

SAANICH PENINSULA COMMUNITY LITERACY PLAN 2012

COMMUNICATION · ACCESS · INFORMATION · PARTNERSHIPS



Vision

A Cross-community, interlinked literacy network that builds capacity for literacy programs and services through increased communication, collaboration and partnerships, and forms a united voice to advocate for literacy development as a key element in sustainable community development.

The Mandate

The Mandate of the Saanich Literacy Task Group is to provide governance to the Saanich Literacy Now initiative, guiding the community* planning process and providing a structure for implementation. The Saanich Literacy Task Group is responsible for establishing policy, strategic direction, and accountability.

The Saanich Literacy Task Group recognizes that all our activities, and the literacy outreach work we coordinate, take place on WSÁNEĆ territory.



Families participate at the READ Society's Family Literacy Day, hosted by the Honourable Steven Point.

* Community is defined using school district boundaries. School districts are mandated to participate in the planning process and to submit the completed action plan to School District Superintendents no later than June 1st, 2012.

The Task Group

The steward of the contract and fund for the Community Literacy Plan lies with the READ Society.

Task Group Structure:

- Saanich Peninsula Literacy Task Group is comprised of a diverse membership that includes at least one representative from the official stewards of the funds. The Task Group is open to all individuals and organizations.
- Steering Committee is comprised of 5 to 6 members of the Task Group. This committee will ensure community decisions are honoured, provide support to the LOC and make decisions as necessary between Task Group meetings.
- Working groups will be struck as needed and will include anyone who has a special interest in literacy development within the community or expertise appropriate for the task.

Our Task Group includes:

Beacon Community Services: Elaine Venables
Camosun College: Jill Auchinachie / Marc Bissley
Greater Victoria Public Library: Fatima Ferreria
Literacy Outreach Coordinator: Chris Leischner
Pauquachin First Nations: Bernice Smith
Peninsula Connections for Early Childhood: Janis Johnson
READ Society: Claire Rettie
Saanich Adult Education Center: Diane Kirby
School District #63 (Saanich): Diana Wiseman
Sidney North Saanich Library: Sharon Walker
Tsartlip First Nations: Willa Wilson
Volunteer and Parent: Laura Chambers

October Visioning Event

Community Priorities and Gaps

The October Event

In October 2011, community members participated in a Community Literacy Visioning Session. Participants represented Brentwood Bay, Pauquachin and Tsarlip First Nations, Saanichton, Saanich, Sidney and Victoria.

A gap analysis was completed at a 'Literacy Wave' event, followed by discussion, options and preliminary recommendations for literacy action.

Emerging Priorities for Literacy Services include:

- Sustainable, long-term government and corporate funding;
- Literacy hub for all ages;
- Sustainable literacy network;
- Literacy as a poverty-reduction strategy with community support at the leadership level;
- Multigenerational projects.

Gaps in Literacy Services

- Inconsistent funding impacts relationship-building
- Limited support for summer literacy programs
- Inadequate transportation limits accessibility to resources
- Limited space for youth to gather
- Lack of accessible materials and resources
- Limited local access to literacy resources for ESL population and seniors

4 ACTION PLANS

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>COMMUNICATION</u>	<u>ESL FOR IMMIGRANT POPULATIONS</u>	<u>VIRTUAL HUB</u>	<u>PHYSICAL HUB</u>
WHAT ARE OUR GOALS?	<p>Raise awareness of the resources available and how to access these on the Peninsula in a creative and accessible way, making the connection between literacy and life long learning.</p>	<p>Establish partnership and parameters with Bayanihan Cultural Center and Immigrant Society. Determine extent of need / goals for ESL project and funding.</p>	<p>Saanich Peninsula Multigenerational Hub Initially online. FOCUS: linking food with projects, financial, health, computer literacy, special library services, youth space, ESL programs and seniors literacy, 12-month calendar / increasing summer programming.</p>	<p>Saanich Peninsula Multigenerational Hub Physical space. FOCUS: linking food with learning, multigenerational projects, financial, health, computer literacy, special library services, youth space, ESL programs and seniors literacy, 12-month calendar / increasing summer programming.</p>
HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THEM?	<p>Organize communication campaign workshop. Invite new members, engage and implement a communication campaign.</p>	<p>Work with partners to apply for grant for ESL Settlement Assistance Program.</p>	<p>Review models for website and consult with Task Group as to 'best fit'.</p>	<p>Research models for Hubs and determine 'best fit' for Saanich. Determine possible partners for business, community, media and First Nations. Funding sources committed.</p>
WHERE ARE WE AT IN THIS ACTION?	<p>Sub-Committee formed to do pre-test and initiate action.</p>	<p>Sub-Committee formed with Community immigrant population groups.</p>	<p>Models reviewed and decision to be made once budget for this initiative is finalized.</p>	<p>Establish stakeholder engagement process, planning to determine need to hire professional for terms of reference and criteria. Scope out the cost for this direction.</p>
WHO WILL TAKE THE LEAD?	<p>Parent driven Sub-Committee / LOC</p>	<p>Immigrant driven Sub-Committee / LOC and Task group members.</p>	<p>Library driven / LOC and Task Group.</p>	<p>Determine who should be at the table to discuss the Hub.</p>

Challenges Facing Literacy Services

on the Saanich Peninsula

Providing adequate and accessible literacy services to a population residing in different communities, scattered over a large geographical area, and involving diverse cultures is challenging.

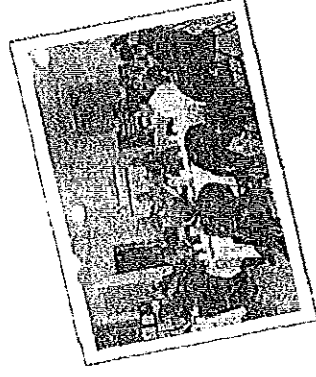
Additional challenges identified by the community include:

- Accessibility to affordable transportation
- Accessibility to childcare
- Communication with populations who may not be aware of services due to other socio-economic issues
- Engaging diverse interest groups in the community in literacy discussions

Impacts On Our Work

In addition to these systemic concerns, 2011-2012 offered additional challenges:

- BC Teachers were less able to participate in literacy task group work due to job action.
- Local First Nation communities suffered a number of tragedies which resulted in less First Nation representation at the table.
- Decreased funding in literacy programs for youth.
- Change in the Literacy Outreach Coordinator interrupted progress, resulting in a six-month setback for the Task Group as well as the Action Plan.



Inclusive Communities

The work of the Literacy Task Group is dependant on the diversity and inclusion of organizations and individuals who support literacy work. The Task Group has shown how collaboration, partnerships and communication can enhance the outcomes. As well, the Task Group has assisted in the development of a Community Literacy Strategy plan.

The Task Group members continue to ensure that a strong focus is placed on increased communication and partnerships, as well as raising the profile of literacy as a key community goal.

To expand relationships, opportunities are provided within the community partners to offer ways to learn new skills while contributing to the development of community literacy goals. These goals are not static and are reshaped by the dynamics of the group. At the same time, the group stays committed to the overall vision and direction in a creative process of change.

The Four Point Action Plan, established between October 2011 and January 2012, has begun to take shape. New partners from Business and Parent Advisory Committees have become engaged in the work. We are working on drawing in the media community and larger community services.

Demographics of the Saanich Peninsula

Central Saanich Population	15,936
North Saanich Population	11,089
Sidney Population	11,178
20% of the District of Saanich which is covered under SD#63 Population	21,950

Total Population of the Saanich Peninsula covered by School District #63 (Saanich) is estimated to be **60,200** including approximately **2,200** with First Nations ancestry.

In 2011, the percentage of the population aged 65 and over in Saanich was 18.3%, compared with a national percentage of 14.8%.



Our Collaborations

Digital Storytelling

Ten grade 6-8 Aboriginal students at North Saanich Middle School worked for over three months to produce a video about themselves and their community. Elders and community members from across the region participated in the production, as did school leaders and family members.

The program was led by Dano Underwood, an experienced film maker, actor, and youth and community engagement worker.

'*Capturing Stories*' is a region-wide initiative involving partnership between the READ Society, and three middle schools from School Districts 61, 62 and 63. Investment from the TELUS Community Board, READ Society, Decoda Literacy Implementation Fund, and Victoria Foundation made this work possible.

Saanich School District

The Saanich School District continues to build upon the successes of the Early Learning initiatives from previous years. Various activities and community outreach have evolved as a result of the collaborative efforts of Saanich School District and community partners including Peninsula Connections for Early Childhood (PCEC) to support young children and families. Some highlights include:

- Teen Education and Motherhood 1 (T.E.A.M.) Child Care Centre operates at Stelly's Secondary School as a long standing partnership with Beacon Community Services and the school community offering infant and toddler care to young parents and community members. It currently serves 8 children.
- Teen Education and Motherhood 2 (T.E.A.M.) Child Care Centre is located at Saanichton Learning Center and offers child care to students in the program. This program includes literacy activities integrated within the daily activities of the center. Some highlights include: weekly story telling with a First Nation drummer from NIL/TU,O; books for families from 1000 x 5 Book Recycling Project; creating books and felt from traditional First Nation stories.

PCEC '1000 x 5' Children's Book Project

Through this initiative, gently-used children's picture books are collected from the community. The books are delivered to a collection depot where they are screened for suitability, counted, labeled, sorted and bagged for distribution to young children (birth-5 years) and their families. The newest initiative is Books for Babies where Community Health Nurses deliver books to new moms to encourage reading.

Workplace Literacy: SkillsPlus

Breadstuffs Bakery and Screaming Bird Café participated in SkillsPlus, a program offering free training in essential skills including reading, writing, document use, computer use, thinking, oral communication, working with others, and continuous learning. This program was offered by the READ Society, Bridges for Women and the Community Social Planning Council and funded by the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Agreement.

Rita Cooney (owner) has seen increased confidence in staff who participated in the SkillsPlus training. Cooney stated "*I notice they (the staff) are more conscious of sharing and relating information to each other. They feel empowered.*" Breadstuffs regularly donate food to the Sidney Food Bank, the Saanich Tribal School Breakfast/Lunch Program and Woodwynn Farm.



StrongStart Centres in Saanich Schools

What is a StrongStart Centre?

The StrongStart program offers families an opportunity for their preschool children to develop important skills prior to school entry. Through play, children are introduced to books, art, stories, songs, and healthy eating habits which are important in their overall development.

The StrongStart program recognizes the parent or caregiver as the first and most important teacher in a child's life. We provide ideas, resources and community links to support parents in their role.

The StrongStart program encourages family literacy through reading, oral storytelling and music.

Brentwood Elementary School
Tel: 260-658-3619
Mon-Fri: 8:40 am-11:40 am
www.brentwood.sd63.bc.ca

Lochside Elementary School
Tel: 250-652-3996
Mon-Fri: 9:00 am-12:00 pm
www.lochside.sd63.bc.ca

Sidney Elementary School
Tel: 250-656-3958
Mon/Wed/Thur/Fri: 8:40-11:40 am
Tues: 1:00-4:00pm
www.sidney.sd63.bc.ca



StrongStart Centres are supported by the Ministry of Education, School District #63, and Beacon Community Services.

Successes 2011-2012

- The Literacy Task Group continues to work toward four concrete goals for literacy enhancement on the Saanich Peninsula. Year three of the Implementation funds will be pivotal in the completion of these plans and, though we have not distributed the dollars over a year to year basis, we believe that the use of maximum dollars can help us leverage more funds from communities and businesses.
- Our increased visibility in the Saanich communities will lead to new partnerships and to a change in how our community sees literacy. The new campaign under way will address the definition of literacy and the many ways it affects our lives. We have already seen an increase in participation with both the Task Group and the sub committees.

Measuring our Process

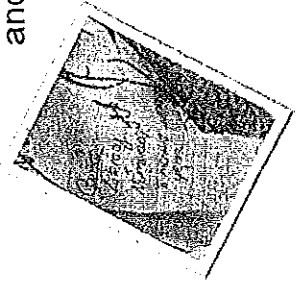
Over the past year we have seen the Saanich Peninsula community commit to developing literacy initiatives.

The Task Group has developed two new committees and four new partnerships.

The Group has an action plan with four strong directions and strategies to accomplish these actions over the next two years.

The Task Group has facilitated a communication opportunity for the various regional libraries in our area and are encouraging active participation.

Our Task Group is now looking at outcome measures as a result of having concrete direction and plans for the coming year.



COMMUNICATION · ACCESS · INFORMATION · PARTNERSHIPS

Communication

A Communication Campaign workshop was recently held involving new members of the community in developing a Communication Campaign for the Peninsula.

The goal was to raise the profile of the work of the Task Group, connect literacy services as well as inspire energy and enthusiasm around literacy. As a result, a new sub-committee was formed to develop a campaign to raise awareness of the literacy resources available on the Peninsula and provide information on how to access these.

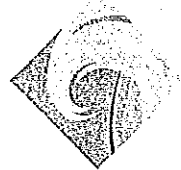
This sub-committee anticipates initiating the campaign in the summer of 2012. The work of messaging, research on audience insights, channels, pre-test and evaluation will be completed in a fun and celebratory way to engage more community members in our work. With new representation from parents and businesses, we hope to establish a dynamic and high profile presence in Saanich Peninsula.

Access and Information

The second issue of the Literacy Wave Newsletter has been distributed by email to approximately 500 contacts. Plans to establish a database will allow us to further increase distribution.

Collaborative Partnerships

- Increased collaboration of the Task Group with the involvement of the Great Victoria Public Library (GVPL) and additional parent representation from the Parent Advisory Committee in School District #63 has resulted in strengthening the Task Group membership.
- A new partnership with the Caregivers Association with new immigrants and homecare providers has opened up an opportunity to deliver ESL programs directly to that population in an environment that they are comfortable in and trust.



Literacy Wave

A Quarterly Newsletter from the Saanich Peninsula Literacy Task Group

