. The Stikine River has created the dramatic Grand Canyon of the Stikine -- a major geological wonder. Gorges up to 300 m (948 ft.) deep have been carved through sandstone, granite, and volcanic rock. The Stikine river basin, passing through two countries, abounds with a great variety of wildlife which still coexists in a natural balance between predator and prey.

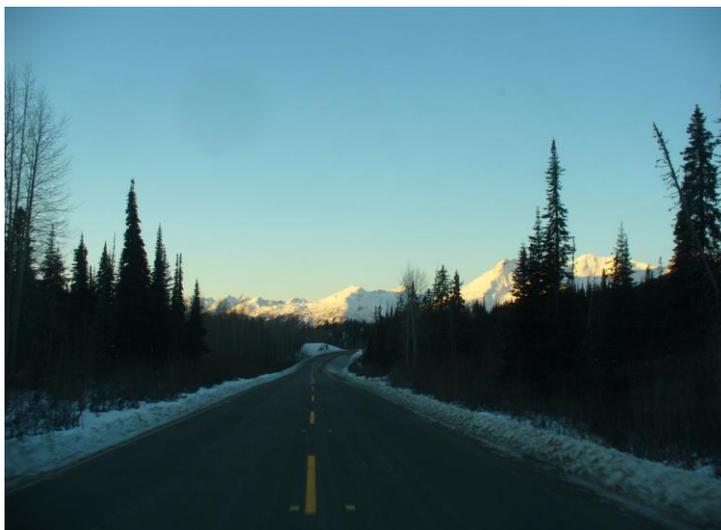
The Tahltan, Tlingit and Kaska Peoples are the original First Nations of the region. The Tahltan traded their goods frequently using the coastal Tlingit tribes as middlemen. Today the Tahltan people are activity involved in managing the resources of this region, most specifically in the communities of Telegraph Creek and Dease Lake. The Tlingit First Nation is prominent in Atlin, while the Kaska First Nation populates the Lower Post community. Each community is distinct within the District and offers opportunities to celebrate cultures.

We live in a beautiful rural and remote area. Our small communities (the largest has a population of about 350 people) are spread throughout this vast region which stretches north to the Yukon and west to Alaska. The trip from Atlin, starting at the furthest north-west point to Lower Post to Dease Lake to Telegraph Creek, the furthest south-west point, is distanced by almost 1500 kilometres. Leaving from Dease Lake, day trips to the other communities are virtually impossible.

Our school population is composed mainly of First Nation students. Hunting, fishing and gathering are important to community and family life. Leaders in the First Nations community are working hard to maintain and promote traditional languages and culture.

The importance of Literacy is understood. There is a strong desire for education. Parents want their children to do well at school and readiness is a key factor. Grandparents and extended families play a huge role in the success of young people and given time, support and a variety of opportunities, students can and do succeed; thus, lending to the importance of community literacy development.

Current Adult literacy programs are extremely limited with a Reading Center in Dease Lake, a community volunteer-run Library in Atlin and a Tahltan Band Office Library being developed in Telegraph Creek and Lower Post. The resurgence of Northern Lights College in the region is promising as a partner to improve literacy for all community members, young and elder alike.

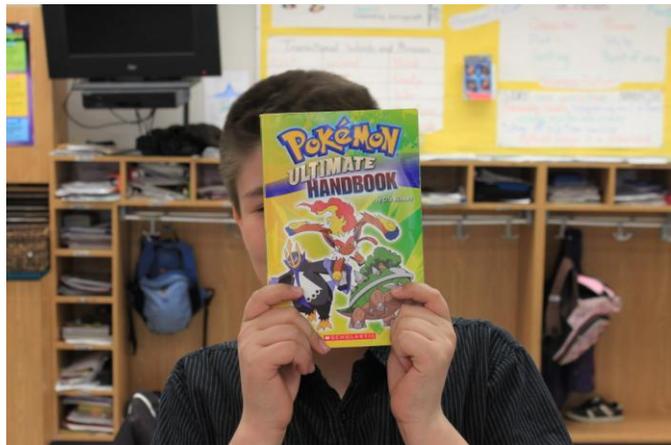


A combination of efforts by the School District to address K through 12 literacy needs and the Literacy Now Task Forces addressing community literacy will indeed increase the capacity of communities to improve literacy throughout the Stikine areas that have active Literacy Now Task Forces, currently, limited to Atlin and Dease Lake.

2. School District 87 (Stikine) commitment to Literacy

School District 87 is clearly committed to literacy development, especially for the school-aged students of the Stikine. While the primary objective is K-12 education, the District supports the efforts of each Literacy Now Task Force and recognizes the importance of its participation to assist with community literacy programs that address the needs of all community members, youngsters and elders, alike. Given the urgency of improving K-12 academic achievement and meeting needs of the whole child as outlined in our current District Achievement Contract, we will continue to concentrate on supporting our schools' populations first. At the same time we recognize our responsibility and are committed to supporting literacy throughout our communities and will continue to support literacy initiatives in whatever practical manner we can with a focus on school readiness.

Our **District Literacy Plan (DLP)** is simple. We must foster growth in all areas for all our K-12 students, school-aged and adult to improve our completion rates. Our public schools offer the educational setting for school-aged students, while the Satellite Program assists students of school age who are unable to attend school and adult students engaged in the completion of their Grade 12 Dogwood or adult equivalent. District efforts must provide opportunities for all staff to



further develop skills to meet the vast and varied needs of all students. This will be accomplished through the successful implementation of our District Achievement Contract. Our capacity to support a District Literacy Plan that extends beyond K-12 is limited; however, we are committed to maintain connections with all agencies and community organizations and actively participate in initiatives that promote a wide spectrum of literacy development in all communities, whether a Literacy Now Task Force exists, or not. This is the focus for our current DLP. We will participate in all Literacy Now Task Force meetings whenever possible and provide ideas, support, guidance and sponsorship. We are also committed to strengthening individual school and community relationships by acting as liaison between partners and supporting activities that strengthen this aspect of public education. We are prepared to coordinate Inter-agency meetings in each community to increase awareness of all available opportunities in each community and promote literacy development. Finally, we are committed to meet the goals of our Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement that address the whole child, socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. Again, the achievement of these goals will, most often, occur through our schools.

3. The Year in Review

Currently, the **Dease Lake** Task Force is in transition for stewardship, and does not have a Literacy Outreach Co-ordinator (LOC) or an active Board. Events during the summer will dictate the continuation of the Chairperson, as well as other Task Force members. Even without these structures, the District sought support to provide nominal scholarships for this year's Dease Lake graduates and the purchase of books for families with children age 0 to 6. The District will re-establish communication with all partners in the fall in attempts to support re-establishing an active Task Force.

Atlin has had a successful year by sponsoring and supporting many activities for all ages. After school programs, weekend workshops and a weekly newspaper promoting events were all a part of the LOC's responsibilities. Unfortunately, the LOC stepped down and the Task Force membership stands at two. Again, the District hopes to support efforts to re-establish structures to sustain this year's efforts and results.

Telegraph Creek has not engaged in the process to establish a Literacy Now Task Force; however, efforts by the school have enriched Literacy in the school and beyond to the community. A music camp was held in conjunction with visiting Denetia School from Lower Post. Community events have brought community members, families of students and elders into the school to add to the development of Tahltan Language and Culture. School staff members enhance relationships in the community and foster involvement with sports and recreational activities as well. District support for reading in the school has seen recent improvement continue.

Lower Post has not engaged in the process to establish a Literacy Now Task Force. The community has joined together with Denetia School as the catalyst for improved literacy. Community members are active in the regular routines at school and in enrichment activities related to Language and Culture development. Integration of curricular programs and First Nations' traditions occur daily. Cabins have been built for outdoor experiences, field trips to experience traditional ways have occurred monthly. Community use of school facilities and participation in events has become a part of the school and community culture. This approach has provided literacy activities for the whole community.



Iskut maintains a private Band school and many students choose to attend Dease Lake School after grade 8 or 9. There are some students who endure the 60 minute one way bus ride who attend the elementary grades as well. This year far greater attention has been given to building relationships between Dease Lake School and the Iskut community, as well as between the two communities themselves. Teachers have travelled to Iskut for parent-teacher interviews. Transition meetings were held in the spring for students coming to Dease Lake in the fall. Regular

communication lines have been established between the District and the Educational Management at the Iskut Band Office. Conversations continue to focus on meeting the needs of school aged children from Iskut. The District also provides Satellite Distance Learning opportunities for adult aged students from Iskut through the District Satellite program.

The School District has maintained contact with each community, regardless of Literacy Now status. Inter-agency contacts occur with coordinated efforts to provide opportunities for members of each community. Response Ability Pathways workshops have been sponsored in Dease Lake and Atlin and for all District teachers. Partnerships were struck to provide workshops for parents on autism and child behaviour. The Stikine Holistic Working Group has engaged in conversations with the District to identify ways to connect and support initiatives to meet community needs. The District Enhancement Steering Committee is committed to the goals of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (EA) and recognizes the importance of literacy for all community members. By integrated EA goal attainment within school through the use of community members, all partners will benefit. The District held its first annual Summer Solstice Run in Dease Lake and was pleased to see so many community members participate. Participants of all ages walked, ran, biked 5, 10 or 21 km.

4. Communication

Communication has been vital to the development and success of each Literacy Now Task Force and operations.

The District will maintain and enhance lines of communication and continue to participate within its means with the regional and local Literacy Coordinators and maintain active membership in the established Literacy Now Task Forces and all partners in each community.

Continued efforts to improve Telegraph Creek connectivity will continue. In the meantime, the District has improved its technology hardware capacity to connect people from all corners of the District.

5. Summary Reflections

Student performance and achievement data for the Stikine indicates an urgency to attend to the academic needs of the K-12 students in our public school system. This is paramount for the District. At the same time, we continue to understand the importance of the community to help raise a child and school readiness as a major contributor to student success. Social and emotional needs of students have to be met as well in order to support their learning in any setting. A partnership with each community that fosters literacy in its broadest sense and reaches out to all members of the community may ultimately enhance K-12 learning. We have not been able to accomplish this fully, due to the academic urgency District-wide.

Each school in School District 87 has been committed to literacy development. Partnerships with community agencies and members have enhanced this commitment. For Literacy Now Task Force communities, we have seen the potential for further partnerships and initiatives. Investigation and analyses of community resources has strengthened the chances for further partnerships. The District expects to continue to build connections and relationships with these resources and the people behind them. The District will continue to liaison and discuss needs with agencies in each community and support initiatives whenever possible. We will also continue to support early childhood opportunities.

The re-activation of the Northern Lights College campuses will enhance opportunities for adults in many of our communities. The District will maintain its capacity for servicing the local learning needs of the adults in Dease Lake and Iskut. We will continue to offer limited support for adult students or students who cannot attend their designated high schools. This support has proven to be valuable and the relaxed time expectations work in favour of the students who have very busy lives.



The District will continue its efforts to build relationships and take advantage of community people and resources that can support literacy development in each community. When travelling to the communities, efforts will be made to have constructive conversations about moving literacy forward at all levels in the community for all partners. Active participation in current Literacy Now Task Force meetings and liaison with LOCs will continue whenever possible. Further relationships need to be built with employers, such as the Tahltan Nation Development Corporation to increase literacy awareness and opportunities for employees and future employees. The District will also continue conversations with those responsible for technology services in education to emphasize the need for quality service to our rural, remote and geographically isolated communities.

School District 87 understands the value of community and the power a collective effort can have to improve literacy at all levels. The District will continue to collaborate and explore ways to increase opportunities for school and community. The District will continue to commit all plausible resources to enhance literacy, first and foremost with K-12 students, and secondly with our communities at large.



6. Goal Attainment Summary for DLP 2010-2011

Goal for 2010-2011	Actions	Results
1. Improve Literacy in K-12 System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of District Resources for literacy • In-service for formative assessment practices • In-service for 21st century learning, planning, learning cycles and personalized instruction • Distance learning opportunities for primary and math teachers • Contracted consultants • Improved use of assessment tools in Reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased circulation of literacy resources throughout District • School-wide assessments show improvements in reading and targeted areas for reading improvement
2. Improve opportunities for Literacy development in communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact with Community agencies and to share ideas • Literacy Now activities (see Atlin CLP) • RAP training • Autism awareness workshop • Atlin ‘Whisper’ publication • Books for Families initiative • Scholarships for post-secondary texts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened relations with First Nations office personnel • Increased awareness of services and events through publications • Increased understanding of autism and child behaviour
3. Provide community wide growth opportunities that may enhance Literacy development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement signed and Steering Committee established • Trades and Outdoors Careers courses offered and supported by community mentors • RAP training in two communities • Contact with First Nation Education managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual report reflects many activities to meet EA goals • Awareness of Circle of Courage and understanding human behaviour and thinking has improved – common language is used in conversations



Stikine Planning Protocol

District Literacy Plan for 2011-2012 School Year

Person Responsible: Gerry Brennan

SCHOOL GOALS			
	Goal 1: K-12 Literacy	Goal 2: School Readiness	
Importance to Success	High	High	
PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS			
Much more than expected (+2)	All students fully meet expectations in ELA	Partner involvement in literacy opportunities has increased	
More than expected (+1)	All students are minimally meeting expectations in ELA	All partners are aware of literacy opportunities with increased participation	
Expected (0)	Improve Literacy in K-12 System	Improve school readiness through opportunities for Family Literacy development	
Less than expected (-1)	Literacy skills stagnate for majority of students	Literacy opportunities stagnate	
Much less than expected (-2)	Literacy skills decrease	Less literacy opportunities are available in communities	

Adapted from Goal Attainment Scaling (Kiresuk, Smith & Cardillo, 1993).

Action Plan

Goal 1:

Improve Literacy in K-12 System

Who: School District 87

When: 2011-2012 School Year

Where: All Schools

How: Strategies for Implementation:

-Successful implementation of staff development to further develop instructional skills related to literacy development through series of workshops on planning, assessment, reading and writing across the curricular areas

-Increased literacy resources for each school – assessment resources, Library resources, District Resource Center development

-Attainment of Achievement Contract Goals related to Literacy

-Create opportunities for Professional Learning Communities among teachers

-Provide parent workshops on 21st century learning

Strategies for Assessment:

-District wide assessments in reading and writing

-Classroom Assessments

-Monitor resources inventory and circulation of DRC

-Success in Achievement Contract with Literacy related goals

Goal 2:

Improve school readiness through opportunities for Family Literacy development

Who: School District 87

When: 2011-2012 School Year

Where: All communities

How: Strategies for Implementation:

- Champion, coordinate and participate in Interagency Meetings
- Collaborate with partners to coordinate literacy events when plausible
- Establish network for sharing correspondence related to Literacy initiatives
- Sponsor community workshops related to literacy and school readiness
- Liaise with Northern Lights College to promote adult education opportunities that focus on Family Literacy (CALP)
- Participate in active Literacy Now Task Forces
- Communicate with Literacy Now LOCs
- Promote the use of School Newsletters to share information and opportunities related to Literacy for the school's Community
- Promote school staff participation in Interagency Meetings
- Expand Summer Solstice Run participation and volunteers

Strategies for Assessment:

- Monitor participation in Literacy opportunities
- Monitor number of opportunities that occur
- Attendance and level of involvement at Interagency Meetings
- Attendance and level of involvement with Literacy Now Task Forces
- Monitor communication and involvement with LOCs