

A Preliminary Strategic Implementation Plan (Part 1)
Continuing and Distance Education Services
School District 57, Prince George, British Columbia

A Vision for the Future

MDDE605 – Assignment #1

by

Richard Giroday and Barbara Morningstar

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A Vision for the Future

Overview

Continuing and Distance Education Services

Delivery of education in K-12, adult education, and distance education, has rapidly evolved over the past 20 years (Bates, 1997; Keegan, 2001; Shale, 1988; Stahmer, 1995). Looking to the future, we see “Information technology is changing the access to knowledge, the process of learning, and the delivery of education and training. Teaching and learning can now take place outside the traditional institutional and work-place-based venues of education...” (Hodgins, 2000). Nowhere is that rapid change more evident than at Continuing and Distance Education Services (CDES), School District 57 (SD57), Prince George, British Columbia. Created September 1, 2003, with the amalgamation of three educational organizations, CDES is a school with a broad mandate for delivery of educational services to diverse student populations. With a clear vision and a sound strategic plan, Continuing and Distance Education Services (CDES) will continue fulfillment of its mandate; capitalize on opportunities that provide expanded educational services to the communities it serves; take advantage of emerging opportunities beyond its traditional boundaries; and deliver educational services in a more cost effective manner.

School District 57 (SD57) is the second largest school district by geographical size in the province of British Columbia (see Appendix A). It encompasses 52,000 square kilometers (20,000 square miles), and includes the communities of Prince George, Mackenzie, McBride, Valemount, and Hixon with all of the communities and settlements in between. The district’s student school-age population in 2003 is 16,400 students, of which 2,900 are aboriginal. SD57 operates 37 elementary schools, 1 middle school, 2 junior secondary schools, and 8 secondary schools. They range in size from Bear Lake Elementary, with 20 students, to Prince George Secondary School enrolling approximately 1,500 students. The district offers a wide range of traditional and alternative programming options. In the last two years, SD57 has undergone major challenges with the closure of 14 elementary schools and faces the closure of two junior secondary schools this year. The district experiences the challenge of a significant decline in enrolment due to regional economics and demographic changes.

First within that its broad mandate, CDES provides Continuing Education (CE) adult basic education programs K-12 for communities within SD57 and educational support for additional specific programs within Prince George. Within its CE mandate, it provides continuous intake, self-directed, self-

paced courses with face-to-face support. It maintains a main school site, with satellites in two additional locations within Prince George. It carries the additional responsibility of providing educational services to the Provincial Correctional Institution and other community initiatives not included under the umbrella of Community Alternate Programs. For adult basic education services, it operates under a philosophy of maximum opportunity for education at minimum student cost. Secondly, CDES carries a mandate for Community Alternate Programs (CAP) consisting of 14 different programs for street youth, youth at risk or youth in special circumstances scattered throughout the city of Prince George (see Appendix B). Third, CDES is home for the Central Interior Distance Education School (CIDES) with the mandate of providing distance educational services to students in School Districts 27, 28, 49, 57, 91 (see Appendix A). In addition, CDES operates a well-established and expanding International ESL summer program with home-stay students from Japan. Additionally, CDES is responsible for the delivery and administration of SD57's summer school program.

Today CDES is the largest school in SD57 with an administrative structure of principal, 2 vice-principals, 60 teaching staff, and 29 support staff (see Appendix C). Among the staff is a technical analyst responsible for maintaining all computer networks, servers, and advising on the implementation of new technologies, as well as a technology support teacher¹. Teachers holding joint duties with CE and located throughout the CE sites, provide DE 11-12 online course support. K-10 distance education support is noted below.

CDES is physical housed in a widely dispersed number of locations throughout Prince George (see Appendix B). It consists of a main office housing the administrative center for all activities, a F2F CE facility, the DE administrative staff and shipping facilities, CE and DE counseling services, and a small library. In addition, CDES has satellite face-to-face (F2F) CE centers in the Hart area and McBride BC, the 14 Community Alternate programs housed separately and scattered throughout Prince George, and a combined satellite F2F CE and k-10 DE support center in the vacant Gladstone elementary school. In addition, CDES maintains F2F satellite support centers in McBride and MacKenzie.

The Opportunity

The evolution of Continuing and Distance Education Services creates new capacity for CDES to fulfill its mandates and opens new opportunities through the expansion of a mandated robust online

¹ The Technical Support Teacher's (TST) role is to help to develop an effective/exemplary online learning model that will be administered and managed by CDES and will give all students within the district an opportunity to choose to access some/all of their education in this manner.

course delivery for full time K-12, 1701² students registered with the Central Interior Distance Education School. Integrating and connecting students that fall under a variety of umbrellas, Adult, High School, Distance Education, and Alternate Programs in online environments from multiple districts and communities, enhances delivery of educational services to and creates expansion of, an established student base.

Assuring Future Success

As CDES embarks on initiatives to take advantage of these opportunities, it faces many challenges. In spite of these challenges, as CDES continues to fulfill its mandate and expand into new areas, excellent e-learning initiatives will succeed, allowing CDES to capitalize on these opportunities. There are many reasons for this success.

- CDES is choosing its future not waiting for it to happen.
- CDES will define specific achievable goals with regard to excellent e-learning, within its possibilities and give itself the resources and monitoring to work toward those goals.
- CDES is a public school with its place in the publicly funded system. CDES has a publicly salaried staff that is demonstrating a willingness to embrace a new vision and leadership and decision-making processes that support goal oriented change.
- CDES is within a publicly funded system and continues to receive public funds while developing its e-learning role through a fully publicly funded team. It is not a new start up company grasping for market share and cash flow.
- CDES has an established history that it can exploit to create a market identity. CDES is a locally known ‘brand’ in continuing education, adult education, and distance education.
- CDES has the opportunity to pursue excellence and benefit from on-going learning in the field regarding both excellent technologies and best practices. This opportunity to pursue excellence can translate into an excellent reputation and reinforce the CDES’ market profile
- CDES is giving itself the opportunity to plug into untapped markets and international markets, as well as the opportunity to retain students in its sector.
- CDES is a member of a resource sharing e-learning consortium. The advantages of this membership will continue to expand and may contribute to its success.

² 1701 students are full time, fully funded distance education students for whom Ministry of Education mandated, online delivery, guidelines have been established (see Appendix D) and must be met for funding to be justified. The Ministry audits the robust nature of the online learning program provided.

- CDES is uniquely positioned to integrate diverse learners in online learning³ environments, creating a rich interactive community of learners
- CDES is not the first to market and has the hindsight of other organizational initiatives

The Market Potential

The Market Opportunities

Development of online courses opens pathways to the “very essential quality of teaching: the ability to interact with the learner, provide feedback, and alter the presentation to meet the learner’s needs” (Rosenberg, 2001, p.22). Through CDES, diverse groups of students will receive the assistance they need from qualified educational specialists, by bridging barriers of time and distance. Increased student-teacher interactivity provides increased opportunity for student success, providing improvement of the current educational services provided by CDES. As CDES prepares for the delivery of online K-12 courses, it has the opportunity for developing quality online courses using best practices and principles, giving CDES the ability to provide an enhanced quality education to those currently served, and to a wider community of students inside and outside its traditional geographical boundaries.

Undeveloped opportunities for growth are available, due to changing environmental conditions⁴. Opportunities to reach beyond the traditional boundaries of school, district, region, and province present themselves through quality, online, specialized courses, partnerships within distance education consortium schools, and Asian school partners. Expansion of Distance Education in delivery of a globally available summer school program that serves students in the Central Interior of British Columbia is another opportunity.

Three additional opportunities present themselves. First, small town schools in the regions under CDES’ umbrella need the means to provide a full curriculum to their students. CDES will provide access to students unable to obtain needed courses due to lack of offerings within their own schools. Secondly, schools, parents and administrators need simple alternative solutions for students who struggle in the conventional classroom and seek increased choices for their students in spite of under funding, school closures, and resulting pressures. Initiatives by CDES will provide solutions for this need. Thirdly, SD57 has a significant population of First Nation students. Opportunities exist to collaborate with First Nation communities throughout central British Columbia for the delivery of online courses adapted to their

³ Online learning and e-learning are used interchangeably throughout this document. Both are defined in the present context as delivery of a quality, robust, interactive educational program through a Computer Learning Management Systems such as WebCT or Desire2Learn; teacher created, directed, and managed; fully meeting the Ministry’s expectations.

⁴ For further details on the current and developing environmental conditions surrounding Continuing and Distance Education Services see <http://giroday.thewebworks.bc.ca/MDDE605/PreliminaryPaperMDDE601.pdf>

special needs and specialized courses targeted to those communities. Strengthening this last opportunity is the recent announcement that SD57 has entered into discussions with the local Aboriginal Education Board about the possibility of an aboriginal school in the district. Lastly, opportunities for cost reductions exist, due to the unique configuration of CDES.

That these opportunities exist is unquestionable. What is unknown is the degree and depth in numerical and financial terms of the market opportunities. The number of students, parents, administrators and school district personnel seeking choices and flexibility is difficult to estimate, given the shifting needs from semester to semester, year to year, day to day. The numbers of students from the various categories of services, available to draw into integrated online environments from various districts and communities, requires a detailed market analysis to estimate with some confidence. That analysis is outside the scope of the present paper.

The Current Market

CDES has many categories of students and offers a variety of services to meet their needs. The CDES student population is approximate 1217 full time equivalents (FTE), comprised of 636 FTE in CE, 208 FTE in DE, and 373 FTE in CAP⁵. There are ninety-four online course enrollments in Cool School within the Prince George school district alone, for which SD57 pays a seat fee. These enrollments cover a wide range of courses from grades 8 – 12 (see Appendix E). There are 388 course enrolments in junior distance education courses and 453 course enrollments in senior distance education courses (See Appendix F). A significant number of course enrollments but only approximately 120 students are full time online students in the junior and senior Distance Education programs. The current market is only a small segment of the student population in the district and region.

The Future Market

The future market for online learning will continue to grow and expand exponentially as societal pressures increase. Economic changes and continued societal pressures demand creative, flexible, available alternatives that provide for the growing and expanding educational needs of various stakeholders. There is on the horizon an approaching exponential growth in online learning in K-12 and Adult Education in British Columbia. As Rosenberg (2001, p.xv) puts it, “We are on the verge of a major

⁵ CE – Continuing Education is Adult Basic Education Services. DE – Distance Education is the Central Interior Distance Education School Services. CAP – Community Alternate Programs educational services. This is not an accurate head count, only the full time equivalent number of students. Producing exact reports on student enrollments in the different programs and student categories is not possible through the administrative systems used by CDES. This inability is a systemic problem CDES must address.

... change in learning. Internet technologies have fundamentally altered the technological and economic landscapes so radically that it is now possible to make quantum leaps in the use of technology for learning.” The first generation of students to grow up with technology as commonplace as the air they breathe, is now in the school system. These children are authorities on the revolution that is changing every institution in society. Young adults, familiar with technology, who need upgrading of their skills and education are ready for flexible access to educational opportunities. Economic conditions are challenging workers who need retraining or educational upgrading. They too seek flexibility and access.

Technology is causing a fundamental shift in our thinking, especially in the delivery of educational opportunities. A gauge for these developments is the Alberta Online Symposium that in just a few years has seen attendance explode from a small number of educators to over 650 from across Canada in October, 2003. Alberta’s developing online learning system with 4,700 full-time and 4,000 part-time students in 21 programs⁶, as well as the directions and initiatives discussed in this paper, provides a view of developments in K-12. Current Computer Learning Management Systems (such as WebCT and D2L⁷) and a host of interactive tools (such as VClass⁸), allow the customization of cost effective educational learning systems for the delivery of learning opportunities for k-12 and adults – anytime, anywhere – in this age that requires life-long learning. Those institutions that provide quality online educational services and excellent support for students will successfully continue to grow as the market grows. CDES is well positioned to provide the former and achieve the latter.

Many international students seek educational opportunities from Canadian institutions. Increasing delivery of courses based on the British Columbia curriculums is occurring each year. Gulf Island School District #64 has established an international virtual school that has become one of the premier international programs in North America.⁹ Other districts are exploring private sector partnerships for offshore marketing, sales and infrastructure. Demand in this future market is growing. CDES is well positioned to explore this future market using its contacts through the CDES Japanese ESL Summer Program.

Marketing Strategies

CDES needs a marketing strategy that promotes and sells to the current and future market—creating and growing an excellent e-learning identity for CDES. Developing an approach to marketing is an important part of the decision-making process regarding marketing for this business plan. The key is an

⁶ Data obtained from <http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/news/2002/October/nr-OnlineLearnSymp.asp>.

⁷ WebCt information available at <http://www.webct.com/>, D2L information available at <http://www.desire2learn.com>

⁸ VClass information available at www.illuminate.com

⁹ Gulf Island School District #64 international virtual school information available at <http://www.sd64.bc.ca/online/index.html>

integrated holistic approach as expounded by marketers of today (Sterne, 2002; Sevier, 2003). The goal of an integrated marketing approach is to maintain customer satisfaction and anticipate customer needs in order to maintain customer loyalty and anticipate future opportunities for increased success. In the words of Sterne, “A brand is not a name. A brand is not a positioning statement. It is not a marketing message, a jingle, or a logo. A brand is the culmination of all of the interactions that all the people in a marketplace have with the firm”. The marketing strategies employed are not isolated decisions. They are part of a way of being. An identity (brand) is growing at CDES. CDES is not just selling on-line courses. It is developing a vision for providing an excellent accessible education. Decisions made regarding course offerings, course platforms and technologies, staff, administration, support and all areas of the school organization have a marketing influence. The best marketing strategy for CDES is to set a specific goal, related to the provision of excellent learning, to achieve it and then make this success known, creating a foundation for future success, honing the method and organizational workings as it proceeds.

Growing success is a question of excellence in service and support first, and then knowing how to get the word out, how to build the identity of CDES, the brand. CDES will increase its knowledge regarding its market, gaining a clearer understanding of how to target specific segments within its market. It will make decisions regarding the cost and benefits of optimizing the use of free publicity and increasing its presence at public venues, tradeshow, and conferences. CDES will make use of technology through excellently designed web pages, personalization, and web customer communities. In addition, the web pages that CDES create will include Asian specific sections. CDES will examine a marketing strategy that advantages the CD's¹⁰ that Japanese students receive after attending the International ESL Summer School. CDES will explore a direct marketing campaign to rural and neighborhood schools within its spheres of responsibility. Additionally, CDES will look at the cost and benefit of using targeted paid advertising.

The Competition

Who They Are

The removal of the cap on online distance education students, coupled with strained school district budgets throughout British Columbia, makes the development of online distance education programs by any school or district within British Columbia more tempting all the time. That pathway is certainly available under new Ministry of Education guidelines. Some schools and districts already have undertaken such initiatives with the result that in a very short period, the number of schools providing

¹⁰ A self installing power point presentation, that records in picture form the events of the entire month the ESL students are in Northern British Columbia is burned on a CD and given to each student at the closing banquet.

distance education – electronic services, has grown from ten to twenty-six. Strained budgets are creating subtle competition for students within these programs. Even within the Provincial Distance Education Consortium, there is a sense of subtle competition for students.

CDES' current main competitors for students are E-Bus, Cool School, College of New Caledonia, and other schools and districts providing distance education – electronic services. Located 60 miles from Prince George, in Vanderhoof, is the 11 year old and expanding E-Bus program operated by School District 91. It has reached an all time high enrollment of 1,084 students¹¹, a recent increase of 400 students of which approximately 75 are adults (Thomson, 2003). In the past, they have aggressively marketed their school. They continue to highlight, within close communities, their online programs for k-12 and adults, and their availability. They are a strong competitor for regional K-12 and adult students. The College of New Caledonia offers Adult Basic Education and counseling services, however in a model different from CDES. Their model of delivery is classroom based with designated entry dates. Approximately eight years ago, the administration at CDES' forerunner, Continuing Education, selected a model of continuous intake, independent-study, self-paced courses to establish CDES' Adult Education market and to distinguish the unique offerings of each institution.

Cool School¹² courses are used in alternate education programs at three Prince George high schools, by a few students at CDES, and by principals to meet student needs and provide choices for various students attending regular classes throughout SD57 (see Appendix E). SD57 has made no decision regarding continuing future membership in the Cool School Consortium, but will maintain its use for the year 2004/2005.

The biggest competition to CDES is the continued development of the growing online distance education initiatives by schools and districts throughout British Columbia. Online delivery of distance education within British Columbia is now an open competitive market with no geographical restrictions by the Ministry of Education. The only geographical restrictions are those established for the Distance Education Consortium schools that will rapidly dissolve given the Provincial situation. The impact and results of this openness has yet to unfold.

Our Competitive Advantage

A primary of advantage of CDES is its solid financial foundation as a public school. It is not a question of building from scratch by attracting full fee-paying students. In the K-12 arena, CDES has the advantage of being a publicly funded school that is receiving incentives to move toward e-learning. In

¹¹ As of November 26, 2003

¹² For further details on [Cool School](http://giroday.thewebworks.bc.ca/MDDE605/PreliminaryPaperMDDE601.pdf) see <http://giroday.thewebworks.bc.ca/MDDE605/PreliminaryPaperMDDE601.pdf>

order to reinforce its position as a publicly funded, excellent e-learning organization, CDES determines to plan, implement, monitor, assess and report appropriately. The organization has financial and human resources that give it a competitive edge. It has a skilled team embracing the move toward e-learning and it is proceeding by means of a thoughtful planned process which includes the continuing development of human resources.

CDES has several advantages in the competition for enrolments. CDES can market to its existing and steadily growing client base of continuing and distance education learners, including the base it has established in Asia.

Entering the online arena now, offers CDES the advantage of using what is known about successful programs by planning and investing wisely to produce, monitor and maintain excellence. One part of this planning and investing may be the resource sharing that it could pursue through its consortium membership.

Business Strategic Plan

Our Vision

Our vision is a community of self-motivated, independent, life-long learners, working, learning, and sharing together. We aspire to be one of the Province's leading schools: recognized for excellence in teaching and education services, whether one-on-one, online or in the classroom, offering flexibility, options, choice, and a caring, nurturing environment that magnifies the success of all our students. We are valued as a school where our team benefits from clear, supportive leadership and pursues best practices in all areas, and that offers an excellent, open learning space – physical and virtual – where students achieve their learning goals.

Our Mission

CDES is a publicly funded K-12 school, mandated to offer open learning, dedicated to offering excellent learning opportunities through appropriate technology and staff development. The mission of CDES is to provide a supportive environment where excellence in the provision of education is pursued and there is a commitment to best practices in open learning. CDES offers and assists students with the opportunity to achieve learning goals and gain the benefits of completing their high school education, benefiting our communities and society.

Our Values and Beliefs

Values and beliefs provide a fundamental basis for our school. They provide a foundation for decision-making, and serve as a compass in establishing direction.

With regard to students, we believe

- Everyone can learn
- Learning is a life-long process
- Educational opportunities for all is important, relevant, and strengthens our communities
- Everyone has the rights of equal opportunity and access, to a complete public education
- Each student must learn to think critically and constructively and assume responsibility for participating in society
- All students have a responsibility to maximize their own potential
- Students learn best when engaged interactively with each other and their teacher

With regard to parents, we believe

- Parents are a student's first educator and caregiver
- All parents should value education
- Parents and staff are a team, working cooperatively in the best interest, for student success

With respect to staff, we believe

- Educators must be willing to take risks and pursue new ideas based on best practices
- Educators must be responsive and responsible decision-makers who focus on results
- All staff must be committed to the achievement of our students and their development as responsible learners
- Administration must provide thoughtful leadership that builds on the strengths of individuals
- In loyalty to and confidence in public education structures
- In resilience and adaptability in a climate of change when necessary
- In cooperation and collaboration for survival first, then success and excellence

With respect to our school, we believe

- Educational delivery methods are varied and must suit student needs
- Respectful and cooperative environments foster learning
- Open communication and collaborative problem-solving are important
- In support for diversity in a safe and caring community
- In the wise, efficient, effective use of resources

With regard to technology, we believe

- Technology is a means not an end
- Quality online learning and supported independent learning, are as effective as face-to-face learning

We confirm these beliefs and values provide the foundation for the decisions we make.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths¹³	Proposed Multiyear Strategies
CDES has the benefit of its present financial situation and funding mechanism. It does have funds to use for development	Develop financial management plan that provides funding to support online initiatives. Develop clear projections of the anticipated funding and appropriate fund allocation.
History and established reputation in distance and adult education	Incorporate strengths and history of DE in all marketing strategies. Structure organization to maintain good reputation of student service and support for established client base. Develop a multi-faceted plan for the exploitation of CDES' history and reputation with a focus on the new and expanding excellent e-learning role of CDES.
Well established client base	Use the established access to both gather and disseminate information pertinent to the excellent e-learning role of CDES
CDES has a successful history of partnerships and relationships with various organizations and agencies for the delivery of educational services	Capitalize on existing partnerships and seek new ones within our Regions of responsibility
CDES has successful partnerships with Japanese schools and is developing critical contacts in Asia	Seek further partnerships and expanded offerings during yearly Asian tour
CDES is already involved in a process of change and at a juncture where many choices will be made. CDES can use the process of change and make every decision based on the potential advantage to develop excellence in e-learning	Maintain quality online courses as the premier method of delivery in decision-making processes. Optimize the current process of change into an opportunity to see metamorphosis into an organization of excellent e-learning. Seek out and integrate the best information possible regarding decision in all areas of the organization.
Staff, teaching, technical and administration demonstrate a willingness to plan and move toward future goals together	Maintain staff cohesion directed towards a shared vision. Use a collaborative change mechanism that keeps up the momentum and keeps stakeholders involved. Use compensation as a motivator where possible.
The planning process started through consultation	Involve all stakeholders in planning and assessment

¹³ Strengths and Weaknesses are internal risks that can be controlled or influenced by CDES' administrative team and/or staff.

with stakeholders	of goals and objectives. Plan collaboration.
CDES has some staff with highly trained levels of technical expertise and familiar with online learning environments and best practices	Encourage and support staff development of expertise with technology and developing and teaching in online learning environments. Continue to build the in-house technical expertise and explore the need for contracted technical expertise. Find the key knowledge that is important for most staff and organize knowledge sharing with rewards
CDES possesses unique software for courseware development (D2L)	Keep abreast of developments in online learning delivery. Utilize the District's "distributed" model. Partner with district schools/teachers seeking to develop online courses using CDES' D2L delivery system
Staff are developing expertise and workability with the D2L course development and delivery environment, and expertise in online learning	Support continued development and recruitment of qualified and experienced e-learning professionals
Most DE courses already incorporating the potential of new technologies	Courses not scheduled for full development and delivery in D2L will continue to utilize and develop FirstClass and Websites for online communications: Teacher – student, student-student, and student – content wherever possible, as well as possible. (eg – Development of a website with errata for module packages). All such courses will have a course-supporting website by Sept 30, 2004. All courses will deliver marks online by Sept 30, 2004. Continue effective use of online tools used for courses not fully developed to online delivery

Weaknesses	Proposed Multiyear Strategies
<i>Business</i>	
Lack of reputation for online learning	Create an implement a marketing strategy that highlights CDES's strengths in DE and its ability to delivery quality online learning
Lack of an online presence – current websites are abysmal	Contract web designer/developer for immediate and future developments
Lack of online school culture and identity	Create a plan to develop school culture. Incorporate and use a unique identity within the marketing strategies
There may not be enough specific information about the priorities of the potential market	Prioritization of market opportunities must be decided through collective consultation of staff
CDES administrative student management system for online students (province wide system) cannot produce the information needed to help with marketing strategies, is slow, and does not meet the needs of administrators or teachers. Three	Immediate implementation and use of CDES' Windsor management system for all online students. Explore existing administrative management systems already available on the market that could serve the needs of the school in

different management systems used.	all areas
People	
Internal processes are hampered by attitudes and workloads: a) All staff are working at peak capacity before online course developments considered b) Difficult communication/action lines between technician and staff. Often requests are made, not acted on, re-requested through principal, then action takes place c) Lack of speed of administration to act on identified issues (eg LXR license at Blackburn)	Clear directions regarding ownership of actions are required. Administrative team must act on recommendations of knowledgeable staff. Decision making structures needs reorganizing and monitoring for success.
Staff resistance in moving to the future vision	Well-articulated vision required, developed and maintained with all stakeholders. Assistance to resistant staff to move to different assignments in SD57
Organizational	
Organization of work loads, work times, access to support staff, working conditions and use of common online tools can prevent delivery of quality online courses and learning experiences, and is mission critical a) All staff working at peak capacity conflicts with time to apply a well defined instruction design process b) Lack of access to support staff for those in other buildings c) Staggered work hours for key staff, not enough overlap d) Separation from face-to-face students for teachers with joint duties of distance education online courses and adult basic education at the senior course level e) Scheduling of VClass sessions among teachers. Limited number of seats purchased for online classrooms	Need closer communication between Administration and staff, and planning which involves all stakeholders in regular planning meetings. Develop a well-defined plan of what is being developed, by whom, using what model, with which resources or team within what time restrictions.
Facilities	
Separation of facilities and staff, spread over geographic areas rather than together in one building in Prince George	Need a new facility to house main office and all DE staff together
Well organized and defined work areas for online teaching, with all necessary setups	Need well planned facility
Resources	
Insufficient resources a) A 1-800 number is needed for k-10 DE online students b) Insufficient phones for the number of staff.	Obtain, continuously monitor, and purchase necessary resources to provide quality online educational delivery

<p>Six teachers sharing one phone. Limitation is the number of lines leading into the buildings. Restricts quality of service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) All online teacher machines need appropriate hardware (tablets, headphones, development software) d) Lack of sufficient tools for editing online assignments – problematic for Socials and English turnaround times e) Gradebook for teachers mark recording and for parental access to course status and marks is needed f) LXR Test web version and an LXR Test server need purchasing and set up for online assessment. 	
<p>Online Development</p>	
<p>Number of courses that need development online is daunting</p> <p>Time line of “ready for September” looms, with the need to maintain current course services and support requirements</p> <p>There seems to be an attempt to “do everything at once” and an expectation that staff can deliver, and a less specific integrated plan of how everything fits together with quality and support...and without burnout</p>	<p>Well-planned implementation stages scheduled required. Explore partnerships with other online schools in the DE consortium and outside. Sufficient funding needed. It will be necessary to make choices. Perhaps set specific goals for introducing some on-line elements into all courses. In keeping with the other strategies, get a good design system in place by working well with a specific course or two. Start staff with the work of going on-line in small increments with sufficient knowledge sharing and skill building time allowed for all subject area experts. The administration should be specific about what the rewards and compensation are for good collaboration on the short, mid and long term goals. The ‘ready for September’ goal has to be broken down into small, doable parts with precise objectives.</p>
<p>There is a steep learning curve that needs to be accounted for and support will be needed to overcome these hurdles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Administration and staff are not familiar with development times for online courseware b) Lack of staff time for course development c) Staff need time to develop skills in creating and placing material online d) More specific examples and experiences are needed with regard to what e-learning is at CDES and how long it takes to produce it with what inputs and at what on-going costs e) Need a well defined-instructional design process and practices that provides continuity across online courses for students. Started but 	<p>Meet staff training needs</p> <p>Sufficient funding required</p> <p>Do not just produce a course. Produce an optimal course incorporating high interactivity and optimal demonstration of learning...and record how this was done and how it was received. Use a systems approach to how this can be done for other courses.</p> <p>Use teams for development.</p>

more yet to go	
Opportunities¹⁴	Proposed Multiyear Strategies
The market for e-learning is expanding	Build on current DE initiatives while developing additional expertise and infrastructure to maximize successful growth. Set specific goals with regard to exploiting the expanding market in the K-12 and Adult arenas.
The government provides financial incentive for offering courses online, for offering e-learning opportunities	Take advantage of 1701 classifications wherever possible that meet the strict guidelines of the Ministry. Set specific goals regarding how CDES is meeting its commitment to expand e-learning. Set in place a monitoring system. Monitor and report.
E-learning is changing the cost of delivery of Distance Education.	Examine clerical configurations for increased cost efficiencies as more courses move online. Maintain focus on cost effective delivery as online course development proceeds
The face of education, even in the k-12 arena, is seeing changes with the rise of new technologies and the shift toward the knowledge based economy and CDES can maximize the potential of its move with these changes CDES can learn from what is going on in the market and use the information to guide choices	Look for efficiencies created by online delivery of educational services to all students. Explore new configurations of students from various programs Have a plan for how the market will be exploited. Set excellence as a goal with specific ways of monitoring excellence. Be specific with regard to priorities. Have a long-term vision for all areas. Look at successful K-12 examples and learn.
CDES is part of an e-learning consortium	Maximize benefits of Consortium membership. Look for partners for CDES initiatives. Explore ways to share knowledge and development costs.
Small community needs and increased choices for students in neighborhood schools	Acquire all Cool School students in SD57. Create marketing strategy that focuses on neighborhood schools and small schools in small communities within DE regional area.
International online course offerings through partnerships with Japanese schools	Capitalize on existing partnerships and seek further partnerships to offer online education to international students. Set expansion into this e-learning market as a goal.
Partnerships with First Nations Communities for delivery of online courses	Open and maintain dialogue with local Aboriginal Education Authority and First Nation Bands to create partnerships. Explore ways to share knowledge and development costs.

¹⁴ Opportunities and Threats are external factors that CDES does not directly control but have potential to impact the operations of CDES.

Threats	Proposed Multiyear Strategies
The government audits progress and imposes financial penalties for the assessed gaps in progress toward “robust” online learning	Ensure all Ministry guidelines are adhered to and met
Competitors lure away learners in CDES territory and reduce or re-assign its government funding	Strong marketing strategy, respect of Consortium boundaries, or Consortium collapses
Continuity of staff due to school closures and temporary contracts may threaten development or maintenance of online courses and impact their quality	Secure current staff employment
Government funding decisions and possible funding changes	Monitor all government activities with regard to e-learning initiatives. Maintain strong contacts and engage in all avenues and organizations that provide a voice to the Ministry of Education. Strengthen the voice of the Consortium. Participate in the new emerging BC Online Consortium.
The DE Consortium CDES belongs to does not have a clearly defined resource sharing mechanism. Some members develop e-learning resources but they are not shared	Continue a strong voice in the Consortium to that end
Perceptions of educators (principals, in school teachers) and parents that online learning is second rate education and not as rigorous as classroom learning	Develop a three-year marketing plan that includes showcasing online learning. Begin planning of an online learning symposium for the North two years hence.
Looming move within eight months to new facility causing disruption in services	Minimize disruptions to students.
Future innovation can give competitors an advantage	Support staff collectively and individually to keep abreast of developments in the field of e-learning in k-12 and adult education

Summary

Rapid changes in the external environment of Continuing and Distance Education Services and within its own environment demand a clear vision for the future of CDES. A clear vision and a sound strategic plan for Continuing and Distance Education Services ensures it will continue fulfillment of its mandate; capitalize on opportunities that provide expanded educational services to the communities it serves; take advantage of emerging opportunities beyond its traditional boundaries; and deliver educational services in a more cost effective manner. The development of a strategic plan for an educational organization needs the input and consensus of the various stakeholders of the institution. It must include “...a clear vision of the intention and the future of the organization, the development of a mission filled with corresponding objectives, the gathering of extensive information, the analysis and

diagnosis of internal and external environments, the study of alternatives, the development of strategies and action plans as well as the evaluation and control of implementation” (Hache, 1998). Although this first part of a preliminary strategic implementation plan for CDES did not involve all CDES stakeholders, it forms a foundation document for entering into a strategic planning process that applies to Education and that will engages all stakeholders of CDES. Hache (1998) presents one such model that is applicable to and will facilitate planning at CDES.

Continuing and Distance Education Services is creating new capacity to fulfill its mandates and open new opportunities through the expansion of a mandated robust online course delivery for full time K-12, 1701 students registered with the Central Interior Distance Education School. CDES can integrate and connect students that fall under a variety of umbrellas, Adult, High School, Distance Education ,and Alternate Programs in online environments from multiple districts and communities, enhancing delivery of educational services to and create expansion of, its established student base. Online learning initiatives are growing exponentially and CDES is positioned well to capitalize on these emerging opportunities.

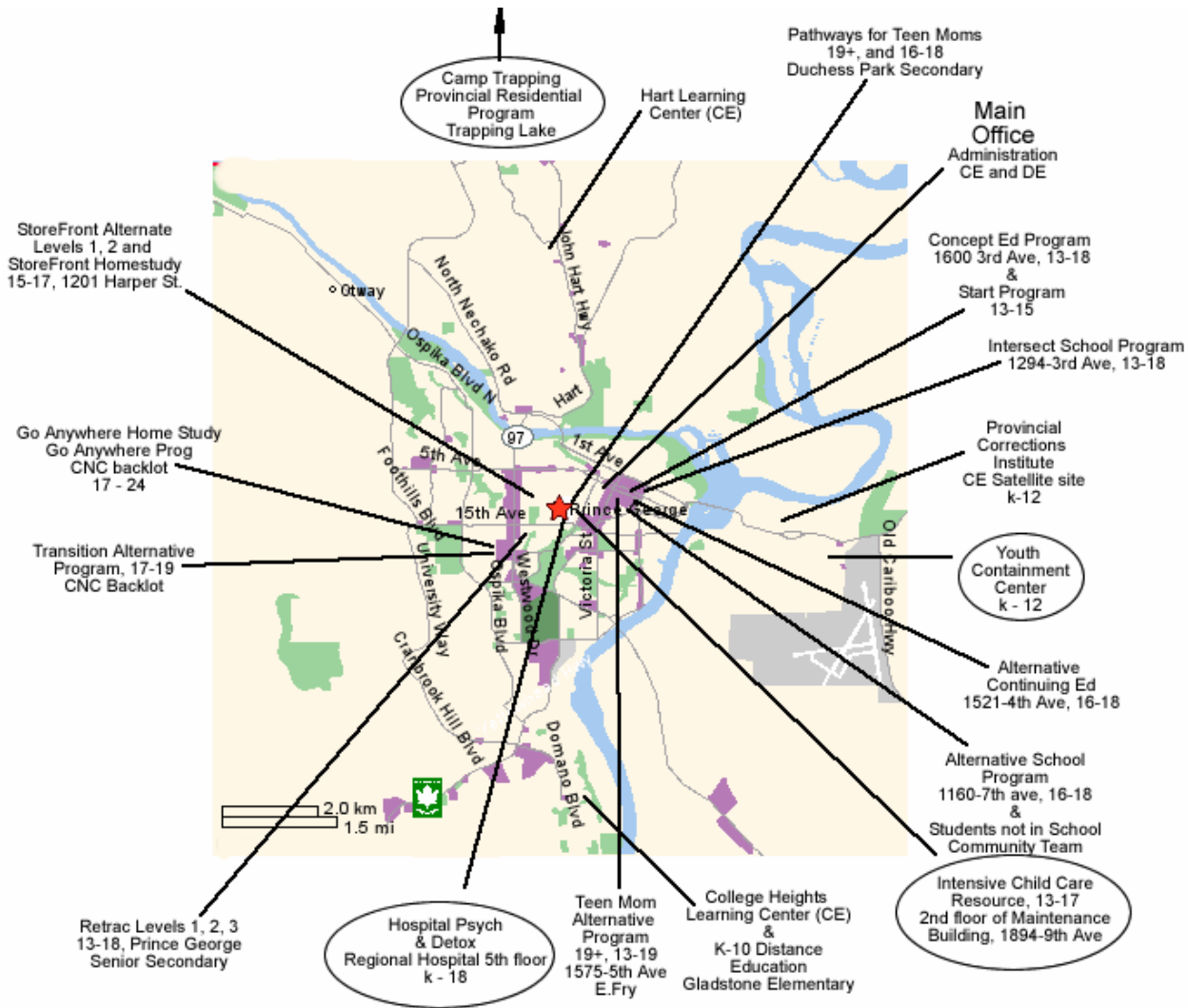
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Appendix B

Program Sites and the Satellite CE facilities of CDES

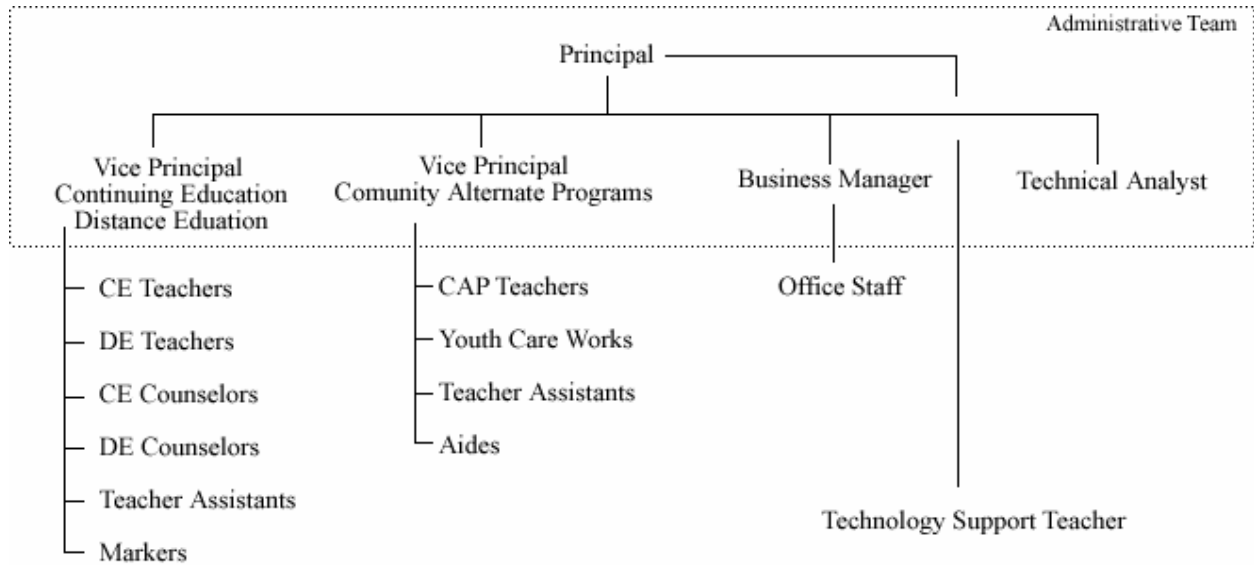


Notes:

Not shown is the satellite F2F CE center in McBride, B.C.
 Circled sites are Provincial Resource Programs, funded differently, and students do not appear in CDES school enrollment figures.

Appendix C

**Administrative Structure of Continuing and Distance Education Services
School District 57, British Columbia**



Appendix D

Ministry of Education Guidelines for Online Electronic Program Delivery

1. Distance Education – Electronic Programs

Students enrolled in a distance education - electronic program are not home schooled children, even though learning may take place in the home. Some distinctions are that:

- these students are enrolled in a school
- their education program is the responsibility of the school district
- their education program must be supervised by a British Columbia-certified teacher
- their program must follow British Columbia learning outcomes, and must meet the required areas of study for students in Grades K-9 and the graduation requirements for students in Grades 10 - 12 (this includes all core and non-core subject areas)
- a member of the British Columbia College of Teachers must assess and evaluate the student
- as per ministry policy and the School Act, the students must receive on-going regular assessments, report cards, provincial letter grades and a permanent student record, as would a student in a neighborhood school.
- parents may assist in facilitating the learning process, but are not the teachers

School districts receive the same annual per-pupil funding (\$5,408 in 2003/2004) for students enrolled in a distance education – electronic program as they do for students enrolled in a neighborhood school. A copy of the May 2002 distance education policy is available on the ministry website. All distance education - electronic programs in British Columbia must be able to demonstrate compliance with this policy.

2. Teacher Supervision

Current policy states that a member of the British Columbia College of Teachers must supervise a student's educational program. Electronic programs must be able to demonstrate a level of teacher service comparable to what is provided at a neighborhood school. This means that adequate supervision must be demonstrated both quantitatively and qualitatively. The ways a district can demonstrate this include evidence of:

- teacher course planning (e.g. course overviews, learning outcomes to be achieved, variety of teaching and learning strategies)
- a teacher is leading the evaluation and assessment of students, not simply receiving and/or reviewing reports of parental assessment

- ongoing teacher reporting on student achievement (e.g. report cards, documented oral communications and conferences with parents/students);
- ongoing teacher engagement in student learning including indications of the type and length of teacher contact with each student (e.g. subject portfolios, contact logs, assessments) and ongoing evidence of one-on-one teacher-student discussions and student-to-student peer interaction
- the ability to authenticate student work (learned through home visits, online teaching sessions, electronic meetings, etc.)

The parent's role in a distance education - electronic program is as a facilitator for student learning; they do not replace the British Columbia-certified teacher's role. The parent is not responsible for the primary planning, teaching, assessing or reporting of the student's educational program. Teachers should work with parents and/or students to plan a student's education program. The teacher may not delegate, and the parent may not assume, the teacher's responsibility for planning, teaching, assessing and reporting. The difference in funding between \$250 per-registered home schooled child and per-pupil FTE funding (\$5,408 for 2003/2004) for a student enrolled in a distance education - electronic program is largely reflective of the teacher's role.

3. Quality Programs

Best practice shows that the cost of a quality program in a distance education environment is comparable to the costs of offering a program in a neighborhood school. The purchase or development of quality educational content, the technical and educational resources, as well as teacher in-service are vital to the success of the program and must be considered by a district that offers an electronic program.

Appendix E

Cool School Enrolment by Courses January 20, 2004 – SD57 High Schools

Course	CHSS	COED	DPTS	DUCH	HPMS	KRSS	LWJR	MBSS	MACK	PGSS	TOTALS
Acct 11		1						1			2
Acct 12		2									2
Bi 11								1			1
Capp 11/12			1								1
Chem 11		1									1
Comm 11		1									1
Eng 8					1						1
Law 12										2	2
Math 9			1			1	1	2	1		6
Math 10A						1					1
Math 10P		1				2		1			4
Math 11E						5					5
Math 11P		1	1			2					4
Sc 8				1							1
Sc 9						3					3
Sc 10						1		1			2
SS 9	1					10				16	27
SS 10				5		10				3	18
SS 11				1		9				2	12
TOTALS	1	7	3	7	1	44	1	6	1	23	94

Appendix F

Distance Education Student Enrolments for Junior and Senior Secondary Courses

Junior Courses Gr. 8 - 10					
Course	1701 Enrolment	Full Grade¹⁵ Enrolment	In School¹⁶	Grad Adult¹⁷	Total
Eng 8	15	14			29
Eng 9	31	12			43
Eng 10	28	18			46
SS 8	10	4			14
SS 9	15	5			20
SS 10	22	7			29
Sci 8	6	4			10
Sci 9	14	8			22
Sci 10	6	4			10
Math 8	23	15			38
Math 9P	21	4			25
Math 9A	7	11			18
Math 10E	6	13			19
Math 10P	18	7			25
CAPP 8	5	1			6
CAPP 9	5	1			6
CAPP 10	2	1			3
French 8	8	2			10
French 9					0
French 10					0
InfoTech 8	5				5
InfoTech 9	9				9
InfoTech10	1				1
Senior Courses Grades 11-12					
Course	1701	Full Grade	In School	Grad Adult	Total
EngLit12	3		6		9
Eng 11	21	12	32		65
Eng 12	15	5	24	1	45
SS 11	11	4	13	1	29
Geogr 12		1	4		5
Hist 12	3		7	2	12
CompCiv12	1		4		5
Chem 11	4	1	13	3	21
Chem 12	2		5	3	10
Phys 11	3	1	6	2	12
Phys 12		2			2
Biol 11	5	3	9		17
Biol 12	6	2	13	13	34
Math 11E	13	18	22	1	54
Math 11Ap	1		8		9

¹⁵ Full time students registered after Sept 30th.

¹⁶ Students attending neighborhood schools, but registered with DE for a course(s)

¹⁷ Graduated student requesting courses for upgrading

A Vision for the Future

Math 11P	17	6	17	2	42
Math 12Ap					0
Math 12P	1	1	9	11	22
Calc 12			7	7	14
CAPP 11	16	2	12		30
CAPP 12	13		3		16