



Overarching Project Goal:

NRLC's objective is to provide strategies and professional development support that will lead teachers to develop their knowledge and understanding of the new curriculum and be able to implement the new Social Studies program of studies as intended.

Overview

This implementation plan was developed by the Project Coordinator in consultation with the NRLC Executive Director and the Zone One Advisory Committee, and based on feedback and data collected in the first cycle of social studies implementation. The 2007-2008 plan followed the cycle laid out in the Guide to Comprehensive PD and is based on three pillars of the ARPDC. There are multiple entry points and the menu of learning opportunities is scaffolded to ensure that teachers are able to access professional development that meets their learning needs whether they are initiating, developing or sustaining their growth.

NRLC Social Studies Project Advisory Committee

The main role of this group is to provide input as they oversee the planning and monitor the progress of project implementation.

Advisory committee meetings were held six times; Roving Advisory meetings were also held which allowed more teachers from the field to participate.

Advisory Comments and Suggestions:

Dates of Meetings	# of Districts Represented	# of Partners	Total # in Attendance
September 24	2	2	25
October 31	7	3	18
January 11	7	2	18
March 5	5	2	13
April 21	5	2	13
May 21	7	2	30
Total			102

- Advisory meetings are a good use of my time.
- I have regularly attended the advisory meetings – this has been great as an overview and an opportunity to provide feedback.

Project Coordinator

A full time project coordinator was in place for 2007- 08. As the central project contact, the coordinator works to facilitate zone opportunities while collaborating among teachers, districts, Zone One members, NRLC Executive Director, Alberta Ed, ATA and teachers' convention boards, and other provincial social studies coordinators. The NRLC project coordinator communicates closely with all stakeholders using various methods including face to face meetings; electronic media.



Budget and Administration

A total of \$525 000 is available for the three years of this cycle of the project. The overall budget was designed to encourage district collaboration and multiple partnerships. This proved to be very effective with resources shared for more than 44 regular workshops, 3 webcasts (shared provincially with other consortia), and a series of 6 full days on assessment with Anne Davies involving more than 1800 participants.

NRLC was able to stay within budget parameters while providing a high calibre, varied program. The funding for curriculum implementation is important to districts and the zone, and allows teachers to become immersed in both the content and the pedagogy that they will use with students.

Project Plan

NRLC continued the process of consulting with advisory representatives, reviewing survey data, and listening to teacher voice as a plan was prepared for 2007-08. The plan addressed all grant requirements and received unanimous approval at all levels of gov-

Partners in Curriculum Implementation

- Facilitators** demonstrate, design, develop and deliver quality PD
- Administrators** show leadership, walk the talk, provide resources, encourage participation
- Curriculum Facilitators** provide sustainability; facilitate, model, mentor; small group or 1 to 1
- Project Coordinator** – create, coordinate, collaborate, communicate
- Teachers** we need to nurture & support; guide and mentor; listen to their voices
- Executive Director** works collaboratively with all zone and project partners.
- Advisory Committee** – influential, informative, innovative, implementation ambassadors
- Provincial Social Studies Project Coordinators, Alberta Ed** share resources, work collaboratively

ernance. During the year the plan was **continuously re-visited and modified** and it continues to be a “**living**” document for the zone.

Districts were encouraged to create their own **implementation plans**. This has only met with moderate success. **District implementation planning is an area in need of further attention.**

Description of Learning Oppor.	# of Lrng Ops.	# of Part's	Avg #/ Ses.
NRLC Regional Learning Oppor.	43	688	16
District Delivered Learning Oppor.	51	1655	32
Anne Davies Assessment Series	6	1848	308
Webcasts: 99 Min. of Social Studies	3	130	43
Total NRLC & Dist Ses. – Full Day	103	4321	
Mighty Peace Teachers Conv (pt day)	20	337	17
Sessions offered by Curr. Facilitators	25	177	7

Provision of Learning Opportunities District Delivered Learning Opportunities

Districts and/or schools could apply for funds to have PD provided in locations of their choice.

- **51 District Days, 1655 total participants.**
- District requested sessions rarely get cancelled due to lack of registrations and have higher average attendance (32/session).

NRLC Regional Learning Opportunities

NRLC provided a wide variety of workshops with low reg fees (hosting costs only) and an **average number of 16 participants per session** (twice as many sessions/participants as last year).

- **43 Learning Opportunities, 688 participants in 2007-08**
- All sessions were offered as joint ventures with multiple districts and/or band/private schools in central locations.

Summer Workshops

Zone one teachers continue to be positive about their summer workshop experiences. **Session participants expressed very high levels of satisfaction** and applicability to classroom work. NRLC was very pleased with the teacher attendance.

Building Leadership Capacity:

Building Capacity Through Assessment: Sessions to train teacher leaders using the ERLC resource.

Administrators’ Toolkit: Many administrators had a session using this excellent resource.

Web 2.0 Tools for Technology: training so they can provide leadership at their schools using Web 2.0 tools.

Weaving Children’s Literature into Social Studies: Very successful with facilitators presenting many sessions.

Cognitive Coaching: districts were provided with some funding. Continued exceptional response.

Anne Davies Assessment Series: Districts were invited to send teacher leaders to two different day-long “leadership in assessment” workshops.

Newsletters and Electronic Communication

Professional articles were contracted

- **85% of those who have read a newsletter agree that the content is useful** (up 6% over last year).

NRLC Website

Teachers and administrators are going to the website in increasing numbers.

- 68% of teachers responded that they use the website “occasionally” or “often” (up 18% over last year).

LearnAlberta

- **Use of this resource has increased to over 70%** (up 20% over the previous year).

Partnerships

- **NRLC partnered with the ATA at the Mighty Peace Teachers Convention.**
- NRLC sponsored one **French Immersion curriculum facilitator** to attend training sessions.
- Partnered with other provincial consortia. **ATA Provincial Social Studies conference.**
- **Future consideration:**
- **The Peace River Museum project did not get going this year. There is also an exceptional centre for FNMI resources in Grouard, and the Grande Prairie Museum that have excellent resources.**
- **Grande Prairie Regional College’s “TEN” program** (Teacher Education North) – an area of untapped resources at this time as well.

Provincial Webcasts

NRLC partnered with Learning Network and Calgary Regional Consortium to do a much-requested pilot project delivering PD via webcast. Our goal was to make PD accessible anytime, any place.

- TC2 offered their services at no charge in order to build their own capacity in the use of the webcast as a vehicle for PD delivery—Roland Case and Garfield Gini-Newman were the two lead facilitators who came to zone one “virtually.”
- Teachers from rural areas signed up more than urban teachers.
- Webcasts are archived at www.learning-network.org.

Comments

- *I like this format because it allows us to participate in quality presentations while not having to travel. We can enjoy a comfortable atmosphere at our own school.*

Webcast Pros	Webcast Cons
Big name presenters in small towns	Tech glitches
No travel, convenient, accessible	Lack of interaction – need more hands on
Cutting edge of technology	Easy to drift – be off task
Cost	Getting used to the technology

Anne Davies Assessment Series

Bringing the experts to Zone One – In Person

All districts in zone one participated in bringing Anne Davies in to do six days of PD on assessment (the most requested need expressed during the first two years). This was almost a year in the planning

- 1848 participants attended the 6 days (average of 308 per session).

Five Top Requests for PD Include ...

- Assessment • Grade Level Planning • Demonstration Lessons
- Inquiry • Critical Thinking

NRLC Survey Questions completed by participants 2007-08 Results from Surveys at PD Opportunities for Social Studies	Satisfied or Very Satisfied
I can apply the info learned to my class/school/district	97%
Overall, I was satisfied with this session.	97%
Satisfaction with NRLC session facilitators/presenters	98%

Reflections/Recommendations re NRLC programming:

- Work to develop district capacity and sustainability.
- Encourage zone & provincial collaboration; expand upon work with francophone board and other consortia.
- Continue to support teachers at multiple levels (initiate, develop, sustain).
- “Evergreen” program elements to allow for multiple entry points - many teachers just beginning their journey.
- Look into partnerships (e.g. Peace River Museum, AAC, TC2, other zones in province).
- Continue working cross-subject— this increases the likelihood of transfer, builds teacher capacity.
- Work with administrators.
- Integrate multiple perspectives (including aboriginal and francophone).
- Listen to teachers – be sensitive to overload.
- Continue to provide PD in a variety of formats using embedded time and/or existing structures (1/2/3 day sessions, PLC days, PD days, ATA PD days/activities, et al). Host in multiple sites.
- Explore alternate delivery options: webcast/VC, dinner sessions, weekends, summer.
- Provide convenient PD in locations close to home/school including “caching” sessions for later viewing.
- **Be open, responsive, flexible, creative and fun. Ensure that teachers enjoy their PD experiences.**

Impact on Teacher Practice – Comparison to Two Year Summary

Is the curriculum implementation project having an impact on teacher practice? Yes. This has been confirmed through survey data, anecdotal records, session evaluations, level of participation, and general discussions with teachers and administrators.

Results from all grades (2005-2007) were averaged & compared to all grades in 07-08. Roll up of teachers who indicate they have “some” or “a lot” of knowledge in the following areas.	05-07	07-08
Teacher knowledge and understanding	71	82
Teacher confidence re effective teaching strategies	69	80
Ability to recognize effective assessment practices	58	70
Continued need for professional development	70	71

Impact on Administrators 2007-2008

Is the curriculum implementation project having an impact on administrators? Yes ... But ... Administrators are busy people with

varied responsibilities and getting their time and attention requires thoughtful preparation. When they can find the time to participate they like what they see and they agree that this curriculum has the power to change teaching practice, improve student achievement, and change the culture of their schools. Administrators indicate the biggest barrier to session attendance is “competing priorities.” They are responsible for more than social studies.

Suggestions for Admin:

- Model the pedagogy you want teachers to use in classrooms – use powerful strategies requiring active participation at staff meetings, attend workshops with your teachers, use the social studies newsletter as a PD resource for a “mini book club,” do classroom walkthroughs - see what teachers are doing, be an active participant in the curriculum/implementation project.
- Provide sub coverage and financial support for teachers to attend PD – have them share with other teachers at your school – encourage them to share with teachers at other sites. Have them share with you!
- **Continue to make social studies curriculum implementation a priority – teachers will follow your lead.**

Reflections as we are Reaching New Heights

Consideration for Next Steps

- One of the greatest project challenges continues to be finding time to offer PD. Working with embedded time is helping.
- Multiple perspectives will require further professional development.
- Continue to work with districts to encourage up to date implementation plans. Continue to involve administrators as they are key to project success. Continue to work closely with Advisory Committee and ARPDC Social Studies Project Coordinators around the province. These are all essential elements to Social Studies curriculum implementation success.

Final Reflections

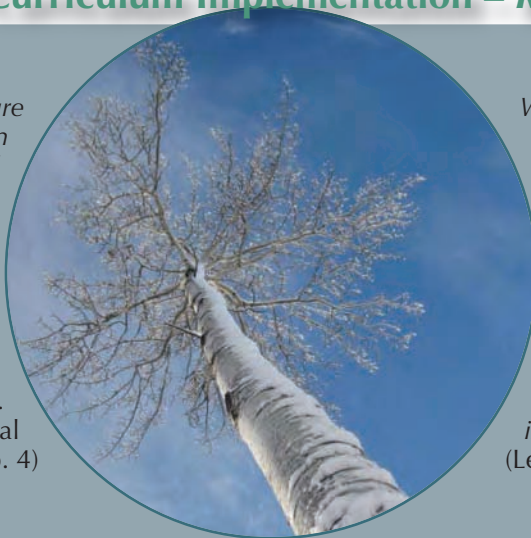
Alberta Education has continued providing an exceptional opportunity for Alberta’s students and teachers by extending the support of this unique implementation model through to 2010.

Curriculum implementation of this magnitude is resulting in increased capacity and sustainability in the area of Social Studies. The work is challenging and time consuming at the provincial, consortia, zone, district, school and classroom level, but the rewards that our Social Studies teachers have experienced has brought professional development and curriculum implementation to new heights.

NRLC Social Studies Curriculum Implementation – Reaching New Heights

One constant finding in the research literature is that noticeable improvements in education almost never take place in the absence of professional development. At the core of each and every successful educational improvement effort is a thoughtfully-conceived, well-designed, and well supported professional development component ... it is an absolutely necessary ingredient in all educational improvement efforts.

(T. Guskey, Evaluating Professional Development, 2000, p. 4)



We are setting a standard that is world class. Implementing a curriculum that values multiple perspectives, explores purposeful content over rote learning of facts, encourages students and teachers to become critical thinkers who are involved in inquiry, and models exemplary pedagogy, is visionary in scope while remaining achievable in the everyday practice of teachers. We are truly reaching new heights in curriculum implementation.

(Leslie Snyder, NRLC, 2006, 2007)