

District Literacy Plan 2012-2013
SD59 Peace River South
Updated July 2013



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Board of Education on Literacy:

The Peace River South Board of Education realizes the importance of “Engaging each Learner” within a personalized learning agenda. Foundational to the engagement of each learner is the recognition that a strong foundation in literacy skills will provide the underpinnings of a community literate in reading, writing, numeracy skills and the process skills necessary to allow each student to realize his or her full potential. The District Literacy Plan is a commitment of collaboration with key community stakeholders to improve literacy for all.

DISTRICT LITERACY PLAN

Defining Literacy:

For the purposes of this document, we accept the broad definition of literacies provided by 2010 Legacies Now: Community Literacy Planning Guide.

“As the world becomes more complex, so too does the definition of literacy. It is evolving from a narrow definition to a broader view. Where once literacy was thought of as encompassing only basic reading and writing, perhaps at a certain grade level, we now accept a more complex and dynamic view of literacy – as enabling participation in family, work and community life. It is made up of essential and transferable social, cultural and academic practices and understandings, involving not only the communication skills of reading, writing and mathematics, but also problem solving, decision-making, technology and social skills. Literacy enables us to listen, view, communicate, represent and evaluate knowledge in many ways. The more literate we become, the greater our understanding of our world.”

Literacies enable us to communicate, represent and evaluate knowledge in multiple ways. The more literacies we learn, the greater our understanding of the world. Literacy is a continuum of skills. We can all become more literate (Source: Literacy Now Planning Guide, p. 4, 2004).

Context:

School District 59 (Peace River South) is located in the northeastern corner of the province. The school district encompasses the communities of Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, and Tumbler Ridge, as well as a number of rural communities. The economy of the area is varied and comprised of agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, petroleum exploration and development, hydroelectric power generation, forestry and mining. The local economy is in a “boom” phase with plans for expansion in each community. This has resulted in a need for skilled and unskilled workers. This has appeared to increase the transient population of our communities.

School District 59 (Peace River South) is largely a rural district with a fairly dispersed population and a resource-based economy. The District is proud of its developing partnerships with local industry and with post-secondary institutions, specifically,

Northern Lights College. These partnerships are resulting in expanded career education opportunities for students. There has also been a shift in moving toward a more personalized learning agenda for students with the focus on a solid foundation of literacy skills.

Reflections on Literacy: 2012/13

This year, we were fortunate to have the Literacy Outreach (LOC's) in both Dawson Creek and Chetwynd. Tumbler Ridge has a new LOC who has been working for the past few months.

Significant changes in the Literacy needs of the communities have resulted in a new awareness of literacy gaps in each community.

Some highlights of the past year have been:

1. Monthly Literacy Newsletter (Dawson Creek)
2. Plain Language Reviews (Dawson Creek)
3. Partnership with Society for Community Living in Bookshare project (Dawson Creek)
4. Beginner workshop series for Seniors and Computer Literacy (Dawson Creek)
5. Partnership with South Peace Seniors' Access Society (Dawson Creek)
6. Welcoming Communities Program (Tumbler Ridge)
7. New StrongStart centre (Tumbler Ridge)

Dawson Creek Literacy Planning

LITERACY OUTREACH COORDINATOR: MICHELE MOBLEY

Dawson Creek:

In November 9th of 2006 Dawson Creek and community began the task of expanding literacy work in the community. By June of 2007, a plan was developed stating long-term direction for enhancing Literacy across the community. The primary members of the task group include: Obair Economic Society, SD 59, Success By 6 and the Dawson Creek Literacy Society. Other members of the task force include South Peace Community Resource Society (SPCRS), Dawson Creek Chamber of Commerce and the Nawican Friendship Centre. Collaborations within the community are working well because of the creative thinking and the willingness of partners to participate.

The local economy continues to grow, which has led to a need for both skilled and unskilled workers. This growth offers many opportunities to make a good wage without much formal training or education, which perpetuates the problem of low literacy rates among many adults in the Northeast. Housing becomes an issue for many who come seeking employment in the area.

In the South Peace, we continue to experience a large number of newcomers to the region, and to the country. Many of these newcomers have come as Foreign Temporary workers to fill gaps in the retail and customer service sector. There are challenges to both employers and employees in terms of language, customer relations and social integration. The Dawson Creek Literacy Society and some local schools have noticed an increased demand for ESL.

Our region has been also experiencing a labour shortage in all sectors. There are many key community service positions that remain open indefinitely making some services or programs inaccessible.

In the 2012/13 year, the goals were to target 'at-risk-youth', 'workplace literacy' and 'lifelong learning'. Some of the programs/projects offered this past year for literacy support and community engagement were:

- The Good Food Box
- Welcoming Committees
- Welcome Baby Party
- Baby's Best Chance
- Anti-Racism Training
- International Women's Day
- Eggstravaganza
- Chinese New Year
- Ready Set Learn

- Welcome to Kindergarten
- Organizing Against Hate and Racism (OAHR)
- Monthly workshops for seniors
- Mosaic Bookshare in collaboration with Dawson Creek Society for Community Living (CLBC employs a client to support the bookshare)
- Doing “plain language” reviews for the city of Dawson Creek
- Set up Seniors Computer Club and monthly workshops/games afternoons with South Peace Seniors Access Services Society (SPSASS)

A new opportunity emerging is to help promote and support a new program at Northern Lights College. They will be offering a 30 hour workplace essential skills course. This may be a place to provide information regarding the benefits of enhancing workplace literacy.

The challenges are ongoing and include the influx of foreign temporary workers which result in a higher need for ESL services. There is the challenge of making people feel included, welcome, more literate and at home in our community.

Our Results:

Our Seniors Computer Club continued to be a success in our second full season. We had close to 40 participants for a total attendance of 476 seats between September 2012 and May 2013. It was been working so well, we are currently in the process of introducing a Computer Club at the Nawican Friendship Centre. School District 59 has agreed to donate computers to the Friendship Centre, and our current computer facilitators have offered to teach.

Since launching the Mosaic Bookshare program in the fall of 2011, we have given away over 2500 books! The Dawson Creek Society for Community Living client who was hired to maintain the shelves has been with us for over one year now. The client has embraced her part time job and taken a lot of pride and ownership over what she does. Her worker mentioned that she is very attentive with ‘her’ books and it gives her a ‘get up and go’ attitude on the days they top-up the shelves.

Through the Literacy Now network, we were able to find a person who could teach sign language to a client at a different community organization.

We continue to publish a monthly community newsletter, and the response is still very encouraging. I have received requests from people who are looking for volunteer work in the community, and I’m able to promote activities, events, meetings etc that all contribute to literacy, healthy living, and community spirit. The feedback and support for the newsletter continues to be positive.

Dawson Creek Literacy Goals 2012/13

Goals	Partnerships	Status
1. To work with Reconnect Program a. Plan summer activities b. Explore further partnerships with Reconnect	Reconnect (SPCRS) SD 59 – Dawson Creek Secondary	Summer and Fall of 2013
2. To promote awareness of Workplace Literacy a. Work with NLC b. Present to Chamber of Commerce	Northern Lights College (NLC) Chamber of Commerce	Summer and Fall of 2013
3. To focus on Family Literacy a. Mosaic Bookshare program	Playgroups Public Health Unit Nawican Friendship Ctr Aboriginal Family Services StrongStart	Ongoing
4. To continue to produce a monthly literacy newsletter.	All community submissions welcomed	ongoing
5. To encourage Life Long Learning a. Focus on senior's community b. Develop workshops: i. Computers ii. In home safety iii. Recognizing scams iv. Elder abuse	Local community professionals	Continue and expand on workshops presented in 2012/13

Chetwynd Literacy Planning:

LITERACY OUTREACH COORDINATOR: LUCY REDFEARN

NOTE: The Chetwynd Plan update was not received by the date of submission of this report. The plan will be further updated once the report is received.

In May of 2008, the community of Chetwynd began the work toward a Community Literacy Plan. The plan was established and the goals were met. In January of 2011 a new LOC was hired to move the community forward with Literacy planning. A new plan has been established and work toward the plan is underway. An increase in collaboration with SD 59 was a desired outcome for the 2011/12 year. The members of the task group represent three active members of the community each with her own diverse areas of community involvement. Important collaborative partnerships have been formed to begin the work in 2012/2013: Chetwynd and Area Service Providers meetings, Chetwynd Healthy Communities, Northern Lights College, Chetwynd Public Library, and SD 59. The enthusiastic support and collaboration over a number of issues and initiatives will benefit the community.

The Chetwynd Literacy Outreach Coordinator has applied for CALP funding to put in place a ten month structured program. The program will address all aspects of literacy including assistance to First Nations, seniors, ESLSAP and low-income residents of Chetwynd. This program will include classes at the college and library with transportation provided.

Chetwynd Literacy Goals 2012/13

Goals	Partnerships	Status
1. To provide residents with seven different paths for literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Computer Literacy b. Library Services c. Personal Finances d. Employment e. Genealogy f. Travel g. Personal and Community Histories 	Chetwynd Public Library Northern Lights College	Pending grant application
2. To continue to offer support for English Language Learners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adult Literacy Classes 	ESLSAP	Ongoing
3. To be available as a resource to community members with literacy barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Topics including housing, employment, completing forms etc. 	Local community professionals LOC ESLSAP	Ongoing

Tumbler Ridge Literacy Planning:

LITERACY OUTREACH COORDINATOR: TERESA ERICKSON

Tumbler Ridge:

The community of Tumbler Ridge began their process of Community Literacy Planning and has developed a document completed in July of 2010. Tumbler Ridge also realized a new Literacy Outreach Coordinator who is reviewing the plan. The members of the task group represent different aspects of the District of Tumbler Ridge (Mayor), Northern Lights College, SD 59 and Tumbler Ridge Public Library. Ongoing collaborations include the task group members as well as Success by 6 and WIP (Work in Progress).

There have been new partnerships established this past year:

- Work with United Way to research and identify the need for adult literacy programs
- Work with Forever Young Society to develop senior's computer club, workshop series, and life skills program for special needs group members in the community
- Work with Forever Young Society, Work in Progress (parents of children with special needs support group) and Tumbler Ridge Secondary to develop a life skills program
- Family Literacy work with WIP and Success by 6 to organize iPad

The challenges we have faced this past year have been being able to get people together on a regular basis, procuring volunteers and finding the time to research grant opportunities and complete applications.

We will continue to encourage more involvement from organizations in taking on the work of the task group and in assisting with grant writing.

Some new programs/directions around literacy in our community for next year are:

- Work Essential Skills at NLC
- Adult Literacy Program
- Review and identification of future directions for the Literacy Outreach Coordinator

Our Results:

This past year we have had success with assisting foreigners and newcomers with programs and services. We have had one student successfully attain citizenship and have other students preparing to challenge the English Language Proficiency test. We have had opportunities to develop many partnerships including the WIP group planning a menu and preparing lunch for seniors.

Tumbler Ridge Literacy Goals 2012/13

Goals	Partnerships	Status
1. To review existing goals and identify new directions	Task group members	Fall 2013
2. To implement an Adult Literacy Program a. To implement an adult literacy program utilizing community volunteers b. Computer Club and workshop series for seniors	Forever Young Society Success by 6 NLC Tumbler Ridge Public Library Literacy Now	Ongoing
3. To develop a life skills program for students with special needs	WIP SD 59 - TRSS Forever Young Society Literacy Now	Spring/Fall 2013
4. To develop a Literacy courses a. Offer an iPad Workshop b. Digital Technology Workshop	Literacy Now WIP Success by 6	Fall 2013

Moving Forward with Vision:

SD 59 is committed to supporting our community through all 5 areas identified by ReadNow BC:

EARLY LEARNERS:

The Present:

The district supports many early learning programs. Programs in the 2013/14 year are Ready, Set, Learn; Parents as Literacy Supporters; Welcome to Kindergarten and participation in the Early Development Instrument.

We have established an Early Learning Hub involving both school district and community partners. The Early Learning Hub houses an indoor playground funded by Children First. The playground will be open to parents and their children 5 days a week during school hours with plans to extend the times to evenings and weekends.

StrongStart programs are in Tremblay, Don Titus and Tumbler Ridge Elementary. StrongStart Outreach will provide programs in Rolla, Parkland, Devereaux, and McLeod. Our Speech Language Pathologist is offering language service to our StrongStart programs and screening for early identification of speech and language difficulties. Munchkin Land, located at Tremblay Elementary School, is an interactive play-based centre for parents and children operating 5 days a week during school hours.

Our vision: To provide children and caregivers with academic, social, emotional and behavioural skill opportunities (0-5 years) to optimize their success.

Our Challenge: To be able to fund programs for early learners, to provide the outreach necessary to all of our catchment area, and to encourage families with the highest EDI vulnerabilities to attend SD 59 early learning programs.

SCHOOL AGE LEARNERS:

The Present: Our district literacy goal demonstrates our commitment to Literacy. Our Literacy Helping Teachers will provide collaborative support for primary and intermediate teachers in determining the best practice to meet the needs of their students. The programs or best practice include but are not limited to Guided Reading, SMART Reading, Fluency Building, Literature Circles, Words Their Way, Oral Language Development, Six Traits provide balanced literacy programs in our classrooms. We are embarking on a Pilot Project in the Primary grades that will focus on essential skills (Literacy and Numeracy), Social-Emotional Learning and an Inquiry/Activity-based environment. We have coach/mentors in each school providing support for teachers. In regards to our partnership with NLC, we are continuing to establish more dual credit programs options for students.

Our Vision: To enable each individual to reach his/her full personal potential with a connection to the community around literacy opportunities and supports. Our work is to provide quality education with each learner showing continuous improvement.

Our Challenge: To continue to be responsive with programs and structures in order to meet the needs of each individual.

ADULT LEARNERS:

The Present: The focus for Adult literacy has been a focus for all three of our communities. There are opportunities available through the school district for specific courses and in the dual credit areas. There is a focus in our communities in helping new adult English language learners become more functionally literate. Setting up Adult Education Centers, providing resources and workshops and collecting information on the

needs for literacy in the adult community are reflected in each of the Literacy Plans.

Our Vision: That adult learners have access to basic and beyond education in our community in order to access all aspects of what the community has to offer.

Our Challenge: To continue to work with community partners in making sure that all adults have access to education especially those who are English Language Learners.

ABORIGINAL LEARNERS:

The Present: The district is disaggregating the data for Aboriginal students in order to be able to set the most relevant goals for this group. Support programs include Family Support Workers, Grade/Grad coaches and Aboriginal Support Workers. Teachers in each school will work with setting individual targets for each aboriginal learner in our classrooms.

Our vision: That all aboriginal students have access to and support to achieve their personal potential in a supportive environment with positive relationships.

Our challenge: To provide responsive programming that meets their needs in the academic, emotional, social and spiritual areas.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS:

The Present: At present we provide relevant programs for ESL/ESD students and sometimes their families. We have a helping teacher to ensure that appropriate programs are in place for school age learners. Adult Literacy programs are active in each of our three communities. Communities are being intentional around providing available resources through the public libraries and Literacy Societies who provide workshops for ESL adults.

Our vision: As a community that we are responsive to the needs of the English Language Learners in our community so they are able to fully participate in all aspects of the community.

Our challenge: To ensure that all families have the information they need in order to best access the supports in our community and to aid the schools in having professional development opportunities around ESL/ESD.