School District No. 34

Abbotsford Virtual School

School Plan for Student Success

2012-2013

“Respect … Opportunity … Innovation”
**Mission Statement**

Abbotsford Virtual School celebrates and respects the rich diversity of its school community in an inclusive and supportive environment. Abbotsford Virtual School endeavors to empower students to:
- meet their educational goals,
- develop personal excellence, and
- engage in lifelong learning.

The motto of AVS is “providing choice learning opportunities”.

**School Context**

Abbotsford Virtual School (AVS) started operation in September 2006 as a SD#34 initiative in response to revised legislation in regards to Distributed Learning (DL) in BC. It is located near the downtown core of Abbotsford. Previously separate programs (Abbotsford Electronic School, W.J. Mouat Virtual School and Rick Hansen eSchool) were amalgamated into one entity to deliver a Distributed Learning program (See Appendix A for further description of DL). AVS is a continuous enrollment DL school that provides educational programs for Kindergarten to Grade 12 and adult students. In DL schools, the majority of the learning takes place at a distance/off-site and through indirect methods of instruction. AVS does not have an attendance obligation for students. Students typically learn at home with teacher-student communication occurring through email, phone and messaging, etc. Teachers make provisions, however, for face-to-face interactions with students, including classes for the K to 9 students at various points in the week or in one-on-one tutoring sessions.

AVS has a teaching staff of fifteen full time equivalents and a support staff of six who provide clerical, custodial and student support services. Complete programs are offered to Kindergarten to Grade 9 students. For Grade 10 to 12 and adult students, students may take one or more of the 48 online courses and/or 18 paper-based courses available. There are three modes of program delivery at AVS:

**K-Grade 9**: Teachers blending instructional materials, generally paper-based, into tailor-made student programs,

**Grade 10-12**: Online Courses (courses developed by AVS teachers and supplemented with the use of programs such as VoiceThreads etc. delivered through the Internet),

**Grade 10-12**: Paper-based courses (pre-packaged Open School courses).

Outstanding key programs include at AVS include:
- Optional classes for elementary and middle students each term including Kindergarten, Art, Technology, PE, and theme-based activities;
- Complete list of academic online courses that lead to regular and adult graduation;
- An online Video Game Design program;
- ICT courses (Cisco, A+, Programming, Web Design);
- A Career/Work Experience programs and;
- A Learning Support Services department.

In accordance with Ministry rules, DL students in Kindergarten to Grade 9 must be fully enrolled at and receive their educational program from only one school. However, Grade 10 to 12 and Adult students may be cross-enrolled, that is, taking courses at more than one school. All students taking grade 10 to 12 courses are funded on a per course basis.
As well as the enrolled DL students, Abbotsford Virtual School supports Registered Homeschooled students. These students are not required to participate in Ministry expectations around curriculum and assessment and their educational program is the responsibility of their parents or guardians and does not result in the issuance of a British Columbia Dogwood graduation certificate. AVS offers support to registered homeschooled students, such as access to educational resources. Parents may borrow educational resources e.g. textbooks or library materials, and children may participate in AVS activities such as field trips, gym, computer classes and art classes. The AVS School Plan will focus on enrolled students. The following table shows the Full Time Equivalency (FTE) of AVS Enrolled students:

Table 1. Historical Enrolled Student FTE Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Grade K- 9</th>
<th>Grade 10-12</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006/2007</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/2008</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/2009</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/2010</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/2011</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/2012</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the FTE is determined as follows:

- 1.0 FTE at the K to Grade 9 level equals 1 student with full program
- 1.0 FTE for the Grade 10 to 12 and Adults is equivalent to 8 course instances

Abbotsford Virtual School students include those who have chosen to learn at home, students who cannot attend school regularly and students who are looking for alternate ways to complete school. Many adult students are taking courses through AVS to upgrade their skills and, in some cases, earn an Adult Dogwood Graduation diploma. The Enrollment figure in Table 2 represents a Head Count (not FTE) showing the significant number of students served by AVS:

Table 2. Historical Student Head Count and Special Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>SPED</th>
<th>Aboriginal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>1260</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>1402</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>1749</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>2079</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>1804</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7* (59)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Full time enrolled students only

In the past six years, AVS has evolved from a school that primarily served home-educated learners to a DL School that serves the students of the entire Abbotsford community and the Province of British Columbia. Students attending the Abbotsford Virtual School are primarily from the Abbotsford area and the three surrounding School Districts (Langley, Mission and Chilliwack). Fewer than 10% of students
are from other BC communities. Enrollment increases throughout the school year due to the continuous entry model for DL schools.

**Data Gathering Issues/Challenges**

Challenges continue to exist in gathering specific data at Abbotsford Virtual School in provincial measures such as School Data Summary (FSA, Provincial Exam results and Satisfaction Survey data) and in district measures such as Grade Writes. Data sets at AVS are small, subject to inconsistent participation and problematic to analyze for a number of reasons e.g. parents opting out, students are at a distance and may not participate, transiency level is very high (year to year cohorts do not really exist), and the lack of access to provincial exam results for students whose school of record is not AVS. Data managers at the Ministry of Education are currently developing a mechanism that collates school-based performance and provincial exam data.

FSA data represents a percent of students in the meeting/exceeding categories BUT this is measured relative to the total students eligible to write each assessment. Unfortunately, due to the large number of students/parents who opt out of writing these assessments, the percentage of students who are meeting/exceeding at AVS is significantly skewed downward. For example, if 10 students actually write an FSA assessment and 8 students meet/exceed, the score should appear as 80%. But if 20 students were eligible to write with 10 opting out, then a score of 40% would be represented (8 out of 20). This leads to information that is difficult to interpret. Parents whose children do not participate in such assessments often express concerns about standardized assessment practices and they do not see value in the use of these measures. Continuous enrollment and year-round service delivery adds to data collection complications. All data should be viewed in the context of the unique structuring and time frames in which DL schools operate.
### Table 3. Data Picture of Abbotsford Virtual School

#### Student Achievement Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PM Benchmarks Grade 3 Reading (% Fully meeting/exceeding)</td>
<td>81.8% (11)</td>
<td>85.0% (1)</td>
<td>53.0% (8/15)</td>
<td>77.8% (7/9)</td>
<td>63.6% (7/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3 Writing (% Fully meeting/exceeding)</td>
<td>100% (1)</td>
<td>71.0% (1)</td>
<td>66.7% (6/9)</td>
<td>66.7% (2/3)</td>
<td>60.0% (3/5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSA – Grade 4 Reading (% Fully meeting/exceeding)</td>
<td>88.9% (9)</td>
<td>61.5% (8/13)</td>
<td>33.3% (4/12)</td>
<td>31.6% (6/19)</td>
<td>33.3% (3/9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSA – Grade 4 Writing (% Fully meeting/exceeding)</td>
<td>100% (9)</td>
<td>69.2% (9/13)</td>
<td>0% (0/12)</td>
<td>26.3% (5/19)</td>
<td>33.3% (3/9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSA – Grade 4 Numeracy (% Fully meeting/exceeding)</td>
<td>88.9% (9)</td>
<td>61.5% (8/13)</td>
<td>25.0% (3/12)</td>
<td>26.3% (5/19)</td>
<td>22.2% (2/9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4 Social Responsibility (% Fully Meeting/Exceeding)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>90.0% (9/10)</td>
<td>85.7% (6/7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6 Writing (Percent fully Meeting/Exceeding)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100% (1/1)</td>
<td>40.0% (2/5)</td>
<td>0% (0/2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSA – Grade 7 Reading (Percent Fully Meeting/Exceeding)</td>
<td>85.7% (6)</td>
<td>60.0% (9/15)</td>
<td>36.8% (7/19)</td>
<td>60.0% (9/15)</td>
<td>50.0% (6/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSA – Grade 7 Writing (Percent fully Meeting/Exceeding)</td>
<td>100% (6)</td>
<td>53.3% (8/15)</td>
<td>31.6% (6/19)</td>
<td>60.0% (9/15)</td>
<td>50.0% (6/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSA – Grade 7 Numeracy (Percent Fully Meeting/Exceeding)</td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
<td>53.3% (8/15)</td>
<td>36.8% (7/19)</td>
<td>53.3% (8/15)</td>
<td>50.0% (6/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7 Social Responsibility (Percent Fully Meeting/Exceeding)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>76.2% (16/21)</td>
<td>72.7% (8/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 9 Writing (% Fully Meeting/Exceeding)</td>
<td>25.0% (4)</td>
<td>0% (0/2)</td>
<td>60.0% (3/5)</td>
<td>100% (3/3)</td>
<td>100% (3/3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science 10 Provincial Exam (average mark)</td>
<td>75.0% (9)</td>
<td>75.7% (13)</td>
<td>74.6% (14)</td>
<td>82.8% (6)</td>
<td>75.8% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 10 Provincial Exam (average mark)</td>
<td>74.4% (11)</td>
<td>78.9% (13)</td>
<td>76.8% (10)</td>
<td>71.2% (13)</td>
<td>80.6% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English 12 Provincial Exam (average mark)</td>
<td>72.0% (1)</td>
<td>65.6% (5)</td>
<td>73.7% (22)</td>
<td>69.1% (23)</td>
<td>68.2% (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math 10 (FPC10) Provincial Exam (average mark)</td>
<td>82.8% (5)</td>
<td>80.1% (12)</td>
<td>83.3% (13)</td>
<td>80.2% (12)</td>
<td>74.4% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math 12 Provincial Exam (average mark)</td>
<td>75.0% (1)</td>
<td>80.1% (7)</td>
<td>72.6% (10)</td>
<td>79.1% (9)</td>
<td>74.8% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socials 11 Provincial Exam (average mark)</td>
<td>80.3% (6)</td>
<td>73.0% (6)</td>
<td>74.1% (14)</td>
<td>71.3% (12)</td>
<td>68.5% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Intermediate Students with a C+ or better in Language Arts</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Intermediate Students with a C+ or better in Mathematics</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Student Engagement Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Daily Attendance</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of SSA Students’</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Regular Graduates</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Adult Graduates</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Discipline Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Referrals</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 3 Reasons for Referrals</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of In-School Suspensions</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Out-of-School Suspensions</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other discipline data</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Survey Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Data Item</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Satisfaction Survey Item: ___</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Satisfaction Survey Item: ___</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other survey data:</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Demographic Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Data</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Enrolment</td>
<td>1260</td>
<td>1402</td>
<td>1749</td>
<td>2079</td>
<td>1804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDI (% vulnerable in 1 or more domains)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Mobility/Transiency:</td>
<td>118.03</td>
<td>135.11</td>
<td>223.43</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Special Education</td>
<td>1.1% (14)</td>
<td>1.9% (27)</td>
<td>2.1% (19)</td>
<td>3.7% (36)</td>
<td>2.34% (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent ESL</td>
<td>0.3% (4)</td>
<td>0.2% (12)</td>
<td>0.1% (2)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Aboriginal</td>
<td>1.2% (15)</td>
<td>2.1% (29)</td>
<td>2.4% (22)</td>
<td>4.5% (44)</td>
<td>0.4% (7)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other demographic factors:</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Only considering full-time enrolled students, not cross-enrolled
Leadership/Teamwork

School Planning Council Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAC Representative</td>
<td>Mrs. Kim Hiebert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Representative</td>
<td>Mrs. Gulneep Parmar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Representative</td>
<td>Mrs. Jacqueline Fischer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrators</td>
<td>Mr. Brad Hutchinson - Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Mary Stobbe - Vice Principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Representatives</td>
<td>Mrs. Fay Christie, Glenda Dyck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Representative</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The School Planning Council (SPC) represents the students, parents, Parent Advisory Council, staff and administration. The council works collaboratively to gather meaningful input from all stakeholders to provide input to the school and its operations. SPC members participated in drafting school goals and have requested that staff provide data, information, goals, objectives, and strategies to complete and compile the school growth plan. The school provides opportunities for administrators, teachers, students and parents to demonstrate leadership in support of improving student learning in the following ways:

Administrators:
- Provide professional development opportunities for staff (i.e. AVS Virtual Certification, Differentiated Instruction and monthly PLC meeting times*). Pro-D is included as part of some staff meetings.
- Scheduled release time for teachers to share, collaborate and discuss common DL approaches.
- Attend and promote relevant Pro-D activities themselves and serve as models for staff to support school goals.
- Work with PAC to provide funds for additional supports for students e.g. computers in the Learning Centre, field trips.

Teachers:
- Develop a set of common educational beliefs that provide a framework to make decisions and foster student success.
- Participate in PLCs in areas of common interest (in the K to Grade 9 and in the Secondary Programs) to evaluate their practice.
- Mentor and support new staff in creating and assessing individualized coursework and programs for each child.

Students:
- Provide information through surveys and in formal/informal interactions with staff.

Parents:
- PAC supports the school with funding for computers, electronic subscriptions and field trips.
- Provide direct input through surveys and informal interactions with staff.
- Meet with teachers for assessments discussions and are an integral part of the students’ educational plan.

* Includes our in-house DEV Team that examines new tools and pedagogical approaches for the DL environment, particularly at the secondary level.
**Communication**

Abbotsford Virtual School is an inclusive school community that values and utilizes input to continually improve service to students. AVS will provide opportunities for continuous dialogue and will make improvement goals and progress public, using the following strategies:

- Bi-monthly newsletters to parents and students posted on website;
- the AVS website;
- monthly PAC meetings;
- regularly SPC meetings;
- AVS Community events; and
- monthly staff meetings.
School Goal Areas

Oral Literacy Goal – K to Grade 8

Goal
To improve student collaboration with other distributed learning students by participating in VoiceThread interactions both as commenter and a creator.

Rationale
Abbotsford Virtual School works with enrolled DL learners at all grade levels. These learners follow Ministry PLOs and work under the direction of a certified teacher. Parents facilitate the learning at home under the direction of the teacher. As Ministry policy requires that students enrolled in distributed learning complete at least 50% of their learning outside of the school setting, many AVS students may be learning without the peer interaction needed to aid in the development of purposeful oral language skills. In the 2009-2011 school years a structured oral language program was initiated to determine if oral language development could be enhanced for our students. From pre and post intervention assessment it was determined that through a structured program, our K-2 enrolled DL learners did show significant improvement in their use of complete sentences (100% improvement) and in the number of words they used to describe a familiar scene (50% improvement). The following year AVS teachers initiated some online learning opportunities designed to improve communication and collaboration opportunities between DL students and their teacher. Initial inquiry into the use of VoiceThread in the previous year and introduction to the parent group has demonstrated that this program has potential to begin the online dialog among students at a distance. DL teachers will begin using these online, along with face to face classes, to encourage and improve student collaboration with their peer groups. Success for this first stage will be measured in frequency of participation with focus on improvement of quality of interactions. Data will be gathered on the number of times students participate in VoiceThread classes and online activities that offer collaboration opportunities. Specific materials and lessons plans will be structured in a variety of subject areas to focus on this goal.

Objectives

Objective 1: To continue to provide students with face to face and VoiceThread opportunities to participate in collaborative activities with peer DL students.

Students will participate in activities such as:
• sharing of ideas
• generating ideas and opinions
• organizing information and practicing delivery

Strategies for Providing Opportunities and Instruction:
• Providing small group classes in a variety of subject areas.
• Providing materials during the lessons that encourage collaboration in partners and small groups.
• Providing information to parents and students about opportunities and expectations.
• Monitoring, tracking and assessing students based upon AVS developed rubrics of assessment that include notation for comments made to peer and/or teacher created VoiceThread.
• Students will create their own VoiceThreads to be commented on by other students.

Objective 2: To provide students with on line opportunities to participate in collaborative activities with peer DL students.
• Providing learning opportunities that use online software such as VoiceThreads and Moodle.
• Providing direction for accessing and using software
• Providing ongoing monitoring of use and expectations
• Monitoring, tracing and assessing students based on the Performance standards.

Performance Indicators and Targets Related to Objectives

As is the nature of distributed learning, students may have few opportunities for daily peer interaction. The Ministry mandate states that DL students must complete at least 50% of their learning in an environment away from the school. This means that in the typically their communication skill development has been determined by the quality of the interactions they have with family and social activities.

For this school year (2012/2013) we will include all grade K to 8 students in our goal of increasing communication opportunities. Our targets for the 2012/2013 school year will be that 75% of K to 2 students will participate in the face to face classes that offer enhanced peer collaboration opportunities and that 75% of our grade 3 to 8 students participate in online programs that offer enhanced peer collaboration opportunities. To assess the progress towards these goals we will monitor attendance.

Actions

**Kindergarten to Grade 2 teachers will:**
• provide in-service opportunities for parents on the importance of peer collaboration,
• provide parents with ideas encouraging peer collaborations in the home and community,
• provide parents with ideas and instruction in order to assist students to be prepared for face to face classes and collaboration,
• regularly schedule face to face classes, both weekly and bi-weekly, where collaborative activities will be implemented,
• regular face to face meetings and report card conferences to monitor progress, and
• provide more opportunities for peer interaction and purposeful instruction through AVS weekly classes.

**Grade 3 to Grade 8 teachers will:**
• provide in-service opportunities for parents on the importance of peer collaboration,
• provide parents with ideas for encouraging peer collaboration in the home and community,
• provide parents with training on how to use online software in order to help facilitate its use,
• provide materials that incorporate the use of the online software as part of the curriculum,
• monitor the use of the software and provide instructional feedback,
• monitor collaboration and provide feedback to further the collaboration, and
• provide regular feedback through face to face meetings, online meetings and report card conferences to monitor progress.

Progress/Results related to objectives

It is expected that for our Kindergarten to grade 2 students 75% will attend our weekly and/or bi-weekly classes where peer collaboration activities are focused. During these classes teachers will supply materials and monitor progress. It is expected that for our Grade 3 to 8 students 75% will access online software tools such as VoiceThreads and Moodle in order to participate in peer collaboration activities at least once a week. Teachers will use materials that can be used to initiate this collaboration and then monitor the collaboration for content.
Literacy Goal – Grade 2 to 5 Programs

Goal: All AVS DL learners will improve technology skills while participating in online literacy-based activities which the result in improvement reading comprehension scores.

Rationale

Abbotsford Virtual School works with DL learners. These students follow Ministry PLOs and learn under the direction of a certified teacher. Parents facilitate the learner at home in consultation with the teacher. Depending upon the particular year and student group, PM Benchmarks and STAR reading assessment data show that some AVS DL learners are struggling to read at grade level expectations. Individual students, however, vary significantly. These students have come to us from a variety of previous settings (i.e. registered homeschoolers, other DL programs, and bricks and mortar schools). Many students who have difficulties or challenges with reading may also be struggling to maintain expectations in other academic areas. One of the challenges faced by the struggling reader is the ability to access the appropriate level of reading material that will allow them to make gains towards their grade level expectations. AVS currently provides appropriately leveled books in paper format but the distance from the physical location can hinder the opportunity to access the necessary level in a timely fashion. It is for this reason AVS will also promote access to an online web based program that will allow consistent access to appropriately leveled text.

Objectives

Objective 1: To have 90% of enrolled students in Grades 2 to 5 fully meeting or exceeding expectations in reading scores by June 2013.

- Provide Grade 2 to 5 students, who are struggling to meet reading expectations, access to appropriately leveled reading material through an online web based program (RAZ kids)
- To monitor student progress and provide timely feedback based on the weekly updates of progress and tracking of log in information that the program provides to the support teacher.

Performance Indicators and Targets Related to Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicators and Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Achievement Results – Grade 2 to 5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM Benchmarks Grade 3 Reading (% Fully meeting/exceeding)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3 Writing (% Fully meeting/exceeding)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSA – Grade 4 Reading (% Fully meeting/exceeding)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSA – Grade 4 Writing (% Fully meeting/exceeding)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSA – Grade 4 Numeracy (% Fully meeting/exceeding)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbotsford Virtual School 2012-2013
Due to the nature of distributed learning and the transient nature of our student population, AVS cannot accurately use cohort groups as performance indicators. Many of our struggling students come to AVS for a shorter time period to deal with their individual needs. Our tracking, therefore, will be based on a pre and post assessment of reading levels (using either PM Benchmarks or the STAR reading assessment) for each student. We will also track online progress through the RAZ Kids levels and the number of logins for each student during each term to correlate the success of the program.

**Actions**

*To ensure that 90% of enrolled students in Grades 2 – 5 are fully meeting or exceeding expectations in reading, AVS elementary teachers will provide support to:*

- model correct reading strategies to parents and students during conferences that can be practiced in the home environment.
- demonstrate strategies of shared reading and coral reading activities during online and face-to-face settings e.g. classes.
- identify struggling readers in Grades 2 to 5 as early as possible through individual assessment tools (PM Benchmarks and STAR) and develop interventions to support their improvement,
- encourage use of the web based online program (RAZ kids) a minimum of three times a week,
- review progress by assessing reading level at each term,
- develop teacher provided motivation/encouragement to use the web based online program through weekly emails and phone calls, and
- create in-house data collection and comparison table to include pre- and post-benchmark reading scores to compare to program progress scores and weekly log in amounts.

**Progress/Results related to objectives**

It is expected that reading score results and Grade 2 to Grade 5 will show in June 2013 that at least 90% of students will be fully meeting or exceeding grade level in reading.
School Completion Goal – Secondary Programs

Goal
To increase the rate of successful student course completion to 75%.

Rationale

Distributed learning is an open and free opportunity for any Grade 10-12 or Adult student even if they are enrolled in another school. Students can start courses at any time but may also withdraw from courses when personal situations change. Examination of the school data profile shows that there are several areas in which to establish goals for secondary programs. However, the most significant area that still needs to be addressed at AVS is in the area of course completion. Initial data from the Ministry of Education for the 2006-2007 Grade 8 to 12 cohort showed that AVS achieved a 74% success rate and a 19% withdrawal rate.

Early Ministry SADE data, while raw and not yet published, shows that AVS has one of the highest success rates in BC Distributed Learning schools, along with one of the lowest withdrawal rates for schools of a comparable size. Analysis of SADE data on course completion collected by the Ministry reveals the following (Grade 10 to 12 active course instances only):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Total Grade 10-12 Active Course Instances</th>
<th>Completed Successfully</th>
<th>Withdrawn</th>
<th>Failed</th>
<th>In Progress*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 07 to May 08</td>
<td>1308</td>
<td>911 (69.6 %)</td>
<td>334 (25.5 %)</td>
<td>57 (4.4 %)</td>
<td>6 (0.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 08 to May 09</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1091 (54.2 %)</td>
<td>640 (31.7 %)</td>
<td>142 (7.1 %)</td>
<td>140 (7.0 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 09 to May 10</td>
<td>3462</td>
<td>1756 (50.7 %)</td>
<td>1014 (29.3 %)</td>
<td>89 (2.6 %)</td>
<td>603 (17.4 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10 to May 11</td>
<td>3088</td>
<td>1336 (43.3 %)</td>
<td>595 (19.3 %)</td>
<td>26 (0.8 %)</td>
<td>1130 (36.6 %)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N.B. Data as of Feb. 2012

Although a clean SADE data picture is yet to emerge in DL, some observations and questions surface about various trends from both the quantitative and qualitative perspective:

- There has been rapid growth in DL but has the rate of growth been stemmed by new “DL Active” policy implemented in 2010-2011?
- Generally, course completions and success rates in DL provincially range in the 40% to 50% rates. What factors can improve these results?
- Withdrawal rates are quite high, generally ranging around the 30% mark. Why? How can these results be reduced?
- Failure rates are relatively consistent with Bricks and Mortar schools. What differences exist in client bases in DL compared to Bricks and Mortar schools?
- Cohort grouping is difficult to manage in a continuously enrolling school. Data lags as a result (open courses may not be closed off for up to 3 years from active date). How can other sources of data be obtained and included for cross-enrolled students e.g. Provincial Exams?

Abbotsford Virtual School 2012-2013
• More in-depth analyses will need to be developed to determine individual course success rates, as the raw data shows that the rate does vary considerably between different courses. What are the differences in DL client bases e.g. comparing Adults versus the Grade 10-12 learners?
• Ministry “Active Policy” was altered for 2010-2011. What impact does this change have on student completion and withdrawal rates?

Objectives

Objective 1: To increase the successful course completion rate to 75% for enrolled students taking Grade 10 to 12 courses.
• Create a more engaging “social network” portal for AVS courses, to capture students more immediately.
• Develop an orientation course providing students with the skills necessary for success in an online environment and giving them a more realistic understanding of the nature of online learning.
• Create a Personal Learning Environment for students, including a Learning Management System, ePortfolio (Mahara), Learning Object Repository (in SD#34), Skills Database, collaboration and other tools and spaces to provide different pathways for students to meet learning outcomes.
• Re-design and ‘re-skin’ the AVS web sites to be more user-friendly and display consistent ‘branding’.
• Expand AVS electives course offerings e.g. Applied Digital Communications and Comparative Civilizations.

Objective 2: To decrease the course withdrawal rate to 20%.
• Collate information from the Withdrawal Survey and determine reasons for withdrawal from courses.
• Create systems of intervention that target students who appear to be disengaging from their courses to reduce withdrawal rate.
• Contact reluctant learners regularly to determine progress through the course.

Performance Indicators and Targets Related to Objectives

A number of reasons have been identified for the withdrawal of students from courses including:
• failure to understand the demands of online learning;
• lack of technical skills necessary for success in an online environment;
• lack of interest in course materials;
• difficulty in self-motivation and pacing required by a more independent learning environment;
• mismatch of course environment to learning style;
• overwhelmed by the volume of material presented; or
• may not fully understand the instructions or assignment requirements.

The development of Open Source tools and applications has made it affordable and possible to offer students a variety of tools, applications and environments to facilitate their meeting of learning outcomes in a variety of different ways, depending on their interests and learning styles. Educational service providers are now able, very readily, to provide teachers with the tools to create Personalized Learning
Environments to enable their students to meet the learning outcomes in a variety of different ways and in a timeframe appropriate to their needs – differentiated instruction, assessment and pacing. The available tools can be integrated seamlessly so that students are able to access learning resources, collaboration tools, learning management systems, assessment tools and so on, behind a secure system with a single sign-on.

This personalized learning environment will exist on a continuum from prescribed, teacher-created learning and assessment activities, through project-based learning experiences, to negotiated activities and artifacts designed by the students themselves.

**Actions**

*With a focus on achieving a course completion rate of 75%, the AVS administration and secondary teachers will investigate approaches and implement practices that address how to:*

- work with students to create a personal learning plan to meet course outcomes,
- create social groupings in courses, using social networking strategies to engage students and foster collaboration and a sense of community,
- encourage students to be creators of understanding, rather than consumers of knowledge,
- develop and ‘retool’ courses to incorporate Web 2.0 tools and to encourage 21st Century learning skills,
- analyze school course completion data to determine trends and approaches to improve student course completion,
- develop systems of interventions to re-engage DL students who appear to be falling behind in course progress or assist reluctant learners,
- develop strategies that enhance teacher-student relationships in the DL environment, and
- provide credit recovery opportunities for SD#34 students.

**Progress/Results related to objectives:**

AVS continues to be in a formative stage as the DL model in BC and Ministry policy evolves. At this stage, baseline data is still being established and the main goal remains focused on targeting improvement in course completion. Although successful course completion data and withdrawal data at AVS compares favorably with other DL schools, student achievement has room for improvement as measured in terms of successful course completions and reduced withdrawal rates. The data collected for the 2009-2010 and 2011-12 school years formed a baseline for further discussion and development of specific strategies. The staff at AVS has worked diligently to improve and streamline intake processes and will continue to work with students to bridge the gap between school/teachers and the students who work with AVS. The accomplishments and gains made in the first six years of operations are encouraging.
School Completion (Secondary Programs):

Abbotsford Virtual School is a choice program in SD#34. AVS serves all students in the district providing additional and/or unique courses. At Abbotsford Virtual School, education is individualized and personalized. For example, many students are choosing hybrid programs – part-time in a bricks and mortar school and part-time in DL. In addition, AVS is a point of referral by district and independent schools when students have not met expectations in a regular schooling program. It can also be noted that many students come to AVS after an “apparent graduation” to take course(s) that formally complete the graduation requirements with the Ministry of Education or to upgrade marks for post-secondary.

Abbotsford Virtual School has been actively engaged in working with other District #34 schools to support “At Risk” youth. AVS has provided paper-based materials to schools to assist schools in serving behavior/learning assistance students and other “At Risk” youth at their home school. While resources and service levels may be limited, AVS also provides programs for students with some face-to-face component to better meet the needs of each individual student if other school options are not suitable.

District Achievement Contract:

- To increase the school completion of Aboriginal students.
  - Progress to Date: There are 7 full-enrolled students of Aboriginal ancestry in the school. In addition, a number of cross-enrolled students including students supported in the Spirit Bear program are served by AVS. Each reporting period the School-Based Team analyzes the achievement of our Aboriginal students in each grade in school completion areas, particularly around English and Mathematics. We have purchased and made available more resources in our Learning Centre and undertaken tracking service opportunities with each individual. The vast majority of Aboriginal students at the Grade 10 to 12 levels are cross-enrolled and, as such, our Aboriginal Education services focus on students for whom AVS is their school of record. However, AVS must consider all students who may benefit from course offerings and support that may be cross-enrolled from other schools.
  - Future Work in this area: We are preparing to offer more cultural experiences in our next school year and ensuring that we increase the number of each student-staff interaction. We continue to support the Spirit Bear project and are reshaping the educational program to provide for a semester-based approach to course completion and to improve the exit transition plan for students in this program.

- To improve the achievement of secondary students in high incidence categories. (Q – Learning Disabilities, R – Moderate Behaviour and H – Intensive Behaviour / Serious Mental Illness)
  - Progress to Date: Our Learning Support teacher, LSS Team and the School-Based Team responds to all students with identified learning challenges, although no behavior program exists. In order to support any students with identifiable learning or behavioral challenges, we provide a large slate of services in our Learning Centre to assist each student individually. Our LSS team has one LSS
Teacher and two Teaching Assistants. AVS is unlikely to create Behavioural programs as this does not fit into the DL mandate.

**Future Work in this area:** We recognize the need to continue to find ways and means of working with at-risk students. We will continue to build strong relationships with all schools and programs within SD#34 to assist students to find the correct placement/program if they are not going to be well-served in the DL environment.

A goal is to increase our implementation of differentiated practices in each Student Learning Plan developed at AVS.

- To increase participation in and completion of career transition programs.
  - **Progress to Date:** AVS has established a Career Facilitator position and our Career Facilitator actively completes site visits. We conducted an in-house review of WEX12 students to determine if our practices met audit standards and have determined that our record keeping for work placement is appropriate. A small number of items were adjusted. The AVS program is fully compliant with District and Ministry expectations. We continue to have SSA students work through AVS as cross-enrolled students. Our Counselor is also our Career Facilitator and promotes all district career options available even though we have few students who are “tagged” as successful applicants to district career programs. Participation in district career fairs is promoted. Our counselor continues to handle all SSA, WE12 and Grad Transitions 12 programs for AVS.
  - **Future Work in this area:** We will continue to promote career options to all students, including district career programs.

- To improve successful transitions of students between schools/grades.
  - **Progress to Date:** AVS is a transition point for many transitioning students. Each student comes to AVS with their own history and background. Our focus is to provide an educational program that is unique to the student and their current/future plans. AVS is not always the best placement for “at risk” youth and, as such; we continue to counsel each individual student (and parent) with respect to the best opportunity that exists in SD#34. The information provided by the 100% project has been somewhat helpful in identifying students who should receive extra support but due to the overwhelming number of students at AVS, identification is challenging.
  - **Future Work in this area:** We will continue to work with the Aboriginal Centre and the District’s LSS Team to track and intervene with students at risk of leaving school. We will attempt to develop a tracking scheme and pyramids of interventions, particularly around direct service and communication that provide greater support within the constraints of the DL environment.
Appendix A. Additional Notes about Distributed Learning

**Distributed Learning (DL):** A method of instruction that relies primarily on indirect communication between students and teachers, including Internet or other electronic-based delivery, teleconferencing, or correspondence.

**Distributed Learning School:** A school or francophone school that offers instruction by means of distributed learning only.

Students wanting to learn any time, any place or at any pace may choose distributed learning as an alternative to attending classes in a bricks and mortar school. It is an alternative to classroom-based instruction for Kindergarten to Grade 12 or adult students. DL can be delivered using paper-based print material, online courses, face-to-face interaction or combinations of these.

Key features of public Distributed Learning (DL) are:
- Boards of Education are responsible for the educational program and supplementary supports as described in the DL Agreement.
- B.C. certified teachers lead the educational program.
- Students taking distributed learning must meet the same course requirements as any other student.
- Courses taken through distributed learning are equivalent to the same course taken in a classroom.
- Students enroll at the school of their choice, not through the Ministry.
- Students are required to meet an “Active” status in lieu of attendance obligation (for funding purposes).
- Students may take courses from a combination of DL and bricks and mortar schools and may take their DL courses from a number of different DL providers.

Distributed Learning (DL) delivery may include any of the following:
- Correspondence courses,
- Pre-packaged Paper-based courses e.g. Open School,
- Online courses that use computer-based and Internet course delivery,
- Live two-way video conferencing (e.g. Learning Live),
- Virtual classrooms/Elluminate text/audio instruction,
- Computer-based systems that integrate technology and learning in one package; for example, the student may use a multi-media program on a CD to learn Spanish, or
- Any combinations of these (referred to as hybrids if a portion of time includes a face-to-face expectation).