

October 26, 2007

District Literacy Plans: A Regional Forum Update

In order to achieve the ReadNow BC mandate of supporting literacy from early years through adulthood, seven District Literacy Plan Regional forums have been planned throughout the province. These forums are intended to encourage literacy coordination among district and community members in order to improve the literacy levels of British Columbians. Attendance at the forums has been excellent - representatives include school district staff, school trustees, Literacy Now, LiteracyBC, Ministry staff, as well as college, library and Aboriginal participants.

District Literacy Plans will acknowledge and identify existing work in communities, adding the capabilities of the School District and maximizing opportunities for collaboration between providers to better meet the needs of all literacy learners. As Allen Chell, Board Chair in Revelstoke comments, "From the perspective of a school trustee we have done a pretty good job K-12, but we realize we have a role, a responsibility, and an opportunity to work with the broader community. There is good work to build on. We need to respect that work and work together for the betterment of the community". District Literacy Plans will address the continuum of literacy learning from early learning to adulthood in order to improve literacy levels throughout the province.

To date District Literacy Plan Forums have been conducted in Prince Rupert, Castlegar, Vernon and Prince George. Rod Allen, Superintendent of Bulkley Valley, stated at one of the forums "The credibility and trust building has to happen together. While we weren't sure what the plan was going to look like, we knew we had

to figure it out as a community - as a group. What was important was that we built the understanding of what we were undertaking together."

The remaining forums will take place in Campbell River, Chilliwack and Burnaby over the next two weeks. Ann Cooper, Superintendent of Revelstoke School District, said "This is not a take-over or a do-over. It's an opportunity to re-think, re-prioritize and revitalize."

A District Literacy Planning Guide is being developed to assist districts in implementing District Literacy Plans. In addition, a Provincial Literacy Forum that will include participants from all 60 school districts and literacy providers from their communities will take place on January 31, 2008.

Library 2020: The Future of Library Collaboration in BC

As you know, the Ministry of Education has responsibility for public libraries, which are vital partners in our quest to reach the goal of becoming the best educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent.

As an indication of our commitment to libraries and their role as an integral part of the continuum of learning, the Ministry was pleased to sponsor the Library 2020 Symposium on October 22nd in Burnaby.

Building on *Campus 2020* and also on the Strategic Plan for the Ministry's Public Library Services Branch, *Libraries Without Walls*, this landmark event brought together library and community decision makers to identify new opportunities for collaboration among BC's rich and varied library sectors.

The 165 participants included representatives from public, academic, school and special libraries, as well as government officials from the Ministries of Education and Advanced Education. Guest speakers from Alberta, Colorado and Prince Edward Island explored the need for a continuum of libraries as a support to lifelong learning, and how other jurisdictions have achieved this goal.

A foundational inquiry explored during the symposium centered around how we can work together to support the full development of a strong, integrated, accessible continuum of libraries. Visioning sessions explored this concept in an attempt to define next steps in the process towards "The BC Library" of the future.

Gold Medal for LearnNow BC

Last week, LearnNow BC received national recognition by receiving a gold medal at the 15th Annual GTEC - Government Technology Exhibition and Conference held in Ottawa. This is an incredible achievement and recognizes our collective excellence in delivering high quality educational programs and services through our Distributed Learning schools. By adding educational services like on-line tutoring and a provincial license (Elluminate) that enables schools free access to online classroom and meeting spaces, we have created the infrastructure to support our students in achieving even more. Thank you to everyone who has played a role in this project.

Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence: Call for Nominations

Every day, teachers across British Columbia make a positive difference in the lives of students. You can nominate a teacher who has made a positive, long-lasting impact on your school community.

The Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence recognize outstanding BC teachers who have made exceptional contributions to benefit their school community and improve student achievement. The Premier's Awards provide students, parents, teachers and other members of the community with an opportunity to celebrate educators who make a real difference in BC schools.

Nominations are welcome in the following categories:

- Literacy
- Distributed Learning
- Healthy Living and/or Physical Education & Coaching
- School Leadership
- Aboriginal Learning
- Community Engagement
- Skills Training & Career Preparation
- Environmental Awareness
- Lifetime Achievement (20+ Years)
- Beginning Teacher (0-5 Years)

The nomination deadline is December 14, 2007. For more information, including nomination forms, please visit the Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence website at: <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/teacherawards/>



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