

## Neighbourhood Learning Centres in British Columbia

### A Summary of Stages of Development of Schools with Community Engagement in British Columbia (ACEbc, 2011)

Based on Children's Aid Society, New York ([www.childrensaidsociety.org](http://www.childrensaidsociety.org))

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Feature	Stage 1: Exploring	Stage 2: Emerging	Stage 3: Maturing	Stage 4: Excelling
<b>Summary of key features of each stage</b>	<p>This stage is marked by discontent with the ways that schools operate and by very grandiose thinking, tremendous optimism, and magical thinking that "if only" X were in place, things would be significantly different.</p> <p>This should be encouraged, because out of these dreams and desires will emerge a shared vision.</p>	<p>This period is marked by a commitment to jump in and do something. A decision has been made to commence the transformation by introducing some level of services, securing some funding, and beginning to develop partnerships. Programs are designed in a strengths-based paradigm based on data from a formal or informal needs assessment. This period is like a roller coaster ride, marked by highs and lows, progress and frustration. Success in this stage requires a commitment to the shared vision, clear goals, good communication processes, clarity of roles and responsibilities, responsiveness to the needs, and regular celebration. This period lasts for about 2 years.</p>	<p>This period is marked by steady, intentional progress and the realization that this work requires a tremendous amount of effort. The vision becomes clearer to all; consequently, there is likely to be broader support for it. Service utilization increases as interventions become timelier, more relevant, and of higher quality. Relationships between community based organizations and the school are deepened. Administrative and program integration becomes more natural, and community-based organizations may become involved in joint planning and funding. Success in this stage requires keeping the vision and programs fresh, tending to relationships, increasing the partnerships, continuing to demonstrate added value, and attending to sustainability.</p>	<p>Quality programs are implemented that are fully integrated into the fabric of the school. The school culture focuses on addressing the needs of the whole child. Increased parent involvement empowers parents and school staff to become advocates of quality education. Strong relationships are established within the school, community, and school district. The school values the coordinator and community program support staff as committed partners and leaders. Success in this stage requires involvement in innovative programming, the development of youth leadership, and the use of staff, parents, and students to teach others to do this work.</p>