

**Northwest Regional Learning Consortium**

# **2020-21 ANNUAL REPORT**



by Sandra Ciurysek, Executive Director, NRLC

### **2020-21 Program Year Context:**

The reporting year September 1, 2020, through August 31, 2021, has been a historic year as the Covid-19 Pandemic directly affected the work for the entire year. After first impacting the province and region in March of 2020, health restrictions in place continue to impact schools and consortia work into the current program year.

Due to the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic, annual learning opportunities and participation numbers have declined to nearly half of those typical for NRLC. The Appendix of the Annual Report contains 3-year data trends exhibiting the anomalies created. However, despite these challenges, NRLC has had many successes over the 2020-21 program year and our regional work remains the primary level of our engagement.

Regional highlights include, 72 regional partnership programs, an increase from 42% to 72% Zone 1 participation in NRLC learning opportunities, an increase in regional satisfaction from 69% to 72% with leadership professional development capacity and the addition of 4 new regional advisory committees connecting us to over 80 new stakeholder partners.

### **Zone 1 Regional Context:**

Alberta Education provides funding to the Northwest Regional Learning Consortium (NRLC) for Curriculum Implementation Support of identified priorities. NRLC, in consideration of the Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortium (ARPDC) goals, provincial and regional priorities, and the needs of Zone 1 school authorities, works collaboratively with regional advisory committees, Alberta Education staff and other Consortia members to develop plans, strategies and opportunities to meet provincial and regional identified needs in congruence with the Alberta Education Business Plan.

The NRLC provides service and learning opportunities for eight school divisions, eight First Nation School authorities, as well as private, and charter schools in a large geographical area covering the northern half of Alberta. Some of the school divisions we serve include French Immersion schools/programs as well as Colony schools and many of the schools we serve have a high percentage of Indigenous students. Approximately **2400 teachers** and **1250 educational assistants** are employed within these school authorities.

## ARPD/RLC Goals:

The goals of ARPD are to provide professional development that:

- supports the effective implementation of components of the Alberta Education Business Plan, Jurisdiction and school education plans, and Education Partner Strategic Plans
- supports the effective implementation of curricula, including instruction, assessment, and student learning outcomes.
- assists partners to identify available professional development resources.
- is based on the identified and emerging needs of educational partners.
- promotes and supports the development of professional development leadership capacity.
- can be accessed at a reasonable cost.

## 2020-21 Strategic Direction:

In supporting implementation of the Alberta Business Plan for Education NRLC worked with our sister consortia in ARPD in applying shared provincial understanding of directions, policies, and targeted outcomes to regional contexts.

NRLC's embraced our strategic plan, in accomplishment of the six (6) goals of consortia through the lenses of Connection, Communications and Response as outlined:

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# Northwest Regional Learning Consortium

## 2020/21 Annual Plan

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Northwest Regional Learning Consortium provides service and learning opportunities for eight school divisions as well as various First Nation School Authorities, private and charter schools in a large geographical area covering the northern half of Alberta.

In the context of the ARPD Provincial Guiding Principles, in the 2020-21 programming year NRLC will focus on achieving the goals of consortia by endeavoring to...

### **CONNECT**

- Building and sustaining relationships with Zone 1 stakeholders and making Individual connections with school division/authority administrative teams, as well as stakeholder partners such as the French Language Resource Centre (FLRC), ATA Locals and Convention board to stay connected to current and emerging regional needs for professional learning.
- Building relationships with and engaging less active stakeholders, including additional FNMI school authorities, Independent schools, ASCA, ASBA stakeholders in Zone 1 and assessing their professional learning needs.
- Capitalizing on the capacity of the newly formed NRLC Regional Stakeholder Committee.

### **COMMUNICATE**

- Advocating current and emerging professional learning opportunities and resources to regional stakeholders, based on their identified needs.
- Assessing and transforming NRLC, and ARPD, communications and marketing based on the identified and emerging needs of all educational stakeholders.

### **RESPOND**

- Building asynchronous learning opportunities and resources as they relate to regionally identified needs and identified priority areas.
- Collaboration with ARPD Executive Directors and Consultants on provincial synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities and resources as they relate to identified priority areas.
- Innovating partnership programming and subsidy funding for regional stakeholder partners.

## 2020-21, Measuring Achievement:

Achievement of goals are measured both qualitatively and quantitatively through various participant and stakeholder feedback processes. Including:

- ❖ Quantitative Session and Participant Data
- ❖ Professional Learning Opportunity Reflection Survey
- ❖ Annual Stakeholder's Survey
- ❖ Personal Learning Reflection - Focus Groups

Despite a decline in the number of learning opportunities and participants in 2020-21, in comparison to other programming years (see appendix), NRLC **increased the number of survey responses from 305 to 377** and continues to have superior feedback from our participants. Various comments and statements of impact are included within this report.



### **Annual Survey Summary Report Showing results from September 01, 2020 to August 31, 2021.**

<b>1. This professional learning opportunity:</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Total # of Respondents</b>	<b>Overall Satisfaction</b>
a) contributed to my awareness and/or a deeper understanding of the topic.	188	162	377	93%
b) provided opportunities to be engaged in the learning.	164	170	377	89%
c) provided information and/or specific strategies for integration of this learning into my current practice.	180	162	377	91%

NRLC was the only ARPDC Consortia to administer the Annual Stakeholder's Survey in 2021. Other consortia opted not to survey their stakeholders out of concerns for survey fatigue due to the ARPDC Strategic Planning survey and interviews conducted in June 2021.

NRLC **tripled our number of Stakeholder survey responses** from the previous two survey administrations from 13 to 46 responses. Increase in responses can be attributed to the addition of 4 Advisory Committee's with access to more teachers, and potential 'email forward' messages from our partners to other teachers. However, along with the increase in the number of responses, there was also an increase in the number of Undecided/Not Applicable responses with an average of 20%-33% respondents undecided/N/A for each question. This has consequently decreased the number of Very Satisfied and Satisfied Stakeholders from previous years. The data provided is allowing for strategic planning opportunities including those of communications and marketing with a goal of educating our classroom teacher partners.

ARPDC Consortia did not administer the Personal Learning Reflection Focus Group Conversations in 2021 in deference to stressors invoked on our stakeholders by COVID-19.

## NRLC 2020-21 Results:

<b>CONSORTIUM GOAL ONE</b>
Facilitate professional development, which supports the effective implementation of: 1. The Alberta Education Business Plan 2. Jurisdiction and school educational plans 3. Regional School Council priorities
<b>OUTCOME 1.1</b> Work collaboratively through ARPDC, Alberta Education, regional school authority District Contacts and Advisory Committees to establish plans, strategies and opportunities that are responsive to the provincially and locally identified needs in congruence with provincial directions for education.
<b>OUTCOME 1.2</b> Demonstrate effective provincial planning through the development of a common consortia Provincial Plan to Support Curriculum Development that promotes consistency in learning opportunities.

Building and sustaining relationships as well as engaging our less active Zone 1 partners was the foundation of the Northwest Regional Learning Consortium 2020-21 Annual Plan. Our commitment to connecting with our partners, maintaining a variety of consistent and frequent communications to promote professional learning and identify emerging learning needs, brought us many regional successes.

NRLC was able to connect with more Zone 1 partners than ever before in 2020-21, with 133 partner meetings. Beyond the newly formed NRLC Regional Stakeholder Advisory Committee, NRLC added three new subject area advisory committees for Inclusive Education, Literacy, and Numeracy/Math along side our long running First Nation, Metis and Inuit Advisory Committee to host of total of **27 advisory meetings** with **86 members**. We **engaged 3 new First Nation School Authorities** that had not partnered with us previously and added to our support for **72 collaborative partnership** learning opportunities throughout the year.

Of our 43 stakeholder responses, 83% were Very Satisfied/Satisfied, (with 17% Undecided/Not Applicable), with the services provided by consortia.

### ❖ Impact Statements

- *“ASCA is grateful for the meaningful and important work NRLC constantly engages in, and for the true partnership it models with stakeholder organizations”!*
- *“At the Literacy Advisory Committee Meetings, it was great hearing what other school divisions are doing and help develop a vision for where my school needs to move with its literacy goals.”*
- *“I very much appreciate the PD included in the Literacy and Numeracy Advisory Committee meetings. The presenter was very knowledgeable.”*
- *“I appreciate the attention to our divisional PD needs and the support that is given to us by NRLC. It is always a “challenge solving” conversation and support is given whenever possible. “*
- *“The NRLC continues to be a very valuable partner in supporting our efforts throughout the division. As well, I have found NRLC staff to be very professional, supportive, and responsive to our local context needs. I really appreciate the flexible and open-minded approach to your work, and your deep commitment to helping us ensure success for all students. I look forward to our partnership in the future”.*

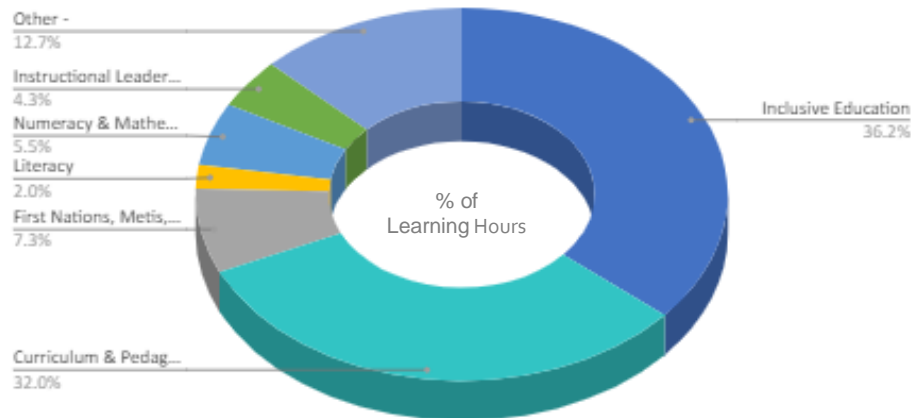
## CONSORTIUM GOAL TWO

Facilitate professional development, which supports the effective implementation of curricula, including instruction, assessment, resources, and student learner outcomes

**OUTCOME 2.1** Develop processes, tools, and resources to support school authority implementation and for the collection, tracking and reporting of 'evidence'.

**OUTCOME 2.2** Provide scheduled professional learning sessions in the identified priority areas:

NRLC hosted **198 learning opportunities** with **24, 030.5 hours** of learning to **4594 participants**.



In partnership with the French Language Resource Centre, NRLC offered 23 French Language Learning Opportunities, 424 Learning Hours to 163 Participants across the province, supported in part with OLEP funding.

Over **93% of our learning opportunities were offered on a virtual platform**. With 165 online sessions, 4 online conferences and 16 asynchronous sessions, that included 4 different e-courses, NRLC offered only 4 face to face sessions in 2020-21. With virtual programming, NRLC was able to extend registration to participants from other consortia across the province for 101 of these learning opportunities inclusive of 7425 learning hours, were open to provincial registration. Among these sessions, NRLC took the lead in representing ARPDC in provincial learning opportunities for Fierce Conversations©, Building a Thinking Mathematics Classroom with Peter Liljedahl, Parents, At-Home Learning: Finding Success for the Whole Family with Marylou Gammons & Éric Caron, Woodcock Johnson IV and DELF A1/B1/PRIM Training programs. Our remaining 97 learning opportunities were regional Zone 1 programs and drew 3132 participants from across the region.

Learning Opportunity feedback saw 93% Satisfaction that Learning Opportunities contributed to a deeper understanding of the topic and 91% Satisfied that LO's provided information and/or strategies for integration into their current practice.

### ❖ Impact Statements

- "NRLC has provided myself and my school staff with easy access to many professional development opportunities to meet our needs".
- "I used NRLC for multiple PD session. It helped me build and succeed with the Professional Growth Plan".
- "Great instructor- I learned SO much! I like how what she showed us was based on her experience and research. I think that is very important".
- "I LOVE how I was able to ask questions as that makes me involved and invested in my learning. It was a WONDERFUL session Geri is a great presenter, is very knowledgeable and I LOVE her passion. Thank you"!

## CONSORTIUM GOAL THREE

Coordinate, broker, and act as a referral center to assist stakeholders to identify available professional development resources.

**OUTCOME 3.1** Collaborate with, share expertise and resources with, and secure the resources and services of other professional learning providers and stakeholders in the planning and developing professional learning opportunities for stakeholders

As previously mentioned, NRLC was able to provide support for **72 collaborative partnership** learning opportunities throughout the year. Though our total number of programs and collaborative projects were lower than in previous program years, due to interference of COVID-19, just over one third of our total learning opportunities for the year were collaborative partnership programs.

NRLC worked to both develop and promote resources over the program year. In addition to the development of 15 asynchronous learning resources on the ARPDC [Learn & Go website](#), we worked closely with Kee Tas Kee Now Tribal Council Educational Authority (KTCEA) to launch a new website, [Infusing Indigenous Knowledge into Curriculum, Grades 1-6](#), and have continued to partner with KTCEA in building resources for Gr. 7-12 to add to this site. Additionally, there have been 9232 visitors, to the improved [First Nation, Metis and Inuit Professional Learning](#) website and 707 visitors to the [Building Educational Equity](#) website, both maintained by NRLC.

NRLC has also worked with our ARPDC partners to make improvements to our regional [www.NRLC.net](#) website to include learning facilitator team profiles, easy access to programs being offered around the province on a provincial calendar as well as improving search features. A total of 18,029 visitors reached our website in 2020-21.

### ❖ Impact Statements:

- *THANK YOU NRLC! This is very helpful and an open and safe discussion how to support us, Educational Assistants. Hoping for a collaboration with Teachers/Administrators to have a stronger collaboration in working with the learners at the classroom. i really enjoyed the sessions and their topics*
- *Great work offering online programs and keeping PD accessible during this COVID pandemic.*



NRLC ARPDC

Learning Opportunities September 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>18:00-19:00: Indigenous Learning Community - Day 1</li><li>19:00-20:00: Indigenous Learning Community - Day 2</li><li>20:00-21:00: Indigenous Learning Community - Day 3</li><li>21:00-22:00: Indigenous Learning Community - Day 4</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9:00-10:00: Google Classroom Training - Application writing</li><li>10:00-11:00: Google Classroom Training - Application writing</li><li>11:00-12:00: Google Classroom Training - Application writing</li></ul>				
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9:00-10:00: Google Classroom Training - Application writing</li></ul>			
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9:00-10:00: Google Classroom Training - Application writing</li></ul>		
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>9:00-10:00: Google Classroom Training - Application writing</li></ul>

## CONSORTIUM GOAL FOUR

Deliver professional development based on the identified and emerging needs of educational stakeholders.

**OUTCOME 4.1** Deliver professional development based on the identified and emerging needs of educational stakeholders.

**OUTCOME 4.2** Work collaboratively with ARPDC to develop plans, strategies and opportunities to meet provincially identified needs in congruence with provincial direction.

**OUTCOME 4.3** Work collaboratively with Alberta Education staff to develop plans, strategies and opportunities to meet provincially identified needs in congruence with provincial direction.

Over the past program year, our goals for responding the emerging needs of our region included increasing our supports for asynchronous learning. Beyond the creation and contribution of professional learning resources to the ARPDC's [Learn & Go website](#), as highlighted, NRLC offered **3101 asynchronous learning hours**, equating **13% of our total learning hours** and **15% of our total participants**. An impressive regional uptake on the ARPDC provincial offering of C2L's, [12 Quick Fixes to Teaching and Assessment in These Times](#) are included with a total of 414 participants & 2490 Learning Hours for this e-Course alone.

Additionally, NRLC has seen a consistent and steady increase in the need and interest for supports in Indigenous learning throughout our region. In 2020-21 17% of our total programming, with **34 Indigenous learning opportunities**, **1757.5 Learning Hours**, supported **373 participants** in our region and throughout the province.

With the goals of being effective helping our partners to access professional development and resources and improve Zone 1 engagement and participation in professional learning opportunities, NRLC has included enhanced communications and marketing strategies to connect, communicate and respond to our partners. In 2020-21 we saw a **200 person increase in our newsletter subscribers** from 1569 to 1771. Additionally, NRLC had 314 Facebook Followers, 367 Twitter Followers and a total of 18,029 visitors to our website. Though our total participant numbers decreased from 2019-20 to 2020-21, NRLC celebrates that of our total 4594 registrants, 3316 were Zone 1 participants, represented 72% of our total participants. This is an increase from only 42% Zone 1 participants in our previous program year. In addition, **1614 of Zone 1 educators participated in virtual learning opportunities hosted by other consortia** across the province in the ARPDC in 2020-21.

### ❖ Impact Statements:

- *"KTCEA values our relationship with NRLC in supporting our vision of creating and implementing our KTCEA CCC. The PD to ensure staff are proficient in google classroom and supporting applications has been impactful, especially during COVID when KTCEA implemented a google classroom platform for all student learning. NRLC has been very supportive".*
- *"Thank you so much for this timely session. While I am celebrating being able to get my kiddos into zooms and meets, I was feeling somewhat defeated when it came to getting the same level of connection or engagement that I am able to in person. Theresa Wills is a fantastic presenter. I am enjoying learning from her and using what she provides in my class. She makes it so easy by allowing us to take the things she has already made. It is fantastic to see how to take what we do in our class and transfer it to online learning so that we can get the kids talking and learning".*



## CONSORTIUM GOAL FIVE

Promote and support the development of professional development leadership capacity.

**OUTCOME 5.1** Develop collaborative learning opportunities with a focus on building leadership capacity within the provincial priority areas.

**OUTCOME 5.2** Develop collaborative learning opportunities to augment leadership capacity in support of emerging jurisdictional needs.

In support of developing leadership capacity, NRLC staffed a Learning Facilitator with expertise in Instructional Leadership in 2020-21. Role tasks included connecting with partners, the development of resources, building, and developing sessions and leading/participating in advisory committees. In combination of building and brokering learning opportunities, NRLC has doubled the number of sessions offered over the past two years with **17 Leadership learning opportunities**, including **1024 learning hours**, to **192 participants**.

NRLC is proud to have an increase in our Stakeholder Satisfaction, from 69% to 72%, (with 22% of respondents being undecided or N/A), that consortium has contributed to their Professional Development toward leadership capacity.

### ❖ Impact Statements:

- *“I feel that having these [fierce] conversations are a very important part of our professional responsibility. Difficult conversations are important, and I am always trying to improve how I am more effectively able to facilitate challenging conversations that will improve relationships at work and at home! Excellent speaker and I appreciate her calm and thoughtful approach to this complex topic.”*

## CONSORTIUM GOAL SIX

Provide educational stakeholders with access to professional development at a reasonable cost.

**OUTCOME 6.1** Consortium will provide professional learning opportunities at a reasonable cost to participants.


NRLC expended 80% of 2020-21 Provincial Support Funds on priority area learning opportunities, with **22% funding supporting directly subsidizing learning opportunities of our school division/authority partners**. ARPDC consultants contributed over 113 hours of learning withing Zone 1 with no cost to partners.

### ❖ Impact Statements:

- *“The NRLC enables us to offer PD opportunities that we could not afford to offer as an individual board”.*

## APPENDIX

The following statistics are reflective of 3-year trends in NRLC program data.

 REGIONAL LEARNING	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<b>Learning Opportunities</b>	210	161	198
<b>Cancelled LO's</b>	42	20	4
<b>Learning Hours</b>			24030.5
<b>Participants</b>	8708	6699	4594

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21		2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
<b>PRIORITY AREA</b>				<b>PRIORITY AREA</b>			
Learning Opportunities	210	161	198	Participants	8,708	6,699	4,594
Inclusive Education	68	40	21	Inclusive Education	3581	2986	1261
Curriculum & Pedagogical Practice	38	20	65	Curriculum & Pedagogical Practice	2793	1139	1395
First Nations, Metis, and Inuit	23	10	34	First Nations, Metis, and Inuit	669	290	373
Literacy	30	40	29	Literacy	159	571	224
Numeracy & Mathematics	24	30	18	Numeracy & Mathematics	502	526	261
Instructional Leadership	8	13	17	Instructional Leadership	288	950	192
Other -	19	8	14	Other -	716	237	888

Division/Authority	2018-19	% of TOTAL 2018-19	2019-20	% of TOTAL 2019-21	2020-21	% of TOTAL Participants
<b>Total Participants</b>	<b>8692</b>		<b>6699</b>		<b>4594</b>	
FVSD	344	3.96%	356	5.31%	89	1.94%
GPPSD	648	7.46%	1052	15.70%	335	7.29%
GPCSD	180	2.07%	40	0.60%	58	1.26%
HFCRD	155	1.78%	22	0.33%	934	20.33%
HPSD	498	5.73%	233	3.48%	179	3.90%
NSD	65	0.75%	46	0.69%	97	2.11%
PRSD	398	4.58%	116	1.73%	642	13.97%
PWPSD	1745	20.08%	641	9.57%	332	7.23%
Dene Tha	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	54	1.18%
KTCEA	0	0.00%	277	4.13%	416	9.06%
LRRBO	75	0.86%	0	0.00%	6	0.13%
Western Cree	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	124	2.70%
GPRC	115	1.32%	59	0.88%	50	1.09%
<b>ZONE 1 Participants of Total</b>	<b>4223</b>	<b>48.58%</b>	<b>2842</b>	<b>42.42%</b>	<b>3316</b>	<b>72.18%</b>
Other	4584	52.74%	3916	58.46%	1258	27.38%