Association for Community Education in British Columbia

ACE-bc ACENOTES

THE POWER OF PEACE -"PEACE OF ART" BAGS AT GILMORE COMMUNITY SCHOOL



When caring hearts and creative hands and minds join together the results can be so powerful. Six hundred canvas 'Peace of Art' bags were designed and created by all 380 Gilmore Community School students as well as staff and parents, residents of Seton Villa and school district staff. City of Burnaby Community Arts Development Programmer Valerie Methot and artists Anna Talbot and Sheila Cano guided and inspired us over the

course of three weeks in May 2009. This project was made possible by support and funding from the City of Burnaby Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services and an ArtStart grant through Burnaby School District 41.

Our goals for this community arts project were multi-faceted. We wanted our students to make a meaningful contribution to other children through a gift of art. All participants created their own personal expression of kindness, caring and sharing and their wish for peace in the world. We also focused on raising awareness of what children in Afghanistan and other war-torn countries live through on a daily basis and how important it is for all children to have the right to quality education.

Our canvas 'Peace of Art' gift bags were filled with handcrafted bookmarks, mini gel pens and stickers to be sent to children in the Mehan Orphanage system based in Kabul, Afghanistan. Through the leadership of the Gilmore Community School Student Council, our students and families raised \$1,000 in a variety of fundraisers including Candy Canes for Peace, an annual Used Toy Sale and Toonies for Peace. The money was wired via Western Union and safely reached its destination early July. FedEx staff were of great assistance and took care in tracking our large parcel, ensuring that our treasured shipment arrived safely at its destination via Dallas/Fort Worth, Paris, Dubai and finally Kabul. What a journey!

The challenge with this community arts project was creating a lasting legacy to keep at the school since our artwork was a gift to others. Our school photographer, Chris Weigel of West Coast Photos, was so moved by our project that he donated his time and the cost of producing several large photos for us. The framed panorama photo of all the Gilmore students and staff with their finished art bags serves as a daily reminder when we walk by the display case in the main hallway. The bags were also pieced together like a heart-shaped quilt

MAY, 2010

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As one of the charter members of ACEbc in the 1970's, it's with great delight that I am now able to serve this organization with a different perspective. Community schools have been my life time career and I believe that "your life is to discover your work, and through your work discover your life." The line between my life, my family and my community have blurred together over the years and made each component richer as a result.

I have been reflecting on the ACEbc board and its direction as I work in the garden over the past few weeks. For the past few years, board members have been suggesting that it was time for new members to step up and share the responsibilities of the board. At the AGM in January, there was a willingness from some of the membership to step forward and a board with some new members was elected and my hope is that we can incorporate the wisdom of the former members with the freshness and growth of some new members.

I have begun a process of connecting by phone with members around the province; it's been exciting to hear what is going on community by community. I have been asking 3 questions:

- What are you proud of?
- What are the emerging issues in your community?
- How can the ACEbc board support your work?

I would like to share a little about what coordinators in BC are proud of at this time! If these highlights spark your interest and you want to know more, contact these folks at the email address that follows.

- The ability in a community to offer more free after school programs than ever before! Laurie Lee, Powell River llee@sd47.bc.ca
- Collaboration on the Sunshine Coast, regional staff through HRSDC federal grants are providing essential life skills training along the Coast. Stacia Leech, Roberts Creek Community School rccs@dccnet.com
- The community schools in Port Alberni hold the contract and employ staff to provide the lunch program (59,000 lunches per year) keeping the money and employment in the community. Cathy Cross Alberni Community School ccross@sd70.bc.ca
- School enrolment is growing and families are coming back to the school. Darcy Topinka James Bay Community School, Victoria childcare@jamesbaycenter.ca
- Partnerships with Simon Fraser University, with multiple faculties. Steve Brown-John Miller Park and Seaview Community Schools, Coquitlam sbrown-john@sd43.bc.ca
- Young Achievers Club which made a business plan and initiates microloans Kim Davis, Likely Elementary Jr Secondary likelycommunity@yahoo.ca
- Operating a community school in a closed school building, StrongStart, 3 5 childcare, Kindercare, after school care, Youth program, 1 to 1 reading, seniors program, elections, etc in the only building in the community Bev George, Blueberry Creek Community School, Castlegar bgeorge@sd20.bc.ca
- Living history project, filming a documentary with children interviewing elders in the community, sharing the stories captured on film. Heather Walsh, Edward Milne Community School, Sooke hwalsh@sd62.bc.ca

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (continued from page 2)

- Abbotsford is faring well and has a community champion in the district office and they are producing measurable outcomes for CommunityLinks. Pierre Weldbedagt, Abbotsford pierre@westabby.org.
- Bring together all the service providers on the island to create asset maps for the community and host the first community wide integrated social services planning session to update our asset maps, look at the need for further integration and coordination of services, establish priorities and continue the conversation around sustainability April Lewis, Hornby Island hornby@valleylinks.net

I want to acknowledge the 2009 Board under the leadership of Jim Taylor, and the work they have done to continue to move community schools forward and the vision that they crafted in November to provide direction for this year. Jim has provided exceptional leadership in this organization for the past 25 years. Thank you for passing on an organization that is making a difference!

I really look forward to working together and would encourage everyone to become involved in your association. If you want to contact me I can be reached at <u>janey.talbot@sd41.bc.ca</u> or 604-664-8716.

Cheers,

Janey Talbot

FOOD FUN-LEARNING THROUGH COOKING

Imagine a small kitchen in the corner of the gym. Inside five parents and six 3 – 5 year olds along with two facilitators complete the day's recipe. The facilitators smile at a day gone well. The parents talk about how surprised they are that their child could "cook". Most impressive are the faces of the children. They are "proud as punch" of what they have made...

...Welcome to Food Fun!

Food Fun is an early literacy program designed to introduce literacy skills to children and their parents through cooking. Parents often confuse learning literacy skills with sitting and reading a book. Food Fun shows them that following a recipe, measuring ingredients, and playing with language through rhymes and songs all teach literacy skills. Skills you need to learn on the way to reading a book.

Food Fun is 6 one hour sessions. Each session has a recipe to make, a game to play, and a song and/or a rhyme about food or cooking. Recipes over the 6 sessions include Cookies in a Jar (a great recipe to practise measuring), Valentine Pizza (pre-made pizza dough cut with a heart shaped cookie cutter), Crepe Banana Wraps, Fishy Melt, Spinach Dip and everyone's favourite 5 Minute Chocolate Mug Cake. During the session facilitators talk about and ask questions about the food being used. Do you eat it at home? Do you know what else is like this vegetable? Through it all the children are being exposed to an expanding vocabulary. The children (with parent's help if necessary) measure and mix the day's recipe. Then they take it home to share or they eat it before they go.

In one session the families go to the grocery store across the street to learn about where food comes from and what fresh fruit and vegetables look like. The facilitators talk about how parents can engage their children in fun learning activities while grocery

FOOD FUN-Learning through Cooking (continued from Page 3)

shopping. Look for letters and numbers. Make a shopping list from pictures in the flyers and let your child find them in the store. What a way to explore environmental literacy!

The program has been a success. Creating teachable moments for parents and enabling children to doing something they are rarely allowed to do. Parent and child learning together is truly remarkable to see.

For more information, please contact Cathy Cross at Alberni Valley Community School at ccross@sd7o.bc.ca.

5 MINUTE CHOCOLATE MUG CAKE

INGREDIENTS:

4 tbsp flour 4 tbsp sugar 2 tbsp cocoa 3 tbsp chocolate chips (optional) 1 egg 3 tbsp milk 3 tbsp oil small splash vanilla extract 1 large coffee mug

DIRECTIONS:

Put dry ingredients in mug – mix well. Add egg – mix well. Add milk & oil – mix well. Add chocolate chips (if using) & vanilla extract – mix well.

Put mug in microwave and cook for 3 minutes on high. The cake will rise over the top of the mug but that's ok. Allow to cool a little and tip out onto a plate, if desired.

THE POWER OF PEACE (continued from page 1)

and photographed and this is now a hallmark on the homepage of our school website at <u>http://</u> <u>gilmore.sd41.bc.ca</u>. Copies of the photos were sent to the Mehan Orphanage in Kabul and in return we received photos showing many happy children with their gift bags and tables piled high with school supplies that they were able to purchase with the money we sent them.

"WHEN CARING HEARTS AND CREATIVE HANDS AND MINDS JOIN TOGETHER THE RESULTS CAN BE SO POWERFUL."

Observing our students working with the artists to create thoughtful messages of peace and kindness through art was a remarkable experience. At Gilmore Community School in 2010 we are continuing on our journey to become more caring,

respectful and peaceful global citizens and are well

on our way to earning our Peaceful Schools International flag by the end of the school year.

Submitted by Dale Owen, Community School Coordinator— Gilmore Community School (dale.owen@sd41.bc.ca).



Happy kids in Kabul receive their Peace Bags.

The ACEbc Annual General Meeting of January 29, 2010 marked a significant milestone for Past President Jim Taylor and for community education in British Columbia. Jim served on the Board of ACEbc beginning in 2004, and became President in 2006, but the past six years were a small part of the decades of work Jim has done on behalf of community education.

Jim started his teaching career in the History Department at Centennial Secondary School in Windsor, Ontario in 1969. In 1974 he moved to the rapidly growing Prince George School District to take an administrative position at Connaught Junior Secondary School.

In the 1970s community education was the fastest growing segment of education in the United States, and Prince George along with Victoria, Burnaby, Surrey, and North Vancouver created the first community schools in BC. Jim became the first Community School Coordinator in Prince George at Lakewood Junior Secondary School in 1975.

In 1978 he assumed the position of the District Coordinator of Community Education in Prince George and in 1979 became the District's Assistant Director of Adult Education.

In 1980 Jim moved to Victoria to take the Community School Coordinator job at Spectrum



THANKS, JIM!

Community School. Jim had a variety of District responsibilities in Victoria over the years which included establishing the District Continuing Education Program in 1992/3. In addition, he was instrumental in the creation of the Spectrum Job Search Centre in downtown Victoria, which has become the largest provider of employment services on southern Vancouver Island.

Jim retired from the Greater Victoria School District in 2005, but he continues to work as the Executive Director of the Spectrum Job Search Society in Victoria.

As the only province-wide community education organization, ACEbc has benefitted enormously from Jim's work and influence in Victoria. In 1995 he was instrumental in convincing the Provincial Government to establish province wide funding for community schools. For the approximately 30 community schools in BC that were members of ACEbc, that funding was a life-saving development after a decade of hard times. Within a couple of years there were over

100 community schools in the province.

In addition, Jim worked with the Ministry of Education in the development of the "Kids at Risk" Project funding. By 1999 funding for disadvantaged children had grown to approximately \$45 million. In 2002, the current BC government indicated they would cut back or eliminate the Social Equity funding, which included community schools. Jim played a major role in convincing government to retain this funding, which helps so many marginalized children and families throughout the province.

The past few years have seen many changes and new models of community schools in BC, with expansion in some large districts such as Surrey and Vancouver, but difficult times in many of the smaller, rural communities across the province. Throughout these changing times, the Board of ACEbc has been able to depend on Jim's leadership and determination to work constructively with the government, with the BCSTA, or with many other agencies to advance the principles of community education.

We're gonna miss you on the ACEbc Board, but Victoria's not far away!

Submitted by Don Reimer on behalf of the ACEbc Board.

NANAIMO'S GEORGIA AVENUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL PROMOTES LITERACY SUCCESS

Community schools provide an opportunity to develop partnerships with community groups, businesses and individuals to promote and improve literacy skills. Working in partnership means combining resources to achieve goals that would be impossible to reach working alone. A particularly successful program that depends upon partnerships is the twice yearly Family Literacy Night for primary age students and families of Georgia Avenue Community School.

The focus of our Family Literacy Night is the families songs 'read' and sung by everyone.

of primary age students. Partners provide funds for books and snacks. Individual community members and teachers are approached to be small group readers. (Some of our partners have been the school PAC, a real estate firm, Altrusa International, Nanaimo Literacy, QF grocers and more. Children take home new books, parents enjoy the great reading 'models', and many carry new skills into their home reading experiences.

(Older students can help with set up, pre-event reading, etc.)

Doors open at 6:15pm, families enter the gym, pick up a raffle ticket and themed directions. Parents find a seat and children join their friends reading on gym mats, with some community adults, or student teachers, or selected parents, who read with small groups for a few minutes, before the fun begins. The opening can be a dramatic reading of a story, high school students pantomiming a story, even seasonal

> This fun, upbeat opening is followed by three 12 minute reading sessions in classrooms and library. Community people, school aides, our district's secretary-treasurer, a well known realtor, parents who no longer have children in our school, RCMP officers, mayors, all have been readers for our special nights! We try to have at least two males. These readers have been prepped and we've asked them to use Smart Reading strategies, setting the

Needed: Six readers. They will be reading one or two books, for three 12 minute sessions. They read the same books to three different audiences.

Snacks, small, healthy, can be placed in small paper cups.

Funds for new books, donations for snacks.

Volunteers to set up gym, reading areas in six classrooms, new books in the library, snack area, to prepare snacks, and to clean up.

Volunteers to read with early arrivals, greet and distribute tickets, supervise snacks, announce when it is time to change, direct traffic, take pictures.

story up, asking questions about what comes next, using various voices. These readers are providing a fun experience for the children - reading IS fun! - and modeling good reading practices for the adults.

Many of our readers bring their favourite books, and our librarian always has several good read out loud books guest readers can pick up the week before the event. (We provide special directions to each family, informing them of the site of 'their' reading sessions ... room a, b, c, or b, c, a or c, b, a or 1,2,3, etc. We do ask that people honour their assignments, so each reader has an audience).

(continued on page 10)



"We believe supportive

RELATIONSHIPS

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HOOPS IN NEW WESTMINSTER

Last spring our school based prevention worker and a school district coordinator were talking about how to create a basketball program for kids who were not engaged in the community. It took four organizations to create this program.

Hoops is a non-competitive basketball league targeting to grade 6 – 8 students who like basketball but are not playing on a team. Each practice starts with goal setting and ends with a debrief and discussion of what the experience was like. There is one practice and one game each week. This program explores how skills and attitudes learned through sport can be applied to life. The goal is to encourage participants to focus on the skills rather than the result or the competitive nature of sports.

<u>Purpose</u>

The purpose of Hoops is to:

- encourage positive and safe play,
- increase structured out of school time recreation,
- promote mentoring among adult staff, youth volunteers, and program participants and,
- learn how to set goals for basketball and life.

Mentoring

Grade 10 - 12 students are volunteering as referees and coaches. They will be supported by a staff person from Parks, Culture and Recreation. We believe supportive relationships with non-parent adults can positively influence the course and quality of children's lives. An initial training session was held to explain the philosophy of the program and review the program content.

Measuring Success

Upon completion of the program; participants, volunteers and parents are asked to fill out an evaluation form. This feedback will be used to ensure a successful program for years-to-come.

The Partnership

This program is supported by Community Schools, our school based prevention worker, Olivet Baptist Church, Young Life and the Youth Services department of New Westminster Parks, Culture and Recreation. Space, transportation, volunteers,

training, registration, advertising, food and curriculum are all challenges that this group has solved together. The cost of enrolment for this program is \$15.00 thanks to contributions of this partner group.

For more information on the program contact Robin Stewart, District Community School Coordinator (rstewart@sd4o.bc.ca).





DICES (DENMAN ISLAND COMMUNITY EDUCATION SOCIETY) COMMUNITY PROGRAMS PROFILE - ELEMENTARY DAY PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP



Because we are a community school, we are in a sense, like a family. Under this one roof, we are interrelated: living, working and learning together in a spirit of collaboration and cooperation. There are two parts to this interrelatedness: first, the education day program administered by School District #71 and second, Community Programs administered by the coordinator and assistant coordinator and directed by the Denman Island Community Education Society advisory council. Integral to the health of this relationship is our mutual

commitment to collaborate with and support what the other strives to achieve and come together to create a feeling of threadless community in the school. This is what is unique about a community school -the idea of community permeates both programs and allows for a feeling of safety, accessibility and expression for the community as a whole.

Although DICES Community Programs largely focus on after school activities for children, youth and adults, there are numerous ways that Community Programs staff collaborate with the teaching staff at the Denman School during the day. The following highlights some of the current examples of our partnership.

Every Friday, the K,1,2 teacher, Karla Florian, generously hands over her classroom for part of the morning to allow parents and their babies and/or toddlers to play and socialise together. Sylvie Marcil facilitates Parent and Tots, providing the opportunity to play games in the gym, do crafts and enjoy library time. The school is full and well used on Friday mornings, the tots learn to feel at home in the building, and it is a great delight for both the staff and students to see the young children and their families. As well, Principal Pelka Wilshire collaborates with Sylvie to offer this preschooler group an early- literacy based program called Ready, Set, Learn which introduces families to literacy materials and activities. We also coordinate homework support through a program called Homework Blues where students can get one-on-one help from retired teacher, Harlene Holm.

While most of DICES core funding comes from School District #71, we also provide funding and financial support to the school for partial upkeep of the buildings and upgrades to equipment where appropriate.

Community Programs also provides administration for various food programs, for example, healthy snacks to supplement children's lunches when necessary as well as special whole school lunches from time to time. The new Fruit and Veggies Program is set to go as we start to receive our first deliveries of fresh produce bi-weekly. The program allows the school to provide a fresh fruit or veggie snack twice a week to students during a break from instructional time.

As lunch time activities, students can participate in the Knitting Circle on Thursdays where they can learn some new knitting skills from mentors Patricia O'Connell and Barbara Mullin or, on Fridays, play Floor Hockey with retired teacher, Dennis Lavalle.

Through a program called Create a Mural, students were able to create the four seasons on mixed media panels under the direction of artist Cathy Stoyko (and friends), the final panel as a leadership project of last year's senior class. Look for these panels soon to be installed on the Emergency Equipment shed outside the school.

Arts Afternoons has been a beautiful collaboration of the school teaching staff and administration, Community Programs, and several community artists who volunteered their time to teach students their craft or art, in media such as painting, quilt making, and pottery.

The afternoons culminated in two student art shows at the Denman Art Gallery, both of which received rave reviews from the community. *(continued on page 10)*

ACEbc Board of Directors, 2010-2011



Back Row (L to R): Don Reimer, Mike Lally, Steve Boyd, Pierre Welbedagt, Lawrence Ryan, Mike Kalivoda, Sheila MacTavish Front Row: April Lewis, Elizabeth Shannon, Bill Preston, Janey Talbot, Robin Stewart, Doreen George, Taryn Briscoe, Jennifer Scott

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OMING SOON! <



WE ARE ON THE WEB

Don't forget to visit our ACEbc website at <u>www.acebc.org</u> for information and updates.

"ACEbc BLOG"



You can sign up and share questions about community education or share articles and resources. More information to follow in the next few months...



Comments, suggestions, feedback? Or, if you would like to submit an article for the ACEbc newsletter, please contact:

> Taryn Briscoe Newsletter Coordinator taryn.briscoe@sd41.bc.ca 604-664-8823

The ACEbc Newsletter will be published three times a year (Spring, Fall, Winter).

DICES (continued from page 8)

There are so many more ways that we participate with the school that are ongoing and that are a response to the need and opportunity as they arise. We are involved in the coordination of special performances and guest speakers, craft nights and various school functions.

Every year we take a primary role in coordinating the Volunteer Appreciation Tea which involves the whole school, including the students creating beautiful art, performing music, and the older students serving refreshments to all those in the community who have supported our school in some way over the year.

We recently received this testimonial from a parent which speaks to the sustaining effect that a supporting school community has on a young person's life as they are launched into the wider world:

"My daughter has just graduated from the Denman Island Community School, where she has been a student for the past eight years. She is now at GP Vanier High School and loving it. But I feel the transition would have been a lot harder for her, if not for the great work and support she received from the Denman School, as well as the community of Denman Island. Over the years, her teachers, principals, community coordinator, support staff, and just the general standard of care her schooling has received, gave her everything she needed to make her way successfully in the educational world. With an emphasis on respect, engagement, mentorship, acceptance and awareness that the Denman School has provided, and continues to provide, she and her fellow graduates seem to be well equipped to meet the challenges of high school life. Of the ten graduates in her class, nine are on the Honour Roll at GP Vanier High School. Well done, kids! We are all very proud of you!"

Written by Sherry Frost and Patricia O'Connell

GEORGIA AVENUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL PROMOTES LITERACY SUCCESS (continued from page 6)

Reading sessions are followed by snack time for the children, while the parents enjoy a special speaker, school librarian, or public library staff member or someone from the school's Literacy Committee.

As children leave the snack room, they receive a ticket, which they can exchange for a new free book, which are displayed on the tables in our library. Funds for these books have been provided by our PAC, and occasionally by local service clubs, and businesses. Scholastic Books offer a wide variety of low cost books. Once most of the children have selected their new book, they join their parents, and the evening concludes with some special draws.... using the tickets distributed at the beginning of the evening. Donated prizes are usually hard cover books, and always, a frozen turkey. (Afterall, these parents have gone "cold turkey", turned off their television, hence the "frozen turkey" reward). Families always

enjoy these 'literacy evenings". Working with our school's Literacy Committee, and drawing upon the contacts of the Community School Coordinator, these evenings draw our families into the school, encourage reading, provide good reading ideas for parents, allow the teachers who participate to see their children and families interacting, provide a way community members, businesses and service clubs and agencies can work together to promote good literacy for the children and families of Harewood. Try a Family Literacy Event soon!

For more information contact Carolyn Iles at kiles@island.net. She is a recently retired Community School Coordinator who worked with the Harewood Family of Community Schools for 12 years.

NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING CENTRES (NLCS)

The Neighbourhood Learning Centres (NLCs) initiative builds on the achievements of community schools and many other successful models of schools working effectively with their community, developing strong partnerships, and responding to the needs of students, families and the whole community.

Read below for a success story about the NLCs in Revelstoke...

Revelstoke's Neighbourhood Learning Centres are still in the final design phase but, already, the project is delivering benefits. "From the beginning," says district superintendent Anne Cooper, "our plan was to pilot an effective community engagement process, demonstrating for other schools and districts how to start from nothing."

Heading into consultations with the community, which has a population of about 8,000, Cooper says the planning team was open to hearing just about anything. "We had no preconceived ideas, other than a focus on kids and opportunities. We gave every individual and group in Revelstoke a chance to get involved and, frankly, we were surprised by some of the ideas coming forward."

Sorting through the various proposals was "a huge job" but Cooper says clear guiding principles have helped to ensure the NLCs will reflect and respond to community needs.

For example, in addition to becoming the province's first early learning hub, providing seamless services from infancy to school age, the new NLC at Revelstoke Elementary will include an acrobatics centre. Twenty per cent of Revelstoke's student population is involved in acrobatics but, because the activity wasn't previously linked with the school system, Cooper says, "We had no idea this was so popular. We never would have known if we hadn't asked."

The elementary school NLC will also feature programs offering medical, dental, literacy and community services to students and families. The second NLC, at

the new Revelstoke Secondary, will include a community theatre and coordinated youth programs and services. Both facilities will be open 365 days a year. Operating hours have not been finalized but Cooper says NLC space will likely be open from 7:30am to 10pm.

The list of community partners is extensive, from the child care society and local sports and arts groups to the regional health authority and the ministry of children and families. "We consulted like crazy," says Cooper, "to the point where pretty much everyone in town considers this 'their' Neighbourhood Learning Centre." In other words, the project is already a success, creating a stronger, more connected community.

In the year ahead, as construction gets underway, Cooper and her team will be working out lease and rental agreements with community partners – and supporting other schools and districts still in the planning stages. "We have documented every stage of our process," Cooper says. "And remember, this was our plan from the beginning: to pilot a successful community engagement process that could be used pretty much anywhere."

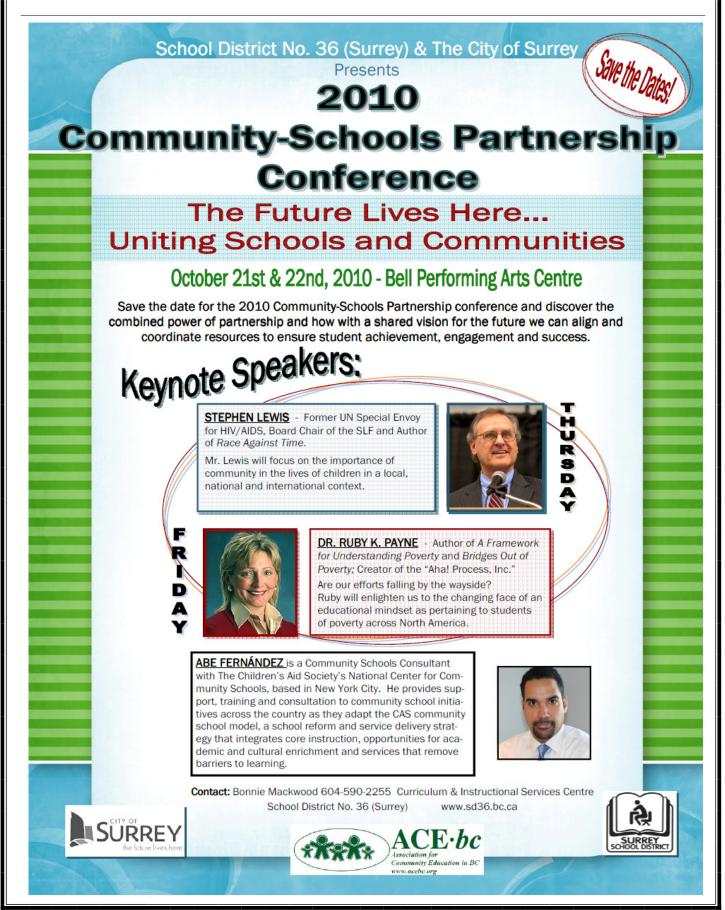
Many of the resources they've developed are available here, including:

Open house materials NLC criteria Powerpoint materials

Further Information: contact Anne Cooper, Superintendent of Schools <u>acooper@sd19.bc.ca</u> or Alan Chell, Chairperson, Revelstoke Board of Education <u>achell@live.com</u>.

For more information on NLCs, visit the website at www.neighbourhoodlearningcentres.gov.bc.ca where success stories and new tools will be published.

For more information on the School Community Connections Program: Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres where Boards of Education and local governments may apply jointly for a maximum of 3 grants up to \$30 000 per school district, visit www.neighbourhoodlearningcentres.gov.bc.ca/nlc_funding.html.



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ACE	NULES	2



Please mail with application and payment to: ACEbc Membership c/o Doreen George, 1386 Wynbrook Place, Burnaby, BC V5A 3Y6 PAGE 13