

Community Literacy Plan
School District #51- Boundary
2015-2016



**Serving the Communities of:
Christina Lake, Grand Forks, Greenwood, Midway, Rock Creek,
Bridenville, and Beaverdell**

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Reflections on the Current Year

1. Task Group

a. Who takes part in the task group?

The Boundary literacy task group is comprised of representatives from a diverse range of sectors. There are members representing health, education (elementary, secondary, and post-secondary), first nations, early years, family services, employment, libraries, youth and businesses. For a complete listing of members, see Appendix 1.

b. How is the work of this group organized?

The Boundary literacy committee met four times this year including the DLP session and will complete the year with a final review of the plan. Our committee continues to benefit from consistent youth representation. This year, our youth representative has participated in our Writing Anthology project as a promoter of the project and a member of the review panel. Health Promoting Schools Coordinator has become engaged in our literacy committee, connecting literacy to a Farm to School program.

Two direct indicators show the impact of our work:

- New and improved partnerships: Grand Forks Public Library and the Midway Library participated with CBAL in Family Literacy Day activities and events. As well, an innovative partnership took on a series of food preservation workshops as a component to our health literacy programming
- Continued dedication to Writing Anthology Project: The committee was dedicated to this project, and due to its success, will be carried forward into the ensuing year

2. Community Context

a. Community

School District 51 (SD51) – Boundary is made up of three municipalities within the Regional District of Kootenay Boundary, including: Grand Forks, Greenwood and Midway and the unincorporated Electoral Areas of C, D and E including the communities of Christina Lake, Rock Creek, Bridesville, Westbridge, Beaverdell and Big White.

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The region covers 7000 square kilometers and has a resident population around 12,500, with 67% of the dwellings categorized as rural. Non-English speaking households make up 4.2% of the population and 15.3% of the population identify themselves as Aboriginal. The population has been in decline since 1998.

The Vital Signs report, led by the Phoenix Foundation, is an important discussion piece for the Boundary and provides conversation and analysis around the current, potential, and perceived issues facing our citizens. The Boundary Communities' Vital Signs Report was released with an update in 2014. Regional residents, including youth, ranked indicators from this report. These priorities distinctly mirror goals set out in this community plan through the indicators of: Learning, Belonging and Leadership, and Food Security.

Scan of the Past Year - The following list highlights both the positive and negative points that mark the past year's community literacy efforts.

- Continuation of the 4 literacy goals identified in the community planning process held 2013. This has continued to provide excellent direction for community literacy priorities. The Community Literacy Planning process in April 2015 confirmed these as key areas for the coming year.
- Community-wide collaborations and service agency commitments continue to provide a rich literacy environment for families and adults in the region.
 - Health literacy: Our family literacy programming where healthy snacks are provided, nutritional programming with BFISS, the Farm to School program, as well as numerous Health Talks taking place in Grand Forks and West Boundary.
 - Financial Literacy: Continuation of BFISS family program and collaborative workshops with CBAL, Selkirk College student sessions, and sessions held in our local Credit Union and library. A financial literacy workshop sponsored by CBAL was held at the Partners in Parenting conference - an annual conference organized by a group of local agencies supporting families.
 - Work Place literacy programs at Community Futures continue to offer a wide spectrum of learning, particularly financial literacy.
 - Selkirk College Adult Basic Education program has collaborated for a second year with the Glanville Family Center. Under the new name of "Together to Learn" this is a program where adults participate in college courses with child minding taking place in the same building. This program seems to have taken off, and with new leadership from Selkirk College, promises to hold diverse opportunities for adults with young children. CBAL continues to support this program by providing child minding.

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- West Boundary literacy planning and program delivery received a boost this year with a new outreach coordinator, and Grant in Aid funds for a computer that will be added to 4 others for a dedicated West Boundary computer lab for adult literacy programming.
 - School District #51 has allowed a weekly presence in a Midway venue that we hope may evolve to a learning hub
 - Midway and Rock Creek Seniors are hosting regular learning opportunities for their members in computer, health and financial literacy
 - Community Futures in the West Boundary is doing excellent work in financial literacy outreach

- The Boundary is a very large region. New literacy programming opportunities are explored with an understanding of our extreme limitations due to geography and resources. Travel costs and limited community transportation continue to be a major barrier for people who wish to access programming and for agencies to deliver needed services.

3. Community Development and Literacy Collaborations

a. Examples of Collaboration

The Boundary communities continue to benefit from an outstanding commitment to collaborative planning and program delivery. Enriched community development is a direct result of these collaborations. Serving the community through any literacy-based activity increases social capacity and quality of life for participants.

A representative collaboration within this community context that demonstrates this commitment as well as wide ranging community benefit is the Nutritional Literacy Program. CBAL, BFISS and the Women's Institute delivered 3 different sessions with a 4th to be offered in Fall 2015 all focusing on the transfer of skills regarding food preservation and nutrition. BFISS offered the venue, facilitation and child minding space, WI provided funds from their community fundraising partnerships, and CBAL provided overall coordination and planning. This program will be continued in the next year, linked to other family literacy and health literacy programming being offered in the community as well as the Farm to School program that will be underway in the next school year. The Farm to School program will expand partnerships and provide another avenue to connect with families.

4. Goals and Actions for Current Year

a. Goals, Actions, Adjustments, Successes and Challenges

Each of these goals will be continued in 2015/16. See table in Section 2 for the priority areas and indicators for the coming year.

Goal #1: Financial Literacy: The community literacy partners will research content, delivery partners, venues, and approaches that will lead to a series of broad-based financial literacy programs that will serve the community up to 2015.

What actions took place in this past year and what organizations were involved?

- Grand Forks Public Library and Grand Forks Credit Union each hosted public financial literacy programs and workshops.
- Community Futures has included budgeting workshops within their Work Place training and these are available to the public.
- CBAL continued with the Money Matters workshops at BFISS with the existing family/parent support groups.
- Partners in Parenting hosted a “Raising your Kids with Money Sense” at their annual conference in Grand Forks – open to the region communities.

What adjustments were made?

- West Boundary community delivery partners for financial literacy have not been established as yet. Rock Creek Seniors may be able to provide the venue and participant base for delivery in the fall 2015 and winter 2016.

What were the indications of success?

- Parents in Parenting program was very well received and will be repeated. We will be researching an ongoing “money sense” support group for families.
- Financial literacy topics are being planned as components of the Selkirk College student orientation and study skills program in collaboration with CBAL and Grand Forks Credit Union.

What were the challenges?

- It continues to be a challenge to find ways to embed community-based financial literacy opportunities into the high school experience at a time when the students need it the most (such as the graduation year). A deeper commitment to working with families to embed the culture of financial literacy within the home was identified by the community at the DLP meeting and may be a more feasible approach. This is reflected in the expanded opportunities described in the work plan for the coming year.

Goal #2: Health Literacy; The community literacy partners will develop new and existing collaborations for programming that will address learning in the areas of needs in healthy eating, mental health, healthy lifestyles, and food security.

What actions took place in this past year and what organizations were involved?

- CBAL/ BFISS collaborated on the delivery of Alphabet Soup, a family literacy program that uses food to explore a wide range of literacy topics such as healthy connections to food, food in different cultures, stories around food, and early language development with food.
- Women's Institute – BFISS – collaboration with Nutritional Literacy- workshops in food preservation and nutrition.
- Health Promoting Schools facilitated a successful Farm to School application, which will take off this fall
- Interior Health spearheaded a reading table at Flu Clinics for those waiting service.

What adjustments were made?

- Mental health supports within the community have become available through Interior Health websites:

www.kootenayfamilyplace.org/kb-searchlight/kootenay-boundary-child-youth-mental-health-substance-use-services

What were the indications of success?

- Food Security has been identified and confirmed within the Vital Signs process as a key indicator of quality of life. Literacy programming that takes this indicator to diverse family programming shows success in the increased participation and continued interest in these programs.
- New partnerships (such as the Women's Institute) are successful and are indicators of the importance of this kind of learning.
- Diverse program content such as; decoding a nutritional label, cooking for health on a budget, and food preservation for healthy eating in the winter are indicators of success in planning that uses relevant topics.
- Alphabet Soup is drawing new families, and is strengthening the connection with Strong Start Centres in Grand Forks, Greenwood, and Christina Lake.
- Health Literacy in connection to food security is a growing interest in the community. The regional community literacy partners in the West Boundary are seeing this as an essential part of partnering and serving the communities in their future planning and development.

What were the challenges?

- This is a vast area for community literacy that needs solid planning and partnerships to ensure the programs that are delivered are relevant in content and adequate in duration.

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- Low budget allocations to this kind of programming limit greatly what can be achieved. Food programs are not overly costly, but do require skilled facilitation, a decent budget and venues that are appropriate. The availability of a commercial kitchen at an affordable rate inhibited the flow of one program this year.

Goal #3: Build on Community Connections: The community literacy partners will research and assist in establishing a region wide community information network. This will be a tool that will assist program planning and be used across community service agencies and education centres. This goal will also begin to explore the issue of “broken communications” between and within the generations.

What actions took place in this past year and what organizations were involved?

- Community Futures/ Boundary Chamber of Commerce continues to lead a regional on-line community calendar. Use is expanding with this calendar as well as others. It has been identified that a “one stop” calendar may not be achievable with the different preferences people have for becoming informed. Posters continue to be a key way for many people to find information.
- The Writing Anthology project has gone into its 2nd year, for submissions from young writers of creative writing pieces that celebrate connections across generations. A publication will be presented to the 20 selected writers in June 2015.

What adjustments were made?

- No traction has been gained with building youth to senior connections within the graduating class. Adjustments are being made to focus on younger age groups and embed these connections within existing computer programs with seniors.
- New learning hubs are slow to take hold in West Boundary. Possibilities are emerging with Midway Seniors (one workshop was held there this year so on-going may be possible) and Rock Creek Medical Centre (a bi-weekly writers group is meeting there now – and a computer session series may be possible in the fall) – all which lead to potential learning hubs.

What were the indications of success?

- The on-line calendar is taking a role in the region for building connections between our communities.
- The Writing Anthology project will go to publication this year – with a strong working committee within the Community Literacy Advisory.
- Partners recognize learning hubs as a primary way for collaborative and effective literacy programming.

What were the challenges?

- Learning hubs require resources that are often not there.
- Distance to the communities, such as Beaverdell, adds enormous challenges in making the right connections much less creating the learning opportunities.

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- West Boundary literacy outreach position is a limited role , but key to creating some of these connections. This position was filled this year with orientation being the main focus. New opportunities are forming this spring for program delivery in the coming year

Goal #4: Build on Collaborative Programming; The community literacy partners will continue to build on existing collaborative literacy programs that serve families and adults in the region.

What actions took place in this past year and what organizations were involved?

- CBAL/ BFISS continued to expand the delivery of collaborative family programming in all of our StrongStart and Family Centres, in Christina Lake, Grand Forks and Greenwood.
- Grand Forks Public Library and the Midway Public Library collaborated in two successful family literacy day events.
- Work Place literacy continues to be a lens for community adult literacy within Community Futures Work BC programming, Selkirk College and CBAL programming and service.
- Computer skill development for adults in workshops and one to one assistance continues to be a collaborative delivery with Community Futures, libraries throughout the region, CBAL and seniors organizations. In the West Boundary, assistance from the RDKB will allow easier delivery of computer programs for adults.
- Reading Link Challenge continued to be a huge success between the West Boundary libraries. The Great Book Debate is a new program that the local libraries have initiated in the Grade 6/7 classes.
- The Gateway “Stektahl” project is an exciting storytelling hub in Midway with the use of a large stone carvings by First nations Artist David Seven Deers. This installation will be located in the Twisted Trees historic site near the Midway High school. It is in the shape of a story telling circle and is hoped to be a focal point for many community gatherings in the years to come. This project is supported by School District #51.

What adjustments were made?

- No adjustments were made to this goal- community collaborations continue to be a fundamental goal and outcome of all community literacy activities.

What were the indications of success?

- CBAL and partnering family programming in the Strong Start Centres, and Family Centres showed increased participation.
- Creative projects from all of our literacy agencies are building on the culture of learning in this region
- Adult literacy programs continue to benefit from healthy partnerships with our region’s libraries and Selkirk College.

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- Our District Literacy Planning process is attended by a wide range of community people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. This input is valuable and ensures truth to the plan based on needs seen by the community.

What were the challenges?

- Access for community use to School District buildings for programs has been variable. This is seen in both the East and West Boundary. It was identified at the DLP sessions as an inhibitor to community activities that require the kind of spaces that are available in local schools.

Community Literacy Plan for 2015- 2016

5. For the Coming Year

For the 2015-2016 year the literacy planning committee has identified a number of priorities and actions. The following information is the outcome of the planning meeting held in April. As a committee, we are committed to the priorities and actions addressed in the plan and will review the plan over the coming year to ensure the plan stays relevant and representative of our community needs. Ongoing reflection and monitoring of the plan will aim to review and assess actions as the year progresses.

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Goal #1: Financial Literacy:

The community literacy partners will continue with established curriculum, delivery partners, venues, and approaches for financial literacy that will be relevant to youth, young adults and families.

Objectives	Partnerships	Resources	Strategies
Continued use of CCFL curriculum. Research other resources and materials	CBAL, BFISS School District #51 GFCU Selkirk College	Planning Facilitation	- Research new program material and identify resources that are relevant to young families
Identify and develop partners for delivery	School District #51 Glanville Center/BFISS West Boundary agencies and groups GFCU	Planning time	- Coordinate scheduling of financial literacy programming offered in the community to reduce overlap
Continue to deliver financial literacy programs in the region that serve the priority ages and topics identified in the program planning	CBAL School District#51 West Boundary groups and agencies Community Futures	Facilitation Materials	- A community-based financial literacy program will be continued and expanded in Grand Forks and the West Boundary - Diversify age groups and locations to be served

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Goal #2: Health Literacy;

The community literacy partners will develop new and existing collaborations for programming that will address learning needs in healthy eating, mental health, healthy lifestyles, and food security.

Objectives	Partnerships	Resources	Strategies
Continue to develop community partners in health literacy	Interior Health CBAL CLAC BFISS West Boundary Seniors West Boundary FAR	Planning time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ongoing health literacy programming with partners will continue and expand to West Boundary - Collaborative programming will be delivered with the West Boundary with initiatives such as Kettle River Seniors program and FAR (food security group) - Learning Garden project will be linked to community literacy programs - Simple health promotion posters will be distributed within the business community; a local focus with local projects and activities
Health literacy will continue to be a lens of program development and evaluation	CLAC CBAL Libraries in the Region Interior Health BFISS School District #51 Women’s Institute	Facilitation time Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family programs will continue to provide healthy life skills development - Deliver a series of “Health Talks” in the West Boundary using library locations

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Goal #3: Build on Community Connections:

The community literacy partners will continue to promote a region-wide community information network that includes on-line calendars and bulletin boards. Literacy programming in the Boundary will be grounded in meaningful connections between people across generations as a foundation to learning in our community.

Objectives	Partnerships	Resources	Activities
A matrix of information tools such as on-line calendars and bulletin boards will build on community information as a regional hubs of community information	CLAC Boundary Chamber Regional Libraries CBAL	Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The community wide calendar systems will link agencies and citizens - Community bulletin boards will be maintained and supported
Build on the connections that stimulate healthy and empowering communication between and within age groups	CLAC SD #51 CBAL Seniors Centres	Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partners in Parenting conference will continue to explore new venues and structure - Anthology project - continues building on the success of this year - Youth to Seniors projects related to storytelling will be explored
Continue to research and develop community learning hubs in the West Boundary; Beaverdell, Midway Library, Rock Creek Medical Centre, & Midway Seniors	CBAL SD #51 West Boundary Literacy Group BFISS	Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of West Boundary learning hubs where feasible - Conduct needs assessment - Find locations for hubs and recruit volunteers

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Goal #4: Build on Collaborative Programing;

The community literacy partners will continue to build on existing collaborative literacy programs that serve families and adults in the region.

Strategies	Partnerships	Resources	Activities
Family literacy programs developed within the context of Strong Start Centers, Family Nights, etc.	BCCRR BFISS CBAL Libraries in the Region Selkirk College SD#51	Facilitation Planning	- Continue to offer a wide range of programs in a variety of locations, times and styles throughout the region
Work Place Literacy: Continued development of curriculum focused on Essential skill development	Selkirk College Community Futures CBAL BCRCC	Coordination Facilitation	- Continue to offer Work Place literacy programs within the community
Programs connected to special needs groups	CBAL Whispers of Hope	Facilitation Planning	- Explore literacy programming opportunities with the new Whispers of Hope location and the Emergency Shelter
Connect to seniors and youth to determine approach to integrate programing	CLAC- Youth CBAL Libraries in the Region Seniors Centres and facilities	Facilitation Planning	- Youth /Seniors build story collections; youth integration into computer workshops; make connection with seniors groups and GEV
Use of storytelling in community literacy programing and community connections	CBAL Regional libraries SD #51	Facilitation Planning	- Storytelling becomes a regular feature in community literacy programing and includes storytelling/story collecting/ skill development - Gateway- "Stekthal" in Midway becomes a focal point for community story telling
Fun creative contests to promote engaging literacy activities in school-aged children	SD#51 Libraries in the Region CLAC	Planning	- The Reading Link Challenge continues and is expanded into schools across the Region. - Establish The Great Book Debate across the region

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Appendix 1

Boundary Literacy Committee 2014-2015

Name	Organization
Avi Silberstein	Grand Forks Public Library
Doug Lacy	School District #51
Ellen Strelaeff	Boundary Family and Individual Services Society
Evelyn Booth	CBAL West Boundary
Jacob Noseworthy	Community Youth
Karly Olsen	Health Promoting Schools Coordinator
Katie Jepsen	School District #51, Trustee
Linda Manzon	Interior Health
Louise Heck,	Boundary Child Care Resources and Referral
Neil Krog	City of Grand Forks
Nicole Ferrier	Midway Library
Sandy Elzinga	Community Futures
Sheila Dobie	CBAL- Literacy Outreach Coordinator
Spencer Tracy	Selkirk College
Yelena Churchill	CBAL- Family Programs