

April 2009

### The SMC makes progress on priority setting and planning!

It's that time again! Planning and priority setting for the upcoming 2009/2010 year began in December and will continue to take place over the next couple of months.

The last face to face meeting with the Executive took place this past February and has planned to meet with the full council to have discussions and gather feedback at a *face to face* in Vancouver on May 20<sup>th</sup>.

Areas of discussion will include training and support, service requests, user engagement and capacity building. ♦

## Message from the SMC Chair



Spring is here and I would like to welcome back those of you who are returning from a much needed break.

In January, we reached a significant milestone with more 400,000 active student records in BCeSIS. Uptake of BCeSIS continues at a furious pace. As of the publication date of this newsletter, there are more than 480,000 active student records in BCeSIS. We now need to collectively shift our focus from simply managing the technology to proactively seeking ways to best use the system to meet educational goals and objectives. Ultimately it is the responsibility of school

districts, schools and the Ministry of Education to make sure the system works for them. With more than 1560 schools now on BCeSIS, we are starting to see many potential opportunities to build capacity through the sharing of information, resources and proactive collaboration between schools and school districts.

It is this approach that will take us where we need to go, which is to use BCeSIS not just as a tool to record data but to realize its potential to generate information that improves student achievement and school planning.

I am pleased to have been re-elected to serve as Chair of the SMC Executive for a second year. I look forward to working very closely with all SMC representatives and the Ministry of Education in the coming months to coordinate and set priorities as we move forward with ensuring that BCeSIS is fully functional and stable for users across the province. Priority planning will continue to be the focus for the months ahead. We will be sure to communicate our priorities and changes as that information becomes available.

Best regards,

Ernie



Left to right Feb SMC Executive meeting in Vancouver: Jon Rever, Doug Hogg, Quirina Gamblin, John Hunter, Brian Kuhn, Craig Forgrave, Allan Garneau, Ernie Mannering, Darren Rowell, Shelley Wilcox, Andrew Macauley and Brett Ravcroft.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Annual BCeSIS User's Conference: *The Collaborative Approach*

### *Keynote Speakers*

*Bev Rundell &  
Yrsa Jensen  
- BC Education  
Leadership Council*

*BC's primary goal in education is to improve the chances of success for every learner in the province. Information based decision making is a key strategy to achieving that goal. Bev and Yrsa will focus on collaborative inquiry approaches to using data and information to support practice and make meaningful decisions about student learning.*

*If we are to realize the vision of every student in British Columbia reaching their full potential we all have a role to play.*

- *How can we provide classroom teachers with the information that support the learning of their students?*
- *How can BCeSIS help?*
- *What can we do to continue a collaborative dialogue?*



The BCeSIS User's Conference committee has been finalizing their session planning for the BCeSIS Users Conference. This year will have some interesting highlights.

The theme of this year's conference is 'The Collaborative Approach'. Building on last years success, this year the sessions will try to provide forums for schools and districts to share expertise and learn how to best approach achieving their common goals.

Last year the very successful Making the Connection Forum explored how student achievement is currently supported by technology, data and information systems. They also explored the role of business tools in education planning and how data can be used to inform and improve practice.

These themes are now woven throughout this year's conference through a new stream on Operational Reporting Strategies. This stream will have various sessions geared towards those interested in developing reporting strategies for their school districts using BCeSIS.

The conference itself will have a kick off plenary with special key note speakers from the BC Education Leadership Council, Director of Programs, Yrsa Jensen and Bev Rundell. Yrsa Jensen has been a teacher, vice principal and principal for over 30 years and recently held the position of Director of Instruction in School District #36 (Surrey) where she coordinated several leadership and curricular initiatives for students, teachers and administrators.

She is currently responsible for facilitating the development of Provincial Leadership Seminar Series for recently appointed principals and vice principals. Bev Rundell's most recent position was as an Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Vernon and is currently serving as Vice President of the BC Principals & Vice Principals Association and President of the BC Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

The committee has kept the conference agenda broad with a wide range of topics for users of all levels and roles including: User support & Training, elementary reporting, notes & incidents, Gradebook, teachers roundtables, and much more. Users can choose to participate within informal Birds of a Feather sessions, expert roundtables and hands-on labs. A social will take place on Thursday evening between 4 and 6pm with debriefing sessions will be scheduled on Friday afternoon to help connect users to their network of peers.

A BCeSIS Users moodle site will also be showcased at the conference. Users can visit [www.BCeSISUsers.org](http://www.BCeSISUsers.org) now to find conference information and begin providing input on the use of the moodle now.

The conference aims to provide a forum where users can grow their understanding of BCeSIS and how to use it to generate meaningful information that will help their students achieve their goals. ♦

## School District 59 uses data to engage teachers and improve school planning!

In June of 2007 Chetwynd Secondary School Principal Cheryl Dyer and District Vice-Principal Sean Cameron began an investigation that demonstrated how the data contained in BCeSIS can be used to improve student achievement.

During the 06/07 year administrators were struggling to get a picture of student achievement to support school planning. Historically both teachers and school administrative staff believed that Literacy and Math were key areas of concern. However the data that they had been using came from a variety of sources and could not be easily aggregated or displayed in a coherent way. Moreover, it was not available until after the year had ended which meant that the information could not be used to assist students during the current school year.

Cheryl and her team decided to try something new using the data in BCeSIS and tools at their disposal. Teachers were asked: what information could best give the picture of what the students needed? The answer was generating graphical reports based upon letter grades. Letter grades are timely, teacher generated and available across the school in a consistent format. The information was compiled into "bubble" graphs that identified by grade level where the letter grades were falling. Grade 9 Math jumped right out. Teachers found the bubble graphs easy to understand and they began to ask more questions. *Who are these students? Was the drop in letter grades related to low attendance?*

Sean continued to mine the data by adding features and layers to the bubble graphs to display data and answer critical questions raised by both teachers and administrators. Results showed no simple direct correlation between Math failure rates and attendance. Surprisingly, most Math students with low attendance had B averages! These students are thought to find the material less challenging. They continue to develop simple excel spreadsheets for educators that combined data from the BCeSIS GDE (student info, grade level, letter grades, course, attendance) with other planning information (gender, program, department, graduation date). "The data allowed us to move from gut level perceptions to an accurate picture of achievement and where the gaps actually were", said Cheryl Dyer.

The following are some of the questions that arose as SD59 dug into their data:

- *What are the student achievement patterns and areas of concern?*
- *What do we know about the students in the groups we identify?*
- *Are our interventions working to improve the situation for these students over time?*
- *Is data available at the right level of detail and displayed in a way that allows teachers to answer questions about their students?*
- *Is it flexible enough to be responsive to the data needs of individual schools and teachers?*
- *Does this system allow for easy aggregation and drill-down of data within a user defined cohort, school, and across the district?*

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*Data allowed us to move from gut level perceptions to an accurate picture of achievement and where the gaps actually were.*

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*- Cheryl Dyer,  
Principal, SD59*

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"Many teachers are getting engaged in ongoing dialogue around the use of data"

- Cheryl Dyer

School plans and student profiles were merged to produce meaningful information that could be used to feed the School Improvement Planning Cycle (diagram below). They gathered information about the students who needed special attention. Department heads worked collaboratively with teachers to analyze the data, prepare plans, and identify a variety of intervention strategies: large scale after school programs, introducing a Grade 9 essentials prep IEP course, tutoring opportunities coupled with district assessment data, and a focus in the classroom on students at risk.

Throughout the year, as soon as report cards were produced, data was pulled from BCeSIS and provided to the department heads who then held department-wide meetings to discuss the results with teachers prior to the next semester. Teachers were able to provide professional opinion and advice, collaboratively identify root causes and make planning decisions. They were also able to identify students that were failing early and to reschedule them into additional math classes within the current year.

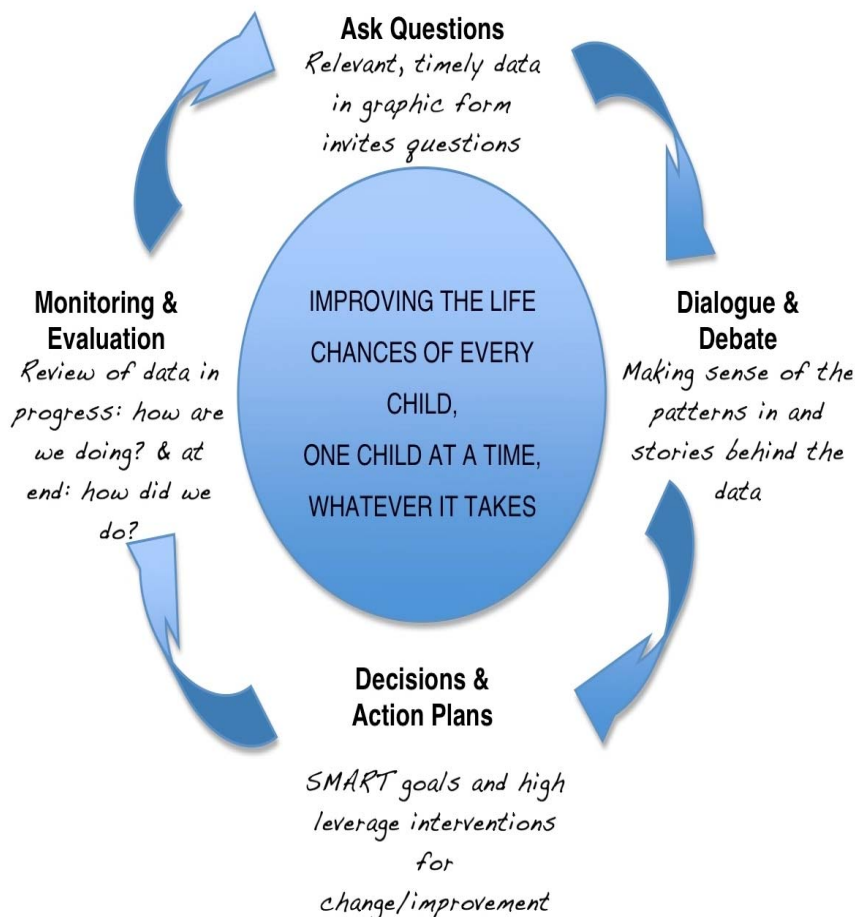
In June Chetwynd Secondary School found that their work paid off and had exceeded expected results, with math failure rates shrinking from 40% in the previous year to just 4%.

The dialogue between teachers and administration has continued and has evolved into further plans for improving student success in grades 8, 9 and 10. Building upon their School Improvement Planning Cycle, teachers, administrators and department heads are engaged in a continuous process of collaborative inquiry and improvement.

They also look forward to using the capabilities of BCeSIS to further consolidate data - this will streamline processes and reduce the effort currently required to compile data from different sources.

Cheryl emphasizes that what's most important is the continuing dialogue with teachers and the availability of accurate data. "It is truly a collaborative approach where many teachers are getting engaged in ongoing dialogue on the use of data. Some are now asking for data to be made available for their use in the classroom." ♦

### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING CYCLE



## New advisory group explores the world of district assessments!

*"I believe that there is capacity within BCeSIS to collect very valuable information that we could collate and disaggregate to help educators monitor and evaluate student achievement"*

*- Pat Duncan,  
Associate  
Superintendent,  
SD 61*

The District Assessment Advisory (DAA) group began this February as part of an effort to explore how BCeSIS can meet the needs of schools and districts with respect to maintaining student assessment data. The Service Management Council Executive believes this advisory group is a welcomed response to many requests from school districts for the need to engage in more dialogue on how BCeSIS can support improving student achievement.

The new DAA is currently reviewing functionality within BCeSIS to determine how districts can view, record, report and track school and district assessment data including unique assessments developed by schools and districts. The advisory is also exploring ways of providing this information in a comprehensive way to inform teachers and principals about the progress of their students. The advisory group will complete their review and recommendations for the BCeSIS Service Delivery Team in June.

The Associate Superintendent of Greater Victoria's School District 61, Pat Duncan says he wants to do all he can to make sure BCeSIS is a tool that teachers and principals can use to help improve student achievement. *"I believe that there is capacity within BCeSIS to collect very valuable information particularly behavioral, attendance and achievement evidence that we could collate and disaggregate to help educators monitor and evaluate student achievement."* says Pat.

In addition to exploring the use of assessment data within BCeSIS, the DAA is also a pilot for a new approach to consultation and collaboration between educators and the BCeSIS Service Delivery Management Team. This is an effort to engage stakeholders in a more open and broad-based consultation process. Input is welcomed from all interested individuals throughout the sector.

By using online tools such as SharePoint and Elluminate, information can be shared while keeping the process open for anyone interested in taking part.

This approach will also save participants the time and travel costs typically associated with collaborative activities. It is hoped that this approach will be a model for future advisory committees.

BCeSIS school districts wishing more information or to participate in the District Assessment Advisory can contact Quirina Gamblen at [Quirina.Gamblen@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Quirina.Gamblen@gov.bc.ca) ♦

## School Districts collaborate on new standing committee for Ministry reporting ~

*Integrated Services Website is new and improved!*

*Check out the new and improved ISW. The District Collaboration Center area of the site has been simplified for easier navigation, users can find updated information on SMC activities as well as BCeSIS Information Updates for the latest news on using BCeSIS for Ministry Reporting: SADE, Course Codes, 1701, Class Size and more!  
[www.isw-bc.ca](http://www.isw-bc.ca)*

School districts and the Ministry of Education have established a new standing committee after having identified an ongoing need to look for ways BCeSIS can help schools address ministry reporting submission needs. The Ministry Reporting Working Group is a standing committee of the Service Management Council and currently has eight members from various school districts.

“Ministry reporting is an important part of on going district/school operations and practice. The creation of a working group dedicated to Ministry reporting provides an opportunity to focus on effective solutions for districts to meet Ministry reporting requirements. The collaboration of representative districts from all over the province ensures that the systems, standards and processes meet the business needs of all districts and schools.” says Bert van der Geest, current working group coordinator.

The MRWG is responsible for all Ministry reporting interfaces and documents required by Ministry legislation such as the Permanent Student Record.

Members of the MRWG represent a wide range of profiles, from small rural to large urban, independent and district. They will also have expertise in BCeSIS functionality, school and district business practices, processes and regulations for Ministry reporting and Student Information Systems usage.

For more information about the MRWG, please contact Bert van der Geest at Bert.vanderGeest@gov.bc.ca

### BCeSIS Stats

The following stats are for week of April 13, 2009.

- ❖ Current # of BCeSIS schools: 1560
- ❖ Current # of students: 479 867
- ❖ Max# of users logging on in a day: 11 165
- ❖ Number of distinct log-ins for the week: 45 155
- ❖ Number of reports run for the week: 47 596



*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](mailto:Stephanie.Campbell@gov.bc.ca)*

## **Your SMC Executive Representatives**

General questions about the **Service Management Council** or the governance of BCeSIS should be emailed to Andrew Macauley at: [Andrew.Macauley@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Andrew.Macauley@gov.bc.ca)

The following list is of districts currently without representation on the SMC Executive Committee:

### School Districts:

|    |    |
|----|----|
| 06 | 67 |
| 19 | 69 |
| 20 | 70 |
| 22 | 71 |
| 28 | 72 |
| 33 | 79 |
| 40 | 82 |
| 45 | 83 |
| 47 | 84 |
| 50 | 85 |
| 53 | 93 |
| 62 |    |

Please contact Andrew with questions about BCeSIS if your district has not selected an SMC executive member to be its representative.

For information or questions about BCeSIS, contact your representative on the SMC Executive Committee. SMC executive reps and their contact information are listed below, followed by the school districts they represent.

**Allan Garneau**, Independent Schools  
[admin@traditionallearning.com](mailto:admin@traditionallearning.com)

**Doug Hogg**, SD #5 - Southeast Kootenay  
[doug.hogg@sd5.bc.ca](mailto:doug.hogg@sd5.bc.ca)

SD #05 Southeast Kootenay  
SD #08 Kootenay Lake  
SD #10 Arrow Lakes  
SD #51 Boundary  
SD #58 Nicola- Similkameen  
SD #74 Gold Trail  
SD #78 Fraser- Cascade

**Brian Kuhn**, SD #43 Coquitlam  
[bkuhn@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:bkuhn@sd43.bc.ca)

SD #37 Delta  
SD #38 Richmond  
SD #41 Burnaby  
SD# 43 Coquitlam  
SD #44 North Vancouver  
SD #59 Peace River South  
SD #75 Mission

**Brett Raycroft**, SD #36 Surrey  
[raycroft\\_b@sd36.bc.ca](mailto:raycroft_b@sd36.bc.ca)

SD #36 Surrey

**Darren Rowell**, SD #42 Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows  
[Darren\\_rowell@sd42.ca](mailto:Darren_rowell@sd42.ca)

SD #42 Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows

**Ernie Mannering**, SD# 91 Nechako Lakes  
[emannering@mail.sd91.bc.ca](mailto:emannering@mail.sd91.bc.ca)

SD #48 Howe Sound  
SD #49 Central Coast  
SD #52 Prince Rupert  
SD #57 Prince George  
SD #60 Peace River  
SD #81 Fort Nelson  
SD #87 Sitkine  
SD #91 Nechako Lakes  
SD #92 Nisga'a

**John Hunter**, SD #39 Vancouver  
[jhunter@vsb.bc.ca](mailto:jhunter@vsb.bc.ca)

SD #39 Vancouver

**Jon Rever**, SD #23 Central Okanagan  
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SD #23 Central Okanagan  
SD #27 Caribou Chilcotin

**Shelley Wilcox**, SD #34 Abbotsford  
[shelly\\_wilcox@sd32.bc.ca](mailto:shelly_wilcox@sd32.bc.ca)

SD #34 Abbotsford  
SD #35 Langley  
SD #64 Gulf Islands

**Gregg Ferrie**, SD #63 Saanich  
[gregg\\_ferrie@sd63.bc.ca](mailto:gregg_ferrie@sd63.bc.ca)

SD #54 Bulkley Valley  
SD #61 Victoria  
SD #63 Saanich  
SD #68 Nanaimo- Ladysmith  
SD #73 Kamloops/Thompson