



**NRLC Social Studies Curriculum
Implementation Final Report 2005-2010**
“Project in Bloom”
September 2005 – December 2010

*Northwest Regional Learning Consortium • www.nrlc.net
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Photo courtesy Tammie Diesel

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Grant Background:

Alberta Education provided two grants (2005-2007 \$600,000; 2007-2010 \$525,000) to NRLC to provide implementation support to the new Social Studies program.

Overarching Project Goal:

Given that student learning is enhanced when jurisdiction staff have access to effective Professional Development, and that professional development needs to focus on enhancing professional practice as well as leadership capacity at the school and jurisdiction levels we identified an **overarching goal for our project:**

Students will demonstrate achievement of specific learner outcomes for their grade level according to the Alberta Social Studies Program of Study.

As Professional development is a shared responsibility, NRLC believes that **our role** in actualizing this goal 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 program of studies as intended.**

Our planning to meet this goal will be shaped by our beliefs about effective curriculum implementation:

Effective curriculum implementation leads to a change in practice that enhances student learning.

Effective Collaboration (process) – Effective Practice (content) – Effective Adult learning (context)

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 each year of the implementation project. From 2005 through 2010 the plan followed the cycle laid out in the Guide to Comprehensive PD Planning and included innovative professional development

strategies to address all grant requirements. These are fully outlined in the complete project plans for each year (available on the NRLC website at www.nrlc.net).

The plans included multiple entry points and the menu of learning opportunities was scaffolded to ensure that teachers would be able to access professional development that met their learning needs whether they were initiating, developing or sustaining their growth. This grant supported implementation over five school years (from September 2005 through December 2010).

Regional Background/Context

The NRLC region includes nine school districts as well as francophone, band, private and charter schools in a large geographic area that covers the northern half of Alberta. The combination of rural and urban schools makes for a multiplicity of teaching assignments and professional development needs. NRLC is responsive to emerging needs from all stakeholders and recognizes that adaptability and flexibility are essential to ensure all needs are met. Programs are provided in many locations throughout the zone to reduce travel time. Local facilitators, district requested and organized days, as well as building more local expertise through collaborative cohorts have all increasingly helped to meet local needs. The final 18 months of the project saw a decrease in the number of general sessions, while maintaining a strong complement of collaborative cohort sessions. Participant satisfaction remained high throughout the 5 years and there is much data to support the success of this implementation project.

Zone One Districts

Fort Vermilion SD #52, Grande Prairie RCSSD #28, Grande Prairie Public SD #2357, High Prairie SD #48, Holy Family Catholic RD #37, Northern Gateway RD #10, Northland SD #61, Northwest Francophone Ed #1, Peace River SD #10, Peace Wapiti SD #76, Francophone-Charter-Private-Band Schools; Partners: Alberta Education, ATA, NRLC

Partners in Curriculum Implementation

Facilitators demonstrate, design, develop and deliver quality PD

Leadership Cohorts develop in-depth knowledge of the curriculum and share with other zone/district teachers.

Curriculum Facilitators provide sustainability; facilitate, model, mentor; small group or 1 to 1

Project Coordinator – create, coordinate, collaborate, communicate

Administrators show leadership, walk the talk, provide resources, encourage participation

Teachers we need to nurture & support; guide and mentor; listen to their voices

Executive Director works collaboratively with all zone and project partners.

Provincial Social Studies Project Coordinators, Alberta Ed share resources, work collaboratively

Central Administrators provide support to all levels of the project.

Advisory Committee – influential, informative, innovative, implementation ambassadors

Project Advisory Committee

NRLC Social Studies Project Advisory Committee

Advisory Committee

The advisory committee was integral to the success of the project. Eight districts regularly sent one or more representatives to the meetings. The main role of the group was **to provide input on ways the grant could best meet regional needs**. These representative voices provided feedback on implementation strategies, offered suggestions for PD, collaborated on larger zone projects, and provided input re unique district needs.

Advisory committee meetings were held from 2 to 6 times each year of the project (including dual purpose meetings allowing the central core of the advisory to serve in multiple roles). A number of these meetings were held via VC or Elluminate. Within the core advisory group a strong bond and a high degree of trust developed. They **valued the sharing, collaboration and open discussion forum** where they could discuss issues, concerns, ideas and innovations.

Although we had a strong central core, it was recognized that more “teacher voice” was needed and in 2007-08 **Roving Advisory Meetings** were initiated. NRLC took the meetings to PD days, convention, staff meetings – anywhere that teachers were gathered. This gave teachers in the field more opportunities to provide ideas and tell us what would best meet the needs of classroom professionals.



Each meeting offered a “district sharing time” where an overview of initiatives supporting implementation was provided. This sharing of ideas and information encouraged many district partnerships with the resulting collaboration responsible for many of the innovative joint projects in Zone One.

Many individual meetings were also scheduled with curriculum leaders of our districts. These meetings allowed for rich professional dialogue, and planning and decision making that was directly

related to their specific jurisdictions. The challenge of releasing teachers from classrooms, budgetary restraints, difficulty in booking subs, and the disruption in students and classrooms, were discussed at length. Overall these discussions were very valuable in providing context from the district perspective allowing NRLC to be more responsive to individual district realities.

Advisory members grappled with ways to increase engagement (teachers, admin, central admin), raise session attendance, overcome distance/travel issues, work with school calendars, and reduce substitute teacher requirements. Some solutions were found during the project. The latest exciting news is that three of our largest districts have announced a 2011-12 joint initiative with 3 common PD days to encourage more of the zone collaborative planning which began when the social studies project rolled out in this zone.

Indicators of success: high attendance of all districts at advisory meetings; inclusion of aboriginal and francophone representatives; open dialogue and consensus on project plans and use of grant funding; district sharing and networking; modeling program pedagogy with advisory group; NRLC, Alberta Ed, ATA partners.

The advisory developed an intimate knowledge of both the project and the zone and were project ambassadors and advocates with the other members of their districts.



Advisory Comments and Suggestions:

- *I have regularly attended the advisory meetings – this has been great as an overview and an opportunity to provide feedback.*
- *Communication methods are fine. ... We are inundated with email.*
- *The advisory has been good use of my time. Even with VC it's good to hear what others are doing.*
- *I am so thankful for the services of the Consortium. I am not sure how I would manage all our PD needs without their assistance and expertise.*
- *Thanks for your hard work this past year and for your ongoing help in district planning and moving Zone 1 forward with effective professional development initiatives.*
- *Open honest communication is always appreciated. The Comprehensive PD Planning sessions are always good.*
- *There were multiple Social Studies sessions where PWSd partnered with NRLC to offer opportunities for collaboration with other divisions ... This has proven to be very effective at expanding collective capacity ...*
- *This will help me engage staff in curriculum conversations.*
- *We need a new process around how the newsletter is circulated.*
- *The sessions were adequate in scope and diversity of offering. They were effective and well received by participants. Teachers have felt a bit of PD overload in our division during the past two years ... my perception is that we collectively managed this more effectively this past spring. I like the planned focus that NRLC has identified for next year.*
- *Provide menu options early in the year so districts can plan ahead and promote sessions.*



Curriculum Implementation Plan

Project Plan

NRLC consulted with advisory representatives, reviewed survey data, and listened to teacher voice as thorough preparations each year led to the development of **comprehensive zone plans**. These plans **addressed all grant requirements** (innovative PD activities and strategies, multiple perspectives, summer institutes, administrator sessions, building district capacity, role of project coordinator) and received unanimous approval at all levels of governance.

The plans followed the cycle outlined in **A Guide to Comprehensive Professional Development Planning** and reflected the **3 pillars of ARPDC** beliefs about curriculum implementation (*Effective Collaboration, Effective Practice, Effective Adult Learning*). Careful attention to program planning ensured multiple entry points for teachers so that they were able to enhance their professional practice whether they were *initiating, developing or sustaining* their learning. During the five years the plans were continuously re-visited and modified and became **"living documents"** that were adjusted and flexed as needed.

Five years of pre and post implementation surveys were administered to teachers, administrators and district key contacts, allowing NRLC to tailor PD to meet specific needs and requests. In many cases, districts used the information from the needs assessments to write their own implementation plans. More districts were able to put plans in place as they better understood the services they could access through NRLC.

Through the course of the project NRLC responded to the increase in district planning/requests by **changing the base model and budgeting for increased numbers of school and district hosted sessions** (including multi-district sessions/cohorts). Initially the project focused on many single day PD events in a wide variety of areas. This evolved into "series" work with some electronic storage for sharing lessons and units (www.zone1socialstudies.pbworks.com). The beginning of the project also saw an attempt to work with **district curriculum facilitators**. This was very

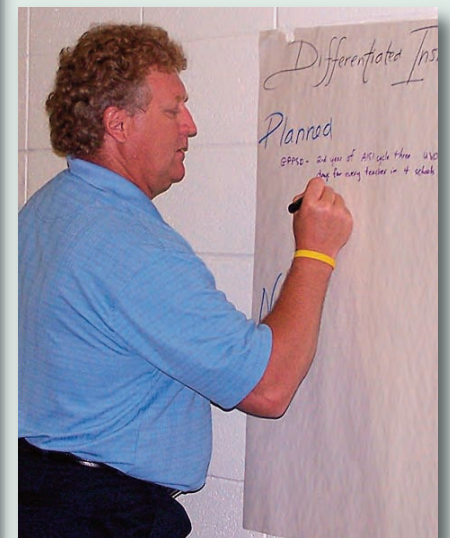
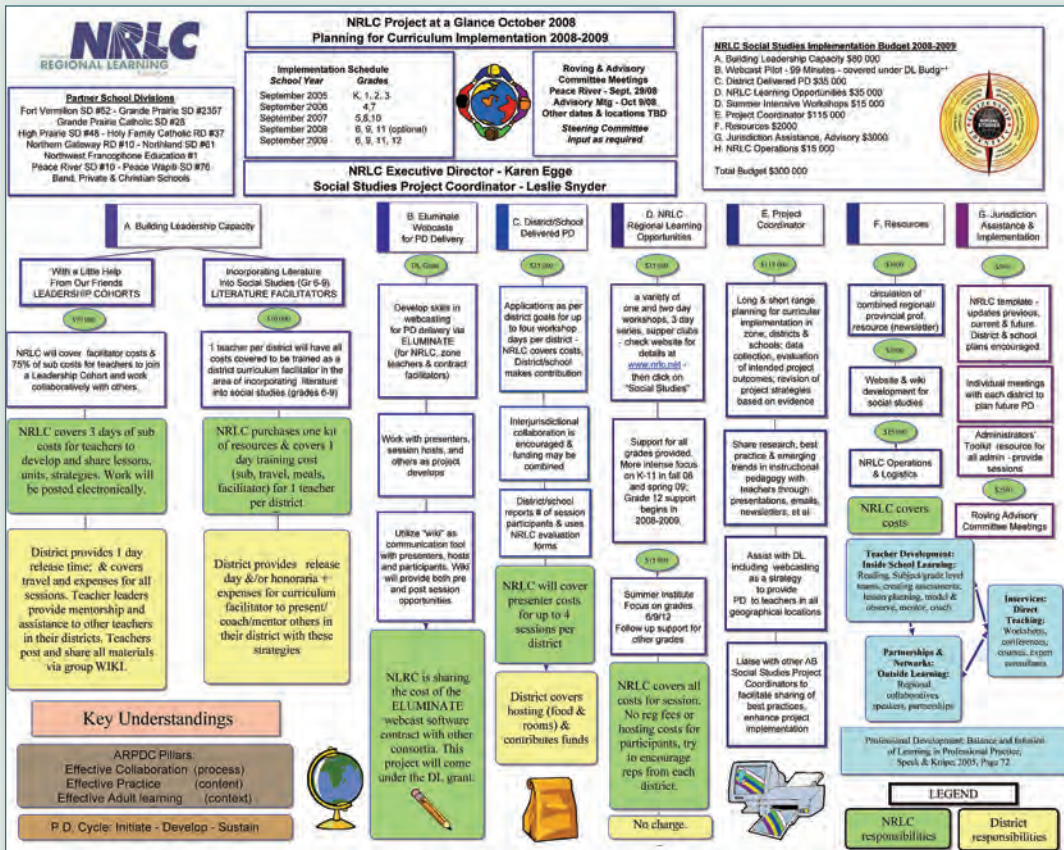


successful when districts were able to support the facilitators with additional time to prepare and present, and pay for the sub funds and additional expenses. Few districts were able to provide this support and the process was discontinued for the most part.

A brief adventure into the world of "webinars" resulted in **"99 Minutes of Social Studies"** with teachers from across the province excited to take 3 web-based PD sessions from their home desktops. This set the framework for additional webinars in later years, as well as **establishing an effective model we are using today in many subject areas**: face to face for initial session/s followed up with electronic webinars to continue the work done in the session. (One example January 2011: <http://www.nrlc.net/content/getting-our-heads-around-assessment>)

As the project evolved it was evident that teachers wanted to be "connected" in groups with others at similar grade levels. In the final two years of the project, the **cohort leadership model** was embraced as the **most effective** way to deliver PD in Zone One and a large amount of planning/funding/support went directly to sharing these costs with districts. PWSD opened their Moodle to all zone cohort teachers and this process of professional learning blossomed as teachers met in groups over sustained periods of time, and then shared their work via an electronic medium – the PWSD Moodle. One example can be found at the following link: <http://collaboration.pwswd76.ab.ca/course/view.php?id=46>

Re-designing the basic framework for the plan as the project evolved allowed NRLC the flexibility to be guided by our advisory committee, teacher input, zone needs assessments, Alberta Ed, and other project coordinator work from across the province. The five year window of effective PD implementation practices and the "team" approach added immeasurable value to the overall project.



Project Coordination, Partnerships

Project Coordinator



NRLC was fortunate to have the same project coordinator for the entire implementation project (varying each year between 0.75 – 1.0 fte). As the central project contact, the coordinator worked to facilitate zone opportunities while collaborating among teachers, districts, zone members, NRLC Executive Director, Alberta Ed, ATA and teachers' convention boards, and other provincial social studies coordinators.

This **diverse role** included communication, support, coordination, organization ... presenting, networking, liaising,

consulting, strategizing, responding, planning and preparing (sessions, plans, reports and more), listening ... creativity, development, reflection, goal setting, vision, collaboration.

The NRLC project coordinator **communicated closely** with all stakeholders using various methods including face to face meetings; electronic media (telephone, email, webcast, video conference, website); through reports, documents and newsletters. Most communication was two way dialogue that informed the project and allowed for a responsive plan that met the needs of teachers in zone classrooms.

The continuity of one person throughout the project provided the opportunity to **develop robust and enduring relationships**. Besides being the main conduit for social studies, it allowed connections to be made to the consortium's other programs and NRLC's overall profile was enhanced as a PD provider. District comments expressed satisfaction with the role and noted that it would be difficult to have a project of this magnitude without an overall coordinator.

Comments:

- We have made very significant use of the NRLC coordination services for our implementation and cannot say enough in support of the value of this service. Leslie Snyder has done an excellent job in support of the Social Studies curriculum implementation and has been invaluable in terms of her leadership and commitment. She has played a valuable role in terms of coordinating PD events for our district, selecting presenters to meet our needs, providing in-services for teachers, keeping key contacts informed regarding options and opportunities. She has effectively maintained connection with schools/teachers, encouraging participation and coordinating events.*
- Project Coordinator is the key to success of the implementation. Having one point of contact in the NRLC focused on social studies is excellent.*
- We made use of the project coordinator services and the support we received was invaluable. Without coordination the effort to put these events together and to keep people informed would have resulted in much less happening.*



- Leslie has done an outstanding job of organizing and promoting NRLC programs and events. She is flexible in her approach and has the interests of our teachers at heart in each of her decisions regarding programs, speakers, presenters, MPTC events, technology and tools, collaboration opportunities and future visioning regarding this project and regarding the NRLC.*
- Our district makes good use of this position. The coordinator is always extremely helpful in suggesting innovative methods and alternatives that can meet my district's needs.*



Consortia and Tc2 - Partnership Opportunities

Alberta Education, ARPDC & Other Partners

Implementation support of this magnitude had not been done in Alberta Education prior to this project and it required a coordinated effort to ensure it rolled out as intended. The strong support from Alberta Education and the other ARPDC social studies project coordinators was appreciated and enhanced what was provided to Alberta teachers. From the very first meeting of ARPDC with Alberta Ed, a team synergy developed which allowed for open sharing of resources, ideas, facilitators, sessions and more.

A very few specific examples that developed over time include:

- Alberta Education's development of the Online Guide (later to become known as LearnAlberta)
- ERLC's kits on "Building Leadership Capacity Through Assessment"
- SAPDC's Administrator's Toolkit
- NRLC & LN's collaboration for the "99 Minutes of Social Studies Webcast Series"
- CARC & CRC's collaboration to do an ICT infusion cohort
- Alberta Ed Learner Assessment Branch development of sessions on topics such as writing effective multiple choice questions
- Alberta Education Summer Institutes
- TC2 meeting with the coordinators to find ways to further develop needed materials
- NRLC & LN's sharing of a joint social studies wiki which other teachers could access
- AAC's development of summer assessment workshops
- ATA's specialist council conferences including sessions with ARPDC facilitators promoting the roll out

There were many, many more examples of collaboration between all stakeholders in the province. These demonstrated the value placed on the new curriculum, and the benefits of teamwork and collaboration.

Alberta Education & Consortia Supports and Services

Alberta Education provided strong supports and resources throughout the program. The many departments that assisted each consortium provided essential services that we utilized repeatedly. Alberta Education personnel were flexible in their approaches and were able to tailor their services to specific regional needs.

From the outset, the ongoing mentoring by Shirley Douglas of the ARPDC Project Coordinators was pivotal to the success of the implementation. Shirley's clear vision and thorough knowledge of the program of studies assisted all consortia as she provided sessions, fielded questions, strategized with each zone, and capably gave guidance in all areas. Additional assistance provided by Cheryl Przybilla and Scott Trueman was also greatly appreciated. Overall curriculum support from Charmaine Brooks and Jim Rubuliak assisted us in meeting grant deliverables, writing concise reports, and keeping Alberta Education informed.

There was a clear understanding by all parties that each of the areas of the province were going to develop unique professional



their Executive Directors. The innovative vision of Alberta Education when they opted for a staggered roll out, provided *pre-implementation support*, commissioned resources based on the program of studies, and then provided *extended support over a number of years* was visionary in scope and had never been attempted before. The strong faith placed in the abilities of the coordinators, the support of the Executive Directors, and the guidance of Alberta Education all contributed to curriculum implementation success.



Alberta Education Summer Institutes provided teachers with a wide variety of activities and resources. Each year, Kaye Steward would bring top-notch speakers and ideas forward. The opening speaker for the first Summer Institute in 2004 was Senator Douglas Roche, who spoke to K-3 teacher about a culture of peace and their responsibilities as educators to ensure that conflict resolution was a primary goal. That was a transformational moment for many of those teachers, who expressed that for the first time, they were treated as the leaders of a new initiative that would then move through the grades to grade 12. Teachers happily immersed themselves in sessions at Fort Edmonton Park, Pound maker Lodge, Francophone La Cité, and other locations. An impressive *citizenship ceremony* was hosted at the close of one summer institute, and many of us will remember screening the movie "Hank Williams First Nation." Through all of this teachers were able to get a handle on the basic concepts of the program well in advance of using it in their classrooms.

Staff at Learner Assessment were actively involved in program development from the onset and developed sessions to assist teachers with Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations, as well as topics related to formative assessment. They provided exceptional sessions related to all things assessment. Thanks to Tim Coates, Dwayne Girard and Patrick Roy for their unique approaches to working with teachers. Sessions such as "My Kingdom for a Source" were engaging and informative and gave teachers much needed time to work with assessment practices before trying them out in their classrooms.



Basic and support resources provided through the capable direction of AnnMarie Lyseng, Shelly Wells and staff brought the curriculum to life. Karen LaRone took all suggestions related to the Online Guide and moved the improved versions over to www.LearnAlberta.ca. Karen fielded phone calls, gave sessions, worked in collaboration

development opportunities tailored to local needs, but that a core vision and philosophy would provide cohesion to all the work. That understanding allowed for a climate of sharing, not "one-upmanship" or competitiveness. The deep understanding of the local needs of each community was shared with the coordinators to reflect a realistic perspective on what was possible in a region.

Regular meetings co-hosted by consortia and Alberta Education proved to be valuable as the overall shape of the project began in one iteration and evolved into many others. These meetings would often result in entirely new concepts, projects, or areas of foci, as coordinators shared what was working and what could be improved. We moved quickly from sharing "*best practices*" to developing "*next practices*" in our collaborative quest to meet the needs of our regions. ARPDC consultants counted on the meetings and the overall vision of Alberta Education to guide us in

completely uncharted territory. We often quoted something Shirley once noted: "**We are building the bridge as we walk on it.**"

Credit must be given to all provincial ARPDC Coordinators and



with teachers, facilitators and consortia, to provide countless hours of support.

Alberta Education and the ARPDC project coordinators formed the first "*collaborative cohort*" as they worked together to create a vision for Social Studies in our province.

Provision of Learning Opportunities

Provision of Learning Opportunities

NRLC considered a number of factors when planning for curriculum implementation.

The Basics...

- Building sustainability (e.g. Leadership capacity, time and funding)
- Meeting basic program requirements (e.g. K & E, Dimensions of thinking, SNMI)
- Unique district characteristics (e.g. Colony Schools, multi-grade classrooms)
- Structure of PD days within district/zone (e.g. PLC's, monthly PD Fridays, afternoon PD)
- District and teacher requests for specific presenters/sessions (e.g. Anne Davies, Tim Coates, Brenda Dyck)
- Adult learning theory (e.g. job embedded, relevant, contextual, just-in-time et al)
- Emerging needs and trends (e.g. cohorts, web-based PD, Moodle, wiki)
- Participant feedback (e.g. session evaluations, pre- and post-needs assessment, bi-annual surveys)
- Barriers to participation (e.g. competing priorities, distance, subs)
- Areas of concern (e.g. funding, resources, responsibilities)

Times Have Changed...

From September 2005 until January of 2011 there have been a number of substantive changes have impacted education and professional learning necessitating changes in content, delivery and storage of teacher materials.

The two biggest changes impacting how teachers teach and how students learn revolved around these big ideas:

1. Technology: LearnAlberta, SmartBoards, webinars, iPods, Web 2.0 tools et al
2. Cohort work: Teacher collaboration over time, posting results to wikis or Moodles

By the end of the project there were a variety of ways for teachers to access PD through the Social Studies project. NRLC was very

Description of Learning Opportunities	# of Learning Opportunities	# of Participants
NRLC Sessions	Dec 2010: 2 09-10: 32 08-09: 53 07-08: 43 06-07: 49 05-06: 37 Total: 179	Dec 2010: 42 09-10: 205 08-09: 818 07-08: 688 06-07: 852 05-06: 845 Total: 3450
District Days	Dec 2010: 9 09-10: 27 08-09: 21 07-08: 51 06-07: 45 05-06: 18 Total: 153	Dec 2010: 61 09-10: 484 08-09: 319 07-08: 1655 06-07: 984 05-06: 441 Total: 3944
Admin Session Admin Session Webcast sessions Anne Davies series Admin sessions Admin sessions Total Admin sessions Total Webinars	Dec 2010: 1 09-10: 4 07-09: 6 + 4 07-08: 6 06-07: 2 05-06: 9 Total Adm: 12 Total Web: 4	Dec 2010: 30 09-10: 45 08-09: 130 + 79 07-08: 1848 06-07: 71 05-06: 226 Total Admin: 327 Total Web: 45
Totals – NRLC & District Days	Dec 2010: 11 09-10: 60 08-09: 81 07-08: 100 06-07: 98 05-06: 64 Total: 414	Dec 2010: 103 09-10: 719 08-09: 1346 07-08: 4191 06-07: 1907 05-06: 1512 Total: 9778
MPTC, District Curriculum Facilitators (delivered by others)	09-10: 19 08-09: 16+ 31 07-08: 20+25 06-07: 74 05-06: no stats Total: 185	09-10: 160 08-09: 254 + 177 07-08: 337 + 176 06-07: 270 05-06: no stats Total: 1374
Annual Totals	Dec 2010: 11 09-10: 79 08-09: 128 07-08: 145 06-07: 172 05-06: 64	Dec 2010: 103 09-10: 879 08-09: 1949 07-08: 4704 06-07: 2177 05-06: 1512
Grand Total	599 sessions	11,324 participants

Evolution of learning opportunities:

Less of this:	More of this:
NRLC delivered sessions	District requested sessions
Curriculum Facilitator Model	Cohort Leadership Model
Paper Newsletters	Emails, Website info
Photocopying - share units/lessons	Moodles, wikis – building work together
One day sessions	Series or cohorts - Multi day
Lessons planned with PPTs	Lessons planned with Notebook Software for SmartBoards
All teachers new to the program	Teachers at multiple levels

deliberate in selecting variety in format, content, facilitators and delivery styles. Teachers needs have changed as they have used the program. They have a better sense of what they know, and what they want to learn. They have a heightened awareness of creating lessons that begin with enduring understandings and are based on critical challenges. They see the textbooks as resources and they start their planning with the program of studies. All of these things together mean that teachers value collaboration in order to have interesting instruction that challenges today's students. Teachers are striving to provide interactive learning environments that are creating communities of thinkers.

K-3	4,7	5,8,10	Everyone ☺	Other Thoughts
<p>Have done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit Planning Online Guide <p>Could do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment Online Guide: update Collab Inquiry Projects Integrating Tech Differentiation in SS Multi Grade Classrooms 	<p>Have done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4/7 Overview Critical Thinking <p><i>June August</i></p> <p>Could do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online Guide Collab Inquiry Assessment Integrating Technology Differentiation in SS 	<p>Have Done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 4 Day Overview - some room <p>Could Do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Day Overview Critical Thinking Inquiry Process 	<p>Have Done: (NRLC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ATA Abor. Ed'n - Taking Root Focus on Inquiry Admin Overview - MPTC Critical Thkg. - Cog. Chg. <p>Could Do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curr. Facilitators District / School Plans 	<p>→ SHARED RESPONSIBILITY for professional development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 4 District Delivered (\$1000 each) → 2 Collab Inquiry Projects (\$2000/1500 each) → 2 Curr. Facilitators \$10 days/10 days → NRLC sessions \$25 <p><i>responsive to topics, time of day, locations, school calendars</i></p>

"... the more hours of participation reported by teachers, the more highly they rated the usefulness of the professional development."

Professional Development in the United States: Trends and Challenges (National Staff Development Council); Wei, Darling-Hammond, Adamson; July 2010, p. 17.

Provision of Learning Opportunities



Barriers that prevent me from taking professional development...

- Competing priorities
- Distance from workshops
- Availability of substitute teachers
- Funding



When I prefer to take PD...

- Teachers' Convention
- Daytime workshops through NRLC
- School based workshops
- District workshops
- Webinar or VC workshops



NRLC Regional Learning Opportunities

NRLC provided a wide variety of workshops with low registration fees (hosting costs only) and an average number of 19 participants per session

- 1 and 2 day workshops hosted in central locations, additional sessions scheduled on request.
- Expanded to evening and weekend opportunities, received high praise but few registrations. Supper sessions often cancelled.
- **179 Learning Opportunities, 3450 participants from 2005-2010**
- All sessions were offered as joint ventures with multiple districts and/or band/private schools receiving the flyers, invitations, website links.

District Delivered Learning Opportunities

Districts and/or schools could apply for funds to have PD provided with locations/ dates of their choice. This increased collaborative planning among districts and all participated enthusiastically. Streamlined forms and reporting made this easier and thus more appealing in later years.

- **153 District Days over 5 years, 3944 total participants.**
- PD days were often co-hosted by 2 or more districts.
- District/school requested sessions have higher numbers of participants (**average 26 participants per session**)
- District/school requested sessions rarely get cancelled due to lack of participants
- Districts participated enthusiastically in this portion of the project

District Curriculum Facilitators, MPTC

• **185 Sessions with 1374 participants** were held at Mighty Peace Teachers Convention or hosted by NRLC curriculum facilitators (literacy, social studies, LearnAlberta, et al) with lower average attendance (7 per session). This included a wide variety of small group and individual sessions hosted at schools and in other smaller settings.

Sessions for Administrators

Specific sessions were held for administrators at MPTC, PARCSA (Peace Area Council for School Administrators), at NRLC days and District Days. After attending an overview, administrators had a higher level of understanding about the degree of change required for classroom teachers. (**12 sessions, 327+ participants**).

Admin support and modelling contributed to the success of implementation in many schools. They placed more emphasis on PD and had more well developed school-level planning. With so many competing priorities it was often difficult to continue the momentum for social studies with administrators.

Summer Workshops

Zone one teachers were positive about their summer workshop experiences. Sessions were aimed at "divisions" some years, specific grade levels on other years.

- 2006 – 2 days on critical thinking skills for grades 4 & 7 teachers (34 teachers)
- 2007 – grade 5 assessment, grade 8 web tools, grade 10 unit planning. (50+ teachers)
- 2008 – 1 day overview, 1 day integrating technology; Grade 9 Canada Opportunities and Challenges – 2 days; Grade 11 Nation and Nationalism – 2 days.
- 2009 – Web 2.0 Tools for Grade 4-6; Emerging Social Studies Literacies for Jr High; Ready, Set, Go – Gr 12 (all sessions 2 days).
- **Session participants expressed very high levels of satisfaction and applicability to classroom work.** NRLC was pleased with the teacher attendance.

Collaborative Inquiry

Understanding the value of teachers constructing their own learning while working collaboratively with other teachers, we worked hard to get CI projects off the ground. This series was re-worked in 2005-06 and 2006-07 (increased funding, more time and support, more structure, et al) and saw very little success and was discontinued in this format. Keeping the premise of teachers constructing their own meaning and working with others at the forefront of where we wanted to go, **this area eventually morphed into the most successful aspect of the entire project... cohort work.**

Building Leadership Capacity

Comments:

Train the Trainer: Building Capacity Through Assessment:

- We are going to meet with grade level teachers to develop comprehensive performance assessments/ tests/etc to produce unit plans.
- This has reinforced my understanding of the principles of this workshop – I will be presenting portions of this to other teachers at our schools.

Admin Toolkit Sessions:

- I can't wait to use this resource with my staff.
- Incorporate this tool as a point of reflection – an examination of where we are going – at a staff meeting or PLC day.
- This resource allows me to ask appropriate questions to get teachers thinking about what “new” curriculum is about.
- This established an effective foundation for our admin retreat.

Web 2.0 Tools for Technology

- Thank you—my brain is flying through ideas.
- Allows me to present to teachers with immediate practical applications to curriculum: looking at grade 4 Alberta SS topic completing a communitywalk.com.
- How lucky am I to be able to attend today? I've already shared things with staff and tomorrow I'll do the same with the kids.

Weaving Children's Lit Facilitators:

- Great model—inspiring and effective. Excellent to build on, transfer, develop for the French learning community. I will be presenting to our other schools ... and to HFCRD administrators.
- Specific steps to follow as a facilitator. Very clear to use to present to others.
- Excellent presentation! Best SS presentation/in-service that I have attended! Thank you!

Cognitive Coaching Series:

- Use the various maps when coaching/helping admin in my district.
- I'm going to keep this training manual right on the side of my desk and practice-practice-practice.
- Excellent PD. Looking forward to using the tools and strategies that will enhance learning in our school.
- The Cognitive Coaching course has been the best PD I've had in my 4 years of teaching.

Building Leadership Capacity:

Building Leadership Capacity Through Assessment: Sessions were offered to train district teacher leaders using the ERLC resource kit on assessment in social studies. Seven districts sent teachers to be trained and the two day session was excellent. This resource may have been used in individual districts but the trickle-down effect was not as strong as anticipated. Use of this resource required extended preparation time as well as time to offer sessions to others. Unless districts were able to offer this extended support/time, teachers were not able to use the kit as intended with their districts.

Administrators' Toolkit: All districts were offered sessions on using this excellent resource/toolkit (created by SAPDC). By the end of the project all districts had participated. Most sessions were hosted at admin meetings and many commented on the usefulness of the resource. Principals noted that using parts of the kit at staff meetings, teacher meetings, and for their own knowledge would be very helpful. The resource was well laid out and practical in nature, providing very clear instructions on how to use the resources in a variety of ways.

Web 2.0 Tools for Technology: Training was provided so that lead teachers could coach and mentor others re using Web 2.0 tools. These teachers provided leadership at their schools, on district PD days, and as joint projects with other school districts in the Grande Prairie area. The 3 day series was offered as a joint project with multiple school districts attending and attendance remained high for the entire series. These lead teachers hosted a variety of workshops in multiple venues (after school one hour workshops were most popular). Teacher leaders appreciated that these tools could be used in many subject areas.

Weaving Children's Literature into Social Studies: Most districts participated. Very successful with facilitators presenting many sessions and one-to-one coaching sessions with teachers in the zone. Started out with an elementary resource. Junior high resource kits were also created in subsequent years and facilitators were trained with these also. Excellent response from facilitators and teachers in the field. Complete provision of resources assisted with preparation; sessions were easy to do and materials were easy to share. Facilitators reported 50+ sessions using these kits and guides.



Cognitive Coaching: Districts were provided with limited funding to support the registration for an extended series in Cognitive Coaching. The lead teachers and administrators who took these sessions then went back and used the strategies in their own school districts. There was exceptional response to the 8 day series and it was hosted five times in Zone One, with a number of one day follow up sessions being hosted as refreshers. The requests for this session and the response to the workshops was stellar. Many educators were reluctant to sign up for an 8 day cohort, but when it was over they agreed that they would repeat the whole series if the opportunity was provided.



Building Leadership Capacity

Anne Davies Assessment - Leadership



Anne Davies Assessment Series –

Anne Davies Assessment Series: Districts were invited to send teacher leaders to two different day-long “leadership in assessment” workshops. These leaders were then given the opportunity to work with groups of teachers as table facilitators during the large group sessions that Anne led on the second day of each series (where there were over 800 participants each day). These teachers received additional resources and invaluable training that continued to build local leadership capacity in the area of assessment for learning. Over 100 teachers participated at these leadership days and they appreciated both

the leadership training, and the additional capacity it provided them in their own classrooms. The leadership sessions were more informative than the “whole group” sessions but a variety of factors affected the large group sessions (including that the first day was hosted in an arena and participants were cold and uncomfortable). The second large group session was held in a school gym and got much better reviews from teachers. All in all, this was a very unique opportunity for teachers in Zone One and although it began as a social studies project, it was opened to teachers in other subject areas as this PD was too valuable not to be shared.

Date	Location	Attendance	Topic
Sept 27/07	Grande Prairie	158	Leading the way to AFL Part 1
Sept 28/08	Grande Prairie	850	AFL: Practical, Powerful & Time Saving
Feb 21-08	Grande Prairie	104	Building an Assessment Plan for Social Studies
Feb 22/08	Grande Prairie	299	Building and Assessment Plan for 1 Subj Area
April 25/08	Peace River	94	Leading the way to AFL Part 2
April 26.08	Peace River	343	Collecting Evidence of Learning/Reporting
		1848	Total number of participants over 6 days

District Curriculum Facilitators (Train the Trainer model): In 2006 NRLC arranged to train Curriculum Facilitators who would build local capacity in their own districts. Teachers came from across the zone and worked together to build their capacity in many areas of the curriculum. This was successful when districts were able to provide strong support after the training. In 2007 (second year) there were 7 CF’s trained from 4 districts, 2 from band schools. That year they delivered 74 sessions in their districts with 270 participants. Despite the good start to this model, things did not continue as strongly: teachers changed assignments, there wasn’t enough funding for subs and travel, et al. The CF project lost momentum in subsequent years. At the end of the project PRSD still had one very active CF who still does sessions on request. Also cross-trained by the francophone consortium, she was an excellent resource for French teachers in the zone as well. Throughout the CF project there was always a good feeling around getting together and developing materials. This was refined and eventually developed into “collaborative cohorts.”



Anne Davies Assessment—Leadership

- Allow time to talk with other leaders in our school on these assessment topics to help staff improve assessment practices.
- Dealing with adults requires the need to model the behaviour we want teachers to use – facilitate adult learning.
- How do you transfer this to a virtual school? ... How do you incorporate peer assessment?
- Lots of thought provoking discussion of timely topics – thanks for the opportunity to explore more on grading and reporting.
- I am an assessment specialist for my district so I had a lot of the info before - but it is a great reminder to help re-focus.
- I will work with teachers so that they realize assessments can be part of the instructional process - in fact, discussing assessment criteria can deepen instruction/learning.
- I didn’t enjoy attending such a large PD session (in terms of #s)
- Time for PLC’s to implement these ideas - incredible potential to change learning in our schools!

Train the Trainer: Curriculum Facilitators: What worked well:

- The excellent training provided by the NRLC. The CF’s are confident and competent and are able to provide a wide variety of services. This means that schools/ teachers can choose to work with the CF’s in the way that works best for them (model, team teach, collaborative planning, online guide inservices on site, collaborative inquiry projects, etc). The CF’s are able to provide on-site, ongoing support for teachers, finally getting us away from the old one size fits all model of PD.

Challenges:

- Time out of class for CF’s... Would love to make it an FTE arrangement at some point, but we don’t have the funds centrally to do it right now.

Other CF Comments:

- Wow! 12 people this time! The reason for high attendance was the principal asked the teachers to attend – she felt this was important/necessary.
- I enjoyed my time as a facilitator. I learned a lot about presenting to adults. As well I enjoyed the whole aspect of being a leader within our district.

Building Leadership Capacity – Cohorts



CohortWork: A small number of “leadership cohorts” were developed in 2007-2008 (“With A Little Help From Our Friends”) and teachers were very enthusiastic about the opportunity to work together to understand concepts, delve into the program of studies, develop units, lessons, test questions and more. There were many requests to continue these multi-day sessions and it was decided to put substantial budget dollars into this aspect of the project.

There had been a variety of attempts to build leadership capacity at district levels since the start of the project, but nothing resonated deeply until the cohort work. Results from the 08-09-10 cohorts were overwhelmingly positive and indicated that **leadership cohorts were the most successful option for meeting the needs of teachers and building district capacity.**

Cohorts were structured so that teachers would work with a master facilitator and teams of other teachers at similar grade levels (multiple grades worked on the same day, in the same location). Each day began with a sample lesson taught by the facilitator. Specific strategies that could be used in this type of lesson were demonstrated (many based on inquiry/critical thinking) and then the teamwork would begin. Teachers were able to further develop lessons and units assessment strategies as they gained a deeper understanding of best practices related to their topics.

“In a review of nine research studies, Yoon and colleagues (2007) found that professional development that includes a substantial number of contact hours (ranging from 30 to 100 hours in total and averaging 49 hours) spread out over 6 to 12 months showed a positive and significant effect on student achievement gains.”

Professional Development in the United States: Trends and Challenges
(National Staff Development Council);
Wei, Darling-Hammond, Adamson; July 2010, p. 13



- Looking back it might have been wise for us to develop more of a cohort based implementation for the Div 1 and 2 groups as well. This was complicated by the staggered implementation of the new curriculum however would be a consideration for next time as the Cohort PLC implementation is clearly an effective model.
- I have learned so much and become a better teacher as a result of this cohort. Excellent experience.
- Working with the cohort is VERY helpful in sharing ideas, resources and assessment strategies. Meeting even three times per year on a continued basis would be highly beneficial to the quality of education my students receive.
- This implementation has definitely... been very effective in promoting internal leadership capacity... as we have seen a number of individuals step forward to demonstrate leadership in pedagogy and professional development.
- Teachers continue to provide sessions to other teachers in increasing numbers. Teacher leaders are cascading their learning in zone one in many ways: formal and informal sessions, from 1 on 1 in classrooms, all the way to providing day-long in-services to large groups of teachers and administrators during school/district PD days and at convention.
- Teachers were able to collaboratively prepare materials and share them with others, both locally and across the province. This degree of comfort and collegiality increased over the year and teachers appreciated the opportunity to share both f2f and via nings, wikis, Moodles, and blogs with other teachers. Valuable networks were extended, allowing teachers to provide leadership locally as well as provincially. (Central Office Comment)
- Shared participation and collaboration from NRLC and several school divisions is an excellent model for professional development as we move forward in our investigation of ways to create more efficient and effective programs for our teachers.
- I would suggest that the cohorts be funded for a lot longer.
- Being able to work with several teachers who teach the same grade made a huge difference to the success I felt we had with this program. Wally did a fantastic job as well. The cohort idea was extremely successful. Biggest success was having a place to visit and re-visit. A living library of work that came from teacher collaboration.
- Being the district cohort leader for the Grande Prairie region has been one of the most enjoyable and rewarding experiences I've had as a teacher. The fact that we have had this opportunity as we had new curriculum to deal with was a lifesaver – as one of my teachers put it “I would have crumbled without this support!” We would never have had the ability to create such an excellent group of collaborators, which is in line with what we expect for our students to develop for future job skills. We would not be able to develop as many quality resources without this cohort group. It is my hope that our collaboration is a legacy of this project, with continued PD support it would be a certainty! (Lynn Nordhagen, Div 4 Cohort Leader)

Building Leadership Capacity – Cohorts

- I found teaching the new curriculum for the first time with no training was very difficult. I used to rely on textbooks and then develop knowledge based projects around that information. Through the social studies cohort I attended this year and last year I am now able to set up my own critical challenges for each learning outcome and design my lessons around the big ideas. My advice would be to get involved in a cohort. I hope funding will continue to allow teachers to take part in this amazing PD.
- I believe the approach our division took in the implementation of the new curriculum was well thought out and supported with adequate funding. Having a veteran teacher, in our case a coordinator, provide resource support (e.g. collaborative planning sessions, Elluminate PD, online and Sharegroup resources, demo lessons, etc) was an excellent idea and helped many teachers, especially our beginning colleagues. With cost of quality presenters like Wally Diefenthaler offset by NRLC, our teachers were given many opportunities to develop lessons that met the outcomes of the new P of Studies.
- The cohort discussion is invaluable. I do not want to attend any more lecture sessions where teachers are supposed to “sit and get”.
- For teachers to continue to improve there must be sustained support. Losing support right when we are finally able to see the diploma exams is unfortunate. Being able to reflect on our practice is important and we are not given the opportunity to go back to the cohorts and discuss what we learned because there I no more funding.
- The cohort planning sessions kept me sane Very helpful.
- This PD has helped me better organize my thoughts for an inquiry based unit. It was also beneficial for me to have others to bounce ideas off of and to see how others within my grade level (5) have developed “cutting edge” units.
- I feel relieved when I get with other teachers because I don't feel alone. I get lots of ideas and it gets me excited.
- It has provided me opportunity to develop creative and interesting lessons. My students are given different lessons, that they may not have been given. I really enjoy sharing with other teachers and learning new things.
- I am very pleased to have had the chance to collaborate and work with other local teachers. I found the “work” periods of the sessions most beneficial.

Completed cohort work (mostly based on critical challenges and enduring understandings) was then posted on a semi-secure wiki site set up for Zone One cohort teachers, or on the PWSD Moodle site (senior high teachers used this site exclusively as the Div 4 area was completely secure and thus exam questions that were developed could not be accessed by anyone outside the cohort). The PWSD Moodle site was also used by Division 3 cohort teachers, but was and remains an “open” site where others can access the work that is housed there (see inset table of contents below.)

Both options (Wiki and Moodle) allowed teachers to keep working on lessons, units and test questions, as well as accessing the work of other colleagues after their session was over. The wiki site became a collection of ideas, lessons, and ongoing development around learner outcomes from the program of studies. All work there could be downloaded and changed, improved, reposted, shared. Cohort teachers accessed the wiki over 1000 times, and the Moodle over 500 times in the three years they have been in use. All teachers expressed appreciation for this locally developed, time-saving, very useful repository.



Name	Size	Modified
Chapter_3_-_Lesson_one.ppt	306KB	22 October 2009, 02:05 PM
Chapter_3_Test.docx	21.7KB	21 January 2009, 11:04 AM
Charter_Affects_Law_Making.docx	13.1KB	19 January 2009, 08:46 PM
Charter_of_Rights_and_Freedoms_Activities.pdf	184.1KB	5 May 2010, 11:05 AM
Charter_pop_quiz_mine.docx	13KB	27 January 2010, 11:35 AM
Chp_3_Individual_Rights	19MB	28 September 2008, 09:05 PM
Historical_Rights_Freedoms_Multimedia_Presentation.docx	15.1KB	19 January 2009, 08:45 PM
In_Class_Written_Response.docx	17.4KB	19 January 2009, 08:48 PM
Individual_Rights_Critical_Challenge_SS9.doc	58.5KB	3 February 2009, 08:57 PM
Major_Assignment_Chart_-_Unit_2_lesson_1.docx	10.6KB	1 December 2008, 07:42 PM
Pop_Quiz_Canadian_Charter.docx	11.8KB	19 January 2009, 08:46 PM
Remarks_at_the_Proclamation_Ceremony.docx	16KB	19 January 2009, 08:45 PM
Rights_Freedoms_T_Chart.docx	11.2KB	19 January 2009, 08:46 PM
Rights_and_Freedoms.ppt	167KB	25 November 2009, 03:35 PM
charter_infringement.docx	13.2KB	19 January 2009, 08:47 PM
mind_map_charter_chapter_3.docx	43KB	19 January 2009, 08:46 PM
ss9_chapter_3_unit_review.docx	14.2KB	19 January 2009, 08:47 PM
unit_2_lesson_1.docx	19.6KB	1 December 2008, 07:42 PM
unit_plans.docx	12KB	19 January 2009, 08:48 PM

In the June 2010 NRLC surveys, Division 4 cohort teachers expressed 100% satisfaction with their cohort sessions and have requested that funding be continued to ensure that they have continued access to this type of PD. Their anecdotal comments are additional proof of the success of this type of collaboration. Not documented but important to note: where there was strong district support (including funding) there were higher participation numbers and more growth as a district team.

When surveyed by NRLC, teachers were asked what were the most important factors that have positively affected their ability to implement the new social studies curriculum. **Their number one response: collaboration!** Collaboration also ranked at the top of the provincial survey results when teachers were asked what were the most important things that contributed to their success with the new social studies curriculum.

“Collaboration time for teachers is much more extensive in many high-achieving nations, where more non-teaching time is built into teachers’ workday. ... [In] many European and Asian countries, teachers spend about 15 to 25 hours per week outside the classroom, most of it working collaboratively with other teachers on preparing lessons, analyzing teaching through lesson study, action research, and classroom observations, and planning in the context of subject matter departments or grade-level teams.”

Professional Development in the United States: Trends and Challenges (National Staff Development Council); Wei, Darling-Hammond, Adamson; July 2010, p. 23



Impact on Administrators

Impact on Administrators

Is the curriculum implementation project having an impact on administrators? Yes ... But ... Administrators have a wide variety of responsibilities. They agree that this is huge shift in pedagogy and they like what they see happening in many classrooms but they find it hard to know all about every new curriculum. They agree that this curriculum is transformational and has the power to change teaching practice, improve student achievement, and change the culture of schools. Results over time are positive and indicate that administrators are increasing in knowledge and confidence re working with classroom teachers and the new social studies curriculum.

- 82% indicate they have “some” or “a lot” of understanding and working knowledge about the social studies program (this has increased each year admin were surveyed).
- 83% responded that they have “some” or “a lot” of knowledge/ understanding re “ability to recognize effective practice” (also increasing each year).

5 yr Avg.	% of administrators who agree with the following statements (I believe...)
77%	In order to teacher the new social studies, teachers will need to change their teaching practices
57%	Admin need to learn more about how to support implementation of the new social studies program
57%	Admin feel comfortable supervising teachers who are implementing the new program
32%	Teachers in their schools feel confident about their abilities to implement the new program
35%	Admin expect to see changes across the curriculum as a result of the new social studies program

BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF OVER-ARCHING CONCEPTS

Administrators were asked to complete the following stem on the annual NRLC surveys: “I believe that...” Their responses suggest that they understand the basic overarching concepts behind the program but additional PD would enhance their ability to assist teachers in classroom implementation. (Percentage noted is 5 year average)

WHAT HAD THE MOST IMPACT?

1. The Admin Toolkit is listed as the number one session that had the greatest impact on admin. “An Administrator’s Toolkit: Supporting Teachers in Social Studies Implementation” is full of quick and easy to use ideas that will continue to provide staff meeting ideas, professional conversation starters, PLC meeting topics and more. Principals will need very little preparation to use this toolkit. **2. Overview sessions.** **3. Sessions on Critical Thinking/Inquiry.** Principles clearly understand basic program concepts.

BARRIERS, RESOURCES

“Competing priorities” prevent admin from becoming deeply knowledgeable in the social studies program. **Distance** from sessions is also a concern. The good news is that admin would prefer to gain knowledge at teachers’ convention or via web/VC sessions. Admin who are new to the program, or needing a re-fresher, could use the Admin Toolkit or attend a session about the LearnAlberta website. Getting admin in touch with electronic sources/resources (e.g. LearnAlberta) would assist them in helping their teachers.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADMIN:

Active central and school level administrator participation is essential to curriculum implementation. This very necessary involvement may be enhanced by consideration of the following suggestions:

- Continue to develop & refine curriculum implementation plans (district and school).
- Model the pedagogy you want teachers to use in classrooms – use powerful strategies requiring active participation at meetings, attend workshops with teachers, go into classrooms and see what teachers are doing, be a role model.
- Request workshops specific to administrators. Use your Admin Toolkit with your staff.
- Champion district and school goals related to citizenship. Set goals that are challenging!
- Provide sub coverage and financial support for teachers to attend PD and participate in cohorts. Help them set up cohorts in your districts and at your school/s.
- Maximize local, district, zone and provincial resources.
- **And please continue to make social studies curriculum implementation a priority – teachers will follow your lead.**



Comments – Administrators

- *This is the way all new curriculum should be implemented. It addressed the stages of a teacher’s professional growth as it relates to changing practice. Implementation needs to be strategic and well thought out, as was the implementation of the SS curriculum. Teachers need the opportunity to make the necessary shifts in practice to achieve the desired change in their teaching behaviours.*
- *The implementation of social studies was very well done. There were plenty of sessions methodically rolling out from one year to the next. The high school cohort was particularly informative and was a great way to model curriculum leadership. The admin toolkit was a perfect overview to enable principals to become instructional leaders. I know the implementation was a success because I do not have teachers complaining about not being able to deal with the curriculum. That is a sign that implementation was complete and served the needs of teachers.*
- *It becomes impossible to have a strong emphasis in too many areas, and I must confess, social studies did not come to the forefront at this school.*
- *Schools are having a difficult time finding the commonalities between different grade level programs as the content from grade to grade is so different which makes it very difficult to teach split classes.*
- *I understand that teachers found it difficult to attend all PD sessions for SS. But I am also grateful for NRLC’s work in providing that PD and to the district for their efforts to get all SS teacher son board with new curriculum.*
- *Great supports from NRLC. Excellent opportunities for teachers to investigate this new pedagogy.*
- *I think our district did well to support SS implementation through its focus on FNMI over the past few years. I know NRLC tried to encourage the district to develop an implementation plan but it didn’t happen.*
- *Despite five years of efforts, teachers are still expressing frustration. They struggle with students attaining higher order thinking skills at young ages.*
- *The NRLC has done an excellent job to assist teachers in our zone. Remembering staff turnover rates and grade level assignment changes some recognition needs to be given to some continuity planning for the near future.*
- *Thank you NRLC for being so flexible and creative in providing teachers what they need and when they could access it. You listened and constantly were problem solving to see what you could do to make sure teachers were informed.*

Teacher Satisfaction, PD Requests

Teacher Satisfaction with programming Teachers and administrators consistently report very high degrees of satisfaction with the professional development offered through the NRLC social studies curriculum implementation project. (Responses are 5 year average)	NRLC Survey Questions completed by participants <i>Results from Surveys at PD Opportunities for Social Studies</i>		Satisfied or Very Satisfied
	I am able to apply the information learned to my class/school/district		97%
	Overall, I was satisfied with this session.		98%
	Satisfaction with NRLC session facilitators/presenters		98%

Provincial Survey Teachers across the province were surveyed about their experience with the social studies curriculum implementation project. The following chart compares the answers of Zone One teachers to other teachers across the province when they were asked to indicate what were the top factors that affected their ability to implement the new social studies program.	What helped me to implement the new social studies program?	NRLC Response	Provincial Response
	Use of Wikis or Moodles to share information	90	61
	Online Guide/LearnAlberta	83	74
	Collaborative planning with other teachers (cohorts)	77	75
	Working with mentors (cohorts)	76	68
	Time to work independently	74	72
	District learning opportunities	72	66
	ATA workshops/conferences	72	74
	Learning through experience	70	72
	NRLC workshops	68	71



Teachers across the province were also asked to indicate what barriers prevented them from participating in professional development for this project. This chart compares zone one teacher responses to provincial average responses.	Barriers preventing teachers from participating in PD	NRLC Response	Provincial Response
	Competing Priorities	62	67
	Limited access to PD funds	39	34
	Distance from sessions	33	24
	Availability of subs	14	14

Top Requests for PD Include ...

In our annual survey, teachers are asked to identify which PD areas NRLC should focus on for the next year. When all grade level surveys were combined, teachers indicated that they would like to work on the following key areas...

Most Requested Teacher PD includes:

- Cohorts/Grade Level Planning
 - Assessment
- Demonstration Lessons
 - Infusing Technology
- Inquiry/Critical Thinking



Reflections/Recommendations re NRLC programming:

- Work to develop district capacity and sustainability.
- Encourage district, zone & provincial collaboration.
- Evergreen to allow for multiple entry points.
- Address best practices across all curricula.
- Work with administrators at school and central office levels.
- Continue to integrate multiple perspectives (including aboriginal and francophone).
- Provide PD in a variety of formats
- Use embedded time and/or existing structures in district calendars.
- Host in multiple sites.
- Explore alternate delivery options: webinar/webcast/VC, supper/evening, weekends, summer.
- **Be open, responsive, flexible, creative and fun. Ensure that teachers enjoy their PD experiences.**



Impact on Teacher Practice

Impact on Teacher Practice – Comparison Over Time

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. Every year teachers were surveyed in clusters according to their initial year of implementation. This data has been compared over time based on the exact same questions. **The results continue to be encouraging.**

Increase in Teacher Knowledge and Understanding

Data from teacher surveys at all grade levels generally indicates that teachers who have received PD through the NRLC curriculum implementation project indicate **higher levels of knowledge and understanding the longer they were involved in the project.**

Chart A	2005-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	Overall Average
K-3	84	90	88	93	89
4, 7	86	96	96	96	94
5, 8, 10	69	87	85	91	83
6, 9, 11	44	61	95	93	73
12	No data	75	60	100	79

Chart A: percentage of teachers who express that they have “some” or “a lot” of understanding and working knowledge about the new social studies curriculum.

Teacher Confidence re Effective Teaching Strategies

Survey data indicates that length of involvement in the project increases the percentage of teachers indicating **higher levels of confidence re effective teaching strategies** (up to 24% higher at some grade levels).

Chart B	2005-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	Overall Average
K-3	80	81	79	87	82
4, 7	79	88	87	83	84
5, 8, 10	66	80	83	89	80
6, 9, 11	50	65	89	93	74
12	No data	88	60	100	73

Chart B: percentage of teachers who express “some” or “a lot” of understanding and working knowledge about effective teaching strategies for the new social studies curriculum.

Teacher Ability to Utilize Effective Assessment Practices

Assessment has often been a requested topic for PD. Teachers increasingly indicate a **much higher level of understanding/working knowledge about effective assessment practices.**

Chart C	2005-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2008-2009	Overall Average
K-3	60	69	82	88	75
4, 7	63	72	83	83	75
5, 8, 10	53	74	71	80	70
6, 9, 11	55	62	86	78	70
12	No data	75	80	100	85

Chart C: percentage of teachers who indicate “some” or “a lot” of understanding and working knowledge about effective assessment practices for the new social studies curriculum.

General trends have emerged from the data:

- Results continue to show increased capacity. Teachers express increasingly higher degrees of knowledge and confidence across most areas over the term of the project.

Comments:

- I have already started to build my class Moodle page. If we can put together the resources to put this in front of students it will dramatically change how I will deliver education.
- I hope to use Voice Threads, Digital Mapping and prioritizing tools. Most importantly I now know where to find the tools and I have lots of ideas and ways I can incorporate more technology into my teaching.
- I am much more familiar with the online program of studies and how to work with and access the resources available through the website.
- Focus on issues driven lessons, skill and inquiry based teaching
- I can now see more clearly how to make cross curricular connections
- Information was so interesting, energetic and relevant that I am going to put together a small package to share with others on my staff.
- This is my second session in social – each time it becomes clearer.
- I will be able to use the visual photo study; our kids being Dene are visual learners and having a concrete idea to use which is relevant will be awesome.
- This was a fantastic workshop. It gave a tool box of 13 tools to use to enhance our teaching style. It was great review of Web 2.0 tools.

Impact on Teacher Practice

Teachers Express Continued Need for Professional Development

Teachers recognize the need for ongoing professional development. Even after more than five years of curriculum support at some grade levels (depending on when their grade was implemented), our analysis of this high request level is very optimistic – **teachers recognize that there is a lot to learn in order to change their practice and they are willing to participate in PD in order to do so.**

Chart D	2005-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	Overall Average
K-3	59	66	49	58	58
4, 7	70	65	57	55	62
5, 8, 10	75	73	77	78	76
6, 9, 11	76	76	77	70	75
12	No data	75	80	86	80

Chart D: Percentage of teachers who express “some” or “a lot” of need for additional PD to teach the new social studies.

Teachers Expect to Change the Way They Teach

As a general average over all grades, teachers expect to change the way they teach after participating in professional development through this project. Primary teachers continue to show the lowest numbers and do not expect as much change. Generally, the higher grade levels have bigger expectations of changing their practice.

Chart E	2005-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	Overall Average
K-3	59	55	66	64	61
4, 7	78	83	72	85	80
5, 8, 10	84	84	72	87	82
6, 9, 11	89	50	88	75	76
12	No data	80	70	86	79

Chart E: percentage of teachers who expect to change the way they are teaching “some” or “a lot” as a result of PD they have received through NRLC and this project.

Teachers Confirm NRLC Sessions Helped Them Understand New Curriculum

Teachers were surveyed as to whether they had participated in NRLC sessions offered on the new social studies program. If they participated they were asked to complete a subsequent question inquiring whether the NRLC sessions helped them understand the new curriculum and/or prepare for implementation. Their responses indicate that NRLC sessions are making a difference.

Chart F	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	Overall Average
K-3	72	71	76	73
4, 7	73	73	77	74
5, 8, 10	85	70	80	78
6, 9, 11	58	86	85	76
12	83	70	93	82

Chart E: Percentage of teachers who agree that NRLC sessions helped them understand the new curriculum and/or prepare to implement social studies in their classroom.

Teacher Responses to Provincial Survey Further Confirm NRLC Results

Teachers across Alberta were asked to complete a provincial survey. The question was: “As a result of attending workshops and/or participating in demonstration lessons, planning cohorts and other PD activities, I have changed the way I am teaching social studies in my classroom.”

37% changing to a great extent

49% changing to some extent

These results confirm the trend of the NRLC surveys – the curriculum implementation project is assisting teachers with changing their practice.

- This is classroom material that is always useful – but more important – it is good for students!
- This PD opportunity has allowed me to not only plan many amazing lessons but also able to brainstorm many ideas. It was great way to train myself to think in terms of critical thinking skills.
- It has caused me to teach differently which is challenging but good. I am learning that I understand more when I don't just feed the students with pages and questions. There are good moments when the lights come on and it has all been self discovery, not just spoon-fed.
- My students will benefit from my clearer understanding – although I still have a long ways to go.
- The students have been able to become much more involved in their learning. They have much more say and more of a chance to create their own opinions and how to justify their ideas. It has created a classroom of critical thinkers.
- I have a better understanding of SS curriculum across the board to better know where I am going.
- Grade 5 teachers have formed a PLC and we will share ideas via email, IMC and at least one meeting this year, possibly video conferencing.
- Still working on expanding my understanding of doing inquiry. Trying to resist the urge to teach it the old way!
- I have some understanding yet find it hard to fit in the assessment component as much.
- I am a new teacher and am finding time is limited. In the past 6 months I have taught two new grades.
- This is the absolute best PD I've had.
- I will integrate a variety of cultural perspectives on a particular concept.

Community Engagement

Citizenship and Social Action Projects

A series of questions were added to the NRLC survey for teachers (2009 and 2010) to dig deeper into the results of the citizenship and social action aspects of the social studies curriculum. Results are positive and show increased teacher, school and community awareness of the impact of the social studies curriculum.

2009-2010

To what extent has your school developed school and/or district goals relating to developing citizenship?	72%	79%
To what degree have students in your school/district been engaged in social action projects during the current school year?	83%	94%
To what extent have your students' social action projects been related to the social studies program?	72%	77%

The chart above does not provide all the details from the survey questions (e.g. how many goals, to what extent, etc.) but it does show evidence that the basic tenets of the social studies curriculum are transferring the general culture of our schools. There have been countless social action projects initiated in our zone, many directly attributable to social studies classes. A few examples are included here.

Pennies for Peace PRSD and HFCRD participated with four churches and the local movie theatre in Manning, Alberta. This small town of 1200 people raised over \$4000 (mostly by collecting pennies and small change) and sent it to the P4P foundation which builds schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Parents and teachers alike were heartened to see the student response to this campaign. See testimonials in the NRLC Legacy DVD re this project (www.nrlc.net)



Alberta teen pays tribute to war heroes

Home Now captures national sentiment

SANDRA SPROUNES
Journal Music Writer
EDMONTON

A teenager's musical tribute to Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan is touching hearts across the country.

"Can you come home now? Can I really see your smiling face? I know you've made this world a better place," Tenille Nadkrynychney sings in her country ballad, *Home Now*. The 15-year-old singer-songwriter from Grande Prairie doesn't have any relatives or friends in the military; he penned the tune after one of her social studies classes.

"It's dedicated to anyone who has loved ones abroad and every time I sing it, I do so in honour of our military heroes," says Nadkrynychney.

"I think music is such a powerful tool and if I can connect with someone, then I am completely fulfilled."

Home Now, which was produced by Alberta country star Duane Steele, is earning airplay on a dozen radio stations from Kamloops, B.C., to Jonesville, N.S.

Chris Scheetz, program director of Edmonton's CJSN 103.9 FM, played a rough demo of *Home Now* months ago and was overwhelmed by listener reaction.

He says Nadkrynychney's innocence in contacting with music fans. "It's very believable and she's got an amazing voice," says Scheetz.

"There's a million kids who can sing out there, but she's got something special."

Nadkrynychney has performed *Home Now* at several gigs, including an artist showcase during the lead-up to the Canadian Country Music Awards in Vancouver.

"I'm really honoured and touched and sad to have to sing about this situation," she says.

"It takes me everything to keep it together when I sing. I feel every word and when I see somebody else connect and feel it too, it overwhelms me. It's quite an experience to sing it."

Nadkrynychney is now working on her first album with songwriters and musicians in Canada and Nashville, Tenn. She had her first brush with fame when she was nine — she was plucked out of the audience at Shania Twain's show at Rexall Place in 2003. The two then sang *What A Way To Win* together.

"I had a big sign that said, 'Shania, can I sing with you?'" says Nadkrynychney.

"She came around, reached out her hand and I took it. I was over the moon and beyond the stars. That was the moment when I truly went. This is what I want to do."

Nadkrynychney is scheduled to perform *Home Now* this morning on Citytv's *Breakfast Television*. A snippet of the tune is posted on her website, tenillesings.com.

SPROUNES@THEJOURNAL.COM

Songwriter Inspired in Class

Tenille Nadkrynychney, a grade 11 student in Grande Prairie, was inspired in social studies class to write a **song for soldiers serving overseas** titled "**Home Now**" (see *Edmonton Journal* article inset on left). Tenille was featured on CBC Radio, Breakfast Television and many other venues, talking about her song and how she got the idea from discussions in her social class at school. She then went on to write another song about children who live in abusive homes which has led to co-hosting an annual event "Big Hearts for Big Kids" to raise money for the Youth Emergency Shelter in Grande Prairie. The first event raised over \$30,000 and it has become an annual benefit concert. (Interview with Tenille on NRLC Legacy DVD www.nrlc.net)

Comments:

- As a district and a school we continue to support those in need and be aware of issues in our communities. ... I believe that my students have to show citizenship, not just read and talk about it. I think these projects implement and teach them to be a citizen. We are doing Project India in which we raised money for an orphan in Indian to continue her schooling to be a nurse. My students are aware that this country doesn't have a democratic society and that girls are not equal to boys. By helping a girl with her education (a Canadian right) they show citizenship.
- As a school our classroom initiates Operation Christmas Child, we participate in recycling, read to seniors, and engage in social skills training (to build cooperation, consensus building and conflict resolution skills).
- As a critical challenge for a lasting change to our community our class planted and tended the flower gardens at our school.
- I have been doing Class Action Projects where students use decision making skills etc to plan and develop projects on issues they are most concerned with. They design and implement the whole project together. I have used the UN Convention of the rights of the Child as a good learning tool. We have been doing mock debates, mock legislations, mock elections (from start to finish), mock court sessions.
- The students are working on Global Citizenship and just starting to look at the Free the Children Foundation and some of the resources from Unicef. I'm bridging over the theme of Global Citizenship into my Language Arts program so that students can research and present about people and organizations making a difference in the world.
- We have school wide projects related to environmental consciousness and these link to "working in our world without damaging it" that is part of the grade 2 curriculum.
- In the last couple of years we have raised money for wood stoves for Peruvian families, a well in India, and gathered canned goods for the food bank after it burned down.
- We are using the Tribes Learning Community program to implement a lot of the "Front Matter" of the grade 6 social curriculum and find that the key ideas (mutual respect, attentive listening, right to participate or pass, and appreciation/no putdowns) of TLC matches the curriculum well.

4 Peace Country Sun • Friday, March 26, 2010

Three Little Buffalo students off to United Nations

Principal hopes to shed light on socio-economic problems in the First Nations community

Kristjanna Grimmel
QMI Agency

Three Cadotte Lake school students from Little Buffalo School joined a United Nations delegation in New York City this week after writing essays on their personal experiences growing up in Little Buffalo. Their principal hopes the contest will motivate youth in the community, most of whom don't graduate and who lack basic services.

Leticia Gladue, 15, Daphne Omi-nayak, 16, and Dawn Seesequon, 17, are spending this week in New York City.

The trip began Monday. The delegation is sponsored by Amnesty International, the Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers), KAIROS, Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, the Alberta Federation of Labour and the Agriculture Union.

Students will also visit New York's Smithsonian Institution, a major global museum and research centre.

The event coincides with the 20th anniversary of a UN ruling that Canada failed to protect the rights of the Lubicon Cree and that extensive oil and gas development

in the area had harmed the local economy and way of life.

Gladue spoke to the Peace River Record-Gazette on a break between classes last Friday, saying she's excited and "overwhelmed" by what lies ahead in New York City.

Gladue, whose essay was called "My People, My Community and Me: How our Human Rights are Repeatedly being Violated and Ignored", said English is her favourite subject. She hopes to become a paediatrician or a psychiatrist.

"It's OK, I guess. It's just boring and there's not much to do," said Gladue of being a teenager in Little Buffalo.

She goes quadding and does homework after school. Her parents have helped her to steer clear of drugs and alcohol, which she says are a problem. She'd think that a community centre is needed more than anything.

Many of the people in Little Buffalo, the small First Nation community about 100 kilometres east of Peace River, live in poverty and without running water. The First Nation has never settled a federal land claim.

Last September, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) took over management of the band's financial management due to an ongoing leadership dispute and concerns over service delivery.

Brian Alexander, principal of

Little Buffalo school at Cadotte Lake, and in his first year in the community, said the essay competition provided a chance for kids to learn the history of the Lubicon people.

Many, including Alexander himself, were unaware of the full history of the First Nation's decades-long struggle with the federal government over the land claim settlement.

He found that living conditions are worse there than in his native Caribbean and that most students lack motivation to finish high school or plan for a future. Despite that, they rank high in Northland School Division evaluations, he said.

"People are living in poverty and in Third World conditions. The kids are living in the richest province in the country and they have nothing," he said.

Of about 30 high school students to begin the year, only 15 remain. Two will graduate this year.

"It seems like a dead end," he said.

Alexander wants a library, a community centre and other activities for the students.

"There's no softball league, no soccer, no swimming. Because they have nothing to do they're often wandering around the neighbourhood."

He had to close the school for 11 days this year due to lack of running water. Students stayed home on those days, Alexander said.

Three students from Little Buffalo School were delegates to visit the United Nations in New York after writing essays about their lives growing up in Cadotte Lake. Their principal encouraged them to write the essays as they learned about the history of their community and the Lubicon people, and their struggle with the federal government over land claims settlements.



PWA Social Studies 30.2 students host forums for both provincial and federal elections.

DAILY Herald-Tribune
Grande Prairie, Alberta

News Sports Special Sections Business Arts/L

Local News / Regional

Home / News / Local News / Regional / PWA Interact club raising funds to help in Haiti, Chile

PWA Interact club raising funds to help in Haiti, Chile

By ERIC PLUMMER, Herald-Tribune staff
Updated 2 months ago

Concerned students at Peace Wapiti Academy are taking action to help infants in Haiti.

A group of students from the high school's Interact Club is selling Christmas cards they designed to generate funds for an incubator at a hospital in the earthquake-ravaged Caribbean country.

The club has already raised \$2,000 from barbecues last spring for the purchase of an incubator in Chile, which also suffered a severe series of earthquakes this year.

"Right now we're bound and determined we're going to buy at least two, one for each country," said Louis Chabot, a social science teacher at Peace Wapiti Academy who oversees the Interact Club.

"If by chance our sales go really well, we'll buy more."

The club is made up of 20 students in Grades 9 to 12 interested generating funds for humanitarian causes.

The club has taken part in numerous events over recent years, including the Make Poverty History March which incorporated 1,500 high school students in April 2009, and a food bank drive over the summer of 2008, where they worked with local Rotary clubs to gather \$100,000 worth of donated food items.

Grande Prairie High School Students from 3 different school boards presented "**A Message of Hope**" with almost 4000 students in attendance. An additional 1500 students participated in a "Make Poverty History" peace march in Grande Prairie organized by "Students Saving Our Society" from Peace Wapiti Academy (photo below). These events were to highlight their overall theme of **HOPE - Hardships - Obstacles - Poverty - Enough!**

Students Saving Our Society wrote a powerful letter to Senator General Romeo Dallaire, excerpt as follows:
Students Saving Our Society (S².O.S) is a citizen action group formed at Peace Wapiti Academy. It was inspired by our teacher Louis Chabot. He teaches, no matter who you are, you can make a difference. ... Our goal was to see if a small group of students from Northern Alberta could actually have an impact on a humanitarian situation, whether it is local, regional, national or even international. ... We decided the Crisis in Darfur was the most urgent. we thoroughly investigated the issue and decided to spread awareness throughout the area. Our first large project was planned by a group of ten students. ... we organized the largest rally for Darfur in Canada. ...



S²OS hosts largest rally for Darfur Genocide in Canada

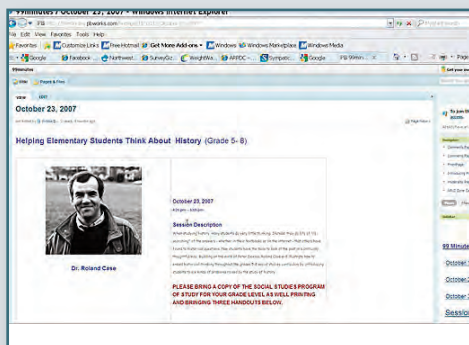
School Principal Comment: The degree of social action projects and environmental action projects (still social studies based) have sky-rocketed in our school. Having this as part of the curriculum heightens the opportunities for students to become aware of issues and have more opportunities in which they may take action. Our school has raised funds for:

- sea turtle restoration project
- SPCA
- Food Hamper program in local city
- Salvation Army
- Foster Child in India
- local wildlife rehabilitation facility, and more!

Students have extensively researched areas of social concern and have explored role models from society such as Ghandi, Ryan from Ryan's Well, Barack Obama, Mother Teresa, Chris Kielberger, et al.

Webinars:

Provincial Webinar Pilot: In 2007 NRLC and Learning Network partnered to host a much requested pilot project delivering PD via webcast. Our goal was to make PD accessible *anytime, anyplace*. Training was required to run the webinar; we also worked with presenters to help them become adept at presenting in this environment (both the pedagogy and the actual running of

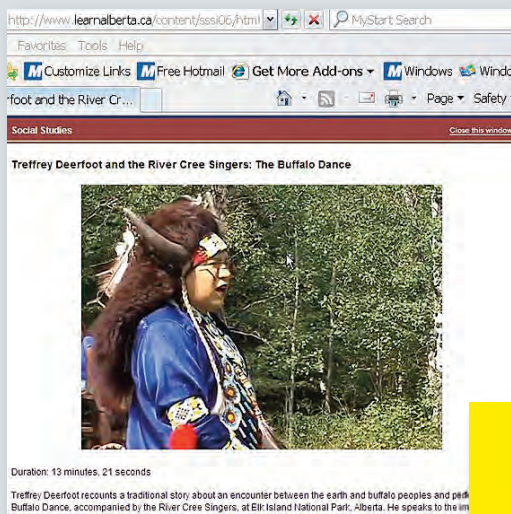


and in the end 130 teachers from zone one participated in the three webcasts as well as many more across the province.

Materials were provided to participants before and after the workshop. There were websites where teachers could follow up but participation was low in this area. Teachers really like the detailed session handouts, archived at www.99minutes.pbwiki.com; webcasts are archived at www.learning-network.org.

This series was a successful first foray into online professional development. Teacher comments were positive. We realized that this platform of session delivery had potential and we looked for ways to expand our services in this area.

LearnAlberta



LearnAlberta Website
www.learnalberta.ca

LearnAlberta Pilot: NRLC had the opportunity to work with Alberta Ed to pilot a series of webcasts on how to use the LearnAlberta website. This provided us with additional information on how to design sessions for an electronic environment.

Webinar Comments 2007:

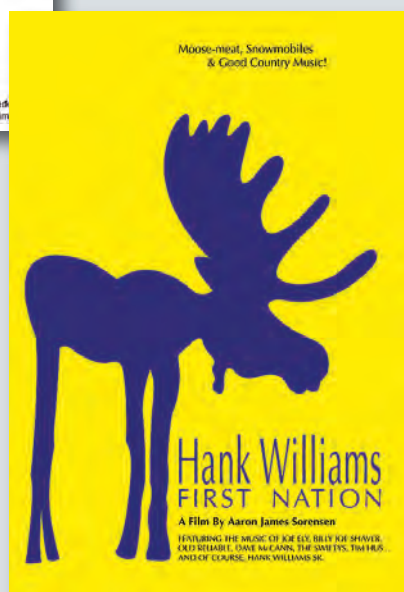
- *Thank you for organizing this pilot for us. I think it is a valuable tool in the world of PD especially with our busy schedules. For those of us who live further north it is also nice not to travel.*
- *Webcasting is easier than video conferencing.*
- *I have not participated in distance learning before (other than watching some videos on line), so I have nothing to compare this too. It was nice to be able to participate in the presentation in my own community. Given the challenges that arise during a pilot, we had anticipated some glitches. Like with everything, some people responded better than others so we had a few fires to put out in terms of promoting this as a viable/reliable method of PD delivery.*
- *I am still thrilled that we had Roland Case and Garfield Gini Newman in our board room talking to us!!!! TOYOTAS weren't the most reliable vehicles when they appeared on the North American market... but, you can't beat them today.*
- *Interaction: Good. By occasionally calling for a hand or smiley face, people feel involved. I really liked this session. It was good to have a refresher, especially with such a great presenter. I liked the informal nature.*
- *It was an interesting session... and the technology of it all was especially cool, even with the glitches. I think the process has real potential for delivering PD to rural teachers.*

"Session Delivery via Video Conference" – Tc2 senior consultant Garfield Gini-Newman delivered a session to HPSD FtF and via video conference. Participants were very pleased at not having to travel and reported a very positive experience with the session that day. Participants were seated at tables and were given tasks to complete with their face-to-face partners in between segments of the day that were delivered electronically. It was a very engaging day.



Use of Film to Explore FNMI Perspective

Teachers screened "Hank Williams First Nation" and met with the writer/director/producer Aaron Sorensen to further explore FNMI perspectives.

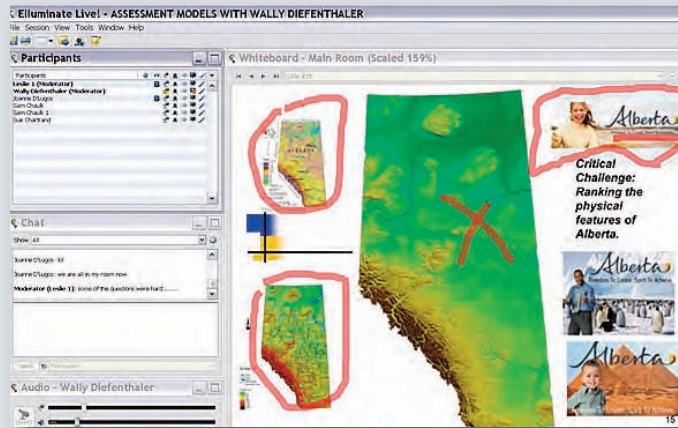


Use of Technology

Evolution of Distributed Professional Learning: The first webcasts hosted in 2007 were a pre-cursor of a variety of new electronic session formats that consortia across the province are now using. This continuation of *anytime, anyplace* learning is now known as **distributed professional learning (DPL)** and it has provided many unique new opportunities, advantages and challenges to PD providers and our varied teacher audiences.

Some of the formats currently in use for DPL include:

- Session delivery – complete sessions are hosted online via Elluminate or Video Conference (see Garfield’s session description via VC, previous page)
- Session follow up – start with face to face session, continue via Elluminate for follow up (see Wally Diefenthaler session *elluminate screen on right*).



Link to Wally Diefenthaler cached webinar: <https://sas.elluminate.com/p.jnlp?psid=2010-11-24.1344.M.F694215048BA46445F877BDB1D6E75.vcr&sid=2009083>

- Meetings – teachers can have virtual meetings to discuss lessons, content, problems, ideas
- DPL makes extensive use of wikis, Moodles, Nings, Google docs, and other electronic means to collaborate and share.

The uses for DPL will expand as presenter and audience capacity and demand increase. The work is new and exciting and we are working to balance the importance of face to face sessions with the reality of travel costs, sub time, and job embedded professional learning. There will be more variations, ideas and excitement around the virtual environment as we continue to **refine best practice and establish next practice**. From the small seed that was planted in 2007, great things have grown.

Technology Successes



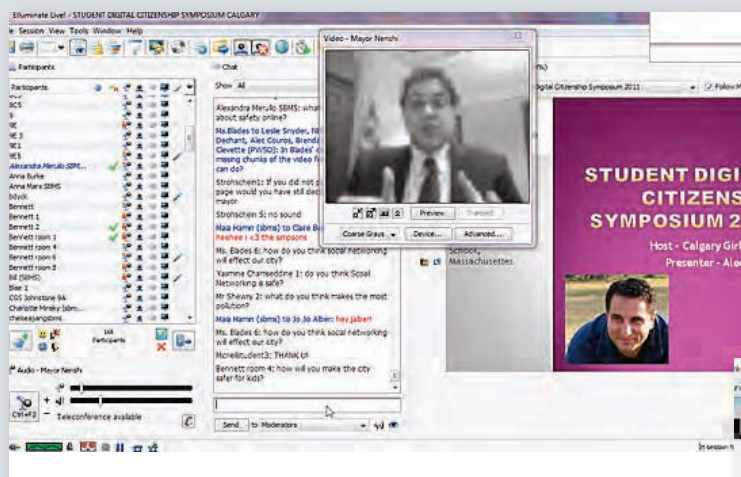
Technology has been a driving force for change in Social Studies classrooms. The use of the internet and the Alberta Education SmartBoard initiative have been very influential in how teachers interact with students. The later years of the social studies project have included the use of multiple electronic resources

NRLC has been involved in the design and delivery of many SmartBoard sessions, including sessions put on by Tc2 who designed SmartBoard Course Pacs which save teachers tremendous amounts of time.

Twitter is being used, with one teacher designing a lesson and asking students “What would you Tweet,” introducing them to a tool that they are increasingly hearing about in the media and online.

Another recent partnership between NRLC and CRC allowed students in GPPSD and PWSO to become participants in a **Digital Citizenship Symposium** hosted in Calgary. Elluminate connections allowed students and teachers in Grande Prairie and Hythe, Alberta to participate with Calgary students as they were led on a journey of discovery around the concept of *digital citizenship*. View the cached presentation at: <https://sas.elluminate.com/site/external/jwsdetect/playback.jnlp?psid=2011-01-20.0740.M.DDB5B9AD0BBDC3D92E7B4F8E9DF4DA.vcr&sid=2009083> or have a look at the Digital Citizenship wiki <http://wiki.crcpd.ab.ca/groups/digitalcitizenship/>

Technology has the opportunity to boost student engagement, bring lessons to life in new ways, and provide interactive collaborative connections across the world. There are complications encountered when the technology does not work properly. As well, teachers must ensure that they select tools that fit their lessons, and not force their lessons to fit the latest tools.



Webinar Comments 2010:

- The follow up Elluminate sessions are great because they're efficient – no driving time! As well, the talk with other teachers is helpful. This kind of PD could help with all subject areas.
- I really appreciated the use of Elluminate rather than VC. It made it easier for our district to participate.
- Elluminate is the preferred delivery method for distributed professional learning at the present. It is easy to use, doesn't require much advance prep, and it becomes easier to use each time.
- The sessions are going well...I have used Elluminate in my Masters courses, but you guys are taking it to a whole new level! I didn't realize that there were so many interactive features... next time I do a class presentation I may call on your expertise! My experience is limited to discussion rooms (very limited) and red X's, green checks etc....



Newsletters



Social Studies Explorations
— A Professional Journal

Winter, 2008 • Volume 2 • Issue 2

Archived copies of Explorations can be found at www.nrlc.net

Previous issues include:
Issue One: Multiple Perspectives
Issue Two: Social Participation

Guiding Question:
What does it take to motivate and engage students as active citizens within a democracy?

Abstract:
The new Social Studies program, social participation for democratic practice requires a focus on what active and engaged citizenship can mean for K-12 students. When students become aware of and develop connections between political and social processes and their own lives, they develop a capacity to act meaningfully for change, a commitment to their communities, and the ability to participate as informed, responsible citizens.

See the full article on pages 2 & 3



Weaving Children's Literature into Social Studies

A great group of zone one teachers have been training to become facilitators to assist you to weave quality children's literature into your social studies classrooms. Currently we have focused on K-7 literature and we are eager to come to your schools, staff meetings, PD days, or informal gatherings and share many ideas and resources. We have resources lists, connections to curriculum outcomes, and many other ideas in our facilitator repertoires!

Each district that was able to participate now has trained facilitators and a \$600 kit of books that they can use to help teachers in their schools. If your district was not able to send a teacher to be trained, please contact Leslie Snyder to make arrangements to have a presentation with your teachers or librarians. Depending on demand and one, there is a possibility of extending the facilitator guide to include junior high level materials, and/or more resources and strategies for elementary classrooms. Invite a facilitator to your school - teachers will enjoy working with these rich resources!

Bookings for this year
We continue to book 2007-2008 PD events, school PD days and a variety of other special requests. Please contact us

we can provide PD to help you improve student learning!
Stay in touch! Leslie Snyder
780.435.1640
Questions or program suggestions can be directed to:
Leslie Snyder
snyderl@nrlc.ca
780.435.1640
NRLC Zone One
Social Studies Project Coordinator
NRLC
Northwest Regional Learning Consortium
www.nrlc.net

Relevant articles and content were distributed via newsletters most years of the project. The intent of the newsletters was to provide teachers with up to date information on ways to be involved in curriculum implementation, inspire teachers by giving them information on what other teachers in the zone were doing, showcase teacher work, and provide independent or group study materials. Newsletters were distributed in both paper and electronic (PDF) format as well as being housed on our website. Survey numbers regarding usage indicated increased readership. Newsletters can be viewed on our website at <http://www.nrlc.net/content/newsletters>

Electronic Sources for Teachers

Email – Regular contact was maintained with social studies teachers by sending flyers, updates, and menus of learning opportunities to district key contacts and having these forwarded to teachers. This was an effective way to encourage teachers to be involved in PD that would meet their needs.

NRLC Website – We wanted to provide resources to teachers that will reduce

the amount of search time needed for them to find information. We intended for our website/collaborative space be a **central hub** leading them to important sites, materials, and a listing of all current/updated sessions being hosted in the zone. Currently our website has been under re-design so this information is not live but will be restored in the near future as **teachers and administrators are going to the website in increasing numbers.** www.nrlc.net Electronic storage has moved to the Moodle environment where teachers can manipulate the content.



Northwest Regional Learning Consortium
Adult Learning for Students' Sake

Welcome to the Northwest Regional Learning Consortium web site.

New sessions for Fall of 2009 are being posted and updated regularly so be sure to check back often.

- Parent's Corner
- Register for Sessions
- Register Here for E-Updates
- Newsletters
- Annual Reports

LearnAlberta – Use of this resource has generally increased. **With teachers moving toward electronic/digital resources**, NRLC continues to recommend the use of this site at all sessions. www.learnalberta.ca

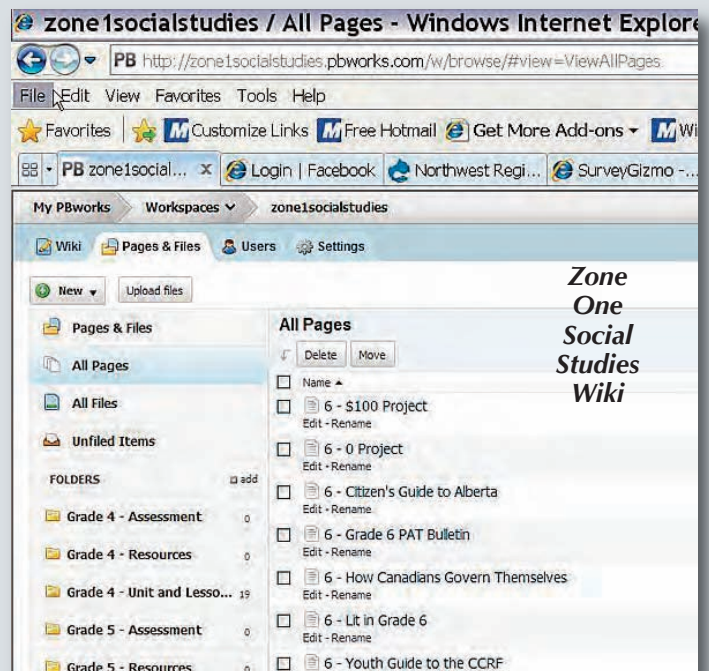
Collaborative Wiki Site – The cohorts developed a number of excellent resources and housed them on a zone wiki. This allowed teachers to share their work and access the work ideas of other teachers in the zone. Critical challenges and lesson plans could be downloaded and adapted to meet different contexts for different classrooms. Many teachers were members of the wiki and expressed their appreciation for these teacher-developed resources.



PWSD Social Studies Moodle, Junior High, Table of Contents

- Social Studies 7**
 - Program of Studies ~ Grade 7
 - Summary of Critical Inquiry Challenges Gr 7
 - Towards Confederation
 - Following Confederation
 - Review & Final Material
- Social Studies 8**
 - Program of Studies ~ Grade 8
 - Summary of Critical Inquiry Challenges Gr. 8
 - Gr 8 Course Outline & Long Range Plans
 - Renaissance
 - Aztec
 - Japan
 - Intro to World View
 - Review & Final Materials
- Social 9 (new)**
 - Program of Studies ~ New Grade 9
 - Summary of Critical Inquiry Challenges Gr 9
 - PAT Exemplars (Written)
 - PAT Scoring Guide (Written Response)
 - Released Multiple Choice Questions (2009)
 - Issues for Canadians Website (Teacher/Student Resource)
 - Grade 9 Course Outline & Long Range
 - Governance & Rights

PWSD Moodle Space – Cohort work done by senior high teachers also included an electronic collaboration space. Due the need for security of Div 4 exam questions, these teachers accessed secure login codes from Peace Wapiti School Division. Teachers then used this site extensively for building lessons, questions, tests, and the development of critical challenges. Division 3 teachers also used the PWSD Moodle for their collaborative work. The screen shot depicts the table of contents for the junior high work being done in this site. The site is not secured and can be viewed at: <http://collaboration.pwsw76.ab.ca/course/view.php?id=46>



zone1socialstudies / All Pages - Windows Internet Explorer

http://zone1socialstudies.pbworks.com/fw/browse/#view=ViewAllPages

My PBworks Workspaces zone1socialstudies

Wiki Pages & Files Users Settings

Zone One Social Studies Wiki

All Pages

- 6 - \$100 Project
- 6 - 0 Project
- 6 - Citizen's Guide to Alberta
- 6 - Grade 6 PAT Bulletin
- 6 - How Canadians Govern Themselves
- 6 - Lit in Grade 6
- 6 - Youth Guide to the CCRF

FOLDERS

- Grade 4 - Assessment
- Grade 4 - Resources
- Grade 4 - Unit and Lesso...
- Grade 5 - Assessment
- Grade 5 - Resources

Lethbridge Moodle Space – A number of zone one teachers requested access to a Moodle space that was in use for teachers in southern Alberta. This Moodle was for teachers who were shadowing a unique video conference opportunity to watch a teacher every day in his classroom. Although teachers were appreciative of the Moodle content, it was not as valuable if they did not participate in the video conference element of this project. NRLC appreciated the collaborative offer extended by SAPDC.

Reflections After Five Years

Project in Bloom

Challenges

- **Time.** Time to attend PD, time to follow up on what you learned at the session, time to change up units and lessons. Time to collaborate, read, process, enhance, expand, examine. Teachers and administrators are short on time. As well, the staggered roll out affected teacher access to PD and support.
- **Competing priorities.** Teachers rarely teach just one subject and thus they must balance their resources to provide their best work in all areas of responsibility. Teachers commented that the new math impacted the time left for social studies.
- **Funding.** Sub and travel costs were barriers. With the “cohort work” teachers required extended support to participate. There were fewer sub dollars in later years of the project and this affected attendance at sessions. Teachers who wanted “just in time” PD were disappointed that less was available to them.
- **Resources/Curriculum.** Teachers (especially at younger grades) were concerned that concepts were too difficult for students and noted that reading levels in resources were too high. K & E teachers were concerned about lack of appropriate materials. Some teachers felt the curriculum had too much to cover and didn't lend itself to split grades (topics were very different from year to year).
- **Sustainability.** Teachers will continue to require support as their knowledge deepens and their perspectives broaden. Districts are encouraged to continue making social studies implementation a high priority, especially through the provision of time for cohort work, and NRLC looks forward to continuing that professional development relationship. Another challenge will be lack of a Zone One project coordinator—this position provided a comprehensive range of services to meet zone, district and teacher needs and will be missed in the zone.

Successes

- **Cohorts.** The leadership cohorts have brought out the excitement and passion embedded in this program and deepened the knowledge base and skill set of teachers. Cohort days have included expert facilitation, action research, lesson observation, creation of unit/lesson plans and test questions, and extended collaboration in small groups over multiple years. All of this melded together has provided professional learning communities of the highest calibre. Teachers feel safe to risk, to learn, to grow. These are the role models who go back to their schools and encourage others: this is achievable, the time spent is rewarding, the results are tangible. Come and join our cohort!
- **Advisory and Central Admin Support.** The advisory team has developed into a cohesive cadre of supportive visionaries. They understand the basics of the social studies curriculum and recognize the value of the PD. They are advocates in their districts and schools, as they ask the big questions: How do we know this is working? What is the evidence in our classrooms? What isn't working? How can we find more time/funding? They have developed their own cross-district cohort at this advisory table and have taken this collegiality to the next level, joining together in cross-jurisdictional ventures in additional areas, including developing common school calendars in some cities.
- **Teacher Participation.** Many teachers are making this implementation a priority. Their comments in NRLC reports are strong indicators that they are deeply engaged in understanding the pedagogy, in changing their practice, in enhancing classroom delivery to maximize student engagement. Through assessment, technology, inquiry. Through hands on learning, group projects, critical thinking. Through dedication and time. Bravo!

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Final Reflections

- Stakeholders at all levels are appreciative of the funding provided to the Social Studies Curriculum Implementation Project. The professional learning provided through these grant dollars was intense, provocative, rewarding, rich. The number of PD opportunities, the requests by teachers, the documented high levels of satisfaction, the continued growth in participation, the overwhelmingly positive comments ... all indicate that this has been a rewarding journey. As we move forward it will be exciting to see continued enhancements of the collaborative efforts of teachers. Another exciting area will be the use of technology. Webinars and VC sessions, podcasts, the recording /caching of key elements of the program—all have the potential to reduce barriers and enhance professional learning irrespective of time or place. The photos, survey results and comments embedded in this report are one set of indicators of Zone One satisfaction with this model of curriculum implementation, and this report is one piece of the legacy of what we have accomplished. All provincial consortia continue learning how to best support curriculum implementation and measure professional development in ways that are truly reflective of the impact of our work on students in Alberta classrooms. Consortia work is complex, and within our roles we have many of the same challenges and successes as highlighted in this report. As we continue to explore ways to provide engaging and powerful professional learning, there is still more work to do. We believe the data in this report indicates extensive progress, and we feel certain that we are a “project in bloom.”
- A Legacy DVD Project is in the final stages. Copies will be distributed in Zone One in February. It will bring to life many of the highlights of this project. It will also be available on our website at www.nrlc.net

NRLC Social Studies Curriculum Implementation – Project in Bloom

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.

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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. Social Studies curriculum implementation is in full bloom in NRLC.

(Leslie Snyder, NRLC 2006-2010)

Appendix A: Final Financial Statement

	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Revenue						
Grants	600,000		525,000			
Carry Forward	61,421					
Total Revenue	661,421	457,261	711,632	337,572	131,353	40,792
Expenses						
NRLC & District Delivered Learning Opportunities, NRLC Coordination	69,884	88,300	178,983	52,985	12,723	4,021
Building Leadership Capacity	24,000	48,178	31,124	46,269	17,938	
Summer Workshops	8,257	10,703	Payment deferred to 08-09	25,616	11,681	
Advisory, Resources, Materials	3,318	3,755	8,304	5,790		4,331
Project Coordinator (including expenses)	98,701	119,693	150,578	76,014	48,219	32,440
99 Minutes Webcast Series			5,071			
Total Expenses	204,160	270,629	374,060	206,219	90,561	40,792
Revenue Less Expenses	457,261	186,632	337,572	131,353	40,792	0

Budget and Administration

A total of \$1,186,421 was available for the 5+ years of the project. This included carry forward from the K-3 social studies implementation grant of \$61,421, \$600,000 from the 2005-2007 grant, and an additional \$525,000 from 2007-2010 grant funds. The project advisory committee was actively involved in setting the budget direction each year and their feedback helped to ensure that budget dollars were maximized.



The overall budget evolved with the project but the main focus was to build district capacity, ensure long term sustainability and foster multi-district collaboration. NRLC partnered with teachers conventions, the ATA social studies specialist council, ATA PD days in Zone One, districts, schools and other consortia. Session costs were kept reasonable. Every attempt was made to ensure equity and equality for all districts as well as band and private schools. Multiple learning opportunities and cross-curricular approaches aided in

maximizing funding and building teacher capacity. The funding for curriculum implementation was highly important to the



districts and the zone, and allowed teachers to be more fully immersed in social studies content and pedagogy that enhanced their practice.

Comments Re Budget:

- The NRLC provided extensive Social Studies training opportunities for our teachers. They were creative and flexible in how they provided support. They addressed all levels and many forms from admin session to Web 2.0 tools to FNMI perspectives. The major concern for our teachers was both time out of class and lack of school and district funding for PD. We appreciated the funding available through the implementation grant.
- Social studies money running out! :(Teachers have been very excited about their cohorts.
- NRLC is open to input and requests from around the zone.
- Problem: running out of social studies money.
- Good support by NRLC for our PD.





Grant Background:

Alberta Education provided two grants (2005-2007 \$600,000; 2007-2010 \$525, 000) to NRLC to provide implementation support of the new Social Studies program. All budget funds were expended as of January 2011. See summary social studies report 2005-2010 for complete details.

Overarching Project Goal:

Given that student learning is enhanced when jurisdiction staff have access to effective Professional Development, and that professional development needs to focus on enhancing professional practice as well as leadership capacity at the school and jurisdiction levels we identified an **overarching goal for our project:**

Students will demonstrate achievement of specific learner outcomes for their grade level according to the Alberta Social Studies Program of Study.

As Professional development is a shared responsibility, NRLC believes that **our role** in actualizing this goal 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 program of studies as intended.** Our planning to meet this goal will be shaped by our beliefs about effective curriculum implementation:

Effective curriculum implementation leads to a change in practice that enhances student learning. Effective Collaboration (process) - Effective Practice (content) - Effective Adult learning (context)

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 every year of the implementation project. From 2005 through 2010 the plan followed the cycle laid out in the Guide to Comprehensive PD Planning and included innovative professional development

strategies to address all grant requirements. These are fully outlined in the complete project plans for each year (available on the NRLC website at www.nrlc.net).

The plans included multiple entry points and the menu of learning opportunities was scaffolded to ensure that teachers would be able to access professional development that met their learning needs whether they were initiating, developing or sustaining their growth. This grant supported implementation over five school years (from 2005 through 2010) and this executive summary rolls up data to the end of December, 2010.

Regional Background/Context

The NRLC region includes nine school districts as well as franco-phone, band, private and charter schools in a large geographic area that covers the northern half of Alberta. The combination of rural and urban schools makes for a multiplicity of teaching assignments and professional development needs. NRLC is responsive to emerging needs from all stakeholders and recognizes that adaptability and flexibility are essential to ensure all needs are met. Programs are provided in many locations throughout the zone to reduce travel time. Local facilitators, district requested and organized days, as well as building more local expertise through the cohorts have all helped to meet more local needs. The final year of the project saw a decrease in the number of general sessions, while maintaining a strong complement of collaborative cohort sessions. Participant satisfaction remained strong throughout the 5 years and there is much data to support the success of this implementation project.

Zone One Districts

Fort Vermilion SD #52, Grande Prairie RCSSD #28, Grande Prairie Public SD #2357, High Prairie SD #48, Holy Family Catholic RD #37, Northern Gateway RD #10, Northland SD #61, Northwest Francophone Ed #1, Peace River SD #10, Peace Wapiti SD #76, Francophone-Charter-Private-Band Schools; Partners: Alberta Education, ATA, NRLC



Partners in Curriculum Implementation

Facilitators
demonstrate, design, develop and deliver quality PD

Curriculum Facilitators provide sustainability; facilitate, model, mentor; small group or 1 to 1

Project Coordinator – create, coordinate, collaborate, communicate

Administrators show leadership, walk the talk, provide resources, encourage participation

Teachers we need to nurture & support; guide and mentor; listen to their voices

Executive Director works collaboratively with all zone and project partners.

Provincial Social Studies Project Coordinators, Alberta Ed share resources, work collaboratively

Advisory Committee – influential, informative, innovative, implementation ambassadors

Description of Learning Opportunities	# of Learning Opportunities	# of Participants
NRLC Sessions	Dec 2010: 2 09-10: 32 08-09: 53 07-08: 43 06-07: 49 05-06: 37	Dec 2010: 42 09-10: 205 08-09: 818 07-08: 688 06-07: 852 05-06: 845
District Days	Dec 2010: 9 09-10: 27 08-09: 21 07-08: 51 06-07: 45 05-06: 18	Dec 2010: 61 09-10: 484 08-09: 319 07-08: 1655 06-07: 984 05-06: 441
Admin Session Webcast sessions Anne Davies series Admin sessions Admin sessions	09-10: 1 07-09: 6 + 4 07-08: 6 06-07: 2 05-06: 9	09-10: 30 08-09: 130 + 79 07-08: 1848 06-07: 71 05-06: 226
Totals—NRLC & District Days	Dec 2010: 11 09-10: 60 08-09: 81 07-08: 100 06-07: 98 05-06: 64	Dec 2010: 103 09-10: 719 08-09: 1346 07-08: 4191 06-07: 1907 05-06: 1512
MPTC, District Curr Facilitators (delivered by others)	09-10: 19 08-09: 16+ 31 07-08: 20+25 06-07: 74 05-06: no stats	09-10: 160 08-09: 254 + 177 07-08: 337 + 176 06-07: 270 05-06: no stats
Annual Totals	Dec 2010: 11 09-10: 79 08-09: 128 07-08: 145 06-07: 172 05-06: 64	Dec 2010: 103 09-10: 879 08-09: 1949 07-08: 4704 06-07: 2177 05-06: 1512
Grande Total	599 sessions	11324 participants

Highlights, Successes and Challenges of the Past 5 Years

Did this project make a difference and how do you know? Evidence of success?



A Number of Project Successes
Partnerships, Collaboration
Leadership Cohort Groups
Social action projects in communities
District support & participation
Funding, Project Coordinator
Moodle & Wiki Spaces for collaboration
Weaving Children's Lit, Admin Toolkit
Introduction of Webinars, new tech

Teacher Surveys Said:
Increasing levels of confidence/competence over time
Increasing confidence re teaching strategies, assessment practices
Still require more PD
Expect to change the way they teach
NRLC sessions assisted them

Barriers Identified by Teachers to attending PD (in ranking order)
Competing Priorities
Distance from Workshops
Available Subs
Funding

**This PD (cohort group) has changed my planning. It has enhanced my knowledge of how to implement the social studies program, which will make my teaching more effective and efficient. I am very thankful for this time to plan with my colleagues. As teachers we are always expect to improve our delivery and assessment methods, but are never given enough time to plan, so thank you very much.*

A Few Project Challenges
Multiple perspectives
Late buy in, PD overload
Curriculum Facilitator approach
Measuring implementation success
Attendance at sessions

**There were multiple SS sessions where PWSd partnered with NRLC to offer opportunities for collaboration with other divisions. This has proven to be very effective at expanding collective capacity. Moodle collaboration has been effective in bringing people together from multiple divisions to learn about this LMS and create collaboration spaces.*

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Being an interpreter suits Harris to a T/D2
Twilight's future bright / D4

Alberta teen pays tribute to war heroes

Home: Now captures national sentiment

4 Peace Country Sun - Friday, March 26, 2010

Three Little Buffalo students off to United Nations

Principal hopes to shed light on socio-economic problems in the First Nations community

Kristiana Grimmel
QMI Agency

Three Cadotte Lake school students from Little Buffalo join a United Nations delegation in New York City this week over writing essays on their personal experiences growing up in Little Buffalo. Their principal hopes the contest will motivate youth in the community, most of whom don't graduate and who lack basic services.

Leticia Gladue, 15, Dupine Omimayak, 16, and Dawn Sessegeen, 17, are spending this week in New York City.

The trip began Monday. The delegation is sponsored by Amnesty International, the Canadian Friends Service Committee (Quakers), KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, the Alberta Federation of Labour and the Agriculture Union.

Students will also visit New York's Smithsonian Institution, a major museum and research centre.

The event coincides with the 20th anniversary of a UN ruling that Canada failed to protect the rights of the Lubicon Cree and that Canada failed to address extensive oil and gas development in the area had harmed the local economy and way of life.

Gladue spoke to the Peace River Record-Gazette on a break between classes last Friday, saying she's excited and "overjoyed" by what lies ahead in New York City.

Gladue, whose essay was called "My People, My Community and Me: How our Human Rights are Repeatedly being Violated and Ignored", said English is her favourite subject. She hopes to become a pediatrician or a psychiatrist.

"It's OK, I guess. It's just boring and there's not much to do," said Gladue of being a teenager in Little Buffalo.

She goes skating and does homework after school. Her parents have helped her to steer clear of drugs and alcohol, which she says are a problem. She'd like to see a community centre is needed more than anything.

Many of the people in Little Buffalo, the small First Nation community about 100 kilometres west of Peace River, live in poverty and without running water. The First Nation has never settled a federal land claim.

Last September, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) took over management of the band's financial management due to an ongoing leadership dispute and concerns over service delivery.

Trish Alexander, principal of



Reflections After Five Years

Project in Bloom

Challenges

- **Time.** Time to attend PD, time to follow up on what you learned at the session, time to change up units and lessons. Time to collaborate, read, process, enhance, expand, examine. Teachers and administrators are short on time. As well, the staggered roll out affected teacher access to PD and support.
- **Competing priorities.** Teachers rarely teach just one subject and thus they must balance their resources to provide their best work in all areas of responsibility. Teachers commented that the new math impacted the time left for social studies.
- **Funding.** Sub and travel costs were barriers. With the “cohort work” teachers required extended support to participate. There were fewer sub dollars in later years of the project and this affected attendance at sessions. Teachers who wanted “just in time” PD were disappointed that less was available to them.
- **Resources/Curriculum.** Teachers (especially at younger grades) were concerned that concepts were too difficult for students and noted that reading levels in resources were too high. K & E teachers were concerned about lack of appropriate materials. Some teachers felt the curriculum had too much to cover and didn't lend itself to split grades (topics were very different from year to year).
- **Sustainability.** Teachers will continue to require support as their knowledge deepens and their perspectives broaden. Districts are encouraged to continue making social studies implementation a high priority, especially through the provision of time for cohort work, and NRLC looks forward to continuing that professional development relationship. Another challenge will be lack of a Zone One project coordinator—this position provided a comprehensive range of services to meet zone, district and teacher needs and will be missed in the zone.

Successes

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