LiteracyNow

building lasting legacies in British Columbia's communities

2010 LEGACIES NOW

A PLANNING GUIDE

I am very pleased to launch the next phase of LiteracyNow – the LiteracyNow Community Planning Guide. As part of 2010 LegaciesNow partnership with community-based organizations and sectors to make B.C. a global leader in literacy learning, LiteracyNow will help adults, youth and children in B.C. communities meet their literacy challenges by increasing local access to literacy learning and tools. And by working closely with community groups across the province we can build a solid provincial network and leave a legacy of literacy learning.

Our mission at 2010 LegaciesNow is to work in partnership with community organizations, non-government organizations (NGOs), the private sector and all levels of government, to develop sustainable legacies in sport & recreation, arts, literacy and volunteerism. 2010 LegaciesNow is actively assisting communities discover and create unique and inclusive social and economic opportunities leading up to, during and beyond the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the provincial government under the leadership of Premier Gordon Campbell for their commitment to make B.C. the most literate jurisdiction in North America by 2010. I would also like to thank Dr. Emery Dosdall for his foresight and guidance in developing innovative literacy programs and Brenda LeClair for accepting the challenge of leading LiteracyNow.

In closing, I would like to thank everyone who has provided support and feedback to LiteracyNow while it was in the development phase. Your commitment to this project will help us engage and mobilize the energy and knowledge within communities and schools in order to make B.C. the most literate province in the country and to prepare British Columbians for the future. This guide, which reflects successful community experience here and abroad, provides practical guidance for the many thousands of people throughout the province who know and care about their communities, and are prepared to work and learn together for the future of their communities.

Sincerely,

Marion Lay
President and CEO
2010 LegaciesNow

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Welcome to LiteracyNow

A bold *Initiative* designed to increase the literacy levels of CHILDREN, YOUTH & ADULTS

As a community member, you are invited to take part in a bold strategy designed to increase the literacy levels of children, youth, and adults within your community. This is a process that involves you getting together with other people to make a community literacy plan that meets your needs. There are already many effective programs in place across the province. The intent of this intiative is to build on and enhance this work, not replace it.

LiteracyNow is a community development initiative

Community development happens when people in a community join together to address common challenges. People build on the existing strengths of their community to find solutions to benefit the whole community.

The **LiteracyNow** initiative is funded by government and private and corporate donations through **2010 LegaciesNow.**

LiteracyNow is a community-based planning process, designed to address local literacy needs and priorities.

This planning guide will support communities as they:

- gather together to talk about literacy
- decide to participate in **LiteracyNow**
- submit an application for provincial planning funds
- mobilize local community energy and knowledge
- assess the community literacy needs
- build on existing literacy work and address important gaps
- prepare a community literacy plan

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

INTRODUCTION

- What is Literacy?

- Why Do We Need LiteracyNow?

- Guiding Principles of LiteracyNow

- Resources for Community-Based Planning Teams

- LiteracyNow at a Glance

What is LITERACY?

INTRODUCTION

As the world becomes more complex, so too does the definition of literacy—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 that there are many literacies. Literacy is an essential cultural, social and academic practice that involves, not only reading, writing and numeracy, but also a variety of abilities including viewing and representing, aural literacy including language, musical and listening skills, cultural literacy including media and social literacy and critical literacy including civic skills.

Literacies enable us to communicate, represent and evaluate knowledge in multiple ways. The more literacies we learn, the greater our understanding of the world. Literacy is a continuum of skills. We can all become more literate.

United Nations Literacy Decade, 2003-2012

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.

WHY DO WE NEED
LiteracyNow?

Access to lifelong learning is essential to meeting present and future social and economic change.
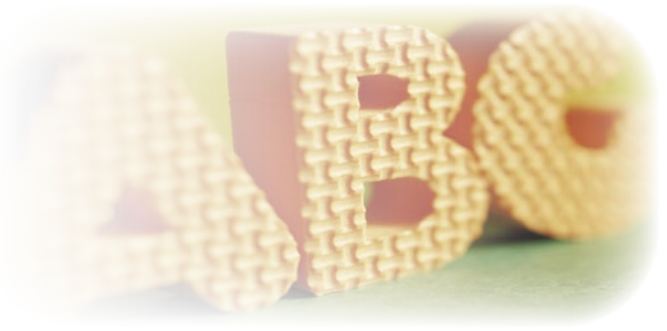
CHANGES IN THE WORLD

There are new literacy challenges in our changing world, new forms of communication and expanding use of technology. Access to lifelong learning opportunities, of which ability in multiple literacies is a cornerstone, is essential to meeting and critiquing present and future social and economic change. Changing demands at school, in the workplace, and in the community require innovative and more inclusive community responses. Learning a variety of literacies has a positive impact on individuals, families, communities and the economy.

CHANGES IN THE COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Rural communities and resource-based communities have identified a need to focus on attaining high levels of literacy, numeracy, and technology skills. Aboriginal communities have identified that their literacy programs must be grounded in culture, be learner-centred and have a community-based approach. Urban community members also need a range of literacies to effectively function as citizens, parents and workers. Linguistically and culturally diverse groups within our communities have specific strengths and literacy needs.

CHANGES IN LITERACY NEEDS

■ Current research suggests that brain development and involvement in literacy activities in the pre-school 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 preschools and speech and language support, will increase the likelihood that children will have more choices as adults.

■ Literacy needs continue after school 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 to fully participate in the community.

■ 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 initiatives in communities throughout the province, which model principles of access, community participation and lifelong learning. The aim is to learn from existing partnerships and to build and expand upon them.

LiteracyNow 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% of the people incarcerated in federal penitentiaries have limited literacy skills.
  (The John Howard Society of Canada, 1996)

- 60% of social assistance recipients have not completed secondary school.
  (Reading the future: A Portrait of Literacy In Canada, 1996)

- Nearly 50% of Canadians have serious difficulty dealing with printed materials or can deal only with material that is simple and clearly laid out.
  (Reading the Future: A Portrait of Literacy In Canada, 1996)

- 20% of 4 and 5-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 that barriers such as job or money problems, lack of childcare and transportation are some of the reasons hindering particpation.
  (ABC Canada, 2001)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF
LiteracyNow

COLLABORATION

Building networks, partnerships and mentoring relationships will be essential.

INNOVATION

New ways of viewing existing programs, new partnerships, and new ideas for programs will be valued.

RESPECT

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

CAPACITY BUILDING

Initiatives will promote and sustain the lifelong learning of all participants. People should feel empowered to act. There is a need to focus on improving the life chances of children and adults.

UNIVERSAL ACCESS

All community members will have access to the planning process and the programs. The hopes and dreams of all will be respected and there will be a place for everyone.

STRENGTH BUILDING

Respecting, building on, and enhancing past and current initiatives will be common practice.

SUSTAINABILITY

A long term commitment to literacy learning will be sustained in order to lead to greater success.

JOY

People will be involved in friendly and enthusiastic ways, celebrating successes from time to time.

RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED
PLANNING TEAMS

On the next page is a chart showing the **LiteracyNow** 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 a different language to describe their groups. For example, some communities may prefer the term working committees rather than task groups. The following resources will be provided by **LiteracyNow** to assist communities in the development of their community literacy plans.

PROVINCIAL COORDINATORS WILL:

- be available at any stage of planning.
- suggest strategies, help you find resources and network with other communities.
- have varied skills and backgrounds in order for them to meet your needs.
- help you to apply the guiding principles of **LiteracyNow**.
- be coaches, mentors or fresh eyes.

FUNDING WILL BE PROVIDED IN TWO STAGES

- A community can apply for planning funds that can be used to complete the Community Literacy Plan.
- When the plan is complete, a community can apply for funds to implement a part of their plan.

THE TOOLKIT INCLUDES:

- ❏ The Planning Guide
- ❏ A video describing the planning process
- ❏ Posters

TECHNOLOGY

Visit the 2010 LegaciesNow website at **www.2010legaciesnow.com** and click on **LiteracyNow**

LiteracyNow
AT A GLANCE

Getting Started
Stage One

Preparing the Community Plan
Stage Two

Implementation
Stage Three

Stage One

Expression of interest by individuals or groups

↓

Initiators expand the conversation with other community members

↓

Initiators prepare for community meetings

↓

The Launch:
Meetings of interested community members

↓

The community members decide to apply for planning funds

↓

The task group prepares and submits The Application for Planning Funds

↓

The planning funds are confirmed

Stage Two

The Community Partners hold a meeting to celebrate progress and to choose facilitators and stewards

↓

Task Group chooses facilitator and stewards

↓

Task Group prepares Community Literacy Plan

↓

Task Group prepares Community Literacy Inventory

↓

The Community Partners approve the Community Literacy Plan

↓

The plan is submitted to 2010 LegaciesNow

↓

The Community Partners celebrate the progress made

Create a Vision

Develop a Community Literacy Profile

Develop a Community Literacy Inventory

Set Goals
(What do we want to do?)

Prepare an Action Plan
(How will we do it?)

Evaluate the Program
(How will we know if we are successful?)

Write the Community Literacy Plan

Stage Three

Task Group Activities

↓

Continuously evaluate progress toward objectives

↓

Maintain enthusiasm and sustainability

↓

Organize Community Partners' meetings

↓

Communicate with all stakeholders

↓

Celebrate your success in the community

↓

Ongoing Community Development

Planning

Evaluating → Implementing

Stage Four

GETTING STARTED

- Expression of Interest by Individuals or Groups

- Initiators Expand the Conversation

- Initiators Prepare for the Community Meeting

- The Launch

Expression of interest by individuals or groups

Initiators EXPAND the conversation with other community members

Initiators PREPARE for community meetings

The Launch Interested community members MEET

Community members decide to APPLY for planning funds

The task group PREPARES and submits The Application for Planning Funds

The planning funds are CONFIRMED

STAGE ONE

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST BY
INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS

What can you do as an individual if you are interested in **LiteracyNow** for your community?

- Talk to your friends.
- Talk to community leaders.
- Contact literacy organizations in your community.
- Decide how we will define our 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 **LiteracyNow** and get it going?
  - Are there others who would be willing to work with us?

> *Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.* St. Francis of Assisi

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

> *Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has.* Margaret Mead

INITIATORS EXPAND THE
CONVERSATION
WITH THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Invite people by letter, telephone, e-mail or in person

WHO SHOULD YOU INVITE TO JOIN YOU?

If you decide to go ahead, invite some community members to prepare for full community involvement in planning.

Explore and recruit diverse groups within your community

CONSIDER INVITING PEOPLE FROM GROUPS SUCH AS:

- Businesses
- Chambers of Commerce
- Community colleges
- Community economic development groups
- Community service groups
- Continuing education programs
- Cultural groups
- Faith organizations
- First Nations organizations
- Government ministries
- Health care providers
- Literacy students
- Writer & other arts clubs

- Independent schools
- Libraries & Museums
- Literacy organizations
- Police and firefighters
- Post-secondary institutions
- Pre-schools
- School districts
- Sports & recreation organizations
- Government -municipal, provincial, federal
- Volunteer organizations
- Trade Unions
- Social planning agencies
- Spirit of B.C. Community Committee

"

The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual.

VINCE LOMBARDI

INITIATORS PREPARE FOR
COMMUNITY MEETINGS

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

HOW SHOULD YOU PREPARE FOR THE COMMUNITY MEETINGS?

Watch the LiteracyNow video to get an overview of the initiative and to generate energy and enthusiasm.

Decide if you want to continue. If you decide to continue, create the awareness that:

- the people in the community are the experts with respect to the hopes, dreams, assets and needs of their community;
- it is effective to work together to achieve results; and
- 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 16)

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 that you can use. If you know the names of participants in advance, you may 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 that are marked with a group identification and proceed as above. During the meeting, the tried and true method of having participants "number- off" and then gather with those with the same number, is effective if not creative.

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.htm**)

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 certain people in your community don't wish to participate, keep them informed and continue to invite 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
- ❏ E-Mail
- ❏ Community Cablevision ads

- Approach those individuals who you believe will be supportive. Begin a conversation about their interest in the **LiteracyNow** initiative and build on it.
- Invite interested people to take a leadership role and to become active in the creation of the **LiteracyNow** plan.
- This is a long-term community-based process. You need to plan ways to keep people involved, such as contacting people between meetings.
- Invite the media and prepare a press package for them. They may also be interested in being members of the task group.

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 it 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 they easy to read? (eg. profile data)			
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 flipchart?			
Once the meeting starts			
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. . .			
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 LiteracyNow AND DO WE WANT TO PARTICIPATE?

Purpose

The purpose of this meeting is to describe the **LiteracyNow** initiative. Members of the community will learn about the purposes, the process and the commitment involved. At the end of the meeting they will decide whether or not to continue and individuals will indicate their level of involvement.

Welcome

Welcome participants and ask them to introduce themselves. If the group is large, ask people to introduce themselves to those seated around them. A smaller group can go around the circle stating their names and interests in literacy.

Describe LiteracyNow

Show overheads outlining key points of **LiteracyNow** (e.g. process & guiding principals). You will discuss the vision, the mandate, the goals and the areas of focus for **LiteracyNow.**

Show the LiteracyNow 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 the participants want to continue to plan a **LiteracyNow** initiative. If the answer is "yes", continue.

THE LAUNCH

Continued ...

Describe levels of participation

Show overheads which describe the levels of participation. Have three sign-up sheets that are headed:

- **Task group members** willing to take an active role, who will:
    - Attend about 5 meetings over the next few months
    - Prepare the proposal
    - Oversee the participation process
    - Keep others involved
- **Community Partners:** attend regular meetings with interested community members
- **Supporters:** want to be kept informed

Ask people to add their names to one of the sheets. Give contact information, addresses, telephone and e-mail.

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.

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 to moving to the planning stage.

THE LAUNCH

**Meetings of interested
community members**

SETTING THE DIRECTION FOR THE FUTURE

Purpose

The purpose of this meeting is to broaden the discussion about literacy as it applies in each particular community. Members of the community will engage in discussions about their own experiences; their hopes for their community and their dreams for the future.

Welcome

Welcome the participants. Share the purpose of the meeting by referring to an overhead or a chart.

Literacy is complex. It engages our emotions and our sense of self-worth. Its importance cannot be underestimated. We can all improve our literacies. We need to be sensitive to everyone's feelings as we work together. UNKNOWN

THE LAUNCH

continued

The following two activities help participants to share their ideas and at the same time focus on initiatives, goals, and visions.

ACTIVITY 1 CAROUSEL

Invite the members to form groups of 4 or 5 people. Place the following questions, on charts, at each of 4 stations.

• How would we like our community to be different five years from now?
• How can we expand choices for literacy and life-long learning for people of all ages?
• Is there a need in our community to give people learning opportunities in community service, citizenship, early childhood learning or pre-vocational training?
• How might the LiteracyNow initiative help us to realize our hopes for our community.

The groups visit each chart in turn, spending up to 5 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 them on the walls and invite everyone to look at them all again.

Everyone returns to their seats and addresses the following questions as a whole group.

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

ACTIVITY 2 A 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 2-3 minutes. When all seem to be finished, invite them to share their moment with the person next to them. 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, a recorder keeps a note of 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.

THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS DECIDE TO APPLY FOR
PLANNING FUNDS

When participants decide to participate in the initiative,

invite them to sign the Application for Planning Funds

THE TASK GROUP
PREPARES & SUBMITS
THE APPLICATION FOR PLANNING FUNDS

The Application for Planning Funds is in the Resources is on the

2010 LegaciesNow website. It has full information regarding

required information and how to submit.

THE PLANNING FUNDS ARE
CONFIRMED

When the community facilitator(s) and the stewards are identified,

the money will be sent to the selected steward.

PREPARING THE COMMUNITY PLAN

- Celebration Meeting

- Choosing Facilitators and Stewards

- Preparing the Community Literacy Plan

- Resources to Support the Planning Process
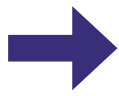
The Community Partners hold a meeting to celebrate progress and to choose facilitators and stewards

Task Group CHOOSES facilitator and stewards

Task Group PREPARES Community Literacy Plan

Community Partners APPROVE the Community Literacy Plan

The Plan is SUBMITTED to 2010 LegaciesNow

The Community Partners CELEBRATE the progress made

STAGE TWO

CELEBRATION MEETING

The community partners hold a meeting to celebrate progress and to choose facilitator(s) and steward.

**A**t this meeting you will celebrate receiving 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. They recognize achievements and renew energy and enthusiasm to continue. They help to build commitment.

❑ Congratulate all of the community partners on their successful application for planning funds.

❑ Form a Task Group (or whatever term your community decides to name this group) of the community members who choose to take an active and intense role in the development of the plan. The Task Group members will have these characteristics:
  - Respect for diversity
  - A willingness to hear all points of view
  - An ability to step back and trust the group
  - A willingness to let go of a personal agenda
  - A commitment to maintaining the unity of the group
  - A commitment to the integrity of the process
  - A willingness to commit to the beliefs and values of the team

❑ Set a date for the first task group meeting.

❑ Set a schedule for meeting with community partners over the next six months. The partners may want to meet only every three months.

IDEAS FOR
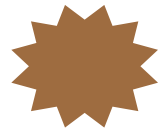
CELEBRATION

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 CHOOSES A
FACILITATOR(S) & STEWARD(S)

The facilitator(s) and steward(s) should work together to form strong relationships and encourage consensus-building strategies to make decisions.

Choose a facilitator for the task group. (You may have two or more people share this very important role.) The person(s) in this role will see that all of the processes are followed. The person(s) should be neutral and without a personal agenda.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF FACILITATORS

❑   Confident

❑   Enjoys working with people

❑   Skilled at communicating clearly and in a friendly way

❑   Adept at modeling the guiding principles of **LiteracyNow**

❑   Experienced in chairing meetings

❑   A good organizer

❑   Perceived as firm but fair

❑   Enthusiastic and encouraging

❑   Excellent at listening, paraphrasing, and clarifying

❑   Familiar with conflict resolution strategies

DUTIES OF FACILITATORS

❑   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 the 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

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 that they didn't vote for.

CHOOSE STEWARDS TO HANDLE THE
PLANNING FUNDS

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF STEWARDS:

- ❑ 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 STEWARDS:

- ❑ Overseeing the initial proposed budget. (The funds are intended to be used to remove barriers to full community participation).
- ❑ Making decisions regarding banking institutions or credit unions and signing authority.
- ❑ Providing financial statements to the **2010 LegaciesNow** when required and to the community partners twice a year.

> "
> *People who work together will win, whether it be against complex football defenses, or the problems of modern society.*   VINCE LOMBARDI


TIP

BANKING THE FUNDS

You can eventually form a society and have your own bank or credit union account.

Initially, the money may be held by a hosting organization that is providing services. It must be in a dedicated bank or credit union account apart from the operating funds of the hosting organization.

Working in groups can be challenging at times. At the end of this Stage 2 section is some helpful information about group work.
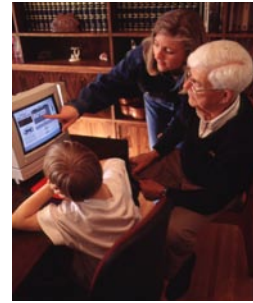
THE TASK GROUP PREPARES COMMUNITY LITERACY PLAN

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 **LiteracyNow** 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 **LiteracyNow** initiative. How can you be sure that you are meeting the values?

3. What document are we developing?

The Community Literacy Plan

4. What are the steps that we must take to develop the plan?

See the eight-step planning process on the following page.

5. How will we 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 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 to participate. You might also consider a way to provide transportation when necessary.

THE COMMUNITY
PLANNING PROCESS

This is a step-by-step approach to planning. It is intended to help you to 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 opprotunities for working together and results in activities that benefit the whole community.

Create a Vision

**Write the Community
Literacy Plan**

**Develop a
Community Profile**

**Develop a
Community Literacy
Inventory**

Evaluate the Program

Set Goals

Make an Action Plan

STEP ONE
CREATE A VISION
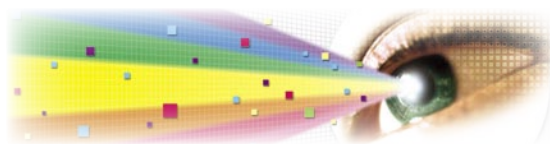
> *We go where our vision is.* JOSEPH EDWARD MURPHY

- A community vision describes what is hoped for and valued in the community. 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.

> *Cherish your visions and your dreams as they are the children of your soul; the blueprints of your ultimate accomplishments.* NAPOLEON HILL

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 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.

The first step in assessing your current situation is to create a Community Profile that briefly describes the geographic, historical, and social and economic setting of your community—the context in which your literacy initiative will occur.

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

If the task group is developing the Community Profile, follow these steps:

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 First Nations people.

3. Develop a demographic scan that includes information on the age distribution, "marital" status and ethnic background including a comparison with provincial averages e.g. twice as many school age children as, or 20% more single parents than, the provincial average, and some indication of trends based on the 1996 and the 2001 census data or recent estimates e.g. the general population has increased by 30%, and the over 65 group by 20%, over the past 6 years.

4. Compare the educational attainment (level of schooling) of your community with the provincial averages, and identify any groups in special need e.g. 60% 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 initiative (e.g. family literacy to improve school readiness of pre-schoolers; community-based literacy for at-risk youth; a literacy initiative targeting single parents; or intergenerational literacy between seniors and children).

TIP

Local public and private agencies such as school districts, university-colleges, village or town administrations, chambers of commerce and tourist bureaus have often 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 up-dates.

DEVELOP A COMMUNITY LITERACY PROFILE

continued ...

The Community Profile will provide an agreed-upon data base 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 Stats Canada is available at: http://www.statcan.ca/english/edu (click on Community Profiles). Stats BC has useful data at: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca (click on Community Facts), http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/sep/index.htm (click on Socio-Economic Profiles and Socio-Economic Indices).

To find out about your community's preschool population, useful data is found at www.earlylearning.ubc.ca. The site is a mapping project which helps measure readiness to learn in children, assess the effectiveness of early childhood interventions, and predict how children will do in elementary school.

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

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

STEP THREE
DEVELOP A COMMUNITY
LITERACY INVENTORY

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

Depending on the size of your community, you may want to contract with an individual to complete your Literacy Assets Information Chart.

If the task group is completing the chart follow these steps:

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 matrix on page 34 to record the names of programs or resources currently in your community. (Enlarge the matrix or 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 (e.g., Pre-school to Kindergarten, Gr. 11-12 to Young Adult.

ACTIVITY

You may want to use a brainstorming activity to generate all of the community literacy assets, resources, and programs and again to explore gaps and possible links. For the rules of brainstorming and strategic suggestions visit: *Brainstorming* **at edweb.sdsu.edu/triton/Guides/ Brainstorming.html or** *Brainstorming- Generating many radical ideas* **at www.mindtools.com/ brainstm.html or Brainstorming techniques that work at www.effectivemeetings.com/teams/ participation/brainstorming.asp**

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.
- There is no discussion of ideas during brainstorming.
- Criticism or evaluation of ideas is not allowed at this stage.
- Don't comment on duplicate ideas.
- At the time limit or when people run out of ideas, look at the list and remove duplicates and organize ideas into groups.
- Decide what action will be taken.

DEVELOP A COMMUNITY LITERACY INVENTORY

continued ...

GATHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAMS

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

These stakeholders of a program may include:

- Service providers who are involved in the day-to-day operation of the program (e.g. teachers in a pre-school 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).
- Decision makers who make decisions about the program (e.g. the administrators of 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?

TIP

Gather the information on the template provided on the next page and then put the information on the Literacy Assets Information Chart. (The matrix on page 35 is provided as an example. You will need to create a larger version so there will be room for all of the information.)

LITERACY ASSETS IN OUR COMMUNITY

	Prenatal & Perinatal	Birth to 5 years	Kindergarten to Grade 3	Grades 4-7	Grades 8-9	Grades 10-12	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 your participants?	Does the service have partners?	Possible links with existing programs

LiteracyNow

DEVELOP A COMMUNITY LITERACY INVENTORY continued ...

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

EVALUATE YOUR COMMUNITY LITERACY INVENTORY

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?

❑   **Are there links?**

Now that you have information about the programs, you can look at each program and ask:
- 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?

❑   **Are there duplications of services?**
- Are there overlaps in programs or services? Look for duplications and consider opportunities for providing new services.

DEVELOP A COMMUNITY LITERACY INVENTORY **continued**

Explore your opportunities, challenges, strengths and needs

THINK AHEAD AND EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES

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 (the things we have or do well)?
- What are our needs or limitations (the things we need or need help with)? What resources (materials, equipment, skills, money, partners, etc.) 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 form ISSUE ALERT (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 **LiteracyNow** at **2010 LegaciesNow**. Your concern 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 or do we need assistance?

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?

CHOOSE AREAS OF FOCUS

You have developed a vision of the literacy services that you would like to have in your community and then 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 another place where 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.

- Prepare young people for post secondary programs in their communities.

- Increase computer literacy in seniors.

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 that you could make it happen. For example, if you want to find ways to prepare young people for post secondary programs in their communities:

• Hold focus groups with parents and young people to determine the challenges.

• Create a think tank with people providing services.

• Advertise current courses.

• Do 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 will help you plan the steps that you need to take:

• **How?**

  What are the tasks, activities, etc. 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?

"

Always have a plan, and believe in it. Nothing happens by accident.
CHUCK KNOX

Objective #			
How?	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 perception of participants.

GATHER INFORMATION

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

Examples of Success Statements

Success Statement	Gathering Information
We will know that we have been successful when the number of people in skills upgrade programs and college programs increase by 20%.	Ask the providers about attendance.
We will know that we have been successful if 85% of the people taking post secondary programs say that the programs were helpful in that they gained employment or were continuing with further 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 The Summary, The Process, The Profile, The Plan and The Budget.

Now you have all of the pieces prepared, it is time to put them together in your plan. You may choose to use a template for the plan which is on the **LiteracyNow** website. Remember that your provincial coordinators 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 checklist to indicate:

• how the Task Group members were involved

• how the principles of collaboration, universal access, 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.

The Plan

❑ Include the action plan and success statements for each area of focus.

The Budget *(This should be completed by the stewards.)*

❑ Use the Budget Template to indicate how the planning funds were used.

Include this information:

• Who are the stewards?

• How are they accountable to the group?

• How are the funds dispersed?

CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTANCE OF PLANS BY
2010 LegaciesNow

It is very important that the process was followed and there is evidence of:

- broad-based community support
- clearly identified ways to build capacity of the community to meet its needs
- alignment between needs and plans

2010 LegaciesNow recognizes that the plans will be as diverse as the communities that develop them. Some communities will not need additional funding to implement their initiative.

If something in your plan requires additional funding, submit an Application for Implementation Funds. Every attempt will be made to fund a variety of communities that are culturally and geographically diverse and that are planning programs for diverse ages and stages of literacy.

THE COMMUNITY PARTNERS
APPROVE THE PLAN

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 information, evaluating and more! You should celebrate your success. Now you must take your plan to the Community Partners for approval.

THE PLAN IS SUBMITTED TO
2010 LegaciesNow

When you have the approval from the Partners you can send your plan to

2010 LegaciesNow, Suite 1350 - 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

The Community Partners celebrate the progress made.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Evaluating Progress

- Organizing Community Partners' Meetings

- Celebrating Success

➡ Task Group Activities

EVALUATE progress toward objectives

MAINTAIN enthusiasm and sustainability

ORGANIZE Community Partners' Meetings

COMMUNICATE with all stakeholders

CELEBRATE your success in the community

STAGE THREE

The implementation of your project is the culmination of all your planning. This is a time when action will begin to happen in your community. The Task Group now becomes the group that ensures the sustainibility of the plan.

TASK GROUP ACTIVITIES

In order to enhance the sustainability of your Community Literacy Plan, the following tasks must be accomplished.

CONTINUOUSLY EVALUATE PROGRESS TOWARD OBJECTIVES

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

Consider Other Sources of Funding

- Examine your community literacy inventory for funding sources.
- Consider approaching businesses in your community.
- Talk to your provincial coordinator about possible funding sources.

Consider the Use of 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.

Consider the Use of Experts

- Teachers
- Early childhood educators
- University/College professors and instructors
- Librarians
- Literacy BC Regional Coordinators
- Public health educators
- Provincial Coordinators

Apply for Implementation Funds

- Identify steps and resources needed for the selected goals.
- See the application template and information about completing it in the resources section at the end of this document.

IMPLEMENTATION

TIP

Maintain enthusiasm and sustainability

It will be important to preserve the group identity, unity, loyalty, and morale. Regular communication will help to achieve this goal. The task group should meet monthly and the Community Partners should meet every three months or as needed.

There is a very big chasm between planning and execution. There is no denying the value of great ideas and vision. But, the true value of ideas and vision can be uncovered only by implementation and brass-tacks.

UNKNOWN

THE 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 met, 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?

At the end of the meeting, generate a summary indicating accomplishments and activities that remain to be done.

Be sure that any members of your team unable to attend a meeting receive a report or minutes from the 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.

- Give a progress report.

- If possible have people who are directly involved in the plan 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 the 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 press 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 press 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 pictures. 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

The provincial coordinators will communicate regularly about what is working well in various communities. They will share information and contacts for the communities as they develop an anthology of successful practices. They will share via the website and newsletters.

CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS
IN THE COMMUNITY

HAVE 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 UPON EXISTING NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LITERACY EVENTS e.g. INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY, FAMILY LITERACY WEEK.

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 YOUR COMMUNITY LITERACY INITIATIVE AT COMMUNITY EVENTS, SUCH AS FAIRS, PARADES OR COMMUNITY DAYS.

ONLINE LITERACY RESOURCES

ONLINE LITERACY RESOURCES

ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation

http://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.
- 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

*http://www.gov.bc.ca/bvprd/bc/channel.*This site has information about the public post-secondary education and training system. It is linked to Achieve BC.

British Columbia Ministry of Education

http://www.gov.bc.ca/bvprd/bc/channel. This site has many resources related to education for Kindergarten to Grade 12 children, including information about curriculum and assessment. It is linked to the Achieve BC website which "brings together the latest educational tools and information for promoting learning and achievement in early childhood, grade school, post-secondary education, and the world of work".

Canadian Education Association/Assiciation 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.

## NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY DATABASE (NALD)

http://www.nald.ca/index.htm

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.

In addition, information about these models is available:

- Books for Babies (parents receive books for their newborns)
- Book Mates (a series of literacy workshops for parents of preschoolers)
- Come Read With Me (programs encouraging parents to read to their children and to continue their own education)
- Home-Based Family Literacy [Parents As Teachers, HIPPY] (programs to help parents support their children's literacy development and school success)
- Kenan Intergenerational Model [Even Start, Toyota Families for Learning, National Center for Family Literacy] (programs to develop parents' skills and to improve their children's learning ability)
- Learning Together (inexpensive family literacy resources and facilitator materials)
- Literacy and Parenting [LAPS] (training program for family literacy practitioners)
- Homespun (in-class instruction for parents and caregivers on reading with children)
- Parent-Child Mother Goose Program (parent and child oral literature activity programs)
- Parents' Roles Interacting with Teacher Support [PRINTS] (programs to empower parents to foster the literacy development of their young children)
- Reading Circles (club where adults and children come together to read for pleasure)
- United Kingdom Basic Skills Agency Intergenerational Family Literacy programs to help parents improve their basics skills and to support their children's literacy learning)
- Project L.O.V.E. [Let Older Volunteers Educate] (a program that has older or retired volunteers to help students in school with reading and other school skills)
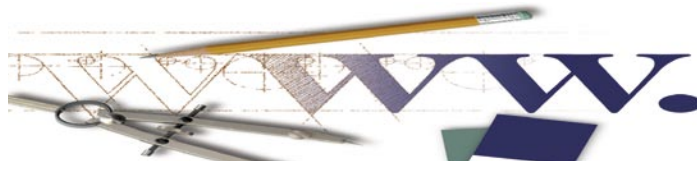
FAMILY CONNECTIONS: THE DIRECTORY OF FAMILY LITERACY PROJECTS ACROSS CANADA

http://www.nald.ca/Famlit/common/intro.asp

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

LITERACY BC *www.literacy.bc.ca* e-mail: *info@literacy.bc.ca*

• Provides a provincial toll free LEARN Line for adults who want to improve their literacy skills, parents who want to support their children's learning and literacy volunteers
• Operates a resource centre with the largest lending collection of literacy resources in BC
• 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

MOVEMENT FOR CANADIAN LITERACY *www.literacy.ca*

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.

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. (The University of Michigan and Michigan State University, with the University of Southern California, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Georgia).

GUYS READ *www.guysread.com/*

Jon Scieszcka, 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.

THE HARVARD EMERGING LITERACY PROJECT (HELP) *www.ed.gov/pubs/ReadWithMe/onecomm.*

This program has university students reading to children at Head-Start schools.

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

Effective community literacy programs are:

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

Community-Based programs are:

- part of an overall community plan
- reflective of local cultural, social, economic, and educational realities
- supported by community resources (for example: transportation, day care, and facilities) and people (for example: librarians, counsellors, literacy instructors, healthcare workers, volunteers, service club members and teachers)

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

FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE PRACTICE continued ...

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 authentic print materials, media, objects, people, places, events, and experiences
- Activities: interactions that focus on themes and topics; 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?

CHANGE

The process of developing a Community Literacy Plan may be for some community members a new way of doing things. Working with all of the people in the community who are interested in literacy to build a new vision and a new plan has not been common practice in many communities. Forging new links and new partnerships and finding a new way of doing things involves change and change 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 that 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 of transition.
- Revisit the vision and remind people about where you are heading.
- Work at building your task group into a strong team that will work together and support each other.
- Call on a provincial coordinator 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).**

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 an 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; and
- 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 drop-out 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 US, 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 "reflect long-standing Swedish education and labour market policies, which have encouraged continuous education and lifelong learning".

Nations such as the UK 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 UK 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 **LiteracyNow** - 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 iv**). 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% of adult Canadians have serious problems dealing with printed materials
- A further 24-26% can only deal with simple reading tasks
- 74% of young Canadians who graduate from high school have strong literacy skills
- 40% 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 organising principle for imaging, 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; and
- 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, 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 has 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 income due to their skill deficits. In a 1995 report David Stager cited a Conference Board study that estimated the cost of drop-outs in Canada during the 1980's 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, are 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 3-R's. 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. CHEERS is more than an amusing television series. 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; community-based initiative to prevent smoking and alcohol consumption among pregnant women.

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

E –   Environmental literacy, often expressed in 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; 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 inner city high school.

R –   Rural/urban development literacy, often expressed as community development. Examples: local early childhood education providers organize collaborative parent education work shops; Women's Institute co-sponsors, with local college, adult upgrading for single parent mothers; local community school co- sponsors, with 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, 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, and are essentially the tools which enable networking in and outside of communities, and the ability to create and critique the use of modern media.

Everyone Can Learn More

Lack of literacy skills has been too often characterised as some sort of pathology or disease. Individual's deficits have been focused on, 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. They 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 a people skilled in sustaining robust democratic government and vibrant voluntary sectors.

This is intended to provide background and contexual information.
Use it as a catalyst for discussion and as a resource document for communities.

ISSUE ALERT

LiteracyNow - An Innovative Provincial Strategy for Communities.
This form is to 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: _____ E-Mail: _____

ISSUE (Describe the issue that the community cannot resolve locally)

_____

_____

_____

IMPACT (How does issue impact your community?)

_____

_____

_____

RECOMMENDATION (What actions/solutions would you propose?)

_____

_____

_____

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

LiteracyNow

building lasting legacies in
British Columbia's communities