



School Community Connections

Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres

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2010 Program & Application Guide

1. Introduction

The *School Community Connections* (SCC) program was launched in 2005 through a one-time \$10 million grant from the provincial Ministry of Education. The program is jointly managed by the Union of BC Municipalities and the BC School Trustees Association and is intended to promote sustainable and innovative collaboration between boards of education and local governments.

In 2005, the first SCC program was launched with an emphasis on encouraging greater community use of school facilities. The three step program provided funding to i) connect boards of education and local governments to explore common needs; ii) embark on a planning process to determine how those common needs might be addressed; and iii) provide minor capital funding to implement the project as planned. The 2005 program is nearing completion with 55 boards of education having taken advantage of at least one phase of the program.

In 2008, SCC was continued with the *Strengthening the Connection* program. This program offered boards of education and/or local governments the opportunity to apply for up to 3 grants of \$8,000 per district in order to support partnerships, address local issues and provide direct benefit to students, their families and the community.

2. Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres

The vision for neighbourhood learning centres is that all schools in BC create welcoming places where people of all ages can access health, education, care and services, seven days a week, twelve months a year. Neighbourhood learning centres are important assets that promote wellbeing for children, youth, families and the whole community.

All boards of education are encouraged to move towards this collaborative approach to the expanded use of school space, including elements of neighbourhood learning centres in all schools. More information on neighbourhood learning centres is available at: www.neighbourhoodlearningcentres.gov.bc.ca.

Since 2005, the School Community Connections program has supported basic principles of neighbourhood learning centres by providing funding to increase community use of school facilities and by supporting the co-location of services, such as child-care programs, office space, health clinics, sports programs, seniors' centres or family resource centres within schools.

The 2010 SCC program, *Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres*, is intended to continue the original goals of the 2005 and 2008 programs while actively encouraging boards of education and local governments to work cooperatively and with community partners to create neighbourhood learning centres and expand the use of schools to provide community services.

Program Goals & Objectives

Grants of up to \$30,000 per school district are available to support neighbourhood learning centres by:

- Encouraging the co-location of services for students, their families and the community at large within school facilities;
- Making greater utilization of available or new school facilities; and
- Encouraging collaborative, long-term facilities planning that takes into account the needs of the community as a whole.

3. Eligible Applicants

All boards of education and local governments in BC are eligible to apply for funding under the *Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres* program; however, the board of education and local government must apply together - one will act as the primary applicant and the other will act as the partnering agency.

Up to 3 applications per school district – with a combined total of no more than \$30,000 – may be submitted. Applications must demonstrate that shared school/community priorities are being addressed and supported by the board of education, local government, and, where applicable, by community partners.

Applications must be submitted directly from the board of education or local government.

Applications submitted directly by schools, school associations or community organizations will not be reviewed or considered.

4. Eligible Projects

Projects must address shared school/community priorities and support the goals and objectives of the *Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres* program.

Two project types will be supported: (i) consultation and planning and (ii) minor renovations. Applicants may select one or both options, but if an application includes minor renovation, the applicant must be able to show evidence that sufficient consultation or planning has already taken place.

Consultation & Planning

Consultation and planning is a key part of any major initiative and was a key component of the 2005 and 2008 SCC programs. For the past number of years all boards of education have been involved in planning with their communities through the District Literacy Planning process. Other planning may also have taken place through the process to develop Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements and Early Childhood Development planning tables, such as Success by 6 and Children First.

Building on both the processes and identified priorities within these plans, boards of education and local government may wish to augment existing plans to support the development of neighbourhood learning centres.

The planning process must include the board of education, local government and key community stakeholders, such as Community/District Literacy Planning Tables, First Nations and Aboriginal organizations, and should consider options for long-term sustainability and community capacity building.

Potential Consultation & Planning projects could include:

- Planning for co-location of community organizations, offices, services or other activities within school facilities.
- Consideration of school facilities in local government plans (e.g. trails, parks and open spaces or recreation plans) or review and/or revision of existing plans (such as OCPs or zoning bylaws) to support co-location of services within school facilities.
- Planning to link local government Parks & Recreation services to school facilities.
- Food security planning for community kitchens or gardens within school facilities.

Minor Renovations

Funding can also be used toward specific, minor renovations to support the co-location of services or the development of a neighbourhood learning centre, as well as to lever additional funding for renovation projects.

Potential Minor Renovation projects could include:

- Minor renovations to support the inclusion of any of the following within school facilities:
 - Co-location of community organizations, offices, services or other activities.
 - Civic functions (e.g. public forums, voting) or local government services.
 - Space for early learning, childcare or after school care programs and family resource centres.
 - Public libraries.
 - Community kitchens or gardens.
 - Space for intergenerational programs or services for seniors.
- Installation and/or renovation of doors, locks and entry systems that allow greater community access to school facilities.
- Upgrades or renovations to school grounds to increase use of athletic and recreational facilities by sports organizations and the community at large.

5. Application Process

The maximum grant available per school district is \$30,000. Up to 3 applications per school district – with a combined total of no more than \$30,000 – may be submitted. A separate application form is required for each project and the SCC Steering Committee will consider no more than 3 applications from a single applicant.

The Application Form is required to be completed by all applicants. A board of education and local government must apply together. One is the primary applicant and the other is the partnering agency:

- The primary applicant must submit a Council, Board or Board of Education resolution indicating general support for the project and willingness to provide overall grant management.
- The partnering agency must submit a letter indicating support for the project.

Applications are due by June 4, 2010 and applicants will be notified of the status of their application by June 30, 2010.

Selection Process

The SCC Steering Committee will assess each application for attention to the goals and objectives of the *Supporting Neighbourhood Learning Centres* program, description of eligible project activities and level of partnership between the board of education, local government and, where applicable, community partners.

Important Information

Please note the following important points when preparing your application:

- A board of education and local government must apply together. One is the primary applicant and the other is the partnering agency.
- A detailed budget, indicating proposed income and expenditures of SCC funds is required to be submitted with the Application Form.
- Applicants are not required to provide matching cash contributions but are strongly encouraged to identify other potential funding sources to better leverage the funds and to identify potential in-kind support (staff time, use of resources, etc) and contributions from local partners to best leverage this funding.
- Funded activities must take place within the 2010/11 school year.
- Applicants under the 2005 or 2008 SCC program that have not met reporting requirements may be required to submit outstanding 2005 or 2008 final reports prior to a 2010 application being considered.

6. Grant Management & Applicant Responsibilities

Notice of Approval

All applicants will receive written notice of the SCC Steering Committee's decision as well as the terms or conditions of any grant that is awarded. Grants are awarded in two payments: 75% at the approval of the project and 25% when the project is complete and UBCM has received the required final report and a financial summary.

Applicant Responsibilities

Please note: Grants are awarded to boards of education or local governments only. When collaborative projects are undertaken with individual schools, school associations or community organizations, the board of education or local government remains the primary organization responsible for the grant.

Due to this, and in addition to the terms and conditions that will be provided to all successful applicants, approved applicants are responsible for:

- Proper fiscal management, including acceptable accounting records.
- Thorough and well-planned project evaluation.
- Final report (using UBCM form)
- Financial summary verifying the total cost of the project. Where applicable, the financial summary should also identify in-kind contributions, matching funding, and other revenue sources used to complete the project.

Final Report Requirements

The Final Report form must be completed and submitted with the required attachments within 30 days of the completion of the project and no later than July 1, 2011. Applicants that do not submit the final report by this date may not receive the 25% holdback portion of the grant.

Changes or Variations to an Approved Project

Approved applicants are required to advise UBCM of any significant variation from the approved project as described in the completed Application Form. Approval from the SCC Steering Committee may be required in advance for such changes.

Also, please note that all funded activities are required to be completed within the 2010/11 school year and all extensions beyond this date must be requested in writing and be approved by SCC Steering Committee.

7. Where and When to Apply & Further Information

The application deadline is June 4, 2010. All application materials and/or inquiries should be addressed to:

Local Government Program Services
Union of BC Municipalities
525 Government Street
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