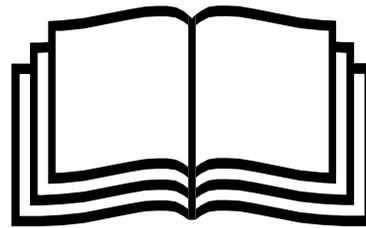

School District 22
District Literacy Plan Update
June 2012

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



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

Prepared by: Debbie Schiller, Literacy Outreach Coordinator

Literacy Plan Focus Areas

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

Reflections on the 2011 - 2012 year

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

Teacher Job Action has reduced communication between teachers and administrators. One of our partners noted: “There is a loss of collegial conversations in some schools, making it hard to plan with all the uncertainties.” Our community partners report changes in programs because of the job action:

- Cancellation of reading and math workshops for parents with children in grade 1 (all 14 elementary schools hosted *Come Read with Me* and *You Can Count on Me* workshops last year). Learning Resource Teachers worked with classroom teachers to facilitate the workshops.
- *PALS* sessions at some schools had decreased parent participation (the program coordinator believes that continued job action may put this program at risk).

School District (SD) 22 reports that school enrolment will decrease again in the 2012/13 school year - creating a deficit of more than \$1 million.

More low literacy adults are seeking help to complete high school or to upgrade academic skills. This may be due to our higher-than-normal unemployment rate.

- School District 22 (SD 22) alternate programs – Open Door is working at capacity to help adults upgrade and/or complete high school. However, the district is not funded to work with adults who struggle with a learning disability or very low literacy skills.
- Okanagan College is funded to help adults with very low literacy skills/learning disabilities. However, the Adult Basic Education program is full and the Volunteer Tutoring program is full with a wait-list.

The unemployment rate in our region has been at an all-time high of 11 - 15% since November 2011. This puts added stress on families and social services. To find work, more men are working in the oil fields up north, leaving mothers to manage work, children and households.

There are Some Positive Opportunities

Vernon was selected to pilot the **Nurse-Family Partnership** program for the next three years. Public Health Nurses will meet regularly with 20 young, socially disadvantaged first-time mothers. Home visits start during early pregnancy and continue until the baby is two years old. There are many opportunities for literacy and other local service providers to support women in the program.

A Vernon **Children's Charter of Rights** was developed by a diverse group of community partners this past year. The Charter was presented in May at a celebration in Polson Park and signed by representatives from: City of Vernon, RCMP and Community Policing, SD 22, MCFD, Interior Health Authority, the Province of B.C., the Business Community and the Social Planning Council. One of the ten rights is: "The opportunity for quality care and learning from conception to adulthood."

Immigrant PALS (iPALS) in Vernon: Decoda Literacy Solutions selected SD 22 to pilot seven iPALS sessions at our ESL school, Mission Hill elementary. The Vernon Prenatal Nutrition Program accessed funds through the Early Childhood Development Coalition (ECD) and hosted a series of iPALS sessions for families in the Sikh community.

2. Task Group

The Task Group's role is to:

- support the work of the Literacy Outreach Coordinator (LOC)
- provide insights into individual areas of work and interest
- identify gaps in literacy services for the LOC
- suggest how gaps can be filled and what partners/collaborations/resources are needed

In this district, two people share the LOC position. They also coordinate other literacy programs/services and are employees of the Junction Literacy Centre. The Centre is managed by a not-for-profit society with an elected board of directors.

Together and individually, the LOCs network regularly with other literacy service providers. Every week they attend a variety of community group meetings. This includes meetings that focus on: Early Childhood Development (sub-committees include Early Care and Learning, Screen Smart and Healthy Living), Family Services, Youth Services, Children in Care, Mental Health, etc. The LOCs also provide monthly reports to the Literacy Centre's board of directors.

As of September 2011, the community groups and Literacy Centre board of directors have fulfilled the role of the Task Group. The board recently spent a day developing a 3-year Strategic Plan with a focus to stabilize funding for the Centre and its literacy programs and services.

The community groups meet monthly or bi-monthly. Several have sub-committees which take on projects to address gaps in services. The LOCs are active participants and are often important contributors on the sub-committees. The LOCs also host two meetings a year with other literacy service providers (Okanagan College, SD 22 Alternate Programs, Learning Disabilities Association and the Immigrant Services Society) to review their services, identify gaps and concerns and discuss how we will continue to meet the literacy needs of every person in the region.

3. Community Development and Literacy Coordination

The following pages provide a list of the essential ongoing collaborations that began or continued through the 2011/12 school year. To prepare this document, we met with key partners and posed the question: “*What makes collaborations work well?*” The results suggest that:

- Collaborations build relationships and provide layers of networks that develop trust and:
 - mutual respect for each others’ work
 - a willingness to share skills, resources and ideas
 - openness that allows for follow-through on commitments
 - enabling people to share a vision

- Bright ideas can be nourished and developed into programs/events/actions
 - regional and provincial LOC networks willingly share ideas and materials that support local program needs

- Participants feel they are working for the common good and not just in the best interest of their agency or organization

- For volunteers, there are opportunities to work with literacy partners that builds civic engagement: *When You Give, You Get*

- Collaborations provide opportunities to engage non-traditional partners in projects and events

New/Expanded Projects for 2011/12	Ongoing and Essential Collaborations involving the LOC
<p>Give and Take Bookshelves</p> <p>NEW: Bright red bookshelves are placed in high traffic locations where “hard to reach” families and individuals tend to visit. The first bookshelf is at the Salvation Army Food Bank where books literally “fly off the shelves”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Junction Literacy Centre – project management (LOC) ➤ VantageOne Credit Union – sponsor of 1st bookshelf ➤ Canadian Federation of University Women, Vernon (restock and manage the shelves each week) ➤ Salvation Army Food Bank - host agency ➤ Volunteer Fire Fighter – built first bookshelf ➤ Vernon Secondary School – wood working class (built 3 book shelves) ➤ Raise a Reader funds – covered costs of 3 new bookshelves
<p>Seniors Computer Support Program</p> <p>NEW: We recruit and train volunteers to work one-on-one with seniors who request help with their computer and other technology needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Junction Literacy Centre – project coordination and management ▪ Interior Health Authority – funding and referrals ▪ Union of BC Municipalities and the City of Vernon - funding ▪ Okanagan College, Adult Volunteer Tutoring program – referrals ▪ Schubert Seniors’ Centre – referrals ▪ Seniors’ Resource Bureau – referrals and advice on senior issues ▪ Family Resource Centre – advise on senior issues
<p>Books on the Bus</p> <p>NEW: High interest books for children in grades K to 12 are placed in book holders and attached to the back of school bus seats.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Junction Literacy Centre – project management (LOC) □ Volunteer Quilter – sewed multiple book holders for 3 school buses □ SD 22 Transportation Supervisor and (2) bus drivers □ Family Literacy Week supporters - donated books to the Heap the Honda event

<p>Family Literacy in a Nutshell</p> <p>NEW: Workshop to help people working with young children and their families to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Identify how their programs currently support family literacy ✚ Include family literacy practices in their programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Junction Literacy Centre LOC – facilitator ✚ Early Childhood Development Coalition Coordinator – facilitator ✚ People Place – free workshop space ✚ Ten participants from many local agencies 	
<p>Screen Smart campaign during Family Literacy Week</p> <p>NEW: screen smart fridge magnets were widely distributed – the magnet becomes a picture frame</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Development Coordinator • Vernon Science Centre • Child Care Resource and Referral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Morning Star</i> newspaper • Interior Health, Dietician • Vernon Branch Library
<p>After School Reading Clubs – expanded to 4 elementary schools</p> <p>NEW – parent workshops provided by the program teachers to help parents understand how to support their child’s reading at home</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Junction Literacy Centre – project managed by Skills Boost Coordinator ○ SD 22 Principal of Aboriginal Programs (funding partner) ○ SD 22 (funding partner) ○ four SD 22 elementary schools (students in grades 1 to 3) ○ SD 22 Literacy Coordinator ○ Bookland – bookstore provides 30% discount on all book/magazine purchases 	
<p>Baby Steps to Grad</p> <p>NEW project to support young parents who need help returning to school after the birth of their baby</p> <p>Planning for this project occurred in May 2011 and implementation began in October 2011.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Junction Literacy Centre – LOC ❖ Early Childhood Development Coalition ❖ SD 22 (Director of Instruction, Counsellors, Principal of Alternate Programs) ❖ First Nations Friendship Centre & Pre-Natal Nutrition Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ North Okanagan Youth & Family Services Society ❖ Ministry of Child and Family Development (regular and Aboriginal services) ❖ Women’s Transition House ❖ Public Health Nursing

<p>Literacy and Learning Plan for Okanagan Indian Band (OKIB)</p> <p>Carried out planning that took place in May 2011 with the following:</p> <p>Books on the Bus for the OKIB school/daycare bus (children ages 4 to 12 are on the bus for an hour, twice a day).</p> <p><i>Stress-Free Reading at Home</i> and <i>Fun with Math at Home</i> – workshops for OKIB families with children in grades 1 to 3</p> <p><i>Aboriginal Parents as Literacy Supporters</i> (A-PALS) – 2 sessions provided to families with children ages 3 to 6 years</p> <p><i>Parent-Child Mother Goose</i> program with extra speech and language supports.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ OKIB – principal of education services ✚ Nixon Wenger Lawyers – provided funding for Books on the Bus ✚ OKIB Bus Driver – manages the books ✚ OKIB daycare, pre-school, cultural school and kindergarten staff ✚ SD 22 – Aboriginal Programs provided funding for parent workshops and A-PALS training for facilitators and other staff ✚ Junction Literacy Centre – LOC is an experienced Kindergarten teacher and co-facilitated all parent workshops with OKIB staff ✚ A Speech and Language Therapist will co-facilitate the Mother Goose program with a trained OKIB staff member
---	--

4) Goals, actions and indications of success for the current year

Please note: * indicates an initiative that was reported on in the 2010/11 DLP report

** indicates an initiative that arose this year from discussions at community tables, where gaps in services were identified

Programs/Projects in 2011/12	Actions Taken
<p>*Skills Boost – One-on-one/small group tutoring after school</p> <p>New:</p> <p>**After School Reading Clubs: expanded from three to four elementary schools</p> <p>Goals: Provide fun, focused reading practice to children in grades 1 to 3 for 1 hour, 2 days a week.</p> <p>Focus on children who are several grades behind in their reading skills</p> <p>Support SD 22 goal: all capable children will be able to “read to learn” by the end of grade 3.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Junction Literacy Centre provided two teachers and two volunteers per school ○ Up to 20 children attended in each school from October 2011 to May 2012 (49 days) ○ station format using guided reading methods, games, and listening stations with a focus on fun and reading improvement ○ NEW: Parent workshop offered in May to help parents support their child’s reading at home. A new book, sight word cards and word game ideas were also provided. <p>Results: Please see Appendix A</p>
<p>*Young Moms – Baby Steps to Grad</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that all young parents know what help is available when they are ready to return to school. 2. Provide child minding, free computer and internet use and tutoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Service providers were made aware of the Baby Steps to Grad program and provided with information rack cards to distribute to young parents (moms and dads) they work with ❖ Young parents can access free child minding and computer/internet use at the First Nations Friendship Centre. ❖ Tutors are available from the Junction Literacy Centre. Funding provided by Open Door. <p>Results: Nine young moms requested support this past year. One managed to stay committed and complete English 10.</p>

Programs/Projects in 2011/12	Actions Taken
<p>*Literacy and Learning Plan for Okanagan Indian Band</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find funding to implement the Birth to Age 6 section of the May 2011 plan. 2. Provide a <i>Parent-Child Mother Goose</i> program for families with children ages birth to 2 years. Include extra support to address speech and language issues common on the reserve. 3. Provide workshops for parents with children in grades 1 to 3 about how to support early reading and math skills (<i>Stress-Free Reading at Home</i> and <i>Fun with Math at Home</i>). 4. Provide two A-PALS sessions for families with children ages 3 to 5. 5. Address the issue of a lack of affordable and available books at the OKIB, especially for children (Books on the Bus). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Approached SD 22 Principal of Aboriginal Programs to discuss family literacy programs that will benefit OKIB families. <p>Result: Funding provided for all programs listed in the plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Mother Goose will run once a week for 8 weeks starting October 2012. Facilitated by trained OKIB staff member and a Speech and Language Pathologist ✚ LOC and OKIB Cultural School teacher co-facilitated two workshops. All OKIB families were invited, whether their children attended schools in Vernon, or on the Reserve. ✚ <i>Linking Literacy and Play</i> and <i>Story Book Reading</i> sessions were planned and co-facilitated by the LOC and OKIB Kindergarten teacher. ✚ The LOC created heavy-duty cloth and plastic book holders that are strapped to the back of bus seats. ✚ Nixon Wenger Lawyers provided funds to purchase new books by aboriginal authors or with aboriginal themes <p>Results and photo: Please see Appendix A</p>

<p>**Books on the Bus for two SD 22 buses</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help students who endure long bus rides to develop a love of reading by providing a good assortment of high-interest books and magazines. 2. Students will read on the bus, take books home and return them to the bus (if they want to). 3. Bus drivers will notice an improvement in student behaviour and students will enjoy reading books and magazine provided. 	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select high-interest books for children in Kindergarten to grade 12 from those donated to the “Heap the Honda” event during Family Literacy Week • Work with a volunteer to sew multiple book holders <p>Results: The Cherryville driver loves having books on her bus so much, she would like book holders placed on the other Lumby/Cherryville bus.</p>
<p>**Give and Take Book Shelves</p> <p>Goals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide free books and magazines to hard to reach families and individuals. 2. Locations: Salvation Army Food Bank, Whitevalley Community Resource Centre in Lumby, First Nation Friendship Centre in Vernon and one Strong Start Centre. <p>Results and photo: See appendix A</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Design and build a front-facing bookshelf with room for books and magazines for every age group ❖ Place the bright red bookshelves in high traffic locations where hard-to-reach families and individuals tend to gather or visit. ❖ Set up the first shelf at the Food Bank ❖ Find a volunteer group that will manage the shelves (tidy and replace books, find new sources of gently used books). ❖ Consult with community partners re: other bookshelf locations

<p>Senior's Computer and Technology Support Program</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help seniors with their computer and technology skills 2. Tutoring is done in the community to address the issues of seniors living in isolation and becoming housebound. 3. Encourage seniors to explore medical and healthy living websites <p>Results and photo: See Appendix A</p>	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and develop a program with the training and information materials needed to ensure its long-term success. • Recruit, train and match volunteers with seniors who call in for support. • Apply for funds to cover the costs of developing and coordinating the program. <p>Results: Funding support provided by Interior Health and Union of BC Municipalities</p>
--	---

Adjustments Made to the 2011 Plan

1. The literacy support program for men who live at **Howard House** did not go ahead. The staff person responsible for the program moved to another agency and was not replaced.
2. There was a change in plans to start an After School Reading Program at **J.W. Inglis elementary school in Lumby**. SD 22 staff and principals agreed that the needs of students at Ellison elementary school in Vernon were much greater. The program began at Ellison in October 2011.
3. **Books for Babies and Toddlers** projects did not attract the funds needed for books at birth and 18 months. After meeting with our community partners, the decision is to provide one gift book at the 6-month vaccination time, when parents are able to understand the importance of *talking, reading, singing and playing* with their child every day. The Vernon Teachers' Association will again provide a new storybook to every child entering Kindergarten.

What are the things that support literacy work?

1. **Collaborations** with active partners who can identify gaps in services and then take the necessary actions to address them.

Dynamic partnerships support and maintain all literacy programs and projects in the region.

2. **Core funding of three to five years**

Program coordinators need time to build capacity, evaluate effectiveness, make adjustments and engage participants.

3. **A Literacy Centre** with core funding and the flexibility to take on projects that other organizations cannot manage. The Junction Literacy Centre is also a resource centre for information about all literacy programs and services in the region.

Currently, the Centre manages:

- *One to One Children's Literacy* program – hosted by all 16 elementary schools
 - 14 SD 22 schools, one private school and the OKIB Cultural school
 - 200 trained volunteers read with over 350 children each year
- *Skills Boost* program
 - qualified teachers provide one-on-one and small group tutoring to children whose families are not able to pay (includes the After School Reading programs and Baby Steps to Grad)
- *For the Love of Reading* project that includes:
 - Books for Babies, Books on the Bus, Give & Take Bookshelves, OKIB family literacy programs
- *Come Read with Me* and *You Can Count on Me* workshops for parents with children in grade 1
- Family Literacy Week – media campaign, Screen Smart awareness and children's book exchange
- *Seniors Computer and Technology Support* program

Challenges:

What are the difficulties?

Funding is always the biggest concern. Much time is put into securing small, one-time funding that supports project “start-up” activities.

This year, our LOC funds were reduced by \$5,000. Further reductions will put this position in jeopardy. Our Literacy Centre’s website needs refreshing and we should have a presence on Facebook and other social media sites. However, funds for these administrative supports are almost impossible to come by. Our board of directors developed a Three Year Strategic Plan that includes finding ways to stabilize funding to maintain and expand our capacity to provide literacy services. A fee-for-service/social enterprise structure is well underway.

We have an opportunity to work with Community Futures (CF) North Okanagan to provide reading, writing and numeracy supports (by qualified teachers) for adults who need to upgrade their essential skills. However, our Literacy Centre cannot fulfill the qualifications required by the CF funder. This involves providing “certified” courses and applying for P.C.T.I.A. (full name unknown) certification. The region’s other literacy service providers have the same problem. Okanagan College offers basic adult education courses and tutoring, but cannot provide courses off-site that suit the essential skills mandate.

What Would Help?

Reliable and fair core funding for the LOC that respects the impact they have on community literacy development.

Continued advocacy work by staff at Decoda Literacy Solutions to help address the funding and literacy-development issues smaller communities are dealing with.

Goals and Priorities for the Coming Year

LOCs will work with the region's community tables to address the following priorities:

1. Early Childhood Development Coalition

- Early Care and Learning Sub-Committee – address the social/emotional needs of children entering all day kindergarten
 - work with Kindergarten (K) teachers to develop a list of “how to get ready for Kindergarten” tips
 - provide the tips to parents through childcare centres, daycares, pre-schools and workplaces (work with employers to ensure all families receive this information at least one year before kindergarten begins)
 - work with ECEs and K teachers to develop ideas for “comfort kits” to help children get through the full day
- Screen Smart/Healthy Living Sub-Committee – address the issue of too much screen time for children ages 3 to 12 years by initiating an *Unplug and Play Week* in April/May 2013.
 - work with the Optimist Service Club to sign on organizations that will host playful activities for every age group
 - develop a media and communications plan
 - work with SD 22 teachers who will use available Screen Smart curriculum – ensure their instruction time coincides with Unplug and Play Week activities

2. Youth Committee

- Community Action Team, lead by the Social Planning Council will address youth violence and drug and alcohol abuse issues by exploring program options that provide recreation, counselling and education supports to youth who have left school and are at extreme risk. Apply for “proceeds of crime” funding opportunities.

3. Children in Care Committee

- help youth who “age-out” of foster care at age 19 transition more successfully into adulthood, further education and jobs

4. Family Committee – explore opportunities to apply for RBC *After School Program* funds (\$40,000).
 - develop an after school program that provides: healthy snacks, recreation, counselling, reading, math and homework support to all students
5. Adult Literacy – work with Community Futures to develop Essential Skills training for adults who have difficulties finding and keeping a job
6. Aboriginal Literacy – work with MCFD Aboriginal Team (Gathering Place) to improve literacy skills of their clients
 - provide the team with a list of existing literacy support programs and locations
 - explore opportunities to provide parent workshops to Foster Parents at the Gathering Place
 - include aboriginal high school students in After School Reading programs
 - continue to provide the same programs to families living on the OKIB reserve, work with staff to improve attendance
7. Evaluate, adjust and maintain the literacy programs and services provided by the Junction Literacy Centre
 - support community partners to do the same

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

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

Appendix “A” Results and Photos

Programs provided under our “For the Love of Reading” project

Books for Babies/Toddlers – distributed to parents and their newborns within a few weeks of birth, and to parents of toddlers during the 18-month vaccination appointment at Health Centres in Vernon, Lumby and the OKIB Reserve.

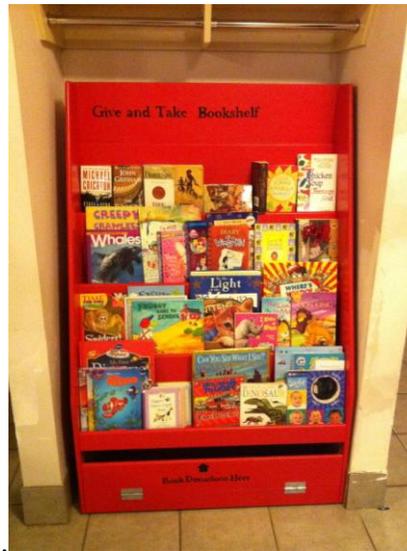
Observation by Vernon Health Centre staff: *“The parents select a book and spend the 15 minute wait time reading it to their child – it’s wonderful!”*

Give and Take Bookshelf

The Salvation Army Food Bank program has been up and running for 17 weeks. The shelves are restocked 3 times a week (about 50 books are replaced each week). About 800 books are in circulation from this location.

Volunteer

People are grabbing books right out of my hands!



Food Bank Staff

The books have been flying off the shelves!

Food Bank Client *“I like how there are books for adults as well - I love to read.”*

Books on the Bus

Book bags loaded with age-appropriate books are on two SD 22 buses, serving children from K – Grade 12. 100 new and gently used books were provided to each bus.

The OKIB bus services children ages 4 – 13. In January we provided 120 new and gently used books. Many are now “well-loved” and need replacing.



Principal – Lorraine Ladon

The children look forward to getting on the bus so they can read the books.

Four-year old pre-school student

It's like having a library on the bus!

APALS for OKIB families

Story Book Reading and Linking Literacy and Play sessions were provided at Snc'c'amala?tn Daycare & School (ages 3 to 5 years)

Six parents and 17 children participated. About 30 other families were provided with the take-home materials and a letter that explained how to use them.

“It was fun to see my child interact in her school environment and for me to think about play in a different way!”

Parent who participated in the Linking Literacy and Play session

Reading and Math Workshops for OKIB families with children in grades one to three

At total of 12 parents and 15 children attended the workshops at the OKIB Cultural School. Our goal for next year is to find ways to increase parent participation.

Parent Comments

Awesome!

I enjoyed playing the games with the children.

It was good to see other ways to do reading exercises with your children.

More parents need to be involved.

Baby Steps to Grad

Tutor's comments received by email:

“My student, “K” had nothing but good things to say about the program. She says that not only does she notice a difference in her writing (spelling, grammar) and reading comprehension but her teacher has also noticed big gains. She has gained a lot of confidence in her abilities and has become a lot more self -sufficient. She loves the one on one aspect of the tutoring.

For the future, “K” is not exactly sure what she wants to do, but she does know that she **plans to finish high school** by the time she is 20 and move on to some kind of college, or post secondary training.

I know that “K” has greatly appreciated and benefitted from the tutoring this year (she even wanted to continue through the summer). And she has mentioned numerous times how she hopes she can **continue with it in the fall.**”

We will not give up on this valuable program. Eight of nine young moms who contacted us this year had good intentions, but their complicated lives, tendencies to move to other communities and fears about leaving their babies were blocks to going back to school. The Literacy Centre will manage the program again in September and our community partners will continue to encourage their young clients to take advantage of the support services.



After School Reading Program, end of year 2 Parent and Student Comments

Please note: last year we provided “PM Benchmark” test results from before, during and after the program. This year, these results were not provided consistently at every school. However, our program teachers report they are very happy with the children’s improved reading skills, with many now reading close to grade level. One teacher reported that two of her students left the program early because they had achieved their reading goals.



Parent comments:

- Her love for reading has gone up.
- His confidence has improved. He takes on the challenge and **tries hard words**
- She is a confident reader now and **challenges herself** to read harder material.
- He has been **reading boxes, packages and newspapers.**
- If it wasn't for this program, I would of had to **hold my daughter back a grade.**
- He enjoys it and has **slowed down** to understand the story.
- She takes her time to pronounce words and feels more **comfortable reading aloud.**
- My child's reading has improved, from what teachers have told me. My child still doesn't read with me at home. This has been a struggle all school years

"He is excited about reading and does not get frustrated as easily when he comes upon a word that he doesn't know...he works it out himself."

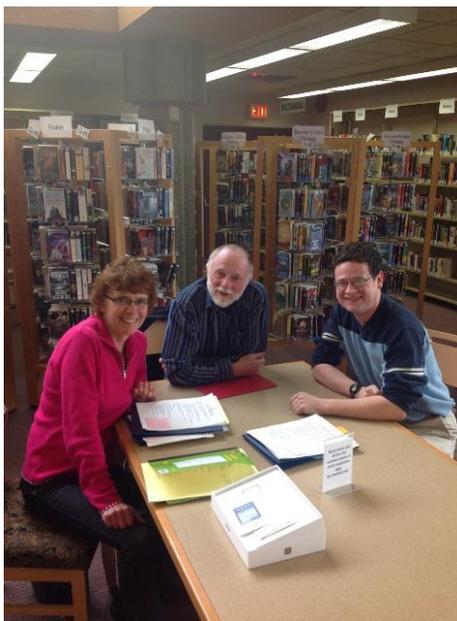
Student comments:

- I really like that they don't treat me like I am dumb.
- have more science books
- it makes me smarter
- I like to read at night.
- I can read chapter books.
- I read at home now
- I liked the games and poetry.
- **I read in my bedroom after school.**
- I like magnet words
- I'm better at it. It's easier to read a big big word.
- I notice that I started reading **every word** on the page

I love reading now with my hole heart. I read every day now because I love it. More than eneything I like.

If I was the boss I would make everyone stay overnight for more work time! I like work.

Seniors Computer and Technology Support Program – Coordinator’s report



Active tutors helping seniors: 25

Seniors waiting for a tutor: 30

Seniors on hold for the future: 11

Matching seniors to a tutor:

- Between February 15 and June 11, we held seven one and one half hour training/orientation sessions attended by 28 volunteers
- Once trained, the coordinator introduced the volunteers to their seniors at the Vernon branch library or the Junction Literacy Centre
 - a folder with support materials was provided
 - the coordinator checks in with the tutoring pairs about once a month
- Some pairings lasted just a few sessions, while most have continued to meet once a week for 1 to 1 ½ hours
 - seniors meet with their tutors at the Vernon Branch library, coffee shops and other places in the community that offer free internet and/or free computer use

What tutors and seniors work on:

- basic computer skills and emailing
- using the internet to search out health sites
- attaching and saving photos from emails and cameras
- Skype, Facebook, YouTube
- setting up folders and saving files

Outcomes

Our tutors have reported that the training/orientation was extremely helpful and answered their questions about the program. They also reported enjoying meeting with their seniors and have great satisfaction helping them with their computer learning.

Our seniors have also been very satisfied with the program. Following are a few comments:

- My tutor gave me a better understanding of how a computer works and helped me **get over the fear of the computer.**
- This program was so easy – one on one is perfect!
- This is a worthwhile program – **my needs are not being met otherwise** – hope it continues.
- This is a tremendous help for all seniors that want to learn.
- I'm pleased within myself as to the skills level I have reached. I know **I am more confident** with myself now.

*A sincere thank you to Interior Health, City of Vernon also the Junction Literacy Centre for making this possible. I hope this program can continue as it makes for a **healthy and social** environment for seniors in the community.*