

School District 71

District Achievement Contract



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School District 71 (Comox Valley)

District Context

Within the district there is evidence that staff are collaborating more within their teaching areas to improve instruction; this is most evident amongst those teachers who are delivering new curriculum. This is demonstrated in the growth of our Professional Partnerships program, and in the reconfiguration of school timetables to include staff collaboration time. At individual school sites it is reported that staff discussions include a raised awareness of the value of assessment for learning practices and an understanding of the merits of project based learning and the use of technology as tools for learning.

Provincial exams scores at the secondary level indicate that School District 71 students are at or above the provincial average in all subjects. Social Studies 11 and Communications 12 are particularly strong, but most impressive are the new Math 10 courses. The extensive staff development effort helped ensure that our students achieved at a level consistent with the provincial average.

One hundred forty teachers are taking part in the Professional Partnership Program this year, in 56 different areas of inquiry. This constitutes 30% of our entire teaching population.

The percentage of grade 12 graduates attending a post-secondary institution has steadily risen since 2005/2006 and

now sits at 49.9%. The percentage of non-graduates attending post-secondary has also risen to 14.2% from 13.7% five years ago.

School completion continues to be an area of concern. Our six year completion rate has plateaued below the provincial average. Our senior students actually perform admirably on provincial exams, but we lose too many students before they get the opportunity to complete secondary courses. We continue to score below the provincial average in FSA Writing and Numeracy at both grades 4 and 7. Our participation rates continue to be a challenge, as many parents are opting out of the exams. The remaining writers may not accurately reflect the aggregated achievement in this district. We are seeing increasing success Aboriginal learners who, if they remain with us to grade 11, transition to grade 12 at a higher percentage than the general population. Aboriginal students making it to grade 12 have graduated 95% of the time.

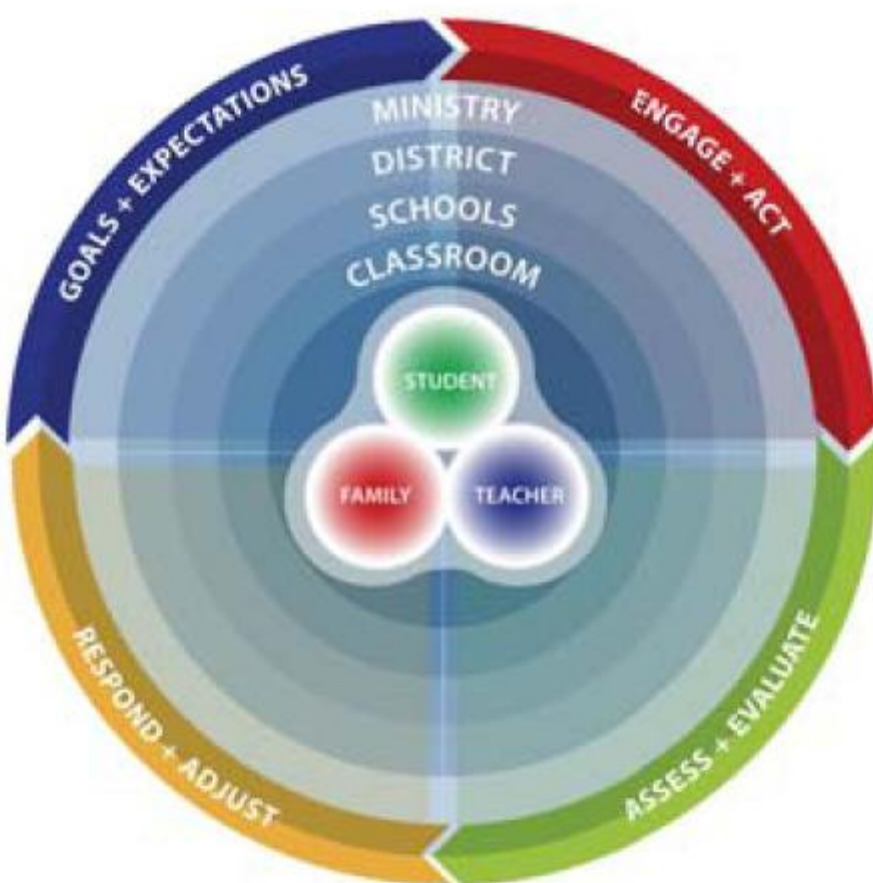
Six year completion rate is 70%, versus the provincial rate of 81%. FSA results indicate that we are 3-10% below the provincial results. We lack confidence in these FSA results due to low participation rates (on average, 50% more students opt out than the provincial non-participation rate) and the political climate associated with these exams.

New Format for the District Achievement Contract

Previous District Achievement Contracts have been organized around goals, having all pertinent information for a given goal in one place. The new [District Achievement Contract Elements](#) call for an organization based on processes. This is described in the graphic below:

Starting in the top left quadrant, the following document will put forth all of our goals and expectations. The graphic on that page will show this quadrant as highlighted. The next section of the document is dedicated to the

next quadrant on the graphic, Engage + Act. In this section, all the strategies we intend to employ to meet the aforementioned goals and expectations are described.



The obvious difficulty with this format will be keeping straight which strategies are assigned to which goals, and so on, as one goes through the whole document. To facilitate this, each goal has been assigned its own colour, and goal headings have provided.



Goals and Expectations

Goal One: Personalized Learning: By 2013, each student will have a personalized learning plan developed in collaboration between home and school.

In 2012, Personalized Learning Network established.

In 2014, all students complete a personal learning plan and an individual record of achievement of foundation skills and competencies is maintained henceforth.

By 2023, all students will graduate from high school with purpose, dignity and options, having completed their plan.

Goal Two: Sense of Belonging: To develop a sense of belonging and to enhance the engagement in learning for all students

While pleased with our trends in attaining our former objectives and meeting targets in this area, we want to continue to monitor the survey responses to these questions:

- Do you feel welcome at your school? (grades 4, 7, 10, 12)
- How many adults at your school care about you? (grades 4, 7, 10, 12)

We believe all students should feel welcome in school. In balancing philosophy with practical realization we are aware that we will need specific strategies to increase this in a positive direction, understanding that over time our ideal goal would be 100%.

Goal Three: Literacy: To improve literacy skills, knowledge and confidence K – 12.

Targets: All Students

Maximize performance and success of each individual student in reading and writing.

Target: All students are reading by Grade 4

Target: All student plans include reflection on his/her writing skills.

Target: All students in a regular program will be enrolled in grade 10 in their 10th year.



Goal Four: Numeracy: To improve numeracy knowledge, skills and confidence across all grades K-12

Targets: All Students:

Target: K - 9: Maximize performance and success of each individual student on essential math outcomes at each grade level

Target: Grades 10 – 12: Individual student plans link future career goals to course selection.

Goal Five: School Completion: To increase the completion rate of all students

An analysis in 2009-2010 revealed that the bulk of students who leave high school do between grades 10 and 11. Many of them were passing their courses when they left us.

Personalized learning and a strong connection to school and to adults in the building will provide an environment of success for more students.

In 2013-14, all students will have an individual record of transition to other programs, to other schools or out of province that can be aggregated to clarify the data.

By 2023 all students will graduate from high school with purpose, dignity and options, having completed their plan (adapted from Network of Performance Based Schools).

To be compared to the provincial average on the six year completion rate, we feel it is important that we consider our student population without the impact of the

North Island Distance Education School (NIDES/Navigate)

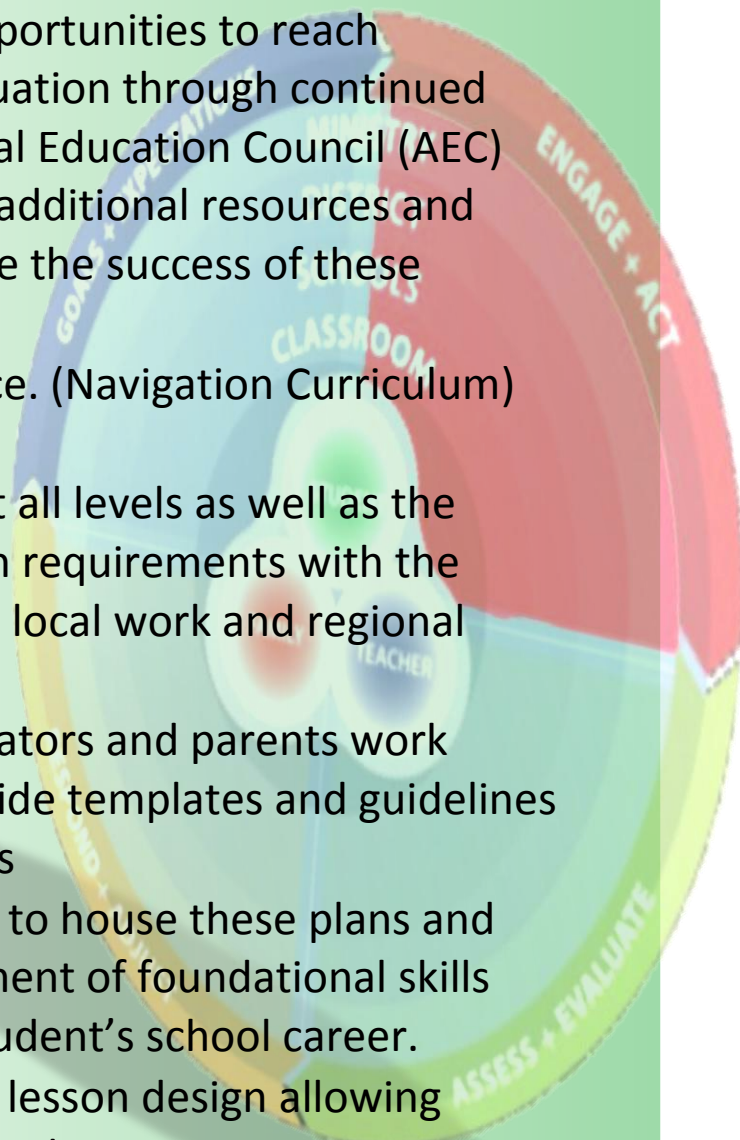
students who are not from our district's catchment area. This is roughly a 3% drop effect on our completion rate.



Engage and Act

Goal One: Personalized Learning

- Engage the school and greater community in establishing the profile of a Comox Valley graduate, including the foundational skills and competencies required
- Ensure that our Aboriginal learners have access to appropriate resources and opportunities to reach successful Comox Valley graduation through continued partnership with the Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) including the commitment of additional resources and programs intended to enhance the success of these learners.
- Develop a scope and sequence. (Navigation Curriculum) across K – 12
- Influence curricular change at all levels as well as the anticipated altered graduation requirements with the Ministry of Education through local work and regional forums
- Groups of teachers, administrators and parents work together to develop district wide templates and guidelines for personalized learning plans
- Begin the design of databases to house these plans and track both goals and achievement of foundational skills and competencies during a student's school career.
- Competencies integrated into lesson design allowing students to develop learning and assessment criteria through self-design and/or co-created projects.



- Continue to support Early Years programming ongoing to serve the needs of the community: Mother Goose and Friends, Mother Goose and More, Little Learners in Schools, StrongStart Centers, JumpStart, Aboriginal Headstart, etc.
- Continue to expand programs of choice for parents and students to add to Aboriginal Kindergarten, Montessori K – 6, French Immersion K – 12, Navigate, Fine Arts Ecademy, ENTER, BEST, IDS, ILC, Nala’atsi, etc. and monitor their effectiveness.
- Develop criteria for new program planning, approvals and implementation

Goal Two: Sense of Belonging

- Develop new assessment tools (with Ministry support) to measure school connectedness and personal safety as part of the Ministry’s recent initiatives for Safe and Caring Schools.
- Facilitate opportunities for teachers to collaborate in building a positive school culture.
- Maintain interventions and supports to increase personal and social responsibility.
- Allow student choice in pursuing curricular areas of interest and passion
- Ensure that activities are designed to be inclusive and welcoming of all students. Examples: activity fairs, peer

support, peer mentoring, clubs, assemblies, sports, intramurals, fine arts, roots of empathy.

- Maintain Youth and Family Support Workers and Aboriginal Support Workers in our schools and continue to provide inservice to them in the support of our vulnerable students
- Continue district wide implementation of SMART IEP goals to increase consistent program implementation and learning experiences as well as reducing behavior incidents.
- Create a district Student Voice structure which involves a rounded cross-section of students in decision making regarding policies, strategies and directions for the district.

Goal Three: Literacy

- Continue the work of our CST and LST teams; teachers use a variety of formative assessments to measure student achievement. Elementary schools are using EPRA, DART and Benchmarks to assess and plan for instruction for individuals and groups. EPRA and DART are fully implemented in our two elementary French Immersion schools (of special note – our district was selected to pilot the French version of EPRA and we created assessment videos and test protocols in French).
- Play based learning remains a focus area for our district as we implement Full Day Kindergarten. Resource kits have been developed to support this work.
- Continue to support and celebrate the embedding of

Aboriginal curriculum and concepts in classrooms across the grades.

- Provide further opportunities for secondary teachers to develop their expertise in Assessment for Learning strategies to ensure consistency in practices and language across the grades.
- Several secondary school teachers are offering interdisciplinary opportunities for students (e.g. Physics/Engineering and English/Chemistry and will be asked to share their experiences with these course offerings to assist other schools in like development.
- Promote professional learning opportunities in assessment for learning. Faye Brownlee will be offering a three part series in 2012-13 on writing. Adrienne Gear will be offering a three part series on Reading Comprehension in 2012-13.
- Continue to partner with the Comox Valley Lifelong Learning Association in our work to link home, school and community efforts in supporting literacy for families. The District Literacy Plan is developed in partnership annually and reflects community and district resources.
- Continue school based programs such as the book bag program which support the capacity of parents to assist their children with reading and their exposure to literature.



Goal Four: Numeracy

- The development of common assessment frameworks at all levels followed by planning and explicit teaching to meet the needs of students.
- In K-8, Continue to focus effort on developing the capacity of our teachers to learn from one another as they work on these specific numeracy skills with their students.
- Continue to support First Steps in Math in-service and training for teachers (120 trained teachers, and additional 30 training in August each year)
- Where appropriate, continue to use the results of the DMA data for planning and targeting EA time and LST time to classes demonstrating the greatest need for intervention.
- Use AFL strategies in numeracy
- Model play-based learning in numeracy
- District Numeracy Lead teacher will work collaboratively with teachers and students K - 8.
- In 9-12, Math teams will continue to work together across the district to ensure that the student plans are linked to course selection, and that AFL and personalized learning strategies are prevalent in secondary math.
- Two additional courses will be implemented in the fall of 2012 at Grade 12. The district has supported school based teams in their readiness by providing collaboration time and resources.

Goal Five: School Completion

- Develop a strategy to strengthen the monitoring and support of students at risk of not graduating
- Develop a tracking mechanism to determine which students have left the province creating a record for each individual student.
- Identify characteristics of students in risk groups who *have graduated* to build a resiliency profile
- Share the completion data to have more ownership of the issue in schools and community
- Assess the efficacy of advisory time in schools (link to personal pathways development and support throughout high school and to transition needs and share these strategies across the district
- Ensure each school has established pathways for student groups that differ from traditional content focused course delivery. These might include programs like BEST, ILC, Opportunities, Options, Aboriginal focused learning experiences, etc.
- Students are cross enrolled with alternate programs (Glacier View Secondary, Navigate, Nala'atsi) at a minimum of the first year remain registered at their "home school" to ensure tracking and reporting is consistent. If deemed appropriate they may be transferred to the alternate program in their 12th grade year.
- Create a Big Picture (Met Schools) network in year one to investigate creation of a local Met School in Year Two.

Some programs have already adopted some Big Picture strategies.

- Examine Planning 10 offerings across the district to ensure that the delivery and content are appropriate to serve students in their planning activities.
- Plan shared course offerings across district earlier in the staffing process to allow for their delivery in 2013.
- Maintain a Careers Lead Teacher to lead the delivery of career programs, such as Trades and Technology, WEX 12A, WEX 12B, SSA, ACE-IT, dual credit with NIC, Sandwich Concrete and Firewood.
- Maintain career centre models in our secondary schools for Grad Transitions and Work Experience.
- Continue staff for Robotics clubs at elementary and Board Authority Authorized course for secondary in Robotics/Engineering.
- Maintain the use of alert lists in the secondary schools to regularly monitor students' achievement and attendance.
- Expect an increase across the district in personalized learning opportunities for students in their pathways to graduation/completion.



Assess and Evaluate

Goal One: Personalized Learning

Templates developed and available

Electronic database and storage exists

Assessment and review process established.

Scope and Sequence (Navigation Curriculum)

Goal Two: Sense of Belonging

Satisfaction Survey –See Questions page 8

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting>

Goal Three: Literacy

FSA Results

English 10 Results

Français Langue Première (10) Results

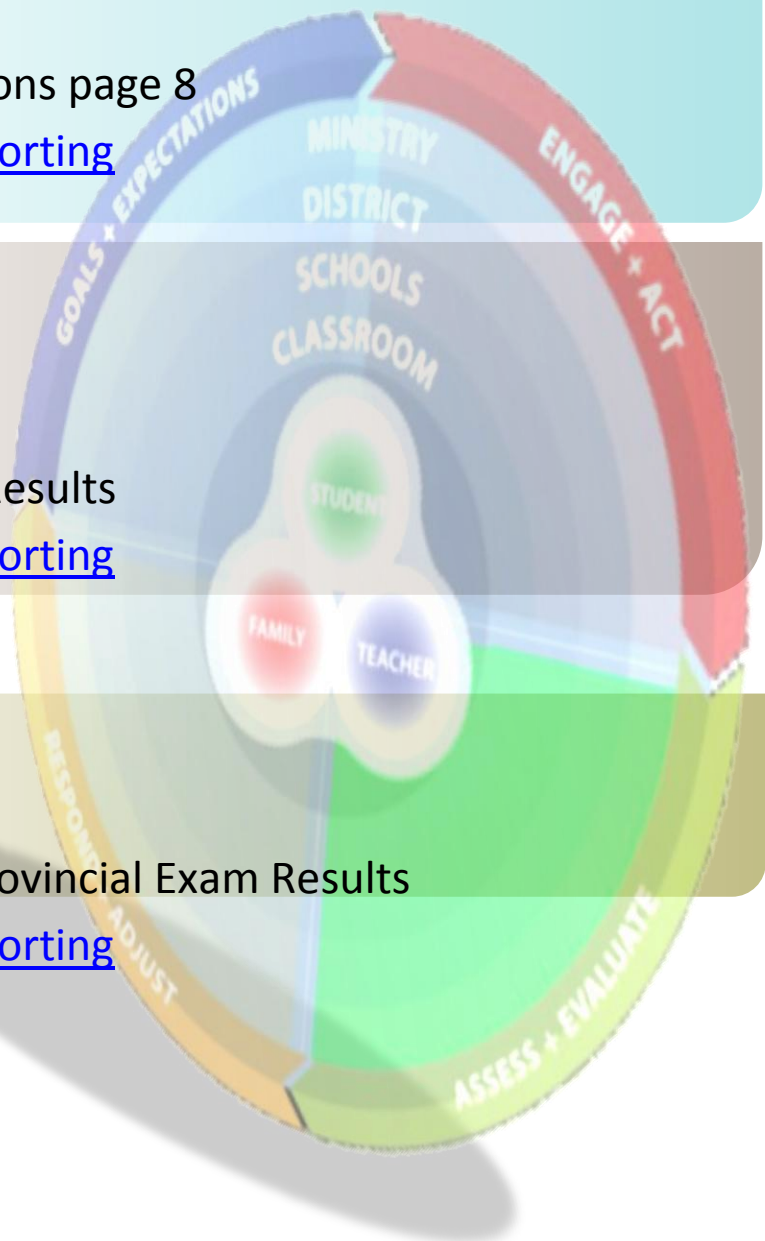
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting>

Goal Four: Numeracy

FSA Results

Math 10 Blended Course and Provincial Exam Results

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting>

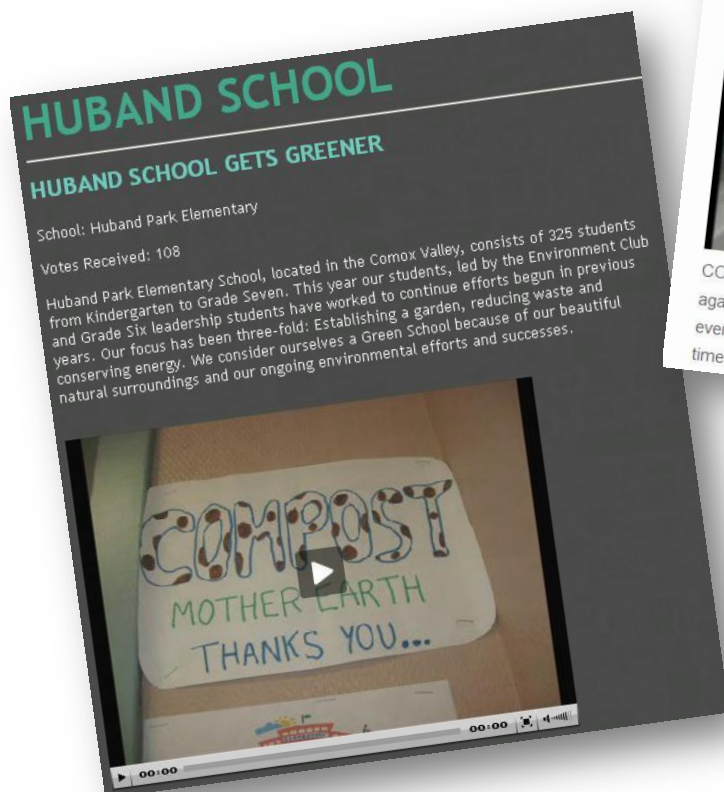


Goal Five: School Completion

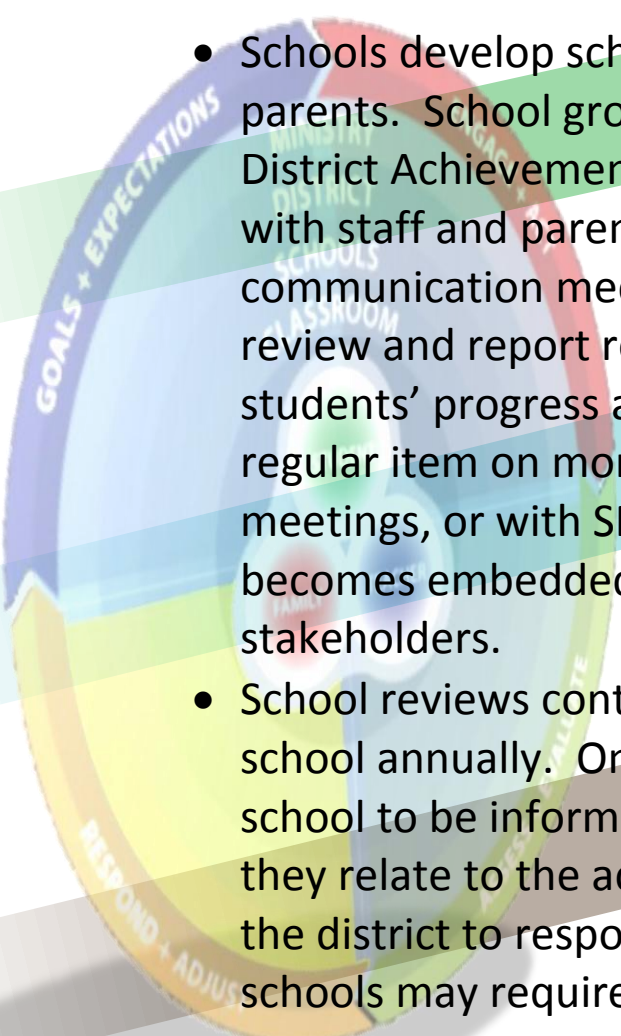
School Completion Rate

Grade to Grade Transition Rates – Percentage of student transitioning from one grade to a higher grade

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/reporting>



Respond and Adjust

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- Schools develop school based plan supported by staff and parents. School growth plans will reflect the standards of the District Achievement Contract. Principals will collaborate with staff and parents on the development of a communication mechanism in the school community to review and report regularly. An example may be to include students' progress and progress on goals and strategies as a regular item on monthly staff meetings and to monthly PAC meetings, or with SPC meetings. Student achievement becomes embedded in regular discussion among stakeholders.
 - School reviews continue with a district team visiting each school annually. Once annually a district team will visit each school to be informed of their successes and challenges as they relate to the achievement of all students. This enables the district to respond to specific needs and resources that schools may require to achieve their goals.
 - Develop a cycle of review for the Achievement Contract through a report to the Board of Education in January and June on the planning cycle, outlining, monitoring and adjusting. Review evidence, both classroom, school and district ongoing to guide adjustments.
 - Individual school district personnel will assume responsibility for the leadership, monitoring and revision of the Achievement Contract Goal and Targets. They will purposefully work with school and district partners to accomplish our annual goals.

Promising Practices

Assessment

Formative assessment, particularly Assessment for Learning (AFL) strategies, is becoming more prevalent. Teachers who have embraced these strategies will continue to collaborate with colleagues who as yet are not using the strategies regularly. District resources continue to be committed to staff development and in-service opportunities. (Faye Brownlee and Adrienne Gear Series)

Differentiated Staffing

Several of our schools have been identified, through Dr. Clyde Hertzman's Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), to have challenges equal to any in the province. These schools were supported in the 2007-08 school year with additional staffing to support these learning challenges. In the 2008-09 year, we deployed "differentiated staffing" to broaden our support for those schools who have diverse learning populations. In the 2010-2011 year we combined the CST and DST allocations to elementary schools in the form of "diversity staffing". This will enable schools to continue focusing on the struggling students in their schools. In the 2012-2013 year we have maintained or increased this level of support in our schools.

Distributed Learning

Among our many innovative programs, the North Island Distance Education School has proven to be a leader and innovator in successfully meeting the needs of students. Combining teacher support, face to face instructional student hours, various online systems, and teacher-developed

learning objects for online curriculum, NIDES has continued to grow, despite a growth in the number of “e-learning” programs in BC and elsewhere. NIDES will continue to be a leader in “e-learning” and will play a lead role in developing more effective uses of technology in our other schools as well. In 2010, distributed learning opportunities were embedded in the timetables of some of our regular secondary schools. This continues successfully and will be expanded further in G.P. Vanier in 2012. The DL program will offer two new blended programs in the district in 2012: the Fine Arts eCademy and ENTER, programs of choice in Tsolum and Aspen schools, respectively.

Diversity Support Teachers

Elementary schools identified the CSTs and DSTs as key resources in their schools. A combination of CST and DST time has placed a 0.30 FTE diversity support teacher in all of our elementary schools (the Island schools will receive collaboration time). These positions continue to be the backbone of our early intervention programs. Working directly in classrooms and with teachers, the diversity teachers are providing a valuable service to those students who do not normally receive learning assistance or dedicated learning support. In addition, the ability for schools to have on staff a teaching colleague who can team-teach, support whole class assessments, and be an expert in formative assessment has been extremely well received. This innovation was designed to build teacher capacity for work in formative assessment and to support the growing diversity in our classrooms.

Professional Partnerships

In the upcoming school year, the Board of Education will be asked to continue to support our professional partnership grants. As with diversity support teachers, the professional partnerships are designed to build teacher capacity by enabling teams of teachers to work together on projects of mutual interest.

Groups of teachers apply for partnership grants. This year, there were almost 120 teachers in School District 71 who were involved in partnerships. In May of 2011, we had another highly successful showcase and we hope that once job action is settled, the showcase practice will continue each spring. As we devote time and resources to 21st Century Learning, the professional partnership project application will ask groups or teams of teachers to develop an inquiry based project, whereby the Network of Performance Based Schools format will be incorporated in all projects in the upcoming school year. Support from our NPBS teacher leaders will be provided for those who may not have developed a specific inquiry style action research project in the past.

Examining Completion Data

In 2009-10 extensive work was undertaken at the district level to look closely at how we can help students achieve their goals. Our focus on early intervention shows that we believe we should intervene early and with intent. With that in mind, we explored those students who “did not meet expectations” in two of three categories on FSA in grade 4, and then track those students to grades 7 and then 10 where we look at their provincial exam results. We believe we can identify a core set

of students who will struggle in significant ways very early on. In many cases, these students carry no ministry designation for special needs.

This work is still in its infancy but we are able to access lists of students who meet this profile of not meeting expectations in two of three areas on FSA, in both grades 4 and 7, and now we can look at how we can identify and support them before they get to grade 10. This is detailed work but we feel it is at the forefront of our attempt to improve completion rates for all students.

Secondary schools through school based team meetings among teachers, counsellors and administrators regularly review student achievement and attendance, on a regular basis. They identify those at risk and promote appropriate strategies to intervene.

Parent Series

In 2008-09 we embarked upon a plan to run a parent education series for the Comox Valley. We felt that we could do more to welcome all parents into our buildings as partners and to work collaboratively on student achievement.

In April 2009, we ran a session on setting priorities and goals in schools and in the district. This was to support the priorities of the achievement contract.

In February 2010 we offered a parent session with Susan Close on SMART learning and a presentation for parents on the Virtues Program.

Ongoing workshops for parents continue focusing on “on line safety and preventative measures to keep their children safe on the internet”

In the 2010-2011 school year Opt Health offered parent workshops across the district “Becoming an Askable Adult” and these were well attended. Two will be offered again next year. The secondary challenge program offered a parent session on giftedness facilitated by Janaka Frank.

In 2012, we ran a session with John Abbott, President of the 21st Century Learning Initiative.

Our goal in 2012-2013 is to strengthen our work with our parents in the area of personalized learning profiles and parent education.

School Reviews

The weekly review of one district school by a visiting team remains a valued practice now and in the future. This year schools were asked to share the work they have undertaken in moving forward with school goals and in particular to illustrate newly developed or revised offerings focuses on developing 21st century learning opportunities for students. The review team is composed of senior district administrators, one or more school trustees and often a visiting administrator from another school. The school review involves discussion and presentations involving staff, students and parents. These connect district staff with the focus, work and values of each school. The schedule for the school reviews will be developed in September each year to ensure all schools are visited annually.

Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement

The district is proud of the current supports that are available to our aboriginal learners but continues to work toward improvement of achievement for these students. It is through

the strong, positive relationship between district staff and the Aboriginal Education Council (AEC) that we identify areas of improvement. We feel very strongly that while we need to attend to the achievement of our aboriginal students, we stay away from talks of “the gap” in achievement. We are concerned about the achievement of our aboriginal students and will continue to support strategies and interventions such as our aboriginal *Head Start* program, full day aboriginal kindergarten programs, Nala’atsi alternate learning program and the nationally recognized Ravens program as ways to improve the results of our aboriginal students. Currently, the AEC works with district staff to commit targeted funds in specific aboriginal learning areas. Highly skilled teacher and support staff work in the specific areas of literacy, numeracy, and aboriginal curriculum development.

A major focus of the Aboriginal Enhancement Agreement includes raising cultural awareness among all of our learners and the AEC and District continue to resource activities and opportunities which engage all students and staff.

Continuation of the successful Grade 4 Big House experience is an excellent example of this collaboration. Highly skilled cultural workers continue to provide school based projects that engage all learners.

Professional Learning Communities

Several schools have formalized teacher collaboration time in various ways, working with school communities to carve out time for professional learning and growth. This is expanding in 2012-13 as several schools have recognized that the changes anticipated in curriculum, instructional strategies and

assessment to create personalized learning opportunities will require formalized time and structure to be achieved.

Whether through common prep, pod structures or formal time in the school day, these models show promise and a Professional Learning Community network is beginning across the district to engage interested teachers and administrators in learning together about the value and structures that will enhance collaborative work.

In June 2012, a district capacity initiative was attended by over 70 teachers representing all schools in our district. It is our intention to provide a yearlong professional dialogue between district staff, PVPs, teachers and support staff as we design a district wide PLC community. It is our belief that in the movement towards a more 21st Century personalized learning, educators and para-professional staff will need time to work together with school leaders as innovative instructional strategies and authentic assessment practices and creativity combine to embed engaged learning opportunities for our students. We are certain that by honouring the expectations for enhanced learning with collaboration time, we will be more successful in enhancing learning for our students – and we will learn and grow ourselves.

Instructions for a Bad Day & Conquering Silence Videos created by G. P. Vanier with Shane Koyczan
Feb 29th, 2012
School District No. 71 (Comox Valley) (sd71.bc.ca)

Instructions for a Bad Day

