



NORTH VANCOUVER
SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Literacy Plan

June 2009

I INTRODUCTION

In January 2007, the B.C. government launched a provincial literacy action plan entitled [Read Now BC](#). The primary objective of *Read Now BC* is to improve accessibility to literacy programs and services for preschoolers, K-12 students, adults and Aboriginal people. *Read Now BC* is a collaborative project that focuses on building strong partnerships between school districts, post-secondary institutions, early learning and other community organizations, public libraries, Aboriginal organizations, and non-governmental groups such as [Literacy Now](#) and [Literacy BC](#). The Read Now government initiative defines literacy as:

The ability to understand and employ 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.

International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey 2005

In the spring of 2007, the Minister of Education announced that school districts would be responsible for preparing an annual district literacy plan that would focus on four strategic components, also known 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 North Vancouver Board of Education recognizes the significant role that we play in the education of people of all ages within our community. The District Literacy Plan is a statement of our commitment to work collaboratively with key community stakeholders to improve literacy for all residents of the North Shore. Through the process of developing this District Literacy Plan, our school district has gained a better understanding of the various perspectives on literacy throughout the community. Dialogue, positive working relationships and consensus building with our community partners over the past two years have enabled the school district to identify specific needs and priorities that are reflected in the literacy goals we have established for each of the four pillars of literacy. The District Literacy Plan is a powerful example of the School District’s Community Connections Vision Statement:

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

This 2009 North Vancouver School District Literacy Plan provides an update to the plan developed and submitted to the Ministry in July 2008. Literacy planning is an on-going annual process which includes processes of reflection, evaluation and the thoughtful planning of future literacy initiatives based on the changing needs of the community.

II District and Community Context and Demographics

North Vancouver covers an area of over 172 km² and encompasses the municipalities of the City and District of North Vancouver. This area also includes the traditional lands of the Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish Nations.

There are approximately 127,727 people living in North Vancouver. Approximately 1700 North Vancouver residents are identified as Aboriginal, according to the 2006 Statistics Canada Census. The population of North Vancouver has not grown significantly, increasing by just over 1% from 2001 to 2006. The general population of North Vancouver is well educated. The economic foundation is correspondingly strong.

Over the past ten years, North Vancouver's immigrant population has been growing faster than its non-immigrant population; however, among cities located in Metro Vancouver, North Vancouver still has the lowest proportion of immigrants who speak languages other than English at home. According to the 2006 Census, Farsi was the most common non-English language spoken at home in North Vancouver, followed by Chinese, Korean, and Tagalog.

The differences between the City and the District of North Vancouver are notable. The District of North Vancouver, by far the larger of the two municipalities, sprawls in an east-west direction and is primarily made up of single-family residential housing. The City of North Vancouver, referred to by regional planners as the "downtown" area, is home to the majority of the North Shore's high-rise buildings, rental properties and commercial operations. While the City and District of North Vancouver are separate entities, each with their own mayor, council, libraries, and operations departments, they share one school district.

The North Vancouver School District enrolls 16,800 students and offers a comprehensive Kindergarten to Grade 12 education. The School District's 28 elementary and 7 secondary schools offer a variety of provincially and locally developed educational programs and services including French Immersion, an extended Kindergarten program, English Second Language (ESL) courses, programs for students with exceptional learning needs, summer school, an outdoor education program, distributed learning courses, and a variety of alternate programs.

The shared vision of the North Vancouver School District is *to 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.* Programs offered by the North Vancouver School District are designed to provide all students with the courses necessary to enter university, college, or other post-secondary institutions, as well as the skills and training necessary to pursue career and vocational opportunities. In addressing the wide diversity of student needs, the district also provides specialized support services for students with exceptional learning needs.

III Alignment with the District Achievement Contract

The North Vancouver School District Achievement Contract identifies literacy as a main focus at both the elementary and secondary levels. It specifically targets, in its goals and objectives, three of the four pillars identified in the District Literacy Plan.

Pillar #1: Early literacy success for young children

The District Achievement Contract recognizes the importance of early literacy screening and intervention for Kindergarten students in order to build strong foundation skills for literacy development in the later grades. Early learning programs, developed in partnership with government agencies and community organizations, and identified in this District Literacy Plan, help ensure that more students enter Kindergarten with the skills that will help them be successful in school. These early learning programs include Early Learning Foundations (ELF) preschools and childcare centres, StrongStart, Mother Goose, a new Farsi Immigrant PALS (Parents as Literacy Supporters) program, and Ready, Set, Learn.

Pillar #2: Reading Success in Schools

The District Achievement Contract identifies goals and objectives specific to the development of literacy skills for all students K-12. Particular emphasis in the Achievement Contract is focused on intervention strategies and structures for students not yet meeting expectations in oral language, reading and writing. Strategies and structures supporting both the District Achievement Contract and the District Literacy Plan include locally developed literacy programs (*Firm Foundations, Our Turn to Talk, Inspirations 44, Reading 44, Writing 44, Web in the Classroom, and Digital Expression*), literacy assessments including the Early Development Instrument (EDI), the Test of Phonological Assessment (TOPA) and the Reading Assessment Device (RAD), as well as an array of commercial intervention programs, strategies, and initiatives, including the Academy of Reading.

Pillar #4: Reading Success for Aboriginal People

Both the District Achievement Contract and the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement identify literacy as a key factor in meeting the goals of improving academic achievement and increasing completion/graduation rates for Aboriginal students. Many of the district's literacy initiatives and programs are strategically aimed at improving the literacy skills of First Nations learners. Through the collaborative process of developing the District Literacy Plan this year, we have been successful in engaging the Aboriginal Education Advisory Council, district and school staff, the Aboriginal communities, and First Nations students in discussions regarding the specific needs of Aboriginal learners. A number of literacy initiatives listed in this plan address these needs and will help meet the goals of both the Achievement Contract and the Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement.

IV Alignment with the North Shore Community Literacy Plan

District Literacy planning is intended to build on the Community Literacy Planning Process. Since June 2007, the North Vancouver School District has participated as a stakeholder member of the [North Shore Community Literacy Task Force](#). The members of the Task Force (see Appendix A), representing literacy programs and services throughout the community, met regularly throughout the initial 2007-08 school year towards the goal of creating a community literacy plan for the North Shore. A facilitator, hired with funding from *Literacy Now BC*, held a series of dialogue sessions, meetings and interviews with the school districts and with members of the broader community in order to identify literacy needs and establish a clear direction for improving literacy locally. A [Community Literacy Plan](#), *Everyone Wins- A Plan for Literacy for All: A Literacy Plan for the North Shore*, was completed and published in June 2008.

The Community Literacy Plan established the following three-year goals for literacy on the North Shore:

- 1. Community organizations work together in a collaborative way on literacy issues*
- 2. A continuum of literacy supports is available to all residents*
- 3. The literacy needs of marginalized groups are understood and acted upon*
- 4. Residents support each other in addressing literacy issues*
- 5. Individuals, children, youth and families are actively engaged in literacy in increasing numbers*

These community literacy goals align with and complement the goals of the North Vancouver School District Literacy Plan. Both plans emphasize the following guiding principles:

- The importance of collaboration between educational institutions and community partners to improve literacy locally
- Commitment to literacy initiatives that are inclusive of the early years through adulthood
- Inclusion and appreciation for different perspectives and points of view
- Recognition and appreciation of First Nations cultures and the importance of linking cultural traditions to literacy initiatives
- The importance of family-oriented and intergenerational approaches to literacy programs and initiatives
- The need to identify issues and barriers to literacy in order to implement successful literacy initiatives and programs

While the Community Literacy Plan will continue to inform literacy action and dialogue on the North Shore, it will not be an actively updated document. Instead, the District Literacy Plans for North Vancouver and West Vancouver, respectively, will extend what has been a traditionally school district-based environment for Boards of Education, to include community-based learning and literacy initiatives.

In September 2008, a Literacy Outreach Coordinator was hired by the North Shore Community Literacy Task Force, with funds provided by Literacy Now BC. Responsibilities of the Literacy Outreach Coordinator (LOC) include facilitating the merger of the two current literacy plans (District and Community), implementing activities related to the identified literacy priorities, and supporting the long-term goal of merging the focus of the Community Literacy Plan with that of the District Literacy Plan.

Fortunately, there exists a common vision of literacy, as described in all three plans relating to the North Shore (the Community Literacy Plan, and the North Vancouver and West Vancouver School District Literacy Plans), that spans literacy programs from early childhood to adulthood. By building on current community partnerships, and extending those that will support new literacy initiatives, we expect to enhance our ability to more broadly affect literacy in the community. Through our alliance with the North Shore Literacy Outreach Coordinator, and our participation in the Community Literacy Task Force, the North Vancouver School District will continue to develop and strengthen networks and partnerships with community agencies that contribute to literacy development.

V Process for Consultation with Literacy Stakeholders

The North Vancouver School District Literacy Plan was developed through a consultative process that has evolved over the past two years, with a number of different partner groups and committees, including the following:

1. *The North Vancouver School District Literacy Plan Committee*
2. *The North Shore Community Literacy Plan Task Force*
3. *Program Services Literacy Team*
4. *The North Vancouver District Aboriginal Literacy Sub-Committee*
5. *School Librarians' Consultative Committee*

The District Literacy Plan Committee agreed in the first year that it was important for us to prioritize our efforts. We made a conscious decision to focus our energy and consultative process on the Aboriginal literacy component of the plan for the 2008-09 school year. Our District Literacy Plan Committee has expanded this year, to include input from staff and students across the District.

The [District Aboriginal Literacy Sub-Committee](#), comprised of school district staff and representatives from both First Nations communities has continued to meet during the 2008-09 school year. During our discussions we have identified issues and learning needs specific to Aboriginal students, and have begun to explore ideas and teaching practices that would be successful with those students. Several exciting plans and initiatives emerged from consultation with the First Nations communities, including two district-wide presentations on Aboriginal literacy by the Lieutenant Governor Stephen Point and the Chatelaine Gwen Point, as well as a number of district in-service opportunities for teachers, administrators, and First Nations Support Workers.

VI Reflections on the 2008 District Literacy Plan and Planning for 2009

The District Literacy Plan outlines four key goals to improve literacy locally. These goals, organized according to the four pillars of the ReadNow initiative, were identified in 2008 by the District Literacy Plan Committee and will be carried forward into the 2009-10 school year:

Goal 1: To increase the number of children who enter school ready for Kindergarten

Goal 2: To increase the number of students K-12 who read successfully

Goal 3: To increase awareness in the community of adult literacy programs

Goal 4: To increase understanding, among educators and in Aboriginal communities, of effective literacy teaching practices for First Nations students

Goal 1: To increase the number of children who enter school ready for Kindergarten

A priority we established in the 2008 District Literacy Plan was to strengthen the school district's relationship and collaboration with Early Learning educators in the community. With the expansion of the popular StrongStart program to three new centres this year, the natural inclusion and integration of early learning in our schools is becoming more apparent. The School District has also taken a leadership role this year in creating opportunities for networking and professional development among early childhood educators in the community, including StrongStart facilitators, preschool and childcare providers, and Kindergarten teachers. Collaborative learning and networking in early childhood instructional practices will continue to be a focus going into next year.

The EDI (Early Development Instrument) has now been established as an annual assessment of children's early development to be completed by Kindergarten teachers. As the community literacy needs change, annual EDI mapping will provide more accurate and timely information to the School District and the broader community with respect to the types of early learning programs needed and the best locations for new programs.

Goal 2: To increase the number of students K-12 who read successfully

The most successful initiatives this year included a shift in professional development towards a more inclusive school team-based approach. This model was used in our Early Literacy Intervention training provided to staff working with at risk grade one students. The same format will be repeated next year, with a focus on early intervention training for Kindergarten students at risk.

The **Academy of Reading** was introduced this year at schools across the District to provide additional literacy support for intermediate and secondary students. While the program has been generally well received by students and teachers, the District Literacy Committee has recommended that we continue to focus on improving access to the program at the elementary and secondary levels. Other literacy programs and initiatives

have also been identified to help support at risk adolescent students. On-going collaboration with the broader community will also help with these endeavours.

Goal 3: To increase awareness in the community of adult literacy programs

The participation of the Literacy Outreach Coordinator on our District Literacy Plan Committee, and the on-going collaboration and partnerships established by the North Shore Community Literacy Task Force, have helped increase awareness, at the School District level, of specific literacy needs among adults living on the North Shore, and of the services and programs available in the community. Many of the community-based adult literacy initiatives are now included in the 2009 District Literacy Plan. However, on-going updates to these inventories will be necessary as needs in the community are identified and new programs are implemented.

Goal 4: To increase understanding, among educators and in Aboriginal communities, of effective literacy teaching practices for First Nations students

The District Literacy Plan Committee and Aboriginal Literacy Sub-Committee have had opportunities this year to reflect on the priorities, objectives and actions that were outlined in the 2008 District Literacy Plan. We agreed that the focus on Aboriginal Literacy was successful in terms of raising awareness of learning styles and instructional practices relevant to First Nations students. The high-level visits and presentations on Aboriginal literacy by the Lieutenant-Governor Steven Point and the Chatelaine Gwen Point contributed to a general understanding, among teachers and administrators, of the importance of connecting students' learning to their culture and of fostering a sense of belonging in schools for First Nations students by honouring and celebrating their traditions.

We agreed to continue our emphasis on Aboriginal literacy, outlining several key themes or areas of focus including:

- Support in early literacy practices for young Aboriginal parents and educators in our school system and in the community through programs, training and mentorship
- Literacy resources suitable for First Nations students
- Broader learning communities that include parents, children, community-based initiatives and elders from the community
- Emphasis on positive Aboriginal role models for our students including: students, writers, singers, and athletes
- Support for the transition of First Nations students from Carson to Balmoral
- Training and support for teachers, and support staff (including First Nations Support Workers) at the secondary level (particularly at the 7-8 transition point).

VII Goals and Objectives to Improve Literacy Locally

Pillar #1: School Readiness in Young Children

Goal 1: *To increase the number of children who enter school ready for Kindergarten*

Rationale:

Measuring children's development at school entry is important because it reflects children's early experiences and it can predict their performance in literacy tasks in later years. Results from the 2004-2005 Early Development Instrument (EDI) assessment indicate that among pre-school aged children living in North Vancouver, about 8% were considered vulnerable in the area of language and cognitive development, and almost 12% were considered vulnerable in the area of communication and general knowledge.

The School District acknowledges the importance of early learning opportunities that prepare young children to be successful in school. We have been proactive in developing partnerships with the early learning community on the North Shore, and we will continue to collaborate with preschool and childcare providers, libraries, community organizations, and Ministry initiatives to develop and expand effective early literacy programs in our community. An extensive number of early learning programs and initiatives are taking place in our schools and across the community. The following lists of strategies and structures feature both school district-based and community-based early learning initiatives that will enhance school readiness in young children and improve their transition from early care settings to Kindergarten:

On-Going Strategies/Structures:

- Continue to support Kindergarten teachers in administering the annual **EDI (Early Development Instrument)** and assist the community in identifying specific literacy needs of young children
- Collaborate with **ELF (Early Learning Foundations)** providers to develop quality early learning and childcare programs in our School District
- Provide support and guidance for **StrongStart** drop-in programs at schools throughout the School District
- Facilitate Story Time visits to StrongStart centres by District and City Librarians
- Provide support for the annual **Ready, Set, Learn** program in elementary schools
- Promote communication and understanding between the Early Learning providers and Kindergarten teachers through participation in WECAN and other ECE committees on the North Shore
- Continue to work with community agencies and District staff to support learning centres and programs for teenage mothers (e.g. **Learning Together Program** at Sutherland) with a focus on parental training in early literacy practices
- Work in collaboration with the Multicultural Society to continue to support the successful **Farsi PALS (Parents as Literacy Supporters)** program
- Continue to support and coordinate Kindergarten Readiness Meetings and the Ready Set Go to Kindergarten poster and booklet for parents

- North Shore Neighbourhood House offers **Mother Goose Programs** for parents and children ages 0-3 at various locations in the community
- **Grandparent Connection** programs are offered at John Braithwaite Community Centre (JBCC) and the North Shore Neighbourhood House
- Drop-in programs, focused on early learning activities, are offered on a regular basis at JBCC. **The Family Centre** is operated at JBCC by NSNH
- The **Supported Child Development Program (SCDP)**, assisting families of children with extra support needs to access inclusive child care. The program, funded by the Ministry of Children and Families and hosted by the NSNH, is intended to serve children from birth to 12
- North Shore Public Libraries participate in **Books for B.C. Babies and Toddlers**
- North Vancouver District Libraries host **Parent Child Mother Goose** sessions
- North Shore Libraries have weekly story times for babes, toddlers and preschoolers and present to preschool parent groups on the importance of reading
- Librarians visit preschools, daycares and StrongStart centres and participate in Ready Set Learn and Immigrant PALS programs
- Support the **WHEELS** (community van) program to promote literacy and school readiness in communities across the North Shore

2008-09 Updates:

- Continued the expansion of the **StrongStart program** to three new centres at Eastview, Lynnmour and Norgate
- Facilitated Ministry **Early Learning Framework** introductory workshop for Kindergarten teachers, elementary administrators and StrongStart facilitators
- Provided professional development opportunities for early learning educators in the school district and throughout the community, including: ELF providers, preschool and caregivers, StrongStart facilitators, Kindergarten teachers, and School District teachers and administrators; topics this year included: the BC MOE Early Learning Framework, Reggio-Emilia and Waldorf philosophies of early childhood education, play-based learning and community connections
- Facilitated the **Get Outside and Play** Saturday workshop series
- Acquired funding from **School Community Grants** to support early learning initiatives (e.g. toy lending libraries for Norgate and Lynnmour to expand play opportunities and continued language development at home)
- Provided training for **Alphabet Soup** pilot for StrongStart facilitators
- Implemented pilot for **Big Science for Little Hands** program
- Continued to support the **Farsi PALS program** and facilitated a move for the program to a new school site (from Capilano to Queen Mary) to provide easier access for participants in the program
- A **Dads and Babies** group was initiated at John Braithwaite Community Centre

Looking Ahead to 2009-10:

- Expansion of the **StrongStart program** to three additional sites in our School District at Lynn Valley, Seymour Heights and Montroyal schools

- Continued focus on collaboration with the early learning community through networks and professional development

Pillar #2: Reading Success in Schools

Goal 2: *To increase the number of students K-12 who read successfully*

Rationale:

While most North Vancouver students demonstrate strong literacy skills overall, provincial test scores, report card results, and classroom assessments indicate that some students at each grade level struggle with oral language development, reading and writing. For example, the Test of Phonological Awareness (TOPA) administered annually to students in North Vancouver, indicates that approximately 15% of Kindergarten students across the district require intervention for reading readiness. FSA scores for North Vancouver generally indicate that about 15-18% of students in grades 4 and 7 are not meeting expectations for reading and writing. Similarly, the results of grade 10 English Provincial exams provide evidence that some secondary students still struggle with literacy skills. Many of the students who experience difficulty with literacy skills are at risk academically, socially and emotionally. Without support and appropriate intervention, these students may leave high school without graduating.

The North Vancouver School District recognizes the importance of ensuring that sound assessment and instructional practices and appropriate intervention strategies are in place at every grade level for students with literacy challenges. We have committed a significant portion of our efforts toward implementing specific strategies, programs, district initiatives, and alternative programs that address literacy goals. The following strategies and structures provide literacy support for students from K-12:

On-Going Strategies/Structures:

- Continue to administer the **Test of Phonological Awareness (TOPA)** assessment annually to all Kindergarten students across the district; provide intervention to those students considered at risk for reading readiness and retest in late spring
- Continue to screen grade 3 students using the **Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT)** in order to plan for enrichment/support in the area of literacy
- Facilitate and support the successful classroom use of early literacy development programs such as ***Our Turn to Talk, Firm Foundations*** and ***Inspirations 44***
- Facilitate and support the successful classroom use of locally developed literacy programs (***Reading 44, Writing 44, Web in the Classroom, Digital Expression***) at all grade levels
- Continue to provide District in-service and opportunities for collegial dialogue, including workshops on locally developed resources, presentations from guest experts in literacy instruction, and sessions dedicated to exploring literacy through integrated technology (e.g. Learning at Night (LAN) sessions)
- Provide support and training for the administration of the formative assessment tool **Reading Assessment Device (RAD)** from grades 1-9

- Provide learning assistance that focuses on early identification, intervention and classroom support for students with learning difficulties/disabilities using a variety of reading approaches/methods and intervention strategies
- Continue to provide, where resources permit, computer assisted learning support for students with written output difficulties
- Provide Secondary Learning Resource Centres using computer assisted learning techniques and other resources for students with complex developmental disabilities
- Provide Speech and Language Therapists for assessment and intervention services and assistance with more formal language and literacy instruction
- Provide short-term specialist teaching at two **District Literacy Centres**
- Facilitate the **Reading Rounds** buddy reading program that provides grade 2 and grade 9 students with cross-grade reading strategy instruction
- Continue the development of **Literacy Bins** for students with diverse needs and interests (Aboriginal, Safe and Caring, students with disabilities)
- Continue to provide annual assessment and literacy support for all English Language Learning (ELL) students
- Support school-based library programs (e.g. contests, special events, author visits, home reading, Writers-in-Residence, Red Cedar Awards, etc.)
- Provide literacy resources and support for alternate programs for students with special learning styles or requirements (e.g. Keith Lynn Secondary, Youth Learning Centre, Third Step, Learning Together, Youth Employment Program, Distributed Learning courses, Eslaha7an Aboriginal youth and adult program)
- North Vancouver District library supports librarian outreach to school for the Kindergarten campaign and **Summer Reading Clubs**
- North Shore Public Libraries host **Red Cedar and Stellar Book clubs** and participate in the provincial children's and teen Summer Reading Clubs
- North Shore libraries host **Book Buddies**, a one-on-one literacy mentoring program for school aged children
- North Shore libraries host author readings and book festivals for students
- The **One To One Literacy** program offers one-on-one instruction in North Vancouver schools to students who struggle with reading and writing

2008-09 Updates:

- Used Literacy Innovation Grant funding to provide Early Literacy Intervention training to administrators, classroom teachers, and support staff in intervention strategies for grade one students in oral language, phonological awareness, reading and writing instructional strategies and interventions
- Facilitated the implementation of **Academy of Reading**, an on-line interactive intervention program
- Provided district in-service in the **Understanding by Design** approach to curriculum planning, with a focus on the **Universal Design for Learning** and **Differentiated Instruction** to meet the needs of all learners
- Facilitated a Teacher Inquiry Project (collegial conferencing workshop series) focusing on instruction and assessment (Marzano's research), differentiated instruction, and teacher leadership

- Facilitated a district-wide workshop series on Assessment for Learning
- Facilitated a series of **Learning at Night (LAN)** in-service sessions focusing on the role of technology in literacy development
- Facilitated a series of Adolescent Literacy in-service sessions for secondary teachers
- Organized a session for librarians and teachers in March 2009 with Adrienne Gear (Non Fiction Reading)

Looking Ahead to 2009-10:

- Use Literacy Innovation Grant funding to create Early Literacy Intervention teams at each school and provide specific training in 2009-10 to administrators, classroom teachers, and support staff in intervention strategies for Kindergarten students identified as at risk on the TOPA assessment
- Continue to improve access and effectiveness of the **Academy of Reading** program at the elementary and secondary
- Continue to explore ways to provide specific training for later literacy support/intervention for students, classroom teachers and support staff
- Continue to explore ways of integrating technology with literacy instruction
- Implement an **ARC-BC project** (through SETBC) to provide high quality digital and alternate format materials for students with physical or cognitive disabilities

Pillar #3: Reading Success for Adults

Goal 3: *To increase awareness in the community of adult literacy programs*

Rationale:

The North Shore Community Literacy Plan identifies several groups in our community who struggle with literacy. These individuals are often not able to understand printed information well enough to access services and participate fully in community life. The groups, identified in the Community Literacy Plan, including individuals from low income residences, First Nations communities, those learning English as a second or additional language (one of the fastest growing populations on the North Shore), and people with mental health issues or physical disabilities. While many programs do exist, these individuals are often not aware of, or do not access, available adult literacy programs in the community.

The North Vancouver School District is committed to working with its community partners to increase awareness of the quality programs and services available for adult learners on the North Shore through the following actions:

On-Going Strategies/Structures:

- Work in collaboration with the North Shore Community Literacy Task Force and other community partners, including business and industry, to expand access to community-based and workplace literacy programs
- Capilano University offers ESL classes and transition-to-university programs

- Work in collaboration with community partners to highlight general interest programs to adults in the community
- Increase awareness in the community of the North Vancouver School District's Continuing Education program that offers English language acquisition high school completion, and blended-model Distributed Learning courses
- Collaborate with community organizations to increase awareness of Early Learning programs that also provide literacy support for parents and caregivers (e.g. **Farsi PALS program, StrongStart, Mother Goose** programs)
- North Shore Multicultural Society offers extensive free and low cost ESL classes for youth, adults, and seniors at various locations across North Vancouver
- North Shore Neighbourhood House offers ESL Programming at the Neighbourhood House and at John Braithwaite Community Centre
- North Vancouver District Library supports Book Clubs for adults at each branch
- North Shore libraries cooperatively plan an annual **North Shore Writers festival**

2008-09 Updates:

- Continued to expand literacy instruction opportunities for adult learners both in face-to-face classrooms, and on-line through increased program options in **Distributed Learning**
- **Lower Lonsdale Literacy Drop-in Program** (run through Capilano University) operates out of John Braithwaite Community Centre and is intended to focus on meeting the needs of low-income and ESL learners in the community. Activities currently include multi-level ESL conversation classes and a writing group based at the Grant McNeil Housing Complex.
- The **North Shore Story Walk** was launched in April 2009
- The **North Shore Welcoming Communities Initiative** is currently developing a database of resources available to newcomers to the region. ESL learning opportunities will be an important component of this directory.

Looking Ahead to 2009-10:

- The North Shore Community Literacy Committee is currently considering providing LiteracyNow implementation funding for a number of new initiatives in the community; priority will be given to expand on-going adult literacy programs on the North Shore, or to support new programs based on identified needs in the community

Pillar #4: Reading Success for Aboriginal People

Goal 4: *To increase understanding, among educators and in Aboriginal communities, of effective literacy teaching practices for First Nations students*

Rationale:

For the past few years, TOPA scores, FSA results, report card data indicate that many Aboriginal students in North Vancouver face challenges regarding literacy skills. This has been and continues to be a significant concern in our school district. The District Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement and the District Achievement Contract both

emphasize the need for educators to work in collaboration with the First Nations communities to increase Aboriginal students' academic achievement, and in particular, their development of literacy skills.

Through conversations with the First Nations communities, with the Community Literacy Task Force, and with various other community partners, we have begun to identify specific literacy needs in the community and in the school district. This knowledge is helping us to design innovative new literacy initiatives.

In discussions with the District Aboriginal Advisory Council and the District Aboriginal Literacy Sub-Committee over the past two years, a key topic that has emerged is the need for increased awareness, among educators and members of the Aboriginal communities, of appropriate and effective teaching practices for First Nations students. The North Vancouver School District is committed to working collaboratively with our Aboriginal communities on the following strategies and structures:

On-Going Strategies/Structures:

- Continue to build on the ideas presented by Her Honour, the Chatelaine Gwen Point during the Aboriginal Literacy Evening in October 2008
- Coordinate the team of District Aboriginal Literacy Teachers in providing leadership and in-service on effective literacy teaching practices
- Provide training and in-service on specific literacy teaching practices that can be implemented in the classroom or in small group instruction by First Nations Support Workers (e.g. Early Literacy Intervention training in 2008-2009)
- In partnership with the Aboriginal community, coordinate the *Ready, Set, Learn* program for First Nations parents and their children
- Continue the partnership of leadership and support with the Squamish Nation Kindergarten to implement professional development and resource support for the staff, to assess students in phonological awareness and numeracy, to facilitate intervention programs as needed, and to provide weekly library time and book exchange at a North Vancouver elementary school
- Provide support to teachers and First Nations support workers in creating classroom and school-based programs that link cultural traditions to literacy initiatives (e.g. oral story telling, elementary cultural awareness literacy projects, First Nations Integrated Studies program and First Nations Support Blocks)
- Continue to partner with So-Sah-Latch Health and Family Centre in their various early intervention programs
- Continue to partner with the Eslha7an Aboriginal program for youth and adults to provide high school completion, GED, and native culture classes

2008-09 Updates:

- Increased District teaching staff to support First Nations students and classroom teachers (Intermediate Aboriginal Literacy and Secondary Math)
- Continued to expand opportunities for teacher in-service and collegial dialogue on topics related to differentiated instruction and best practices for First Nations students (e.g. Coast Metro Differentiated Instruction series)

- Presentations by David Bouchard (September 2008 at Carisbrooke; May 2009 at Windsor) on the topic of Aboriginal Literacy

Looking Ahead to 2009-10:

- The District Aboriginal Literacy Committee has identified the need to provide in-service in literacy teaching practices for First Nations Support Workers working with intermediate and secondary students
- Continue to research and purchase literacy resources suitable for First Nations students and re-emphasize the **Aboriginal Literacy Bins** through in-service
- Support for transition of students from Carson to Balmoral
- Support broader Learning Communities – parents, children, community-based initiatives – use of Elders from the community in classrooms
- Support the Aboriginal Engagement Committee (a sub-committee of WECAN) in implementing a SummerStart StrongStart program at Capilano Littlest Ones
- Highlight Aboriginal role models for our students: students, writers, athletes
- **First Nations English 12** – offered at Carson – use those students as peer models
- Facilitate and support an Aboriginal “writer in residence” program for the Carson Graham First Nation Integrated Studies

IX Process for Approval of the District Literacy Plan

The British Columbia School Act (81.1) states that a Board of Education must, on or before July 15th of a school year, establish and make available to the public, a District Literacy Plan for the school year, setting out the plan for improving literacy in the geographic area of the school district.

The North Vancouver District Literacy Plan will be submitted to the Board of Education for approval in June 2009. The new District Literacy Plan will be shared with the community through various committee meetings during the 2009-2010 year. The community will also have the opportunity to review the District Literacy Plan on the District website and provide comments and feedback on its direction during the year.

Appendix A: Committee Membership

North Vancouver School District Literacy Committee:

Joanne Robertson	(Chair) District Principal, Program Services
Surya Govender	North Shore Literacy Community Outreach Coordinator
Gowa Kong	District Administrator, Early Learning
Jenny Hilder	District Early Literacy Facilitator
Gretchen Tolfo	Early Literacy Facilitator, Aboriginal Education
Deb Holliday	Literacy Support, Aboriginal Programs
Lisa Ottenbreit	District Later Literacy Facilitator
Ann Copp	Learning Assistance Support, Student Services
Maureen Stanger	Vice-Principal, Continuing Education
Marcia Garries	District Administrator, Student Services
Sheilagh Martin	Teacher Librarian, Canyon Heights
George Monkman	District Facilitator, ESL/ELL Programs
Steve Garland	Principal, Carson Graham Secondary
Deb Wanner	Principal, Fromme Elementary
Georgia Barnard	Student, Argyle Secondary
Charlotte Kidd	Student, Handsworth Secondary
Delany Wicken	Student, Seycove Secondary
Debbie Noble	One to One Literacy

North Vancouver School District Aboriginal Literacy Sub-committee:

Joanne Robertson	District Principal, Student and Program Services
Mark Lefroy	District Principal, School and Program Services
Carleen Thomas	Educational Consultant, Tsleil-Waututh Nation
Deanna George	Elder, Tsleil-Waututh Nation
Gretchen Tolfo	District Early Literacy Teacher, Aboriginal Education
Lisa Ottenbreit	District Later Literacy Facilitator
Brad Baker	Teacher, Carson Graham
Ann Copp	Learning Assistance Support, Student Services
John McGowan	Principal, Sutherland Secondary
Liz Bell	Principal, Windsor Secondary
Yolande Martinello	Principal, Westview Elementary
Leslie McGuire	Vice Principal, Upper Lynn Elementary
Marcia Garries	Student and Program Services
Maurice Nahanee	First Nations Support Worker
Rosie Dapp	First Nations Support Worker
Anjie Dawson	Educational Consultant, Squamish Nation
Carla George	Parent, Squamish Nation
George Jacobs	Elder, Squamish Nation

North Shore Community Literacy Task Force:

Pat Hodgson	Regional Literacy Coordinator
Surya Govender	Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Joanne Robertson	North Vancouver School District #44
Maureen Ciarniello	West Vancouver School District #45
Elizabeth Jones	North Shore Multicultural Society
Tricia Andrew	North Shore Neighbourhood House
Sarah Haxby	Bowen Island Community School Coordinator

North Vancouver School Library Consultative Committee

Joanne Robertson	District Principal, Program Services
Mark Lefroy	District Principal, Program Services
Tracey Todd	Elementary Library and Vice Principal
Marilyn Aldworth	Teachers' Professional Library – Program Services
Sheilagh Martin	Elementary Librarian
Wendy Evans	Elementary Librarian
Maureen Stuart	Secondary Librarian
Jenny Hilder	District Early Literacy Facilitator
Lisa Ottenbreit	District Later Literacy Facilitator
Gretchen Tolfo	District Early Literacy Teacher, Aboriginal Education
Allison Taylor McBryde	North Vancouver District Public Librarian
Susan Corcoran	North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council
Leslie Uhlenbruck	North Vancouver Parent Advisory Council

Appendix B: Glossary of District Literacy Plan

Aboriginal Literacy Bins

The Aboriginal Literacy Bins are a collection of print and non-print teaching materials with a focus on Aboriginal content. Both elementary and secondary bins were created to provide teachers with resources for planning lessons or units based on Aboriginal culture and themes.

Academy of Reading

Academy of Reading is an individualized literacy intervention program designed to help struggling students realize fast, permanent gains in core reading skills. It is designed to complement the existing reading curriculum.

Alphabet Soup

Alphabet Soup is a family literacy program piloted by Vancouver Coastal Health. The participants learn about nutrition, listen to stories and poems that connect to nutrition, and enjoy a healthy snack.

ARC-BC project

ARC-BC is an Accessible Resource Centre that contains a repository of online collections of downloadable resources to support students with perceptual disabilities.

Big Science for Little Hands

Big Science for Little Hands is a hands-on preschool program created by Science World. It offers activities for 3-5 year-olds intended to serve as starting points and inspirations for scientific explorations.

Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test (CCAT)

The CCAT (Canadian Cognitive Abilities Test) is a group test that measures a child's academic abilities. The CCAT is administered to all grade 3 students in the North Vancouver School District as one of the screening tools for identifying high ability or gifted students.

Dads and Babies

Dads and Babies is a drop in program at John Braithwaite Community Centre, for preschool aged children and their dads. The program focuses on early learning and literacy activities.

Digital Expression

Promoting collaborative learning in creative ways, the Digital Expression Program encourages learners to actively use technology (desktop computers, laptops, cameras, etc.) to improve and demonstrate their learning.

Distributed Learning

The Distributed Learning program offers North Vancouver students the opportunity to complete many of their high school graduation courses online.

District Literacy Centres

The District Literacy Centres are district based literacy programs designed to provide intense intervention for students in Grade 3 who have significant difficulties with reading and writing skills. Students are admitted for a one-time, three month (approximate) enrolment.

Early Development Instrument (EDI)

The EDI is a research tool that assesses the state of children's development in Kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers complete the EDI checklist for each child in their class after they have known their students for several months. The EDI measures a child's development in five domains: physical health and well being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication and general knowledge.

Early Learning Foundations (ELF)

Early Learning Foundations are play-based preschool programs designed to give children positive and constructive learning experiences that nurture their individuality while preparing them for school learning experiences. Early Learning Foundations preschools are uniquely located within North Vancouver elementary school environments, allowing preschools access to a wide array of school based resources.

Early Learning Framework

The Early Learning Framework describes the vision, pedagogical principles, and key areas of learning for children birth to five years (before school entry). The framework was developed in partnership with the Ministries of Children and Family Development, Healthy Living and Sport, and Education.

Farsi PALS program

Farsi Parents as Literacy Supporters (Farsi PALS) is a culturally responsive family literacy program for newly arrived Farsi speaking parents and their preschool/Kindergarten children. It provides an accessible, welcoming, and joyful learning environment to develop language and literacy abilities and to support their integration into the community.

Firm Foundations

This document provides the learning continuum that early primary teachers need to facilitate their students' acquisitions of early literacy skills, in a play-based and socially interactive classroom. Key components of Firm Foundations are the instructional timeline, the materials, and the assessments for the teaching, practicing and mastery of early literacy skills such as rhyming, segmenting and blending, concept of print, and letter sound mastery.

Get Outside and Play

Get Outside and Play is a Saturday workshop series for families, early learning educators, Kindergarten teachers and StrongStart facilitators, focusing on guiding young children's outside play and experiences.

Grandparent Connection

The Grandparent Connection programs are offered at John Braithwaite Community Centre and North Shore Neighbourhood House to promote social connections between grandparent caregivers; early literacy skills development is provided by an ECE facilitator

Immigrant PALS (Parents as Literacy Supporters)

Immigrant Parents as Literacy Supporters (Immigrant PALS) is a three-year pilot program helping immigrant families support their preschool and kindergarten-aged children's early literacy development, through interactions in English and their first language.

Inspirations 44

Inspirations 44 is the North Vancouver School District's full-day kindergarten program. This afternoon extension to the regular and provincially-funded Kindergarten Program is offered at

selected sites. The program includes theme-based programs for extended learning in language and literacy skills, mathematics and science concepts, and activities in fine arts and physical education.

Learning at Night (LAN)

LAN is an on-going forum for the discovery of new ideas and provides educators with the opportunity to learn new tools, talk about them, and plan instruction for using online social networks safely. The goal is that teachers will discover opportunities beyond simple messaging and investigate how to make social networks work for them by writing, collaborating, sharing and engaging with audiences beyond the classroom.

Learning Together Program

A program offered at Sutherland Secondary School with a focus on parental training in early literacy practices; the on-site childcare program is run through North Shore Neighbourhood House.

North Shore Story Walk

The North Shore Story Walk was launched in April 2009. This on-going literacy awareness project will gather stories of North Shore residents and learners and share them on printed postcards distributed at locations throughout the region.

North Shore Welcoming Communities Initiative

The North Shore Committee Initiative is a program focused on facilitating the integration of new immigrants and refugees through different trainings and services. The program supports the development of welcoming and inclusive communities.

North Shore Writer's Festival

The North Shore Writers Festival is cooperatively planned by the three North Shore libraries to introduce local and nationally renowned authors to the local community. The Festival typically runs for a week each spring and features a Writer in Residence and at least five individual author readings for adult audiences.

One to One Literacy

One to One literacy is an instruction program for students identified by teachers as needing a boost in their literacy instruction. The instruction is delivered by volunteers who work within the schools, in collaboration with classroom and resource teachers.

Our Turn to Talk

This oral language resource supports early primary educators in their efforts to increase the expressive language fluency of all young learners. The classroom component of the document provides strategies and activities to support oral language development. The intervention component is a developmental series of interactive small group sessions designed for students with specific language needs.

Parent-Child Mother Goose Programs

The Parent-Child Mother Goose Program is a group experience for parents and their babies and young children. It focuses on the pleasure and power of using rhymes, songs, and stories together. Parents gain skills and confidence which can enable them to create positive family patterns during their children's crucial early years, and give their children healthy early experiences with language and communication.

Reading 44

Reading 44 is a classroom program written by the teachers of the North Vancouver School District. This resource outlines an explicit classroom reading program for all students K-10. The heart of the Reading 44 program lies in the “Daily Dozen,” twelve reading strategies that good readers use. Instructional activities and graphic organizers are included in the document to encourage diverse learners to recognize, learn and practice these twelve strategies in order to become effective, critical readers.

Reading Assessment Device (RAD)

The RAD is a formative assessment tool that focuses on informational reading for grades 1 through 9. The RAD is designed to give teachers descriptive feedback in three aspects of reading described in the BC Performance Standards: strategies, comprehension and analysis. The primary purpose of the RAD is to help students learn more about themselves as readers and to help teachers plan for systematic reading comprehension instruction.

Reading Rounds

Reading Rounds is a cross-age reading initiative that pairs older students (who may struggle with reading) with younger, emergent readers from neighbouring schools. The older students gain the opportunity to examine and strengthen their reading comprehension strategies, build their competence as role models and develop confidence as a learner. The younger students benefit from small group instruction, explicit reading comprehension instruction and authentic, meaningful reading practice

Ready, Set, Learn

Ready, Set, Learn is a provincial initiative that helps three-year olds get ready for school. It includes events in local elementary schools, free books for preschoolers and a booklet parents can use to help their child at home.

Red Cedar and Stellar Book Clubs

Red Cedar and Stellar Book Clubs are book awards administered by the Young Readers' Choice Awards in British Columbia. These provincial programs encourage students in Grades 4 - 6 (Red Cedar) and teens (Stellar) to read from a nominated list of Canadian titles. At the culmination of six months of reading and on-line reviewing - students are invited to vote for their favourite. The NVDPL consistently runs bi-weekly book clubs for Red Cedar and sponsors author readings with Red Cedar and Stellar nominees for children and teens.

Safe and Caring Literacy Bins

The Safe and Caring Literacy Bins are a collection of print materials with a focus on social responsibility. Created for elementary teachers and students, the bins include an array of picture books and novels that deal with friendship, feelings, anti-bullying, love, inclusion, relationships and more.

School Community Grants

The School Community Connections program has provided grants to encourage and assist the development of community activities and services within schools. Administered on behalf of the Ministry of Education through a collaborative partnership between the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) and the British Columbia School Trustees' Association (BCSTA), School Community Grants encourage and facilitate the co-location of services for students, their families and the larger community within school facilities.

Strong Start

StrongStart BC is a free, drop-in early learning program for preschool-aged children accompanied by a parent or caregiver. Qualified early childhood educators lead learning activities, including stories, music and art to help children get ready for success in kindergarten.

Summer Reading Clubs

Each summer, the North Vancouver public library offers summer reading clubs. Children at each branch sign up to read a minimum of fifteen minutes per day and gain rewards along the way. Story times, craft programs, author readings and other events are included.

Supported Child Development Program (SCDP)

The Supported Child Development Program (SCDP) assists families of children with special needs to access inclusive child care. The program, funded by the Ministry of Children and Families and hosted by the NSNH, is intended to serve children from birth to 12.

Test of Phonological Awareness (TOPA)

The Test of Phonological Awareness (TOPA) assesses young children's phonological awareness. Because of its predictive relationship to reading acquisition, the TOPA is used as an early screening device in Kindergartens in the North Vancouver School District.

Understanding by Design

Understanding by Design (UbD) is a curriculum planning model that uses backward design principals to move beyond “activity focussed” or “coverage focussed” styles of teaching towards an inquiry-based, teaching for meaning model.

Universal Design for Learning

Universal Design for Learning is an approach to learning in which curriculum designers consider the scope of student abilities and learning styles.

Web in the Classroom

Web in the Classroom supports learners with the skills to locate, organize, understand, and evaluate information available on the web. It provides strategies to move beyond simply accessing Internet information to provide activities to evaluate and synthesize information to harness the power of the World Wide Web.

WECAN

The WECAN Coalition supports the development, health and wellness of young children and their families on the North Shore. WECAN works to increase family access to community programs and services by addressing barriers such as language, culture, poverty, disability, and lack of awareness, and to collect and assess local research to guide and support community planning that enhances the lives of young children

Writing 44

Writing 44, developed and published by the North Vancouver School District, provides teachers with a practical resource for the teaching of writing. The "Eight Skills of Writing", which identify key elements in effective writing, and the accompanying instructional activities and graphic organizers, offer teachers creative ideas and suggestions for classroom writing instruction.