

February, 2007

Aboriginal Education

SD 79/250-748-0321



EA Talks Continue

The Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement signed in 2001 has led to many changes in the School District and an increase in the success rates of Aboriginal students.

In November 2006, the first community forum was held to begin the dialogue that will lead to the *next* Enhancement Agreement. This was followed up with a workshop with the District Student Advisory Committee in early February and will be followed by a teacher forum on February 21 at Quamichan Middle

School. The purpose of the forums is to discuss what it means, from a variety of perspectives, when we talk about Aboriginal student success.

More focus groups will be held throughout the year to ensure that all perspectives form the larger picture. Plans are to use the feedback to form goal areas, look for measurable indicators of each goal area and set targets for the next few years. For more information on Enhancement Agreements contact the Aboriginal Education Department.

Koksilah Hosts Dialogue

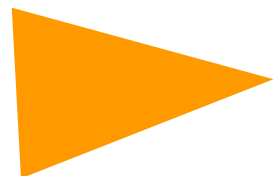
On February 9th Pro-D Day, Koksilah School hosted a dialogue on Aboriginal student achievement. Participants came from both public school and community organizations to talk about how to best work together to increase the success rates of Aboriginal students, both at Koksilah and in the larger school system.

Facilitated by teacher **Shawn Nelligan** and Cultural TA **Chuck Seymour**, the session featured small and large group

discussions seeking ideas and airing challenges.

At the end of the session, participants were asked to email any thoughts and comments that hadn't been raised at the dialogue.

For more information on the outcome of the dialogue, please contact Koksilah Elementary School at 748-3138.



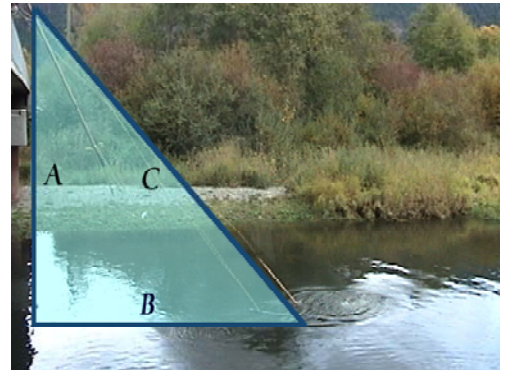
ACI Project Widens to Include More Districts

The ACIP team continues working with educators throughout the province, including SD 79, to produce relevant multi-media learning resources that utilize Aboriginal knowledge.

Five of BC's seven designated regions are currently developing lessons, with the Coast/Metro region being currently in the dialogue stage.

Grant Mellemstrand and Norm Thorne recently traveled to School District #35 (Langley) on February 8th to work in tandem with Sto:Lo Nation member/educator Gail Stromquist, local Aboriginal resource person Lekeyten and local videographer

Craig Spence to produce multi-media learning resources. Grant and Norm will be traveling to Howe Sound District 48 on February 22nd to partake in the upcoming Coast/Metro regional meeting. For sample lessons, visit www.sd79.bc.ca/programs/abed/ACIP/acip_intropage.html



Human Rights Tribunal Exemption

After long dialogue, the CVTF and the School District have developed a joint submission to the BC Human Rights Tribunal for an exemption to the BC Human Rights Code.

This exemption application is designed to meet the goals of the BCTF and the Ministry of Education to increase the number of Aboriginal teachers in the public school system, as outlined in the last round of Collective Bargaining.

If the BC Human Rights Tribunal supports the application, the District will be able to implement priority hiring practices for teachers of Aboriginal ancestry.

For more information on the number of Aboriginal teachers in the public school system, contact the BCTF, the CVTF or the Aboriginal Education Department.

Cultural Divide in Science Education

The Canadian Council on Learning has recently released a document outlining some of the reasons behind the low number of Aboriginal students taking upper level science and engineering occupations. The primary reason, according to the research, is a cultural mismatch between Aboriginal and Western science world views.

Aboriginal students find themselves forced to choose between three strategies, according to the document, that put them in conflict with their world view.

The document provides some ways of combining traditional knowledge with Western sciences and links to lesson plans, other research and projects that are integrating Aboriginal traditional knowledge into the science curriculum.

Locally, the University of Victoria's Lorna Williams and Gloria Snively are working with Graduate students to develop lesson plans and strategies.

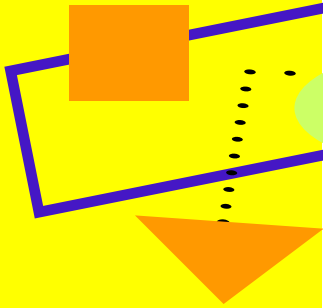
To facilitate Aboriginal student success in science, the research recommends establishing an Aboriginal science perspective that can stand in contrast to the Western science perspective without being treated as inferior to it, making explicit the values that underlie the Aboriginal and Western science approaches to understanding the world and maintaining the distinction between Aboriginal and Western science values, and consistently specifying which set of values underlies the information presented in science lessons. For more information link to www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Reports/LessonsInLearning/LinL20070116_Ab_sci_edu.htm.

Heart of the Matter Conference

Malaspina University College Child and Youth Care First Nations is pleased to present the Heart of the Matter Conference. Taking place on March 8-9 in Duncan, the conference features speakers and workshops focusing on working with Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities. For more information visit their website at web.mala.bc.ca/cycfncon

The cost is \$200 for 2 days, \$100 for 1 day (Early bird rates)





English 12 First Peoples

On July 5, 2006, the Province and First Nations signed an agreement to enhance First Nations education by recognizing their jurisdiction over the education of their First Nation students in BC. One of the items agreed upon is the development of a Language Arts 12 curriculum and examination with a focus on Aboriginal content, perspectives and pedagogy.

This Aboriginal English language arts course (English 12 First Peoples) is intended for both aboriginal and non-aboriginal teachers and students. It

represents an invitation to all learners to explore and discover an Indigenous people's worldview through the study of literary and informational text with local, Canadian and international and Aboriginal content.

Timelines for completion of the course and exam:

September 2007 – Piloting *units* of this course within the current English 12 course; possibility of piloting components of the provincial exam.

September 2008 - Full implementation of course

Jan, June and August 2009 - Provincial exams available.

Webcast: Connecting Aboriginal Learning with Literacy

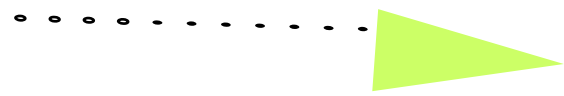
On February 19 from 3:30 to 5 pm the first of five webcasts on the theme "Strategies for Engaging First Nations Learners" will be broadcast and hosted by the BCPVPA.

This webcast is one in a series of free weekly professional learning offerings from the Rural Education Network that will occur between January and June 2007 that are open to all BC educators. Each session is live, interactive and highlights one of five main themes

taken from the Rural Renewal Conference held in the Fall of 2006.

All webcasts in this series are delivered via Elluminate Live! First time users should visit Getting Started on the BCEd Online website for help with initial setup (www.bcedonline.ca)

To participate, log in on the day of the webcast up to one hour prior to the start time.



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