2010 LEGACIES NOW™

COMMUNITY LITERACY PLANNING GUIDE

2010 Legacies Now gratefully acknowledges the Province of British Columbia
for its ongoing support of initiatives like the Community Literacy Planning Guide

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MESSAGE FROM PREMIER GORDON CAMPBELL

Literacy is the single most important gift a child, youth or adult can be given to help them fully participate in society.

Literacy provides us with the power to learn, to imagine and to pursue our dreams. It empowers people to pursue their careers and take advantage of the opportunities in our growing economy. It enables us to be healthy, and keep our families healthy. It is the foundation on which knowledge, confidence, and personal growth are built.

The Province is proud to support 2010 Legacies Now's literacy initiatives, including the Community Literacy Planning Guide. By engaging communities and giving them the tools to identify their own literacy needs, opportunities, and programs, the Community Literacy Planning Guide will play a fundamental role in building literacy capacity throughout British Columbia. This kind of cooperation and engagement is critical to helping us reach this government's goal of making B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent and a global leader in literacy by 2010.

I congratulate all of the partners, leaders and volunteers who have worked to develop this guide. The commitment and community spirit you've shown is part of what makes B.C. the best place on Earth.

Honourable Gordon Campbell
Premier of British Columbia

MESSAGE FROM 2010 LEGACIES NOW CEO BRUCE DEWAR

Literacy is important for all of us, no matter how young or old we are, no matter where we live, whether we're working, playing or learning. Literacy helps us participate fully in our communities. That's why 2010 Legacies Now supports the goal of making British Columbia the most literate jurisdiction in North America and a global leader in literacy learning by 2010.

To achieve this goal, 2010 Legacies Now has developed the Literacy Now Communities program, a community development strategy that is stimulating collaborative planning and the creation and expansion of local literacy programs throughout the province.

The program guides literacy task groups through a planning process designed to address local literacy needs. With support from 2010 Legacies Now and the Province of British Columbia, literacy task groups around the province are building action plans that will benefit all members of the community. Many are now implementing their action plans and introducing exciting new strategies and services, such as hiring a community literacy coordinator or focusing on financial or transportation-related barriers to learning.

Thank you to everyone who is participating in the Literacy Now Communities program. I encourage literacy task groups and communities across the province to use this guide as they work to ensure all British Columbians have the chance to reach their full potential.

Bruce Dewar
Chief Executive Officer
2010 Legacies Now

Contents

INTRODUCTION

1 2010 Legacies Now and community literacy planing
2 What is literacy?
2 Why do we need the Literacy Now Communities program?
4 Guiding principles of the Literacy Now Communities program
5 Resources for community-based planning teams
6 The Literacy Now Communities program at a glance

STAGE ONE: GETTING STARTED

7 Expression of interest by individuals or groups
8 Initiators expand the conversation
9 Initiators prepare for community meetings
11 Shared planning checklist
12 The launch
15 Form a task group
15 Task group chooses a facilitator and a steward
16 Task group prepares and submits the application for planning funds

STAGE TWO: PREPARING THE COMMUNITY PLAN

17 Celebration meeting
18 Task group answers important questions
19 The community planning process
24 Worksheet: literacy assets in our community
25 Worksheet: literacy assets information chart
27 Worksheet: strengths, needs, opportunities, challenges
32 Criteria for acceptance of plans by 2010 Legacies Now
33 Finalizing the plan: obtaining approval from community partners
33 Plan is submitted to 2010 Legacies Now
33 Reflect on the planning process
33 Celebration

STAGE THREE: IMPLEMENTATION

35 Evaluating progress: task group activities
36 Evaluation progress: task group meetings
36 Organize community partners' meetings
37 Communicate with all stakeholders
37 Celebrate your success in the community

39 ONLINE LITERACY RESOURCES

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT THE PLANNING PROCESS

43 Framework for effective practice
44 Change
i Appendix
ix Issue alert

Introduction

2010 Legacies Now and community literacy planning

Why do we need the Literacy Now Communities program?

Guiding principles of the program

Resources for community-based planning teams

Literacy Now Communities program at a glance

2010 Legacies Now and community literacy planning

To achieve the goal of making British Columbia the most literate jurisdiction in North America and a global leader in literacy learning, 2010 Legacies Now has developed the Literacy Now Communities program. This program encourages communities to increase local access to literacy learning through collaborative planning.

You are invited to take part in the Literacy Now Communities program to increase the literacy levels of children, youth and adults within your community. The program involves community members coming together to build a plan that addresses local literacy needs. There are already many effective literacy programs in place in communities across the province. The intent of this program is to build on and enhance this work, not replace it.

This planning guide will support communities as they:

- Gather together to talk about literacy
- Decide to participate in the Literacy Now Communities program
- Submit an application for planning funds
- Mobilize local community energy and knowledge
- Assess the community's literacy needs
- Build on existing literacy work and address important gaps
- Prepare a community plan

2010 Legacies Now partners with non-government organizations, the private sector and government to help communities discover social and economic opportunities for all British Columbians. Through these partnerships, communities create their own legacies, from which they will benefit long into the future.

What is literacy?

As the world becomes more complex, so too does the definition of literacy. It is evolving from a narrow definition to a broader view. Where once literacy was thought of as encompassing only basic reading and writing, perhaps at a certain grade level, we now accept a more complex and dynamic view of literacy – as enabling participation in family, work and community life. It is made up of essential and transferable social, cultural and academic practices and understandings, involving not only the communication skills of reading, writing and mathematics, but also problem solving, decision-making, technology and social skills. Literacy enables us to listen, view, communicate, represent and evaluate knowledge in many ways. The more literate we become, the greater our understanding of our world.

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

International Adult Literacy
And Life Skills Survey

"A renewed and expanded vision of literacy is essential for success. Such renewed vision admits that literacy is not confined to any particular age (childhood or adulthood), institution (i.e. the school system) or sector (i.e. education); that it is related to various dimensions of personal and social life and development; that it embraces a wide range of scenarios, strategies and means; and that it is a lifelong learning process."

United Nations
Literacy Decade,
2003-2012

Why do we need the Literacy Now Communities program?

Access to lifelong learning is essential to achieving present and future social and economic change.

CHANGES IN THE WORLD

There are new literacy challenges in our changing world, new forms of communication, and expanding use of technology. Multiple literacies are a cornerstone of lifelong learning. They are essential to understanding and meeting present and future changes and challenges. Changing demands at school, in the workplace, and in the community require innovative community responses, open to all. Learning a variety of literacies has benefits for individuals, families, communities and the economy.

CHANGES IN THE COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Communities in B.C. are diverse in culture and language, and have identified different strengths and literacy needs. Rural and resource-based communities are often focusing on changing economies and the skills required to adapt. Aboriginal communities are focusing on literacy programs that are grounded in culture. Members of urban communities are thinking about how to assist the immigrant population and address barriers to participation, such as housing, transportation and childcare.

CHANGES IN LITERACY NEEDS

Current research suggests that brain development and involvement in literacy activities in the preschool years is critical to lifelong literacy learning.

Families are interested in knowing how to support their young child's development.

Improving access to early learning opportunities, such as preschool programs and speech and language support, will increase the likelihood that children will have more choices as adults.

Literacy needs to continue into adulthood, and adult literacy development builds on a foundation in the schools and the community. Literacy is an important key needed to access post-secondary education, obtain employment and participate fully in community life.

Older British Columbians can benefit from literacy programs that help them maintain their connection with their community and develop new skills.

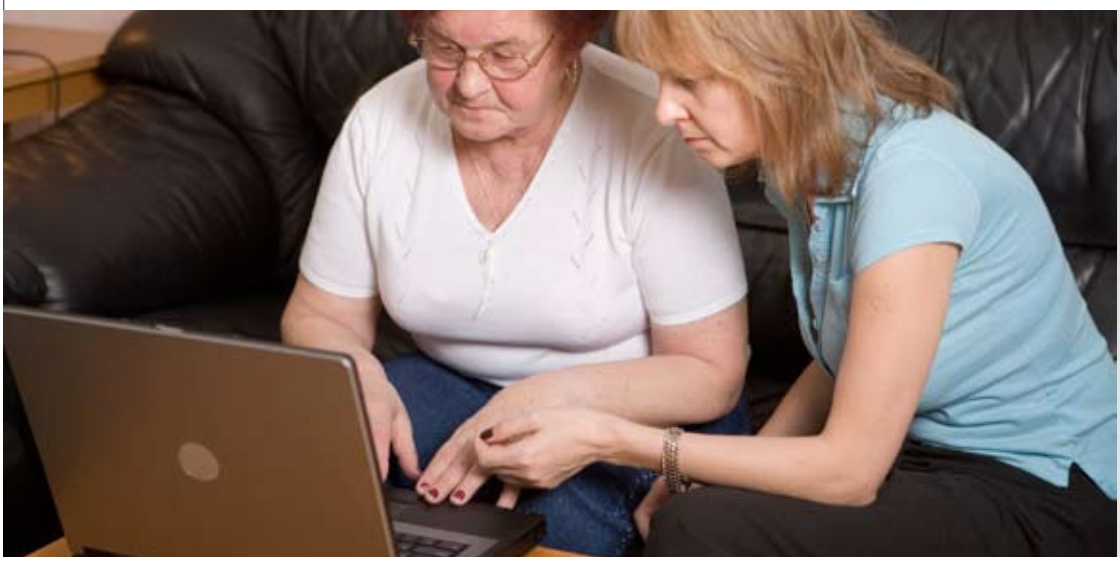
NEED FOR COLLABORATIVE PLANNING TO MAXIMIZE RESOURCES

There are many exemplary literacy programs in communities throughout the province which model principles of access, community participation and lifelong learning. The aim of the Literacy Now Communities program is to learn from existing partnerships and to build and expand upon them.

The Literacy Now Communities program is designed to build awareness of existing funding sources locally, provincially and nationally. This will help the community members to build partnerships in their communities.

SOME FACTS ABOUT LITERACY

- 68 per cent of the people incarcerated in federal penitentiaries have limited literacy skills
  (The John Howard Society of Canada, 1996)
- 60 per cent of social assistance recipients have not completed secondary school
  (Reading the Future: A Portrait of Literacy in Canada, 1996)
- Among adults aged 16 to 65, about nine million, or 42 per cent, scored below the desired threshold for coping with the increasing skill demands of a knowledge-based society
  (2003 International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey)
- 20 per cent of four- and five-year-olds do not have the language background for kindergarten success
  (Early Development Instrument [EDI], 2003)
- Fewer than 10 per cent of Canadians who could benefit from literacy upgrading programs actually enroll; research indicates barriers to participation include job or money problems, lack of childcare and lack of transportation
  (ABC Canada, 2001)



Guiding principles of the Literacy Now Communities program

Relationships and Collaboration
Communities build and support networks, partnerships and mentoring relationships.

Innovation
Communities value new ways of viewing existing programs, new partnerships and new ideas for programs.

"A new vision of development is emerging. Development is becoming a people-centered process, whose ultimate goal must be the improvement of the human condition."

Boutros Boutros-Ghali, United Nations Secretary General, 1992-1996

Respect
People are treated with respect and will be encouraged to freely share their ideas. Diversity is welcomed and valued.

Capacity building
Programs and projects promote and sustain lifelong learning for all participants and focus on improving the life chances of children and adults. People feel empowered to act.

Access for all
All community members have the opportunity to be part of the planning process and the programs. Community members respect the hopes and dreams of everyone and there is a place for all.

Strength building
Communities respect, build on and enhance past and current practices.

Sustainability
Success grows from long-term, sustained commitment to literacy learning.

Joy
People are involved in friendly and enthusiastic ways, celebrating success from time to time.

Resources for community-based planning teams

On the next page is a chart showing the Literacy Now Communities program process at a glance. This guide will help you complete each step. The language used in the flow chart is intended to describe each level of participation. Communities may choose different words to describe their groups. The resources described below will be provided by 2010 Legacies Now to assist communities in the development of their community literacy plans.

2010 LEGACIES NOW LITERACY EXPERTS:

- Will be available at any stage
- Can suggest strategies for planning and developing programs
- Can help you find resources and build relationships with other communities
- Have varied skills and backgrounds so they can help meet your needs
- Can help you apply the guiding principles of the Literacy Now Communities program
- Are coaches and mentors
- Provide a fresh perspective
- Understand the literacy and learning context of your community and region
- Can provide information about events, programs and projects in your region
- Can help you build regional networks and relationships
- Are a link to literacy programs and projects throughout the province

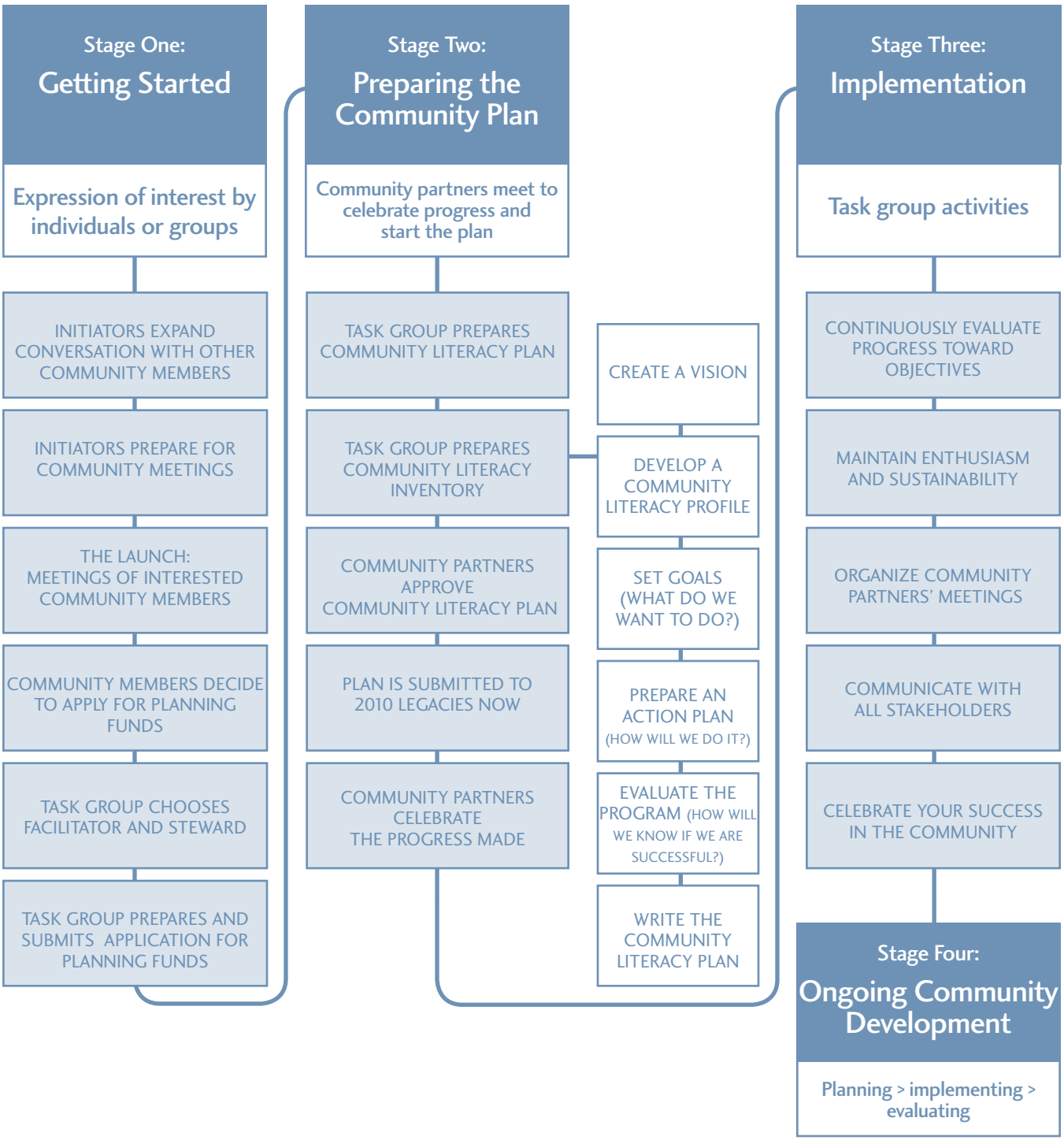
PLANNING FUNDS

- A community can apply for planning funds to be used to complete a community literacy plan
- Funds may also be available to help a community implement parts of the completed plan

2010 Legacies Now also provides a video, available in DVD and VHS, that describes the planning process.

For more information, visit the 2010 Legacies Now website at **www.2010LegaciesNow.com**.

Literacy Now Communities at a glance



Stage One: Getting Started

Expressing interest

Preparing for community meetings

Forming a task group

Choosing a facilitator and a steward

Applying for planning funds

Expression of interest by individuals or groups

What can you do as an individual if you are interested in the Literacy Now Communities program for your community?

- Talk to your friends
- Talk to community leaders
- Contact literacy organizations in your community
- Decide how to define your community
- Begin a conversation about literacy in your community
  - What are the literacy needs of our community?
  - Are we willing to give some time to learn about the program and get it going?
  - Are there others who would be willing to work with us?

Complete an Expression of Interest form (available at **www.2010LegaciesNow.com**) and submit it to 2010 Legacies Now.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY?

A community is a group of people who may:

- Live in the same geographical area
- Share culture and traditions
- Have activities in common
- Share ownership or responsibility
- Share common goals or values
- See themselves as a community

Initiators expand the conversation with community members

WHO SHOULD YOU INVITE TO JOIN YOU?

Planning for community change involves many different people. If you would like to participate in the Literacy Now Communities program, invite other community members to join you and prepare for a community launch meeting.

"We spent a couple of years learning from each other and that's the key if you are starting from square one. We all have something to teach and we all have something to learn. And a big part of the learning is trust and context – understanding where everyone is coming from."

Tracy Spannier, Community Literacy Coordinator, Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy, Revelstoke

CONSIDER INVITING PEOPLE FROM THESE SECTORS:

Culture and Heritage

- Aboriginal organizations
- Heritage organizations
- Cultural groups
- Libraries and museums
- Sports and recreation groups

Education

- Head Start programs
- Preschools and childcare centres
- School districts and independent schools
- Community colleges and universities
- Continuing education programs

Employment

- Employment and assistance centres
- Training centres

Child and Family Development

- Success by Six
- Recreation centres
- Youth centres
- Social development agencies
- Government ministries and agencies

Health

- Health care providers
- Mental health organizations
- Crisis support organizations
- Wellness centres
- Government ministries and agencies

Business and Financial

- Community economic development agencies
- Trade unions
- Professional and business associations
- Chambers of commerce
- Credit unions and banks
- Community service organizations
- Community futures organizations

Justice and Legal

- Restorative justice
- Legal aid
- Family assistance organizations

Service and Support

- Spirit of BC community committees
- Literacy organizations
- Volunteers
- Social planning agencies
- Transition agencies
- Media
- Faith organizations
- Community, village, band and municipal governments

Initiators prepare for community meetings

All community members have unique skills and abilities that can help achieve literacy goals.

HOW SHOULD YOU PREPARE FOR THE COMMUNITY MEETINGS?

Watch the Literacy Now Communities program video to get an overview of what is involved and to generate energy and enthusiasm.

Decide if you want to continue.

If you decide to continue, create the awareness that:

- The people in your community are the experts with respect to local literacy needs, hopes, dreams and assets
- It is effective to work together to achieve results
- All community members have knowledge, skills and abilities to share

Plan for the larger meetings.
The shared planning checklist will help you to prepare for these and other meetings (page 11).

Decide who will be responsible for these tasks:

- Identifying and inviting community participants
- Chairing the meeting
- Advertising the meeting
- Arranging for transportation
- Finding a meeting place (school, community hall, etc.)
- Arranging for refreshments
- Planning for childcare
- Recording the meeting
- Making sure that people feel welcome and stay connected

> Activity

If you need to form small groups to facilitate discussion at any meeting, there are a variety of strategies you can use. For example, if you know the names of participants in advance, you can provide nametags that have a number, coloured dot or symbol on them. Ask participants to go to the area displaying their symbol. If you don't know the names of the participants before the meeting, have blank nametags marked with numbers or symbols and proceed as above.

The facilitator who chairs the meeting will need particular skills and strategies. Many of these can be found in online resources such as Secrets of Successful Facilitators (**www.thiagi.com/article-secrets.html**) or Facilitator Competencies from the Electronic Discussion on Group Facilitation (**www.albany.edu/cpr/gf/resources/FacilitatorCompetencies.html**).

Identify community participants

- Intentionally include everyone who might be interested; an inclusive process keeps the door open
- Identify the variety of interests in your community and develop ways to involve people who represent those interests
- The process is as important as the results; a process that fails to be inclusive does not model community development, regardless of the results
- If some people in your community do not wish to participate, keep them informed and continue to encourage their participation
- Keep asking the questions:
  - Who else needs to be involved?
  - Are we unintentionally excluding someone from the process because they are not connected to a group or organization in our community?

HOW CAN PEOPLE BE INVITED?

- Posters
- Newspaper ads
- Radio ads
- Personal invitations
- Email
- Community cablevision ads

Approach those individuals who you believe will be supportive. Begin a conversation about their interest in the Literacy Now Communities program and build on it.

Invite interested people to take a leadership role and to become active in the creation of the literacy plan.

This is a long-term, community-based process. Plan ways to communicate and keep people involved between meetings.

Invite the media and prepare a press package for them. They may also be interested in being members of the task group.

> Note

THE LAUNCH: STRUCTURING THE MEETINGS

On the next pages the launch is described as two meetings. You may decide to use this format if it suits the needs of your community, or you may find that one longer meeting, such as an all-day meeting, may work better for your community group. You will need to consider the readiness of your group, as well as transportation and childcare needs. Two meetings offer people the opportunity to consult with others in the community between meetings. In this case, you will want to find ways to ensure that people will return for the second meeting.

Shared planning checklist

BEFORE THE MEETING	Yes	Not Sure	No
Do people understand why they are being invited?			
Do they know about the purpose of the meeting, why it is happening and what the group hopes to accomplish?			
Have people had the chance to see and comment on the agenda?			
Does the agenda include enough time for discussion and decision-making?			
Have you prepared printed materials of important information?			
Are the materials easy to read?			
Is the meeting location easy to get to? Is it quiet, well-lit and comfortably heated?			
Does the seating allow people to talk to one another and see the flip chart?			
ONCE THE MEETING STARTS	**Yes**	**Not Sure**	**No**
Do people understand the purpose of the meeting?			
Do they agree to the agenda?			
Do they know what decisions they can make and what items they can take action on?			
Do participants have the opportunity to say who they are and why they came?			
Has the group made decisions about how they will identify and solve problems?			
Has the group been able to plan for how they will communicate after the meeting?			
Does the group have a plan for how they will deal with conflict?			
AFTER THE MEETING - Did the chair or facilitator do these things. . .	**Yes**	**Not Sure**	**No**
Create a safe atmosphere?			
Create space for everyone to ask questions and comment on each topic before moving on?			
Keep the meeting on track?			
Make sure things are clear and suggest changes as needed?			
Share leadership, tasks and actions with group members?			

The launch

Meetings of interested community members

What is the Literacy Now Communities program and do we want to participate?

PURPOSE

The purpose of this meeting is to describe the Literacy Now Communities program. Members of the community will learn about the goals of the program, the planning process, and the commitment involved. At the end of the meeting, participants will decide whether or not to continue and will indicate their level of commitment.

WELCOME

Welcome participants and ask them to introduce themselves. If the group is large, ask people to introduce themselves to those seated around them. With a smaller group, each participant can state their name and explain their interest in literacy.

DESCRIBE THE LITERACY NOW COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

Talk about key points of the Literacy Now Communities program (e.g., the process and the guiding principles). Discuss the vision, the mandate, the goals and the areas of focus.

SHOW THE LITERACY NOW COMMUNITIES PROGRAM VIDEO

Ask people to respond to the video with comments and questions. People may be more comfortable talking privately to the person next to them before sharing as a whole group.

ASK PARTICIPANTS IF THEY WANT TO CONTINUE

Determine if community members want to participate in the Literacy Now Communities program. If the answer is "yes," continue.

DESCRIBE LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

Talk about the levels of participation: task group member, community partner and supporter. Have three sign-up sheets:

- **Task group members** are willing to take an active role and will–
  - Attend about five meetings over the next few months
  - Prepare the funding application
  - Oversee the participation process
  - Keep others involved
- **Community partners** will attend regular meetings with interested community members
- **Supporters** will want to be kept informed

Ask people to add their names to one of the levels-of-participation sheets. Ask them to provide contact information, including mailing address, email and telephone number.

CLOSING

Before people leave, invite them to attend a second meeting at which the assets and needs of their community will be discussed. Ask them if there are additional people who should be invited. Set a date for this meeting. Thank everyone for their participation.

REMINDER:

If it suits the needs of the community, the two meetings may be combined. It is important that participants have time to fully understand the process and consider their commitment before moving to the planning stage.

Setting the direction for the future

PURPOSE

The purpose of a second meeting is to broaden the discussion about literacy as it applies to your community. Participants will engage in discussions about their own experiences, their hopes for the community, and their dreams for the future.

WELCOME

Welcome the participants and share the purpose of the meeting.

The following two activities will help participants to share their ideas and focus on goals, visions and actions.

> Activity 1: Carousel

Invite the members to form groups of four or five people. Place each of the following questions on a chart. Create four stations, with one chart each.

- How would we like our community to be different five years from now?
- How can we expand choices for literacy and lifelong learning for people of all ages?
- Is there a need in our community to provide learning opportunities in community service, citizenship, early childhood learning or pre-vocational training?
- How might the Literacy Now Communities program help us to realize our hopes for our community?

The groups visit each chart in turn, spending up to five minutes on each question. Ideas are recorded on the charts. At a signal, the groups move on to the next chart. They read the comments, add to them and place check marks where they agree with a previous statement.

When all the groups have visited all the charts, post the charts on the walls and invite everyone to look at them again.

Everyone returns to their seats to address the following questions as a group:

- Do we see any patterns emerging?
- What are the most important ideas that have come to the surface?
- Is the Literacy Now Communities program able to realize any of the hopes of individual group members? (Have someone record ideas as they are shared.)

> Activity 2: Tapestry of stories

The facilitator begins the activity with this introduction:

"As we talked about the questions on the charts, ideas, experiences, wishes and dreams surfaced for all of us. We all have memories of our experiences of learning to read or of hearing a story read or told to us by an elder. We remember our school days, the books we were given, and the joy or pain of those experiences. In our work we may be concerned with literacy as teachers, librarians, parents or in some other way.

"Take a moment to think about your experience of literacy, in the past or in the present. On a piece of paper, jot down some words, phrases, or a quick sketch that shows one moment from your life's rich experiences. Try to capture the feelings associated with literacy in that moment. This moment may be about yourself, or about someone else. Focus on the moment and try to capture it."

The group writes or draws for about two to three minutes. When all seem to be finished, invite them to share their moment with the person next to them and talk about the feelings they had in that moment. When everyone has shared a story with a partner, invite the group to talk about the stories they heard.

"Please share one thing you heard your partner talk about."

As the stories are shared, have someone write down all the feelings associated with literacy that are mentioned. Review those feelings. It is predicted that a whole range of feelings will emerge from positive to negative.

CONCLUSION

The facilitator sums up the meeting's findings:

"This meeting has set a direction for the future work of the task group. We have a sense of purpose and some shared interests. All of us recognize the sensitivity and importance of this issue." Thank everyone for coming.

Form a task group

Form a task group (or whatever term your community chooses to use for this group) made up of the community members who have chosen to take an active role in the development of the plan. The task group members will have these characteristics:

- Respect for diversity
- Willingness to hear all points of view
- Willingness to set aside personal desires and trust the group
- Willingness to commit to the beliefs and values of the group
- Commitment to maintaining the unity of the group
- Commitment to the integrity of the process

Set a date for the first task group meeting and then develop a schedule for meetings with community partners over the next six months. The partners may want to meet only every three months.

The task group chooses a facilitator and a steward

The facilitator and steward should work together to form strong relationships and encourage consensus building to make decisions.

Choose a facilitator for the task group. You may have two or more people share this very important role. The facilitator should be neutral, able to set aside personal preferences, and committed to maintaining the unity of the group.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF THE FACILITATOR:

- Confident
- Enjoys working with people
- Skilled at communicating clearly and in a friendly way
- Adept at modeling the guiding principles of the Literacy Now Communities program
- Experienced in chairing meetings
- Skilled at organizing
- Perceived as firm but fair
- Enthusiastic and encouraging
- Excellent at listening, paraphrasing and clarifying
- Familiar with conflict resolution strategies

DUTIES OF THE FACILITATOR:

- Prepare agendas for effective meetings
- Chair the meetings in a way that welcomes participation
- Help the task group develop the necessary processes to accomplish tasks
- Pay attention to group dynamics
- Suggest ways to resolve conflicts
- Guide decision-making processes
- Maintain the enthusiasm and momentum of the task group
- Value the contributions of all task group members
- Ensure follow-up after meetings
- Encourage celebration

"In organizations, real power and energy is generated through relationships. The patterns of relationships and the capacities to form them are more important than tasks, functions, roles and positions."

Margaret Wheatley, consultant, speaker and writer on organizational leadership

Choose a steward for the task group. The steward will manage the planning funds, which are intended to help the task group remove barriers to full community participation as it develops the community literacy plan.

CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF THE STEWARD:

- Experienced in handling a budget
- Familiar with accounting processes
- Perceived as community-minded and trustworthy
- Supportive of the concept of broad-based community planning
- Able to resist pressure from interest groups

DUTIES OF THE STEWARD:

- Oversee the initial proposed budget
- Make decisions regarding banking institutions or credit unions and signing authority
- Provide financial statements to 2010 Legacies Now when required and to the community partners twice a year
- Sign a contribution agreement with 2010 Legacies Now
- Employ or negotiate a contract with anyone selected by the task group to undertake paid planning work

The task group prepares and submits the application for planning funds

Once you are ready to apply for planning funds, please email **LiteracyNow@2010LegaciesNow.com** to request an application.

> Tip

CONSENSUS BUILDING

It will be best if you can make a decision using a consensus-building strategy rather than voting. Consensus happens when everyone can support a decision made by the group. When consensus is reached, the group members are usually committed to implementing the decision. If a decision is made by voting, some members may not support a decision for which they didn't vote.

Stage Two:

Preparing the Community Plan

Celebrating progress

Answering important questions

Using the community planning process

Finalizing the community literacy plan

Worksheets

Celebration meeting

The community partners hold a meeting to celebrate progress.

At this meeting you will celebrate confirmation of the planning funds and prepare for the development of the community literacy plan.

Celebrations are a way to say thank you and congratulate participants for their hard work and support. The goal is to recognize achievements and renew energy and enthusiasm so the task group can continue. Celebrations help to build commitment.

IDEAS FOR CELEBRATION

- Banners/balloons
- Special food
- Time to tell personal literacy stories
- Thank you notes
- Special presenters (authors, elders, community leaders)
- Games/fun/good news

The task group answers important questions

Now you will begin the rewarding task of creating a community literacy profile and inventory to develop your community literacy plan. The process described here will take several months.

At your first meeting you will set the stage for your work by answering these questions.

1. **What is our purpose?**

   Watch the Literacy Now Communities program video again to review the purpose and the requirements.

2. **What guiding principles will direct the work?**

   Consider what you have learned about the guiding principles of the Literacy Now Communities program. How can you be sure that your work is guided by these values and principles?

3. **What are the steps that you must take to develop your community literacy plan?**

   See the seven-step planning process described on the following pages.

4. **How will you manage the work? Who will do each part and how? Do you need to hire someone?**

5. **How will task group members communicate with each other and with the community partners?**

   You will need a person to record the activities and decisions at your meetings. You may also want to develop a telephone tree and an Internet task group network.

6. **When and where will we meet?**

   Consider offering childcare to help make it possible for all people who are interested in participating. You might also consider a way to provide transportation when necessary.

REMINDER

Your community literacy plan will be judged on whether or not you have followed the process and can demonstrate that the guiding principles have been upheld.

The community planning process

This is a step-by-step approach to planning. It is intended to help you build on what you know about planning to create a community literacy plan. Planning is a key part of any community development project or activity. Effective community-based planning creates opportunities for working together and results in activities that benefit the whole community.

Step one: create a vision

- A community vision describes what the community hopes for and values. It is an ideal picture of the future.
- People and organizations have a vision of a better future and they use it as a guide to what they do.
- This is an important step. It is your vision that will guide your planning and keep you on track.
- Use the gallery walk activity to develop the community literacy vision.
- The result of the gallery walk describes the vision of literacy for the community. Be sure to record it so that you can refer to it often.
- Two or three people can prepare a clear and concise version of the vision so that all understand the common purpose and shared vision. Print and display the vision.

> Strategy: gallery walk

Objective:
To develop a vision for community literacy

Time: 45 - 60 minutes

Materials:
A large sheet of paper and felt-tipped marker for each of the five stations.

Instructions:

1. Designate these five stations in the room:
   - Babies and young children
   - School-age children
   - Young adults
   - Adults
   - Seniors
2. Place large sheets of paper or overhead transparencies at each station. These should have a leading sentence such as: “Life for seniors in our community would be better if…” Have instructions at each station.
3. Ask people to go to the station that interests them most. The task of the groups at the stations is to imagine your community sometime in the future, and to describe the desired literacy and learning opportunities available to the particular group of people.
4. Rotate groups to new stations when directed by the facilitator. If they have similar ideas to earlier groups, they may star or check those responses. If they have new ideas, they can write them down.
5. Return each group to their beginning chart at the end of the gallery walk. The group members can discuss how the chart has changed.
6. Discuss the results of each station with the full group.

Step two: develop a community profile

Now that you've had a chance to imagine the future, you need to find out about your community today.

In order to assess your current situation, you will need to create a community profile that briefly describes the geographic, historical, social and economic setting of your community – the context in which your literacy plan will occur.

Depending upon the size of your community, you may wish to contract with an individual to complete your community profile.

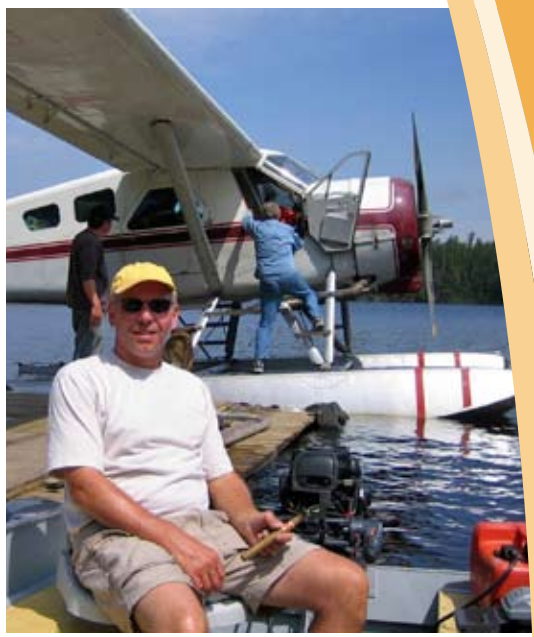
"Our plan is not doing more; it is about pulling together and having respect for the work that has already been done. We need to be smarter, and say to ourselves that we could do even more if we do it differently."

Sheila Rooney,
Superintendent of Schools,
Burnaby School District

Here are some suggested steps to follow:

1. Identify the community and its geographic location in terms of the surrounding provincial region and near-by centres.
2. Provide a brief community history, including that of the local Aboriginal people.
3. Develop a demographic scan that includes information on the age distribution, marital status and ethnic background of your community. Include a comparison with provincial averages. For example, you may have twice as many school-age children as the provincial average, or 20 per cent more single parents than the provincial average. Identify some trends based on the 2001 and 2006 census data or recent estimates. For example, the general population has increased by 30 per cent, and the over-65 group by 20 per cent, over the past six years.
4. Compare the level of schooling (educational attainment) of your community with the provincial averages. Identify any groups in special need. For example, 60 per cent of single parents have not graduated from high school.
5. Describe the economic situation, e.g. main industries or businesses, unemployment rates and trends, and compare with the provincial averages.
6. Identify the main social and economic issues or challenges in your community that may be addressed by a community literacy plan. For example, you may identify family literacy to improve preschool children's school readiness, or community-based literacy for at-risk youth. Other possibilities might be a literacy program targeting single parents or intergenerational literacy between seniors and children. Plans should grow from the issues and challenges within your community, as identified in your community profile.

The community profile will provide an agreed-upon database that will serve as one basis of discussion about your community. Remember that census data is only an approximation and a snapshot of a situation. Communities are complex, ever-changing networks and relationships that can only partly be described by data. However, it is often better to adopt an evidence-based approach to community dialogue rather than engage in discussion that is an exchange of various, but uninformed, opinions.



> Activity

There are several excellent sources of census data available on the Internet. The community profile data of Statistics Canada is available at: **www.statcan.ca/english/edu** (click on Community Profiles).

BC Stats has useful data at: **www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca** (click on Community Facts), **www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/index.htm** (click on Socio-Economic Profiles and Socio-Economic Indices).

Good examples of urban neighbourhood profiles and associated community resource inventories can be found at the City of Victoria site: **www.city.victoria.bc.ca/business/profiles.shtml.**

These samples illustrate how informative neighbourhood profiles can be. You will not be required to provide information with the scope or depth of these examples. You will need to provide a brief community description and analysis that will help illuminate the reasons for your literacy plan.

> Tip

Many local public and private agencies such as school districts, university-colleges, village or town administrations, chambers of commerce and tourist bureaus have developed community profiles or environmental scans that may contain much, if not all, of the necessary data and related analysis for your community profile. Check what already exists with community partners who will be willing and able to provide not only existing data but also future updates.

Step three: develop a community literacy inventory

This will help you to describe and assess your community today.

The next step you will take in assessing your current situation is to create a community literacy inventory to identify and evaluate current literacy assets, funding sources, programs and resources in your community.

Depending on the size of your community, you may want to contract an individual to complete your literacy assets information chart.

LIST LITERACY PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

- Use a brainstorming strategy to get the names of literacy programs and resources in your community.
- Determine how you will find out about other resources that you may not know about.
- Use the chart on page 24 (Literacy assets in our community) to record the names of programs or resources currently in your community (enlarge it on chart paper or prepare a template on the computer).
- As you analyze your community's resources and programs at different stages of the lifespan, you may wish to pay particular attention to transition periods as people move from one stage to another, such as from preschool to kindergarten or from secondary school to the work world.

> Activity

You may want to use a brainstorming activity to generate all of the community literacy assets, resources and programs, and to explore gaps and possible links.

For the rules of brainstorming and strategic suggestions visit:
edweb.sdsu.edu/triton/Guides/Brainstorming.html
www.mindtools.com/brainstm.html
www.effectivemeetings.com/teams/participation/brainstorming.asp

GATHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAMS

Identify the people who have a vested interest in each of the programs you have listed.

Stakeholders may include:

- Service providers who are involved in the day-to-day operation of the program (e.g. teachers in a preschool literacy program)
- Users of the services (e.g. the students in an adult literacy class)
- Potential users of the services (e.g. unemployed people who have not completed high school)
- People who make decisions about the program (e.g. administrators in a school district that offers adult English-as-a-second-language classes)

Ask the stakeholders these questions:

- What is the name of your program and your organization?
- Who does it serve?
- What are the goals?
- What is the location of the program?
- When does it occur?
- How many people are served?
- How is it staffed (volunteers, paid staff)?
- What resources do you have (e.g. funding, training, energy, time, personnel)?
- What are your greatest successes?
- What more would you like to do?
- What would make the service better for your participants?
- Does your service have partners?
- What are possible links with existing programs?
- Use the chart on page 25 (Literacy assets information chart) to record the information you gain from stakeholders about community programs (enlarge it on chart paper or prepare a template on the computer).

> Tip

EFFECTIVE BRAINSTORMING

- Present the question or problem that is to be addressed
- Ask the participants to answer the question
- Encourage everyone to participate.
- Have a recorder record all ideas on flip chart paper
- Encourage a rapid-fire of ideas
- Don't discuss specific ideas during the brainstorming session
- Do not allow criticism or evaluation of ideas during the brainstorming step
- Don't comment on duplicate ideas
- Remove duplicates and organize ideas into groups once the brainstorming has ended
- Decide what action will be taken

Literacy assets in our community

PRENATAL & PERINATAL	BIRTH TO 5 YEARS	KINDERGARTEN TO GRADE 3	GRADES 4 TO 7	GRADES 8 TO 9	GRADES 10 TO 12	YOUNG ADULTS	ADULTS	SENIORS

Literacy assets information chart

NAME OF PROGRAM AND ORGANIZATION	WHO DOES IT SERVE?	WHAT ARE THE GOALS?	WHAT IS THE LOCATION OF THE PROGRAM?	HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE SERVED?	HOW IS IT STAFFED?	WHAT ARE THE RESOURCES?	WHAT ARE THE GREATEST SUCCESSES?	WHAT MORE WOULD THEY LIKE TO DO?	WHAT WOULD MAKE THE SERVICE BETTER FOR PARTICIPANTS?	DOES THE SERVICE HAVE PARTNERS?	POSSIBLE LINKS WITH EXISTING PROGRAMS

EVALUATE YOUR COMMUNITY LITERACY INVENTORY

Look for gaps, links and overlaps in the literacy assets.

Now that you have gathered all of the information about literacy assets in your community, ask these questions:

Are there gaps in services?

- Return to your vision and ask if there are gaps in the services provided. If there are gaps in the profile, do they indicate needs? Are there ways to build capacity in the community?
- Are people aware of the services?
- How can we provide better communication to reach the people who need the services?
- How can we increase community involvement?

Look at each program and ask:
Are there links?

- How do we build on this success?
- Are we making the best use of community volunteers?
- How can we enhance the capacity of this program?
- Can we link this program with others?
- Are there current links?

Is there duplication of services?

- Are there overlaps in programs or services? Look for duplication and consider opportunities for providing new services.

THINK AHEAD AND EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES

Explore your opportunities, challenges, strengths and needs.

Questions to consider as you analyze your community inventory:

- What are the opportunities (things that we could make use of)?
- What are challenges (things that could get in our way) inside or outside our community that might affect what we do?
- What are our strengths (things we have or do well)?
- What are our needs or limitations (things we need or need help with)?
- What resources (materials, equipment, skills, money, partners, etc.) do we have or do we need?

NOTE

You may find challenges at this point, or at any stage in your planning, that are more provincial or systemic in nature and cannot be resolved at the community level. If this happens use the issue alert form at the back of this guide to communicate your concerns.

On this form you will be asked to describe the issue, the impact in your community, and your recommendation for change.

Send this form to **2010 Legacies Now**. Your concerns will be forwarded to the appropriate government department.

> Tip

The worksheet on the next page will help you to organize your strengths, needs, opportunities and challenges.

Worksheet

Strengths	Needs
What do we do well already?	What do we need ?

Opportunities	Challenges
What's happening now that we could work with, make use of, or benefit from?	What could stop us or get in our way?
	Local: Regional, provincial, national: Other:

Step four: setting goals

What do we want to do?

"While we weren't sure what the plan was going to look like, we knew we had to figure it out as a community – as a group. It was important that we built the understanding of what we were undertaking together."

Rod Allen,
Superintendent of Schools,
Bulkley Valley School District

CHOOSE AREAS OF FOCUS

You have developed a vision of the literacy services that you would like to have in your community, and you've created an inventory of your current community services. You will need to develop a plan to address the issues which you have identified. Decide which needs you will address in the short term and which you will address over time.

This is a time when you may want to use a consensus-building strategy rather than voting.

STATE WHAT YOU WANT TO DO

When you have chosen an area or areas that you want to address, write a statement that broadly describes what you want to do. (These statements are sometimes called goals.)

These are some examples:

- More preschool children will have the opportunity to develop early literacy skills
- Families will learn strategies for supporting students' literacy learning.
- Literacy courses will be available in the community
- More Grade 12 students will have support to prepare for the transition to post-secondary education
- Seniors will have the opportunity to take courses in using computers

> Activity

When you have reached the stage of choosing your initial areas of focus, you will want to be sure that everyone has a chance to express their views. The following activity will give your group an indication of the group's preferences because it involves getting input from each member.

Narrow the possible choices for areas of focus to five or fewer. Write the choices on a large sheet of paper. Draw a horizontal line about five centimetres below each choice. Give each participant five small, coloured sticky notes and ask them to place the notes on the lines below the choices that most interest them. They can choose to spread them out among the choices or to place all five under one choice.

If the notes have been placed carefully, you will have a bar graph that will provide a quick visual display of participants' choices. You can then lead a discussion about the preferred choices.

Step five: making an action plan

How will we do it?

When you have chosen an area or areas that you want to address, explore all of the ways you could reach your goals. For example, if you want to find ways to prepare young people for post-secondary programs in their communities, action items could include:

- Holding focus groups with parents and young people to determine the challenges
- Creating a think tank with people who provide services
- Advertising current courses
- Doing an Internet search for innovative programs

Now you can make a plan.

The action plan describes what you are going to do.

SAMPLE ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET

The worksheet below will help you plan the steps you need to take.

- **What?**
  What are the tasks and activities that need to be done in order to reach your objective?
- **Who?**
  Who needs to be involved in this activity? Who is responsible for making sure that it happens?
- **Resources?**
  What materials, equipment, partners, places, skills and knowledge do you need in order to carry out this objective?
- **Date?**
  When do these activities need to be done?

Objective #

What?	Who?	Resources?	Date?

Step six: evaluating our program

How will we know if we are successful?

MONITOR YOUR PLAN

It will be important for you to monitor your plan.

You do this to:

- Monitor achievement
- Determine if changes are needed
- Provide information to stakeholders (funders, providers, participants, community members)
- Recognize and celebrate successes
- Avoid making expensive mistakes

WRITE A SUCCESS STATEMENT

Write a statement that describes how things will look if you are successful. Think of several ways that you could measure your success, such as participation rates, achievement rates, and feedback from participants.

GATHER INFORMATION

Depending on your success statement, you will gather information in different ways. The chart below gives examples of how you might gather information for different success statements.

Examples of success statements

Success Statement	Gathering Information
We will know we have been successful when the number of people in skills upgrade programs and college programs increases by 20%.	Ask the providers about attendance.
We will know we have been successful if 85% of the people taking post-secondary programs say the programs helped them gain employment or continue their post-secondary training.	Talk to the people who were enrolled in the programs.

Step seven: write the community literacy plan

Your community literacy plan should include a summary, a description of the planning process, your community profile, the community literacy inventory, the action plan, and a financial statement.

Now that you have prepared all of the pieces, it is time to put them together in your plan. You will find examples of community literacy plans on the 2010 Legacies Now website. As you write your community literacy plan, 2010 Legacies Now staff members are available to support you.

THIS IS HOW YOUR PLAN WILL BE ORGANIZED

Summary

Write a one-page summary that briefly describes your process and your plan.

The process

- State the names and occupations or literacy interest of the task group participants
- Use the Shared planning checklist (page 11) to indicate:
  - How the task group members were involved
  - How the guiding principles of collaboration, access for all, respect and open communication were developed and maintained
  - How the areas of need were chosen

The profile

- Summarize the community profile
- Summarize the community literacy inventory
- Describe the gaps found when the community inventory was compared to the vision
- Describe the existing links found among the current literacy services

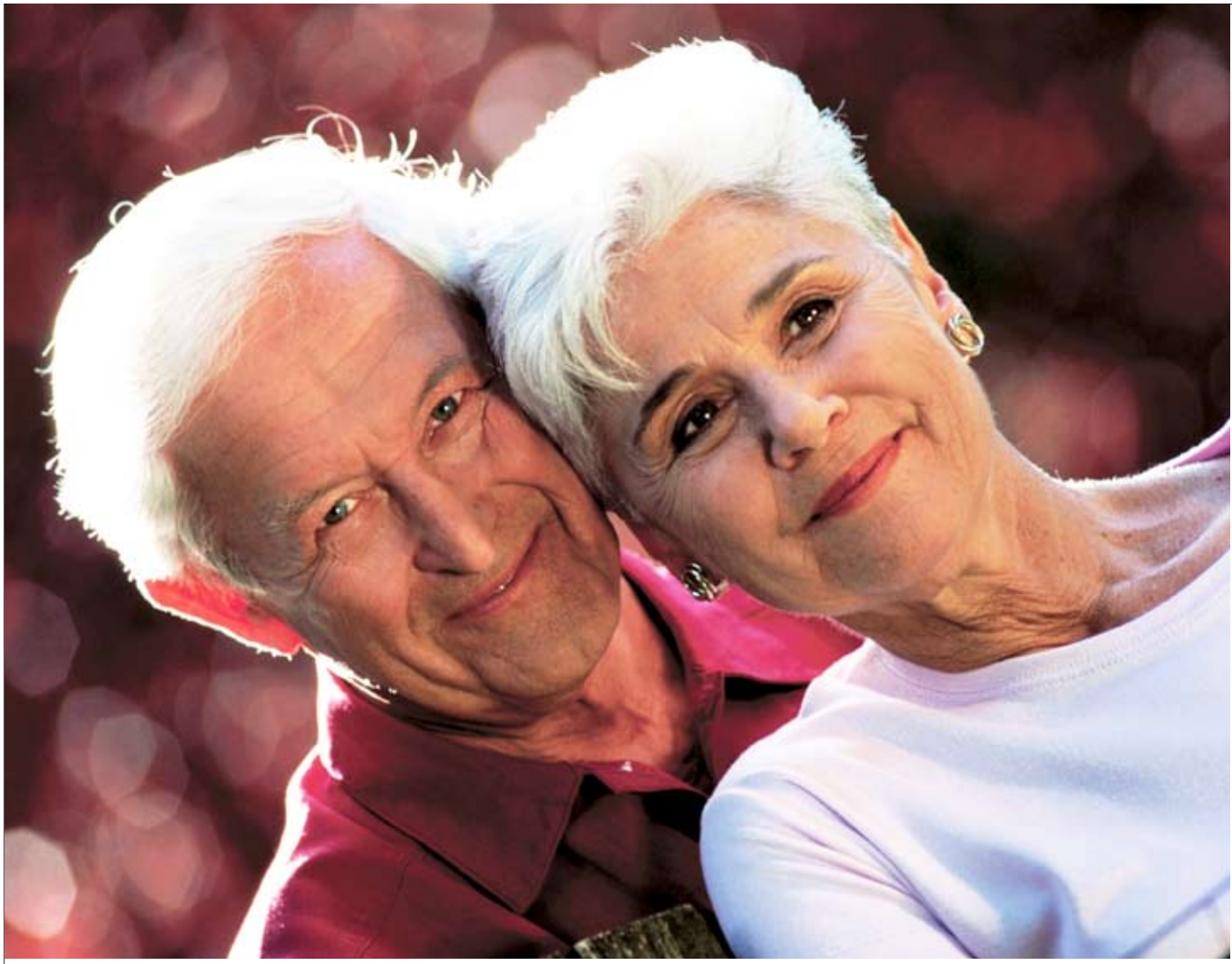
Action plan

- Include the action plan and success statements for each area of focus or priority

Financial statement

(This should be completed by the steward.)

- The task group must indicate how the planning funds were used; to request a financial statement template, please email: **LiteracyNow@2010LegaciesNow.com**



Criteria for acceptance of plans by 2010 Legacies Now

Use this manual as your guide.

The task group must:

- Provide evidence of broad-based community support
- Provide clearly-identified ways to build capacity in the community
- Show alignment between needs and plans
- Show how the guiding principles have been followed.

2010 Legacies Now recognizes plans will be as diverse as the communities that develop them.

Some communities will not need additional funding to put their plan into action.

2010 Legacies Now implementation funds, when available, can be used for action items that require additional funds.

Every attempt will be made to fund a variety of culturally and geographically diverse communities with plans to meet the needs of people of all ages at all stages of literacy learning.

Finalizing the plan: obtaining approval from community partners

Congratulations! Now you have a community literacy plan complete with goals, objectives, activities and evaluation plans. You have done a lot of work since you first became interested in enhancing your community's literacy needs. Your task group has been making plans, developing a vision, providing full access to all community members, participating in open conversations, gathering and evaluating information, and more! You should celebrate your success. Now you must take your plan to your community partners for approval.

The plan is submitted to 2010 Legacies Now

When your task group has approval from your community partners, you can send your plan to:
2010 Legacies Now, Suite 400 - 1095 West Pender Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6E 2M6

Reflect on the planning process

- When did you feel most successful? Least successful?
- What surprised you?
- What new things did you learn from each other or the experience?
- What skills and resources do you have in your group?
- What questions do you have?
- What things do you want or need to learn more about?

Celebration

Bring your community partners together to celebrate your accomplishments to date.

Stage Three: Implementation

Evaluating progress

Organizing community partners' meetings

Communicating with stakeholders

Celebrating success

Evaluating progress: task group activities

The implementation of your project is the culmination of all your planning. The task group now becomes the group that ensures the sustainability of the plan.

CONTINUOUSLY EVALUATE PROGRESS TOWARD OBJECTIVES

Keep in mind that evaluation is much more than just a monitoring activity; it is an essential learning process. Evaluation of your plan will be ongoing as you assess progress and make changes, as needed. You may want to break into goal groups to effectively monitor your plan or access funding sources.

In order to enhance the sustainability of your community literacy plan, consider:

Other sources of funding

- Examine your community literacy inventory for funding sources
- Think about approaching businesses in your community
- Talk to 2010 Legacies Now about possible funding sources

Using volunteers

- Volunteers are often an untapped resource in a community
- Think about people in your community, such as college students or seniors, who may welcome the opportunity to participate in your projects
- If you use volunteers be sure to prepare and support them well, respect their contributions and show your appreciation regularly

Using experts

- Teachers
- Early childhood educators
- University/college professors and instructors
- Librarians
- Literacy BC regional coordinators
- Public health educators
- 2010 Legacies Now literacy experts

> Tip

Maintain enthusiasm and sustainability.

It will be important to preserve the group's identity, unity, loyalty and morale. Regular communication will help to achieve this goal. Continue to meet with your task group and community partners.

Evaluating progress: task group meetings

The agenda

REVISIT THE ACTION PLAN

This will serve to keep the goals and objectives foremost on the agenda.

AS PART OF THE CONTINUOUS EVALUATION, DETERMINE WHICH ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED

- Does the progress match the timeline?
- Are actions being accomplished?
- If they aren't being accomplished, what needs to be done? Analyze and revisit the plan.
- Do the people responsible for the project have appropriate and sufficient resources?

REVISE THE ACTION PLAN AS NECESSARY BASED ON THE PROGRESS REPORT

- Do the goals need to be revised?
- Does the action plan need to be revised?
- Does the timeline need to be revised?

Generate a summary that notes accomplishments and indicates which activities have not yet been organized.

Be sure to send a report or meeting minutes to any members of your team who are unable to attend a meeting.

Celebrate the progress that you have made.

Organize community partners' meetings

Convene a meeting with the community partners every three months or as needed.

- Provide a progress report
- If possible, ask people who are directly involved in the plan to share their experiences
- Be sure that participants have the opportunity to express their ideas and opinions
- Celebrate your accomplishments
- Send a progress report to all participants unable to attend the meeting and to all supporting participants who want to be kept informed; be sure to include your MLA, members of your local government and community leaders

Communicate with all stakeholders

Submit regular news releases to the local media and keep other communities apprised of your activities and progress.

KEEP THE MEDIA INFORMED OF YOUR PROGRESS

The success and sustainability of your plan is dependent upon broad community support.

Provide regular news releases to newspapers, radio stations and television stations.

Regularly report on the progress and success of projects. This is a good news story for your community. Let them know that you are available for interviews and photographs. Weekly newspapers are usually pleased to have prepared stories to print.

Invite the media to be among your partners and keep them informed of your progress.

NETWORK WITH OTHER COMMUNITIES TO SHARE EXPERIENCES

2010 Legacies Now can provide information about what is working well in various communities. Contact information for participating task groups is available online at **www.2010LegaciesNow.com**.

Celebrate your success in the community

OPEN HOUSE

Host an open house for one of your programs.

Invite community members to view the progress for themselves. People who know about programs are usually supportive and the more they know, the more supportive they are.

BUILD

Build upon existing national and international literacy events, such as International Literacy Day and Family Literacy Week.

INVITE

Invite your MLA and members of local government to a celebration breakfast to learn about your progress.

Busy people can often make time for a breakfast meeting.

HIGHLIGHT

Highlight your community literacy initiative at community events, such as fairs, parades or community days.

Online Literacy Resources

Online literacy resources

LITERACY BC

www.literacy.bc.ca

Literacy BC is one of 2010 Legacies Now's valued partners. Literacy BC:

- Provides a provincial toll-free ReadNow hotline for British Columbians who want to improve their literacy skills, parents who want to support their children's learning, and people who want to volunteer for literacy in their community
- Operates a resource centre with the largest lending collection of literacy resources in B.C.
- Offers training and professional development for the literacy community at the regional and provincial level
- Coordinates and develops local and regional literacy networks, partnerships and alliances
- Monitors and reacts to federal and provincial government literacy policy and initiatives

ABC CANADA LITERACY FOUNDATION

www.abc-canada.org/research/

This is a national charity that focuses on raising the awareness of literacy issues and conducting research. Two research studies available at this site are: Nonparticipation in Literacy and Upgrading Programs (Long, 2002), a national study of nonparticipation of potential adult learners; and Patterns of Participation in Canadian Literacy and Upgrading Programs (Long and Middleton, 2001), a follow-up study of 500 people who inquired about literacy or upgrading programs for themselves or others.

BRITISH COLUMBIA MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

www.gov.bc.ca

Click on Ministries & Organizations to find the B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education website. Here you will find information about the public post-secondary education and training system. This site is linked to AchieveBC, a website that brings together the latest educational tools and information for promoting learning and achievement.

BRITISH COLUMBIA MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

www.gov.bc.ca

Click on Ministries & Organizations to find the B.C. Ministry of Education website. Here you will find resources related to education for children and youth in kindergarten through Grade 12, including information about curriculum and assessment. This site is also linked to AchieveBC.

READNOW BC

www.readnowbc.ca

The Province of B.C. has introduced ReadNow BC, an action plan to help British Columbians improve their reading skills. ReadNow BC focuses on increasing the number of children who enter school with the pre-reading skills they need to succeed, and improving the reading skills of school-age children, Aboriginal people and adults.

CANADIAN EDUCATION ASSOCIATION/ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE D'EDUCATION

www.cea-ace.ca

The Canadian Education Association is a bilingual, federally incorporated, non-profit organization. Founded in 1891, it initiates and sustains dialogue throughout the country, influencing public policy issues in education.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR ADULT LEARNING

www.c-pal.net/index.html

Community Partnerships for Adult Learning is a U.S.-based website dedicated to encouraging the creation of partnerships to improve the quality of adult education. This site offers a broad range of high quality community-building and adult education resources, including how-to articles, research reports and links to relevant websites.

NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY DATABASE

www.nald.ca

The National Adult Literacy Database Inc. (NALD) is a federally incorporated, non-profit service organization, which provides a database of adult literacy programs, resources, services and activities across Canada. It also links with other services and databases in North America and overseas.

Resources from NALD's literacy collection include Aboriginal materials, classroom materials, family literacy materials, learner writings, oral history, plain/clear communication tools, and practitioner resources.

MOVEMENT FOR CANADIAN LITERACY

www.literacy.ca

This site is an information space for the literacy community in Canada. Its purpose is to keep literacy workers and supporters posted on emerging issues, resources and research.

BOOKS FOR BABIES

books4babies.bclibrary.ca

Books for Babies is a community-based literacy program focusing on the importance of reading to newborns. Each year, the B.C. Library Association and the provincial government distribute more than 40,000 Books for Babies reading kits to new parents in British Columbia.

BOOKMATES

www.bookmatesfamilyliteracycentre.ca

Bookmates is a not-for-profit organization focused on the development and delivery of family learning programs to enhance the learning of both children and adults.

PARENTS AS TEACHERS NATIONAL CENTER

www.parentsasteachers.org

The Parents as Teachers National Center, based in St. Louis, Missouri, provides parents with child development knowledge and parenting support.

HOME INSTRUCTION FOR PARENTS OF PRESCHOOL YOUNGSTERS (HIPPY)

www.hippy.org.il/

HIPPY is a home-based, family-focused program that helps parents provide educational enrichment for their preschool child.

LITERACY AND PARENTING SKILLS (LAPS)

www.nald.ca/laps/

LAPS is a five-module training program for family literacy practitioners. The website contains information about training workshops and resources such as manuals and videos.

PARENT-CHILD MOTHER GOOSE PROGRAM

www.nald.ca/mothergooseprogram

Parent-Child Mother Goose activities centre on oral literature – rhymes, songs and stories – with parents and children seated together in a circle. Teaching is directed at parents, with children participating, napping or wandering, as is appropriate for their age.

PARENTS' ROLES INTERACTING WITH TEACHER SUPPORT (PRINTS)

www.nald.ca/prints/

PRINTS Family Literacy Network is an independent, voluntary organization dedicated to promoting literacy development. The program is designed to empower parents to foster the literacy development of their young children.

FRONTIER COLLEGE - READING CIRCLES

www.frontiercollege.ca/

Frontier College works with community-based groups and organizations to set up Reading Circles, places where children and volunteers read together for enjoyment.

FAMILY CONNECTIONS: THE DIRECTORY OF FAMILY LITERACY PROJECTS ACROSS CANADA

www.nald.ca/Famlit/

This is a directory of over 250 innovative literacy projects that have been developed to support families in Canada. It is sponsored by the National Literacy Secretariat and Human Resources Development Canada.

CENTER FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF EARLY READING ACHIEVEMENT (CIERA)

www.ciera.org

This is a national United States center for research on early reading. You will find many resources and examples of programs here. CIERA is a consortium of educators from five universities: University of Michigan, Michigan State University, University of Southern California, University of Minnesota and University of Georgia.

GUYS READ

www.guysread.com

Jon Scieszcka, a children's book author, is a spokesperson for this literacy initiative to encourage boys to read, to promote the issue of boys' literacy, and to encourage adults to consider the role of gender in books for boys.

INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION

www.reading.org

This organization of professionals and parents focuses on reading and the school-aged child. The site has information about resources and research.

Resources
to Support the Planning Process

Framework for effective practice

Change

Appendix

Issue alert

Framework for effective practice

EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY LITERACY PROGRAMS ARE:

- Community-based
- Learner-centred
- Supported by community resources

COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS ARE:

- Part of an overall community plan
- Responsive to local cultural, social, economic and educational realities
- Supported by community resources, such as transportation, day care, facilities and others
- Supported by people within the community, such as librarians, counsellors, literacy instructors, healthcare workers, volunteers, service club members, teachers and others

LEARNER-CENTRED PROGRAMS:

- Assess and build on the learners' context, perceptions, and uses of literacy and language
- Use and build on the learners' prior knowledge, language and vocabulary, and experiences
- Focus on themes and content that are meaningful to the learners' lives and futures
- Build a strong sense of the learners' identity as part of the community

EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS:

- Are organized around relevant and meaningful themes
- Promote critical thinking and inquiry
- Integrate life skills
- Use appropriate methods
- Use a variety of activities
- Integrate all forms of language: reading, writing, speaking, listening, viewing and representing
- Incorporate an ongoing, integrated assessing/teaching/learning process

ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- Content: relevant, meaningful themes and topics
- Materials and resources: a wide variety of print materials, media, objects, people, places, events and experiences
- Activities: interactions that focus on themes and topics and bring together teachers, learners, materials and resources

EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

- What are we going to do with this material, media, person, place, or event?
- What are we going to learn?
- Why is this important to us?

Adapted from Community-Based Student-Centred Literacy Programming with First Nations Adults, Carmen Rodriguez

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Change

The process of developing a community literacy plan may be, for some, a new way of doing things. Working with community members to build a vision and a plan for literacy learning has not been common practice in many communities.

Forging new links and new partnerships and finding a new way of doing things involves change, which can be confusing and difficult for people. It will be important for you to recognize what happens when people experience change and how you might be able to help.

People go through a transition period as they learn to deal with changes. Three phases in this transition have been described as:

- Saying goodbye: letting go of the old
- Shifting into neutral: a period between the old and the new
- Moving forward: accepting the new (*Bridges, 2003)

These are some things you can do to help people through the transition:

- Recognize and respect the difficulty in letting go of the old way of doing things, and remember that this takes time
- Communicate, communicate, communicate; talk with people about the changes and the difficulties they are experiencing
- Revisit the vision and remind people about where you are heading and why
- Work at building your task group into a strong team that will work together and support each other
- Don't hesitate to contact 2010 Legacies Now when you get stuck and need help

*William Bridges is a business consultant and an authority on managing change.

You can read about his ideas in *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change* (Perseus Pr, 2003).

APPENDIX

The purposes of literacy in a knowledge-based society – lifelong learning for all

By Ron Faris

THE WIDER SETTING

In 2002, a province-wide consultation on literacy and learning in British Columbia, initiated by Literacy BC, concluded with the Huget Report. The report, entitled The Big Picture Up Close, recommended that "literacy and lifelong learning" be used as "the over-arching, umbrella phrase that describes all learning and skills acquisition."

The following discussion of the links between literacy and lifelong learning is set in a worldwide environment of complex, constant change. Global forces are restructuring whole economies, societies, industries and communities. No province is immune from the powerful winds of change, especially a province such as British Columbia that is in a relatively rapid transition from a historically resource-based to an emerging knowledge-based economy and society.

DRIVERS OF CHANGE

Socio-economic change is being driven by at least three forces:

- Economic globalization
- Rapid technological change
- The explosion of knowledge and learning, especially in scientific-technical fields

There is a worldwide challenge of converting an information economy into a knowledge-based economy and society, in which data is informed and organized by human intelligence in order to give meaning and enable learning. In a knowledge-driven society, learning – the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values – is key to individual development, economic competitiveness and social inclusion – the objectives of democratic societies everywhere. In such a setting, lifelong learning and literacy skills for all are both an economic and moral imperative.

GROWING GAPS

Sadly, recent socio-economic analysis indicates that globally, nationally and provincially there is a growing gap between the educated and under-educated. Inter-generational literacy problems are a spectre that haunts every Canadian province. There are significant rural-urban differences in British Columbia's high school dropout or school completion rates. The lagging regions have correspondingly high adult literacy challenges. Growing numbers of children and their single parent mothers lack the basic literacy skills that will enable them to improve the quality of their lives. Too many people of Aboriginal ancestry, young and old, lack culturally relevant basic education. Many seniors or disabled persons lack the needed opportunity to gain literacy skills that will enrich their lives.

The stark fact is that British Columbians with low literacy skills are, compared to

those with higher literacy skills, more likely to pay a heavy financial and human cost, including inter-related factors such as:

- Lower incomes
- Higher rates of unemployment
- Higher rates of imprisonment
- Higher rates of ill health

With significantly different social class access to, and use of, computers, British Columbia could face what the European Union calls a "two-tiered" society.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

The 1996 *International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS)* highlighted the Canadian situation in stark comparative terms. Canada was found in the middle of the pack of 12 nations in every assessment category, including prose and document literacy, as well as numeracy. While Canadians noted that their performance was slightly higher than the U.S., when compared to world-class nations our country faces a major challenge.

Equally disturbing is that most Canadian adults surveyed felt their literacy skills were sufficient, regardless of tested skill levels. Thus many Canadians are unaware of world-class literacy standards, or the concerted efforts of other nations to move even further ahead.

According to analysis in the report *Reading the Future: A Portrait in Canada* (1996), the fact that Canada did significantly worse in every measure of the IALS than Sweden "reflects long-standing Swedish education and labour market policies, which have encouraged continuous education and lifelong learning."

Nations such as the U.K. that did not participate in the IALS have initiated their own comparative analysis and taken major steps to strengthen their literacy provision and outcomes. In 1996, the Blair government began the process of developing a comprehensive national lifelong learning strategy that is systematically addressing the issue of creating a coherent learning system aimed at achieving the twin goals of economic regeneration and social inclusion. In 1999, the Moser Report on Adult Basic Skills in the U.K. recommended a ten-point National Strategy within their wider national lifelong learning initiative. In the absence of a comprehensive Canadian strategy, British Columbia can become – through 2010 Legacies Now – a national leader.

There has been a decade-long global trend towards identifying the basic skills essential to effective functioning in an industrialized society. While these skills bear different terms in different nations, there is agreement about the key competencies required (see *Literacy as Essential Skills*, page vi). Thanks to this global consensus about literacy outcomes, Canada's mediocre international performance has become at once both increasingly clear and redeemable.

THE WIDER CANADIAN SCENE

There is an urgency to respond to Canada's unmet literacy needs. The economic, social and human cost is unacceptably high by any measure. British Columbia, a magnet for new Canadian settlement and the home of a large Aboriginal population, faces special cross-cultural challenges and opportunities within its communities.

THE SIZE OF THE CHALLENGE

The IALS study revealed a wide range of information about the literacy situation in Canada such as:

- 22 per cent of adult Canadians have serious problems dealing with printed materials
- A further 24 to 26 per cent can only deal with simple reading tasks
- 74 per cent of young Canadians who graduate from high school have strong literacy skills
- 40 per cent of Canadians over 65 have not completed primary school

Combined with the 1991 Census, the IALS provides an estimate of 5 million adults functioning at the lowest level of literacy (level 1) with, for example, serious reading difficulties. Another 6 million Canadians are at level 2 and can deal only with material that is simply written and clearly laid out.

Taken overall, threads of a lifelong learning approach in Canada are emerging, and if woven together with coherent community partnerships of the public, private and voluntary sectors, could be the basis of a rich and diverse tapestry that could be world-class.

A LIFELONG LEARNING TAPESTRY: A VISION

While the initiatives of leading Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) nations in weaving their national literacy and lifelong learning strategies are impressive, British Columbia has the opportunity and challenge of developing its own "made in British Columbia" approach.

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF LIFELONG LEARNING

From a public policy perspective, lifelong learning has been defined as a conceptual framework and organizing principle for imagining, planning and implementing policies and programs that enable:

- Purposeful and systematic learning opportunities for individuals throughout their lives
- Individuals to learn wherever, whenever, and in modes appropriate to their learning styles and needs
- Use of the total learning resources (both formal and non-formal sectors) of a jurisdiction

It is also a social goal which envisages a learning society in which the pervasive culture values, fosters and celebrates learning in all its forms, whether in the home, the community, at school or work.

Learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, is a natural everyday process that occurs throughout one's life. It is driven by human curiosity and intelligence that attempts to give meaning to information in all its forms. It is both an individual activity and a social process that occurs in all of life's stages from birth to death. The concept of lifelong learning speaks to this life-span aspect. It also identifies a life-wide dimension that recognizes that systematic, purposeful learning occurs, and is promoted in, not only the formal sector of education and training for credentials but also the non-formal sector or context of the family, the workplace and the voluntary or community setting. Finally, informal or non-systematic, serendipitous learning can occur as one views television, reads a newspaper, discusses politics

around the family table or gardening tips with a neighbour over the backyard fence.

GOALS OF LIFELONG LEARNING AND LITERACY

The concepts of lifelong learning and literacy are no longer merely nice ideas. They are economic and social imperatives. It is a province's wisest investment in the future. Literacy – especially learning how to learn – is the foundational skill of lifelong learning. The two concepts are closely inter-related. For example, lifelong learning is the rationale for far greater emphasis on preventative, rather than just remedial, literacy strategies. It also provides a framework for establishing coherent, comprehensive and continuous literacy learning objectives for individuals and communities.

LAYING HEALTHY FOUNDATIONS FOR LIFELONG LEARNING AND LITERACY

New findings and insights from the neurosciences, as well as health determinant and child development studies, have all contributed to the realization that investment in the pre-natal to pre-school period of infants' lives is crucial to their development as healthier, more intelligent and productive youth and adults. Two of the greatest causes of children with significant developmental or learning deficits – alcohol and tobacco consumption during pregnancy – are largely preventable. Both cognitive and affective mental capacity is largely set by the age of three. Babies, even in utero, who live in environments of fear, abuse or poor nutrition or nurturing, suffer deficits that can be lifelong. Programs such as the American Parents as Teachers or the Maori Parents as First Teachers have provided substantial research evidence that both improved child readiness for learning and parent involvement in local school and civic initiatives result when quality early learning initiatives are available at the community level.

THE LEARNING ECONOMY

In the evolving knowledge-based economy and society, the only constant is change. As our economy continues the shift from a resource to a knowledge and largely service-based economy, even greater demand for a literate work force emerges. While there appears to be a current lack of skilled workers in some sectors, the chronically high unemployment rates of the past 20 years have masked the current labour shortage in a growing number of fields, as a rapidly greying population will be supported by a significantly smaller working-age cohort. This younger work force will be faced by an increasingly rapid rate of technological change and an explosion of knowledge that no previous generation has ever encountered. Once again, literacy will be re-defined and expanded in terms of new economic imperatives.

The economic costs of significant and pervasive under-education are substantial. Several Canadian economists have estimated various costs of low literacy levels. Monica Townson's 1987 report, The Economic Costs of Illiteracy, estimated that in 1986 adults with low education levels (grades 0-8) lost over $7 billion in income due to their skill deficits. In a 1995 report, David Stager cited a Conference Board study that estimated the cost of dropouts in Canada during the 1980s represented a net annual loss of output of one billion dollars. He also noted that individual returns to completion of secondary school, from the total economy's perspective, appear to be

about the same as returns for university students. International agencies report similar findings. The 1996 OECD report, *Lifelong Learning for All*, noted that "there is widespread agreement that social rates of return to primary and secondary education are higher than the social rate of return to higher education." The 1998 Asian Development Bank report, Support for Human Development, states that "access to quality basic education provides the foundation for both human and economic development" and notes that "global evidence suggests that high rates of literacy...are highly correlated with economic growth."

How can our future workforce meet the challenges of an emerging knowledge-based economy unless every citizen – including those who too often have been in the shadows of our society, the disabled, First Nations people, visible minorities, marginalized youth and many women – is assured of the literacy skills that will enable their participation? All citizens will be needed to contribute to our economy, and will require the requisite literacy skills to do so.

THE LEARNING COMMUNITY

Many British Columbians have a sense of history and a sense of place. They care about their communities and the people who live in them. Small wonder that Huget's 2002 province-wide consultation report called for fostering "learning communities" in which literacy and learning are "seen as a viable fulcrum for effecting socio-economic revitalization." Yet forces such as economic restructuring and family-social breakdown are often felt most starkly at the community level. It is no exaggeration that many rural communities from coast to coast are facing crises in their resource-based, agricultural, forestry or fishery economies. Some urban neighbourhoods have significant clusters of people with joined-up social and economic problems. Often the communities hardest hit are those with the largest numbers of adults with literacy deficits.

One of British Columbia's greatest advantages is its wealth of social capital – the values of trust, fairness, civility and effective human networks – that is found in so many communities. Yet we now face the challenge of building the capacity of our communities to meet the challenges of a knowledge-based economy with a significant number of citizens with the inter-related problems of literacy, ill-health, unemployment, poverty and poor housing. How can we engage in needed processes of economic and community development in ways that engage all members, regardless of literacy levels, and all sectors of our communities, whether they are civic, public, private, educational or voluntary?

THE LEARNING SOCIETY

The goal of a learning society has challenged humanity since the dawn of civilization. In modern terms it is a society in which the lifelong and life-wide learning of all – individuals and groups – is systematically encouraged, invested in, and harnessed for the public good rather than just for the benefit of the few. It is a civil society in which all participate and contribute to sustain and enhance the benefits of citizenship in a free and democratic society. Social inclusion is the objective, and learning how to learn and the skills of civic literacy are the foundational skills of a learning society. Yet how can the foundational skills and values of a learning society be learned by all, especially those who have rejected, or have been rejected by, the dominant society?

THE LEARNING CULTURE

British Columbia needs a way of life that values, fosters and celebrates lifelong learning in all its forms whether in the home, the community, at school or work—for all its people. In our province, with its linguistic and cultural diversity, the potential for a dynamic of cross-cultural learning is possibly unparalleled. Yet respect for other's cultures is based on self-respect and self-esteem, qualities often lacking in people who face literacy problems. The deeply rooted issue of inter-generational literacy also must be dealt with in more effective ways. Otherwise the cycle of low literacy can be perpetuated among those whose sub-culture denigrates or ignores the value of learning in all its forms. How can we build a lifelong learning culture so that all people share a common core of basic attitudes and values that promote their learning and that of others?

LITERACY AND LIFELONG LEARNING

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

LITERACY AS ESSENTIAL SKILLS: A FUNCTIONAL DEFINITION

One important way to define literacy is as the essential skills recognized by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). These skills have been identified as those that people use to perform a wide range of everyday life and workplace tasks. Essential skills are the fundamental skills that make it possible to learn all others. They are skills that enable people to participate fully in the workplace and in the community. The following skills are included:

- Reading text
- Use of documents
- Writing
- Numeracy
- Oral communication
- Thinking skills
  - Problem solving
  - Decision making
  - Job task planning and organizing
  - Finding information
- Working with others
- Computer use
- Continuous learning

These basic skills go beyond the simplistic notion of the three Rs. They are in fact the skills that, in varying degrees, we must all acquire.

CHEERS: Six major community purposes of literacy

There are as many purposes of literacy as there are literacies. It is also an acronym that illuminates the many community purposes of literacy, as follows:

C **Citizenship literacy**, often expressed in civic and community engagement. Examples: youth, including those at risk, learn to engage in a civic youth advisory council; adult literacy learners plan and carry out an all-candidates meeting; high school social studies students, acting as citizen apprentices, work with city councillors to develop civic issue papers.

H **Health literacy**, often expressed as preventative public health promotion. Examples: seniors gain ability to read prescription instructions; new Canadian migrant farm workers learn uses and dangers of pesticides; a community-based campaign to prevent smoking and alcohol consumption among pregnant women.

E **Economic literacy**, often expressed in community economic development. Examples: people with disabilities learn to form and operate their own wood-chopping firm; citizens learn to create and manage a community economic development trust; a First Nations community trains members to operate a potato co-operative.

E **Environmental literacy,** often expressed by people acting locally as if future generations matter. Examples: band elders share stories of a valley with at-risk youth who are learning to restore the ecology of the area; a village council introduces the Natural Step process of community environmental health (pioneered in Canada by the Resort Municipality of Whistler); college environmental science students mentor students from an inner-city high school.

R **Rural/urban development literacy,** often expressed as community development. Examples: local early childhood education providers organize collaborative parent education workshops; a women's institute co-sponsors, with the local college, adult upgrading for single parent mothers; a local community school co-sponsors, with the neighbourhood association and city council, a series of workshops on local public transportation issues for low-income commuters.

S **Social/cultural literacy**, often expressed as multi-cultural celebration or social development. Examples: seniors (elders) and school children participate in an intergenerational literacy and oral history project; college nursing students work with street people regarding health issues; a community faith council promotes an immigrant newcomer buddy system with community volunteers.

There are, of course, the technical literacies, sometimes called computer or multi-media literacy, which cross-cut all six community literacies. These are essentially the tools which enable people to network in and outside of communities, and to create and critique the use of modern media.

EVERYONE CAN LEARN MORE

Lack of literacy skills has been too often characterized as some sort of pathology or disease. People have focused on an individual's deficits, sometimes to the exclusion of any recognition of their assets. We must move away from the stigma of "illiteracy" to the realization that we all need, and are capable of, continuous learning. We must value all learning, be it vocational or academic, cognitive or affective, whether acquired inside or outside the classroom. We must therefore adopt an approach that assures that there are many pathways for progress rather than systemic or programmatic dead-ends.

THREE CONTEXTS FOR LITERACY LEARNING

There are three non-formal contexts that all encounter – the family, the community and the workplace – in which essential literacies are learned. The three environments are not in isolation; they are inter-related. Essential literacy skills gained in one setting may be used in another. In all, the importance of understanding literacy learning as a social process – we learn from and with others – is crucial to developing a meaningful definition of literacy that links it with real-life roles and responsibilities.

LITERACY: THE FOUNDATION OF A LEARNING SOCIETY

Literacy – the essential skills – is the foundation of a learning society. These skills are not just nice to know, they are critical to active learning, active citizenship, and active labour force participation. The twin goals of sustainable economic development and social inclusion cannot be achieved without a fully literate society, nor can democratic processes and institutions flourish without people skilled in sustaining robust democratic government and vibrant voluntary sectors.

This guide is intended to provide background and contextual information.

Use it as a catalyst for discussion and as a resource document for communities.

Issue alert

Literacy Now Communities program—an innovative provincial strategy for communities

This form can be used to communicate about a provincial systemic issue that is impeding community planning, but cannot be resolved at the community level.

Submitting group: _____

Location: _____

Contact person: _____

Phone number: _____ Email: _____

ISSUE: Describe the issue that the community cannot resolve locally

_____

_____

_____

_____

IMPACT: How does this issue affect your community?

_____

_____

_____

_____

RECOMMENDATION: What actions/solutions would you propose?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

This feedback will be gathered by 2010 Legacies Now, collated and presented to the appropriate level of government.

Notes

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