

Vancouver Board of Education Annual Literacy Plan

July 2010

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Vancouver District Literacy Plan

Introduction

One of the Government of British Columbia's Great Goals is to make British Columbia the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction in North America. In support of this "Goal" the Ministry of Education has set as a priority "Improved literacy for all British Columbians."

Boards of Education are mandated, on or before July 15 of a school year, to establish and make available to the public a district literacy plan for the school year, setting out the plan for improving literacy in the district.

A District Literacy Plan is a statement of commitment by a school district to work with community partners to improve literacy locally- all part of ongoing community development. (ReadNow BC District Literacy Planning Guide))

The purpose of the Vancouver District Literacy Plan is to provide an update on the work and goals outlined in the 2009 Literacy Plan. It continues to be a summary of the collaborative work of the community literacy partners and a blue print for future action. The plan reflects the ongoing energy and commitment of all the partners who are working together to improve the lives of people working and living in communities throughout Vancouver.

Literacy Definition

The Core Purpose of the Vancouver Board of Education (VBE) is: It is our collective responsibility as a school district to ensure the highest quality of learning experiences for all learners, with a focus on engagement, learning and development in a safe, inclusive environment.

For the purposes of the plan, a definition of literacy that has been agreed upon by Literacy Now and ReadNow and that aligns with the VBE Core Purpose is being employed. Literacy is defined as "the broad set of skills that enable people to participate more fully in social, economic, family and community (ReadNow BC Literacy Planning Guide).

Vancouver Demographics

According to the 2006 Census, (Census Data, Statistics Canada) Vancouver has experienced a steady population growth rate of 5.9% since 2001. The population now exceeds 578,000 people. This growth is largely a result of immigration, both from within Canada and from other countries. Vancouver accounts for the second largest population change in Metro Vancouver. Population densities are increasing mainly in the downtown and in areas zoned for apartments. As well, densities are higher in the neighbourhoods on the east side of the city.

The City of Vancouver identifies 23 distinct neighbourhoods that make up Vancouver (City Of Vancouver Planning Department). The following table illustrates the population trends within each of the neighbourhoods using census population data. Of note are the population stability and/or growth in all neighbourhoods and the particular growth in density in the Downtown as well as Renfrew Collingwood on the east side of Vancouver.

Neighbourhoods	1976	2001	2006
Arbutus Ridge	12,870	14,515	16,144
Downtown	6,585	27,988	43,417
Dunbar-Southlands	19,635	21,308	21,478
Fairview	16,070	28,308	29,294
Grandview Woodlands	26,740	29,085	28,206
Hastings-Sunrise	28,530	33,055	33,127
Kensington-Cedar Cottage	34,105	44,556	44,664
Kerrisdale	13,410	14,033	14,618
Killarney	11,575	25,785	27,178
Kitsilano	33,910	39,621	40,597
Marpole	17,700	22,416	23,783
Mount Pleasant	19,970	24,539	23,616
Oakridge	10,670	11,793	12,726
Renfrew Collingwood	29,850	44,946	48,885
Riley Park	20,165	21,998	21,815
Shaughnessy	10,370	9,017	8,896
South Cambie	6,940	6,991	7,070
Strathcona	11,545	11,573	11,925
Sunset	24,355	33,423	35,231
Victoria-Fraserview	22,145	27,152	29,196
West End	37,515	42,103	44,556
West Point Grey	11,870	12,676	12,990
Total	426,525	546,976	579,412

According to the 2006 census data the percentage of the population under 25 years fell significantly from 1961 - 1981 but it has fallen only slightly since then. Because the total population increased between 1981 and 2006 there were 14,500 more children under 15 in 2006 than in 1981.

Housing is a significant indicator of income and social stability. Of the total number of privately owned housing, 48.1% are rented. Apartments account for 59% of all dwellings.

Half of Vancouver's population is made up of immigrants. Of this group 50% settled prior to 1991, 33.4% arrived between 1991 and 2000, and 16.7% arrived between 2001 and 2006. One quarter of Vancouver's population have Chinese as their mother tongue followed by Punjabi, Tagalong and Vietnamese.

The International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) is an international survey used to measure adult's ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities, at home, at work, and in the community. Scores are grouped in five levels. Adults at Level 1 have very low literacy skills and adults at Levels 4 and 5 have strong literacy skills and many strategies for dealing with complex materials. Level 3 has been validated as the proficiency level needed to fully participate and succeed in the modern, knowledge based society (Literacy BC at www.literacybc.ca).

According to Literacy BC, immigrants with a first language other than English have significantly lower literacy than other Canadians, with 60% below Level 3 according to the AILSS. This proportion does not improve with time and those immigrants who are here for 10 years or more have the same literacy profile as new arrivals. Two thirds of BC's working-age people at Level 1 are immigrants. (Literacy BC *Literacy in British Columbia* www.literacybc.ca).

Vancouver Community Literacy Planning Overview

Each of Vancouver's neighbourhoods is unique in its history, culture and population and each has developed resources and planning processes to meet the needs within their communities and to respond to the varied and significant changes. This has implications for literacy planning. A Vancouver Literacy Plan is a compilation of neighbourhood literacy plans.

But all of the neighbourhoods share similar challenges. High immigration, increasing numbers of seniors as well as young children, the isolation of families and residents due to multiple barriers of language, poverty, and access to transportation, housing, child care, information and appropriate services are issues that all communities face.

Literacy Planning in Vancouver Is currently focused in eight neighbourhoods as three additional neighbourhoods received funding this year. Legacies Now/Literacy Now working in partnership with the Vancouver Board of Education, Vancouver Public Library, Vancouver Community College and neighbourhood representatives identified criteria for allocating Literacy Now funding to support the neighbourhoods in the development and implementation of a Literacy Plan. The criteria included need, current levels of resources, and a community development model of planning within the neighbourhood. Need was determined by population trends, EDI scores, immigration patterns, languages spoken in the home, and the education and poverty levels of the residents.

The funding for development of literacy plans in Vancouver has been allocated incrementally over the past three years so the neighbourhoods are at different levels of planning and implementation.

The following report will provide an update on:

- a. the progress of each of the Community Literacy Plans,
- b. the Vancouver Literacy Neighbourhood Support Committee
- c. the Vancouver Learning City (VLC) initiative and the development of an alignment between the VLC and the Community Literacy Planning
- d. the Vancouver Board of Education literacy goals
- e. the VCC literacy programs and
- f. the Vancouver Public Library literacy activities

The Community Literacy Plans: Report on Progress

The following table outlines the eight neighbourhoods, the stewards of the Community Literacy Plans and the Literacy Outreach Coordinators in the neighbourhoods. Following the table are the updates from each of these neighbourhoods. Those neighbourhoods in the planning stage are presented first followed by the update from the neighbourhoods who are in year one and two of implementation.

Vancouver Literacy Neighbourhood Projects

Neighbourhood	Steward	LOC
Renfrew Collingwood Phase 3 second year	Collingwood Neighbourhood House Paula Carr Ex. Dir. pcarr@cnh.bc.ca or Jennifer Gray-Grant jgg1@shaw.ca	Julie Cheng chengfergus@lightspeed.ca Wenhuan Ren wenhuanr@hotmail.com (new)
Downtown Eastside Literacy Roundtable Phase 2	First United Mission Sandra Severs ssevers@firstunited.ca	Joanna Lemay dtes_literacy@joannalemay.org
Cedar Cottage Phase 2	Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House Donna Chang Ex. Dir. dchang@cedarcottage.org	Joanna Lemay kcc_literacy@joannalemay.org
South Vancouver Phase 2	South Van Neighbourhood House Wei Wei Siew weiwei@southvan.org	Joan Wright joan@southvan.org (new)
Mount Pleasant Phase 3 Second year	M.P. Neighbourhood House Jocelyne Hamel Ex. Dir jhamel@mpnh.org	Tracey Mann tmann@mpnh.org
Kitsilano Phase 2 and 3	Kits Neighbourhood House Catherine Leach Ex. Dir Catherine@kitshouse.org	Emily Palmer Emily@kitshouse.org
Marpole Phase 2	Marpole Oakridge Family Place Tracy Howard ED@mofp.org	Hiring
Kiwassa Phase 2	Kiwassa Neighbourhood House Nancy McRitchie Ex. Dir. NancyM@kiwassa.ca	Hiring

Community Literacy Plans July 2009 -July 2010

Community Literacy Plans: Phase 2 Developing the Plan

South Vancouver

Steward:

South Vancouver Neighbourhood House

Literacy Facilitator:

Christina Campbell

Community Served:

Sunset (south Vancouver)

Progress in the Development of the South Vancouver Community Literacy Plan

Task Group

David Thompson Secondary School, Community Schools Coordinator
John Oliver Secondary School, Community Schools Coordinator
John Oliver Secondary School, Principal
Langara College, Community Development Programs
Pacific Immigrant Resources Society (PIRS)
Progressive Intercultural Cultural Society (PICS)
South Hill Education Centre
South Vancouver Family Place
South Vancouver Literacy Planning Facilitator
South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, Community Development Worker
South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, Family Adult Team Leader
South Vancouver Neighbourhood House, South Asian Settlement
Sunset Community Centre, Youth Worker
South Community Health Centre, Community Developer
Vancouver Public Library, Fraserview Branch
Vancouver Public Library, Joe Fortes Branch & Literacy Steering Committee
Vancouver Public Library, South Hill Branch
Vancouver Board of Education & Literacy Steering Committee
Welcome to South Hill Initiative

Planning meetings

The task group met nine times from May to September 2009 and further communicated by email.

The community

Sunset is one of the most ethnically diverse neighbourhoods in south-east Vancouver. Sunset lies between E 41st Avenue, Ontario St, Knight St and the Fraser River. Rich in ethnic diversity, it is home to the Punjabi Market. Like most of south-east Vancouver, the area used to be predominantly working class but rising house prices elsewhere have made the area increasingly popular with young professionals and families who can no longer afford houses in areas such as the west side.

Community consultations

Six community consultations were held in June and July 2009. The approximately 113 participants included Sunset Literacy Task Group members, Sunset service providers and community residents.

The consultations were comprised of two neighbourhood forums. Invitations to forums were circulated via the South Hill Festival information table, emails to service providers, posters displayed at key community venues, and a public announcement in the local paper. Four consultations were facilitated through community groups and events: a workshop of the Welcome to South Hill Initiative, the South Asian Men's and Women's Senior's groups and the annual Summer Potluck at South Vancouver Family Place.

Gathering data

The Literacy Asset Survey allowed the task group to identify various aspects about programming in Sunset. They includes recognizing our success stories, learning about the additional services that community groups would like to implement and recognizing ways in which groups could improve their existing services.

Asset mapping

Sunset Literacy Asset Inventory: a survey was circulated via the Internet, facsimile, post or personal engagement to service providers in the community for the purpose of creating an inventory of literacy assets in the community. Refer to the Sunset Community Literacy Plan document in appendix C for the list of services and programs by age groups.

Communication

Members of the task group met nine times from May to September 2009 and further communicated by email. Agendas and minutes were distributed, and documents created by smaller working groups were circulated for approval and feedback. Decisions by the task group were made by consensus and in adherence to the Guiding Principles of the Literacy Now Community Programs.

Timeline

The Sunset Literacy Plan was submitted in October 2009 and was approved for implementation to begin May 1, 2010.

Vision for literacy

Sunset Community Literacy Plan: We envision the development of community hubs of learning: to support community and family building; to work together to share resources; to respond to the literacy needs of the community; to promote intercultural, inter-generational, and co-operative learning opportunities; and to recognize and utilize the literacy gifts within the community.

The central role of a community hub of learning is:

- A. To inform residents about community opportunities through the development of a range of communication tools and by strengthening service provider networking and partnerships.
- B. To develop strategies for removing barriers to participation.
- C. To encompass learning opportunities across the life-span.

Definition of literacy

The Sunset Community Literacy Plan used the International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey definition of literacy:

“[Literacy is] the ability to understand and use printed information in daily activities at home, at work and in the community - to achieve one’s goals, and to develop one’s knowledge and potential.”

Goals/objectives/actions

Goal 1: To identify and enhance ways for residents and service providers to have access to community spaces.

Goal 2: To inform residents about community opportunities through the development of a range of communication tools and by strengthening service provider networking and partnerships.

Goal 3: To develop peer mentoring programs in the community in order to enable community members to feel a sense of belonging and to participate more fully in community life.

Goal 4: To support food literacy in the community in the areas of food security, environmental sustainability and healthy living.

Goal 5: To enhance existing services, programs, and projects that support our literacy vision and to communicate new developments with residents and service providers.

*Refer to Sunset Community Literacy Plan for the actions for each of the goals.

Concluding comments

We are looking forward to continuing with the Literacy project and starting the Implementation phase.

Project Implementation will begin May 2010.
Literacy Outreach Coordinator: Joan Wright

Marpole Community

Steward:

Marpole Oakridge Family Place: Tracy Howard

Literacy Facilitator:

Kate Trethewey

Community Served:

Marpole

Progress in the Development of the Marpole Community Literacy Plan

Task group

Task Group Members		
Name	Title	Organization
Tracy Howard (Steward)	Executive Director	Marpole Oakridge Family Place
Andrea Little	Literacy Plan Coordinator	Vancouver School Board
Marisol Peterson	Community Schools Coordinator	Vancouver School Board
Debra Martel	District Principal-Aboriginal Education	Vancouver School Board
Eric Lau	Manager-Group and Community Services	S.U.C.C.E.S.S
Jan Weiten	Department Head- Basic Education Department	Vancouver Community College
Megan Langley	Branch Head	VPL_ Marpole Branch
Stefan Haag	Chair- English Department	Langara College
Angela Thomson	Acting Recreation Programmer 1	Marpole-Oakridge Community Centre
Community Supporters		
Name	Title	Organization
Lori Walker	Literacy Program Manager	2010 Legacies Now
Jacquie Hall	Principal	Sexsmith Elementary School

Planning meetings

Planning meetings were held, and the planning process is complete.

The community

Bordered by the communities of Kerrisdale, Oakridge and Sunset, Marpole is one of twenty-three communities in the city of Vancouver. Marpole is a South Vancouver community, **bounded by Angus Drive, 57th Avenue, Ontario Street and the Fraser River**. Marpole is one of the oldest communities in BC, first settled by non-natives in the mid-1800s.

Community consultations

Neighbour Surveys, Student Surveys, Program Provider Surveys, Focus Groups

Gathering data

Survey Monkey Tool, Focus Groups, Paper Surveys

Asset mapping

Used LBC Online Literacy Directory, and information provided by the Task Group

Communication

In person and via email

Timeline

Aug. 2009- May 2010

Vision for literacy

*A community where diversity is celebrated,
each member's contribution is maximized
and learning is accessible to all.*

Definition of literacy

A Wordle was created, and represents a visual definition of Literacy

Goals/objectives/actions

Goals

- 1) Create a communications process that will effectively and efficiently inform community members about programs and services in their community.
- 2) Ensure the long-term sustainability of current and new programs by increasing the capacity of service provider's access external funding sources.
- 3) Enhance service provider access to community spaces.
- 4) Increase community engagement.

Actions

- 1) Create a Literacy Round table to explore opportunities to work together on improving communication with all low literacy community members
- 2) Develop a closer connection/network with the community's multi-faith groups
- 3) Create an inventory of communication tools, including: print, online, networking etc.
- 4) Develop an action plan on how to improve communication tools (targeted at ESL families) using survey information and Round Table feedback
- 5) Disseminate communications action plan to service providers in the community

Downtown Eastside Vancouver

Project Steward:

First United Mission

Literacy Plan Facilitator:

Joanna Lemay

Community Served:

Downtown Eastside Vancouver

Progress in the Development of Downtown Eastside Literacy Plan

Downtown Eastside Literacy Roundtable Participating Organizations (in alphabetical order)

Aboriginal Front Door Society, Capilano University Community Development and Outreach Department, Carnegie Learning Centre, Carnegie Library, Downtown Community Court, Downtown East Adult Learning Centre (VSB), Hastings Education Centre (VSB), Learning Disabilities and Whole Life Learning Project, Literacy BC, NewStart, SFU Community Education Program, UBC Humanities 101, UBC Learning Exchange, Union Gospel Mission Education Program, Women's Information Safe Haven (WISH) Learning Centre, Vancouver Community College at First United Mission, Vancouver Community College at Harbour Light, Vancouver Eastside Educational Enrichment Society (VEEES)

Description of the DTES Community

The Downtown Eastside is in a unique position to create a literacy plan because, unlike many other neighbourhoods, a strong infrastructure and organization are already in place. For example, the DTES Literacy Roundtable is a group of service providers engaged in learning and literacy; it began meeting monthly about four years ago to collaborate and build capacity. Last year, librarian Emily Sobool created a DTES literacy resource inventory that demonstrated that numerous learning opportunities exist. Many DTES community profiles, visions, and asset maps already exist through the City of Vancouver and different community groups. The DTES is also a thoroughly, one might even say over-researched, neighbourhood, requiring special sensitivity in engaging and consulting residents without repeating oppressive research practices. The DTES prides itself on its strong community, volunteerism, social justice efforts, and cultural focuses. About seventy percent of the residents are low income and it is considered one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Canada. It is a place where people who are struggling with addictions, mental and physical health

challenges, and homelessness live and gather. It has many older people, Aboriginal people, people of Chinese ancestry, and people living alone. The process of creating a literacy plan for the Downtown Eastside will be unique because it will be a process of synthesizing and crystallizing a great deal of existing information, unearthing surprising gaps and needs, and taking things to the next level. In this context, our working definition is that: “Literacy means having the knowledge, skills and confidence to participate fully in our lives.”

Progress Summary

The DTES Literacy Roundtable and the First United Mission (the project’s steward) hired Joanna Lemay, the DTES Literacy Plan Facilitator, to begin work March 15, 2010. The existing Roundtable is equivalent to the literacy plan ‘task group’ and has continued to meet monthly since the launch of the planning process. Two action sub-groups have been organized to put extra attention to community outreach/communications and to community consultation and will meet between Roundtable meetings as needed.

To date, the work has focused on orientation, organization and working on connecting to existing plans and priorities instead of recreating the wheel. This has included meeting with community leaders and expanding the participation of the Roundtable. We have been documenting ideas as they come up although the consultation process has not technically started yet. We have also been discussing how to connect with synchronous opportunities, such as the Children’s Book Bank, a future Downtown Eastside-Strathcona Library, and the Vancouver Learning City Initiative. The community profile and resource inventory are well underway, largely based on existing documents.

As we are very much at the beginning of the planning process, we look forward to engaging in community consultation, data collection, asset mapping, visions, goals, objectives and writing the plan.

Timeline

- ✓ March - May: Introducing, organizing, orienting, strengthening Roundtable
- ✓ May - July: Communicating with and consulting community, identifying vision, goals and purpose, writing 1st draft of plan
- ✓ August - September: Completing community profile and resource inventory, analyzing and organizing findings and major themes; choosing focus for plan; writing 2nd draft of plan
- ✓ October: Finalizing DTES Literacy Plan; Roundtable and community partners approving plan; submitting plan to Legacies Now

Kensington-Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood

Steward:

Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House

Literacy Plan Facilitator:

Joanna Lemay

Community Served:

Kensington-Cedar Cottage

Kensington-Cedar Cottage Literacy Task Group Members Represent (in alphabetical order)

Cedar Cottage Community Garden, Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House, Family Services of Greater Vancouver, Gladstone Secondary, Vancouver Public Library- Kensington Branch, Laura Secord Elementary School, Lord Selkirk Elementary School, Minister of the Legislative Assembly, Refugee Family Newcomers Community Kitchen, Residents, Safeway Pharmacy, Vancouver Coastal Health

Progress Summary

Joanna Lemay, the KCC Literacy Plan Facilitator, was hired to begin work May 19, 2010 and launched the planning process that day at a neighbourhood inter-agency meeting. A task group has formed with a focus on resident participation. The group has met once to date and plans to meet every three to four weeks, with action groups and communication in between. The group has agreed how to work together, the purpose of the plan and the guiding principles. Community awareness and participation is already underway through a community announcement and sign up sheet that is circulating, as well as community festivities and events planned over the summer months.

As we are very much at the beginning of the planning process, we look forward to engaging in community consultation, data collection, asset mapping, visions, goals, objectives and writing the plan.

Timeline

- ✓ May-August: Introducing, organizing, orienting, strengthening Task Group; Communicating with and consulting community; Identifying vision, goals and purpose; Completing community profile and resource inventory; Writing 1st draft of plan
- ✓ September: Analyzing and organizing findings and major themes;
- ✓ October: Choosing focus for plan; writing 2nd draft of plan
- ✓ November: Finalizing KCC Literacy Plan; Task Group and community partners approving plan; submitting plan to Legacies Now

Kiwassa Neighbourhood

Steward:

Kiwassa Neighbourhood House

Contact:

Nancy McRitchie

Community Served:

North Hastings Sunrise / North Grandview Woodlands

Progress in the Development of the Kiwassa Community Literacy Plan

Initial Task Group: Consultations have begun with:

Vancouver Public Library - Hastings Branch, Templeton hub of schools, Kiwassa, Hastings Community Centre, VSB alternative high school, (to be expanded), Capilano University

Community Consultations

Preliminary consultations have been minimal so far, but have included discussion with: Hastings library, alternative high school here at Kiwassa, Templeton hub of schools coordinator, and discussions with members of the local community and Kiwassa staff.

Kitsilano Neighbourhood

Steward:

Catherine Leach, Executive Director. Kitsilano Neighbourhood House

Literacy Facilitator:

Emily Palmer

Community Served:

Vancouver’s Westside (Kitsilano, Arbutus Ridge & lower West Point Grey) The Kits/Westside Literacy Community Plan focuses on the neighbourhoods of Kitsilano, Arbutus Ridge and parts of Point Grey/ UBC Endowment Lands. The areas of Point Grey/ UBC Endowment lands that are included are Jericho Military Base, low-income/ BC housing near Jericho Beach.

Planning Process Timeline:

The Kitsilano/ Westside Literacy Planning Process occurred from January 2009- December 2009. For the purpose of this report, activities occurring between July 2009-December 2009 will be covered below.

Progress in the Development of the Kitsilano Community Literacy Plan

Task Group

NAME	ORGANIZATION OR INTEREST	INVOLVEMENT
Emily Palmer	Kitsilano Neighbourhood House - Volunteer Coordinator	Literacy Planning Facilitator
Catherine Leach	Kitsilano Neighbourhood House - Executive Director	Task Force Member & Project Steward
Diane Ash	West Side Family Place -Executive Director	Task Force Member
Daniela Esparo	Kitsilano Public Library -Branch Head	Task Force Member
Renee Chalut	VPL-Kitsilano Branch -Community Librarian	Task Force Member
Greg Laing	Point Grey Community Church -Pastor	Task Force Member
Sandra McKay	Vancouver Community College - Vancouver Regional Literacy Coordinator	Task Force Member
Andrea Little	Vancouver Board of Education & Literacy Support Committee	Task Force Member

Colleen van Winkel	ESL Outreach Department- Vancouver Community College- Assistant Department Head	Task Force Member
Leanne Evans	Vancouver Coastal Health- Community Developer	Task Force Member
Lisa McCune	Vancouver Coastal Health- Community Developer	Task Force Member
Les Smith	Vancouver School Board- West 2 Community School Coordinator	Task Force Member
John Braithwaite	Vancouver Police Department - Community Police Officer	Task Force Member
Janet Chung	Vancouver School Board- Settlement Worker in Schools	Task Force Member & 3Bs Club Organizer
Susan Declerck	Local resident & ESL teacher	Task Force Member

Planning meetings

Planning meetings rotated location and occurred on the following dates:

September 15th, 2009
November 3rd, 2009
December 1st, 2009

The community: a brief description

Kitsilano is located on Vancouver's Westside and is bordered by English Bay, 16th Avenue, Burrard Street and Alma Street. Geographically situated between West Point Grey and False Creek communities, Kitsilano spans 551 hectares and has a population of 40, 5951. Kitsilano is home to West Side Family Place, Kitsilano Library, Kitsilano Neighbourhood House, a community centre, a new community policing centre, one high school and four elementary schools.

West Point Grey, spanning 455 hectares is slightly smaller than neighbouring Kitsilano yet less than one third of the population at 12,990 residents. English Bay, 16th Avenue, Alma Street and the University Endowment Lands bound West Point Grey, adjacent to neighbouring Kitsilano². West Point Grey is the site of the Spanish Banks, Pacific Spirit Park, Jericho Beach, Jericho Military Base, West Point Grey library, a community centre, two high schools and five elementary schools. There is a number of BC Housing complexes and co-op housing in 'lower' West Point Grey near the water.

Arbutus Ridge neighbours Dunbar, Kitsilano, Kerrisdale and Shaughnessy communities. Bound by Mackenzie Drive, Puget Drive, East Boulevard, Maple

¹ http://vancouver.ca/community_profiles/kitsilano/index.htm

² http://vancouver.ca/community_profiles/west_point_grey/index.htm

Crescent, 16th Avenue and 41st Avenue³, it spans 369 hectares and has a population of 16,1454.

Arbutus Ridge maintains a strong Chinese population: 34.4% of residents identify Chinese as their mother tongue. Relative to Vancouver's population change over 5 years (5.9%) Arbutus Ridge has experienced significant population growth (11.2%) with a high number of recent (2001-2006) immigrants⁷. Arbutus Ridge is home to high numbers of children (aged 3-18) and baby boomers (aged 40-59 at time of last census) and boasts the highest senior population citywide⁵. In addition, a remarkable number of lone parents with low after-tax incomes reside in the neighbourhood. Arbutus Ridge is home to one secondary school and two elementary schools. Relative to its size, Arbutus Ridge has a lack of resources compared to other Vancouver neighbourhoods.

Community consultations & Gathering data

Online and postcard surveys were produced for both community members and for service providers. Surveys were circulated in a variety of ways including through emails, websites talking to people in the neighbourhood, community boards, various literacy programming and at a booth at Kitsilano Neighbourhood House's Autumn Fair.

We conducted 84 community literacy surveys and 13 service provider surveys throughout September and November 2009.

Four focus groups were conducted with the following groups: Kitsilano Neighbourhood House Seniors Drop-in, Steeves Manor Literacy Consultation, Youth Advisory Group & Literacy Potluck attendees.

Asset mapping

As part of the planning process, the Task Force worked on a Literacy Inventory to assess the current situation of literacy in our community. As the plan covered a number of Westside neighbourhoods, the inventory helped to identify the geographic distribution of literacy resources. Of note from the literacy inventory was the lack of literacy services in the Arbutus Ridge neighbourhood as well as the lack of affordable ESL programs. The Literacy Inventory was the basis for the assessment of the community's strengths, needs, opportunities and challenges.

Communication

Communication between Literacy Task Force members occurred at bi-monthly meetings, through e-mail and through the social media site NING. Communication about the plan to service providers occurred over email, at community events and through the Kitsilano Neighbourhood House website.

³ For purposes of this Literacy Plan, the area covered ends at 33rd Avenue.

⁴ http://vancouver.ca/community_profiles/arbutus_ridge/index.htm

⁵ City of Vancouver Social Indicators Report, March 2009

Timeline

July-August 2009

- Planning for community and service provider consultations and surveys
- Development of community profile and literacy inventory
- Focus group with senior's group- Kitsilano Neighbourhood House Seniors Drop-in

September 2009

- Community and Service Provider surveys distributed
- Focus group at Steeves Manor- BC housing complex
- Task force meeting- focused on cuts in literacy funding, especially the loss of regional literacy coordinator positions

October 2009

- Continued to distribute community and service provider surveys
- Had a health literacy booth (Vancouver Public Library) at Kitsilano Neighbourhood House featuring free books, surveys and health literacy information
- Focus group with youth-Kitsilano Neighbourhood House Youth Advisory Group

November 2009

- Family Literacy student did 15-hour practicum to support the planning process through assistance with literacy asset mapping, community interview and focus groups
- Task force meeting- focused on community assessment (strengths, opportunities, needs and challenges) and community literacy priority areas
- Literacy Potluck- with 80 attendees and performances by 3Bs Club (newcomer youth group from Lord Byng Secondary School)

December 2009

- Task force meeting- focused on development of the action plan
- Writing and finalizing Community Literacy Plan

Definition of literacy

Literacy is made of a person's skills and abilities that come from lifelong learning: reading, writing, numbers, computing, and other forms of knowledge. Literacy helps people share ideas, find information and learn new things so that they can function well in their community and reach their personal goals - Westside Literacy Task Force.

Goals/objectives/actions

The action plan was developed by the Kits/Westside Literacy Task Force. The discussions focused on our commitments to relationships and collaboration, capacity and strength building, sustainability and innovation.

Goal 1: To engage residents in supporting literacy programs through the recruitment, training and support of volunteers.

Action	Who	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Define goals & purpose of literacy volunteer training - Research existing literacy volunteer training and identify best practices - Develop partnerships with community programs to train and place literacy volunteers - Develop guidelines for volunteer placements - Develop a clearly defined strategy to support volunteers in an on-going way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literacy Task Force - Literacy Planning Facilitator - Community Literacy Programs - Volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteers - 2010 Legacies Now Community of Practice Website - Community Partners - Community Volunteer Program

Success Statements: We will know we have been successful when:

1. A diverse group of residents are trained in community literacy needs and supports and are placed in meaningful volunteer activities.
2. A number of programs in the community are benefiting from the placement of literacy- focused volunteers.

Goal 2: To support English language literacy programs for those in the greatest need.

Action	Who	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop English Conversation Circles - Build relationships with immigrant/newcomer organizations - Develop an immigrant/newcomer organization presence on the Westside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literacy Task Force - Literacy Planning Facilitator - Newcomers - Newcomer and Immigrant organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vancouver Public Library - Kitsilano Neighbourhood House - Vancouver School Board - Community Partners - Community Tables - 2010 Legacies Now Community of Practice Website

Success Statements: We will know we have been successful when:

1. More newcomer and immigrant organizations are connected to Westside community tables and service provider networks.
2. English Conversation Circles are developed and sustained over a period of two years and serve newcomer and immigrant populations in our community.
3. English Conversation Circles are supported by volunteers who have been trained in literacy.

Goal 3: To support and enhance current literacy programs and projects through collaboration with partners, sustainability planning and awareness building.

Action	Who	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued collaboration amongst service providers/ partners so literacy does not get lost in the face of other needs. - Continue to develop inventory of programs and services and promote these to the community. - Provide ongoing assessment and articulation of need in our community. - Develop a literacy sustainability plan for the Westside. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literacy Task Force - Literacy Planning Facilitator - Literacy Programs - Task Force Networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Tables - Partner and Task Group member websites and networks - Literacy Inventory - Potential funding streams and/or corporate sponsors - 2010 Legacies Now Community of Practice Website - Community Partner

Success Statements: We will know we have been successful when:

1. Service providers and residents are aware of literacy needs can refer residents or themselves to appropriate services.
2. A sustainability plan is developed for literacy on the Westside including funding sources, volunteer capacities and service provider networks.

Goal 4: To increase computer literacy among low-income residents and seniors by improving access to training and supports for computer literacy.

Action	Who	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify & remove barriers to accessing training and ongoing support - Map computer access sites and potential sites in our community - Partner with current computer training providers to enhance flexible access to computers and training. - Work with seniors to identify needs - Work with service providers to develop community literacy programs and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literacy Task Force - Literacy Planning Facilitator - Community Partners - Seniors - Low-income residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current computer access sites - Vancouver Public Library - Kitsilano Neighbourhood House - Community Access Portal (CAP) - 2010 Legacies Now Community of Practice Website - Community Partners

Success Statements: We will know we have been successful when:

1. There is an increase in computer literacy programs and public access computers in our community.
2. Seniors and low-income residents feel that they can access affordable computer training.
3. Seniors and low-income residents feel they can access computers and the internet.

Concluding comments

Service providers, residents and literacy advocates came together from January 2009, to focus on community literacy on the Westside of Vancouver. Starting in January 2010, these key stakeholders moved into the implementation stage. Throughout the last year, relationship building and community capacity building were emphasised. In addition to working within the community, we were also supported by the Vancouver Literacy Support Committee and the online Community of Literacy Practice developed by Legacies Now. These formal and informal networks within and outside of our neighbourhoods were essential to the planning and implementation processes.

As a result of over two hundred and twenty people providing feedback and ideas, four goals were identified as priorities for our community. The action plan for the Kits/Westside area includes engaging residents to support literacy work through volunteering, supporting newcomer English as a second language (ESL) literacy and working to sustain literacy work in the community. The action areas work on the strengths and opportunities within our community while addressing community needs. There is a lot of energy from the planning process, moving into the implementation stage.

Community Literacy Plans: Phase 3 Implementation

Kitsilano Neighbourhood

Steward:

Catherine Leach, Executive Director. Kitsilano Neighbourhood House

Literacy Outreach Coordinator:

Emily Palmer

Community Served:

Vancouver's Westside (Kitsilano, Arbutus Ridge & lower West Point Grey)

Implementation Process Timeline:

The Kitsilano/ Westside Literacy Implementation process began January 2010. For the purpose of this report, progress until May 2010 will be covered.

Task Group Participating Organizations

- Vancouver School Board- Settlement Worker in Schools & Community School Coordinator
- Vancouver Public Library
- Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
- Vancouver Coastal Health- Pacific Spirit Community Health Centre
- Brainboost Education
- Westside Family Place
- West Point Grey Community Church

Kitsilano 2009 Priorities /Objectives and Actions Addressed this Year

Goals & Actions

Goal 1: To engage residents in supporting literacy programs through the recruitment, training and support of volunteers

- Defined goals & purpose of literacy volunteer training and currently working on volunteer curriculum development
- Researched existing literacy volunteer training and English Conversation Circles best practices

Goal 2: To support English language literacy programs for those in the greatest need.

- Strategies for targeting those in greatest need will be discussed at the next Task Force meeting

Goal 3: To support and enhance current literacy programs and projects through collaboration with partners, sustainability planning and awareness building

- Developed partnership building strategies and outreach plan for working with newcomer/ immigrant organizations
- Funding applied for and received from Coast Capital Savings to support volunteer training and newcomer program development

Goal 4: To increase computer literacy among low-income residents and seniors by improving access to training and supports for computer literacy

- Community Access Site intern (Kitsilano Neighbourhood House) worked with Kitsilano Public Library to develop computer tutoring and self-help resources for public access sites
- Developed and filled volunteer role for public computers at Kitsilano Neighbourhood House to offer basic computer literacy training 2 times a week.
- Working on offering volunteer computer service in two other locations (Steeves Manor- West Point Grey & Pacific Spirit Health Centre (Kerrisdale))

Target populations

- ESL Newcomers
- Low- income residents
- Seniors

Collaborations

- Building Welcoming and Inclusive Neighbourhoods- Kitsilano Neighbourhood House Community Organizer sits on the Task Force and has been involved in a variety of ways including meeting bi-weekly with the Literacy Coordinator on partnership building and newcomer resources.
- Settlement Worker in School (SWIS) workers- Worked together on the Literacy Potluck (November 2009) and continue to work collaboratively on newcomer resources including on the development of English Conversation Circles.
- Explorative and information sharing meetings on expanding services for newcomers on the Westside of Vancouver with Immigrant Services Society of BC (ISS), Collingwood Neighbourhood House and North Shore Neighbourhood House
- Sharing of resources and best practices through the online Community of Literacy Practice (2010 Legacies)
- Vancouver Literacy Support Committee. On-going meetings
- Fraser Valley & Lower Mainland Literacy Coordinator Meeting- arranged by 2010 Legacies April 2010

Existing Resources

- Strong commitment from literacy task force leading into the implementation stage. Terms of Reference developed for this stage
- 2010 Legacies Now funding to support implementation for 2 years
- Strong volunteer potential

New Resources

- Funding through Coast Capital Savings to support the Welcoming Neighbours Project- \$10,000. This will support the development and implementation of volunteer training and the development of Newcomer out-trips and socials
- UBC Summer Intern Student will be working on various aspects of the implementation Summer 2010
- New Literacy Task Force Members including a local educator and community organizer

Evaluation Strategies

Evaluation processes are part of an implementation logic model and are built into all program development such as the volunteer training, English Conversation Circles and Computer Literacy tutoring. There is evaluation tools connected to each of the following outcomes.

Outcomes

Our outcomes goals for the implementation are as follows:

- Key literacy stakeholders on the Westside are engaged in community action.

- Residents are engaged in supporting literacy programs through volunteer recruitment, training and support.
- English literacy programs for those in the greatest need are developed and supported on the Westside.
- Current literacy programs and projects are supported and enhanced through collaboration with partners, sustainability planning and awareness building.
- Computer literacy increases among low-income residents and seniors through increased computer access and training.

Factors Contributing to Success

Informal and formal networks within and outside the community

- Expertise and commitment of the Task Force

Factors presenting challenges

- Perception that there is lack of need on the Westside
- Connecting with vulnerable population due to stigma, location or lack of connection to other services

Planning 2010/2011

New opportunities, challenges, changes, trends or issues in the community that impact literacy planning

Cuts to funding throughout many sectors especially at the Board of Education impacted us at the community level in terms of availability of time to commit to plan implementation. The cut for the position of regional literacy coordination also impacted coordination at that level. With cuts at the Vancouver Public Library, West Point Grey is the only branch location in the area that has been affected with a reduction in staff hours but information staff can still be relied upon to assist in implementing the Literacy Plan with the Area Branch (Kitsilano) Daniela Esparro taking the lead. The Literacy Plan is a priority for North Area libraries.

New opportunities did arise in terms of the Vancouver Literacy Support Committee especially in work with Vancouver Learning City with their strategic goals of “visible engagement around ‘learning’ as an important issue on Vancouver’s “agenda” - as evidenced by its appearance in the City’s policy and program lexicon; events coordination and turnout among diverse constituent groups; and media engagement. Advocacy and awareness was identified as a need in our community and work at the city level can be impactful at the community level.

Demographic trends clearly indicated that the Westside has increasing numbers of newcomers. Outreach, as we implement the literacy plan, creates new opportunities for community engagement throughout the process.

Changes to the plan

There have been no changes to the plan but the Task Force will be working to strategize around the goals and strategies for collaborating with newcomer and immigrant organizations.

Goals/ objectives and actions

As of May 2010, our priorities are:

- The development and implementation of volunteer training (Spring/ Summer 2010)

Continuing to work on outreach and relationship building with newcomer and immigrant organizations and looking for opportunities to provide services on the Westside

- Development of English Conversation Circles extending the reach of computer literacy services throughout the Westside

Evaluation strategies

Evaluation for implementation of the Literacy Plan has been developed into a monitoring framework covering 2010 & 2011.

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood

Steward:

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House (Association of Neighbourhood Houses of BC)

Literacy Outreach Coordinator:

Tracey Mann

Community Served:

Mount Pleasant

Task Group Participating Organizations:

Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House
Vancouver Public Library - Mount Pleasant Branch
Vancouver Community College
Frontier College
Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre
Mount Pleasant Family Centre
Native Education College
Alliance for People's Health
Broadway Youth Resource Centre
La Bousolle YMCA Nanook House

Vision for literacy in the community:

A community where the capacity exists for all citizens to participate in and contribute positively to society. (From initial planning process.)

Mount Pleasant 2009 Priorities /Objectives and Actions Addressed this Year

Goals

Supported by the vision and guiding principles, three goals were identified and prioritized based on progressive community development.

1. Improve awareness of community literacy among citizens and service providers in an effort to improve access to services.
2. Establish mechanisms to improve collaboration and communication among service providers that leads to enhanced services and improved access to community literacy for citizens.
3. Support the sustainability of current and new programs through partnerships.

Actions

- Developed a network for collaboration
- Created and supported new partnerships to meet the needs in the community
- Supported existing programs by seeking out funding
- Hosted “Worlds of Wisdom on October 24, 2009
- Hosted a family literacy walk a literacy event in the neighbourhood through Jane’s Walk on May 2nd
- Raised the profile of literacy programs in the community
- Conducted outreach to marginalized communities through literacy programming

Target population

All community members including, families, new immigrants, seniors, adult learners, and community members who are multi-barriered.

Collaborations

- Vancouver Public Library, Vancouver Community College, Frontier College, Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, and Vancouver School Board were the main organizers of the literacy fair, and several other agencies participated during the event - Mount Pleasant Family Centre, Native Education College, Alliance for People’s Health, and the management of Kingsgate Mall.
- Vancouver Community College and Vancouver Native Education College are exploring future programming possibilities related to Adult Basic Education offered as satellites in various locations.
- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House has collaborated with Broadway Youth Resource Centre, Vancouver Native Health, Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre and Vancouver Coastal Health to develop a family drop in for Urban Aboriginal Families.
- Frontier College provided literacy and tutoring supports to the children in Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House’s summer camp, located at Florence Nightingale School.
- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, Frontier College and Langara College collaborated to run Community Literacy and Learning Circles for Immigrant Women. (The seeds of this program were sown during the planning phase.)
- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House collaborated with Vancouver School Board to host Mother Goose programs.
- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House and Broadway Youth Resource Centre collaborated on a youth-driven arts-based project, Citizens in Transition, aimed at developing civic literacy and community engagement, and developed a youth service providers network. Currently the network is building capacity in youth through a train-the-trainer program (provide in-kind by the City of

Vancouver). The youth trainers will then engage other youth in an asset-mapping project.

- Vancouver Coastal Health, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House, La Boussole, Broadway Youth Resource Centre, and Mount Pleasant Family Centre have collaborated to redesign and launch a service provider's network with the goal of bringing community agencies together to build capacity and skills. For example, sessions delivered by community partners included introductions to Appreciative Inquiry, Capacity Building 101, and supporting / integrating volunteers with barriers such as low English language skills; and facilitated discussions on gentrification and homelessness in our community. The goal of the coming year will be to identify additional topics related to civic and community issues that affect the community, service providers and our participants.

Existing Resources

The Legacies Now funding primarily contributes to the wages of the LOC, and a small portion of funds is used for implementation of activities such as the literacy fair.

- Additional Estimated Resources for Worlds of Wisdom Literacy Fair Event Only:
 - \$3800
 - 80 hours of volunteer time: \$1200 (estimated at \$15.00 per hour)
 - Space at Kingsgate Mall: \$2000
 - Snacks and books / materials / prizes: \$500
 - Storyteller wages (paid for by VPL): \$100

Other in-kind resources:

- Successful grant applications resulted in \$7500 in literacy supplies for community partners.
- Community partners are providing space in-kind for a variety of activities supporting literacy (for example, MPNH provides free space for Learning is First, VPL and MP Community Centre is providing free space for seniors programming conducted by MPNH, VPL provides staff resources to support family literacy in other sites such as MPNH, Mount Pleasant Family Place, local schools, etc.
- Think City provided training and support related to organizing Jane's Walks, and provided infrastructure (registration, advertising, etc.) for the Alphabet Walk Family Literacy walk.
- Frontier College, Langara College and MPNH supported and implemented Community Literacy and Learning Circles for immigrant women largely through in-kind resources. Secured \$10,000 grant from Vancity towards a project which supported the financial literacy and asset mapping / civic engagement portion of the project.
- New Resources
- Train-the-trainer for volunteer computer trainer/tutors

- Currently established partnership with UBC learning exchange to develop a train-the-trainer course for volunteer computer trainers (UBC is focusing on “facilitator” training, we are working on the content for computer training).
- Frontier College is supporting the effort by sharing volunteer training resources.
- Four community partners have expressed interest in hosting the volunteer training and supporting

Evaluation Strategies

- We have used an interview / survey process to see how service providers understand community literacy, to assess how the program is working for the community, to identify barriers to participation, to better understand the long term needs and vision of community partners and to develop our goals for the future.

Outcomes

- Improved awareness of community literacy: the literacy fair and the newsletter were mechanisms to increase awareness of literacy and programs in our community. The fair, in particular, broadened the audience as it was held at the Kingsgate Mall, which enabled us to reach a broad spectrum of community members.
- Increased collaboration related to literacy: The most successful aspect of the initiatives is the collaboration between organizations who have used the knowledge and capacities that exist within their organizations to build programs that meet the needs of the community. We are impressed by the range and scope of “community literacy” activities and initiatives, and this project has helped the community to better map the existing collaborations and services in a way that goes beyond a mere list.

Factors Contributing to Success

- The task group was incredibly supportive of the work, and helped to create linkages and partnerships.
- There is a strong culture of collaboration among service providers in our community.

Factors presenting challenges

- Community partners are stretched and it is difficult for them to attend meetings, particularly for smaller organizations, so participation in the task group meetings was inconsistent.
- Despite the broad definition of Community Literacy (which includes family literacy, essential skills, health and media literacy, etc.), some community partners did not engage in the process because they could not see the relevance to their programs. There is still a perception that literacy targets

reading, writing and numeracy, and although many agencies support community literacy through civic engagement, computer training, and other activities, they do not necessarily identify these activities as literacy.

- The above factors made it challenging for the LOC to actually meet with community partners, as it takes time away from direct services. For example, one of our goals was to create a newsletter highlighting various programs, and the LOC found it really challenging to get appointments with people so she could interview them about their literacy programs.
- Additionally, with the Literacy Fair, several key agencies, such as the schools in the neighbourhood were unable to participate, and we had last minute cancellations from various other agencies.

Planning 2010/2011

New opportunities, challenges, changes, trends or issues in the community that impact literacy planning

The community of Mount Pleasant is experiencing the following changes:

Demographic/Economic: Mount Pleasant is a community in transition, with increasing gaps in the socio-economic abilities of our residents. In large parts of the community, housing prices and rents are increasing; and therefore affordable housing for low-income families is becoming scarce. While the average income in the neighbourhood increased (according to Census 2006 data), areas in Mount Pleasant—such as the north east and south east areas bordering the communities of Grandview Woodlands and Kensington-Cedar Cottage continue to have large numbers of low income families.

We have also seen an increasing number of homeless (and near-homeless) individuals in the community, and our agency participated in dialogues with service providers and the City of Vancouver regarding emergency supports for the homeless during the winter months. Plans for building social housing with 100 single-room-occupancy (SROs) are in place, and we anticipate that this will be completed in the next two years. This facility will provide 30 SROs for at-risk-youth, and 70 for people with mental health challenges. The facility will provide space for one of our community partners—Broadway Youth Resource Centre—who will provide services to the 30 youth. However, the facility will be one block away from Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House, thus we anticipate a need for more services to the non-youth residents once the facility is completed.

The neighbourhood continues to have high numbers of immigrants with second languages other than English, and has one of the highest percentages of urban Aboriginal populations in the City of Vancouver. In our planning process we identified an emerging need for services for immigrant and Aboriginal populations, and some new partnerships have emerged to address these issues.

Community Partners and Services: A new community centre has been built in our community, which houses the local Vancouver Public Library-Mount Pleasant Branch. The library has been set up with space for early childhood development and family literacy activities, and an adjoining space is internet accessible and set up for computer savvy adults and young people. Additionally, a community room is available for programming, and Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House has already started to offer workshops for seniors in this space. While the topics are largely driven by the senior's interests and needs, some of the sessions have related to health literacy. Additionally, the community centre has provided space for MPNH to run recreational activities for seniors, such as line dancing and other activities. The library has worked with MPNH and YMCA-Nanook Centre to participate in an Alphabet Walk, which promoted family literacy and was a part of "Jane's Walk", a city-wide initiative commemoration Jane Jacobs, and urban activist.

The planning process and implementation of the plan has supported the development and strengthening of several community partnerships, which are elaborated on below.

Changes to the plan

The changes to the plan were to focus more time and energy on raising the profile of programs in the community, to develop a train the trainers session for computer literacy classes and to support service providers by supporting grant writing and building capacity within organizations.

Evaluation strategies

We will use an interview / survey process to see how service providers understand community literacy, to assess how the program is working for the community, to identify barriers to participation, to better understand the long term needs and vision of community partners and to develop our goals for the future.

Renfrew-Collingwood Community

Steward:

Collingwood Neighbourhood House Society

Literacy Outreach Coordinator:

Julie Cheng (Year 2) and Wenhuan Ren (Year 3)

Community Served:

Renfrew-Collingwood

Task Group Participating Organizations:

Vancouver Public Library - Collingwood Branch
Vancouver School Board - Windermere Family of Schools
Vancouver Coastal Health - Evergreen Health Centre
Collingwood Neighbourhood House
Learning Disabilities Association
Local residents, including Chinese senior resident

Also involved in the Working Groups:

Renfrew Park Community Centre
Residents and other Collingwood Neighbourhood House staff

Vision for literacy in the community

A diverse learning community that encourages, challenges, supports and nurtures all residents to participate, master and share what interests them.

Renfrew-Collingwood 2009 Priorities /Objectives and Actions Addressed this Year

Goals

Priority 1: Know Our Neighbourhood

- Expand and focus community mapping around school catchment areas
- Link community mapping to transportation to and from programs and services
- Map the gifts and skills of residents in a skills inventory

Priority 2: Connect Residents

- Connect residents to appropriate programs
- Strengthen outreach using and expanding community assets such as Cultural Connectors

- Identify and remove barriers to participation
- Create a safe and welcoming environment that encourages residents to acknowledge and share their gifts and needs
- Create a culture that recognizes all residents have gifts and skills that they can contribute to the community
- Acknowledge resident leadership and find ways to empower them and build on their strengths
- The initial focus is on adults, immigrants and seniors.

Actions

- **Created working groups**
 - The literacy committee agreed to participate on two working groups in two priority areas: mapping and connect residents. The entire committee meets every other month and the working groups in between.
- **Mapping Group**
 - Explored different mapping systems, met with a mapping consultant and worked with the City of Vancouver's GIS department
 - Started to update community directories and hired a mapping coordinator
- **Connect Residents Group**
 - Recruited a Cantonese, Mandarin and Vietnamese-speaking Cultural Connector to meet with community groups. The result is an ESL class started at Collingwood Neighbourhood House through a partnership with SUCCESS.
 - Recruited a Tagalog Cultural Connector, who has brought in Filipino residents, and the Filipino seniors are now participating with the Chinese seniors in the ESL class and providing tutoring for different English levels.
 - Initiated discussion with two elementary schools on a seniors independence grant to connect isolated caregivers and grandparents to school programs. Funding application was unsuccessful but provided impetus for UBC Learning Exchange to start a Conversation Café for Grenfell School parents and caregivers (see attached article "English Practice for Parents Is a Success at Grenfell.")
 - The Chinese Cultural Connector recruited to assist the UBC Learning Exchange in promoting their class has taken UBC's class facilitation training. She has brought her new skills back to the Chinese seniors and has started a separate class focusing on English conversation and cultural exchange between the Chinese and Filipino seniors.
 - Developed multi-language guide with phrases around market buying and paying for multicultural market running five Sundays starting July 26, 2009 (see attached "Summer Market Language Guide")

- Developed an ESL page called “Read On!” for the monthly local paper, the Renfrew-Collingwood Community News, along with online teacher resources and podcasts (see attached “Read On!” pages)
- **Recruited onto the committee residents**

Catherine Wong (Chinese senior) and Linda Tang as active members and others like Ashok Rattan (Punjabi-speaking Settlement Coordinator with the Richmond Multicultural Society), who want to remain informed through minutes; January Wolodarsky, CNH Director of Community Development, for the Connect Residents Working Group; and Nancy Reynolds, Community Recreation Coordinator at Renfrew Park Community Centre, and resident Robert Allen for the Mapping group.

Target population

Adults, immigrants and seniors

Collaborations

- English classes. Collaborating with the UBC Learning Exchange’s School-Based ESL Conversation Program and SUCCESS’s Immigrant Seniors Project have resulted in learning from both sides. UBC’s model to create a sustainable program of volunteer learners-facilitators-in-training has not resulted in the volunteers coming forward as expected due, in part, to neighbourhood characteristics; however, one of CNH’s Cultural Connectors through our literacy project is one of the facilitators-in-training and assists in translating and promoting and leading the class. She has brought her training to create a new class for Chinese and Filipino seniors aimed at conversation and cultural exchange. SUCCESS is learning that senior residents like to find out more about local resources rather than traveling long distances for programs and services.
- ESL page. After consulting with local English classes, the RCC News started publishing an ESL page, written by an ESL teacher and with podcasts and teachers’ resources available online
- Mapping. Partnership with the City of Vancouver and Renfrew Park Community Centre on community mapping. Comprehensive outreach to local organizations to map their programs and services
- Committee members raise awareness of literacy initiatives to constituency groups, mobilize network to participate and share information, knowledge and resources
- Working with Cultural Connectors to broaden awareness of literacy initiatives among ethnic groups and to gather information on their literacy needs
- Market language guide. Worked with the Collingwood Multicultural Summer Market coordinator on the market language guide
- Discussions with the Leadership Institute on opportunities to provide leadership-building classes to culturally diverse residents

- Discussions with Ideas Gathering coordinator on linking together working groups with common interests

Existing Resources

In addition to Legacies Now funding, there are in-kind contributions:

- \$8,500 from Renfrew-Collingwood committee members, SUCCESS and UBC volunteers
- \$1,500 in meeting space from Evergreen Health Centre and Grenfell school

New Resources

Future actions to explore include working together with such community groups as Ideas Gathering, Citizen’s Summit and Learning Neighbourhood committees to leverage their resources

Evaluation Strategies

Residents have given us feedback and told us stories on how the literacy project has improved their lives.

“There are now 40 people coming to the exercise and English classes, including 15 Filipinos. It’s good for our health to get out, be with friends, do activities and learn English. Sometimes the seniors don’t feel like going out, but there’s a place they can come to with people they know and it makes them happy.” –Catherine Wong, resident and literacy committee member

“My dad and my mom, Corazon Maming, moved here two years ago. They’re seniors and it’s a challenge for them to embrace a new environment and country. I asked my mom to join the ESL program. She can read and understand English but the confidence was not there. When she moved here, she wouldn’t even pick up the phone. She was so afraid of making a mistake. When she joined the Chinese ESL class, she found out she wasn’t the only one having these challenges. She started to mentor and coach the Chinese seniors, exchange cultural information. Every day she would come home with stories of their culture. She became one of the leaders of the class, even challenging the teacher sometimes. In the Philippines, my mom had wanted to be an elementary school teacher and wasn’t able to fulfill that dream. After the ESL class, the Settlement group at Collingwood Neighbourhood House invited her to become a Cultural Connector. Now you cannot stop her from talking. I cannot believe what she is doing now. She would go to Filipino markets and tap on seniors’ shoulders—would you like to join?—and go to the Skytrain station and give out flyers. She doesn’t like to exercise, but now she goes around the park with the goal to meet people and invite them to the program. She’s recruited a lot of Filipino former teachers. They’re helping coach the Chinese seniors. Now they have submitted an application for the Neighbourhoods Small Grant to reach out to more seniors. I’m just thrilled to see her bloom.” –Karen Caguioa, resident and CNH office staff

“I talk with other ESL teachers and they say there is a great need for ESL learning resources with local content. This ESL page in the local paper and the online teacher resources will be popular.” –Jennifer Gray-Grant, resident and Assistant to CNH Executive Director

We are reporting our progress at our committee meetings and at Vancouver Literacy Support meetings.

Outcomes

- 2 ESL classes, through collaborations with SUCCESS and the UBC Learning Exchange, have resulted in parents, caregivers and seniors learning English, becoming less isolated and participating more in community life in a comfortable classroom setting close to their home
- UBC Learning Exchange is planning to expand their Conversation Café model at Grenfell to another school, widening the scope of learning at local elementary schools to include more parents and caregivers
- ESL page in the monthly local newspaper, RCC News, as well as podcasts and ESL teacher resources added monthly to the RCC News website support student learning and encourage them to submit their writings to the paper
- Chinese seniors are interacting with more people and programs in the community. They are becoming organized as a group, voicing their needs and applying for their own funding
- Updates of community directories, to be mapped online, will better connect residents to local programs and services
- Cultural Connector program has expanded with a Tagalog-speaking Connector, resulting in increased diversity of cultures participating in the literacy project and community life
- Chinese Cultural Connector has gained new skills in class facilitation and is designing and leading her own class, encouraging conversation and cultural exchange between Chinese and Filipino seniors

Factors Contributing to Success

- **Contributions by Cultural Connectors**
 - The Cultural Connectors have expanded their skills; we’ve added a Tagalog-speaking Cultural Connector and expanded our reach to more people in culturally diverse groups
 - The Tagalog Cultural Connector was a previously isolated resident. Now she has increased her connections to people and her community
- **New committee members with language abilities**
 - New Chinese-speaking committee members bring a fresh perspective on local literacy needs and they are participating more in community life. The Chinese senior who has joined the literacy committee is connecting our

project to a key isolated group. She speaks of gaining confidence as she contributes in various ways to her community and takes on a leadership role

- **Leveraging strong neighbourhood networks**
 - Links with Evergreen Community Health Centre clients have been strengthened since the Chinese seniors exercise group and ESL group have been meeting at Evergreen. Staff and one client have noticed the group and were interested in getting involved. In future, the Chinese seniors will feel more comfortable attending other activities at the health centre
 - Updating the community directory for mapping purposes has uncovered a huge turnover of programs and services. The community will benefit from the updated information as residents will find it easier to become connected to the programs and services they need
- **Project seeks inclusion and participation and builds community connections**
 - Relationships built with local ESL classes have encouraged students to submit their writings to the Read On! ESL page
 - Chinese residents voiced their literacy needs and had a hand in designing an English class that works for them
- **Information exchange among task group committee members**
 - Connections through the Vancouver School Board's Community Schools Team laid the foundation for UBC conversation classes starting at Grenfell school
- **We are sharing our experiences** with other neighbourhoods coming on board the literacy project as one of two pilots in Vancouver.

Factors presenting challenges

- **Accessibility:** The availability of space is a constant problem. For example, our SUCCESS class has outgrown its classroom, but there is no suitable larger space available at present. There needs to be a concerted effort to locate such space in the community and make it available to residents.
- **Sufficiency:** More residents are needed to take on leadership roles as facilitators and educators. For example, encouraging residents to contribute their skills in the classroom. Appropriate leadership development support needs to be made readily available to help them get started.
- **Sustainability:** Evaluation procedures need to be developed and implemented to ensure initiatives are both economically and ecologically sustainable. Criteria should be developed collaboratively by program administrators, leaders and participants.

Planning 2010/2011

New opportunities, challenges, changes, trends or issues in the community that impact literacy planning

- **Cultural Connections:** Increase involvement of Cultural Connectors. The Cultural Connectors in the community have made an impact by connecting people from diverse cultures to local programs and services and by giving them a vehicle to voice their needs in their community. For example, a Tagalog resident who was previously isolated was found through this project and has become a Cultural Connector, linking the Filipino community to local resources.
- **Local Collaborations:** Organizations are increasingly coming into the Renfrew-Collingwood neighbourhood, adopting our collaborative approach and making good use of resources. Their participation offers opportunities for improving the resources we can provide.
- **Outreach to Chinese Seniors:** This initiative to include seniors who were previously isolated and not attending programs in the local community, has resulted in an opportunity to form a local Chinese seniors committee with residents that seek their own funding and design their own programs.
- **Neighbourhoods of Learning:** The Renfrew-Collingwood Neighbourhood Learning Community Committee includes elementary and secondary schools, neighbourhood groups, residents and service providers from Renfrew-Collingwood. The committee is working to build a diverse learning community in this neighbourhood and there are potential collaborations with our literacy project.
- **Welcoming Schools:** Through the Renfrew-Collingwood Neighbourhood Learning Community Committee we intend to look at the possibility of welcoming programs being offered in local schools for a wider range of newcomers than just the school-age participants coming to individual schools.
- **City Ideas Gathering:** Uncertainty over funding to City of Vancouver programs, such as CityPlan, has slowed the work of the City's Ideas Gathering community development initiative in our community. In response the community has hired its own community developer to move on the ideas gathered from citizens in 2008 and 2009.
- **Citizens Summit:** A new citizen's initiative resulting from the local Citizen's Summit has generated excellent ideas for improving civic/public engagement in Renfrew-Collingwood. These initiatives, along with the literacy project, are helping build a solid foundation for a learning community.

Changes to the plan

In Year 2 we developed and introduced new programs that focused on Know Our Neighbourhood and Connect Residents. In Year 3 we will continue to seek opportunities to build on resident leadership and needs, to develop more and different programs and find ways to sustain them.

Goals/ objectives and actions

Year 3 implementation will focus on the following three remaining strategies from the Renfrew-Collingwood Literacy Plan report submitted in November 2008:

1. Connect Service Providers

In order to better link service providers to the social capital that exists in the neighbourhood, we intend to encourage the active participation among local service providers in our community mapping project.

2. Expand Capacity

We intend to improve the effective utilization of existing resources by expanding capacity on the basis of identified needs and focussing on more efficient delivery of service. This includes:

- reducing duplications of resources and service while at the same time developing an accessible, comprehensive and sustainable set of program options
- working together with community service providers who have the training, skills and cultural capacity to build community-based programs in order to develop and implement new programs
- fostering resident leadership and the collaborative development of local initiatives for sustainable lifelong learning

3. Develop Programs

We plan to address the local demand for literacy, numeracy and sociolinguistic skills for Canadian-born adults and new immigrants by focussing initially on seniors in programs that are sustained by concrete resources and in-kind support from public, private and community organizations

Evaluation strategies

CNH is often cited as a model of asset-based community development practice. Measuring outcomes is sometimes a struggle because our assets are unpredictable. They are human. Progress for us follows a non-linear path (we are no assembly line), full of small successes and failures. Over the past few years we have been using an appreciative inquiry approach to capture the best of what we do and basing our strategic planning on what we find. It's a good fit with our organizational goals and culture.

Summary of the Community Literacy Plans

Community literacy planning is a community development process. In each of the Vancouver communities, organizations and residents work together to develop a vision for their neighbourhood and set goals and an action plan that builds on the strengths within their community.

But there are common threads throughout their plans and many of the established goals have been identified in most if not all neighbourhoods.

The lack of community/program space is a recurring issue throughout the city. Most neighbourhoods have set “identifying space” as a goal. The goals of working in partnership, seeking additional resources, building on existing programs, developing outreach, recruiting and training volunteers and developing resident leadership are hindered by the lack of space to provide these enhanced programs and services.

The significant focus areas for neighbourhoods include: developing effective communication strategies, supporting organizational and resident networks, increasing the range of ESL programs and resources, building in program sustainability, providing computer literacy for seniors and low income adults and families and increasing and supporting community participation, engagement, leadership, and peer mentorship. The strategies are varied and unique to each neighbourhood.

District Literacy Plans can be viewed on the 2010 Legacies Literacy Now website at www.2010legaciesnow.com/literacy_now_communities/

The Vancouver Neighbourhood Literacy Planning Support Committee

The role of the Committee is to oversee the development of the Community Literacy Plans, ensure alignment with an overall vision for a Vancouver Literacy Plan and provide support and resources to the neighbourhoods as they identify priorities and establish goals for their community. The Committee is a cross-sectoral group representing the Vancouver Board of Education, the Vancouver Public Library, the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Community College, and community organizations. Each of the communities working on developing or implementing a Community Literacy Plan sits on the Committee.

Work of the Committee: 2009/2010

The Committee met four times over the winter and spring. The work of the Committee this past year has included:

- identifying three new neighbourhoods to receive Literacy Now funding
- meeting with the neighbourhoods to provide background information and support documents
- continuing to provide a venue for updates and sharing information and issues from all the neighbourhoods
- updating the neighbourhoods on provincial planning
- updating the neighbourhoods on city-wide initiatives such as Vancouver Learning City
- supporting the new neighbourhoods in the development of their community literacy plan
- reviewing and providing Committee input into the development of the District Literacy Plan
- working with the neighbourhoods to develop a process for coordinating their work with the development of the District Literacy Plan and aligning with city wide initiatives

VBE Literacy Plan Facilitator

The role of the part-time VBE Literacy Plan facilitator has continued to be one of liaising and communicating between the community literacy planning initiatives in the eight neighbourhoods and the Vancouver Literacy Support Committee. An important role was supporting the new neighbourhoods in the development of their literacy plan. The facilitator attended the meetings and community consultations in each of the neighbourhoods as well as provided administrative support to the Vancouver Literacy Committee.

As the VBE will no longer be providing a facilitator to support the work of the Committee and the neighbourhood Task Groups, the facilitator has been working with the Committee to create a neighbourhood reporting template for the development of an integrated and comprehensive District Literacy Plan in 2011. This change will require the Literacy Outreach Coordinators in the eight neighbourhoods to assume more responsibility for coordination and involvement in the development of the Plan.

The Vancouver Learning City

The Vancouver Learning City is a coalition of organizations and individuals in Vancouver who support lifelong learning. Its intent is to build a culture of learning throughout the City. (www.vancouverlearningcity.ca)

The guiding vision of the Learning City is: “Vancouver is a place which recognizes values, enables and celebrates learning; a place where all sectors work together to ensure access to learning; a place where residents recognize learning as an essential and integral part of their lives; a place where residents take responsibility for learning throughout their lives.

The initiative is spearheaded by a voluntary, informal board referred to as VLC Working Group. The Vancouver Board of Education, The Vancouver Public Library, and Vancouver Community College, all members of the Vancouver Literacy Support Committee, are active on the VLC Working Group and support the vision of the VLC.

This past year LegaciesNow provided a small grant to the VLC to support aligning the vision and activities of the VLC with the work of the Community Literacy initiatives in the eight neighbourhoods. Stacey Huget, the VLC Project Director attended two meetings of the Literacy Committee and outlined the vision and the strategic directions of the VLC, the activities planned and how the VLC can work with and support the literacy initiatives in the neighbourhoods. Stacey will be participating in the Committee on an ongoing basis.

The Vancouver Board of Education

The VBE operates 74 elementary schools, 17 elementary annexes and 18 secondary schools serving approximately 56,000 students. In addition, there are 56 district programs connected to the secondary schools that address a wide range of student needs from enrichment to remedial.

The School Act requires each Board of Education in British Columbia to prepare and submit to the Ministry of Education, an Achievement Contract that outlines the standards for student performance and the plans for improving achievement in the district. It expresses the commitment by a Board of Education to improve success for each student. They are three-year plans that are annually updated. Achievement Contracts are to be submitted to the Ministry of Education on or before July 15 of each school year.

As well, on June 25, 2009 the Vancouver Board of Education, Aboriginal Communities and the Ministry of Education officially signed the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement. This was a commitment by the VBE to focus on success for Aboriginal students, enhance academic opportunities and ensure an inclusive and respectful environment for all learners.

The annual Achievement Contracts provide an explanation of the connection between the Achievement Contract, the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement, the District Literacy Plan and Early Learning Programs.

The overall goal of the VBE as outlined in the Achievement Contract is success for each student with a focus on literacy. Five specific areas of ongoing work and adjustments were identified as important to supporting success in the classroom and for each student in literacy:

- early intervention
- safe and supportive environments for children to work in
- strong relationships with parents and caregivers
- differentiating instruction for all students according to their learning and behaviour needs and making assessments for learning part of each classroom

The Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement provides direction for the district focusing on three main goal areas: Belonging, Mastery, Culture and Community. The goals align with the district initiatives strengthening literacy skills, social and emotional learning conditions and using assessment for learning to ensure positive educational experiences for all learners. Two Action Plans have been developed through consultation with the Aboriginal Communities to provide a framework and a shared commitment.

School Libraries

Teacher librarians continue to be integral to the literacy goals both within the school community and the community at large. The teacher librarian consultant, who

supports teacher librarians throughout the district, is a member of the Vancouver Literacy Support Committee. As such, she liaises between the schools and the community Literacy Outreach Coordinators and the Vancouver Learning City.

Teacher librarians contribute to the development and promotion of literacy in many ways. They work collaboratively with classroom teachers to develop programs that build in literacy, promote reading for pleasure and information, integrate strategies to build multi-literacies in students, and engage in and support school-based, school-wide and district initiatives that promote literacy.

As well, teacher librarians promote books, events, websites, services and resources that create professional, community, and student awareness of literacy-based activities. They bring in or connect with the community for activities and events that promote literacy such as authors, public libraries, summer reading clubs, festivals and more.

There will be changes in the 2010/2011 school year. The full-time teacher librarian consultant position will be replaced by a .4 teacher librarian mentor. This will have implications for future community partnerships, as the resources will be significantly reduced.

Early Learning

The VSB maintained a strong commitment to supporting early learning in the district this past year through maintaining the position of a District Early Years Coordinator. This position has played a critical role in developing new programs, liaising with community organizations and community early learning planning tables, supporting educators in their understanding of the importance of early learning, strengthening the relationships between StrongStart Centres and the host schools, working with early learning educators to develop a smooth transition to Kindergarten and facilitating collaborative planning in the district. New initiatives this year include:

- Welcome to Kindergarten in 72 elementary schools and annexes
- Ready Set Learn in every school
- Alphabet Soup (with Vancouver Coastal Health, Vancouver Public Library (VPL), Mosaic) in two schools
- Implementation of the EDI (all K teachers were trained to do EDI on line this year)
- Working in partnership to develop a Vancouver Coastal Early Years Framework
- Strong Beginnings Program (GAIT- Garibaldi Annex Implementation Team)
- VPL Outreach Programs in conjunction with Strong Start
- Vancouver City College Nursing Students in Strong Starts
- Westcoast Lending Library in Strong Starts
- BC Aboriginal Childcare Society training for Strong Start/K teachers and Aboriginal education workers

- Development of a Foster Care Committee (0-5 year olds in Care) in conjunction with Vancouver Coastal Health, Aboriginal educators and the Ministry of Children and Families

While the role of the Early Years Coordinator has been integral to the development and support of many of the initiatives, this position will not be in place in the 2010/2011 school year. This will have a significant impact on VBE programs and the ongoing liaising with the early learning community.

Adult Literacy

The VBE continues to operate six Adult Learning Centres in Vancouver providing adult learners with educational opportunities ranging from beginner literacy levels in English, Math and Computer Technology to high school completion. The six Centres provide courses to an estimated 7,000 students annually. The student population reflects the cultural, linguistic and economic diversity of the city and the students' ages range from sixteen to over seventy-five years old.

The Adult Education program that takes place in partnership with ten elementary schools in the District continues to provide access to adult education to the adult family members of the students attending the school.

Vancouver Community College

Vancouver Community College, in addition to offering a full range of certificate, diploma and continuing education classes, is the largest college provider of adult literacy programs in Vancouver. It has a long and proud history of collaborating with a wide assortment of community constituency groups. Some recent partners include: the Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services (ACCESS), the Salvation Army, the Vancouver Public Library, the Vancouver Board of Education, Safeway, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and the YWCA.

The following is a snapshot of adult literacy programming at VCC.

The Basic Education Department is the Adult Literacy Fundamental Level program at VCC. It encompasses beginning skills up to approximately Grade 9. Currently, the department has eleven instructors teaching fundamental English and Math. It offers both group-based and self-paced continuous intake classes at the Broadway Campus. Basic Education has well-established adult learning centres at the First United Church Mission in the Downtown Eastside, at Vancouver Public Library's Downtown Branch, and at Salvation Army's Harbour Light, a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in the Downtown Eastside.

The Basic Education Department has also been involved this year in the *Aboriginal Gateway to Health Careers* project that is a federally funded collaborative effort between ACCESS and VCC.

Adult Upgrading

Courses are offered at the Intermediate (Grade 10), Advanced (Grade 11) and Provincial (Grade 12) levels for students wishing to earn credit or obtain academic prerequisites leading to high school completion and the BC Adult Graduation Diploma. Students can complete prerequisites: (1) for entry into institutions such as BCIT, Langara, Kwantlen, etc., (2) in preparation for entry into other VCC programs (e.g. Pharmacy Technician, Practical Nursing, or Electronics) or (3) for entrance into academic, career, or technical programs.

Intermediate Program for Youth: Broadway Youth Resource Centre

The ABE Intermediate Program for Youth offers a Grade 10 equivalency for youth in an informal, off-campus setting at the Broadway Youth Resource Centre. The program prepares students for Grade 11 in the College or the public school system, entry into a career program, or employment. The learning environment is structured to the needs of young adults. The ABE Intermediate Program for Youth offers individualized and self-paced instruction in English, Mathematics, Science and Social Science.

Essential Skills for College and Career Success

In September 2009, a new Essential Skills Centre opened at the VCC Downtown Campus (250 West Pender). Course offerings include:

- Education and Career Planning: Self-Assessment, Career Exploration, and Interview Skills
 - College Success: Active Learning, Study Skills, Goal Setting
 - Computer Skills: Word, Excel, and Windows
- These courses are being offered in a flexible format that includes self-paced study and scheduled workshops at various times to suit the student. Courses are tuition free (college application, student association and college initiative fee are charged.)

Harbour Light Learning Centre

Since 2007, VCC has offered the Harbour Light Learning Centre program in partnership with the Salvation Army Addictions and Rehabilitation Centre on East Cordova in the Downtown Eastside. Students are residents of the Rehab Centre and are referred by their counselors. Students meet with the VCC instructors to discuss an education plan before being assessed and placed into the Learning Centre Program. Harbour Light Learning Centre offers upgrading from beginner level reading, writing and math up to the grade 12 level. It is operated by both the Basic Education and CCA Departments.

English as a Second Language

Renowned for its English as a Second Language training, VCC offers ESL classes for immigrants and refugees living in Canada as well as for international visa students and visitors. VCC also offers the largest English language teacher training ([TESOL](#)) program in Western Canada. VCC ESL offers the following programs:

- ELSA - English Language Services for Adults - Broadway Campus
- English for Career Preparation and Advancement
- ESL at VCC - Literacy, Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced - Broadway and Downtown Campuses
- ESL Literacy Classes in the Community
- Classes for ESL adults who have limited literacy skills in their first language as well as English are available through VCC's ESL Outreach Department. Classes are available at community locations as well as at the Downtown Campus for students who are at a pre-beginner level in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Two more classes, one at Broadway and one Downtown, are available for those who have intermediate listening and speaking skills (CLB 4) and very low-level English reading and writing skills. Classes are offered mornings or evenings. There are three 12-week terms starting January, April and September.
- ESL Classes in the Community - Literacy, Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
- ESL - Homefront Learning

- Homebound adult ESL students living in Vancouver or Burnaby can receive two free hours of English instruction per week in their homes by a trained volunteer tutor. Students can study at any level: Literacy, Beginner, Intermediate or Advanced. Students can stay in the program as long as they are eligible and a tutor is available.
- ESL Learning Centres in the Libraries
- In partnership with the Vancouver and Burnaby Public Libraries, VCC operates nine ESL Learning Centres. Eight are located in Vancouver and one in Burnaby. Learning Centres in Libraries provide free one-on-one and small group tutoring in ESL to adults. Each Learning Centre has various operating hours and is staffed by experienced Instructional Assistants with ESL training.

World Beat

Vancouver Community College (VCC), in partnership with S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and YWCA, is offering an innovative new project for vulnerable young immigrants and refugees. Called World Beat, this project combines educational, career and life planning with learning in music, literacy, language and essential workplace skills to engage and support the project participants in finding suitable paths for personal and career development. The program is open to young immigrants and refugees (aged 15 - 25), having been in Canada for 5 years or less, who have low language and literacy levels, are no longer attending school, and have little awareness of how to access skill upgrading and career education opportunities. They may also face multiple barriers to settlement. Instructors from the VCC School of Language Studies and School of Music will deliver an integrated 16-week bridging program that is designed specially for youth. Outreach workers from S.U.C.C.E.S.S and YWCA will provide ongoing support to the project participants and connect them with community resources for their long-term development.

Initiatives focused on Aboriginal Learners

Vancouver Community College is committed to increasing the participation and success rate of First Nations learners and provides First Nations learners with academic and cultural support. Aboriginal academic advisors assist with liaising with band administration, elders, sponsoring agencies, and referral to community resources, pre-admission advising, orientation to VCC facilities and resources, and advocacy. Recognizing that Vancouver Community College serves a large Aboriginal population that is under-represented in post-secondary education, priority registration will be given to qualified Aboriginal students in all courses and programs at VCC.

The Aboriginal Adult Basic Education Dogwood (AABE) e-Portfolio Project is a three-year collaboration between the Native Education Centre (NEC) and VCC. Since September 2008, NEC students have been engaged in a process of gathering, evaluating and presenting evidence to demonstrate competencies met for English 12 and Math 11. These e-portfolios form part of the BC Adult Graduation Diploma requirements for English 12 and math 11.

The Aboriginal Gateway to Health Careers is a partnership between Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services (ACCESS) and VCC, School of Health Sciences and School of Arts & Science. This federally funded project is designed to prepare and support urban Aboriginal people towards entry into health sciences career training programs. Students explore the professions and research the education they will need to get a start in this field while also working on ABE Skills Upgrading and e-portfolios. The course is specially designed to assist in the student's personal, cultural and emotional development through interaction with role models and health care professionals in the Aboriginal community. This pilot project of three cohorts will run until March 2011.

VCC is a partner of the *Coastal Corridor Consortium (C3)*. The goals of the Consortium are:

- to create better cultural connections between and among the C3 post-secondary institutions and the Aboriginal partners
- to ensure a strong and consistent Aboriginal voice
- to remove barriers for Aboriginal learners to access quality higher education with focus on enhanced learner services and supported outreach programs
- to offer programs that meet the needs of Aboriginal learners and their communities, providing pathways to employment and/or further learning.

Courses for Students with Disabilities

These programs are designed to meet the specific needs of students with disabilities. VCC provides opportunities for students by offering skills and learning that will enhance career opportunities, personal potential and academic success. Adult Special Education courses are designed for students with a disability, who wish to establish and/or upgrade pre-vocational skills that would enhance entry into further education or employment. These courses include part-time literacy courses in; Reading and Writing for Every Day Use, Managing Your Money, and Computer Applications. The program also delivers courses in; Career Awareness (ASE), Clerical Skills (ASE), Deaf and Hard of Hearing - Job Readiness, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Courses, Food Service Careers (ASE), Hospitality Careers (Adult Special Education), Office Administration for the Visually Impaired, Retail Food and Supermarket Careers (ASE), and the Visually Impaired Adult Program.

Family Literacy Certificate Program

Partnering with Literacy B.C., the Centre for Family Literacy and 2010 Legacies Now, Vancouver Community College is proud to host the Family Literacy Certificate Program. Designed for those who currently work or plan to work in family literacy, this certificate program builds knowledge and skills in a wide range of areas that are key to high quality programs and services. Unique across Canada, this credential offers an excellent curriculum facilitated by leaders in the family literacy field. An on-line mixed mode delivery of the program is presently in development.

Vancouver Public Library

The Vancouver Public Library and the Vancouver Board of Education have a long history of partnership and collaboration. Both organizations work together to build and maintain complementary programs and services to ensure that the City's children and youth have access to formal and informal life long learning. Partnerships and collaborations between libraries and schools, families, caregivers and other community organizations support the concept that student achievement is a shared responsibility.

Children's & Youth Services

The Vancouver Public Library is committed to advancing literacy and lifelong learning for all Vancouver's citizens. Children's and Youth Services at VPL focuses on developing those literacy skills that enable children to grow into adulthood with the capacity to participate in the social, economic, political, cultural and intellectual life of the city. Such a commitment is best achieved in partnership with other community groups and organizations. Working with the Vancouver Board of Education helps both the VBE and the VPL achieve their goals in the community.

VPL programs and services are the building blocks for strong communities, a vibrant society and an engaged citizenship. VPL has a strong tradition of serving children and teens throughout the city with innovative programs and culturally relevant services. Committed staff serve the children and teens with dedication, knowledge and compassion. VPL's collections reflect the City's diverse cultural heritage.

VPL provides programs and services in a variety of ways and in a variety of locations with a variety of partners. Literacy based storytimes are offered at Foodbanks, in church basements and in public housing as well as in library branches. Community partnerships are formal and informal and include Coastal Health Units, Aboriginal service providers, Qmunity, BC Housing, and, importantly, the Vancouver Board of Education. With community partners the library supports initiatives such as the Early Years Community Program, and online Teen Reading Clubs. The Storybus can be seen at local community events, parades and civic celebrations. With the VBE, branch libraries deliver programs for Summer Reading Club, Grade Seven Library Skills, Welcome to Kindergarten, and Ready Set Learn. Children's librarians visit schools for a wide variety of events, and participate in Strong Start programs and Neighbourhood Centres of Learning & Development.

Teens have new virtual and physical spaces at the Library. At teens.vpl.ca youth can share reviews, enjoy blog entries and make Library purchasing suggestions. Vancouver teens and the Library's Teen Advisory Group, composed of VBE students, provided input for the library website's redesign and for a new teen section at the Central Library. There are also dedicated teen areas at the new Mount Pleasant and Kensington branches. VPL also does outreach to non-traditional users, e.g. teens at the Broadway Youth Resource Centre.

Programs and services at the VPL help prepare students for kindergarten and for school. Innovative programs for babies, toddlers and preschoolers include Storytime Kits, Mother Goose, Man in the Moon (male caregivers and children), as well as a newly developed program for parents and children with speech delays called the Westside Mother Goose Program. In this program, VPL partners with a Coastal Health Speech Language Pathologist who visits the program regularly to help guide and support parents. A Canadian Cancer Society award recognizes the program for inspiring communities to identify and meet their unique needs.

Children's and Teen Services has the experience and capacity to touch the lives of significant numbers of Vancouver's children. In 2009 over 6800 children signed up for Summer Reading Club. For the first time, a children's book was featured in the library's 2009 One Book One Vancouver program. VPL strives to meet every child in the city and have every child benefit from an ongoing relationship with the library.

Here are some highlights from our services:

Aboriginal Learning Project

With funding from the provincial Public Library Services Branch, Library staff worked with Aboriginal students to determine how the Library can better support and meet the needs of Aboriginal youth currently enrolled in Vancouver Board of Education programs. In addition to reviewing Library services and programs, the staff and students discussed the recruitment of Aboriginal youth for library careers and the possibility of a work experience program specifically for Aboriginal youth.

The students spoke candidly about the barriers that keep them from using the Library and offered recommendations for how libraries can become more welcoming, inclusive and relevant to teens.

As a direct result of the project, students were recruited for work experience at the Library, four of whom were later hired as Shelves. This type of collaborative community consultation is vital for building relationships and successfully developing Library services for Aboriginal people. The Library is grateful to the many individuals and groups who worked with us and we look forward to continuing such efforts in the future.

Storytime Kits

Young children learn best when having fun and the Library's new Storytime Kits ensure that children attending daycares, family places, community centre programs and preschools do both. Storytime Kits create fun language learning experiences for young children and help to develop early literacy skills while providing engaging, enjoyable activities for youngsters and caregivers alike. The kits include colourful books, puppets, a CD, toys and lists of rhymes, songs and lively activities. With over ten fun themes to choose from, Storytime Kits are an economical way for early childhood educators to access a wide assortment of learning tools and activities to keep youngsters engaged and learning throughout the year. Storytime Kits can be borrowed by anyone with a valid VPL Institutional Library Card.

The Early Years Team Community Project

Many families in our communities are isolated. Poverty and health issues have impacts on families' daily lives, making activities that some of us take for granted simply impossible to provide for these children. The Early Years Team places vulnerable families at the top of their priority list. Early Years librarians work in community settings and are uniquely equipped to meet the needs of families who need extra support in their children's early years. For example, the team participates in a weekly storytime program at YWCA Munroe House, a shelter for mothers who are leaving abusive relationships. The team also runs three storytime programs at family food banks and a number of BC Housing complexes. These sessions include healthy food, arts and crafts, as well as storytimes. Feedback from participants and partners has been universally positive.

Team members are frequently asked to contribute to the professional development of family support workers, family childcare providers, and early childhood educators via a number of interactive workshops on topics such as early literacy, bilingualism, diversity and Aboriginal resources.