

Capacity Building, Training and Business Incubation Strategy

Prepared for the District of Tofino, District of Ucluelet, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation and Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ Government.

A component of the Advancing the Pacific Rim Knowledge and Innovation Economy project.

January 8, 2015

Funding provided by Islands Coastal Economic Trust, Westcoast Aquatic Management Association and the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust.

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Executive Summary

In spring 2014, the District of Tofino, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations, District of Ucluelet, and Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ Government embarked on a formal collaboration to develop the education economy on the west coast, along with the support of the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT) and Westcoast Aquatic Management Association (WAMA). The goal of the project is to strengthen Pacific Rim communities' economic development plans by advancing the knowledge and innovation segments of our local economies. Specifically, the project builds on previous research, momentum, and political will to create a capacity building, training and business incubation strategy for developing a regional knowledge and innovation hub, with community nodes.

Areas of Strategic Action

Using a “learning by doing” approach, the project activities were designed to pilot an administrative ‘hub’ as one model for addressing the following areas of strategic action (as identified in the Terms of Reference of the Pacific Rim Knowledge and Innovation Economy project):

1. Business Incubation and Mentorship
2. Supports for Adult Learners
3. Employment skills training
4. Professional development opportunities
5. Supports for secondary school students
6. Nuu-chah-nulth language education

Challenges for Moving Forward

Currently, individual communities, organizations and institutions are doing their best to deliver their individual mandates while also looking to the future. However, all stakeholders find themselves to be limited by a lack of capacity and funding. People do not have the time to share ideas and opportunities beyond their organization or community. While individual communities, organizations and institutions are functioning effectively as an individual ‘spoke’ or node, the region is missing the administrative ‘hub’ of the wheel (so to speak) that can coordinate multiple independent and autonomous organizations.

Lessons from Implementing an Administrative Hub Pilot Initiative

In order to move forward as a region and leverage opportunities for all communities and stakeholders, the region will need to implement a coordinated approach to address all six areas

of strategic action and recommendations. One key finding from the ‘learning by doing’ approach, adopted by this capacity building, business training and incubation strategy, is the discovery that all education stakeholders appreciate and benefit from the support and coordination provided by an administrative hub, as convened by the CBT. Through hosting events, such as the regional education forum, creating mechanisms for sharing such as the education listserv, and identifying joint-project opportunities in which communities, organizations and institutions can work together, we have successfully piloted the ‘hub’ model for implementing the recommendations for each area of strategic action. We see the next steps as necessary for enabling a ‘hub’ model to continue:

- Fund a full time “regional education coordinator” position within a local organization to create an administrative ‘hub’;
- Use the administrative ‘hub’ to secure funding for local business training and program delivery;
- Continue to use CBT regional education list-serve to share education and training opportunities;
- Use the administrative hub to build relationships with Provincial and Federal programs; and
- Continue to support the Regional Learning Council hosted by the CBT to convene meetings on an annual or biannual basis for building relationships, sharing updates and identifying regional priorities.

Recommendations for Strategic Action

Given the success of this preliminary pilot, we recommend the following actions be taken to support and advance the knowledge sharing and social innovation of the Pacific Rim communities’ economies.

1. **Business Incubation and Mentorship:**
 - Host business incubation presentations and support partnerships such as Innovation Island Business Acceleration partnership program;
 - Support the delivery of Nuu-chah-nulth Economic Development Corporation programs locally (for example, Entrepreneur Camp and Aboriginal Best).
 - Support the delivery of the SFU Local Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program (LEAP) program;
 - Secure funding to provide hub administration services to support ongoing delivery of workshops and programs while building capacity within community champion organizations.

2. Supports for Adult Learners:

- Invite a discussion between local service providers and adult learners to identify needs & opportunities;
- Use the CBT's education list-serve as a means of sharing education opportunities and updates;
- Conduct a literature review on successful models for basic adult education;
- Take steps toward reconciliation together and invite education stakeholders into these important and difficult conversations; and
- Build a relationship with the First Nation Health Authority regional coordinator.

3. Employment Skills Training:

- Support local area knowledge training opportunities at the regional level
- Use the CBT education list-serve as a means of promoting employee training
- Encourage & support local commerce organizations to include business training as part of their mandate ;
- Provide administrative support to leverage funding for a range of educational readiness programs;

4. Professional Development Opportunities:

- CBT continue to deliver training opportunities for volunteers and non-profits;
- Continue to engage with and support local education delivery partnerships; and
- Continue to offer the Leadership Vancouver Island program as a community funded, regional program.

5. Supports for Secondary School Students:

- Help coordinate annual career fairs;
- Assist with creating apprenticeship partnerships & Sponsors;
- Host family events early in the transition from elementary school to high school;
- Support USS in considering more flexible means of meeting students' needs in their early years at the school;
- Participate in the development of the Aboriginal Youth Apprenticeship Program;
- Support programs that develop competencies outside;
- Support mentorship within USS; and
- Celebrate and share successes within and beyond the schools.

6. Nuuchahnulth Language Education:

- Encourage Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations to develop a new language contract ;
- Host a Nuuchahnulth language gathering and celebration;
- Secure Locally-focused language revitalization funding
- Assist with grant writing for language revitalization program funds

Introduction

In spring 2014, the District of Tofino, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations, District of Ucluelet, and Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ Government embarked on a formal collaboration to develop the education economy on the west coast, along with the support of the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT) and Westcoast Aquatic Management Association (WAMA). The communities and organizations recognized that increased skills training, advanced education and promoting a knowledge-based economy will strengthen the diverse nature and long term economic resilience of the region and benefit local youth, families and businesses.

PROJECT VISION: Knowledge serves as a key foundation for a vibrant economy, culture, and governance in the Pacific Rim region. Educational institutions, programs, and curriculum reflect the area's unique character, including local culture, knowledge, history and language. There is a high degree of involvement, partnership, and alliance between education providers, governments, businesses, managers, and civic organizations in the area. Together they create a unique Pacific Rim knowledge experience and high standard of excellence, generating pride and reputation locally and internationally. This approach connects local people to employment and advanced educational opportunities, enabling them to stay in the area. It also attracts researchers, learners, and tourists to the area, generating economic returns as well as knowledge exchange.

The goal of the project is to strengthen Pacific Rim communities' economic development plans by advancing the knowledge and innovation segments of our local economies. Specifically, the project builds on previous research, momentum, and political will to pilot a regional knowledge and innovation hub with community nodes.

Building on past research, as well as the current momentum gained from developing partnerships and the political will to create a regional approach, the project recognizes the potential of each community to develop its own niche within an integrated regional education economy. For example, one important outcome of this project is the inventory of regional education assets, which identifies the capacity within each community to host and facilitate education opportunities locally and for visiting learners. Other outcomes of this project include capacity building and identifying training and business opportunities associated with research and education institutions and organizations.

Background: Regional Education by the Numbers

In 2014, CBT produced its second Vital Signs report-- a community health snapshot that brings together data from a number of sources to tell the story of the region. In addition, the CBT worked with partner communities to conduct a regional survey in the summer of 2014. The data collected provides an important baseline for this strategy.

It is important to note that education is one of the social determinants of health that shapes the lives of all residents. Educational success has a positive effect on overall health. Improving the quality and quantity of local education offerings will have a positive impact on the overall wellbeing of all citizens.

In the Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve Region, 38.1% of the population 15 or older had completed post-secondary education (university degree, post-secondary certificate or diploma). The rate was below the national average (50.7%) and the provincial average (52.2%).¹

The Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve Region

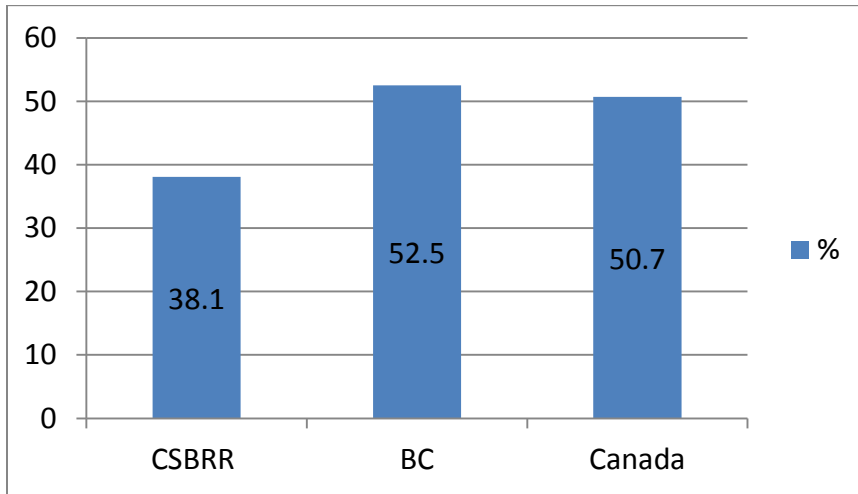
The Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve Region (CSBRR) contains eight distinct communities including six First Nations communities and two non-First Nations communities, composing a population of approximately 5,297.

While not all of these communities were participants in this project, local data is most available at the regional scale and has been included for reference.

¹ Statistics Canada, Community Profiles, 2006

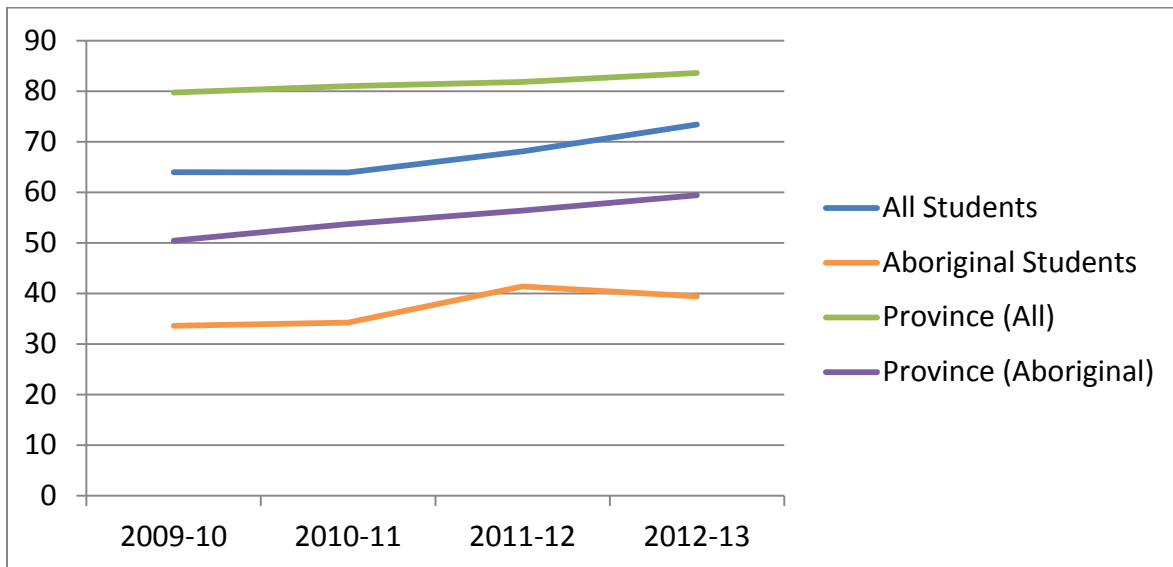
Figure 1.

Comparison of High School Completion Rates in the CSBRR, BC and Canada



In School District 70, which includes the CSBRR, “six-year completion rates” (completion of grade 12 within six years) in the 2012-2013 school year was 73.4%, up 9.5% from the 2010-2011 school year (63.9%) (see Fig.1). For Aboriginal students, the rate was 39.4%, up 5.2% from the 2010-2011 school year (34.2%). This compares to a provincial rate of 83.6% for all students and 59.4% for Aboriginal students.²

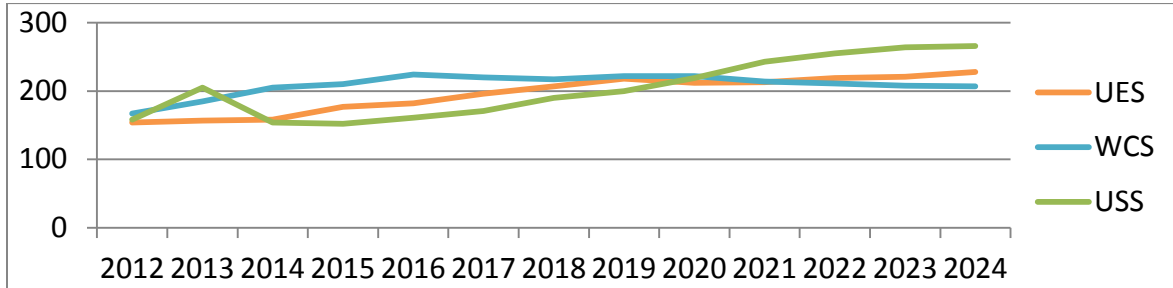
Figure 2. Six Year High School Completion Rates (SD 70 vs. Province)



² BC Ministry of Education bced.gov.bc.ca

Our communities are young and growing. Enrolment projections show continued growth in our schools.³

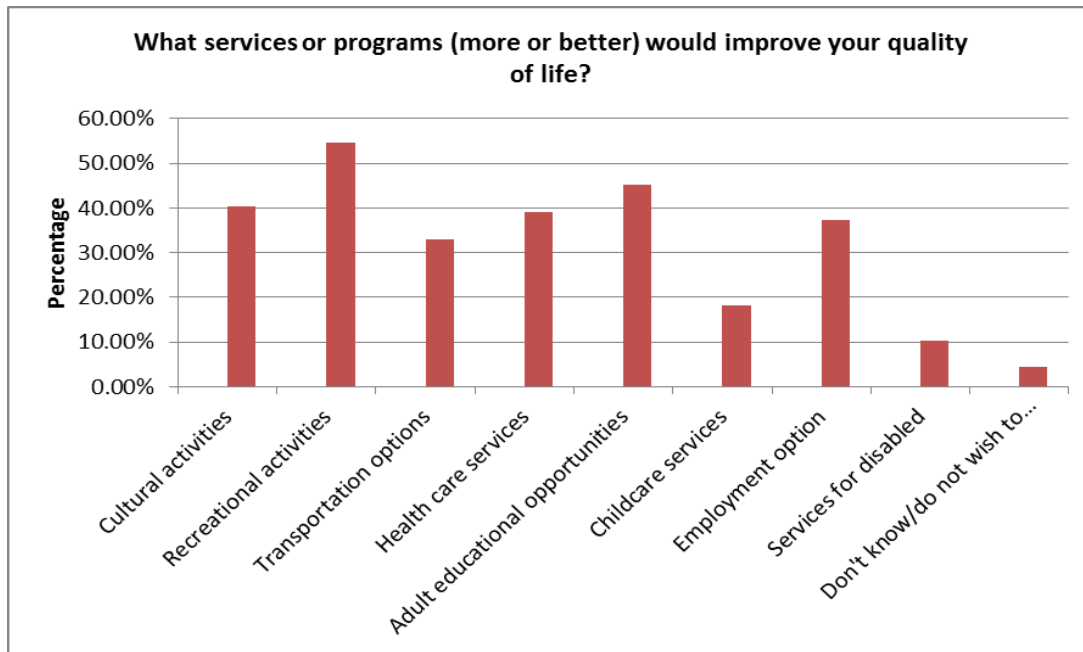
Figure 3. Pacific Rim School Enrollment projections



The following data was collected through the 2014 regional survey.

As illustrated in Figure 4, Over 45 % of respondents indicated that adult educational opportunities would improve their quality of life.

Figure 4. Local Perceptions of Services to Improve Life Quality in 2014

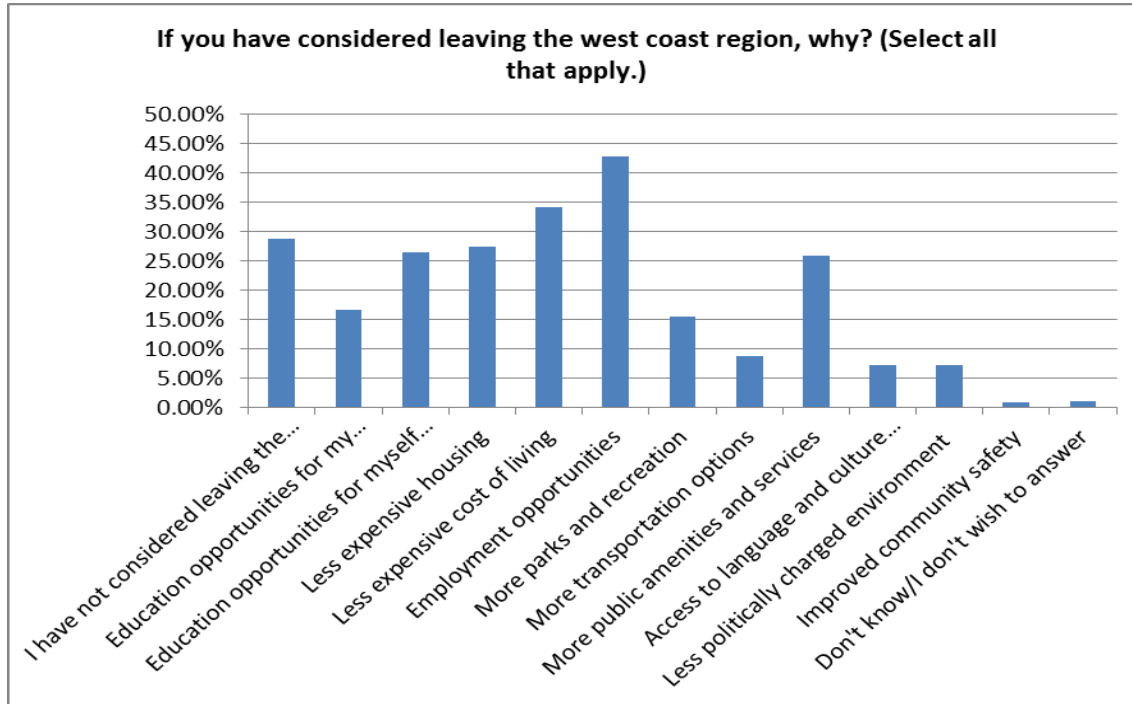


When asked “what infrastructure or amenities, if any, do we need to better support tourism?” 7.0% of respondents indicated job training.

³ School District 70

16.7% of respondents indicated that they have considered leaving the west coast region to pursue education opportunities for their children, while 26.4% have considered leaving the area to pursue education opportunities for themselves.

Figure 5. Percent of Population Responses for Why They Would Leave the West Coast

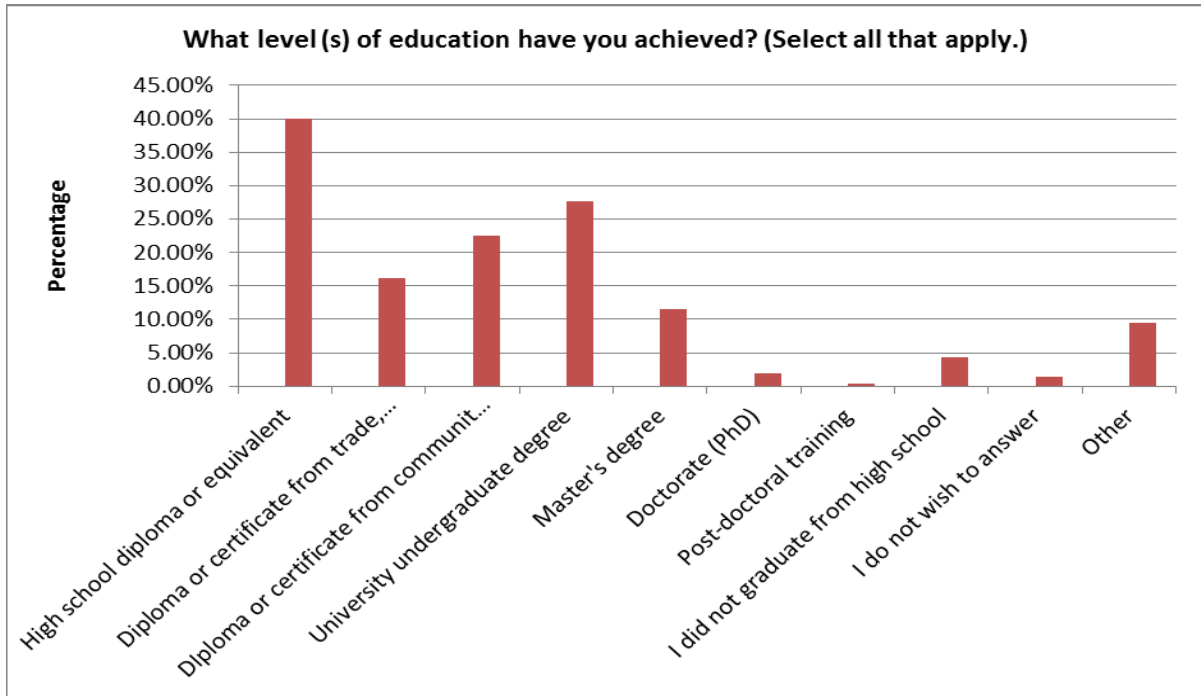


The following data in Table 1. provides a breakdown of the level(s) of education achieved by respondents to the regional survey.

Table 1. Education Level Achieved by Percent of Respondents

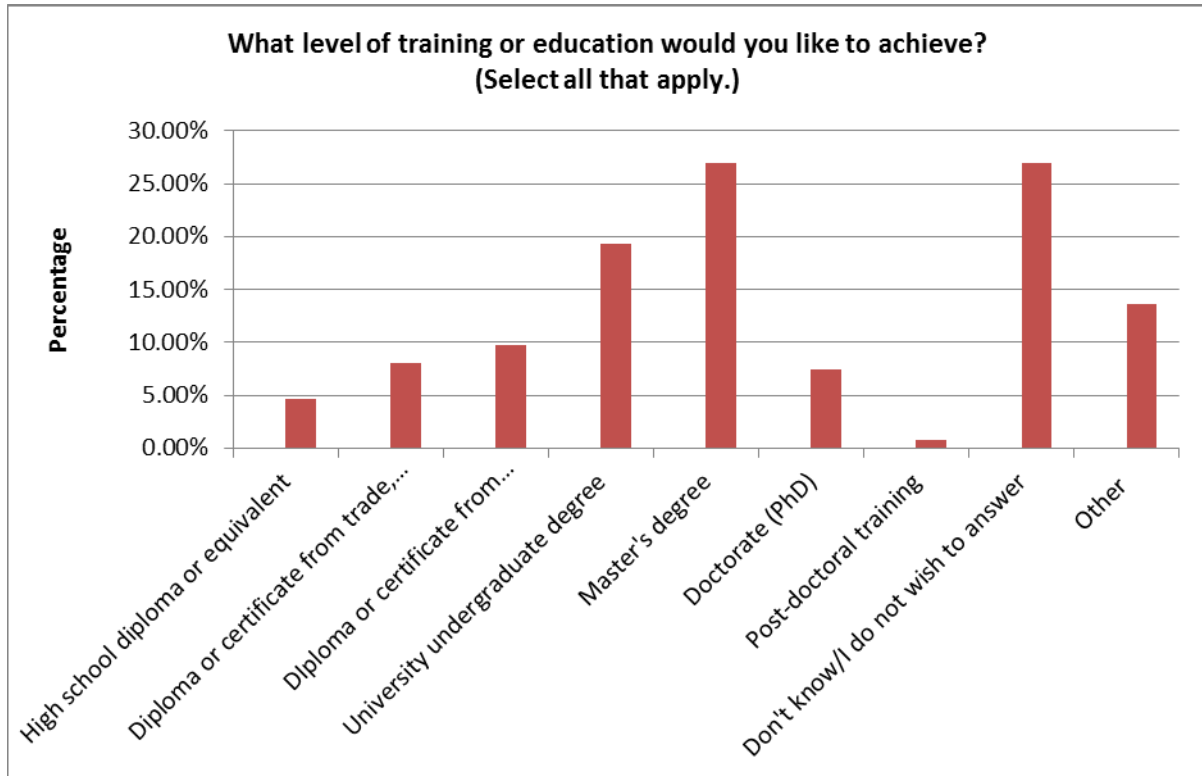
High school diploma or equivalent	40.0%
Diploma or certificate from trade, technical or vocational school	16.2%
Diploma or certificate from community college	22.5%
University undergraduate degree	27.7%
Master's degree	11.5%
Doctorate (PhD)	2.0%
Post-doctoral training	0.4%
I did not graduate from High School	4.3%
I do not wish to answer	1.4%
Other (please specify)	9.4%

Figure 6. Level of Education per Percentage of Regional Survey Respondents in 2014



Lastly, the following Figure 7. provides a breakdown of what level of training or education respondents would like to achieve.

Figure 7. Desired Level of Education per Percentage of Regional Survey Respondents in 2014



Goals and Objectives

The main goal of this project is to improve opportunities for local education and training so that residents can continue to live, work and thrive in the region. The project provides the background and initial scope for developing a capacity building, training and business incubation strategy focused on the following three key objectives:

1. To identify and build-on existing local capital assets such as human capital, infrastructure, physical capital and social capital;
2. To foster capacity development and entrepreneurship through training, mentoring, education and other means; and
3. To enable businesses, researchers, governments, non-profits, educational institutions and residents to work together to share knowledge and deliver innovation by creating networks, events, awareness and other linking activities.

Approach

This project used a ‘learning by doing’ approach. For example, the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT) initiated a four month pilot of a regional knowledge and innovation administrative hub, beginning with hosting the Regional Education Forum. Lessons from this pilot initiative provide the basis for developing a long term regional knowledge and innovation strategy. For example, one outcome of this pilot project is the ongoing meeting of Regional Learning Council in which stakeholders continue to build relationships and develop priorities together.

Piloting the “Hub” Model: The Regional Education Forum

In May, 2014 the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT) hosted a Regional Education Forum to bring together education stakeholders from all communities. With strong participation, the meeting provided an opportunity for each community, organization and institution to share their priorities and initiatives in order to achieve a shared understanding of the status of education in our region. The attendees worked in small groups to discuss education strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Participants took the opportunity to discuss what educational success means in our region and to determine next steps for working together.

The CBT presented an overview of regional statistics related to education. Given that statistics at this scale lack context for our local situation, the presentation spurred a lot of discussion regarding the cultural relevance of foundation skills assessment tests and the challenges of tracking attendance and graduation rates. Participants noted the cultural bias often embedded within data collection and psychological testing. For example, there is a strong bias towards outgoing personality types and verbal communication skills. Participants also noted how

important it is that data is collected and analyzed at the scale of our local region, rather than at a broader geographic scale that includes Port Alberni statistics.

The group discussed the ongoing impacts that residential school trauma has had at both the individual and community level. There is a strong need to recognize these impacts and to take a holistic approach to healing this hurt through work at the community, individual and school level.

The forum wrapped up with the opportunity for attendees to share a final thought. Much appreciation was shared, both towards individuals for taking the time to travel to and attend the session, as well as towards the CBT for bringing the group together. There was a strong interest in continuing to gather as a Learning Council in order to share information at the regional scale and, more importantly, to develop and implement projects together (i.e. action focused).

Areas of Strategic Action

1. Business Incubation and Mentorship

Business incubation is a process which provides a framework of support to help entrepreneurs build profitable and sustainable companies. Similarly, business accelerators help companies to scale up while building on an established model and success. Business incubators generally fall within a spectrum between technology focus or skills focus.

Technology-focused incubators provide the physical infrastructure to support new businesses. These co-working spaces include desks, phones, reception services and access to advanced technology such as 3D printers, as well as access to expertise and other resources. Ideally, new businesses purchase these services at an hourly, weekly or monthly rate until the point that a company can move on to sustain itself independently. A recent example of a technology incubator on Vancouver Island is SquareOne in Nanaimo (<http://thinkbigatsquareone.com/>).

Skill-focused incubator programs provide business advisory support, management guidance, educational networks and other resources. Community Futures is an excellent example of a skill-focused incubator (<http://www.cfac.ca/>). Established in 1985 by the Federal Government, Community Futures offers services ranging from business planning workshops, advisory services, financing, and services targeted to specifically to youth and entrepreneurs with disabilities.

Locally, there is interest in increasing business incubation services to support new companies, as well as existing businesses, especially given the seasonal nature of the local tourism economy.

Recommendations:

- Host business incubation presentations and workshops. A winter speaker series in partnership with local economic development committees and commerce organizations would provide a means of increasing knowledge and skills, as well as introducing trends and examples from other communities.
- The CBT will be hosting Innovation Island in February 2015 to share their insights on how to build a successful business start-up ecosystem. Other topics identified include succession planning and Venture Acceleration program opportunities through the BC Acceleration Network.
- Support the delivery of Nuuchahnulth Economic Development Corporation programs locally (for example, Entrepreneur Camp and Aboriginal Best).

- Support the delivery of Island Innovation programs locally with funding leveraged from the British Columbia Innovation Council.
- Support the delivery of the Local Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program (LEAP) program. Simon Fraser University offers this program in partnership with a local host organization. This model allows the region to test the social enterprise waters and develop local capacity.
- Provide hub administration services to support ongoing delivery of workshops and programs while building capacity within community champion organizations.

2. Supports for Adult Learners

There is a consistent need for adult basic education (ABE) throughout the region. Supports for basic adult learning have shifted away from School District 70 delivery due to the loss of dedicated funding. Currently, services are offered by individual nations to their members. Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations has sought funding to deliver ABE in their communities based on high demand, but has not been successful. A dedicated teaching space for adult basic education would be a great asset to this community. Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ Government staffs an education coordinator position, but has had high turnover because it is a .2 position that has provided an opportunity for new teachers to gain local experience before moving into full time positions. North Island College also offers support and tutoring for students at their Ucluelet location. These upgrading services can be offered in collaboration with Ucluelet Secondary School (USS) which is well positioned to work with more flexible secondary school curriculum.

Education stakeholders have identified a need to look broadly at barriers for adult learners. For example, transportation and daycare are significant challenges on the west coast especially for the Nuu-chah-nulth communities. Some adult students find themselves busy coping with these challenges and unable to prioritize their education in the face of more immediate needs. There is support for looking at programs that “meet students where they are at.” For example, the Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ SEEDS program supports adults receiving social assistance and offers a wide range of services. Programs such as the Nuu-chah-nulth Education and Training Program (NETP) graduated licensing and life skills training have been helpful in getting individuals on a path towards employment.

It is important to note that the ongoing impacts of Indian Residential Schools continue to impede adult learner success in our region. Many Nuu-chah-nulth people have good reasons for not trusting the education system and continue to carry their personal experiences heavily. Younger generations are also sharing in this burden as intergenerational effects continue.

Recommendations:

- Invite local service providers to focus on supporting adult learners by identifying opportunities to work together across disciplines through a range of universal, targeted and clinical programs. This discussion could begin at the Coming Together Forum planned for May, 2015.
- Create opportunities for ABE instructors to meet annually or biannually to share information and priorities.
- Utilize and promote the CBT's education listserv as a means of sharing education opportunities and updates such as the NETP learning initiatives. Clear communication is vital to keeping all stakeholders up to date.
- Conduct a literature review on successful models and programs showing a high level of positive impact on transforming challenges into opportunities for basic adult education in other countries, provinces and rural communities. The purpose of this research is to identify success factors and innovative programs that could be considered locally.
- Take steps toward reconciliation together and invite education stakeholders into these important and difficult conversations. Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, the District of Tofino and the CBT will be completing a Returning to Spirit program in January, 2015. Further open and honest conversations should be considered with a goal to co-create a strong foundation for our all of our communities and for student success.
- Build a relationship with the First Nation Health Authority regional coordinator to promote locally available services for enabling culturally safe mental health and human well being.

3. Employment Skills Training

While no formal organization or agency is the lead for employment skills training, businesses in Ucluelet and Tofino have a range of training needs for their employees and believe these can be met locally. None the less, there is an ongoing need for recertification and 'refresher' courses every one to three years.

A significant number of businesses identified the need for employee training in local area knowledge. The Ambassador program offered in Tofino was identified as a highly regarded source of local area knowledge training by Tofino businesses. The majority of businesses provide this type of training in-house to their staff.

As one might guess, word-of-mouth is the most common way that businesses find out about local training opportunities for employees. North Island College is the 'go-to' place for First Aid training.

Businesses also search online for training opportunities, send employees out of the communities for training, and partner with other businesses to recruit trainers and fill a desired course.

Businesses would like to see a wider range of local training options including language courses (German, French, Spanish, and English), computer courses (specifically on how to use the latest versions of popular computer programs such as Excel), professional cook training, world host, fitness theory, basic communications and writing, as well as customer service training offered locally.

Many businesses noted that they have the ability to provide apprenticeship opportunities especially within the culinary and hospitality sectors. Some businesses cannot offer 'formal' apprentices but do hire co-op students, interns, and student volunteers.

Recommendations:

- Develop greater awareness of local area knowledge training opportunities, such as the Ambassador Program and adapt for regional delivery. Funding is required in order to develop new curriculum and to sponsor delivery in new communities.
- Utilize the education listserv as a means of promoting employee training opportunities to ensure courses are well advertised and attended.
- Encourage local commerce organizations to include business training as part of their mandate and support the development of capacity within those organizations.
- Provide administrative support to leverage funding for a range of educational readiness programs. The CBT is currently assisting NIC and Tofino chefs seeking funding to deliver a basic culinary skills course. The CBT has also begun conversations with stakeholders interested in expanding the Ambassador program within the region.

The top ongoing training needs identified by local businesses are Occupational First Aid, CPR-C, FoodSafe, Serving It Right and marine courses such as: Small Vessel Operator Proficiency (SVOP), Marine Basic First Aid, Marine Emergency Duties, and Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC).

Case Study: Ambassador Program

One defining characteristic of our tourism base economy is the transient nature of our seasonal labour force. As a consequence, many of our locally employed people require an introduction to the local area knowledge and history. Three years ago, a pilot project of the Tofino Long-Beach Chamber of Commerce was initiated to encourage local knowledge awareness training amongst local businesses.

“I heard that Lone Cone was an extinct volcano.” “What does Clayoquot mean and how do you say it?” “Where can you see whales?” Front-line staff people are peppered with questions from curious visitors throughout the year. To build the skill level and confidence of staff and to enhance visitor experience, the Tofino-Long Beach Chamber of Commerce now delivers the Ambassador Program, an education and training module of regional information about the local ecology, history, and communities.

The Ambassador Program builds on the success of another locally-developed program, the Raincoast Host, an initiative of the Raincoast Education Society (RES) and is delivered by staff of the RES and other knowledgeable instructors. The Tofino-Long Beach Chamber of Commerce developed the current curriculum with the help of local agencies.

The program aims to educate participants with a comprehensive overview of the community’s histories, values, successes and challenges. Specifically, the program:

- *provides consistent and accurate information to enhance the understanding of local residents, businesses, and employees about the natural and cultural history of the region;*
- *increases awareness and understanding regarding a number of specific issues (for example, proper behaviour in bear, wolf, and cougar country; greater understanding of First Nations’ history and ties to the region, etc.)*
- *increases awareness of regional non-profits as well as agencies such as provincial and federal parks and the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Reserve;*
- *builds cross-cultural understanding;*
- *improves “good host etiquette”, positive service, and leadership behaviour, to enhance visitor experience; and fosters civic responsibility, volunteerism and participation in community events and projects.*

Secrets to Success:

The program is offered free.

Collaboration between many groups to develop and test the curriculum.

Employers recognize the excellent training opportunity.

4. Professional Development

There is a strong need for locally delivered, relevant professional training to support middle and upper managers within our communities. Many professionals find that it is difficult to schedule and afford courses and workshops outside of the region. While there is a wide range of programs available online, community members are seeking a supportive learning environment that is locally and culturally appropriate. The successful Leadership Vancouver Island program has proved that there is local demand for such courses and that communities can work together to meet their own needs.

Beyond the current leadership training, there is additional need for a locally-available program to develop management skills including financial planning, strategic planning, public speaking, coaching and economic development. It is important for residents to be able to learn within their community where they have supports in place and to create opportunities for these management competencies to be taught with an indigenous lens and include cultural teachings.

Recommendations:

- CBT should continue to deliver training opportunities for volunteers and non-profits as a means of building capacity. Recent workshops on knowledge philanthropy, strategic planning and governance have been very well received. The CBT has been able to deliver these workshops for no charge by leveraging their own board training and accessing training grants.
- Continue to engage with and support partnerships with First Nations communities and universities to create custom designed accredited and non-accredited programs in our communities. The CBT will be hosting faculty from the Ch'nook program at the Sauder School of Business (UBC) in January with a view to developing local opportunities.
- Continue to offer the Leadership Vancouver Island program as a community funded, regional program.

Case Study: Leadership Vancouver Island

Leading self, leading others, leading community. These are the tenants that guide the Leadership Vancouver Island (LVI) program, an initiative of Vancouver Island University. In 2013, a made-on-the west coast version of this program had its inaugural year in the Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve region. Guided by leaders in local government, business, and not-for-profit organizations from all communities on the west coast, the revised program was crafted to mentor west coast leaders. The program helps build community leadership and offers advanced learning close to home.

Now administered and coordinated through the CBT, local participants in the LVI program engage in community leadership development through several dynamic individual and group learning opportunities during the 10-month program year. The program begins with a two-day residency in September and is followed by eight learning days – once day a month from October to May – spread out amongst communities within the Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve region (CSBRR). Each learning day follows a theme and brings together participants, facilitators, presenters, and other LVI contributors. One of the highlights of the west coast program is that participants meet people who live throughout the region and, through the course of the program, visit all seven communities in the CSBRR.

Students create their own personal leadership plans and work with their team and a coach to craft their own path of learning. Groups of students also apply their skills to community projects and initiatives as they bring a team project through from conception and planning to implementation and evaluation. Upon completion of the program, students are eligible to receive six credits from Vancouver Island University.

Secrets to Success

Employer support allows learners to take time from work to attend the program. In several cases, the employer also paid the tuition fee.

Learning at home. Students receive high-quality educational opportunities very close to home, which is excellent for students who work full-time, who are parents, and/or do not have the means to travel out of town once a month for 10 months.

Financial support from local municipalities. A \$10,000 commitment from both the District of Tofino and the District of Ucluelet helped “seed” the program and provided leverage for further funding.

5. Supports for Secondary School Students

At the elementary and secondary school level, students are supported by a group of dedicated teachers and administrators who deliver locally and culturally relevant education in order to meet Ministry of Education outcomes with limited resources. At the same time, we continue to see graduation rates below the provincial average, especially for our First Nation students. Once again, it is important to look at the social determinants of health to understand how a number of underlying issues are undermining student success. The seasonal nature of the west coast economy is presenting barriers for our younger students, as they experience the effects of seasonal employment and housing challenges at home. Many students find themselves moving either within or beyond the region in order for their parents to find year-round employment. As well, families are challenged to find appropriate year-round housing and may also face transportation challenges. Teachers and administrators frequently work to support students in light of these circumstances and note that our close-knit communities make this possible.

Students, teachers and administrators report that the transition from elementary to high school is a critical time. The students with the hardest time transitioning from high school may lack executive skills such as showing up to class on time and bringing the appropriate materials which are necessary for the more independent learning environment.

Yuułu?i?ath Government has made an investment in time, energy, and funding to support youth and has noted an increase in graduation rates. They are pleased to see their 'at-risk' list shrinking and credit success their investment as well as to bringing services into their community.

USS has shown leadership in developing and delivering locally-relevant classes for its students including Kayaking 11/12, Sustainability Studies 11/12 and Global Education 11/12. There is a strong demand for experiential learning programs, hands on learning and apprenticeship programs. The Aboriginal Youth Apprenticeship Program is currently developing curriculum to support fisheries apprenticeship training beginning in grade ten. The program is in a pilot stage and could potentially be delivered locally.

Recommendations:

- Provide coordination support for annual career fairs and invite participation from key partners (for example, Uu-a-thluk and Nuu-chah-nulth Seafood Corporation).
- Provide assistance identifying apprenticeship sponsors and creating apprenticeship partnerships.

- Host family events to engage both students and parents early on in the transition from elementary school to high school. This is especially important for families new to the school and from outside Ucluelet who may not have had contact with USS programs or teachers.
- Support USS in considering more flexible means of meeting students' needs in their early years at the school. Experiential learning and 'alternate' programs can support students who struggle in the normal classroom setting.
- Participate in the development of the Aboriginal Youth Apprenticeship Program with a view to USS offering the program in 2015-2016.
- Support programs that develop competencies outside of the school in partnership with youth and recreation workers such as the Girls and Guys of the Wildcoast.
- Provide support to update mentor posters within USS and host events where students can meet with both alumni and elders as mentors.
- Celebrate and share successes within and beyond the schools. Help all residents to be aware of the positive work being done locally through assisting with communications.

Case Study: Ucluelet Secondary School Apprenticeship Partnerships

With such a small regional population it is difficult for our local high schools to offer a broad suite of electives for students. While distance learning may fill the gap for some students, it is more challenging when it comes to trades. But Ucluelet Secondary School (USS), with the support of local tradespeople, is trying an innovative approach to fit the needs of students interested in pursuing a career in the trades.

The partnership between USS administration, journeyman John Crookes, a heavy-duty equipment mechanic, and student Logan Arsenault is a case-in-point. Logan has always enjoyed mechanics and it was clear that it would make a fitting career. Logan worked with the school to set his course load in the senior grades so that he had all of his graduation requirements, except for final electives, by the end of the first semester (late January). Then, with the support of Crookes, he began his apprenticeship, earning four courses in the workplace: Apprenticeship 11A, 11B, 12A and 12B.

Arsenault plans to enter college or trade school in the fall of 2015, where he will begin his coursework. His required practicum hours are well in hand, however, as Crookes reports all of Arsenault's hours with the Industrial Training Authority. The partnership was so successful that Arsenault continued to work with Crookes the year following his high school graduation.

This partnership is the most recent one organized by the school and principal Carol Sedgwick is searching for other tradespeople keen to work with local students. The innovative program allows students to begin their post-secondary training at home, with the support of their high school and local businesses.

Secret to Success

Students and school administration need to work together to plan senior-level courses to ensure all other high school graduation requirements are completed before the apprenticeship begins.

Students must have a strong interest and aptitude to the particular trade to ensure they don't waste the time of journeymen.

The strong support of local journeymen (with the appropriate tickets) able to have apprentices.

6. Nuuchahnulth Language Education

While the number of First Nations people who are fluent in their traditional languages continues to decline, interest in learning is gaining momentum. In our region, 1.7% of First Nations people are fluent in their traditional language, which is down from 3.1% in 2012. But interest in learning traditional languages is on the rise. A further 2.6% speak somewhat or understand and 6.3% identify as being learners. Both these figures have increased slightly since 2012.⁴

Currently, language classes are being offered in many communities and range from grassroots gatherings to university approved curriculum. Some communities are approaching language as a part of community events and incorporating along with other cultural activities. The grassroots events benefit from genuine support but are not supported by any formal administration capacity which prevents them from accessing funding to support their work.

North Island College, University of Victoria and local communities are making steps toward delivering two accredited classes in the region with a local, accredited instructor. As well, many nations have accessed funding to complete digitization projects and, in one instance, a language app and language nest.

It is important to consider the boundaries for language dialects when suggesting regional projects and coordination, as the region includes two different dialects. Teachers are recognizing the need to teach the different dialects and are creating a supportive environment which is inclusive.

Recommendations:

- Encourage Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations to identify a language contact that is able to represent Tla-o-qui-aht on regional initiatives. At this time other nations are unclear who to approach as there are many champions within the community.
- Host a Nuuchahnulth language gathering and celebration to provide each group with an opportunity to share its accomplishments and consider next steps towards working together. This gathering should be planned by a committee with representation from each nation. Logistical support is needed for this to move forward.
- Locally-focused language revitalization funding is needed. Grantwriting and administrative support may also help projects to move forward. Need the support for grantwriting.

⁴ First Peoples' Language Map (maps.fphlcc.ca) Note: Statistics include all members of each First Nation even those currently living outside the CSBRR.

Lessons Learned from Piloting the “Education Hub”

As stated in the project vision, “knowledge serves as a key foundation for a vibrant economy, culture, and governance in the Pacific Rim region.” Communities, organizations, and individuals have expressed support for the development of the education economy and there is a strong belief that by providing training and capacity building opportunities within our region we will be able to retain residents and move forward together on our vision. Currently, individual communities, organizations and institutions are doing their best to meet their immediate needs while also looking towards the future.

However, the region has an enormous opportunity to work together to scale up their individual initiatives to achieve their shared vision collectively. All stakeholders find themselves to be limited by both time and money. People are working to deliver their core mandate and do not have the time to share ideas and opportunities beyond their organization or community. Each of these groups is functioning effectively as a spoke or node, but is missing the opportunity to connect through a hub with other nodes.

In order to move forward as a region and leverage the highest potential from current initiatives, the region will need to create an education hub. The “learning by doing” approach adopted by this strategy development has shown that all education stakeholders appreciate the support provided by an administrative hub through hosting events such as the regional education forum, creating mechanisms for sharing such as the education listserv and projects where communities, organizations and institutions can work together on action-oriented projects such as regional delivery of the Ambassador program.

Next steps: Implementing the Recommendations Through a Regional Education Hub

- Fund a “regional education coordinator” full-time position within a local organization to create an administrative hub that will serve all regional communities.
- Utilize hub capacity to seek funding for programs and providing assistance with grant writing and provide local administration (for example, NETP application for regional Ambassador Program and NIC culinary program).
- Utilize hub capacity to support the development of programs (for example, locally driven management training program in partnership with an accredited university).
- Continue to share education and training opportunities via regional education list-serve.
- Communities should continue to articulate their own priorities, network beyond the region, and foster their own initiatives based on individual needs. The hub can provide support and capacity to help move projects forward, but should not be the instigator.
- The administrative hub will provide an efficient and effective starting point for regional consultation and can orient new education stakeholders to the local education landscape.

- The administrative hub can build relationships with Provincial and Federal programs and offer the capacity to engage with them effectively.
- The Regional Learning Council hosted by the CBT should continue to meet on an annual or biannual basis to create opportunities for building relationships, sharing updates and identifying region priorities. These priorities can then move forward with hub capacity under the direction of working groups. The learning council should be supported by a clear terms of reference.

Case Study: CBT Administrative Hub for Regional Training Opportunities

In 2013, the CBT organized an Emergency Medical Responders course for 12 First Nations participants from the Central Region with funding provided from the Nuu-chah-nulth Employment and Training Program (NETP). Having the CBT secure the funding and coordinate the logistics of the program took the administrative burden off any one community. As well, this central coordination ensured that the program was open to qualified Nuu-chah-nulth residents within the region. In the end, 12 students were funded: 4 from Ahousaht First Nation, 6 from Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, and 2 from Toquaht First Nation. As well, 2 more students from Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations were sponsored by their community and one person from Tofino paid for their own course.

The course enhanced skill levels of first responders in remote communities, who are called on to deal with trauma and medical emergencies. As well, the course increased the employability of the participants. Having this certification is a pre-requisite that enables people to apply for certain jobs in the region and elsewhere, so having this certification gives these students an advantage and necessary skills for future employment.

This was a very challenging course and community involvement was high. Carla Moss, a local ambulance attendant, was invaluable in organizing the course and attended almost all of the sessions, assisting where possible. As well, other local ambulance attendants volunteered their time to help out. Ms. Moss also helped organize the study sessions and was an invaluable resource.

The course did have its challenges. The course work was difficult for many students and they required on-going support and more class time to successfully complete the program. The instructors were committed to the success of the students and supported them well, yet there were still cultural barriers and some lack of support for different learning styles.

Secrets of Success

Regional coordination by the CBT to ensure the program was offered region-wide, without the burden being placed on just one community.

Coordinated support. Students self-organized with voluntary study sessions and a Facebook page, used to share information, ask questions, and set study session times.

Community support. Various parts of the community came together to support the students both in the course as well as financially and logistically. Working ambulance attendants supported the students, Tin Wis Resort provided the meeting room for the course and gave a reduced rate to instructors and participants; Mainstream Canada helped support the travel costs of students from Ahousaht.

Appendix A: Funding Programs

While sources of funding are constantly in flux, key sources of funding include:

- BC Capacity Initiative – <http://www.bccapacity.org>
- Canada Summer Jobs - <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/epb/yi/yep/programs/scpp.shtml>
- CivicInfo BC - <http://civicinfo.bc.ca/18.asp>
- Clayoquot Biosphere Trust - www.clayoquotbiosphere.org
- Concierge Service, a one-stop-shop for all Governmental programs (grants, funds or other programs of value) <http://concierge.portal.gc.ca/>
- Island Coastal Economic Trust - <http://www.islandcoastaltrust.ca/>
- Nuu-chah-nulth Education and Training Program - <http://www.nuuchahnulth.org/tribal-council/netb.html>
- Union of BC Municipalities - <http://www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding.html>
- Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council - <http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/home-accueil-eng.aspx>
- WorkBC - <http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Employment-Services/Community-Employer-Partnerships.aspx>

Appendix B: Education Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

This SWOT analysis was conducted in small groups at the May, 2014 Regional Education Forum hosted by the CBT.

Strengths

- Our culture & values
- First Nations enrollment #'s are high
- Visionary dialogue beginning
- Government collaboration – municipal & aboriginal
- Our environments/lands
- Each community has existing role models
- Traditional knowledge/language speakers
- Regional approaches, creativity; community approach to education
- Dual credit with NIC, experiential learning for credit
- Partnerships between communities
- Increasing populations/new people/ideas/perspective relationships
- Local relationships, trust
- Cultural foundation & initiatives
- Reconciliation, resilience, resurgence
- Community collaboration, growing acceptance, strong communities
- Small population & close knit community which offers a safe environment
- Diversity of communities, pool of talent
- Energy, passion
- West Coast Natural Resources, oral history, local researchers & scientists
- Local expertise, committees in place
- Tourist destination
- Visiting researchers & academic sharing locally
- Education Assistant Program in community i.e. Ahousaht ECE upcoming
- High school for all students (MSS)
- Potential for youth, can do attitude
- Environment, geography, lifestyle of the West Coast
- Engaged local leaders willing to lobby, strong leadership, Leadership Vancouver Island
- Ecosystem & natural classroom, cultural workshops, carving shed
- Ahousaht local schools; elementary & secondary
- Strong elementary & early education
- Community, NGO foundations & institutions
- Dialogue increasing
- Growing population
- Recognize education is not just academic based learning
- CBT neutral third party

Weaknesses

- Technological impediments that are slow & intermittent such as internet access in rural areas
- Economy
- Geographical remoteness & access, importing supplies
- Communities spread over a large area; difficulty accessing local resources
- Cost of living, small industry base, inflated markets
- Transportation; distance between school & home
- Housing; cost & maintenance
- Band-Aid approach does not have lasting solutions
- Mistrust
- Holistic community services that focus on family unit as a whole
- Industrial Education Model
- Funding formulas
- Migration to Port Alberni by skilled people
- Social challenges such as poverty
- Availability & access to daycare/childcare
- Lack of awareness or access to information on community services
- Seasonality for work/employment
- School attendance
- Formal language classes/curriculum
- Financial independence
- Lack personal time/free time
- Lack of communication & coordination
- School attendance & engagement
- Limited amenities & instructors
- Limited special needs support
- Limited amount of programs & funding; economics of educational delivery is not understood by funders
- Limited collective voice i.e. to lobby
- Lack understanding on trauma informed approaches to mental health issues
- Special needs training and skill development is very limited, barriers, limited access
- Lack confidence to use skill sets
- Need to develop self-employment skills & training
- Change how data is collected such as in reference to returning students ; lack communication with community organizations for education & health data collection
- Disconnected standardized testing that is not culturally sensitive or appropriate; i.e. using words and phrases not connected to the geographic area where students reside

Opportunities

- Collaborative i.e. Leadership Vancouver Island
- Natural/cultural wealth & knowledge

- Intergenerational opportunities
- Develop curriculum that is values & culturally based
- Mid-Management certificate/diploma program
- Ambassador program curriculum/aboriginal tourism collaboration
- Pro D Days used as training opportunities for students ie food safe/Low cost/no cost for training
- Workshops to build skills
- Train the trainers
- Build inside/local resources
- Resource/people exchanges
- Individual skill sets per community
- Collaboration/equipment & resource sharing
- Utilize strengths
- Growth & diversity
- Diverse knowledge base to draw on/local community
- Attract external student base
- Field studies/school
- Share a different way of knowing/uniqueness
- Amenity migrants choosing to stay/come home
- Increase online access
- Geographical location
- Respect of culture
- Ecotourism
- W.C. draws/attracts artistic people
- Career Fairs
- Community License Bank/halibut ie Bartering System
- Higher Education
- Youth Conferences
- Cultural activities/canoe journeys
- Intersection of Industry & Nature/aqua culture, ecotourism
- Match education with opportunities & industry ie Culinary arts, aquaculture
- Tourist destination
- Outdoor education/research
- First Nations partnerships
- Aquarium opportunities
- Skill training in high school
- Biology program/marine
- Maritime training/Coast Guard etc./Basic certifications
- More programs/training delivered in the community
- Management training – Ucluelet First Nations/SEEDS
- Wild Pacific Trail Society – interpretative signage & walks/student involvement
- Raise interest, rigor & culture

- MSS wants to be an educational destination
- Education Economy development
- A West Coast Institute
- Lobbying government together as a region (provincial and federal)
- Residential school education credit
- Recognizing cultural learning credits
- Teaching for different learning styles, creative ways to deliver training

Threats

- Loss of culture
- Communication/collaboration
- Overuse of technology
- Western/traditional education systems not humble enough to respond to need
- Lens on education system fragmented
- Lack of funding
- Declining # of knowledge keepers
- Development
- Drop-out system
- Wellness obstacles
- Lack of rural development (Federal Government)
- Small population = quiet voice
- No fibre optics
- Education Budget cuts
- First Nation Schools funding different than for public schools / Separation of the two school systems
- No formal language status for Nuu-chah-nulth language
- Natural disaster
- Volatility of economy, increase in cost of living
- Lack of infrastructure investment/aging infrastructure
- Reduced government funds & investment in education
- Lack of professional work opportunities after education/Limited jobs & career opportunities/seasonality of economy
- Competition from other parts of Vancouver Island/B.C./Alberta
- Brain drain
- Special needs track unnecessarily
- SD70 Geography
- Residential school education credit – triggers & conflict