

NORTH VANCOUVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

2008-2011
**ACHIEVEMENT
CONTRACT**

July 14, 2009



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General Update June 23, 2009:

The North Vancouver School District Achievement Contract for 2007-2008 responded, in promissory fashion, to the specific recommendations of the District Review Report of May 2007. The 2008-2009 Achievement Contract created the prototype for the current “three year plan.” The 2009-2010 Achievement Contract has been written to sustain the basis of the 2008-2009 contract and to provide strategic updates in all required areas. This pattern will be repeated until July 2011, when the current three year plan will be thoroughly re-evaluated and revised. This is a living document and will be updated periodically during its 3 year existence. Its internal survey data will be next updated in October 2009.

School District Context

INTRODUCTION

The North Vancouver School District is an urban school district with a student population of approximately 16,000 Kindergarten to Grade 12 students. The school district boundaries encompass both the City of North Vancouver and the District of North Vancouver municipalities.

Escalating home prices and a low inventory of existing affordable housing, with little prospect of affordable development in the near future, have combined to compound the local effects of a provincial declining birth rate and have resulted in significant levels of declining enrollment in our school district. Over the past 5 years, enrollment in North Vancouver schools has decreased by 8% and is projected to continue to decline by a further 8% over the next five years.

Despite the fiscal challenges presented by a decreasing student population and an aging infrastructure, the North Vancouver School District continues to improve learning opportunities and supports for students in the advancement of key areas of literacy, numeracy, social responsibility, safe and caring schools, health and physical fitness, early school success, and applications of information technology. In support of our Aboriginal Learners, we continue to implement our *Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement*

signed late in the 2005/06 school year. Under the Agreement, the Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, the North Vancouver School District, and the Ministry of Education will collaborate to meet our Aboriginal students' educational needs.

Updates June 23, 2009:

“Despite the fiscal challenges presented by a decreasing student population and an aging infrastructure. . .” These trends continue unabated.

SNAPSHOT OF THE NORTH VANCOUVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

- 16,000 students enrolled in Kindergarten to Grade 12
- Major community groups: ESL 5.8%, Aboriginal 3.5%, Special Needs 11.8%
- \$139 million operating budget for 2008-09
- \$75 million capital budget for new construction, renovation and improvements
- 2,280 employees (full time and part-time) – teachers, support staff, administrators/managers
- A comprehensive K-12 education program consisting of over 200 provincial and locally developed educational programs and services in the Humanities, Mathematics/Sciences, Physical Education, Fine Arts and Applied Skills
- Early French Immersion, Late French Immersion and Secondary Bilingual Programs
- Continuing with the application process for the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Program at Balmoral, Carson Graham and Capilano schools
- Development of Distributed Learning School offering 20 courses in its second year
- Introducing and expanding District Programs of Choice to respond to the expressed interests and needs of the community
- Nationally recognized local programs, including *Band and Strings*, *Reading 44*, *Firm Foundations*, *Inspirations 44*, *Math 44* and *Early Learning Foundations*
- Summer School providing comprehensive programming in remediation, enrichment, fine arts, full credit senior secondary school courses, and integrated ESL and International Programs

- A variety of specialized support services for students with exceptional learning needs
- Short and long term International Educational Programs, attracting over 700 learners from around the world
- Continuing and adult education programs, providing a full complement of high school completion courses, adult education and academic upgrading classes, short-term international programs, vocational and employment training programs, and general interest and community programs
- The Artists for Kids Trust housing a collection of contemporary Canadian art and providing award winning fine arts enrichment programming and scholarships
- 28 elementary schools and 7 secondary schools
- 2 alternate schools/programs (KLASS and Windsor House)
- A residential outdoor education center, called the North Vancouver Outdoor School, located near Squamish, BC
- The *Instructional Institute*, a research-based program to provide high quality, leading edge instructional development for all teachers and administrators in the School District.

Our School District continues its commitment to enhancing the learning experience of students through the improvement of instructional practices through the *Instructional Institute*. Entering its sixth year, the *Instructional Institute* will continue to support development in the areas of assessment for learning, collegial conferencing, action research, instructional strategies and instructional organizers. The 2008-09 school year will emphasize the consolidation of the *Instructional Institute* through the continued involvement of teacher leaders, department heads, and principals and vice principals and the implementation of a plan for sustainability in the future. Supported and resourced by the District, school-based action research and collegial conferencing projects have been highly instrumental in furthering the aims of the *Instructional Institute*.

We encourage each of our students to be engaged in all of the opportunities available to them in their educational programs. We also encourage our parents to take an active interest in their child's education and to stay involved in their school. Active School

Planning Councils in each school during 2008-09 will formalize the participation and consultation process of parents and employees in the development of annual school plans to improve student achievement.

So that students may take full advantage of the School District's rich program offerings, teachers, principals, vice-principals, support staff and parents will be encouraged at each and every school to continue to work together to increase student engagement and to foster and maintain high student achievement levels and safe and caring learning environments in schools.

Updates June 23, 2009:

The enrollment head count for the 2009-2010 school year is projected at 15,650 FTE. This represents a decline of approximately 300-350 students. The operating budget for 2009-2010 is \$137 million.

Connections: School Plans, Superintendent's Report, Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, District Literacy Plan, and Early Learning Programs

ALIGNMENT OF DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENT CONTRACT WITH SCHOOL PLANS

The first District Performance Plan (Accountability Contract) prepared in 2001-2002 preceded the formation of School Planning Councils and their engagement in creating School Plans. Therefore, the first District Performance Plan served as a major resource in the School Planning process and provided general guidelines for School Planning Councils as they developed their first school improvement plans. At that time, School Planning Councils were advised that they should address the same four goal areas as the first District Plan, in ways that responded to the needs of their students, based upon the

available data. School Planning Councils had latitude to address additional goals based upon the uniqueness of each school.

This cycle, with the District's October plan prefiguring the schools' May plans, which then provided input into the District's plan for the following October, has now been halted and reversed. During 2007-2008, School Plans for 2008-2009 have been developed in advance of the District Plan. The schools have exercised greater latitude in selecting their school goals on the basis of specific site-based needs. The goals and objectives appearing in School Plans as received by the District in May 2008 have been examined for inclusion in the District Achievement Contract. While developing the 2008-2009 District Achievement Contract, the School Services Leadership Team has considered district-wide data on school goals and the numbers of schools choosing goals and objectives in specific areas. During 2007-2008, 30 schools selected Literacy goals, 32 selected Safe and Caring goals, and 5 schools, with high numbers of Aboriginal students, selected Aboriginal goals in their school plans.

The School Services Leadership Team has maintained communication with school Principals and School Planning Council's during the development of the current school plans. This District Team, which includes representatives from the school principals, has analyzed all of the school plans and will provide systematic feedback to principals and school planning councils. Based on a survey of School Planning Councils, the Team is currently developing a plan to provide input to School Planning Councils at sessions involving "families of schools" starting early in the 2008-2009 school year. Follow-up sessions to provide continuing feedback from members of the School Services Leadership Team to School Planning Councils will figure prominently in the 2008-2009 in-service plan.

Update June 23, 2009:

The School Services Leadership Team has been reconfigured as the Curriculum Leadership Team and expanded to include representatives from the Elementary and Secondary Principals' groups. The Curriculum Leadership Team has been active in liaising with School Planning Councils by providing in-service on the mechanics of School Plans on a Family of Schools basis. Individual members of the Curriculum Leadership Team have also liaised with individual School Planning Councils and school principals to support the school planning

process. Once again the Curriculum Leadership Team has read each school plan, in order to provide feedback to schools and to harvest information for inclusion in the District Achievement Contract.

ALIGNMENT OF DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENT CONTRACT WITH SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT ON ACHIEVEMENT

Each school year, by December 15, the Superintendent of Schools must prepare and submit a report on student achievement for the previous school year to the Ministry of Education. This annual report is intended to serve two purposes: to acknowledge district responsibility for improving student achievement and to provide information that will facilitate subsequent planning during the development of school plans and the district achievement contract.

In his report prepared on December 11, 2007, the Superintendent of Schools for North Vancouver School District raised concerns regarding the results for Aboriginal students, attendance rates, transition rates and six-year completion rates.

The Superintendent also raised a concern regarding the District's heavy dependence on external data "which may lead to a complacency that diverts attention from the pursuit of continued improvement on an individual student basis." He quoted the District Review Report (2007) which encouraged the District to move to more consistent use of "authentic assessments, preferably based on B.C. Performance Standards" as not only "good for students" but also as reducing "reliance on external provincial measures."

During the development of the current Achievement Contract, the School Services Leadership Team has sought to act upon these indications by the Superintendent.

Updates June 23, 2009:

The Superintendent's Report on Achievement of December 9, 2008 details that the School District's six year completion rates "trend line over recent years indicates gradual improvement," but that there "appears to be a discrepancy between the high levels of achievement for English, Mathematics and Science 10 and the current six year completion rates." The District Achievement Contract shares this concern in that the six year completion

rates appear to be lower than expected in light of the English 10 and the Science 10 results, which are “significantly better” than those reported for public schools and the province, while the Math 10 results are “better than those reported for public schools and the province .

The District Achievement Contract also shares the concerns of the Superintendent’s Report on Achievement for the success of Aboriginal Students and the capacity of the District to “systematically track at-risk students more effectively.”

ALIGNMENT OF DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENT CONTRACT WITH ABORIGINAL EDUCATION ENHANCEMENT AGREEMENT

The North Vancouver School District Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement was signed in June 2006. A committee of all stakeholders, including strong representation from both the Squamish Nation and the Tsleil Waututh Nation, determined the goals of the Enhancement Agreement during the 2005-2006 school year. These goals are as follows:

1. To Improve Academic Achievement of Aboriginal Students
2. To Improve School Completion and Dogwood Graduation Rates For Aboriginal Students
3. To Improve Aboriginal Students’ Sense of Belonging in the Public School System by Honouring and Supporting the History, Traditions, and Culture of Those First Nations Communities Whose Traditional Territories are Served by School District #44 North Vancouver, B.C.

Goal 1 is divided into the following areas: improving students’ readiness to learn and improving their proficiency in reading and numeracy (mathematics).

Since the signing of the Enhancement Agreement, the School District has taken special care to ensure that the goal areas of the Enhancement Agreement have been reflected in the Accountability Contract and in school plans. This approach has continued during the development of the current Achievement Contract.

The School District’s Aboriginal Education Advisory Council, which includes Elders and Council Members from both the Squamish Nation and the Tsleil Waututh Nation, chose

Goal 3 for its primary area of focus during the 2006-2007 school year. This focus was carried forward into 2007-2008. Going forward into 2008-2009, an additional focus on Aboriginal Literacy has grown out of a liaison between the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council and the District Literacy Committee. Formed by representatives of both groups, a Subcommittee on Aboriginal Literacy has explored strategies to advance the development of Aboriginal Literacy in ways that are engaging and culturally relevant for students of all ages. These strategies will be put into effect during the 2008-2009 school year.

Updates June 23, 2009:

The focus on Aboriginal literacy has continued through the efforts of the Subcommittee on Aboriginal Literacy. The acquisition by the District of access to the new online versions of Academy of Math and Academy of Reading have improved individual access by numerous Aboriginal learners to compatible individualized instruction in reading and math. The Curriculum Leadership Team closely monitors initiatives and developments proposed by the Aboriginal Education Advisory Committee.

ALIGNMENT OF DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENT CONTRACT WITH DISTRICT LITERACY PLAN

North Vancouver School District's *District Literacy Plan* focuses on four strategic components, known in the province as the *four pillars* of literacy:

1. Early literacy success for young children
2. Reading success in schools
3. Reading success for adults
4. Reading success for Aboriginal people

The 2008-2009 *District Literacy Plan* sets a goal for each of the four pillars:

1. To increase the number of children who enter school ready for Kindergarten
2. To increase the number of students in K-12 who read successfully
3. To increase awareness in the community of adult literacy programs
4. To increase understanding, among educators and in the Aboriginal communities, of effective literacy teaching practices for First Nations students

North Vancouver School District's *Achievement Contract* reflects in its goals and objectives, three of the four goal areas of the *District Literacy Plan*.

1. **Early Literacy:** The *Achievement Contract* recognizes the importance of literacy screening and intervention for Kindergarten students in order to build strong foundation skills for literacy development in the later grades.
2. **Reading Success in Schools:** The *Achievement Contract* identifies literacy as one of its major goal areas. Literacy is recognized in both documents as central to success in school and to lifelong learning.
3. **Reading Success for Aboriginal People:** Both the *Achievement Contract* and the *Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement* identify literacy (reading) as an important goal area. The role of literacy in improving academic achievement and increasing completion rates is emphasized in both documents. The *District Literacy Plan* reiterates this emphasis.

Updates June 23, 2009:

The relation between the District Literacy Plan and the District Achievement Contract continues, in the same ways as mentioned above, to be a close one.

ALIGNMENT OF DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENT CONTRACT WITH EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS

North Vancouver School District acknowledges the importance of early learning opportunities that prepare young children to be successful at school. The District has been proactive in developing partnerships with the early learning community in the City and the District of North Vancouver. The District supports a number of programs and initiatives in the area of early learning, including:

- The *Early Development Instrument* (EDI) which identifies specific literacy needs of young children
- The District's *Early Learning Foundations* program (ELF) which liaises with North Vancouver preschools
- *Strong Start*, the Ministry of Education sponsored drop-in programs for young children and their care-givers
- WECAN, an Early Childhood Education Committee on the North Shore
- WHEELS, a community van program that promotes literacy and school readiness
- *Mother Goose* programs for parents and children ages 0-3
- The *Immigrant PALS* (Parents as Literacy Supporters) program offered in collaboration with the North Shore Multicultural Society
- *Ready Set Learn* is offered in all of the District's elementary schools
- Kindergarten Readiness Meetings
- *Ready, Set, Go* posters and booklets produced by the District and supplied to parents
- Kindergarten Transition meetings held for parents of children with special needs

It bears repeating, in this context, that the *Achievement Contract* recognizes the importance of literacy screening and intervention for Kindergarten students in order to build strong foundation skills for literacy development in the later grades. This is accomplished through district-wide use of the Test of Phonological Awareness (TOPA) and the locally developed Kindergarten Math Assessment (K-Math), which is a play based assessment device.

Updates June 23, 2009:

North Vancouver School District opened three additional Strong Start Centers in 2008-2009. An active liaison was maintained between the Early Learning Administrator and the Curriculum Leadership Team. The new Strong Start Centers have been closely monitored and consistently supported with resources and in-service as necessary, in accordance with the intentions of District Achievement Plan. Three more Strong Start Centers will open in North Vancouver School District in 2009-2010, bringing the total number of Strong Start Centers in the District to seven in 2009-2010.

SUMMARY

The goals, objectives, and actions included in the District *Achievement Contract* represent a *convergence of inputs* that have arrived through a variety of sources. Prominent among these sources have been:

- The School Plans and the feedback of the School Planning Councils
- The Superintendent's Report on Achievement
- The Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement
- The District Literacy Plan
- Early Learning Programs
- The District Review of May 2007
- The Ministry of Education's District Achievement Contract Guidelines

Updates June 23, 2009:

The "convergence of inputs," mentioned above, has continued during the development of this updated Achievement Contract.

Response To District Review - May 2007

A Ministry of Education External District Review Team visited the North Vancouver School District April 29 - May 2, 2007. Their District Review Report was presented to the North Vancouver Board of Education on September 25, 2007.

The Review Team, chaired by Dr. Keven Elder, Superintendent School District No. 63 (Saanich), visited six elementary schools and three secondary schools and met with district and school staff as well as representative groups of our educational community.

The recommendations presented by the Review Team addressed four key areas of focus:

- Planning
- Students At Risk
- Authentic Assessment

- Literacy

Many current district initiatives and additional actions have been mobilized in response to the recommendations of the Review Team.

PLANNING PROCESS

<i>District Review Recommendations:</i>	<i>Progress Report (2007-2008):</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Simplify planning documents so all can understand and own - Simplify school and district plans (reader friendly) - Have school planning drive district planning - Increase school responsibility for decision making - Expect meaningful involvement of parents in all schools, including having SPCs involved with staffs - Engage parents and students in planning - Integrate the work of district leaders - Investigate programs of choice, alternate programs - Celebrate successes of all schools from all regions 	<p>Key participants from the school and district levels have engaged in the development and implementation of a revised, school-initiated planning cycle</p> <p>Inputs have been considered from district and school community sources, such as: School Services Leadership Team, Teachers' Association Executive, District Sustaining Schools Committee, Parent Advisory Committee/School Planning Council members, Family of Schools (FOS) teams, school-based administration, teacher groups, and student members of secondary School Planning Councils</p> <p>All school-based planning began with a school learning portrait, filtered through the Ministry of Education target areas of Literacy (K-12), Completion Rates, Aboriginal Student Improvement, and Early Learning</p>

STUDENTS AT RISK

<i>District Review Recommendations:</i>	<i>Progress Report (2007-2008):</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on improving transitions for First Nations students from grade 10 to grade 11 - Build capacity to support needs of every child, especially the most vulnerable, and every school - Build a culture of continuous improvement for all students - Work with the community to explore "what matters most" for vulnerable students and for First Nations learners. Consider a balance approach to the base of evidence - Challenge high achieving schools to meet all needs 	<p>School-Based Resource Teams continued to track students at risk, emphasizing teacher professional judgment and quality instructional interventions</p> <p>A Student-At-Risk File software program to track students and support interventions was piloted at two schools</p> <p>The School Services Leadership Team, working with the School Planning Councils, supplied guidelines for creating school portraits and examining learner needs for School Plans</p>

STUDENTS AT RISK

<i>District Review Recommendations:</i>	<i>Progress Report (2007-2008):</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distribute resources to support the most needy children 	<p>The school portraits assisted in discussion and redistribution of district and school supports for the most needy students—these included human resources such as Special Education Assistants, Learning Assistance Centre time, and time from Family of Schools support team members, eg. Learning Support Workers, Autism Support Workers, Behaviour Support Workers, and First Nations Support Workers</p>

AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT (Leading to Authentic Instruction)

<i>District Review Recommendations:</i>	<i>Progress Report (2007-2008):</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build capacity for authentic assessment for all planning - Remove extraneous data from the district plan - Base planning on authentic assessment, collaborative inquiry and school-level priorities - Develop software for storage and analysis of evidence - Create a base of authentic assessment evidence from which to make school and district plans on a wide array of indicators tracked over time - Develop common, authentic district-wide assessment - Engage teachers in deep dialogue regarding the best ways to have authentic assessment inform planning 	<p>School communities used “Assessment for Learning” standards such as B.C. Performance Standards and the District’s <i>Report Central</i> program which refers to performance standards in reporting student progress to parents</p> <p>Using <i>IEP Central</i> and <i>Report Central</i>, the School Services Leadership Team piloted a Student-At-Risk File software program to track students and support interventions at two schools</p> <p>Within the Instructional Institute, in-service on assessment for learning and authentic assessment was provided at in-service events and the district-wide Curriculum Implementation Day.</p> <p>School-based Action Research and Collegial Conferencing projects continued to advance dialogue on authentic assessment leading to authentic instructional choices at school and classroom levels</p> <p>The District continued to evaluate and monitor our locally developed NVRA (North Vancouver Reading Assessment), TOPA (Test of Phonological Awareness), K-Math assessments, Grade 6 and 8 Math assessments and the Safe Schools Social Responsibility Survey</p> <p>Through <i>IEP Central</i>, the District continued to monitor instructional interventions for students determined to be at risk at the school and classroom levels</p>

LITERACY

<i>District Review Recommendations:</i>	<i>Progress Report (2007-2008):</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Broaden the district's examination of best practices in support of the 44s, for example, in balanced literacy, leveled texts and school-wide guided reading - Build assessment literacy and implement practices (British Columbia Performance Standards)	<p>The District continued to incorporate a broad-based approach to best practices in literacy instruction within the strategies, tactics and skills in-serviced through the Instructional Institute</p> <p>The District provided ongoing in-service on Performance Standards as linked to report cards and <i>Report Central</i></p> <p>The District provided in-service on <i>Writing 44</i> and continues to provide in-service on <i>Reading 44</i> linked to the use of provincial Writing and Reading Performance Standards in the assessment of student work</p>

Updates June 23, 2009:

The direction of the above-mentioned trends in District progress, as specified in the Progress Report of 2007-2008, has been carefully maintained. Many of these trends will be specifically reported on in the Evidence (Qualitative/Anecdotal) sections of the Goals and Objectives of the Achievement Contract, below (pp 20-30).

Statement of Progress

STATEMENT OF PROGRESS

Since the submission of the *Transition Plan* in October 2007, there has been considerable progress toward improving the planning cycle and simplifying the planning documents. There has been an increase in the role of the schools in “driving” district planning, and both School Plans and the District Achievement Plan have been simplified.

In the area of early learning, the thorough institutionalization of the TOPA and the K-Math assessments at the Kindergarten level has been instrumental in shifting the practice of Kindergarten teachers toward “assessment for learning” and selection of appropriate instructional interventions.

In its elementary schools, the District is encouraging the use of B.C. Performance Standards through implementation of the *Report Central* report card. A variety of in-service events and pilot projects have initiated a concerted move toward greater use of authentic assessment practices in classrooms, at schools, and at the district level.

Two unique, ongoing approaches to collaborative instructional practice continue to promote progress. The District’s *Special Education Service Delivery Model* and the District’s ongoing *Instructional Institute* have been used to focus a renewed interest in long-term monitoring of the needs of a variety of students at risk for non-graduation or non-completion of their educational programs.

North Vancouver School District’s *Special Education Service Delivery Model*, with its six points of intervention, addresses the processes and procedures through which schools can work effectively on behalf of students at risk. This *Delivery Model* provides guidelines for

continuous refinement of the practices of School Based Resource Teams and Family of Schools Intervention Teams.

Also, the District's ongoing *Instructional Institute* enables authentic conversations to take place among school staff members on such topics as assessment for learning, deep knowledge of learners and learning, differentiated instruction, and appropriate instructional interventions, as needed. The District's continued funding of school based Action Research and/or Collegial Conferencing projects encourages schools to use the *Instructional Institute* framework to assist in their development as learning organizations or learning communities.

The Sustaining Schools Working Committee has endorsed several new "programs of choice" in the district, and a district-wide "Appreciative Inquiry" visioning process has resulted in a coherent vision for the School District, including the following statement on sharing and celebrating success:

***We proudly honour individual and collective accomplishments
that inspire all of us to pursue and achieve success.***

The results of the School Planning Council Survey suggest that shifts are also occurring in the cultures of School Planning Councils, due to ongoing focused conversations that include school administrators, district administrators, Parent Advisory Councils, students, (and the inputs of teachers through school staff meetings).

The District takes pride in the gains that have been made through the efforts of its Aboriginal Education Advisory Council in the areas of increasing the "sense of belonging" of Aboriginal students in our schools, the sharing of First Nations cultures, and Aboriginal literacy.

Updates June 23, 2009:

The inputs of the schools into the District Achievement Contract, followed by the inputs of the Curriculum Leadership Team into the School Plans have led to the tightening of a productive symbiosis between the two planning processes. It is intended that this symbiosis will lead toward a conscious evolution of School Plans as records of school based “communities of practice” informed by instructional intelligence and transformative practices.

It is intended that the district record, maintained in this Achievement Contract, should be supported by achievement data that reflects ongoing improvement of the learning and life chances of all students. Unfortunately, in the context of North Vancouver School District, FSA scores have become unreliable indicators of student progress. This has happened for two reasons: 1.) The BCTF campaign against the FSA has resulted in many parents in North Vancouver School District keeping students home on the days when tests are written, and 2.) Local marking of the FSA tests makes local comparisons with the provincial scores and scores in other districts less secure. Therefore, North Vancouver School District will move further toward using Report Card results as key indicators of student progress. Recent developments in the District’s ReportCentral application, allowing teachers to use the language of provincial Performance Standards in their comments, will permit greater cross-comparison of student progress at the school and district levels. It is anticipated that aggregate report card data will become available in 2009-2010.

Greater use of Performance Standards will become evident as the District moves toward the development in 2009-2010 of RubricCentral, an online application which will allow teachers to access, customize, and bank Performance Standards rubrics in all subject areas and at all grade levels.

Greater awareness of the foundational importance of social-emotional learning has been developing with the efforts of the Safe and Caring Schools initiative and the TRIBES initiative within the District’s Instructional Institute.

The needs of each learner have been emphasized in two recent program reviews conducted in the school district. The review of the Keith Lynn Alternative Secondary School has made recommendations designed to support the needs of students who struggle with school completion. Also, the review titled Supporting Our Special Elementary Learners (SOSEL) has made recommendations regarding the supports offered through School Based Resource Teams in following up on students who are struggling academically, socially, or behaviourally. The implementation of the recommendations of these two reviews will be among District priorities for 2009-2010.

Progress in the separate Goal and Objective areas of this Achievement Contract is reported in the Evidence (Qualitative/Anecdotal) sections, below (pp. 20-30).

Rationale for Goal Selection

RATIONALE FOR SELECTION OF EACH GOAL

During the district-wide, all stakeholders visioning process that unfolded during the 2007-2008 school year, eight vision statements, covering a variety of areas of district functioning, and one overarching statement were produced. Three of these statements bear directly on the rationale for the selection of goals for the District *Achievement Contract*. They are the Overarching Statement, the statement on Instructional Practice, and the statement on Community Connections.

The **Overarching Statement** is:

We provide world-class instruction and a rich diversity of engaging programs to inspire success for every student and bring communities together to learn, share, and grow.

The statement on **Instructional Practice** is:

We provide meaningful assessment and relevant instruction to support the success of every student and, to ensure this outcome, encourage professional growth for all staff.

The statement on **Community Connections** is:

We thrive on bringing people together through collaboration and responsive partnerships that strengthen communities and contribute to the needs of students and society.

In light of these vision statements and the convergent inputs of the School Plans, the Superintendent's Report on Achievement, the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement, the District Literacy Plan and the District Review (2007) Report, North Vancouver School District cannot respond with complacency toward the evidence that we need to improve our success rates with Aboriginal students. Nor, in light of this same evidence, can the District afford to be casual about improving literacy for students who are not yet meeting expectations for reading, writing, speaking and listening, or about retaining students in their educational programs until graduation or school completion.

Improvements in student progress and student completion will result if our students are able to sense that they are learning in ways that are individually meaningful, and if they are able to sense that efforts are being made to create the conditions of student safety and student belonging in our schools. Therefore, the three goals of the North Vancouver School District *Achievement Contract* for 2008-2009 are in the areas of literacy, safe and caring schools and Aboriginal student success.

Updates June 23, 2009:

The above stated Rationale for the Selection of Each Goal continues to be valid and applicable.

**NORTH VANCOUVER SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISTRICT ACHIEVEMENT CONTRACT
2008-2011**

District Goals:

Based on the review of student-related evidence using Provincial, District and school-based information, the goals set out in the District Achievement Contract for 2008-2009 are as follows:

- 1. To improve the success rates of students who are not yet meeting expectations for reading, writing, listening and/or speaking as measured by performance standards.**
- 2. To improve completion rates for students in the school district by emphasizing the safe, caring, and relational aspects of instruction in our schools.**
- 3. To increase awareness of the goals of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and participation in efforts to achieve these goals for Aboriginal student success.**

District Goal 1:

To improve the success rates of students who are not yet meeting expectations for reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking as measured by performance standards.

Goal Rationale:

Many students' performance profiles display uneven development among the various aspects of literacy. The District needs to apply attention and available resources toward identifying these students, supporting meaningful interventions, and monitoring the effectiveness of the interventions selected in each instance. Students positively affected will include students of Aboriginal heritage, students with various special needs, students who are not native speakers of English, students who are gifted and have additional special needs, and students whose lack of success in literacy-learning contributes to behaviour difficulties.

Evidence for Long-Term Monitoring: The District will aggregate and monitor report card data for trends over a three-year period. Evidence of trends will be reported yearly in the Statement of Progress section of the District *Achievement Contract*.

Objective 1.1

To increase the number of schools making systematic use of multi-year evidence to monitor the success of interventions provided to students who did not meet expectations on the TOPA during their Kindergarten year.

Actions (Strategies/Structures):

- Continue district-wide screening with TOPA at Kindergarten
- Monitor TOPA and K-Math assessment results
- Determine and support effective intervention strategies
- Continue multi-year tracking of literacy-learning needs of students receiving interventions in Kindergarten
- Support adoption by schools of methods for electronic tracking of students who may have difficulty with key grade-to-grade transitions, eg. Student-at-Risk File Software

Evidence: (Quantitative/Anecdotal)

Key Performance Measure:	Baseline	Target	Actual
Number of elementary schools completely adopting methods for electronic multi-year tracking of students to chart success of interventions provided	2007-08 2	2010-2011 10	2008-2009 3

Evidence: (Qualitative/Anecdotal)

The number of elementary schools adopting these methods has not risen as quickly as predicted. Accordingly the implementation process has been revised and the target has been reset. The electronic tracking process will now be made available to all elementary teachers in the school district as a feature of our Report Central elementary report card system. Teachers will be encouraged to adopt this feature as benefitting year to year transfer of students' information, in the course of their transitions between grade levels. Numbers of teachers adopting this feature of ReportCentral will be monitored and encouraged, and whole school adoptions will be encouraged and supported.

Objective 1.2

To increase the number of schools using assessment for learning practices to determine the classroom literacy needs of students in the areas of reading, speaking, and listening as monitored through surveys of principals and teachers.

Actions (Strategies/Structures):

- Identify suitable performance standards for speaking and listening
- Develop preliminary survey by October 31, 2008
- Establish baseline number of schools and levels of use

- Invite schools to participate in “assessment for learning” activities
- Provide in-service and district support to participating schools

Evidence: *(Quantitative)*

Key Performance Measure:	Baseline	Target	Actual
Number of schools where administrators report significant use of Assessment for Learning Practices	2008-2009 25	2010-2011 All	

Evidence: *(Qualitative/Anecdotal)*

As of June 19, 2009, administrators from 25 schools have reported significant use of Assessment for Learning practices in their schools. The most frequently reported practices include the Reading Assessment Device (RAD)—17 schools—and the Dibels—15 schools. Thirteen (13) of these 17 schools report significant use of both the RAD and the Dibels. These reports need to be cross-referenced, analyzed, and queried as to the degree to which each school is using assessment for learning practices as a move toward shifting the instructional culture to these types of practices.

Objective 1.3

To increase the number of schools co-marking “school wide writes” using performance standards to assess needs of students for direct instruction in writing.

Actions (Strategies/Structures):

- Invite schools to participate in implementation of *Writing 44*
- Implement use of *Writing 44* at participating schools
- Encourage school use of the school-wide write strategy
- Provide in-service and district support to interested schools regarding school-wide writes and performance standards

Evidence: *(Quantitative)*

Key Performance Measure:	Baseline	Target	Actual
Number of schools using school-wide write strategy	2007-2008 10	2010-2011 All	2008-2009 20

Evidence: *(Qualitative/Anecdotal)*

School administrators and District literacy staff report that 4 secondary schools (including Keith Lynn Alternative School) and 16 elementary schools are using the school wide write strategy. Though successes in this area are attributable to the implementation of the new Writing 44 document(s), these reports need to be cross-referenced, analyzed, and queried as to the degree to which each school is using performance standards based collaborative marking as part of the overall strategy.

Objective 1.4

To increase the number of schools where teachers are consciously selecting instructional methods based on evidence arising from ‘assessment for learning’ practices.

Actions (Strategies/Structures):

- Provide in-service and support regarding “assessment for learning’ practices
- Provide in-service and support regarding “differentiated instruction” methods
- Provide in-service and support for “universal design” and “understanding by design” techniques for lesson design
- Encourage instructional uses of technology in ways that support student learning
- Develop “level of use” survey and self-rating rubrics for practicing teachers

Evidence: (Quantitative)

Key Performance Measure:	Baseline	Target	Actual
Number of schools where administrators report significant conscious selection of instructional methods such as Reading 44, Cooperative Learning and Understanding by Design	2008-2009 25	2010-2011 All	

Evidence: (Qualitative/Anecdotal)

As of June 19, 2009, administrators at 25 schools have reported significant conscious selection of instructional methods to be occurring at their schools. The three most consistently sited methods are Reading/Writing/Math44–5 secondary schools and 20 elementary schools; Cooperative Learning–5 secondary schools and 20 elementary schools, and Understanding by Design and/or Universal Design for Learning–3 secondary schools and 16 elementary schools. These reports need to be cross-referenced, analyzed, and queried as to the degree to which each school is shifting the instructional culture toward these types of practices.

Objective 1.5

To increase the number of Secondary Schools that are participating in cross-departmental collegial conferencing for purposes of improving students’ performance in areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Actions (Strategies/Structures):

- Communicate with all secondary schools regarding availability of Collegial Conferencing funding in support of this objective

- Encourage use of assessment for learning practices within these Collegial Conferencing projects
- Provide in-service and support by district staff
- Encourage and support debriefing, sharing and follow up on findings of these Collegial Conferencing projects

Evidence: *(Quantitative)*

Key Performance Measure:	Baseline	Target	Actual
Number of secondary schools participating in Collegial Conferencing Projects of the specified type	2007-08 0	2010-2011 9	2008-2009 4

Evidence: *(Qualitative/Anecdotal)*

The target for 2008-2009 was exceeded at 4 of this type of Collegial Conferencing projects involving Secondary School Staffs. Accordingly, the target for 2010-2011 has been revised upward to 9—that is, at least one such project, during the three years of the Achievement Contract, in each of the secondary schools including Keith Lynn Alternate Secondary School and Continuing Education.

District Goal 2:

To improve completion rates for students in the school district by emphasizing the safe, caring, and relational aspects of instruction in our schools.

Goal Rationale:

Evidence regarding six-year completion rates for 2006-2007 indicates that North Vancouver School District does not achieve completion rates that meet the District’s expectations for its own performance. In 2007-2008, a working group was formed to review the cases of 371 students who were listed by the Ministry as non-graduates in 2006-2007. Evidence compiled by this working group suggests that organizing effective transitions, maximizing care for students in grades 7, 8 and 9, and proactive engagement by teachers, counsellors and administrators with “faltering students” will lead to increases in student retention and student success. Indications from the working group and from the 2008 Review of the Keith Lynn Alternative Program suggest that greater efforts need to be made to monitor the progress of students who rejoin mainstream schools after leaving alternative programs. These findings indicate that students’ sense of emotional safety, sense of belonging in a school setting, and instructional engagement are key issues regarding student retention and completion rates.

The North Vancouver School District vision statement on **Integrated Communities** states:

We build strong, trusting relationships that develop the confidence and sensitivity needed to share ideas and create solutions within our schools, families of schools and school district.

Evidence for Long-Term Monitoring: The District will aggregate and monitor data from the Ministry’s Satisfaction Survey, the District’s Safe and Caring Schools Audit and the District’s Safe Schools Social Responsibility Survey (SSRS) for trends over a three-year period. Evidence of trends in light of completion rates will be reported yearly in the Statement of Progress section of the District Achievement Contract.

Objective 2.1

Increase numbers of elementary schools and/or families of schools participating in Collegial Conferencing projects on specific instructional practices that suit the needs of students transitioning to grade 8 and enhance their sense of belonging in school.

Actions (Strategies/Structures):

- Communicate with all elementary and secondary schools regarding availability of Collegial Conferencing funding in support of this objective
- Encourage use of “assessment for learning” practices within these Collegial Conferencing projects
- Provide in-service and support by district staff
- Encourage and support debriefing, sharing and follow up on the findings of these Collegial Conferencing projects
- Support use of information from District Grade 6 and Grade 8 Math assessments by groups engaged in these projects
- Provide district support to secondary school based resource teams
- Support the use of information from the Safe Schools Social Responsibility Survey (SSRS) by school based groups

Evidence: (Quantitative)

Key Performance Measure:	Baseline	Target	Actual
Number of schools participating in Collegial Conferencing Projects of the specified type	2007-08 2	2010-2011 7	2008-2009 2+2 = 4
Percentage of students answering positively to the SSRS (4-7) question, “I feel like I belong at my school”	2007-08 74%	2009-10 80%	

Evidence: (Qualitative/Anecdotal)

The target for 2008-2009 was not met at 7, as only 2 such Collegial Conferencing projects involving families of schools occurred during the school year. Accordingly, the target for

2010-2011 has been revised upward to 7—that is, at least one such project, during the three years of the Achievement Contract, in each of the 7 families of schools.

Objective 2.2

Increase the numbers of high schools showing evidence in surveys of secondary school administrators that they are supporting students through efforts to enhance pedagogical and inter-student relationships in classrooms and the students' sense of belonging in schools.

Actions (Strategies/Structures):

- Provide District support for Tribes and/or PBS-like initiatives in secondary schools
- Provide District support for school-based systems to monitor transitioning students
- Provide District support for developing suitable Student Learning Plans and Individual Education Programs (IEPs) for students experiencing academic, social-emotional, or behavioural difficulties
- Provide in-service and support to school-based counsellors regarding students experiencing relational difficulties in classrooms
- Provide district support to secondary school based resource teams
- Support use of information from District Grade 6 and Grade 8 Math assessments by groups engaged in these initiatives
- Support the use of information from the Safe Schools Social Responsibility Survey (SSRS) by school based groups

Evidence: (Quantitative)

Key Performance Measure:	Baseline	Target	Actual
Survey of secondary school administrators (to be developed by October 31, 2008.)	2008-2009 4	2010-2011 9	
Percentage of students answering positively to the SSSRS (8-12) question, "I feel like I belong at my school"	2005-06 63%	2009-10 80%	

Evidence: (Qualitative/Anecdotal)

As of June 19, 2009 only 4 secondary schools have submitted surveys completed by administrative staff. Two additional schools have indicated that their surveys will be incoming by June 26. The most frequently cited strategies employed in the schools of the administrators' surveyed are: Tribes, Elements of Effective Group Work, and Family of Schools Transition Initiatives.

Objective 2.3

Increase the School District's six-year completion rate over a three-year period.

Actions (Strategies/Structures):

- Continue the working committee's efforts to follow up on students not completing high school programs within six years
- Put systems in place to continue to monitor the educational needs of students who have left school without completion
- Implement relevant recommendations of the working committee
- Implement relevant recommendations of the Review of the Keith Lynn and Third Step Alternate Programs
- Continue to follow indications of the Aboriginal Advisory Committee regarding the sense of belonging of Aboriginal students
- Put systems in place to monitor the educational successes of students up to four years after completing school

Evidence: (Quantitative)

Key Performance Measure:	Baseline	Target	Actual
Yearly six-year completion rate, beginning 2006-2007	2006-07 83%	2010-2011 90%	2007-2008 81%

Evidence: (Qualitative/Anecdotal)

The baseline has been revised to reflect the most recently updated information from the Ministry of Education. The target of 90% has been projected to be reached by 2010-2011. The actual for 2007-2008 is 81%. At this point, none of these figures has been corrected for the presence of international students. Of interest is the discovery that, though the 2007-2008 percentage declined in relation to the 2006-2007 percentage, both percentages are 3% over the provincial average.

District Goal 3:

To increase awareness of the goals of the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement and participation in efforts to achieve these goals for Aboriginal student success.

Goal Rationale:

The School District's Aboriginal Education Advisory Council, which includes Elders and Council Members from both the Squamish Nation and the Tsleil Watuth Nation, have chosen to support the aboriginal students' sense of belonging in the public school system by honouring the history, traditions, and culture of the first nations communities whose traditional territories are served by the School District. This has been the primary area of focus for the Advisory Council during the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 school years. A Subcommittee on Aboriginal Literacy co-founded by members of the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council and the District Literacy Committee is currently exploring strategies to advance Aboriginal literacy while enhancing current practices that honour the histories,

traditions, and cultures of the local nations, upon whose traditional territories the schools of the School District are built. To be successful, this initiative will require the awareness and participation of the many school communities that comprise North Vancouver School District.

Evidence for Long-Term Monitoring: The District will disaggregate, monitor and report Aboriginal student data for trends over a three-year period. Evidence of trends will be reported yearly in the Statement of Progress section of the District Achievement Contract.

Objective 3.1

To increase the numbers of events, initiatives and programs offered in schools, which consciously honour the history, traditions and culture of First Nations communities.

Actions (Strategies/Structures):

- Support the plans and efforts of the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council
- Support the plans and efforts of the Subcommittee for Aboriginal Literacy
- Support School Principals, Teachers, First Nations Support Workers and District staff in their efforts to plan and implement events and programs
- Encourage the inclusion of relevant objectives in school plans

Evidence: *(Quantitative)*

Key Performance Measure:	Baseline	Target	Actual
Number of relevant events/initiatives counted in district per school year	2007-08 20	2010-11 35	2008-2009 25

Evidence: *(Qualitative/Anecdotal)*

The target of 30 events has been revised to 35 for 2010-2011. In 2008-2009 there has been a count of 25 relevant events/initiatives. Nineteen (19) schools have had ongoing initiatives involving carving, drumming/singing, and/or arts/crafts. There also have been 6 major events including Pow-Wow, Pole-raising, Guest Speakers, and Aboriginal Day activities.

Objective 3.2

To participate consciously in efforts to increase the six-year completion rates among aboriginal students.

Actions (Strategies/Structures):

- Support schools in their efforts to monitor needs of Aboriginal students for academic and social-emotional support particularly at times of transition

- Provide in-service and support to First Nations Support Workers, teachers involved in Aboriginal Education, counselors, and school administrators regarding the needs of Aboriginal students
- Create closer liaison among teachers involved in Aboriginal education, literacy and math education, special education and alternative programs to promote shared understanding and a consistent approach to the needs of Aboriginal students
- Enhance efforts to follow up on students not completing high school programs within six years

Evidence: *(Quantitative)*

Key Performance Measure:	Baseline	Target	Actual
Percentage of Aboriginal students eligible to graduate who graduate	2006-07 69%	2010-11 100%	2007-08 82%

Evidence: *(Qualitative/Anecdotal)*

The target for 2008-2009 was 80%. This was revised to a stretch goal of 100% for 2010-2011. In addition to this target revision, an additional target will be developed during 2009-2010, which will involve raising the % of students entering grade eight, and who will be eligible to graduate within 6 years, who actually do graduate.

A point of great interest has been raised in a report from the Aboriginal youth program at Eslha 7an: 12 students are graduating with Dogwood Certificates in 2008-2009. All of these students are in their 7th year after entering Grade 8. The District will continue to track and report this number.

Objective 3.3

To increase participation in Aboriginal literacy activities, as a way of increasing academic engagement and potential success.

Strategies/Structures:

- Support the plans and efforts of the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council
- Support the plans and efforts of the Subcommittee for Aboriginal Literacy
- Support school Principals, Teachers, First Nations Support Workers and district staff in their efforts to plan and implement relevant events, programs and interventions
- Reconfigure the District literacy team to promote broader attention to the literacy needs of Aboriginal students

Evidence: *(Quantitative)*

Key Performance Measure:	Baseline	Target	Actual
Number of relevant events counted in the school district per school year	2008-2009 10	2010-2011 16	

Evidence: *(Qualitative/Anecdotal)*

A baseline of 10 events has been established in 2008-2009. These events included a presentation by Lieutenant Governor Stephen Point at Carson Graham Secondary School, a presentation by the Chatelaine Gwen Point at the Tseil Waututh Nation, presentations by David Bouchard at Carisbrooke Elementary School and Windsor Secondary School, and two workshops series for teachers and first nations support workers.