

Towards an Effective Adult Learning System: Report on a Series of Regional Roundtables

Prepared for the Adult Learning Knowledge Centre
of the Canadian Council on Learning

By
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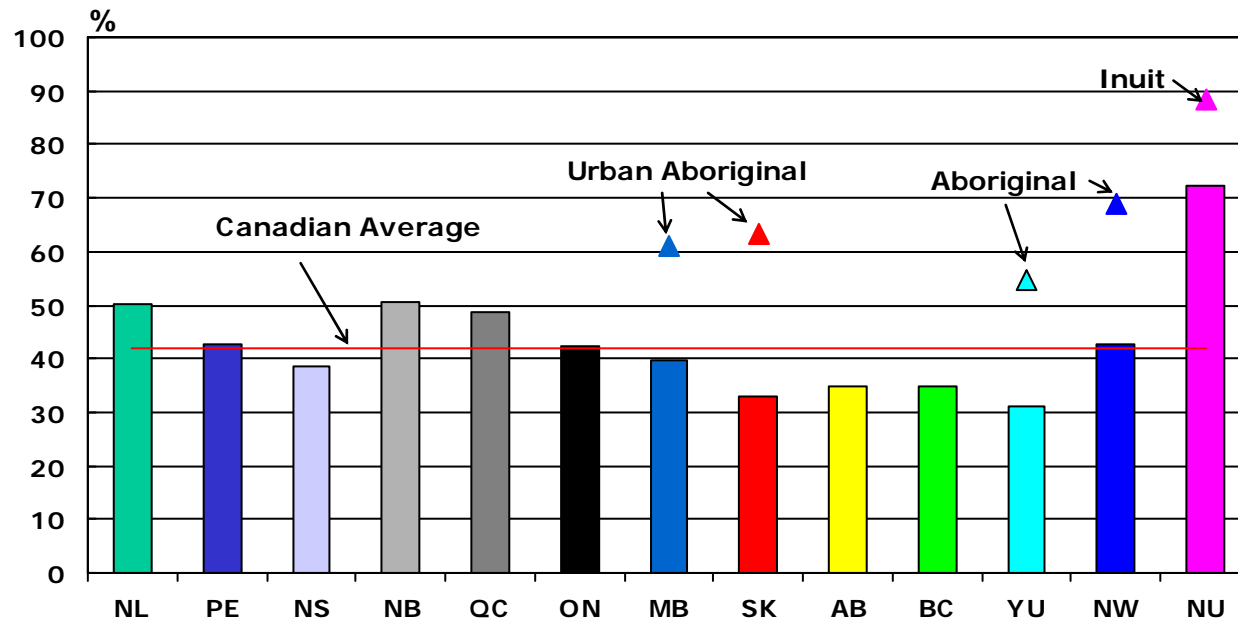
Towards an Effective Adult Learning System: Report on a Series of Regional Roundtables

Introduction

There is a lot of talk in policy circles about “lifelong” learning. In an economy where technologies and skill needs are constantly changing, Canadians must have access to learning opportunities throughout their lives. This is reinforced by concerns about the ageing of the workforce: with declining labour force growth, it is important that everyone, including older Canadians, has a chance to fully contribute to the economy and to their communities.

It is particularly important that those with lower levels of educational attainment have the opportunity to improve their skills, in light of concerns about the polarization of earnings and income and disturbing evidence (from the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey) about adult literacy levels: nine million Canadians aged 16 to 65 years have literacy skills below the level considered necessary to live and work in today’s society. As the chart below shows, the proportion of the population with weak literacy skills varies across the country, but is high everywhere and very high for the Aboriginal population.

Percentage of Population Aged 16-65 with Scores at the Bottom Two Levels of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey



Source: *Building on our Competencies: Canadian Results of the International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey 2003*, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada and Statistics Canada, 2005.

But how well do we “walk the talk” about lifelong learning in Canada? To answer this question, Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) undertook a study to document the availability of learning opportunities for adults, to identify factors that influence the participation of less-educated/less-skilled adults, and to assess the effectiveness of our adult learning systems.¹ The resulting report, *Too Many Left Behind: Canada’s Adult Education and Training System*, by Karen Myers and Patrice de Broucker, finds that access to learning opportunities, whether through second chances in the formal education system, through government-funded programs in the community, or through employer-sponsored training, is generally poor for less-educated adults in Canada.

Myers and de Broucker noted that 3.7 million Canadians aged 25-64 do not have a high school diploma or higher credentials, that evidence is emerging that second chances in education/training have a substantial impact, but that less-educated adults are five times less likely to participate in structured learning than those with a university degree. Survey data suggest that many more adults would like to take such programs but face financial and other barriers, including difficulties in finding the time to participate. The authors found that, although most provinces have launched recent initiatives in support of learning opportunities for adults, adult learning systems remain complex, fragmented and incomplete, and employer support for training remains concentrated on the higher-skilled.

The report, published in June 2006, puts forward a set of principles for reform, and recommends some steps towards a more coherent, navigable, and effective adult learning system.

The Adult Learning Knowledge Centre (AdLKC) of the Canadian Council on Learning sponsored a series of regional roundtables to discuss the findings of *Too Many Left Behind*, develop a vision for a more effective learning system, and identify actions that could be taken to move towards that vision. The roundtables involved government officials, educators, and researchers.

The first of these roundtables was held in Halifax on November 13, 2006, with participants from across the Atlantic region. The Ontario roundtable was held in Toronto on January 12, 2007. On February 16th, participants from Québec, as well as from francophone communities in Ontario, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, gathered in Montreal. The final event of the series was held in Calgary on April 16th with participants from across Western Canada. In total, over 100 people participated in the four roundtables.

CPRN and the AdLKC have published brief reports on each of the roundtables, available at www.cprn.org/doc.cfm?doc=1720&l=en, or at www.ccl-cca.ca. This document provides a recap of the main findings and recommendations of *Too Many Left Behind* and an overview of the series of roundtable discussions.

¹ Neither *Too Many Left Behind* nor the roundtable participants set out an explicit definition of “less educated.” Those without a high school diploma or equivalent would clearly fall in this category. Those with a high school diploma and no further credentials (whether a degree, diploma, trades certificate, or certificate from an essential skills program) would also be seen as “less educated.” Those with low literacy skills (levels 1 or 2 of the scale used in the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey) would be seen as “less skilled.”

The roundtables included updates on policy and program developments in most provinces. Information about these is appended to this report.

Too Many Left Behind: Highlights of the Report

At each of the roundtables, Karen Myers and Patrice de Broucker provided an overview of the vision for adult learning systems and the proposed policy changes set out in *Too Many Left Behind*.

The **vision for adult learning** systems articulated in *Too Many Left Behind* is as follows:

- No one will leave school without a minimum set of employability skills.
- All adults will have access to learning opportunities to:
 - enhance their basic skills, and
 - maintain, enhance or transform advanced skills.
- All adults will have access to easy-to-follow information about learning opportunities.
- Counselling will be readily available; supports will be coordinated, and the system will be easy to navigate.
- The skills development of all workers will be considered important and worthwhile investments.

As we shall see below, participants at the roundtables had much to add to flesh out this vision. However, none of those additions contradict what was laid out in *Too Many Left Behind*: the broad concepts set out there were validated in our discussions across the country. Similarly, the policy changes recommended in *Too Many Left Behind*, as follows, remain consistent with the ideas put forward in the roundtables:

- Implement a public policy **framework** that acknowledges the “**right to learn**.”

In June 2004, Canada signed a recommendation of the International Labour Organization on Human Resources Development with an explicit reference to the right of adults to learn. Federal and provincial governments should work together to build on this momentum and move towards the development of concrete plans.

- Develop **financial support** programs appropriate to the needs of adult learners

High-school-related skills-upgrading programs should be free to all individuals regardless of age and financial assistance should be available to help participants meet basic living expenses. Post-secondary student aid systems should be reviewed to ensure all adults have access to a reasonable combination of student loans and grants.

- Provide **incentives for employers** to support training of their less-skilled employees.

The competitive human resource strategy of too many Canadian firms is based on a low-cost/low-added-value approach. This approach perpetuates a low-skill/low-wage equilibrium in which neither employees nor employers demand higher levels of skills. It is unclear how firms that gain their competitive edge from low-cost, low-skill work can be encouraged to invest in labour force development. This is an important area for further research.

- Increase governments' **investment in basic skills** training.

Making a 'right to learn' framework a reality will require increased investments in a number of areas, especially in basic skills training for adults. Many educational institutions have already adopted flexible, holistic approaches to meeting the needs of adult learners. However there is very little rigorous research on what works and what doesn't work for adult learners. Before more funds are invested, governments should conduct a systematic research project to identify and disseminate best practices.

- Develop a **coordinated approach** to respond to adult learners' needs.

Provincial governments need to enhance coordination by ensuring that there is an appropriate entity (such as a secretariat, a steering committee, a cross-ministry working group or unit) to coordinate the further development and implementation of an adult education policy framework. (Several provinces have already taken action in this regard.) In principle, learners should be able to enter the adult education system at any point, have their prior learning assessed and recognized, participate in the appropriate learning program(s), and proceed to the next step, whether employment or further education, in the shortest time possible.

Key Characteristics of an Effective Adult Learning System

Participants in each of the roundtables were asked to imagine what an effective adult learning system would look like, keeping in mind the broad principles suggested in *Too Many Left Behind*. At each roundtable, some ideas were added, but no group rejected the ideas of a previous one, although there was on occasion some modification. The vision that emerged from the series of roundtables is of an adult learning system characterized by the following:

Learner-centred
Goal-directed^{T,C}
Coordinated/seamless
Aligned^T
Articulated^C
Collaborative
Affordable^M
Cost-effective^C
Equitable
Transparent^T

Accountable
Relevant^T
Balanced between flexibility and structure^C
Sustainable
Visible
Connected to youth education^C
Available in community^M
Attractive to adult learners^M
Respectful of adult circumstances^M

^T Added in Toronto ^M Modified/Added in Montreal ^C Modified/Added in Calgary
 Items without a superscript were put forward at the initial roundtable in Halifax.

Learner-centred

- Educational institutions have a client-service orientation.
- Individuals are able to choose their own path (supported by accessible information and advice).

Goal-directed

- Adult learning is designed to achieve specific goals. Adult learners have access to assistance in articulating goals that are appropriate for them.
- Goals of adult learning extend beyond labour market outcomes (employment, earnings) to include active, engaged citizens who are able to contribute to the development of their communities. However, the link to productivity is important.

Coordinated/seamless

- Learners are able to enter the system at any point and be assisted in finding their way to the service that is appropriate for them.
- Consistent needs assessment tools are in place across the system.

Aligned

- The activities of different programs complement (and do not impede) the objectives of each.

Articulated

- Credits offered by different institutions/providers are recognized across the system.

Collaborative

- Deliverers of adult training and employment services, as well as government departments and agencies, work together (and with clients) to meet client needs.

Affordable

- Financial assistance allows individuals seeking learning opportunities to be able to participate, whether or not they are eligible for Employment Insurance (EI). Montreal participants felt that there should be no cost to participate in programs that provide basic competencies.
- Employers are offered financial incentives to invest in learning programs.

Cost-effective

- Programs are cost-effective from the perspective of all payers (e.g. governments, employers).

Equitable

- There is active outreach to disadvantaged groups to facilitate their participation in learning activities.

Transparent

- Evidence on the impact of programs is accessible.

Accountable

- Learning programs are evaluated and outcomes are reported.

Relevant

- Skills that are acquired are valued by employers and/or in the community.

Balanced between flexibility and structure

- Courses are available at times and places convenient for adult learners. (For those who have jobs, this means availability of courses taking the workplace context into account.)
- Flexibility is balanced by the need for structure: it will not always be feasible to tailor a course to the individual.

Sustainable

- There is adequate and stable funding to support a comprehensive, integrated adult learning system.

Visible

- There is widespread awareness of adult learning opportunities.
- People know where to go to enter the system.

Connected to youth education

- Adult learning programs are connected to a continuous learning system (i.e. learning for young people and adult learning is seamless).

Available in community

- Programs are available locally. Francophones are able to access programs in French. (Noted in particular at the Montreal roundtable which brought together representatives of the Francophone communities in Atlantic Canada and Ontario, in addition to representatives for the province of Quebec.)

Attractive to adult learners

- Service providers actively seek to encourage potential learners, who may lack confidence about participating in learning programs as adults.

Respectful of adult circumstances

- Programs build on competencies already acquired, including those gained through experience. Programs respect that adult learners have different constraints (family and financial responsibilities) than younger learners.

Several participants emphasized that bold action is required to realize the vision in a way that will really make a difference. Small steps may be part of this, but alone they will not be enough.

Examples of Promising Initiatives in Canada and the United States

At the roundtables, Karen Myers, one of the authors of *Too Many Left Behind*, presented a selection of examples of recent initiatives in Canadian provinces or US states to improve learning opportunities for adults or to better connect learning programs to what employers are looking for in the labour market. The examples outlined by Myers were as follows:

Improving coordination

- **Articulation:** Facilitates transfer of course work and credits between participating institutions (British Columbia);
- **Formal referral protocols:** Ensure that learners receive advice about programs best suited to their needs (Nova Scotia, Quebec);
- **Adult Learning Centres:** Provide one-stop access to adult learning (Manitoba).

Sharing information

- **Telephone hotlines:** Provide program information by phone and referrals for face-to-face counseling (Quebec);
- **Service centres:** Provide one-stop information and referrals (Alberta).

Providing financial support

- **Income support programs:** Provide income support to low income adult learners who meet specific requirements (Alberta);
- **Bursaries:** The Millennium Adult Learner Bursary provides assistance to low-income learners who are pursuing post-secondary studies. (Manitoba).

Creating learner pathways

- **Dual credit programs:** Allow adult learners to pursue a PSE credit at the same time they are pursuing a high school credit (Manitoba, Nova Scotia)²;
- **Career ladders and pathways:** Several US community colleges have partnered with local labour market intermediaries to map out pathways that show low income individuals how different programs of learning lead to career opportunities in the labour market, with career progression as different levels of learning are accomplished.

² Manitoba recently collected feedback from both high school students and adult learners participating in dual credit programs. While both groups were positive in their appraisal of dual credit courses, adult learners identified the greatest benefits. In addition, about 50 percent of adult learners stated that having a dual credit influenced their decision to pursue a post-secondary program.

Actions towards an Effective Adult Learning System

Participants at each of the roundtables were asked to propose actions to move adult learning systems towards the kind of vision that they had articulated. The following ideas emerged from these discussions, grouped by theme. In some cases, the roundtable discussions involved identifying more specific steps that could be taken soon to move forward in the various action areas, and these are noted as “first steps” below.

Develop a policy framework centred on the “right to learn”

- Develop, in collaboration with all stakeholders, a policy framework for adult learning that includes recognition of the right to learn. Engage community groups in the process (and in ongoing policy development).
- Consider setting out the principles for the adult learning system in legislation.
- Use the media, as well as champions at the community level, to help promote a culture of lifelong learning. Extend thinking beyond balancing work and family to balancing work, learning, and family.

First step:

- Provincial governments should cooperate to launch a pan-Canadian promotional campaign on the importance of adult learning.

Develop a more integrated adult learning system that facilitates learner pathways

- Establish an umbrella organization to oversee adult learning.
- Develop common assessment tools, a referral protocol, and plain language guides so that clients can find a suitable path wherever they enter the system.³ These guides should identify how learners can move from one program to another and what credentials are recognized by employers and post-secondary institutions.
- Governments and educational institutions should work to provide better articulation between learning programs (including better connections between the K-12 and post-secondary systems).
- All players should work to foster partnerships among all levels and departments of government, aboriginal communities, providers of learning programs, sectoral organizations, business, and labour, building on existing mechanisms wherever possible. Government leadership is needed at the highest level to drive this.
- Emphasize meeting aspirations and fulfilling potential, not redressing deficits.
- Improve systems of prior learning recognition (recognition of competencies) and promote their active use by learning institutions. Develop pan-Canadian tools.
- Establish/improve accreditation systems for adult educators and volunteers working to deliver literacy programs.

³ Collaboration among different service providers is important in this regard. Ontario participants acknowledged that competition among providers in that province can impede achieving what is best for the client. They recognized the need for a more collaborative system.

First step:

- Each sector (e.g. school boards, colleges, universities, community providers, employers, unions, government) should work on principles to promote a more effective and integrated adult learning system from the perspective of their sector. Then representatives of each sector should come together to work on a common action plan.

Address financial barriers to participation in learning opportunities

- Provide free access to the acquisition of basic competencies at all ages
- Reform the financial aid system for post-secondary education to make aid more accessible to adult learners. This requires looking at EI, the Canada Student Loan program, and provincial financial aid programs.
- Consider the use of EI to provide income support to employed individuals seeking to upgrade their skills.

Foster employer investment in training

- Employer associations and bipartite organizations should identify champions and share promising practices.
- Unions should put workplace training on their bargaining agendas.
- Training providers should customize skills assessment tools and curriculum to meet needs of particular industries.
- Researchers should examine the return on employer investment in training.
- Governments should consider financial incentives, such as tax credits to encourage employers to offer apprenticeship positions and internships. The federal government could use the EI fund to provide premium credits to employers who train.
- Extend nationally the Quebec initiative, *A General Framework for Development and Recognition of Competencies*, a partnership between labour market partners, educational institutions, community and government.

First step:

- Key employer associations (e.g. Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME), Chamber of Commerce) should play an active role in promoting employer investment in learning, particularly for less-educated employees. These associations could sponsor knowledge exchange forums centred on examples of promising practices. The new joint leadership of the Work and Learning Knowledge Centre by the CME and the Canadian Labour Congress may help this happen. Sector Councils are also important in this regard, especially as vehicles for reaching out to small- and medium-sized businesses.

Increase the flexibility of course offerings

- Offer more evening/weekend courses
- Increase access to individual courses without requiring that students commit to a diploma or degree program. For those who do want to complete a program, offer more flexibility around course load/time to complete.

- Offer dual credit programs to adults – partnerships between secondary school boards and colleges or universities.
- Provide more support for distance education; establish satellite operations in rural areas.
- High schools and colleges should offer a mix of academic and technical/vocational programs with bridging between streams.
- Program providers should work with unions and employers or employer associations to develop learning programs that are linked to career ladders (as a complement to, not replacement of, existing structures such as apprenticeship programs).

Enable community-led initiatives and take advantage of successful pilots

- Bring key stakeholders together at the community level.
- Governments should provide funding that can be tailored to community needs; accountability requirements should focus on results.
- Pilot projects should be funded on a multi-year basis. Funders should build room into their plans for sustained funding for successful pilots.
- All pilot projects should have funded knowledge exchange activities built into the project plan. Funders should foster a culture of knowledge exchange.
- An organization should be mandated with the responsibility to collect information on promising/best practices, make this available in a repository (similar to the National Adult Literacy Database, but broader in scope) and find appropriate ways to disseminate this information widely.

First steps:

- Community organizations should establish/strengthen mechanisms to bring key stakeholders together at the community level.
- Governments should articulate parameters for community-based learning projects, then provide long-term funding to support such activities when success is demonstrated.

Address communal and societal goals as well as individual objectives

- Develop programs that foster life skills and active citizenship, and not just job skills.
- Develop curriculum and delivery processes that draw from the community, are sensitive to cultural context, and reinforce a sense of community, particularly with regard to Aboriginal learners. Federal and provincial governments need to work more collaboratively with Aboriginal communities in this regard.
- It should be recognized that adult learning may/should involve multiple objectives: student success, family success, community success, economic prosperity, and social cohesion.

First step:

- Build into the mandate of all institutions of learning a responsibility to contribute to the development of community and social well-being and hold them accountable for meeting this part of their mandate (require them to report on their plans and achievements in this area).

Some of the proposed actions are directed to governments (e.g. development of a policy framework, provide sustained funding to community-based initiatives) some to schools, colleges, and universities (increase the flexibility of course offerings); some to community groups (bring key stakeholders together at the community level); some to employers and employer associations (identify champions and share promising practices); some to unions (put workplace training on bargaining agendas); and many would require partnerships among two or more of these (develop common assessment tools and a referral protocol).

Key Implications of the Roundtables: Thoughts from CPRN and the AdLKC

The findings of *Too Many Left Behind* were re-affirmed at the roundtable events. Some of the findings resonated particularly strongly for roundtable participants, such as the right to learn, the difficulty learners have in navigating the system, and the inadequacy of investment in workplace-based training. The fragmentation of adult learning systems in most provinces and throughout the country was seen as a significant problem that needs to be addressed.

Roundtable participants agreed strongly with one of the central ideas articulated in the *Too Many Left Behind* report: creating enhanced opportunities for workers to advance their skills and knowledge has undeniable potential for a strong positive impact on economic productivity. And the benefits are shared by individuals and communities, as well as the entire nation. Participants in all four roundtable events also pointed to the non-economic benefits of adult learning; these include personal empowerment, family well-being, participation in voting, civic engagement, and social cohesion.

CPRN and the AdLKC were tremendously encouraged with the response to the roundtables. It was clear that the opportunity to discuss adult learning was valued and that the efforts of CPRN and the AdLKC were applauded, not only because the roundtables brought together key stakeholders who were asked to identify changes to policy and practices that could improve access learning opportunities for adults, but also because the resulting dialogue was informed both by specific regional circumstances and by an understanding of the overall pan-Canadian picture. The roundtables provided a unique opportunity to design a vision for effective and coordinated adult learning systems across Canada.

However the roundtables provided only a starting point. While some of the action items proposed at the roundtables may be addressed within individual provinces, many would benefit from inter-governmental collaboration to maximize their effectiveness. There could be a role for the federal government in the provision of financial incentives and in support for research on adult learning. Also, it is clear that the provinces can learn from each other. Those interested in building a more integrated adult learning system could benefit, for example, by looking at initiatives in Manitoba and Nova Scotia.

The roundtables indicated a high level of commonality around a positive vision for adult learning across the country. There were many shared ideas about how to move forward. Coordinated action is required, involving governments as well as service providers, employers, and others.

The Adult Learning Knowledge Centre indicated that it is prepared to play a leadership role in assisting with policy development, facilitating knowledge exchange opportunities, and designing coordinated strategies.

Conclusion

Canada's labour market is changing. As in other industrialized countries, the labour force in Canada is aging, as the younger cohorts are smaller in number than those approaching retirement age. As a result, the labour force will grow more slowly than in the past, even with continued high levels of immigration. Most of those who will be in the workforce in 2015 are already part of it. In this context, it is more important than ever that adult Canadians have the opportunity to improve their skills and knowledge.⁴ At the same time, the smaller number of cohorts of young people means that there should be room in many educational institutions to welcome adult learners in larger numbers. There is an opportunity for these institutions to prepare their offerings in consideration of the vision for an adult learning system outlined here.

As *Too Many Left Behind* pointed out, our current adult learning systems are, for the most part, fragmented, incomplete, and difficult to navigate. In this series of roundtables, participants from across the country, from government, aboriginal organizations, business, labour, colleges, universities, and community groups have pointed the way towards a more coherent and effective adult learning system. Hopefully, their ideas can be the spur to action that makes lifelong learning more of a reality in Canada.

⁴ This is underscored in the recent Canadian Council on Learning report, *Unlocking Canada's Potential: The State of Workplace and Adult Learning in Canada* (2007), available on the CCL website at www.ccl-cca.ca/NR/rdonlyres/1130B764-D7A3-4A07-9A35-B46001C26E01/0/AdultENG19juin11h36FINALv5.pdf.

Appendix 1. Recent Initiatives (Outlined at the Roundtables)⁵

Atlantic Canada

School for Adult Learning (Nova Scotia)

- Coordinates the delivery of adult learning services in the province: provides access to a continuum of services for learners over the age of 18; developed a new high school diploma for adults.

Premier's Provincial Literacy and Learning Strategy (Prince Edward Island)

- Involves partnerships among government, business, and community organizations to promote learning in all stages of life, from early childhood education to adult learning.

Training the Trainer (New Brunswick – Université de Moncton)

- Offers a certificate program in Adult Education, designed to train adult educators to deliver programs in ways that are sensitive to how adults learn.

Distributed Learning (Newfoundland and Labrador – College of the North Atlantic)

- Uses telecommunications technology in combination with other media to make learning opportunities accessible on-line to learners who may be constrained by time and geography; has facilitated adult access to learning: the average age of distributed learning students is 27.

New Ministry of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (New Brunswick)

- Gathers in one department many functions related to learning programs for adults.

National Adult Literacy Database

- Provides a portal for access to information about adult literacy services and initiatives, and a library of resources that can be used in the design and delivery of adult literacy programs.

Ontario

- The implementation of the Labour Market Development Agreement in Ontario provides an opportunity to improve the coherence of the adult education and training system.
- The Ontario government has been increasing its investment in language training for immigrants and is developing new tools for the assessment of language proficiency (to be used in such programs as Ontario Works and Job Connect).
- The Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has been working in partnership with service providers to develop and implement the Continuous Improvement Performance Management System (CIPMS). CIPMS involves measures of program efficiency, effectiveness, and customer satisfaction. Recent work on the CIPMS has included the development of measures of learner skill attainment, based on the “essential skills” framework, with a focus on skills relating to reading text, use of documents, and numeracy.

⁵ Some government representatives provided additional information after the roundtables that is incorporated here.

Western Provinces

Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre

- The Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre is working with the head office of the Canadian Council on Learning to identify **what success in learning means from an Aboriginal perspective**. A recent workshop examined how to redefine learning success for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

British Columbia

- British Columbia announced in January 2007 \$27 million in funding for the first phase of a provincial **literacy strategy** designed to increase the number of children who enter school with the pre-reading skills they need to succeed and improve reading skills among school-age children and Aboriginal people as well as in the workplace. The envelope includes \$5 million to help Literacy Now address community literacy needs around British Columbia and \$1 million to expand community-based adult literacy programs for learners at the lowest literacy levels, with increased focus on families and Aboriginal people.

Alberta

- Alberta is developing an **integrated career development system** to provide better access throughout life for individuals to engage in career and employment programs and services.
- The **duration of time** for which eligible clients can receive **grant funding** is being extended. This will assist highly disadvantaged clients such as immigrants requiring ESL, to receive the training they require to attach successfully and sustain attachment to the labour market.
- **ESL** delivery is being **expanded in rural locations** through partnerships between community colleges and local community providers.
- Information on **training outcomes** will be accessible by web, enabling current and potential learners to see variances by institution and program and allowing institutions to compare their results with a provincial average.

Saskatchewan

- Saskatchewan has established a Literacy Commission to develop and coordinate a new **literacy strategy**. The Commission aims to increase literacy levels for youth and adults through coordinating the human and financial resources dedicated to literacy across educational, economic and community sectors. A new program for family literacy was launched in April 2006, and new funding for community literacy programming was announced in October 2006.
- Funding has been provided for **additional programming for First Nations, Métis and northern learners**, as well as for additional immigration, **foreign credential recognition** and settlement programming. **Prior learning recognition** initiatives have been funded to help facilitate transitions from learning to work, and work to learning.

- Significant investment in **technology enhanced learning** since 2000 has enhanced the quality and flexibility of learning opportunities, particularly for learners in rural and northern communities.
- Funding has been provided to establish **inner city skills and trades centres** to improve education and labour market outcomes for young adults and others, including better linkages to local employers.

Manitoba

- Developed and launched a **screening tool** for Adult Learning Centres (ALCs) to assist intake advisors in determining if applicants who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL) have sufficient **language skills** to manage high-school level ALC coursework.
- In November, tabled Adult Literacy Act (currently at second reading). This Act, if passed, will require the development of a provincial **Adult Literacy Strategy**.
- Recent cross-department initiatives include the development of an **Aboriginal Education Action Plan**, a **Labour Market Strategy for Immigrants**, and a **Career Development Framework**.

Appendix 2. Participants of Roundtables

A total of 118 individuals participated in the series of four roundtable events. The participants at each roundtable are listed below.

Halifax Roundtable

John Cunningham

Executive Director, Adult Learning Skills
Post-secondary Education
Government of New Brunswick

Jean-Jacques Doucet

Coordonnateur de programme, Programme
en éducation des adultes
Université de Moncton

Charles Ramsey

Executive Director
National Adult Literacy Database

Judith Potter

Executive Director
College of Extended Learning
University of New Brunswick

Kathleen Flanagan

Coordinator
Adult Learning Knowledge Centre

Patrick Flanagan

Facilitator (Atlantic Roundtable)
Board Member
Canadian Council on Social Development
(CCSD)

Candice Ennis-Williams

Director, Adult Learning & Literacy Div.
Department of Education
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Ann Marie Vaughan

Director, Distance Education and Learning
Technologies
Memorial University of Newfoundland

John King

Chair of Distributed Learning
College of the North Atlantic

Marjorie Davison

Director of Apprenticeship
Nova Scotia Department of Education

Margan Dawson

Executive Director
Assoc of Workplace Educators of
Nova Scotia (AWENS)

Ann Marie Downie

Executive Director
Literacy Nova Scotia

Joan McArthur-Blair

President
Nova Scotia Community College

Bobbi Boudreau

Director of Skills and Learning Branch
Nova Scotia Department of Education

Mary Morrissey

Associate
Prior Learning Assessment Centre

Patrice de Broucker (Author/Presenter)

Chief, Education Matters & Indicators
Centre for Education Statistics
Statistics Canada

Brenda King

Facilitator (Ontario Roundtable)
Executive Director
Assoc. of Adult & Continuing Education
School Board Administrators

Karen Myers (Author/Presenter)

Research Analyst
Department of Sociology
University of Toronto

Ron Saunders

Director, Work Network
Canadian Policy Research Networks

Toronto Roundtable

Jane Barber

Consultant
Literacy Education and Training Services

Jeanette Barrett

Dean, Schools of Career Development &
Continuing Education
Durham College

Bernadette Beaupré

Executive Director
ONESTEP

Marcello (Mars) Bottiglia

Superintendent of Schools
Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board

Leslie Brown

A/Executive Director
Ontario Literacy Coalition

Jonathan Brown (observer)

Education Officer, Adult Education Policy
Unit
Ontario Ministry of Education

Felicity Burr (observer)

Senior Policy Advisor, Adult Education
Ontario Ministry of Education

Tony da Silva

Trustee
Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School
Board

Barbara Glass

Coordinator, Academic Upgrading and Pre-
Apprenticeship Programs
Canadore College of Applied Arts and
Technology

Debbie Grier

Manager, Special Projects & Basic Skills
Collège Boréal

Rebecca Howse

Principal, Adult & Continuing Education
Thames Valley District School Board

Sarah Irwin

Managing Director
Independent Learning Centre (ILC)

Joanne Kaattari

Co-Executive Director
Community Literacy of Ontario

Sara Katz

Consultant (ACAATO)

Bonnie Kennedy

Executive Director
Canadian Assoc. for Prior Learning
Assessment

Andrea Leis

Director, School of Career & Academic
Access
Conestoga College

Tamara Levine

Literacy Coordinator
Canadian Labour Congress

Carol Maingot

Coordinator, Community Education
Services
District School Board of Niagara

Margaret Maynard

Adult Learning & Resource Centres
Niagara West

Kathy Mills

CAO
The Centre for Skills Development &
Training

Eleanor Newman
Director of Education
Council of Ontario Directors of Education

Sheila Nicholas
ESL Coordinator
Upper Canada District School Board

Ellen Paterson
Executive Director
Ontario Native Literacy Coalition

Derwyn Sangster
A/Coordinator, Work and Learning
Knowledge Centre

Judy Stanleigh
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