

June 2009

The Service Management Council meeting in May a success!

Planning and priority setting for the upcoming 2009/2010 year requires the input from all Service Management Council representatives. This past May the full council was invited to meet face to face in Vancouver. Those who attended had the opportunity to discuss and provide feedback on a variety of priority areas. The SMC Executive facilitated break out groups to obtain ideas on strategies and actions that can be used to address:

1. Role of SMC in decision making and planning processes
2. Building capacity and expertise in districts/schools
3. A sustainable training model to address school/district needs
4. Funding of ongoing BCeSIS operations and enhancement

This information has been compiled and will help the SMC Executive move forward with finalizing plans for the coming years. For further information on this event please contact your Service Management Council representative.

Message from the SMC Chair



Hello Everyone!

We are heading towards the end of another year and I am happy to report that BCeSIS now holds over 500,000 student records. As summer fast approaches, we are also happy to report that 23 schools have now been set up within BCeSIS as a summer school. This will be the first summer for all of these summer schools to use BCeSIS.

It was a great pleasure to have had the opportunity meet and speak with many of you at this year's BCeSIS User's Conference in Richmond. I hope that you all had a chance to network with your peers around the province and share knowledge and expertise. The conference gives us a great opportunity to build important networks that will aid us all in our work long after the conference has ended.

The theme for this year's conference was 'The Collaborative Approach' which recognizes the need for school districts to work together towards their common goals. On behalf of the Service Management Council, I want to thank Bev Rundell and Yrsa Jenson for speaking to us at the conference. I also want to thank the BCeSIS Conference planning committee for all their hard work in bringing everything together this year. Great job folks!

Just before the conference I had the opportunity to meet with the full Service Management Council on May 20th in Vancouver to work on priority planning and was happy to be able to share with you an overview of the work that has been going on behind the scenes with the Service Management Council, the Ministry of Education, Fujitsu and aAL during the conference.

On behalf of the Service Management Council, we hope you enjoyed the conference and wish you all a great summer break.

Best regards,

Ernie



Service Management Council meeting May 20th, 2009. Vancouver

4th Annual BCeSIS Users' Conference: *an increasingly important role in capacity building.*

The theme of this year's BCeSIS User's conference was 'The Collaborative Approach' which signaled a shift from what began as largely a technology centered conference to one that focuses more on capacity building and using BCeSIS data to support student achievement and school planning. Over 340 people attended this year. The event kicked off with key note speakers Bev Rundell and Yrsa Jenson from the BC Education Leadership Council. The overall message was about managing change, collaboration, capacity building, leadership and need to make effective use of data in education. They emphasized that success will require a "reculturing" that goes beyond traditional restructuring or organizational change.

So what is capacity building? The global definition is "the creation of an enabling environment and is a long-term, continuing process, in which all stakeholders participate". The conference this year certainly reflected this new direction by facilitating the important dialogue between all users and stakeholders province wide.

Director of Common Systems Initiative, at the Ministry of Education Andrew Macauley says "The coming years will be defining for BCeSIS as an enterprise wide project. As we move towards a common understanding of the needs for capacity building within schools and districts, all stakeholders must work together to meet those common goals and objectives."



BCeSIS Users' Conference cont'd...

"We wanted to provide people with as much opportunity to meet and network with others as possible"

- Technology coordinator, SD74, Gold Trail, Conference planning team chair, Marianne Munro

In the past, the user's conference was largely focused on technology. This year the conference took the 'collaborative approach' signaling a shift from users listening to technology experts and software developers to networking and collaborating with each other to share experiences, knowledge, resources and expertise. Now that almost all districts in the province have finished implementing eSIS, networking opportunities have become increasingly important.

"We wanted to provide people with as much opportunity to meet and network with others as possible" says Marianne Munro, Conference planning committee chair. These networking opportunities were built into the program through roundtable panel type discussions, loosely structured sessions or 'birds of a feather' where users could determine the topic of discussion. Also included were debrief sessions, an early evening social and open meeting rooms for get togethers in the evenings. This year users took advantage of the networking opportunities by launching a province wide user group for the Student Services module. They plan to use the conference as an annual opportunity to meet.

The wide range of areas needed for capacity building was also reflected in the conference program. Users could choose from technical support sessions to learning specific areas such as gradebook or scheduling, custom reporting tools, Ministry reporting, data quality to reporting strategies and business continuity planning.

BCeSIS is a vast treasure trove of capabilities and functions that have huge potential to support student achievement by supplying quality streamlined data for teachers and administrators alike. The operational reporting strategies stream intended to foster dialogue around using BCeSIS data for school planning provided a small glimpse into the future.

Districts are encouraged to take advantage of the many opportunities that the BCeSIS Users' conference offers. As schools and districts embark on capacity building together, the role of the conference will become increasingly important in the years to come.



The conference is one opportunity for users across the province to meet each other face to face to learn and share ideas around data management planning and the use of data to inform teaching and learning.



*Conference planning committee 2009
Marianne Banman, SD63, Tim Agnew SD63, Stephanie Campbell, Ministry of Education, Michael Northy, SD39, Marianne Munro SD 74, Andrew Macauley, Ministry of Education*

Capacity building: an art and science

Lessons from SD 73



Norm Walker, SD 73

“Change is inevitable, but each school will change differently, and it’s important to look for that and validate each experience.”

**Technology coordinator
SD73, Norm Walker –**

Teacher of 32 years and current Technology coordinator for SD73, Norm Walker, has experienced much success both as a trainer and a coordinator for BCeSIS within his district and in his previous district. He learned most of his lessons while working with SD 58 where he helped to implement three Secondary schools and seven elementary schools in two years. He has since been working with SD73 to implement BCeSIS in twelve schools spanning five communities and remains passionate about schools using BCeSIS as a data management system. Norm emphasizes that the task of implementing BCeSIS is largely about managing change.

“Change is inevitable, but each school will change differently, and it’s important to look for that and validate each experience of it. Focus on the benefit of the change and not on the change itself. There will likely be things people do not like about any new system because it’s a change,

but there are also things people don’t like about their old system as well.”

The SD73 implementation plan was developed by a management committee a year in advance. The plan included a modest budget, a training model, a timeline and proposed organizational changes to accommodate anticipated capacity needs. Strategies were implemented to not just make sure users feel supported but to ensure that the knowledge and technology successfully transferred into the District so it can become self reliant as quickly as possible.

While the physical framework and resources need to be in place, there are some key principles Norm believes are helpful when building BCeSIS capacity and managing change.

- **Transfer knowledge not technology**

Get to know your school: Understanding that BCeSIS is a data management program, you need to see the whole picture of how that school is currently managing their data. Then match eSIS to their data management plan.

Get to know your users: Identify and understand the skill level of the current staff that will be using the software. First learn about the users situational needs- then match eSIS to the individual user process. Realize that all users want to be successful, and reluctance is usually out of fear of being unsuccessful. Build for success and help the users find the success.

- **Train your trainers**

Supporting users at their desk face to face helps users feel supported, but it is also important to effectively maximize the use your district trainers. The SD73 plan included one TA trainer to a maximum of 30 teachers at the secondary schools.

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- **Train users around key times of the business cycle**

Users need to be supported as they do their jobs therefore it is helpful to offer support during the most critical periods of the business cycle. For example, in early September or one week before a report extract is due(1701/TRAX/Report Cards/ etc..) refresher training should be made available so users feel supported and prepared to meet the demands of their jobs.

- **Train in groups**

Train in groups specific to size of school and role if possible. This tends to create natural user groups. It is ideal if groups could be organized by size of school which usually determines the job demand of the user. Users tend to support one another through the process and keep in touch afterwards as a network of support.

- **Extract good practices and keep them relevant**

Users know best: Norm actively solicits input from users in the field incorporating their notes, knowledge and learned experience into manuals to keep them current and tailored to user needs. Other districts have used those manuals as a starting point and modified them to fit their context. Currently there are several manuals, videos and other reference materials available on the district 73 moodle site for user support:

www.ehelp.sd73.bc.ca

“Once commonality is established, you move into collaborative problem solving. Using collaborative problem solving to help improve learning through the use of data is a rich and rewarding goal”-

Norm Walker, SD73

The need for training and support is tapering off due in part to the effective strategies for capacity building starting to take hold.

Norm remains highly committed to BCeSIS and is optimistic about the future of BCeSIS due to the positive impacts he is already seeing in the field. He is particularly impressed with how student records transfer seamlessly between schools on eSIS.

He also remains focused on the potential of eSIS to manage data in a way that allows for statistical information to be retrieved giving insight into teaching and learning. For example, he recently responded to a district request for a report on students writing provincial exams between June 1st and June 30th in English 10 and Social Studies 11 by school which he says will take all of 3 minutes to produce. The request is a result of the productive collaborative dialogue emerging between schools and districts.

“A common information system by nature will start to highlight and create commonality. Once commonality is established, you move into collaborative problem solving. Using collaborative problem solving to help improve learning through the use of data is a rich and rewarding goal.”

Norm is confident that these positive experiences will only continue to grow. 🚀

Province wide user group launched for Student Services Module ~



Ken Arkell, SD 42 and David Levine, SD 6 launches a Student Services User Group at the BCeSIS User's conference

Within school districts and schools many groups have formed to support user's of different levels and interests, but one group has taken things to the provincial level. Ken Arkell of SD 42 and David Levine of SD6 seized an opportunity at this year's conference to launch the Student Services User Group (SSUG).

The Student Services module is an important one but not without its share of challenges. Its function is primarily to manage the records and data for students with special needs. There are many facets to the module that users are discovering in various districts. After having met user's across the province at the conference, Ken and David opened up a bi-weekly conference call for Student Services users to plug into to get information and share expertise.

User groups at the province wide level are a good way to connect users from different size districts and schools, to stay informed and receive support and are critical to capacity building. The Service Management Council supports this activity and hopes to use it as a model for other user groups.

Conference calls will resume in the fall. For more information about the SSUG, please contact Ken Arkell at karkell@sd42.ca or David Levine at david.levaine@sd6.bc.ca

BCeSIS Stats

The following stats are for week of June 15, 2009.

- ❖ Current # of BCeSIS schools: 1588
- ❖ Current # of students: 502, 668
- ❖ Max# of users logging on in a day: 11 960
- ❖ Number of distinct log-ins for the week: 59, 609
- ❖ Number of reports run for the week: 62, 426



Share your story

Are you using BCeSIS to support student achievement? Save time? Improve efficiencies? Please share your news!

Pass on story ideas for BCeSIS news to your SMC executive rep or Stephanie Campbell at the Ministry of Education - Stephanie.Campbell@gov.bc.ca