



School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake)

Brent Kennedy Elementary School

Box 40 – 1092 Hwy 6, Crescent Valley, B.C. V0G 1H0

Telephone: (250) 359-7292 Fax: (250) 359-7522

Email: clerical@sd8.bc.ca Web: [//bkes.sd8.bc.ca](http://bkes.sd8.bc.ca)

Academic Success ◇ Creativity and Imagination ◇ Citizenship ◇ Resiliency



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Application for Public/Stakeholder Budget Initiative:

Brent Kennedy Elementary

Closing the Gap with Technology Initiative...

Betty Radcliffe (LAT), Lauri Wood (Case Manager), Mike Hurley (Principal), Brenda Bax (EA)

Overview:

We are looking at the involvement of technology with our struggling students. We have been amazed at the difference that an iPad with Co-writer has made for a few of our students in the classroom. The device not only improves the student's ability to provide written output, but enables the child to feel successful where they've previously struggled. The changes in their attitude toward literacy has been remarkable.

Since we've introduced a few of these devices into our school through our Case Manager, and training we've had from District Itinerate staff with another project from SET-BC, we seen some really interesting changes for our students.

It has made us think about the possibilities of a long term cost savings to the district and society. Similar to the way the district has made a commitment to Read by 3, where we know that if we can invest in children and ensure they are reading by the end of Grade 3, we can feel confident that they will be successful in literacy for their lives. We are thinking that an investment in technology for students who continue to struggle with reading and writing after Grade 3. This investment would involve using iPad and co-writer initially to provide for almost instant success with students in being able to provide written output.

This would be the attraction for students to be involved. Not only the cool technology, but the ability to be able to write like their peers. The continued work would be to get these children to be very comfortable with the management of files, apps, programs, and technological changes that come their way.

We could see that if these children are able to use the technology to read and write, it may give them the ability to still be successful in the classroom despite their learning struggles. The cost savings to the district would be that there may be less need for Learning Assistance provided for these students.

We see that this program has three components:

Our Mission: "We focus on excellence for all learners in a nurturing environment."

- 1) Identification of students who would benefit from such technology. So called “grey area” or vulnerable students for reading comprehension and written output.
- 2) Training student for fluid/independent use of the device, programs and apps by Grade 6.
- 3) Training of EA’s and teachers about the technology and how to use it for leaning/teaching.

This project ties into many district directions. One area is the gap for boys in our schools. We are seeing that our boys are not doing as well as we would like, and many of those boys struggle with written output. Being able to use the co-writer program to quickly share their ideas before they are bogged down with getting it written on paper has great potential. Once they have shared their ideas, they can get into the nitty gritty of editing and honing their writing.

The alignment with global educational trends are toward personalized learning. For these struggling children it will help the student to meet expectations in their reading and writing using technology. It will allow student to present their passions. We have seen many of our students just “give up” on the writing process because they simply can’t get their ideas down on paper and then struggle as they try to edit their work. We recognize that there will be challenges helping students to understand how to use the technology correctly and appropriately. Students will need to learn to use the programs, organize files, interact with other technology such as printers and networks. And if they can be successful with their device, they will have levelled the playing field when they arrive at the high school.

We see the project unfolding in the following manner:

- 1) Identification of students – at BK we have four students.
- 2) Purchase of equipment – iPads/co-writer (iPads \$600 – Co-Writer \$120 Various cool apps \$50) Per student - ~\$800. This project ~\$3200
- 3) Training of student – done by Case Manager at BK – No cost (we’ll make time)
- 4) Training of EA – done by Case Manager at BK – No cost.

Students would get the device to have as their own when the project is complete and take it with them when they leave the school.

Measure of Success:

We feel that the measure of success will be if these student who are “Not Yet” and “Minimally” meeting expectations for reading and writing now are “Fully” Meeting expectations by Grade 6.

Lifecycle:

We are thinking that a school of our size (220) there will likely be three or four students who could benefit from this type of personalization of their learning. So, the beginning outlay of purchasing of the iPads would be expensive, but after that, we would only need to purchase one....maybe two devices each year following, depending on the students in Grade 4 who were struggling.

Budget:

Pilot Project: Year 1:

Brent Kennedy: iPad package \$800/student.
4 students at BK for a total of **\$3200**

Year 2: Purchase of one iPad package \$800

Year 3: Purchase of one iPad package \$800

In the future, this could be method could be delivered to each Elementary school as an extension of Read by 3. Could be shown to EA's and Teachers when they receive their training for Read by 3.

Alignment:

We feel that the alignment with Provincial Curriculum (Ability of students to show their knowledge of "Big Ideas") , District Directions (Academics, Creativity), Global Educational Trends (Personalized Learning) all fit with our proposal. This idea was sparked from the success we've had with a SET-BC grant where we were able to bring iPads into the classroom, and then we "borrowed" them for some other students too. We had amazing, remarkable, wonderful, and exciting results!