



EARLY LEARNING in SD71




Historical Perspective:

- Half day K/AbEd K program/Full Day Kindergarten
 - Government Direction: Why was this decision made?
 - EDI results
 - Community Partnerships
 - Vancouver Island Early Years Network
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Current Initiatives Operating in the District:

- EDI Data
 - StrongStart
 - Ready/Set/Learn
 - Welcome to Kindergarten
 - CAPC (Community Action Program for Children)
 - 1000 X 5
 - Success by Six
 - Waiting for the Bus
 - AbEd Head Start
 - Special Needs transition program
 - Kindergarten transition program (ECCE involvement)
 - Kindergarten Orientation/Information Evening
 - Early Learning Collaborative
 - Valley Dads
 - Valley Families
 - Cumberland Moms and tots
 - Valley Child
 - Roots of Empathy/Seeds program
 - Childcare and Preschool
 - ECCE program at NIC/Practicums in our Early Learning programs
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Staffing Allocated to Early Years

- 3 FTE for Strong Start (25 hrs. per week)
 - 2 FTE for Strong Start (35 hrs. per week)
 - Extra hrs. used for Early Learning Outreach Programs
 - Days in lieu for K teachers to do EDI surveys (funded by UBC)
 - Contained within the Director of Instruction portfolio
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Financial Review for Early Years in SD71

- StrongStart Salary (\$150,000)
- StrongStart Program costs (\$5000)
- Professional Development (\$1500)
- Welcome to K costs (Print Shop)
- Ready/Set/Learn costs
- Success by 6 costs
- 1000 X 5
- In Kind Support: CAPC/Waiting for the bus/Kindergarten transition (space and dinner)/Early Years forum/StrongStart forum/ECEBC Conference
- Special Needs Brochure
- School district provides space for: Early Years Collaborative
- On site daycares access school facilities during the day

Preferred Future of Early Years in SD71

- The preferred future is to have an Early Years Program at every elementary school in the district.
- Strengthening the relationships between ECCEs and K teachers/School District educators.
- Make Early Care and Learning part of what we do and who we are.
- K teachers attend the transition meetings.
- Increase the knowledge/understanding of Early Childhood Programs in our district.
- Shift the culture regarding Early Care and Learning and school learning so that it is collaborative and partnership oriented.
- Having collaboration time for ECCEs and K teachers to work together.
- Collaboration for K teachers with K teachers.
- Support for K teachers (Extra EA support from Sept.-Dec.) for transitioning children to school.
- Support for K teachers beyond transition where students requiring support get the extra support they need.
- Invite pre-school children to school events beyond Ready/Set/learn and WTK programs.
- Preference be given to Not for Profit Early Care and Learning programs.
- School district person dedicated toward Early Care and Learning programs

Gaps in Early Learning

- Gap in understanding between what happens in the community programs vs the school program. Blame can then become a part of this.
 - Overall lack of understanding in what really happens in the early learning programs.
 - Gap in passing on information between early years and the school.
 - Not every school has their K teachers attend transition meetings.
 - Gap in understanding the transition of students coming from a smaller setting to a classroom setting. 1-8 ratio vs 1-20 ratio. Also support and services gap (SLP/OT, etc...)
 - Huge Family/Child support in ECCE programs, more “child” centered support in the K setting (less parent interaction).
 - Collaboration time for ECCEs and families.
 - Not enough parents “welcomed” in to the K environment/setting during transition times.
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GAPS cont...

- Educational requirements are not universal in ECCE programs and it is not monitored.
- StrongStarts and ECCE programs are not in every school.
- There is a shortage of qualified ECEs in the district and throughout the province.
- Early Learning programs trying to find where they belong in the school district and vice versa.
- Competing interests as opposed to collaborative interests, (ie CAPC/StrongStart in the schools).
- Professional development opportunities for ECEs.
- No universal K standard practice (play-based learning not happening in every K program or a different emphasis on skills vs play)
- Understanding what “Play” is and the role it plays in development.
- No specialized education for “K” teachers even though it is quite different than the primary program. Training is very specialized in ECCE.
- There is a gap between what we do in K, K/1 compared to what happens in Grade 1 in some schools.

