

**From:** [Government of British Columbia](#)  
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**Subject:** Growing Innovation brings personalized learning to life  
**Date:** March 29, 2011 9:00:55 AM

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NEWS RELEASE  
For Immediate Release  
2011EDUC0021-000309  
March 29, 2011

Ministry of Education

Growing Innovation brings personalized learning to life

VICTORIA - The Ministry of Education and the University of British Columbia (UBC) are launching Growing Innovation, a unique research project that will explore new and creative learning opportunities for students in rural B.C.

A \$300,000 research grant to UBC's faculty of education will be used to provide guidance and assistance to a maximum of 15 rural school districts. Each district will be eligible for up to \$14,000 to help bring to life their innovative ideas and concepts of personalized learning. Research support and assistance will be provided by the faculty of education through the office of the Eleanor Rix professor of rural teacher education.

The goal of Growing Innovation is to boost student engagement and improve achievement for rural learners. Districts selected to be part of this pilot will bring their innovative ideas to life so they can be used as case studies to share among other school districts in B.C.

The UBC faculty of education will work with representatives from rural school districts and the Ministry of Education to set up the grant application process and determine the selection criteria for districts wishing to participate. UBC will establish the research-based criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the innovative approaches to rural education.

Quotes:

Minister of Education George Abbott -

"Families are the heart and foundation of rural B.C. This pilot project uses a unique approach that will allow our rural school districts to explore the benefits of personalized learning and engage students and their families to improve education outcomes."

"School districts in rural locations best understand the challenges

they face and are often already innovative in their schools because of geography or other unique circumstances. There are many great things happening in the field. For example, at Lytton Elementary school, students connect with other students - hours away - to experience different teaching methods and share in their learning experiences as if they were working together side by side. This research will help more ideas like this come to life."

UBC Eleanor Rix professor of rural teacher education, Linda Farr Darling

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"This wonderful opportunity allows us to contribute to the creation of educational innovations relevant to rural and remote classrooms, as well as shine light on promising practices that exist in these settings. Carrying out research in collaboration with schools and districts will help us enhance educational opportunities and support for students and their families in rural communities across the province."

Quick facts about Rural Education:

- \* There are 1,610 public schools in B.C. this year, and 365 of those schools are in rural locations where the needs of local families are changing.
- \* This year 64,255 students are attending schools in rural communities.
- \* Forty-six districts receive rural factor funding under the unique geographic supplement - \$22.7 million for 2011-12.
- \* A small community supplement will provide \$63.2 million to 47 districts in 2011-12.

Learn More:

Check out 'connected classrooms' at Lytton Elementary:  
[www.bced.gov.bc.ca/news/av/video/2011/connected-classrooms/](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/news/av/video/2011/connected-classrooms/)

Learn NowBC's Rural Education Strategy:  
[www.learnnowbc.ca/educators/Rural\\_Education/](http://www.learnnowbc.ca/educators/Rural_Education/)

Resources for parents:  
[www.learnnowbc.ca/LearningResources.aspx](http://www.learnnowbc.ca/LearningResources.aspx)

Personalized Learning:

Premier's Technology Council Report at:  
[http://www.gov.bc.ca/premier/attachments/PTC\\_vision%20for\\_education.pdf](http://www.gov.bc.ca/premier/attachments/PTC_vision%20for_education.pdf)

BC School Superintendents' Association Conference on Personalized

Learning at:

<http://www.bcssa.org/fallconference.html>

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