

## District Context

Campbell River is located on the east coast of central Vancouver Island extending north to Sayward and south to Oyster River. The district also includes the outer islands of Read, Cortes and Quadra.

Serving a population of 5,296 students in 20 schools, the district administers a budget of approximately \$51 million. Although the community population has remained stable, an aging demographic has led to a steady decline in student enrolment.

The district has maintained its focus on gains in student achievement and providing its students with a broad array of high quality programs and services.

## Community Demographics

- Population of 30,000 with a trading population in the region of 60,000.
- An aboriginal population of 3,655 – increasing.
- 2.5% of homes are non-English speaking
- 84% dual parent families
- Average family income \$62,040.

## District Profile

- 15 elementary schools
- 2 middle schools
- 2 secondary schools
- 1 alternate program
- 2 provincial resource programs (Oasis and Head Start)

## The District Literacy Plan: Opening Comments – Spring 2013

Submitted By Nevenka Fair, Assistant Superintendent, School District 72

The District Literacy Plan is a statement of commitment by our school district to work with our community partners to improve literacy in the communities of Campbell River, Sayward, Quadra and Cortes. We feel very fortunate to be part of the collaborative culture that has become well established as a result of our work together. The process to develop a District Literacy Plan enables our district to gain a stronger understanding of the literacy needs and strengths within our communities. The work that has been accomplished over the years has been impressive.

While this plan describes the initiatives and work being done *outside of our schools*, it is important to note that literacy is very much a district focus for all of our K-12 learners within our schools. Therefore this District Literacy Plan is not intended to duplicate information already contained in other documents prepared by our school district that outline this work such as our Achievement Contract and Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement which are posted on the school district website at [www.sd72.bc.ca](http://www.sd72.bc.ca), as well as the literacy goals found within the Student Success Plans for many of our schools. These can be found on individual school websites.

In addition, all our schools host Ready, Set, Learn and Welcome to Kindergarten events sometime between November and May. The purpose of these events is to help preschoolers and their families become familiar with their neighbourhood school as well as some of things associated with school success, many of which focus on literacy. Our StrongStart programs currently located at Cedar, Georgia Park, Sandowne, Sayward, Quadra, Willow Point, and Oyster River schools provide opportunities for preschool aged children and their parents/caregivers to participate in many literacy experiences in a safe and nurturing environment.

As we look ahead to the 2013-2014 school year, we aim to further expand our relationships with our community partners. We are currently in the process of forming an Early Learning Leadership Team, bringing classroom, district and community partners together. In all of our work together, the district's beliefs about learning will form the foundation of our actions:

- **Respectful relationships are fundamental to successful learning.**
- **All learners vary in their learning styles, prior knowledge and experiences, abilities, and rates of development**
- **Learning is an active process.**
- **Positive learning behaviours and attitudes lead to greater student independence, success, and lifelong learning.**

(To learn more about our learning beliefs visit the [SD72 website](#))

On behalf of the school district, I would like to thank the efforts and dedication of all members of the task force who bring our District Literacy Plan to life.



# Campbell River Literacy Now

## 2012-2013

Submitted by Anne Boyd, Campbell River Literacy Outreach Coordinator

***Campbell River Literacy Now is dedicated to providing quality intergenerational experiences to enable all citizens to reach their personal goals.***

### 1. Task Group

#### a) Who takes part in the Task Group?

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Anne Boyd	Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Kat Eddy	Adult Literacy Outreach
Eleanor Gee	Pacific Care
Donna Bayne	Retired Educator
Tony Bellavia	Dean, North Island College
Mac Newton	North Island College ABE Instructor
Joyce McMann	Family Place Coordinator, Trustee School District 72
Elizabeth Johnson	Vancouver Island Regional Library
Sharon Bollefer	Altrusa Club
Brenda Wagman	Chair – Social Development Committee
Kathy Rae	Sunrise Child Development
Justin Unrau	Vancouver Island Regional Library
Chris Button	Altrusa Club
Bruce Izzard	Daybreak Rotary Literacy Representative
Barbara Drake	Chair, Campbell River Literacy Association
Jo-Anne Windsor	Altrusa Literacy Coordinator
Lynne Stone	North Island Constituency office manager
Timothy Skye	Vancouver Island Regional Library
Nevenka Fair	School District 72- Assistant Superintendent

#### b) How is the work of this group organized?

- The Campbell River Task Group meets monthly for most of the year.
- Meetings are generally the last Monday of the month unless organizing around a special event.
- The Task Group is always open and we encourage anyone with an interest in furthering literacy in the community to attend when possible.

- Representatives from other groups attend as needed.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator attends several other community tables and gathers information that is shared with the Task Group.
- One meeting a year is dedicated to planning for the next year by reviewing the previous plan and setting priorities based on community input.

## 2. Community Context

### a) What has happened in the community over the past year that impacts people in the community and the ability of organizations to support literacy development?

- This past year has seen the community regain some momentum as several large construction jobs have begun or are about to begin.
- Absent dads continues to be an issue identified by the school system as many families adjust to men working away.
- Young families continue to face issues of poverty as they work at one or more low paying jobs in order to make ends meet.
- Daycare is difficult to secure, spaces are at a premium.
- Seniors continue to move to Campbell River and demand services at an increasing rate, a large seniors group has formed.
- Government programs that support families continue to face cuts.
- A large Hydro project is beginning this year which will bring many new jobs to the community that will put a stress on rental housing.
- A new hospital will be constructed in 2014 which will bring more jobs but not necessarily for local people.
- There is a need for upgrading to allow underemployed local people to qualify for new jobs that will require skills training.

## 3. Community Development and Literacy Collaboration

### a) What are the collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?

CR Literacy Now has collaborated with:

- City of Campbell River
- School District 72
- Vancouver Island Health Authority
- Success by Six
- Vancouver Island Regional Library
- Family Services
- Supported Child Care
- Early Childhood Education Working Group
- StrongStart Centres
- Parks and Recreation

- John Howard Society
- Aboriginal Success by Six
- Aboriginal Head Start Programs
- Laichwiltach Family Life Society
- Campbell River Mirror Newspaper
- Local Businesses: Coho Books, Party Shop, Tidemark Theatre
- Daybreak Rotary
- Altrusa Club of Campbell River
- Campbell River Community Literacy Association
- Aids Vancouver Island
- North Island College
- Campbell River Multi-Cultural Society
- Decoda Literacy Solutions
- First Book Canada
- M'kola- BC Housing
- Volunteer Campbell River
- KDC Aboriginal Health

**b) What are the essential ongoing collaborations?**

Collaborations with all of the above groups are essential for literacy to reach community members. CR Literacy Now works most closely with:

- School District 72
- Success by Six
- John Howard Society
- Parks and Recreation
- Vancouver Island Regional Library
- Campbell River Community Literacy Association
- City of Campbell River
- Decoda Literacy Solutions
- Family Services
- Aboriginal Success By Six

**c) What makes collaborations work well?**

Collaborations work well as groups are able to share resources of time and money. Large events become manageable when many groups are involved in the planning and production of events. The Children's Health Fair is an example of collaboration that allows literacy to reach over 300 families in a single day. Many groups work together to sponsor a Health Fair including: School District 72, Success by Six, Vancouver Island Health Authority, Aboriginal Success By Six, Family Services, Supported Child Care.

City Parks and Recreation offer Literacy Now space at no cost to offer computer classes to seniors. This collaboration results in costs being reduced to CR Literacy, we provide only the instructor and tutors.

Another important collaboration for Literacy Now is with the John Howard Society. They run a program for youth at risk and Literacy Now provides the literacy component. The School District is now working with this group as well to work out school credits for these youth.

## 4. Goals and Actions for the Current Year

### a) Things we have accomplished 2012-2013

- Sponsored Family Literacy Week 2013 – 7 days of events.
- Promoted literacy at Health Fairs.
- Sponsored Books for Babies – Prepared 400 bags of books.
- Continued partnership with Campbell River Community Literacy Association and jointly sponsored an adult literacy outreach position.
- Worked with several community groups to provide afterschool care, including homework support, in a low income housing project – Gathering Place.
- Sponsored computer courses for seniors at the library and at the community hall.
- Worked with youth at a John Howard program and offered literacy opportunities to at risk youth – Delaware.
- Worked with the city and the School District to provide summer programs for kids at risk in two sites.
- Provided books to children of young parents at Christmas through Family Services.
- Provided support and advice to the Aboriginal Success by Six working group.
- Provided funds to support a homework support program for ESL students.
- Literacy Outreach Coordinator chairs the Success by Six community table.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator attended many community meetings to take the literacy message to more places, some groups don't have the resources to be part of the task group, such as Aboriginal Infant Development Program, Early Childhood Table, Early Childhood Working Group, Crave ( Aboriginal Youth).
- The Task Group met regularly to support the implementation plan.
- Worked to develop a community table to focus on youth at risk.

### b) What actions were taken to reach these? What organizations and groups participated in these actions?

- Our goals and actions were planned and supported at the Task Group.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator was responsible to implement these actions.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator met with many other community groups to organize these events.

### Family Literacy Week -15 Minutes of Fun, Families Learning Together

- Task Group began planning in October 2012.
- Contact was made with ABC Literacy/Family Literacy Day.
- Plan was made to have an event every day for a week.
- Task Group members took responsibility for contacting event sponsors.
- Local newspaper developed an insert around Family Literacy that is released the Friday before the event – 4 pages sponsored by local businesses.
- Radio stations promoted the events over the week.
- Literacy Outreach Coordinator and Adult Literacy Coordinator attended all events.
- Mon. Jan. 21 – Cooking with Kids – Sponsored by John Howard Society

- Tues. Jan. 22 – Displays in Tidemark Theatre Lobby, Child Care, Campbell River Community Literacy Association, North Island College, Family Place, Old Time Fiddlers Group played for kids to dance on stage, Theatre provided spotlights and space for free, Altrusa Members volunteered to help direct people.
- Wed. Jan.23 – Rotarians read in 40 classrooms, donated a book to each school library, coordinated by Literacy Now Rotarian, School District 72 District Librarian.
- Wed. Jan 23 – City sponsored free Family Gym at Community Hall, information distributed to 50 families on the importance of using directional language with children ( up, down, over, under).
- Thurs. Jan. 24 – Vancouver Island Regional Library sponsored story time and writing activity.
- Fri. Jan. 25 – Fire Safety- Tour of Fire Hall – 40 people participated.
- Sat. Jan. 26 – Art Gallery sponsored Super Saturday, art classes for children and adults.
- Sat. Jan. 26 – Campbell River Museum sponsored Aboriginal Stories and Songs.
- Sun. Jan. 27 – Strathcona Gardens Swimming Pool partnered with Literacy Now to sponsor a free family swim, coordinators made contact with 300 people.
- Make up event on Mon. Jan. 28 – Cooking on a Budget, sponsored by a local chef, Royal Coachman Pub, John Howard Society.
- During the course of the week families entered a free draw, there were over 600 draw tickets entered.



## Health Fairs

- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator is part of the planning committee for the Children's Health Fair.
- Coordinators attended the Children's Health Fair and Community Health Fair to provide information on literacy to community members.
- 130 families attended the Children's Health Fair.
- Planning involved Success by Six, School District 72, Family Services, Supported Child Care, Pacific Care (childcare support), and many other community providers who had booths, screening for vision, hearing and speech was provided, families were given lunch.
- 800 people attended the Community Health Fair, Literacy Now sponsored a booth in partnership with Campbell River Community Literacy Association.



## Books for Babies

- Literacy Now is the major sponsor of Books for Babies in Campbell River.
- Support is provided by Day Break Rotary, \$800. Altrusa Club, Campbell River, \$2,000. Success by Six, \$1,500. Coastal Community Credit Union, \$1,800.
- Task Group members assemble 400 bags with Literacy Now logo, bags contain a high quality board book, a CD (Charlotte Diamond, provided at cost by Hug Bug Music), a DVD from the I Love When We... Series, provided by School District 72, Growth Chart, donated by Coastal Eyecare Centres, information about programs for babies in the community.
- Bags are assembled, boxed and moved to the Public Health Centre by School District 72 staff.
- Health nurses distribute bags to all new babies at their first visit, nurses have been in-serviced about the importance of early reading.
- Bags are sent to KDC, Aboriginal Health Centre for distribution to Aboriginal babies.





Task Group Assembles Books for Babies Bags

### Campbell River Community Literacy Association

- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator is a member of this working board and attends monthly meetings.
- Jointly sponsor an Adult Literacy Coordinator who provides several programs in the community.
- Adult Literacy Coordinator – writes for grants and has successfully received grants from: New Horizons for Seniors, BC Gaming, CALP Outreach.



### Gathering Place – After School Care


- After school care is provided in a low cost housing project for 30 children three days a week.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator manages the programming and Literacy Now Funds provide for the Adult Literacy Coordinator to provide academic support one day a week.

- Laichwiltach Family Life Society provides a Head Start Program four days a week for 12 children.
- Family Services provide trained counsellors once a week.
- Parks and Recreation provide a craft and activity day once a week.
- Literacy Now provides homework and school support once a week.
- Parks and Recreation have a teen program one night a week.
- Food is provided at all programs.



### Computer Classes for Seniors

- Free computer classes for seniors are offered by the Adult Literacy Coordinator.
- Campbell River Community Centre offers space for these classes and advertises in their monthly bulletin – four groups of eight people attended a series of eight classes with tutors provided.
- Classes are also offered in the Campbell River Library, clients can meet one on one with the coordinator.
- This program qualified for a Gaming Grant this year due to its success.




**Seniors Teaching Seniors  
Computer Literacy**

**'HOW DO I?' is back!**

Kat is ready to run a full slate of basic beginner classes at the Community Centre on Thurs & Fri 12 to 2pm in Room 2.

Do you have a working knowledge of computers?  
If you have 2-3 hours a week to help other to help other seniors, call Kat!

**Kat Eddy**  
Adult Literacy Outreach Coordinator  
(250) 923-1275



Funded by Campbell River Literacy Now  
[www.literacyforall.ca](http://www.literacyforall.ca)

## Delaware – Program for Street Youth

- Four mornings a week, the John Howard Society provides a safe, caring place for street youth, the program starts with breakfast.
- Adult Literacy Coordinator spends six hours a week at this program offering youth support with portable computers.
- This program is a safe connection point for youth that provides; food, education and literacy supports, life skills, community referrals, and counselling services.
- Youth have applied for social insurance numbers, completed resumes, accessed employment information, resumed studies, and been encouraged to pursue job skills.
- Average attendance is 12-15 youth a day, many move on to the alternate education program at Robron Centre in the afternoon.



## Summer Programs in Low Income Areas

- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator works with School District 72 and Parks and Recreation to offer summer camps in high needs areas.

- Programs are offered free and include, a teacher provided by SD72 Summer School, food donated by community stores, recreation provided by Parks and Recreation, field trips including swimming, and books donated by Literacy Now.
- 75 children attend these programs

#### **Young Parents Christmas Party**

- Family Services provide a Christmas party for young parents in December.
- Literacy Now provides 70 books as gifts for the children.

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*Thanks Literacy Now for providing these books for our young parents. We used to give McDonald's toys as gifts and your organization now allows us to encourage reading through a lovely gift. The children love getting these books.*

- Linda – Young Parents Coordinator, Campbell River Family Services

#### **ESL Classes for Youth**

- Provide funding for a coordinator to offer tutoring to youth who are ESL students in local schools.
- Coordinator trains tutors to offer one-on-one support to students.
- Homework support is offered once a week to students who have parents with English language issues and are unable to help with homework.
- The success of this program has resulted in a Gaming Grant being awarded to continue this program.

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*I am so happy my child has this help. My English is not good enough to help with homework. Thank you for helping my son.*

- Parent of student in the ESL Youth Program

### **Success by Six Community Table**

- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator chairs this table that meets monthly to plan and direct the work of the Success by Six coordinator.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator is able to connect at this table with: Public Health, Ministry of Children and Families, School District 72, Child Care Society, Family Services, United Way, City Council, Coordinator Campbell River Family Place, Coordinator Aboriginal Success by Six, local business.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator and Success by Six coordinator partner to support outlying coordinators in Sayward, Cortes, and Quadra Island.

### **Task Group Meetings/ Other Meetings**

- Our Task Group met in September, October, November, January, February, and May.
- Task Group members receive meeting notices, agendas and minutes via email.
- Emails are sent to keep the group informed of all events.
- Coordinator attends other meetings to keep literacy involved at other community tables.
- Aboriginal Infant Development meets monthly.
- Early Years Table meets monthly, followed by a working group meeting.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator is involved in planning professional development for ECD.
- Attend CRAVE meetings when possible to contribute to Aboriginal Youth table.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator meets regularly with senior staff at School District 72.

### **c) What adjustments were made to the plan?**

- Plans to organize a youth table did not result in any action.
- We were unable to make any progress on Employment Services in the community, we will continue to work on this issue.
- Our Task Group tries to stay responsive to any emergent needs in the community.

### **Our Core Goals:**

**Goal 1:** Increase awareness of literacy issues and of services to address these issues in the community with the help of a community literacy coordinator.

**Goal 2:** Create new programs and provide support for the underserved age groups identified by the CR Literacy Now needs assessment.

## **5. Indications of Success**

- a) How do you know that actions taken are working to support literacy? What impact have the literacy initiatives had?**

- **Family Literacy Day** has become a community event that is anticipated by the community.
- Partners step forward and offer support which makes planning much easier.
- This year we reached **over 600 people** with the message that **15 minutes of learning together** at many different activities as a family **supports learning**.
- Our partners also learned that activities other than reading are a part of literacy.
- Our newspaper flyer dedicated to Family Literacy reaches over **20,000 households**, this flyer is completely paid for by advertisers which include business, MLA, MP, School District 72.
- **Health Fairs** allowed us to reach hundreds of families with the message that parents strengthen learning and many programs are available to help.
- **Books for Babies** takes the “read early, read often” message to **400 families** a year. Our local health nurses deliver bags to all new families in our region and encourage early reading, children who are introduced to reading early have better vocabularies and **do better in school**.
- **Seniors** have participated in free computer classes. All sessions have been full this past year with a constant waiting list. Seniors complete an eight week series of lessons which makes them **computer literate** and allows them to **connect with family, friends and the online world**.
- **Thirty children** in a low cost housing project received computer assisted learning in an after school program – **schools** these children attend **report improved learning**.
- The **Delaware Youth Program** supports up to **20** youth a day, coordinated by John Howard Society. This program has now been in operation for two years, grants were received for the second year. Youth receive **help with literacy issues**.
- Literacy Now has helped over **35** youth with such accomplishments as taking **Serving it Right and Food Safe**, obtaining **drivers’ licences**, applying for **SIN numbers**, creating **resumes** and forming connections with other supporting agencies.
- Supporting **summer programs** for **at risk kids** prevents summer learning loss. It is a documented fact (work of Richard Allington) that students who **read six books at their reading level** over the summer **maintain** their reading skills over the break. CR Literacy Now has supported the summer programs with coordination and books. More than **75 children** attend these programs over the summer.
- Family Services organizes a dinner **for young parents** at Christmas time. In the past the children were given small toys as gifts. Literacy Now has provided a book for each child for the past three years. The books were very well received, **70 children were provided with a book** of their own. Children who have books in their homes are **more likely to be ready to read at school age**.
- **ESL classes** were offered to students in the evening. **Fifteen** students attended on a regular basis which helped them keep up with regular school work.

#### b) What are the things that support literacy work?

- Having a designated coordinator who is well connected in the community.
- Funding that enables the implementation of goals that meet the needs of the community.
- Collaborating with other groups in the community.

- Writing for grants.
- Members of the community who volunteer their time to offer programs and services where needed.
- A community that works and plans together to meet the needs of their citizens.
- The formal literacy organizations such as schools and colleges.
- Support of the provincial literacy group, Decoda Literacy Solutions.

## 6. Challenges

### a) What are the difficulties?

- Not having funding that is assured from year to year, the threat of lost funding this year was very difficult.
- Lack of funding causes a need for a lot of time to be spent fund raising and grant writing that could be used for programming.
- Keeping the Task Group involved, balancing time at meetings, actions and interests.
- Keeping the momentum around literacy issues going is a constant challenge in a world where there are many needs.
- Trying to get the community at large to recognize the importance of literacy to community development.
- In this community, engaging employment agencies to recognize the need for work place literacy is an ongoing challenge.

### b) What would help?

- Consistent and adequate funding.
- The continued support of a well-funded provincial organization.
- Consistent messaging around the importance of literacy from the provincial and federal governments.
- More recognition within the business community of how literacy impacts the whole community.
- Continued messaging to school districts that they are partners in community literacy planning.

## For the Coming Year

### Task Group Input May 27 Meeting

Plans were posted at the May 27 Task Group meeting, members supported next year's plan by placing dots on goals and were encouraged to add any goals from that might need to be addressed.

### 1. Are there new opportunities, challenges, or issues in your community? How will you respond to those?

Campbell River is about to enter a growth phase with many construction projects starting or about to start in the next year. House prices are on the rise and rental units will become scarce as people move to the community with the new projects. This growth will result in difficulties for low income families as there will be more pressure for services such as housing and daycare.

Literacy Now will continue to seek opportunities to offer work skills programs in order to prepare local people to avail themselves of some of these new work placements. The Adult Literacy Coordinator and Literacy Outreach Coordinator will work with other communities who have been successful with this type of programming.

Attention will continue on youth entering the job market. Young people struggle to obtain work in a community that has lost major industry. Literacy Now will continue to support youth programming at Delaware and will work with other community partners to support youth in other settings.

Working with our community partners we will monitor services for all families and attempt to connect people and needs within the community.

## **2. What goals, priorities or objectives will you work on in the coming year? What actions are planned against those goals?**

**Goal1 :** Continue with programs that have been successful  
Programs and events that have been successful in the past will be continued.

- Family Literacy Day
- Computers for Seniors
- Health Fair participation
- Attending Community Tables
- Books for Babies
- Youth ESL
- Youth at Risk Program – Delaware
- Summer Programming for at risk students
- Books for community events
- Gathering Place support

**Goal 2:** Explore Professional Development on Baby Signs

- Coordinate workshops for parents and Early Childhood Educators on the use of baby signs to enhance communication in very young children.
- Goal was suggested at Task Group planning session.

**Goal 3:** Establish a Youth Table

- Literacy Now will work with other community members to explore the possibility of establishing a youth table to connect those working with youth. There are many organizations working with youth but gaps still exist. Working together could eliminate gaps and strengthen programs.
- Find an organization willing to head this initiative.

**Priority:** Continue present work with youth

- Our Adult Literacy Coordinator will continue to support youth through partnerships with John Howard Society.



**Goal 4 : Establish workplace literacy support**

- Workplace Skill training is being explored. Youth and adults need more training to make them successful in obtaining and maintaining employment. Literacy Now will connect with other groups concerned about this issue.
- Literacy Now will stay connected with Decoda as they explore this issue and develop provincial standards for work place skills.
- Literacy Now will work with Comox Valley on Workplace Literacy.

**Goal 5: Respond to needs in the community as they arise**

- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator and the Task Group will stay alert to needs and changes in the community and respond to those needs as appropriate.

**3. What will be required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year?**

- The help and guidance of the task force will be needed to continue and expand the work of Literacy Now.
- Partnerships within the community.
- Funding will need to be secured to continue some programs.
- Provincial funding will be needed to continue to the work of the Literacy Outreach Coordinator.
- Implementation funding is need to help and support the work.
- Support of Decoda Literacy Solutions, the provincial organization continues to be critical to our success.
- Working with other Literacy Outreach Coordinators in our region will strengthen all of our efforts.
- The support of our closest partners is critical; Success by Six, School District 72, Parks and Recreation, Community Literacy Association



LOC Anne Boyd with Daybreak Rotary and task group member Bruce Izzard  
Daybreak Rotary donated \$800 to Books for Babies



*Coastal Community Credit Union and Cheryl Jordan, Success by Six Coordinator. Coastal Community Credit Union donated \$1800. to Books for Babies*



# Cortes Island Literacy Plan

2012 - 2013

Submitted by Susanna Bonner, Cortes Literacy Outreach Coordinator

## 1. Task Group

### a) Who takes part in the Task Group?

The Cortes Island Literacy Outreach Task Group currently has four regular members and three adjunct members. The adjunct members like to be kept on the regular Task Group email list and sometimes have input and feedback, but cannot attend most meetings. These numbers are lower than ideal, and through current local advertising hopefully more community members will join the Task Group.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Susanna Bonner	Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Blanca Scanlon-Sharpe	Teen Scene Youth Worker (Cortes Community Health Association)
Marc Vonesch	Reel Youth
Ester Strijbos	Cortes Community WiFi Society
<b>Adjunct Task Group Members</b>	
Desta Beattie	Family Support Coordinator (Cortes Community Health Association)
Marilyn Fitzmaurice	Cortes Community Health Association
Katie Babb	Community Member

### b) How is the work of this group organized?

The Cortes Task Group meets approximately three times per year to work collectively on projects, plans, issues, budgeting, and anything else of relevance. The Task Group also shares input and idea discussion online with the Literacy Outreach Coordinator.

With a large number of literacy-related issues that could be addressed, and an aim to not spread financial resources too thin in a number of varying directions, the Task Group chooses a single focus for the year. The focus for Cortes Literacy Outreach in 2012 - 2013 is Youth Literacy.

The Literacy Outreach Coordinator writes a draft of responses to the guiding questions for the Community Literacy Plan and submits the draft to the Task Group for discussion, input, and feedback. A final draft is then written based on any changes, and is submitted for inclusion in the District Literacy Plan.

## 2. Community Context

### **a) What has happened in the community over the past year that impacts people in the community and the ability of organizations to support literacy development?**

In August 2012, the previous Cortes Literacy Outreach Coordinator, Coreen Boucher, stepped down. This slowed the year's efforts down as the new Literacy Outreach Coordinator, Susanna Bonner, got to know the Task Group, familiarized herself with current projects and contacts, and made her way through the learning curve of a new position.

A new principal was hired at the public school for the beginning of the 2012 - 2013 school year, and this has been a help to the focus on Youth Literacy, as the new principal is very open to collaborating and sharing resources with Cortes Literacy Outreach.

The old Cortes branch of the Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) has remained closed for the past year (since May 2012), with only a temporary branch open for people to pick up books that they've put on hold through the library's website.

This has had a major effect on community literacy and morale. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator has received feedback that without a place to browse books and have a semi-social reading room area, a large hole has been felt in the fabric of Cortes life. A new location for the Cortes VIRL branch has been found, though it is still unannounced as to when the branch will open.

The announcement in February 2013 about literacy funding cuts across the province was difficult to hear. Many people in the Cortes community expressed their concern about how the funding cuts would affect our island and BC. For the Literacy Outreach Coordinator, it meant slowed work and interruption as effort was put into coordinating with Literacy Outreach Coordinators across the province to make the case for restoring funding, instead of into literacy efforts in the community. With the restoration of funds for the coming year, the literacy initiatives we are working towards will be able to help people in real ways in the Cortes community.

### **3. Community Development and Literacy Collaboration**

#### **a) What are the important collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?**

Cortes Literacy Outreach has worked with or is currently collaborating with the following organizations and individuals:

- Cortes Community WiFi Society
- Reel Youth
- Peregrin Publishing, Campbell River
- Noba Anderson, Regional Director (Comox-Strathcona)
- Cortes Community Health Association (CCHA)
  - Teen Scene
  - Family Support
- Various individuals from the Cortes community, including:
  - Monica Nawrocki
  - Linda LaClaire
  - Yvonne Kipp
  - Ruth Ozeki
  - Stephen McRorie
  - Filipe Figueira
  - Anonymous donors of cash prizes for the Young Writers' Prize contest
- Campbell River School District 72
  - Cortes Island Elementary / Jr. Secondary School
- Decoda Literacy Solutions
- Cesca Zamboni, Social Development, Klahoose First Nation

#### **b) What are the essential ongoing collaborations?**

The collaborations, contact, and shared information with the above organizations and individuals have been essential for literacy initiatives and outreach on Cortes in the last year. Cortes Literacy Outreach has worked and expects to continue to collaborate most closely with:

- Cortes Community WiFi Society
- Reel Youth
- Campbell River School District 72 – Campbell River Literacy Now
  - Cortes Island Elementary / Jr. Secondary School
- Decoda Literacy Solutions
- Noba Anderson, Regional Director (Comox-Strathcona)
- Cortes Community Health Association (CCHA)
- Various individuals from the Cortes community

#### **c) What makes collaborations work well?**

Collaborations work best when there is a willingness to set aside personal agendas and instead to share both the vision towards a collective goal and the resources and effort that will make that goal possible (funding, in-kind contributions, time, information, materials, ideas, contacts, venue space, etc).

Clear communication is vital between organizations and individuals, whether or not they are part of the Literacy Task Group. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator needs to be able to facilitate and lead the Task Group meetings and do so in an inspiring way that promotes the group's functionality.

It is important for the Literacy Outreach Coordinator and the Task Group to work together while including community feedback from outside of the Task Group. The Literacy Outreach Coordinator needs to provide transparency in any decisions made without Task Group involvement, as well as helping to foster a feeling of community responsibility and mutual support within the individuals and organizations represented in the Task Group.

If a goal is not achieved, the collaboration is more likely to continue and succeed at a new goal if blame can be set aside. Learning from mistakes and follow-up discussion need to be included and expected as part of the group process.

Additionally, collaborations work best when acknowledgment, gratitude, and celebration are shared as a collective goal is achieved.

## **4. Goals and Actions for the Current Year**

### **a) What priorities, goals, or objectives have been addressed this year?**

With limited funding available and many different options for where the funding could go to support literacy on Cortes, the Task Group has continued with its decision to choose one particular literacy focus to work on. This helps to make sure funding and other resources are used appropriately, without being spread too thin.

When Susanna Bonner came in as the new Literacy Outreach Coordinator in August 2012, the focus was already on Youth Literacy, and this focus has been re-committed to by the Task Group, at least until August 2013. At that point, the Cortes literacy focus will be revisited for potentially changing.

Youth in rural, remote communities are known to be "at-risk" simply from a lack of engaging age-appropriate options and activities. We are aiming to bring more educational opportunities to Cortes youth that help them connect, learn, and have fun.

The objectives of this Youth Literacy focus are to engage the youth of Cortes (especially the teens and pre-teens) in activities that:

- promote practical skills and creativity.
- encourage reading, writing, and clear communication.
- are peer-pressure free.
- are interesting and compelling.
- develop responsibility to self and others.
- develop self-esteem and confidence.
- help avoid rural boredom from lack of available activities.
- help avoid risky behaviours (e.g. drug use, unprotected/uninformed sex, etc.).
- promote human rights, environmental protection, and cultural diversity.

Additionally, a request for Adult Literacy support on Cortes was brought to the Literacy Outreach Coordinator. With this specific request in mind, the Task Group approved the addition of as-needed adult literacy support in addition to the youth focus. The objectives of this initiative are to encourage adult literacy initiatives on Cortes, while specifically helping any adults in need of tutoring in reading, writing, math, how to fill out forms, etc. in such a way as to:

- develop confidence and self-esteem.
- promote lifetime learning and family literacy.
- enhance career options.
- ease the pressure in public situations (i.e. filling out a form while others wait in line).
- encourage reading, writing, and clear communication.
- promote practical skills and creativity.

**b) What actions were taken to reach these objectives? What organizations and groups participated in these actions?**

Before the objectives of the Task Group could be addressed, the issue of hiring a new Literacy Outreach Coordinator needed to be addressed and completed. Actions planned around switching Literacy Outreach Coordinators included:

- job posting, interviewing applicants, and hiring new Literacy Outreach Coordinator (previous Literacy Outreach Coordinator and financial steward).
- new Literacy Outreach Coordinator training (previous and current Literacy Outreach Coordinators).
- Literacy Outreach Coordinator learning curve catch-up: getting acquainted with paper and computer files, recent meeting minutes and previous District Literacy Plan reports, other Task Group and relevant community members, etc. (current Literacy Outreach Coordinator).
- Task Group meeting with previous and current Literacy Outreach Coordinators.
- Regional Training Event (current Literacy Outreach Coordinator and Decoda Literacy Solutions).

Actions planned toward the objectives of the Youth Literacy focus included:

- distribution of boxes of free books to underprivileged children aged 6 - 12 and their families (Cortes Family Support).
- 2012 Young Writers' Prize creative writing contest – already completed (anonymous donors of prize money, and volunteer local authors acting as judges).
- 2013 Young Writers' Prize creative writing contest – ongoing (anonymous donors of prize money, and volunteer local authors acting as judges).
- grant research and grant-writing to fund more Youth literacy initiatives (Task Group and local grant-writing expert community member).
- purchase of Literacy Kits for Family Support program (Task Group, Cortes Family Support, and CCHA).
- purchase of Teen Kits for Teen Scene program (Task Group, Teen Scene, and CCHA).
- Young Writers' Creative Writing and Zine Making classes (two community members acting as teachers for the classes and Cortes Public School).
- help fund St. John's Ambulance LifeSavers Course for youth (Task Group, Teen Scene, and CCHA).
- fund and organize teen summer literacy programming (to be determined).

“

*Much gratitude for the Writers Competition. My son was inspired to enter the competition primarily with the hopes of winning some cash. Although he didn't win he found that he loved writing and continued working on new chapters of his story long after the competition ended. He's now planning to be a writer and currently working on his second short story.*

- A parent of a contestant in the Young Writers' Prize creative writing contest

Actions planned toward the objectives of the Adult Literacy support included:

- find suitable tutors for adult literacy study sessions and connect them with the adults who have asked for literacy-related support (local individuals acting as tutors).
- help to organize and host a book launch for local Cortes authors (Peregrin Publishing).

**c) What adjustments were made to the plan? As the year progressed were there new opportunities or were there changes that did not allow for some actions to be taken?**

There were some adjustments made to the plan that was submitted last year in the Cortes section of the District Literacy Plan (DLP). The major change that caused adjustments to be made was the transition from the previous Literacy Outreach Coordinator to the current Literacy Outreach Coordinator. Because of this switch:

- The search for grant funding was slow to proceed. Grant money has been sought, but no new private funding has been received.
- The goals and plan that were identified as important for Cortes literacy in the District Literacy Plan last year were not the same ones that were handed over to the current Literacy Outreach Coordinator upon her training. This meant that the plan to implement various youth programming in 6-week cycles over a 1-year period was not among the tasks or current commitments that was handed to the new Literacy Outreach Coordinator, and miscommunication ensued which resulted in more-limited programming than what was initially planned for.



## 5. Indications of Success

### a) How do we know that actions taken are working to support literacy? What impact have the literacy initiatives had?

- We received amazing feedback from young writers and their parents in regards to the Young Writers' Prize creative writing contest. Young writers had been eagerly asking when the next (currently running) contest would start.
- Local individuals and organizations have been quite receptive and interested to participate as volunteers and offer in-kind donations for various literacy initiatives. This is part of a larger trend on Cortes of people wanting to be involved in literacy programming.
- In keeping with that trend of increased interest and support for literacy work on Cortes, the Cortes Literacy Facebook page has increased in "Friend members" by 472% in the last three months.
- Many new faces came up to the Cortes Literacy booth at the Wellness Fair to discuss literacy issues, pick up a free book, and find out more about Cortes Literacy Outreach. This is very important for the Literacy Outreach Coordinator to be able to make those community connections.
- A new Literacy Outreach Coordinator was hired to replace the previous Literacy Outreach Coordinator. This current Literacy Outreach Coordinator is passionate about literacy and has no plans to leave Cortes, so could continue working as long as funding is available.
- Adults have seen the youth focus and have requested adult writing workshops.
- There was great youth turn-out for the St. John's Ambulance LifeSaver course, and literacy funding will also go toward the adult LifeSaver course. Feedback from the Cortes Community Health Association was very positive.

“

*The St. John Ambulance LifeSaver course was a big success. LifeSaver is an introductory first aid course that teaches five of the skills required most often to save a life such as shock, choking, CPR, wound care, burns, and poisoning.*

*There were 19 teens that attended the Saturday course and 12 pre-teens for the Sunday course. All who attended received a LifeSaver certificate. With Decoda support we were able to provide 31 youth with basic life-saving skills.*

- Marilyn Fitzpatrick, Cortes Community Health Assoc.

- A tutor for the adult literacy study sessions has been found and the tutor has been connecting with the family who put in the initial request for Adult Literacy support on Cortes. This is the beginning of filling a real need in our remote community, where ESL and adult college courses are not available.
- Feedback was outstanding from both the students and the teachers of the Young Writers' Creative Writing and Zine Making classes. The teacher of the creative writing segment wrote:

*“One young boy who is home schooled attended [the class] and shared that he had so many stories in his head he couldn't get onto paper and he was very frustrated. When asked to write the first word that came into his awareness onto the middle of the page and to then use that as the first word in an ever-winding circle until he was finished, he looked up smiling, saying he couldn't believe how much he had written.”*

#### **b) What are the things that support literacy work?**

- Community awareness and involvement are important. With effective community outreach and subsequent community support, needs can be noted and addressed.
- Literacy work is largely supported by the belief that it is needed and essential. This is necessary at a provincial level, as well as at a regional and community level.
- Funding is a very key ingredient. With funding, time and effort increase as well, which allows for reaching people and solving literacy issues in a way that pure volunteerism would not be able to.
- The Decoda Literacy Solutions network of Literacy Outreach Coordinators is a big help. It allows for the Literacy Outreach Coordinators in remote areas and all across BC to feel connected, share ideas, and learn from what other communities are doing with their literacy initiatives.
- The community Task Group is a wonderful support to the literacy initiatives on Cortes. It is vital for the Literacy Outreach Coordinator to be able to get other perspectives and feedback, and the members of the Task Group provide that extra support and generation of ideas that the Literacy Outreach Coordinator might not have thought of.

“

*I loved collaging without thinking about what I was choosing and then writing about what it said to me.”*

*“I like that you say there is no right or wrong and I can write whatever I choose and there will be no red pen marks. I can tell my story and edit it later.”*

*“I can breathe outside (in nature) and writing is so much easier and more fun.”*

*“I like that everything here is confidential and I don’t have to read my writing out loud if I don’t want to.”*

*“Circle writing is my favourite. Lots of new things I’d never thought of came to me.”*

*“I like the prompts you offered and that we can each make up our own for the group [to use], too. It gave me a lot of new ideas to write about.”*

*“I can write so much more. I have a whole new story idea to work on now.”*

- Various quotes from youth participants in the Young Writers’ Creative Writing and Zine Making classes

## 6. Challenges

### a) What are the difficulties?

Our greatest challenge this last year was due to the switch in Literacy Outreach Coordinators and the learning curve that ensued. Despite some initial verbal training, a lot was left up to the new Literacy Outreach Coordinator to figure out on her own or with the distant help of Decoda.

With that behind us, the next largest challenge is finding grants and other private funding that will allow Cortes Literacy to create and continue with the various literacy initiatives that would best serve the island community.

Another challenge is expanding the Task Group membership when everyone on Cortes with a community-minded volunteer spirit is already serving on several boards and committees. It is difficult to get people to join the Task Group when they are already maxed-out on volunteer time, even when literacy is an important issue for them.

#### **b) What would help?**

The Cortes Task Group has asked the current Literacy Outreach Coordinator to go ahead with outlining normal procedures and priorities, and creating a manual out of the result. This would allow for any future training to flow a lot more smoothly.

Regular access (via Decoda or otherwise) to searchable grant databases (like the BIG grant database: <http://www.bigdatabase.ca/>) would be helpful, especially for smaller communities that might not have access to such resources otherwise.

“Community Outreach” as a training topic at Decoda’s training sessions (either by webinar or during a regional training) would be really beneficial.

### **For the Coming Year**

#### **1. Are there new opportunities, challenges, or issues in your community? How will you respond to those?**

A large issue that has been identified for the coming year (with our currently-continued focus on Youth Literacy) is the Cortes public school ceasing to offer 10th grade curriculum.

In 2012 - 13 school year, the school ran from grades K - 10. This was already a divisive challenge for the community, as families with students who were ready for 11th grade would then move off-island, usually to Campbell River, Courtenay, or Victoria. This has meant that long-time Cortes families, often with younger children as well, would have to uproot and move, sometimes bringing local businesses they had started away with them.

This also means that families with teenage youth are more likely to leave Cortes earlier, as it makes little sense to enroll a student in 9th grade, if 10th - 12th grades are not available at the school.

The Cortes Literacy Task Group has yet to determine how we will be able to effectively respond to this issue, though initial thoughts have included working closely with the school, requesting access to 10th - 12th grade curriculum, and offering home-school tutoring support for families that wish to stay on Cortes. This is still problematic, however, as many home-schooled children want to be in more social environments as they get into the age range of high school.

Cortes Literacy Outreach does not have anywhere close to the financial means to be able to fund an alternative school project to help families stay on Cortes.

A new opportunity for our community is the coming re-opening of the Cortes branch of Vancouver Island Regional Library. It is assumed (though not announced) that this will happen in the coming year, as the VIRL board voted to enter into an intent-to-lease agreement with the chosen VIRL branch location. Once the library branch is re-opened, Cortes residents will have greatly improved access to books and literacy support.

## **2. What goals, priorities, or objectives will you work on in the coming year? What actions are planned against those goals?**

The goals of Cortes Literacy Outreach and its Task Group in the coming year are to:

- expand literacy awareness in the community via dedicated community outreach efforts, and grow the member numbers of the Task Group
- continue to focus on Youth Literacy, at least until August, with the objective of finding more funding and increasing the amount and frequency of youth literacy programming available
- continue to offer literacy support to everyone on Cortes, despite the Youth focus

Actions planned toward those goals include the following.

- Cortes Literacy Outreach will have a table and booth presence at both Cortes Day and Sandcastle Day, with community outreach and interaction as the goal.
- Connections will be made with VIRL in order to link VIRL and Cortes Literacy when the new branch opens.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator will write at least one grant per month in continued search for additional funding.
- The Literacy Outreach Coordinator will connect with Quadra Island's Literacy Outreach Coordinator in order to promote Quadra Literacy events and vice versa.
- An adult writing workshop will be offered in the Autumn, in accordance with community requests.
- Adult Literacy tutoring will continue to be supported and expanded as necessary.
- As the Young Writers' Prize creative writing contest continues, tutoring sessions with the contest entrants will be offered to help them learn editing skills and reading for clarity. The contest will wrap-up, winners will be announced, all entrants will receive their story in bound, printed copy, and the winners will receive cash prizes.
- Remaining available funding for Summer youth programming will be used to fund either a Teen Job Start program (if appropriate teachers can be found for the carpentry project) or an off-island field trip for the teens, with various literacy tie-ins.
- Additional funding will be assigned to programming in August, as the Task Group decides whether to continue with the Youth focus.
- Continue to offer individual Adult Literacy support sessions with local tutors, and continue to discuss expanding these sessions to home-schooled students to help offset the public school's no longer offering 10th grade.
- Continue to work with existing partnerships and alliances, and expand the network of individuals and organizations that support and encourage literacy on Cortes

## **3. What will be required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year?**

- Finding funding opportunities and seeing that some of the funding comes through will be a requirement for the coming year's programming.

- Expanding the Task Group will be instrumental in supporting the Literacy Outreach Coordinator and helping the community outreach efforts.
- Continuing to ask for support from Decoda will be helpful in training and networking purposes, as well as with their government liaison work.



## Sayward Literacy Now 2012 - 2013

Submitted by Ann Vansnick, Sayward Literacy Outreach Coordinator

### 1. Task Group

#### a) Who takes part in the Task Group?

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Ann Vansnick	<i>Literacy Outreach Coordinator</i>
Laura Thiessen	<i>Success by 6/ Family Connections</i>
Barb Bowbrick	School Board Trustee
Anne Boyd	<i>Literacy Outreach Coordinator- Campbell River</i>
Cheryl Jordan	<i>Success by 6 Campbell River</i>
Jan Bakker	Computer Teacher
Richard Glover	Private citizen/computer class student
Nancy Bakker	Private citizen /Vancouver Island Regional Library
Gerry Mitchell	Private citizen/computer class student
Hugh Knudson	Private citizen/computer class student
Karen Knudson	Private citizen/computer class student
Christine Smith	Private citizen/computer class student
Memory Jerome	Friends of the Kelsey Centre
Steve Jewell	Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
Collette Mooney	Private citizen/computer class student
Barry Hall	NIEFS

#### b) How is the work of this group organized?

The Sayward Task Group tries to meet three to six times a year. The Task Group is open to our whole community. It is hard to fit into everyone's schedule but we do our best to make it accessible to all. We advertise meetings in our local newsletter, through email and word of mouth. We work together as a group.

### 2. Community Context

Sayward has been fairly stable in the past year. The population of seniors and low income families continues to grow within our community. There are not many jobs in our community

and almost all courses/help are an hour's drive away in Campbell River. Cuts to government programs have resulted in less money in all organizations to support the development of literacy

### **3. Community Development and Literacy Collaboration**

#### **a) What are the collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?**

Sayward Literacy Now has collaborated with:

- School District 72
- Success by Six CR
- Success by Six/Family Connections Sayward
- Vancouver Island Regional Library
- Strong Start Centre
- Campbell River Literacy Now
- Marine Harvest Canada
- Village of Sayward
- SCRA
- Fisherboy Motel and Trailer Park
- Salmon River Inn Hotel
- Kelsey Rec. Centre
- Adult Literacy Outreach Campbell River
- NIEFS
- Canada Post
- Sayward Health Clinic
- Sayward School Parent Advisory Council
- Friends of the Kelsey Centre

#### **b) What are the essential ongoing collaborations?**

Collaborations with all of the above groups are essential for literacy to reach community members. Sayward Literacy Now works most closely with:

- School District 72
- Family Connections/Success by Six Sayward
- Success by Six CR
- Campbell River Literacy Now
- SCRA
- Village of Sayward
- NIEFS
- Sayward School Parent Advisory Council
- Friends of the Kelsey Centre Society



**c) What makes collaborations work well?**

Being a small community working together means a lot. Our community benefits from it in all different ways. Groups are able to share resources of time and money. Helping each other is big.

## **4. Goals and Actions for the Current Year**

**a) Things we have accomplished 2012-2013**

- Continued computer classes for adults/seniors.
- Give books for students to take home at different times throughout the year.
- Book bags for the whole family.
- Promoted literacy at Health Fair.
- Working with School District 72 at having adult education in our classroom.
- Gave books as prizes through the Parent Advisory Council.
- Health Fair.
- Provided support and advice to the Sayward Success by Six.
- The task group met regularly to advise and support the plan implementation.
- Seek to partner with other community groups/businesses to maximize resources.

**b) What actions were taken to reach these? What organizations and groups participated in these actions?**

- Keeping computer classes up and running for the adults/seniors.
- Family book bags.
- Bought refurbished laptops for class and take home.
- Health Fair
- Vancouver Island Library
- RCMP
- PAC
- SCRA
- Family Connections
- Local Dr.
- Local RN
- Ambulance
- Red Cross
- Health Nurse
- Dental Nurse
- Strong Start
- Child find
- NIEFS

**c) What adjustments were made to the plan?**

I feel we have pretty well stuck on course of what we planned to do. Teens are the hard ones to reach and so few here that we have discontinued teen nights.

## 5. Indications of Success

### a) How do you know that actions taken are working to support literacy? What impact have the literacy initiatives had?

- Health Fair-was a well-attended event put on by Sayward Literacy. All ages came out and learned new things. Our community found out some of what we have to offer locally, also what is available to our community. This will grow within the community. Great displays this year and hope to continue next year and get better
- Computer Classes-They are well attended. Average age of users is about 70. We have offered classes on certain subjects and some classes are come with what you want to learn. Have seen many happy faces leaving and returning to keep learning. We offer home visits also and that has helped many out.
- Family Book Bags- Working with Family Connections/Success by Six we got our bags together. They are placed out at certain businesses for anyone to use. We are hoping they get well used in our community. Also a tote for families has been put together to be at our local library to be taken home. Many of our bags have disappeared so hoping they went to a good home.

### b) What are the things that support literacy work?

- Literacy work is supported by having a coordinator for the task group
- Literacy work is supported by funding and meeting the needs of the community
- Literacy work is supported by collaborating with other groups in the community
- Literacy work is supported by many different members of the community who volunteer their time
- Literacy work is supported by bringing our community together in many different ways.

## 6. Challenges

### a) What are the difficulties?

- Making sure our funding is going to last
- Putting on events/classes that don't cost money
- Keeping the momentum going
- Not knowing if we are going to be able to continue our goals
- Low number of teens/children in our community

### b) What would help?

- Having awareness within the business community of how literacy impacts our whole community
- The continued message to School Districts that they are partners in community literacy planning
- Having more funding for programming

## For the Coming Year

- 1. Are there new opportunities, challenges, or issues in your community? How will you respond to those?**

Sayward hasn't had many changes in the last year. More seniors and low income families have moved in. Very few jobs are here in our community. More programs could be brought up to help our seniors in different areas from filling in forms, to getting help when needed. Offer more programs on resumes, etc for all ages. Investigating on trying to set up an office that would offer more to our community and be more accessible. So far haven't found any place that would fit that need. Have different groups put on office together including Sayward Literacy Now. We are working on getting adult education in our class for adults. We have the use of a classroom in the local school.

- 2. What goals, priorities or objectives will you work on in the coming year? What actions are planned against those goals?**

Programs that we have done will continue. Computer classes for adults/seniors, Family book bags, Health Fair.

Literacy Now is working with NIEFS (North Island Employment) to come up with different programs for our youth to help them get into the work force. Niefs has been coming up once a month for a day helping unemployed people in our community

The Task Group and the Literacy Outreach Coordinator will watch for needs and changes in the community.

- 3. What will be required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year?**

The help and guidance of the task force will be needed to continue and expand the work of Literacy Now.

Partnerships will develop as needs arise.

Funding will need to be secured to continue some programs. We will try to find businesses that can support us financially

Support of the new provincial organization, Decoda, will continue to be critical to our success.

# Quadra Island Literacy Plan 2012 - 2013

Submitted by Robin Beaton, Quadra Island Literacy Outreach Coordinator

## 1. Task Group

### a) Who takes part in the Task Group?

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Robin Beaton	Literacy Outreach Coordinator & Retired Teacher
Don Kretlow	Quadra Elementary Principal
Bridget Walshe	Learning Assistance Teacher
Marni McMahan	Kindergarten Teacher
Karen Abercrombie	Educational Assistant
Mia Frishholz	Retired Teacher
Heather Kellerhals-Stewart	Writer & Community Member
Dee McPhee	Director of the Quadra Children's Centre
<b>Members at Large – who receive agendas and minutes of meetings and are consulted in areas of expertise:</b>	
Anne Boyd	Campbell River Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Cheryl Jordan	Success by 6 Coordinator
Sandy Spearing	Coordinator for Quadra Island Recreation Society
Barb Van Orden	Quadra Librarian
Lisa Scalapini	Psychologist
Karen Holmes	Social Worker
Sheelagh Elmitt	Retired Physiotherapist
Helen Lee	Teacher

### c) How is the work of this group organized?

I organize the monthly meetings, the agenda is set, then plans and initiatives are discussed at the meeting. I consult with various community members to gather further information for specific projects and programs and bring information back to the group for decision making. Task group members assist at events and support programs when they can.

## 2. Community Context

Ferry fares have increased. It is expensive to commute to town for work and the cost of goods and services has risen. The unemployed find it costly to take advantage of employment programs offered at places like NIEFS (North Island Employment Foundation) in Campbell River.

Tourism has slumped. Businesses on Quadra are affected with the decrease in revenue. Employment opportunities are limited both on Quadra and in Campbell River.

Seasonal employment is often advertised on the internet. Some seasonal workers lack the literacy and computer skills to produce a competitive application and resume online.

The upside is that self-employment and resourceful living is common on the island. There is a growing demographic of retirees, many of whom are active volunteers with various groups in the community.

### 3. Community Development and Literacy Collaboration

#### a) What are the collaborations that have taken place to support literacy and the work of the task group?

Quadra Literacy collaborates with **Quadra Children's Centre** and the **We Wai Kai Child Care Centre** to circulate Quadra Literacy Kits to families with young children. We have 18 themed kits in circulation as well as a Sexual Health Resource Kit for parents to share with their children.

Another important collaboration is the support for the **Parent and Tots** program offered through **Quadra Recreation**. Quadra Literacy provides the rent for two sessions a week at the Community Centre and funds an educational enrichment initiative with an **Early Childhood Educator** from **Quadra Children's Centre** every fortnight.

Collaboration with **Quadra Elementary** includes planning Family Literacy Day. The entire school, teachers, students and parents join families with preschool children at the Community Centre to engage in a range of activities encouraging family literacy. Representatives from **Emergency Responders, Quadra Quilters, Theatre Quadra, Sing for Joy and the Recreation Society** collaborate to ensure this event is a success.

Quadra Literacy sponsors the writing category in the annual **Fall Fair** encouraging young and older writers to create stories, essays, poems and journal articles on a range of topics. This is a very successful community event.

Coaches Corner for Computer Skills takes place in the **Quadra Library**. It is an effort to make connections with people/learners in other locations, where they feel comfortable. As a pilot project, it was offered one evening a week throughout the month of May.

#### b) What are the essential ongoing collaborations?

All of the collaborations listed above are considered to be essential ongoing collaborations.

#### c) What makes collaborations work well?

These collaborations are successful because they create connections with a broad spectrum of groups interested in supporting a healthy community. These collaborations engage parents,

their children and other adults in a variety of literacy opportunities in different community settings.

## 4. Goals and Actions for the Current Year

**Goal 1:** Strengthening the foundations of the Quadra Literacy Action Plan to ensure that the necessary resources, connections and communications are in place for the Plan's sustainability and vitality.

The Quadra Literacy task group meets 6-7 times a year to plan and evaluate programs, projects and events. Eight members on the task group and seven additional members at large offer a broad representation of community members interested in promoting literacy.

**Goal 2:** Literacy skills and services for adults.

We have volunteer tutors who work with individuals on literacy needs. This year we have two tutors working with adults learning English. These tutors and tutees meet regularly in the Quadra Literacy Centre at Quadra Elementary and occasionally at various events in the community.

Tutors also meet with people in the Quadra library to work on a variety of digital literacy learning needs.

**Quadra Seniors** enjoyed a presentation on using eReaders and accessing the public library catalogue to borrow eBooks.

**Goal 3:** Support for early learning and literacy for children and families.

**Quadra Literacy Kits** (QLitKits), available to parents with young children, are circulated through the Quadra Children's Centres and the We Wai Kai Child Care Centre. Over the past year, **thirteen families** have used the kits and the kits have been borrowed **sixty times**.

**Sexual Health Resource Kit:** This is a resource for parents to share with their children. The kit includes a range of books to share with preschoolers through to teens. There are DVDs by Meg Hickling, RN and Sexual Health Educator, that have specific presentations for parents, primary, intermediate and teenage children.

Our annual **Family Literacy Day** is a popular event, attended by families with young children, the Child Care Centres and Quadra elementary students and parents. Participation of representatives from Emergency Responders, Quadra Quilters, Theatre Quadra, Sing for Joy, the Recreation Society and a variety of committed volunteers continue to make this event a community success.

Quadra Literacy funds an early childcare educator from Quadra Children's Centre to provide an **enrichment activity** for those that attend **Parents and Tots**, bi-monthly.

Quadra Literacy provides the rent for **Parents and Tots**, two sessions a week at the Community Centre

### **c) What adjustments were made to the plan?**

One of the new opportunities we explored this year is using the public library as a place to make connections with people directly needing literacy help. The pilot project during the month of May was successful enough to warrant offering it again in the fall.

## **5. Indications of Success**

### **a) How do you know that actions taken are working to support literacy? What impact have the literacy initiatives had?**

One of our most successful programs is offering **individual ESL tutoring**. We have a couple of success stories this year. One young woman who recently immigrated to Quadra meets weekly with a volunteer tutor to learn English. She has begun to take her young child to Parents and Tots where he can socialize with other children and also learn English.

Another young woman has met with her tutor for two years now and brings her young child to the tutoring sessions. She has gained the confidence needed to shop at the local grocery store, go to the public library regularly and take her child to Parents and Tots.

### **b) What are the things that support literacy work?**

This literacy work, teaching ESL, is supported in a number of ways. Volunteer tutors meet with learners in the Quadra Literacy Centre, a classroom in Quadra Elementary. As a certified TEFL teacher, I am able to provide tutors with support for teaching resources and materials.

## **6. Challenges**

### **a) What are the difficulties?**

It is difficult to engage people with literacy needs even when learning opportunities are available. Recently I met with one adult who expressed a need to develop certain literacy skills. We met 3 times but he was not interested in committing to ongoing work with a tutor. This is a common occurrence.

### **b) What would help?**

I think offering literacy support at the public library as an initial way to connect with people is effective. People are already comfortable asking for help at a library. The library staff has been active and helpful in connecting us with people who express an interest or need for literacy help.

## **For the Coming Year**

- 1. Are there new opportunities, challenges, or issues in your community? How will you respond to those?**

I have been meeting with Jenny Evans, program coordinator for North Island Employment planning collaborations for this fall. We would offer the services of a NIEFS counsellor and literacy tutor on a once a week basis at the library. The goal is to connect people with employment services and literacy opportunities, including learning to use the public access computers at the library.

- 2. What goals, priorities or objectives will you work on in the coming year? What actions are planned against those goals?**

We are also looking at co-hosting a NIEFS workshop on self-employment, accessing employment opportunities and internet/email job searches at the Quadra Literacy Centre in November.

- 3. What will be required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year?**

Continued funding for grass roots community literacy and a Literacy Outreach Coordinator to research, stimulate, and organize programs is required to meet the goals and effectively employ actions for the coming year.