



District Literacy Plan

2012-13

School District 70 (Alberni)

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Chapter 1: Progress on Literacy Development

Overview

School District 70 (Alberni) is one partner in the literacy development activities coordinated through Literacy Alberni, the Bamfield Community School Society, and the Coastal Family Resource Coalition. The district literacy plan summarizes projects and progress in literacy development in the communities of Port Alberni, Bamfield, Tofino, and Ucluelet. Within the Alberni Valley, the school district also collaborates with the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council to support literacy initiatives within the Tseshaht First Nation, Ditidaht First Nation, Hupacasath First Nation, and Uchucklesaht First Nation. In addition, the literacy plan includes efforts to improve literacy in our First Nations communities: Hot Spring Cove (Hesquiaht First Nation), Ahousaht (Ahousaht First Nation), Opitshat and Esowista (Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation), Ittatsoo (Ucluelet First Nation), Macoah (Toquaht First Nation), and Anacla (Huu-ay-aht First Nation).

The SD70 (Alberni) District Literacy Plan is the result of combined efforts from the Community Literacy Plans developed by Literacy Alberni, the Bamfield Community School Society and the Coastal Family Resource Coalition.

Progress to Date

The primary role of SD 70 (Alberni) is to participate as a community member and partner in the development and implementation of community-based literacy initiatives. In addition, the district literacy plan allows opportunities for sharing literacy resources and coordination of literacy development initiatives within the region. One of the challenges in preparing the district literacy plan is synthesizing and aligning initiatives and priorities from three separate community literacy plans. This report presents a summary of literacy development programs, initiatives, and priorities within the geographical region served by School District 70 (Alberni). Rather than replicating information provided in other documents, the community Literacy Plans and the District Achievement Contract available as separate reports.

Anticipated Next Steps

School District 70 (Alberni) continues to be an active partner in the development of community-based literacy initiatives. School-based programs and initiatives emphasize literacy development in the K-12 student population. The school district now has three school-based Strong Start programs and one Outreach Strong Start program to provide early learning programming throughout the district.

The district Achievement Contract, Aboriginal Enhancement Agreements, School Growth Plans, and the School Review process all emphasize the development of literacy skills as a critical

aspect of our improvement strategy as students transition from early learning through school completion and on to the post-secondary opportunities in the work force or in higher learning.

Building connections between our three community-based literacy plans and establishing networks with other community literacy programs will provide additional opportunities for sharing literacy improvement strategies, initiatives, and identify promising practices for further investigation. Potential opportunities for enhancing literacy awareness within the geographical region include:

- Building capacity in literacy instructional practices and assessment procedures.
- Developing collaborative literacy-focused networks within the district and with other regional entities.
- Establish a communication strategy to emphasize literacy related issues and community development.
- Continue the collaborative work with all organizations interested in literacy issues that contributed to the success of the April 2011 West Coast Literacy Symposium

1. Literacy Alberni

Summary

Building on the successes of the 2011/2012 academic year, Literacy Alberni Society will continue to provide a number of the community's core adult literacy programs, as outlined below.

Literacy Alberni Society will also continue to work collaboratively with other community supporters. These organizations include:

- The Alberni valley Community School
- The Make-Children-First-Network
- The Port Alberni Friendship Centre
- Tseshaht First Nation
- Hupacasath First Nation
- North Island College
- The Alberni Valley Childcare Society
- Alberni Valley Employment (Work BC)
- INEO Employment Services (Work BC)
- Vancouver Island Regional Library
- SD70

Literacy Alberni Society – Onsite Programs

ESLSAP (English as a Second Language Settlement and Assistance Program)

In 2011, the ESLSAP Program grew by 34% to 59 adult learners. We anticipate these high numbers to continue in the 2012/2013 academic year. The program pairs ESL immigrants with tutors who facilitate their acquisition of English via weekly 1:1 tutorials. Learners are also invited to attend group sessions, which include English language classes, as well as Citizenship classes, and Canadian Cooking Classes (providing an authentic and natural environment to speak English, as well as introducing local food and culture). Learners' needs usually extend beyond English classes, so we also act as a referral centre for additional services they may require (e.g. AV Employment, the library, North Island College, Service BC, etc).

CALP (Canadian Adult Literacy Program)

In 2011, the CALP Program doubled in size to 93 adult learners. The program is experiencing large increases in the number of young, male learners with low reading and writing literacy levels, as well as senior citizens with low computer literacy. Learners are paired up with tutors who facilitate their upgrading of any of the following: reading, writing, oral, participation, IT and/or math skills. All instruction is currently done through individual tutorials with the exception of computer classes, which are offered as drop-in classes three times a week.

Computer Refurbishment Program

This program aims to improve computer literacy in Port Alberni. Literacy Alberni Society is a licensed Microsoft Refurbisher, which enables us to install Microsoft Windows and Microsoft Office onto used computers at a discounted rate. Volunteers at Literacy Alberni Society wipe all data from donated used computers, and install the new software. Computers are then distributed at a modest price to individuals who cannot ordinarily afford a new computer and do not already have access to a computer at home. As of May, 2011, over 30 computers have been refurbished and placed in new homes.

Adult Nutritional Literacy Class

This program was introduced in late 2011, targeting low-income adult learners with low literacy levels, with several goals in mind:

1. To improve nutritional literacy levels
2. To provide information about cooking healthy and *affordable* meals
3. To improve reading and writing literacy levels
4. To act as an outreach group for adult learners who have been reluctant / scared to 'go back to school' and study in a classroom setting

The program involves cooking affordable, healthy meals and is offered 3 times per month collaboratively with VIHA, ACAWS, and Bread of Life. The program has already attracted 48 individuals with an average attendance of 10 people per class. We anticipate the program to continue its success in 2012/13 and to continue being an excellent outreach tool for the other adult programs.

Literacy Alberni Society – Offsite Programs

Parents As Literacy Supporters (PALS)

In order to address the high percentage (17%) of young children identified as being vulnerable in the area of 'Language and Cognitive Development' (EDI 2011), Literacy Alberni Society is funding up to 42 PALS events throughout the community. Over 60 local Early Childhood Educators and teachers have been 'PALS Trained' by one of the founding members of the PALS Program, Fiona Morrison (Decoda Literacy Solutions, Vancouver). Multiple community organizations (see below) are offering the programs, which aim to improve language and cognitive development through equipping parents with educational literacy skills and games they can practice with their child in non-school settings. We anticipate that it will take several years of PALS sessions to significantly change EDI figures, so we aim to offer this program for years to come.

Organizations which (in collaboration with Literacy Alberni Society) offer PALS:

- SD70 Kindergarten classes (8th ave, Wood, John Howitt, Alberni,
- Mini Miracles Preschool
- Knee-waas, Port Alberni Friendship Centre
- Parks and Recreation (cancelled)
- Shining Start Child Care Centre
- New Beginnings Child Care Centre

- Alberni Valley Child Care Society

Other Literacy Programs (offered by other organizations)

Mondays at Maquinna

Alberni Valley Community School

This is gym time to run the wiggles out from 9:00 to 10:15 at Maquinna Elementary School gym. Free play with parents is followed by 15 minutes of reading time – parent and child read or the leaders read to groups of children and parents.

Wednesdays at Wood

Alberni Valley Community School

This is gym time to run the wiggles out from 9:00 to 10:00 at Wood Elementary School gym. Free play with parents is followed by 15 minutes of reading time – parent and child read together or the leader read to groups of children and parents.

PALS (Parents As Literacy Supporters)

Alberni Valley Community School

Building on the successes of 2011 -2012, when the Community School hosted **two** PALS sessions at Alberni Elementary School for a combination of two kindergarten classes (34 children and their parents), we are planning on hosting two more PALS sessions for kindergarten classes in 2012 - 2013

Scampers Summer Reading Program

Alberni Valley Community School

Our Scampers Summer Reading Program follows a centre-based literacy format focusing on four main skills: phonemic awareness/rhyming, word families, consonant blends and 4 decoding strategies. Program takes place in the month of July. On 4 or 5 days a week the program runs from 9:30 – 12:30 with one day running until 2:30 – spending the afternoon at one of the local spray parks with families. We are currently working on the length of the program and number of days a week looking for the optimum period of time in which learning occurs.

Nayi?ii (Echoes Family Cultural Program)

Port Alberni Friendship Center

Twice a week family drop-in aims to promote, support and empower participants and increase literacy among parents & children by strengthening culture and languages. Elder involvement is emphasized.

Alphabet Soup

Alberni Child Care Society

Originally funded by Literacy Alberni, the Alberni Child Care society has secured other funds to continue this program that addresses healthy eating and literacy skills for preschoolers.

PacificCare Child Care Resource and Referral

PacificCare

Music Drop-in for parents and preschoolers (once a week, held at Kiwanis Hilton Children's Centre).

Play and Learn Lending Library

Kiwanis Hilton Children's Centre

The Toy Lending Library is a free service open to the entire community - kind of like a book library. Like a book library, you borrow items for a period of time and then return them to the Toy Library. There are a wide variety of educational preschool toys and books.

2. Bamfield Community School Society

Community Impacts:

The loss of the Bamfield Community Hall has had a profound impact on the people and organizations within this community. The Community Hall was a gathering place, which hosted and facilitated many groups and annual events. Its loss has put the onus on the Bamfield Community School Association to provide support for literacy development and the community at large. In the past year there has been a huge turn over in community groups, impacting the community, changing dynamics, and affecting the ability of organizations to support literacy development, making the work of the Bamfield Community School Association and Literacy Now even more important.

The Huu-ay-aht Treaty is having a substantial impact on the community and may bring with it new opportunities for literacy and funding, as well as changing demographics. The Bamfield Marine Science Centre is changing their staffing, which includes layoffs over the Christmas and summer periods, impacting rentals, residents, jobs and local businesses.

1. Task Group:

a. Who takes part in the task group?

The Literacy Task Group is composed of a wide variety of individuals, including the Bamfield Community School Association Board of Directors and various community members.

Andrea Butler	Teaching Assistant, Bamfield Community School; PAC
Bob Baden	Business Owner
Catherine Thompson	Literacy Outreach Coordinator and Community School Coordinator, BCSA
Donna Dunn	VIHA Outpost Nurse
Eileen Scott	Retired; active volunteer
Hana Kucera	Marine Science Educator and University Instructor, Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre
Jean Richardson	Researcher, Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre
Louis Druehl	Retired; Professor Emeritus, Simon Fraser University; active volunteer
Marie Newfield	Retired; active volunteer
Marnie Cameron	Head teacher, Bamfield Community School
Rae Hopkins	Retired; active volunteer
Sheila Charles	Councillor, Huu-ay-aht First Nation
Suzanne Jennings	Retired teacher

b. How is the work of this group organized?

The work of the Literacy Task Group is organized by the Literacy Outreach Coordinator, Catherine Thompson. The individuals involved met as needed and communicated regularly through email. Information and ideas were gathered throughout the year during events, conversations with community members, during Bamfield Community School Association Board of Directors meetings and at Literacy Task Group Meetings. The role of the LOC is to provide a summary of activities, share ideas and information, present opportunities, facilitate discussion and implement and evaluate the goals and activities of the Task Group.

2. Community Context:

a. 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? Consider both positive and negative impacts.

School District 70 has begun an adult upgrading and high school completion program, VAST, in the community. This has given many of our community members the opportunity to finish their schooling, which can be a challenge in a community with a school that only goes to Grade 7. The HUU-AY-AHT First Nations in conjunction with the Bamfield Community School Association received a Community Adult Literacy Program (CALP) grant, which allowed us to support the VAST program, recruit and offer volunteer tutoring, as well as hire a CALP coordinator.

The communities of Bamfield and Anacla continue to experience changing demographics and a decrease in the year round population. There are few full time jobs available to community members, which makes it difficult for the community to support and attract families. High numbers of summer residencies have led to fewer rental properties and a changing community dynamic.

The implementation of the Maa-nulth Treaty is bringing many changes to the community and the decision of the HUU-AY-AHT First Nation to not invest in housing this year will be a challenge for individuals and families.

With a small population it is often the same individuals volunteering their time and supporting various organizations and societies. In turn many of the same groups are vying for the same pool of resources and support for various projects.

We recently received notification that funding to our Community Access Program has been discontinued; this will have a negative effect on the Computer Access site at our location, possibly reducing hours and making printing and other services less accessible to community members.

3. Community development and literacy collaboration:

a. What are the important collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?

Important collaborations which have taken place this year in order to support literacy and the work of the task group include:

- School District 70
- Bamfield Community School staff
- Bamfield Community School Association
- Community Access Program
- Vancouver Island Regional Library
- Vancouver Island Health Authority
- Community Park and Garden
- Huu-ay-aht First Nations
- Literacy Alberni
- North Island College
- Paawats Language Nest
- Community Affairs
- Bamfield Arts Council
- Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre
- Bamfield Historical Society
- Bamfield Community Hall Society
- Bamfield Harbour Authority
- Music By The Sea
- Local Businesses
- Kids Don't Float- Transport Canada
- Oysters, Authors & Ale, which again brought two rural communities, Bamfield and Cortes, together to share resources and ideas.

b. What are the essential ongoing collaborations?

All collaborations are essential to the success of our literacy programming. Significant ongoing collaborations include:

- School District 70- offers the VAST high school completion and upgrading program, which is supported by the CALP grant; provides funding for our Preschool program and supports the ongoing work of the Bamfield Community School Association.
- HUU-ay-aht First Nations- works with the BCSA in the delivery of the CALP grant; support a variety of literacy programming and initiatives through funding and in kind donations.
- Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre- supports literacy programming through in-kind donations of educational programming in lab and field settings.
- Vancouver Island Regional Library- coordinates a book swap with the Bamfield Community Library and sends resources.

c. What makes collaborations work well?

The key factors that make collaborations work well are: communication, understanding, literacy, respect, openness, clear goals and vision, common interests and goals, shared resources, flexibility, energy, support and partnerships. Community involvement and funding are imperative to supporting the literacy work that is being done in Bamfield and Anacla. Collaborations have worked well between the BCSA and various community groups because there are clear goals and an interest in providing opportunities for community members.

4) Goals and actions for the current year:

a. What priorities, goals or objectives have you addressed this year?

The literacy priorities and goals that have been addressed in the current year include:

- Reducing barriers to programming (transportation, safe learning environments, access to food)
- Engaging community members
- Promoting the Library and Community Access site throughout the community
- Computer Literacy
- Adult Literacy
- Family Literacy
- Early Learning- Preschool
- Literacy opportunities for our elementary aged students
- Encouraging a love of literacy among our elementary aged students
- Environmental Literacy
- Youth mentorship

b. What actions were taken to reach these? What organizations and groups participated in these actions?

- The CALP grant made it possible to provide transportation for individuals living in Anacla to attend tutoring sessions, VAST programming and various community events.
- We have established a food bank in the Library through the efforts of our VIHA Outpost Nurse.
- Through a partnership with Huu-ay-aht First Nation and a grant from Times Colonist we have expanded our youth and adult libraries with the purchase of adult easy reader books, audio books and a variety of children's books, which include First Nations content.
- Computer classes were made available through funding from the Community Access Program. Our CAP Youth Intern offered 6 beginner adult computer classes, which were well attended and promoted the use of the Community Access site.
- Adult literacy was encouraged through group and one-on-one tutoring opportunities, as well as a variety of workshops on financial literacy, resume and

cover letter writing and interview skills. This was supported by CALP, School District 70 and the BCSA Board of Directors.

- Cooking/nutrition classes for adults brought 20 individuals together to create and enjoy a meal while learning cooking and nutrition tips that they could take home.
- Oysters, Authors & Ale, an adult literacy event and fundraiser encouraged 7 local authors to read their work in front of over 70 people. This event was supported by a number of community groups. Most notably the Bamfield Arts Council, which purchased and distributed over 30 blank canvases to community members as part of an Art Show which took place during the event.
- Short Story & Poetry Competition, which engaged and challenged individuals to submit a unique story and read their work in front of an audience at Oysters, Authors & Ale.
- Family Literacy Day was celebrated with a Pancake Breakfast, book give away and a variety of resources for families to take home
- Weekly Preschool Program, funded by SD 70, for parents and their preschoolers, which includes recreational activities, crafts, story time and a chance for parents and their children to interact.
- Weekly After School Club for our elementary school students offers a chance for the students to engage in literacy activities, such as writing thank you cards, after school.
- The purchase of new reading materials, book give aways and writing competitions for our elementary aged children.
- Summer camps promoted a wide variety of literacies for the children, youth and parents in Bamfield and Anacla. Themes included environmental, ocean, cultural and music literacy, health & wellness, as well as a weekly reading club, which decreases the effects of summer learning loss.
- Monthly Newsletters provide information about community events, how to get involved and information on important resources. Promoting citizenship, participation and literacy.
- Increasing the number of events that bring community members into the School to explore the facilities.
- Promoted mentorship through our support of the New Bamfielder, a local paper that raises money to offer mentorship opportunities to youth in the community.

c. What adjustments were made to the plan? That is, as the year progressed were there new opportunities or were there changes that did not allow for some actions to be taken?

A new opportunity that arose this year provided a major shift towards adult literacy in the communities. School District 70 began offering the VAST program in Bamfield and Anacla and the CALP grant gave the Huu-ay-aht First Nations and BCSA the opportunity to provide financial support to the program and learners, as well as much needed transportation to learners. The grant also made it possible to recruit volunteer tutors and hire a CALP Coordinator.

We had planned to run a Heroes Read campaign, which we cancelled due to little community interest.

5) Indications of success:

a. How do you know that actions taken are working to support literacy? What impact have the literacy initiatives had? It is important to include examples to illustrate the impact.

- Attendance at events and workshops are a sign of success and an indication that people understand the importance of literacy. We had over 70 people in attendance at Oysters, Authors & Ale, our adult literacy fundraiser and over 50 people participated in Family Literacy Day.
- We are seeing 10 individuals preparing to finish their high school education. Students are supporting each other and being assisted by 12 community members who have volunteered as tutors.
- This year we held the second Oysters, Authors & Ale adult literacy fundraiser. This event was well attended and well received by the community, we received donations from community groups and individuals that made the event possible, more community members were involved in all aspects of the event. This year we had 7 community members read personal writings, 5 of which were entries in our Short Story & Poetry competition. A great success that night was when one young man, who is currently involved in completing his high school and had entered the story competition, read his story at the event, in front of over 70 community members.
- Summer camps saw over 50 different children in attendance, as well as 41 parents who took part in a variety of activities. Activities included: trips with the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre to visit the intertidal zone and the Whale Lab to learn about the ocean and look in microscopes; cultural activities including HUU-AY-AHT language learning; supporting the VIRL Summer Reading Club; learning about and running scientific experiments; music lessons with world renowned musicians visiting for Music By The Sea.
- Computer classes were well attended by 12 adults and since the classes we have seen an increase in the number of users at our internet site. Individuals had the opportunity to learn about Microsoft Office, basic internet skills, and downloading and editing photos. All of the individuals involved have been thankful for the opportunity to practice and learn skills, we have had several requests to run another series.
- The Afterschool Club has made a difference in the lives of our elementary school children. The children appreciate having a place to be after school, receiving help with their homework, learning new games and taking part in a variety of activities. One day that stands out in my mind is when we had the children write down their worries and place them in worry dolls that they had made. This gave the children a chance to share something that had been troubling them and made it okay to ask questions and explore their worries or anxieties.

- Making connections with local community members who have in turn offered piano, Photo Shop and drawing lessons to our elementary school students.

b. What are the things that support literacy work?

- Leadership, organization, and a clear vision of the communities strengths and needs.
- A Literacy Coordinator to coordinate the efforts of the group- to plan, implement and evaluate programs in order to meet community needs.
- Funding to hire additional staff and ensure that programming and services are continued and enhanced.
- Volunteers and in kind donations, overall support from community members.
- Collaboration and partnerships.
- Communication.
- Professional development, the chance for LOCs to get together and learn about programs and share ideas.

6) Challenges:

a. What are the difficulties?

- Keeping adult learners motivated, reducing barriers, especially when you do not know what they are.
- Keeping individuals interested and motivated in programming.
- Uncertainty of continued funding.
- Distance between Anacla and Bamfield presents a challenge as many individuals do not have access to reliable transportation.
- Individuals not taking advantage of available opportunities. Ensuring people are aware of the skills they need to join the work force and be successful in a changing world.
- Increasing need for literacy in all aspects of life.
- Many of the same volunteers take part and over commit themselves.
- Positive community engagement and the ability to create risk free community discussions.
- Limited access to resources.
- The location of the BCSA, which is associated with and housed in the Bamfield Community School, some adults are not comfortable using the School as a place of meeting and learning.

b. What would help?

- Community members taking part in programming and the task group.
- Encouraging people to take advantage of the opportunities that are available.
- Continued funding.

- Continued support from a provincial literacy organization.
- Opportunities for professional development and get together in order to share stories, ideas, challenges and successes. Learning from other communities successes.
- Rural development and collaboration.

For the coming year:

1) Are there new opportunities, challenges or issues in your community?

- Bamfield and Anacla continue to suffer from economic challenges and limited opportunities. The recent loss of an NSERC grant by the Bamfield Marine Sciences Centre means that there will be even fewer jobs in the future.
- The Community Access Program (CAP) funding has been cut by the Federal Government affecting our CAP site, reducing public access hours and possibly increasing the cost of printing and other services for community members.
- For the first time our community has received a New Horizons for Seniors grant to do a digital storytelling project, this is an opportunity to engage with seniors and elders in the community, share their stories and provide a mentoring opportunity for others.
- There continue to be opportunities to work with the Huu-ay-aht First Nations under their new Treaty.
- Many challenges come with adult literacy, there are individual barriers and motivations to deal with. As we continue with the CALP grant and our adult education initiatives we are going to learn a lot and encounter many opportunities for growth in the community.

How will you respond to those?

- Advertising, word of mouth and persistence.
- Continuing to offer courses, workshops and opportunities to the community.
- Creating and maintaining partnerships.
- Continuing to locate and apply for grants.
- Making events applicable and enjoyable.
- Offering support and appreciation to our volunteers.

2) What goals, priorities or objectives will you work on in the coming year?

- Health Literacy
- Essential Skills Training
- Adult Literacy- Continue to provide support for VAST and offer opportunities through the Community Adult Literacy Program
- Computer Literacy
- Digital Storytelling Project for elders and seniors
- Community engagement

- Animal Care education
- Environmental Literacy
- Successful programs and events will be continued in the coming year

What actions are planned against those goals?

- Advertising and enhancing the Community Library and various facilities.
- Workshops on nutrition, diabetes and substance abuse.
- Essential Skills and Job Skills workshops.
- Toast Masters Club and Pecha Kucha nights.
- Computer classes.
- Continuing work with the Huu-ay-aht First Nations to offer the CALP program.
- Nutrition, cooking and health literacy workshops.
- Digital Storytelling workshop and Film Festival.
- An all-ages community play.
- Summer camps, which will target elementary and preschool aged children as well as their parents. Providing opportunities to engage in literacy and recreational activities throughout the summer.
- An all ages Spelling B or Game Show night.
- Art workshops.
- Various workshops led by community members- Life Skills.
- Animal welfare education, possibly partnering with the SPCA.
- Oysters, Authors & Ale.
- Short Story & Poetry Competition.
- Family Literacy Day celebration.

3) What will be required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year?

- Interest, community involvement and participation.
- Volunteers.
- Guidance of Literacy Task Group.
- Leadership and organization.
- Funding is needed to continue programming and the work of the LOC.
- Support from SD 70 is critical.
- Collaboration and partnerships.
- Staying aware of community interests.

3. Central West Coast Dual Literacy

2012 Central West Coast Dual Language Literacy Report

When one looks through the lens of lifelong learning in our evolving knowledge-based economy at the changing definition of literacy what does one see? Simply, lifelong learning is a continuous process by which we all acquire the basic literacies necessary to better perform our roles as active citizens, effective parents and family members, productive workers and informed consumers, and creative learners.

(2010 Literacy Now Community Literacy Planning Guide, Appendix vi)

This report includes the following West Coast communities: Hot Spring Cove (Hesquiaht First Nation), Ahousaht (Ahousaht First Nation), Opitsaht and Esowista (Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation), Hitacu (Yuulu?it?aht First Nation), Macoah (Toquaht Nation) and the Districts of Ucluelet and Tofino.

Community Context

The communities of Ahousaht and Hot Spring Cove have new principals at their schools and I have been in contact and worked with each of them. Both principals are interested in extending literacy opportunities into their communities. They recognize that by strengthening family literacy skills, there will be positive outcomes in their student's academic achievements.

Over the past year, the new High School in Ahousaht was completed and officially opened. The students have a wonderful, stimulating learning environment and the first of many graduating classes have just celebrated the completion of their grade 12 requirements.

The Alberni Clayoquot Regional Health Network is an organization entrusted to support Port Alberni and the West Coast Communities to develop a health plan that will address regional issues. Over the next year, funds will be allocated to address specific health needs with the recognition that the concerns of the communities on the West Coast present unique challenges such as limited hospital and medical services, isolated communities, seasonally unpredictable weather conditions and costly travel expenses.

Task Group

The Coastal Family Resource Coalition (CFRC) continues to fulfill the role of the Task Group for our dual-language literacy plan and represents a wide range of service providers, educational perspectives, and community voices. These include the Westcoast Community Resources Society, Vancouver Island Health Authority, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Social Development, Service Canada, Service BC, Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, Nuuchahnulth community agencies such as USMA, Parks and Recreation departments for Ucluelet and Tofino, Pacific Rim Hospice Society, School District 70, and representatives from the RCMP detachments in Ucluelet and Tofino.

As the West Coast Literacy Outreach Coordinator I work in conjunction with Marcie DeWitt, the facilitator for the CFRC. We effectively and efficiently utilize the monthly CFRC meetings to report on the progression of the literacy plan. We also bring forward any issues or situations that require funding decisions in order to maintain transparency with a regional perspective. We are able to ensure a regional perspective since the multiple communities throughout the West Coast region host the monthly meetings.

Goals and Actions for the Past Year

Food security continues to be an issue for families in *all* the communities. Regionally there are dedicated people and agencies working collaboratively to implement some effective strategies. One such group is called "Eat West Coast" and they meet monthly to design action-oriented activities. As well, the literacy plan has worked in conjunction with the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT) to provide cooking and preserving classes in numerous communities. These are within the guidelines of the Canadian Diabetes Association and promote literacy within the essential skills area.

In Hot Spring Cove we offered financial support for a project that honored the Elders of the community and supported their physical and social health. There were regular Elder luncheons held, where the Elders were exposed to more healthier lifestyles choices in choosing and preparing their traditional foods. As well, the use of the community garden was encouraged.

In Ahousaht, the literacy plan provided funding for the Maaqtusiis School to begin their family literacy program. Their plans involved after-school activities for children, youth and families to participate in together. Keeping with the Nuu chah nulth traditions, the sharing of food was incorporated into the events.

We continued to support the Nuu chah nulth Language classes at School District 70's Ucluelet Secondary School and the Elementary School. There is a collaborative project occurring on the grounds of the elementary school, where some high school students are building a green house. The elementary students will be involved in the selection and growing of the produce, which will be utilized in the lunch programs at both schools. Literacy abounds in this wonderful building project!

We had considered offering a writing program on the West Coast, but the interest within the two communities did not materialize. As well, the West Coast Youth Council (mentioned in last year's report) transitioned to an established Youth Worker position in Ucluelet, which oversees and organizes Youth activities and events.

Over the course of year, I attended meetings, presented at parent programs, and met with various community and band members to gather current information as to the community's priorities and interest regarding literacy.

Future Plans: 2012 - 2013

The next year will see us collaborating with CBT on various literacy-based projects. The first one will support the Nuu chah nulth Language and Culture program to transfer from SD 70's Ucluelet Elementary School, to SD 70's Wickaninnish Elementary School in Tofino.

The transfer of this program adds value and longevity to the original literacy funding that supported this project.

Literacy funds will support a Food Skills course for the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation families and will take place within their communities so that transportation will not be a barrier for people interested in coming. This course has been positively received in three other communities and we are looking forward to more encouraging results.

During the 2012-2013 school year, the Roots of Empathy program will be supported by the West Coast Literacy funding. The program will be offered in the schools in Ucluelet and possibly Tofino. This program has a history of success regarding empathy and social skills for children and youth of all ages. Plans are underway to include First Nation families, recognizing that this will be an effective avenue for promoting a practical and positive parenting message.

The literacy plan will work in conjunction with CBT and provide funding for a teen girl's program to address substance abuse issues and promote a more positive healthy life style and self-esteem. This will be for the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation girls and will have a traditional language and cultural component.

In the past five months, an issue that has reverberated throughout the region is the growing concern with technology overuse, and how that is influencing educational and social wellbeing. After numerous Task Force meetings, it was decided to plan a family event for the Fall of 2012, which will have a focus on technology overuse for all ages of participants. There is a small working committee that I participate in that is organizing the event, as well as lead-up activities and articles in the local paper. One event is called "Tech-Off Challenge" which has been organized by a youth focused agency. The youth challenge is to go 24 hours two or more times from July 1st to September 1st and win some youth oriented prizes that promote active outdoor enthusiast activities.

The outdoor environment on the West Coast is world-renowned and in Ucluelet there is a Children's Interpretive Walk being created at Big Beach. The literacy project, along with CBT and community businesses are funding this project, which is incorporating local artists and providing work experience for local youth. This is a unique venture,

which has the potential to extend literacy to the outdoor environment and encourage positive children, youth and family interactions.

During the next year, literacy funds will be allocated to the Maaqtusiis School in Ahousaht to further their family literacy activities, as well as funding to the Learning Place School in Hot Spring Cove. In both circumstances I will work in conjunction with the principals to ensure the projects support family literacy, which in turn supports community literacy.

Over the next year, one of the main priorities in the West Coast Dual-Language Literacy plan will be addressed. The creation of an early literacy resource for children between the ages of 2- 5 years of age will become a reality. The resource will be in both Nuuchahnulth and English languages. The preliminary plans encourage inter-generational participation in the development phase and will incorporate both youth and Elders from the various First Nation communities in the region. This project is in direct alignment with the West Coast Literacy plan and will have strong connections with SD 70's students and faculty, as well as contributing community Elders.

I look forward to the coming year and anticipate very positive outcomes regarding these projects, as they support literacy skills in the areas of problem solving, social skills, decision-making, reading, math, writing and technology.

Respectfully Submitted By;

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