

The Final
Report of the
Literacy
Community
Planning
Process
(LCPP)
Development
Project:
Literacy Service
Planning Guide



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Introduction

A Process lies behind every Product

Although the product is what you see – the concrete results – it is the process leading to the product that often has the greatest impact and that is the most important to the future. This is particularly true when the product is the result of a group effort, a group that will come together again to accomplish other tasks. This report looks at the development or evolution of the **Literacy Community Planning Process (LCPP) Committees** in Waterloo Region and Wellington County. The document, in itself, is one outcome of this project, aimed at finding ways for the LCPP Committees to better work together to serve the literacy needs of local communities. **2012 Update: LCPP Committees are also referred to as Literacy Service Planning Committees (LSP) or Literacy Community Planning (LCP) Committees across Ontario.**

Two major areas of concentration occupied project time. These included the **development of guidelines** for the LCPP Committees outlining how member agencies would work together, and community planning culminating in the **Literacy Services Plans (LSP)** for Waterloo Region and Wellington County respectively.

These areas of concentration resulted in two final research products. Both products are documents, and are contained here. It is the intent that other LCPP Committees will be able to use our experiences to shape their own responses suitable to their particular communities.

The final products associated with this project include:

- **Working Together:** Literacy Community Planning Process (LCPP) Guidelines
- **Literacy Service Planning in Practice**

These two products were the vehicles through which the LCPP Committees explored their roles and found new ways to work together. Using the word “vehicles” does not imply the products are unimportant in themselves. They **are** important. They provide evidence that the LCPP committees are fulfilling their mandate, with the ultimate result of better service delivery throughout the Waterloo-Wellington areas.

Committees worked together to reach their goals is integral to any discussions of the overall value of the project. Accomplishing two concrete tasks led to new ways of working together and new ways to view the role and purpose of the LSP Committees. Through the process of developing the guidelines and the LSP, members put in place the groundwork for their future interaction.

The most important and challenging shift over the course of this project was for the LSP Committee to think of itself as a planning body rather than a “reporting” body. It is the outcome that should be most enduring, if the project has been a success, and will affect the most change over time.

In the past, the LSP viewed its primary role as reporting to fellow members what a particular agency had been doing in the preceding month, and perhaps what it intended to do in the next month. It was an info sharing and networking process. Members learned about professional development activities, workshops, conferences, projects, or other opportunities from each other.

Info-sharing and networking are important. These are roles of the LSP Committee, and need to be fulfilled. They are not, however, the only role nor are they “stand-alone” functions. By that, it is meant that they are not an end in themselves.

The central work of the LSP is creative. It involves thinking, analysing, responding, shaping, and creating anew. This creativity is a required element to do what the committees have been mandated to do by their funders – community planning.

Without a creative approach, the LSP Committees will simply repeat old patterns. In “LSP” lingo, the result will be a mix of services based upon historical tradition, rather than community need. The status quo is maintained, not necessarily because it should be maintained, but because it is easiest to do so. The shift in thinking – from a reporting body to a planning body – does not come easily. Change is never easy.

Introduction

Introduction

A creative response requires what is seldom available in the literacy field – unrushed time. The stage must be set to allow for creativity. It just doesn't happen. Inspiration often comes as a result of hours put into the task. It takes hard work, but a particular kind of hard work. It comes from working to create the best planning response, rather than working to meet a deadline.

Time was often the deciding factor, rather than a lack of desire to enact change. Deadlines loomed for Business Plans and other “immediate” demands in a field that always seems to have a pressing demand - whether adapting to Program Reform, or trying to understand new funding formulas and how they will affect the financial bottom line, or submitting a Literacy Services Plan for approval.

Throughout the project, the time that was required for creative group planning was always greater than originally envisioned. Solutions and decisions that were expected to take a portion of a meeting took full meetings, and often spilled into the next meeting. We came to realise that this is part and parcel of the process. Time needed to be reserved for intensive group interaction. It was focused, quality time that was required, where members came to the meeting with the main purpose of actively participating in creative thinking.

Creative work is not something that can simply be “fit in” between a slate full of other agenda items, Nor can it be left to the end of a regular meeting if there is sufficient time (usually there is not). Community planning and other such creative work are best viewed as an ongoing task. When one Literacy Service Plan is submitted to funders it is time to begin the next one.

Planning, after all, is a primary function of the LSP. And good planning takes time.

This report is organised into three main sections. The first two sections may be viewed as “stand-alone” documents.

- **Part One** focuses on the creation of the LSP Guidelines and provides the final products as a sample. Networks are invited to use this document as a springboard for discussions for LSP members to create their own guidelines. Pages 8 - 49

- **Part Two** focuses upon community planning and the process of creating a Literacy Service Plan. Sample documents are provided that Networks are invited to modify for their use. Pages 50 - 122

- **Part Three** focuses upon what we have learned from the research project in general terms. It provides recommendations for future development and a summary. Pages 123 - 127

How this Report is Organised

Part 1 – LSP Guidelines



The Process:

**Developing
Guidelines**

The Product:

**Literacy
Service
Planning
Process
(LSP)
Guidelines**

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Section Contents

The Process: Developing the Guidelines

In 1999, both the Waterloo Region and the Wellington County LSP Committees set developing policies and procedures manual as a future goal. The Waterloo Region LSP Committee established a “member’s guide” as a priority goal in its LSP annual report.

The larger of the two committees, the Waterloo Region group had approximately twelve individual members at the time, and included ten member agencies. The Wellington County LSP, being much smaller, consisted of five individual member agencies (including the Network). The Wellington County LSP felt a less pressing need than the Waterloo Region Committee to formalise or define interaction between member agencies. They did think, however, that guidelines would be a useful tool, and agreed through consensus for them to be developed.

The Network identified a strong need for guidelines so that it could better serve member agencies. Guidelines would ensure facilitation in a manner that had been agreed upon by the LSP membership and that had met their needs. A written document would also ensure members had a consistent understanding about how the Committee would operate and, equally important, why they came together – the mandate of the LSP.

The variance in urgency or need for guidelines might be attributed to the distinct differences in the communities each LSP Committee served, and the amount of interaction that occurs on a daily basis between member agencies. Wellington County serves a much larger geographical area, much of it rural. Half of the population of Wellington County resides in these rural areas; the other half is located in the City of Guelph. LSP members have clearly established boundaries that define which agency serves a particular geographical area. Movement between agencies and literacy programs does not occur regularly. Transportation continues to be a barrier.

Waterloo Region LSP members share much the same “geographical base” of learners. Transportation in general is

not a barrier to participation. More day-to-day interaction occurs among literacy providers, and more movement of learners among agencies. Geographical location plays less of a role in determining where an adult accesses literacy training. Since other factors come into effect, it is extremely important that members have a clear understanding of how they will work together, and whom they will serve. Community planning takes on an urgency, and agreements made around the LSP table often have an immediate and more direct impact upon service delivery.

Several individuals on both committees have been involved with the LSP since its inception. They “know” how meetings traditionally operate through experience, and have participated in the creation of informal policies and procedures. They have seen firsthand how the roles of the LSP Committees were changing, with a greater responsibility placed on member agencies to participate in community planning.

Although “polite” agreements had been reached in terms of decision-making and other interactions, group members saw a time when the LSP would be asked to make more difficult decisions around the LSP table. These decisions would require formal understandings of interaction, since some decisions would affect the mix of services offered in the community, and hence, affect funding that a delivery agency might receive. Guidelines would provide the framework within which these decisions would be made.

Another concern was changing LSP membership. New faces around the LSP table meant the need for an orientation process to educate new members to the workings and role of the LSP. Guidelines would fulfill this purpose.

The Process

The Waterloo Region LSP Committee had identified the need for guidelines and the action steps it would take to formulate them in its 1997 LSP Report. It also identified the outcome. As a result; group members would “share a common understanding of the role of the LSP, and the expectations

Developing the Guidelines

Developing the Guidelines

upon them as members.” A Table of Contents was created to provide guidance for the types of information that should be included in the document. A first draft was produced based upon the action steps identified in the LSP Report, the Table of Contents, how the LSP Committees had traditionally operated, and the community planning experiences of both groups in creating Literacy Services Plans for their local communities. This draft was distributed for feedback, and a second draft was written with input from the Network, the membership, and other members of the literacy community. The revised document was presented to both LSPs for their modification. The Waterloo Region LSP Committee used the document as a springboard for discussion. They set aside two meetings (approximately six hours) to change key areas and reach agreement. In particular, the Committee broke into small groups to discuss contentious issues such as “Making Decisions” and extending “membership” of non-LBS community groups. The result was a lively discussion that touched upon such issues as how many votes each agency would receive, who would participate around the LSP table, and the role of the Network in decision-making. This information was then used to create another draft that was, in several places, quite different from the original document. The final draft was presented at a subsequent LSP meeting and accepted by a formal vote of the group.

An important element to the acceptance of the Guidelines was flexibility. The document is meant to be a “living document;” that is, the LSP Committee can modify it, or portions of it, as they require. This will allow the Committee to respond to new situations in timely ways. It will also allow the LSP Committee to “test” the Guidelines through everyday application, and change them accordingly.

The Wellington County LSP followed a different path to the writing of their Guidelines. They rejected the draft outright. It did not meet their needs at all. As a small group they felt the Guidelines were much too formal for their interactions, and had been written according to the needs of the larger LSP Committee. They also disagreed with the idea of one

document that applied, in general terms, to both LSP Committees. They wanted their own “Made in Wellington County” version.

Although the draft presented to the Wellington County LSP did not meet their approval, this in itself has a positive outcome. The four member agencies are presently meeting to revise the original document and create Guidelines more in keeping with their needs and vision. The exercise is helping them come to agreement about how they will interact, and in a sense, has become a group building activity. Simply put, they required more time to discuss and develop agreements than the original process (and project timelines) allowed. They took direct ownership of the project, and the result will be a document with which they are satisfied and that reflects more precisely their reality and needs.

2012 Update: The LSP Committee in Waterloo and Wellington each review the LSP Guidelines on an annual basis. They continue to use the Guidelines as a tool to guide discussions, inform new members and decide on priorities.

Community Planning

The development of guidelines around the LSP table proved to be an excellent tool to facilitate the planning process. Both Committees had recently undergone an intensive process for literacy services planning. They were in a position to identify the kinds of decisions that needed to be made to facilitate further planning, and that should be addressed in the document. It encouraged them to take their planning to the next step, that is, to think about how “info-sharing/networking” might be balanced with developmental/planning needs. It helped participants to identify the role of the Network in the planning and facilitation process. And it established the “nitty-gritty” everyday details about who does what, and what is necessary for the LSP to work on a practical basis.

Developing the Guidelines

The Product: LSP Guidelines

The following pages offer the Waterloo Region document as a sample. Networks and LSP Committees are invited to use *Working Together, Literacy Service Planning Process (LSP) Guidelines* as a “springboard” to discussions to write their own guide. It is not expected that this sample will apply “verbatim” to other groups, nor should it. You are welcome, however to modify the document to suit your own needs, or to simply use it as a basis for forging your own agreements for interaction around the LSP table.

These Guidelines serve as an introduction to the purpose and operation of the Literacy Service Planning Process (LSP) Committee in Waterloo Region.

The Guidelines will orient new members to their role, and describe for them how the LSP Committee serves the literacy needs of the community through local planning and coordination.

Experienced members will find the Guidelines useful for clarification and reference. The document serves as a reminder of tasks that must be completed and decisions that must be made as partners in literacy services planning.

The Guidelines establish a basic framework or yearly cycle to ensure that both long-term planning and development, and day-to-day issues, are given satisfactory attention.



A About These Guidelines

B What is the LSP?

The Literacy Service Planning Process or the LSP is the name of the committee that participates in the local planning and co-ordination of literacy services.

Project READ Literacy Network Waterloo-Wellington facilitates and supports the work of the LSP Committee.

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU) funds local Planning and Co-ordination through the base funding of delivery agencies and regional networks.

Within our area, we have retained “LSP” to ensure continued recognition within the broader community. The LSP Committee carries out the responsibilities of Local Planning and Co-ordination as described by Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

1.

To promote the best interests of adult literacy learners and agencies to the community as a whole, to government, to business, and to other education, employment, training, and social organisations.

2.

To plan and co-ordinate local literacy services, and to ensure reasonable access to, and a fair and equitable distribution of, these services throughout the region.

3.

To ensure that literacy learners throughout the region are provided with consistent and high quality training, and to support literacy agencies in providing these services.

4.

To develop and approve a Literacy Service Plan that responds to the unique needs of the region and each local community within it; to inform and seek approval of the membership to initiate changes to the Literacy Service Plan.

5.

To share information and provide updates that will impact upon our ability to serve learners in the region; to respond as a group accordingly.

6.

To help learners in the region move along a seamless adult education system that supports lifelong learning and that assists them to achieve their personal goals



D Guiding Principals

1.
Literacy in the region benefits from a collective effort. LSP Committee members work for the good of the whole, as well as their individual agencies.
2.
Adult Literacy learners have varying needs. We collectively accommodate these needs by maintaining a range of service delivery models, supports, and learning approaches.
3.
A community is dynamic, not static. Forces from within and outside the community impact upon it. We monitor and respond to changing conditions through local planning and co-ordination.
4.
Effective planning and co-ordination happens in an atmosphere of trust. Members deal with each other honestly and openly. They discuss differences in a respectful manner and work towards consensus.
5.
We establish links within our community. We complement the broader educational and training system, and work with social agencies, employers, and others with similar interests.
6.
Upon joining the LSP, committee members agree to act in accordance with the membership guidelines contained in the manual.

1.
All agencies funded by the Literacy and Basic Skills Program, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU) must be represented at the LSP Committee table.
2.
Each literacy agency is encouraged to appoint one person per site to represent it at LSP Committee meetings and to be the contact for the organization.
3.
A site is defined according to TCU criteria.



F

Roles and Responsibilities

Member Agencies

1.

Send at least one representative to each LSP Committee meeting.

- a. Arrange for alternative representative as need to ensure decisions made around the LSP Committee table reflect the full membership.
- b. Inform Project READ Literacy Network (PRLN) in advance if a representative will not be present.

2.

Ensure the representative has the authority to make decisions and give information as needed on behalf of the agency and as appropriate to the agenda and purpose of the meeting.

- a. Provide clear guidelines about the kinds of decisions the representative is not authorised to make, and the appropriate channels the representative should follow.

3.

Support the efforts of the LSP Committee, other literacy delivery agencies, and the concept of the local planning and co-ordination.

- a. Make decisions and act in the best interests of literacy learners across the region as a whole.
- b. Participate in the development of the Literacy Services Plan.
- c. Participate in the development of LSP Committee agendas, as needed.

4.

Participate fully in information sharing.

- a. Make disclosure around the LSP Committee table concerning literacy programs and services offered, including those that are not Ministry of Education and Training funded.
- b. Share data and provide information around the LSP Committee table on service projections: how many learners do agencies plan to serve, how often, and for how long.
- c. Inform the LSP Committee of agency updates and other information that impact upon service delivery in the area and agreements made in Literacy Services Plans.
- d. Inform the LSP Committee if a services delivery commitment will not be met, preferably before the service is terminated.
- e. Inform the LSP Committee of new programming or other changes to the Literacy Services Plan and seek membership approval before implementation.

5.

Collaborate with other agencies to determine and adjust service locations, service offerings, and client mix in order to meet identified community needs.

- a. Fulfill service delivery commitments as agreed upon in the Literacy Services Plans.
- b. Participate in planning that may result in modification of programming to suit the needs of the area as a whole as identified by the LSP Committee membership

F Roles and Responsibilities

Member Agencies

F**Roles and
Responsibilities****Member
Agencies****6.**

Articulate literacy services in order to provide a continuum of opportunities and a smooth transition among different agencies for learners.

7.

Participate in the establishment of:

- information and referral protocols
- common assessment and training plan strategy
- tracking and follow-up protocol
- local communications strategy which provides a link to other service agencies and to the Local Board
- the definition of working relationship with other appropriate service providers
- public education strategy
- volunteer training strategy
- process for evaluation the effectiveness of the above.

An agency representative is a person appointed by the member agency to represent it at the LSP Committee meeting.

1.

Serve as a channel of communication between your agency and the LSP Committee.

- a. Represent the best interests of your agency and its clients.
- b. Act in the best interest of the community as a whole and all adult learners.
- c. Ensure information shared and decisions made at the LSP Committee are communicated to the frontline staff, boards members and others at your agency as required
- d. Bring your agency's concerns and perspectives to the LSP Committee.
- e. Participate in local planning and co-ordination.

2.

Attend LSP Committee meetings on a regular basis.

- a. Ensure another representative comes to the LSP Committee on your behalf if you are unable to attend.

3.

Consult with staff, board members, and others so that you can make the informed decisions that reflect the needs and positions of the agency you represent.

- a. Know what decisions you can make on your own around the LSP Committee table.
- b. Seek the appropriate approval from your agency or individuals within it for other decisions that need to be made
- c. Come to meetings prepared. Read minutes, agenda items, and be ready to discuss and make related decisions.

F Roles and Responsibilities

Agency Representative

F

Roles and Responsibilities

Agency Representative

4.

Share responsibility with other members to ensure the work of the LSP Committee is carried out.

- a. You may be asked to act as Chair, take minutes, or assume responsibility for a project or meeting topic.

5.

Share your opinion, experience, knowledge, and ideas.

- a. State concerns up-front around the LSP table. Work with the membership to find solutions.
- b. Show respect to fellow members. Listen to others. Allow equal time for opposing views.

Honour confidentiality when called upon or when appropriate

The Network's roles and responsibilities have been organised into two categories:

- **internal** (support of the LSP Committee and facilitation of its meetings)
- **external** (promoting literacy awareness in the community, serving as a literacy advocate, acting as a channel between LSP Committee and other service providers, networking to support work of LSP Committee agencies)

Internal

1.

Provide ongoing support to Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) funded agencies throughout the region including all cultural streams.

2.

Facilitate communication among regional literacy agencies, and between the LSP Committee and the LBS - TCU

3.

Facilitate the local planning and co-ordination process.

- a. Raise timely and pertinent issues at the LSP table regarding the delivery of literacy services in region.
- b. Assist the LSP Committee to reach decisions (through consensus and/or voting).
- c. Compile/write/distribute annual LSP Committee reports and/or Literacy Services Plan (LSP) as required, and submit to TCU on time.

F Roles and Responsibilities

The Network

F

Roles and Responsibilities

The Network

4.

Organise logistics and facilitate LSP Committee meetings.

- a. Call meetings, arrange space, and distribute agendas in advance for LSP Committee meetings, including local planning and co-ordination.
- b. Chair LSP Committee meetings unless otherwise requested by the membership or when an issue impacting upon Network responsibilities requires a vote
- c. Arrange minute-taking, compile and distribute minutes to membership, maintain record of minutes.
- d. Orient new members to the LSP Committee and operations.

5.

Provide information, assessment, and referral to supplement the services provided by individual delivery agencies.

- a. Lead the development of a regional plan for information and referral.

6.

Co-ordinate professional development workshops and activities for literacy staff and volunteers in Waterloo Region

- a. Encourage and facilitate co-operation among literacy agencies in the initial training of volunteers, and other efforts.

7

Co-ordinate and manage literacy development projects as identified, approved, and requested by the LSP Committee.

8

Participate as a member agency/agency representative of the LSP Committee when group discussions concern Network responsibilities.

External

- a. Educate the public and key stakeholders at a regional level on the nature and extent of the literacy needs of Ontario adults.
- b. Establish links to the planning activities of the Local Board and other relevant bodies.
- c. Represent LSP Committee interests to organisations, government agencies, other committees, and individuals as specified by the membership.
- d. Represent regional issues to the *Essential Skills Ontario*, the provincial umbrella of literacy in Ontario, as specified by the LSP Committee.



F
**Roles and
Responsibilities**

**The
Network**

F

Roles and Responsibilities

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities - Employment Training Consultant

1.

Act as a channel between the LSP Committee and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU).

- a. Meet and consult regularly with individual member agencies, the network, and the LSP Committee.
- b. Attend LSP Committee meetings to advise membership and provide timely information and updates.
- c. Relay LSP Committee feedback, concerns, and suggestions to TCU.

2.

Provide feedback to the LSP Committee and the individual agencies concerning the Literacy Services Plan.

- a. Ensure participants have a clear understanding of eligible activity, target groups, TCU standards and outcomes when expending TCU funds.
- b. Clarify the consultant's role, particularly with respect to making recommendations on the Literacy Services Plan and individual agency allocations.
- c. Assist in guiding the LSP Committee through changes in focus or funding from TCU and that will impact upon the Literacy Services Plan.
- d. Indicate clearly that business plans must reflect individual agencies' commitments as agreed upon and communicated in the LSP.

The LSP Committee meets as needed, usually once a month throughout the year.

- a. The LSP Committee will set the dates for meetings a minimum of three months in advance.
- b. Meetings usually last two to four hours.
- c. Meetings are held in a location agreed upon by the membership.
- d. Meetings will occasionally occur at the offices/sites of different delivery agencies so members become familiar with literacy settings in the community.
- e. All meetings are public unless an in-camera or closed meeting is agreed upon by the membership.



Logistics

G

Meetings

Extended Participation & Special Meetings

1.

At least once a year, the LSP Committee will hold a strategy meeting to plan the upcoming year, and evaluate past effectiveness.

- a. A mid-year review will also be conducted if possible.

2.

At least one a year, a joint meeting of the Waterloo LSP Committee and the Wellington LSP Committee is held to discuss common issues.

3.

At least once every two years, board members or other decision-making representatives from an agency will be invited to a special meeting to discuss common issues and to learn about the workings of the LSP Committee.

4.

Frontline staff (rather than the regular LSP Committee agency representative) may meet as needed to discuss common issues and to facilitate the seamless system of adult education among literacy providers.

5.

The LSP Committee may invite members from other community organisations as guest participants or speakers to further the planning process or obtain specific and timely information.

1.

LSP Committee meetings, in general, will consist of two main parts:

-Updates and timely issues

-Development and planning.

- a. Updates involve immediate issues, events, announcements, reports, and guest speakers providing information or consulting on issues.
- b. Development involves long term planning and coordination issues and decisions, as well as those that impact upon how the LSP Committee will operate.
- c. Both parts will be given sufficient agenda time.

1.

Development parts of each LSP Committee meeting may involve membership research or other time commitments in preparation.

- a. A member may be asked to take responsibility for doing preliminary work and presenting it for consideration during the development discussion and/or decision-making process.
- b. Tasks may include polling members, frontline staff or learners to gather information, researching statistics, or exploring specific issues.
- c. The membership may identify other tasks to ensure the smooth working of the LSP Committee, and will share responsibility for these as well.

G

Meetings

Structure

**Sharing
Responsibilities:
Making it
Work**

G

Meetings

Agenda

1.

The agenda will be compiled and distributed by the Network with input from LSP Committee members.

- a. Members are expected to contribute agenda items.
- b. Ideally, agenda items are submitted a minimum of one week prior to the meeting.
- c. The Network will distribute agenda items to members prior to the meeting, and in sufficient time to allow consultation at the agency.
- d. Members will together decide the topic for the Development portion of the agenda. This will be done at least one meeting in advance.
- e. Members are expected to come to the LSP meeting having completed the required consultation and information gathering to discuss agenda items and make related decisions

2.

The Network is responsible for ensuring minutes are taken at each LSP committee meeting.

- a. The Network will transcribe and distribute minutes to the membership for approval.
- b. All minutes are distributed to TCU.
- c. The Network will maintain a record of the minutes.
- d. The network will distribute additional information or handouts as requested by members.

Minutes

1.

In general, the Network will chair meetings.

- a. At times, other members may be asked to chair a portion or all of a LSP Committee meeting

2.

The chair will facilitate maximum input and participation around the LSP Committee table.

- a. The chair will ensure the meeting proceeds on time and in an orderly and fair fashion.
- b. The chair will ensure representatives from each Member agency have an opportunity to voice a view point, and that no one person will dominate the discussion.
- c. The chair will recognise speakers and, if necessary, limit the length a speaker may address the table.
- d. The preferred method of sharing opinions and information is a “Go-Around,” where each member, or a representative from each Agency, is given an opportunity, in turn, to express a view point on a particular issue.

1.

Participants will respect the opinions of others, communicate openly and honestly, respect confidentiality when applicable, and conduct themselves appropriately at meetings.

- a. The Chair may ask a member or participant to leave the LSP Committee table for inappropriate conduct

G

Meetings

Chair

Conduct

G

Meetings

Complaints

1.

Ideally, concerns and disagreements are discussed around the LSP Committee table. Members are encouraged to raise issues as they occur (or soon after) for clarification and resolution.

2.

Members have the right to register a formal complaint at any time. It is encouraged that this avenue is taken only if the issue has been raised at the LSP table (or away from it between the immediate parties), and remains unresolved.

3.

To register a formal complaint, members put their concerns in writing and submit them to the chair. In consultation with the immediate parties involved the chair may choose to proceed in one of two ways.

- a. The formal complaint may be included as an agenda item for discussion and resolution at a LSP meeting, including being put to a vote, if required.
- b. The chair or the LSP Committee may appoint three neutral members to explore the issue and mediate. If a resolution cannot be found, the three members may issue a decision or bring specific options back to the LSP Committee table for a vote, at their discretion.
- c. If the Formal complaint involves the Chair, the complaint will automatically become an agenda issue. The LSP Committee will appoint an interim Chair to respond to the situation in one the ways described above.

1.

Decisions made around the LSP Committee table are agreements that agency members choose to honour in the best interest of learners in the area.

- a. It is recognised that these decisions are not binding and that final decisions rest in the contract between the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU) and the individual agency.
- b. It is also recognized that decisions made around the LSP Committee table are strong recommendations to government and others concerning service delivery in the region, and have been made with careful thought.

1.

The LSP Committee is responsible for making decisions concerning local planning and co-ordination.

- a. Decisions are made to ensure services delivered are appropriate to the community as a whole.
- b. Decisions are made to determine and adjust service locations, service offerings, and client mix in order to meet identified community needs, and result from collaboration among delivery agencies.
- c. Decisions are made that provide a continuum of opportunities and a smooth transition of learners among different agencies.
- d. Decisions are made to ensure a reasonable and equitable level of services across the region.

H Making Decisions

Agreements

What Kinds of Decisions?

H

Making Decisions

What Kinds of Decisions

2.

Decisions are made that establish information and referral protocols, portability of training plans, common assessment strategies, tracking and follow-up, and that deal with other roles and responsibilities of the individual agencies and the Network.

3.

Decisions are made about local communications strategies to provide links to other service agencies and to the Local Workforce Development Board.

4.

Decisions are made in response to current literacy issues, research and development projects, and other matters deemed appropriate by the membership.

5.

Decisions are made about the operation of the LSP Committee.

1.

Consensus is the preferred method of decision-making at the LSP Committee table.

- a. Consensus is reached when all participants agree to accept a decision. Although agreement may result in a compromise of their position, members are comfortable and willing to proceed.

2.

A majority of the members must be present.

3.

Each agency representative in attendance may participate in decisions reached by consensus.

4.

It is the responsibility of the Chair to clearly reiterate the decision to ensure agreement.

1.

A vote may be taken if consensus cannot be reached.

- a. At any time a member or the Chair may request a vote on an agenda item or another issue that requires decision-making.
- b. A vote will not be taken unless it is requested.
- c. A member may ask that voting be delayed until the following meeting to allow for agency consultation. Otherwise, voting will occur following discussion.

H Making Decisions

Consensus

Voting

H

Making Decisions

How to Vote

1.
All voting is by show of hands.
2.
No voting is done by secret ballot.
 - a. It is important to the planning and co-ordination process (as well as to the day-to-day operation of the LSP Committee) to ensure open communication and full disclosure.
3.
Under normal conditions, votes will be counted and number for/against recorded.
4.
Any member may request that votes be tallied, recorded and distributed in the minutes showing how an agency representative voted.
5.
A majority of member agencies must be present in order for a formal vote to take place.
 - a. It is the member agency's responsibility to ensure a representative is present at the LSP Committee meeting, and voting may proceed if the majority membership as stipulated above is met

1.

Member agencies receive one vote for each site as defined by TCU criteria.

- a. The member agency decides who will register its votes and how representatives will reach a decision.

2.

The Chair does not cast a vote.

- a. If a representative from a member agency is acting as Chair, then another representative from the agency may vote. The chair must remain neutral at all times.

3.

Project READ Literacy Network will vote on issues that involve Network responsibilities only, and in such situations, will not act in the capacity of Chair.

1.

The majority of votes cast decides the issue.

- a. A tie vote does not constitute a majority, and therefore, is not “broken” by a vote by the Chair.

H

Making Decisions

Who Votes

Results

H

Making Decisions

Confidentiality

1. Information discussed around the LSP Committee table is not considered confidential in nature unless specifically requested by a member.
2. Exceptions to the above statement include specific learner data and other information protected by law.
 - a. It is the individual member's responsibility to ensure all confidentiality laws are obeyed at and away from the LSP Committee table.
 - b. It is the responsibility of the Network to ensure that minutes and other materials distributed by the Network concerning meetings and decisions respect confidentiality laws.
3. A member may request that details to be discussed around the LSP Committee table remain confidential.
 - a. This request must be made before the specific information is communicated at the LSP Committee table, and all members must agree beforehand to confidentiality.
4. The membership may decide through consensus or vote that a specific meeting or portion of it is "closed" to non-members.
5. In-camera confidential meetings concerning sensitive topics may be held through consensus or vote of the membership.
6. The membership may request that the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU) Field Consultant or another representative not attend a specific meeting of the LSP Committee to encourage open discussion.

1.

The LSP Committee creates the Literacy Services Plan (LSP).

- a. The Literacy Services Plan is an agreement among member agencies about which organisations will deliver specific literacy services in the community.
- b. The Literacy Services Plan identifies the gaps and duplications in literacy delivery service in the region and describes the respective roles of individual literacy agencies in response.
- c. The Literacy Services Plan details service delivery: information and referral, assessment, training plan development, training, and follow-up.
- d. The Literacy Services Plan also includes initial volunteer training, and the programs and the functions of the Network.

2.

The Literacy Services Plan is the product of local planning and co-ordination, and is based on community need, not past delivery patterns.

3.

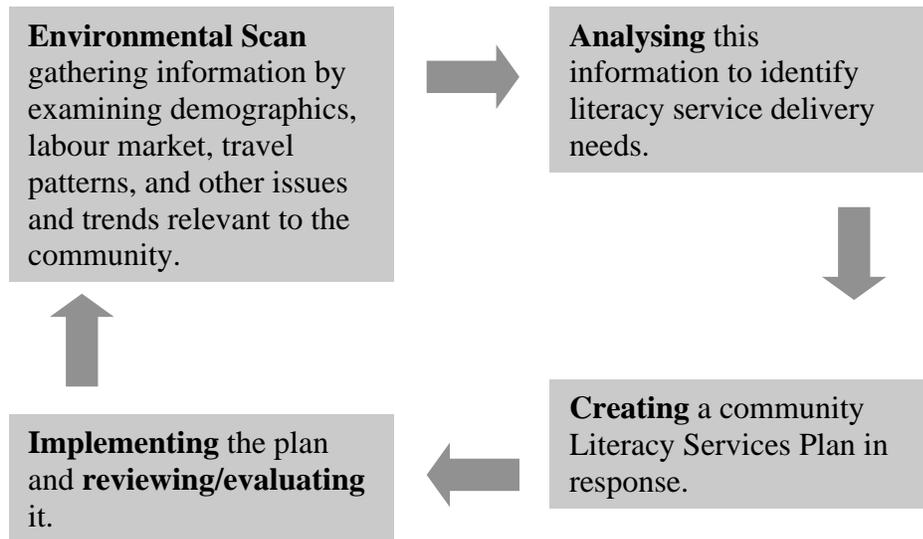
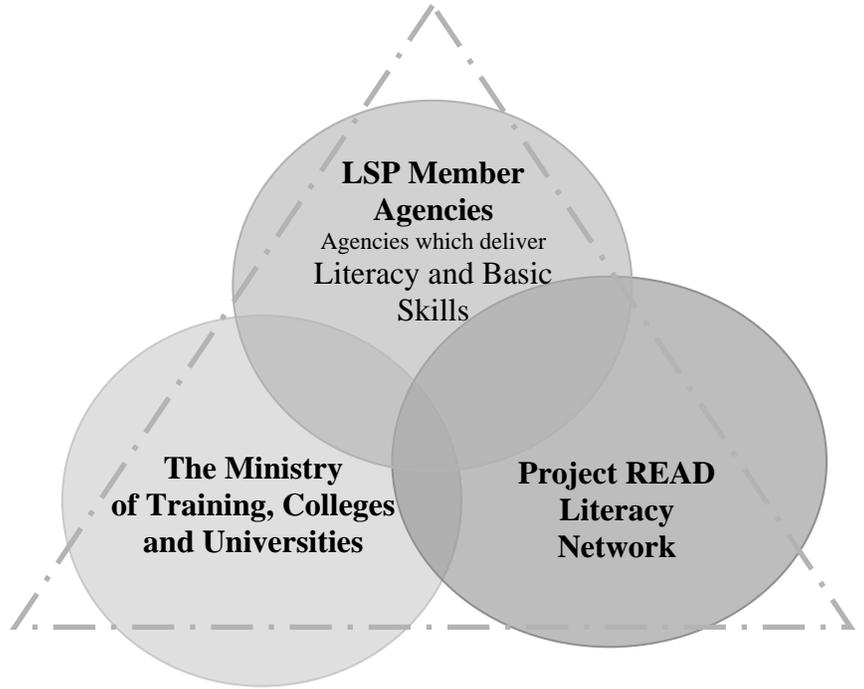
The annual business plans submitted by individual member agencies to TCU are based on the Literacy Services Plans that are developed around the LSP Committee table.

I Community Planning

Literacy Services Plan

I Community Planning

The Planning Cycle



1.

Literacy Services Plans are submitted to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU) annually or as required by the government.

2.

Literacy Services Plans must be completed in advance of the date member agencies submit their Annual Business Plan to TCU.

- a. A minimum of a month in advance is recommended.

3.

The LSP Committee and the Network establish timelines for literacy services planning.

- a. Adequate time must be planned so member agencies can fully consult with their Boards, principals, staff, and others as required.

1.

The LSP Committee creates a Literacy Services Plan for each local community in Waterloo Region.

2.

The LSP Committee defines the local communities within the region in terms of literacy service delivery.

- a. These communities may vary from plan to plan, depending upon development and local needs.*

**The initial Literacy Services Plan identified six local communities: Cambridge, Kitchener-Waterloo and the Rural Waterloo Region.*

I Community Planning

Timelines

Local Communities

I Community Planning

Facilitation

1.

The Network facilitates the community planning process that results in the Literacy Services Plan.

- a. The Network acts in a neutral capacity. The Network guides the process and ensures all members have equal opportunity to participate.
- b. The Network invites all cultural streams to participate.

2.

The Network may participate in discussions when a decision is reached by consensus, although it must maintain its objectivity.

3.

The Network will not vote when planning decisions require a formal vote. An exception includes the following situation.

- a. The Network may participate in the Literacy Services Plan process as a member agency when discussions and decisions impact upon Network responsibilities. This includes the right to vote on the issue if a formal vote is called.
- b. In this case, a neutral party or individual will take responsibility for the facilitation of this portion of the discussion and decision-making process.

4.

The Network compiles and submits the finalised version of the Literacy Services Plan to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (TCU).

1.

The LSP Committee will interact with other service providers to co-ordinate efforts and identify information important to the planning process.

- a. Examples of other service providers include training, educational, employment, social service, government agencies, and community groups.
- b. When possible and useful, formal linkages will be made.
- c. This may include establishing mechanisms to share information, to participate in community planning, and to expedite processing of learners/clients.

The Local Board in our area is the Workforce Development Board Waterloo Wellington Dufferin.

1.

The LSP Committee and the Local Board interact to exchange community planning information.

- a. The Network will develop a process to communicate with the Local Board, and facilitate and co-ordinate this process.
- b. The Network provides Member Lists and other documents approved by the LSP Committee to the Local Board as needed.
- c. The LSP Committee and the Network work co-operatively to ensure the Local Board is informed about literacy issues.

I Community Planning

Links with the Broader Community

Links with the Local Board

J

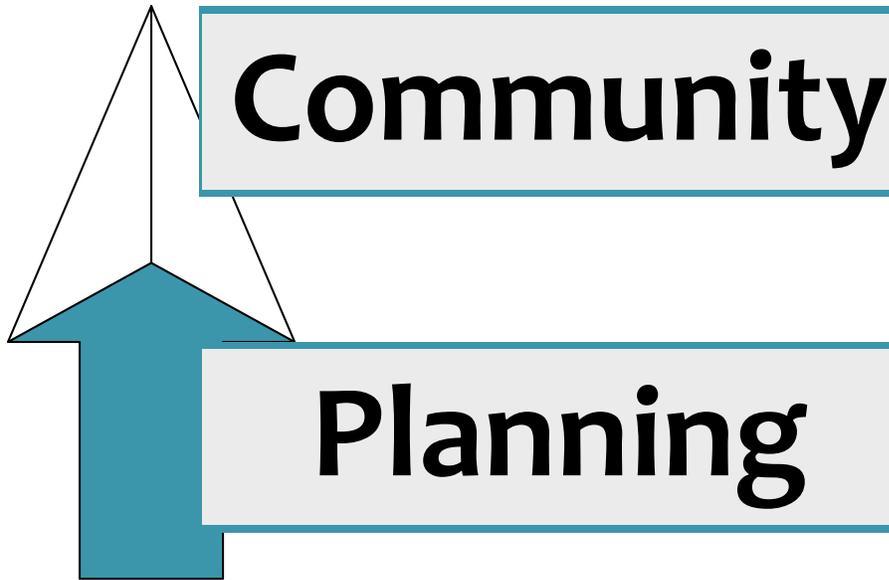
Revisions

1.
The membership, by consensus or by vote, may revise these Guidelines and procedures at any time to better suit their collective needs.
2.
The Network will update and distribute the Guidelines annually or as required.

Part 2 – The Product of Planning: Literacy Services Plan

Literary
Service
Planning
in Practice

A Report



Please Note:

Literacy Services Planning in Practice is a report that discusses the process and results of a research project that ended in April 1998. Much has happened in the literacy field in Ontario since then, namely, the introduction of the Literacy Basic Skills Program (LBS) Learning Outcomes Matrix, The five levels of Competencies in the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework, the province-wide requirement for service providers to develop Literacy Services Plans for each local community, and the implementation of the five delivery services or core functions. This report, therefore, is in some ways dated. It does not refer to the five level LBS system, nor does it deal with all five services but focuses on training. The sample forms and the worksheet at the end of the report will need modification to update them to present TCU requirements. Given these limitations, the report is still useful to LSP Committees and Networks as an illustration of community planning. It illustrates the kinds of considerations, circumstances, and issues that impact upon group interactions, and that impede or lead to good decision-making.

2012 Update: As stated above this section of the document describes the Planning Process that was facilitated in 1998. While the details are dated, the process is not. The activities and tools used to facilitate the development of the **Literacy Service Plan** are still helpful and relevant to the LSP Processes of today. Please note that LCPP (Literacy Community Planning Process) and LSP (Literacy Service Planning) are used interchangeably throughout this document.

April 1998: Literacy Service Planning in Practice

This report looks at the experiences of two Literacy Community Planning Process committees in creating a Literacy Service Plan. Both LCPP committees are part of the Project READ Literacy Network in Southern Ontario.

One group serves Waterloo Region, primarily consisting of urban centres, and some rural areas. Fourteen representatives from literacy delivery agencies participated. The other group serves Wellington County, with a population across a large rural area and the City of Guelph. Six representatives participated in the process.

This report is divided into two parts.

The sidebar relates process steps that a facilitator may choose to use in leading similar groups through the creation of a Literacy Services Plan (LSP) for their area. They are based upon steps used to guide the two LCPPs through the process. Suggestions are also offered.

The main body of the report discusses the LSP process from the viewpoint of the facilitator. It is a personal report. It discusses experiences, observations, and insights from one perspective and is not meant to be viewed as a collective report from the participating LCPPs. It examines the difficulties and successes experienced by the two LCPP committees working through the task of creating a Literacy Service Plan.

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Overview

Start by thinking about the reasons for creating an LSP. What is its purpose? Maybe even simpler, what is an LSP?

Why will an LSP be useful to your area? How might it be different from past approaches? What kinds of information will it include? What should it do? How should it be used?

How much time can participants devote to the LSP? Set realistic timelines.

Project READ Literacy Network began its LCPP Development project in July 1997. As part of this project, the Network was asked by MET to develop and field-test a Literacy Service Plan around the LCPP table.

Literacy providers would gather to create a service delivery plan that suited the specific needs of their LCPP area. **The objective: to agree around the table upon what literacy services should be delivered, which agency should deliver them, and then formalise the results into an LSP.**

The LSP would be situated in **community need**. It would be guided by the **principle of fair and equitable distribution of services across the region**, rather than repeating the historical or traditional programming available in the past.

Although sounding simple, the LSP task was actually a challenge. The two groups and the facilitator were starting from “scratch” in terms of process and finished product. The LCPP committees had never before created an overall literacy delivery plan. It was recognized that the outcome could not realistically be the “definitive plan” – creation and implementation. Rather, we set to make inroads and to start the LSP process in the area. That’s what we did.

Originally, the facilitator planned for the process to span two meetings for each LCPP committee. A meeting would last approximately two hours. Group members would be given pre-thinking and homework tasks to be done before and between meetings. Another meeting would be scheduled for “catch-up”, final review, and closure.

This timeline was the greatest miscalculation made by the facilitator. The process spanned four months, and six LCPP meetings. It also included 1:1 meetings with each member. In that timeframe, the LSP was not quite completed, although done in large part, and in time for members to submit their “business plans” to MET based upon it.

Granted, the project tackled the process in an in-depth manner. Future plans shouldn't require so much time, since both LCPP committees have worked out preliminary issues and have laid the groundwork for future LSPs. They have created a base plan to revisit and modify in upcoming years. They have identified gaps that could not be filled this year, but have been noted to readdress in the future.

In hindsight, the LSP process is probably best spread out over the LCPP yearly schedule with portions addressed on an ongoing basis. However, another suitable approach is dedicating a full-day workshop to the task with a follow-up meeting as needed. The LSP should be the sole focus, with other LCPP agenda items left for another time.

The process focused upon the service training. The other services were not addressed in-depth in the LSP, although could be the focus of later plans.

Resolve to base the LSP on community need. Try not to simply repeat the exact set of services that have been delivered in the past.

Revisit the above goal throughout the process. Is the plan the group is shaping based on community need rather than tradition?

Getting Ready

The facilitator and the Project READ Executive Director met to fashion overall steps to accomplish the development of the LSP. Participants were asked to make decisions at each step. These were modified throughout the process, but in general, could be divided into the following:

- A. **Who** will we serve (target group)?
- B. What **local communities** are within our LCPP?
- C. What are the **needs** of each community?
- D. Brainstorm: **How** might we **meet** these needs?
- E. What training will **each agency** deliver?
- F. What training will we deliver **as a whole**? Have we served the **overall** needs of our area?

Decide upon the overall steps the group will follow to build their LSP.

We made a purposeful attempt to view the task from a non-historical viewpoint, and therefore, did not begin by mapping out training presently offered. Instead, we asked people to come to the meetings prepared to "step outside" the perspective of their particular agency and think about overall literacy needs in the area.

Planning steps might be divided into two main parts:

→ **PRELIMINARY**

- defining the terms of reference to be used throughout the LSP

→ **BUILDING THE LSP**

- identifying service needs
- brainstorming ideas to fill these needs
- putting concrete proposals on the table
- shaping these proposals
- coming to an agreement

Recognise that discussion will overlap and won't "neatly" proceed through the steps. Try to keep on target, but highlight important information whenever it is introduced. It is often the "tangents" that reveal insights that eventually lead to concrete plans and solutions.

Although not originally planned, both LCPPs did map out present services at the midpoint of the process. This was used as a tool for identifying gaps, rather than a starting point or base upon which to build. Both communities were not completely comfortable creating a plan from the "ground up", but preferred a mixture of the old and new. This approach worked; however, it was important for the facilitator to return the attention of the group to gaps and needs that had been identified, so that the finished plan didn't simply reflect the past.

In hindsight, the midpoint of the process is probably a good time to examine the historical approach to service delivery. Any earlier, and the plan risks being built upon the "status quo", rather than need.

Another area where the facilitator modified the original process in response to the needs of both groups involved inclusion of a process of defining terms. An in-depth discussion of the added steps is described in the next section (Developing a Common Language).

It was important to the facilitator that members were not "surprised" with any aspect of the planning process, and that they had plenty of opportunity to become familiar with the task, ask questions, and think about their responses before they came to the LCPP table.

Time was valuable to all participants. It was important that members had the opportunity for "pre-thinking" so that the planning around the table used their collective time effectively. One strategy included a type of "homework". A workbook was developed and distributed before the LSP process began that outlined steps for members to do away from the table and bring to meetings (see attached, page 103).

Overall, the booklet was a good idea. However, the process outlined was modified quite a bit along the way. The intention had been to repeat the exercises in the workbook at LCPP meetings to create a group perspective. The general areas

were followed, but the facilitation activities did not strictly adhere to the workbook steps.

Some of the graphics or charts used in the booklet did not translate easily into practice, although members followed the intent of the exercise, and developed their own ways to illustrate the information.

The pre-set timelines turned out to be impractical. In reality, it was impossible to complete the tasks outlined in two meetings. As well, some members were “intimidated” by the booklet; others appreciated it. Some ignored it and came to the meetings without completing the tasks. Others came well prepared, and had consulted staff and volunteers at their agency to help formulate answers.

If this facilitator were repeating the process, she would modify the booklet to streamline it, and use it primarily as a “pre-thinking” exercise – using the information as a jumping-off point for group exercises.

If others choose to use the booklet to create a Literacy Service Plan for their area, it is suggested they shape the steps and the exercises to meet the needs of the particular LCPP and their personal facilitation style. In other words, pick and choose what you want. In any case, it is important to provide members with information about the process and the overall task ahead of time, and throughout the course of the planning.

An informal conversation establishes rapport and works to overcome misconceptions. This facilitator delivered the booklets in person, and followed up with a phone call to those who were not in the office at the time. Several members welcomed the opportunity to express their concerns and ask questions. As a result, people did not feel they began the process “cold turkey” at the first large group meeting.

The other preparatory tool that was distributed at the first meeting was a fill-in chart that showed the final form the LSP would take. This was modified throughout the process by

Communicate your plans to all group members ahead of time. Incorporate feedback. Listen to concerns. Acknowledge them. Answer questions.

Give “pre-thinking” exercises so that people come to the planning meetings with ideas to contribute.

Provide a sample of the format the final product might take.

feedback from members. However, the initial chart was useful in that it illustrated where the process was headed. Further information about the chart is included later in this document, and in the Attachments at the end (page 99 and following).

Developing a common language

Make a list of basic literacy terms commonly used around the LCPP table and that are central to LBS program reform. Be sure all members know the basics of LBS reform.

Come to an agreement about what these terms will mean to members during LCPP discussions and decision-making.

Record. Post the definitions at LCPP meetings as a reference tool while decision-making.

Defining terms was an essential first step to the creation of a Literacy Service Plan. It contributed to the success of the LSP and at very least, to the ability to complete the task.

Members needed to give themselves the opportunity to develop a common language, even though they had previously worked together and defining terms added significantly to the length of the overall LSP process.

Providers in Waterloo Region and Wellington County know each other well and have successfully worked together to address literacy issues. Given this familiarity, defining basic terms would appear unnecessary; however, the activity grew out of need that emerged around the table.

The exercise gave members a foundation upon which to communicate and build plans. This foundation did not exist at the beginning of the LSP process. This was, in large part, a result of program reform.

Program reform is new. Members were occupied with a variety of LBS tasks, such as field-testing outcomes and incorporating training plans into tutorials. They had both to learn a new language and implement it, all within a short time frame, and for the most part, in relative isolation. Their terms of reference were changing because of program reform, and they had to figure out what that meant to their individual agency, and then to the LSP process as a whole.

Frustrations arose early. These were alleviated in time and through discussion. Some members found that the LBS language did not adequately describe what it was they did or their particular way of presenting literacy. Yet, the facilitator was asking them to choose from LBS terms to plan for the

area. They tried to search out new vocabulary, citing LBS language as restrictive and unspecific. However, in the end, they would need to be able to use LBS language to communicate their intentions in their business plans, and to apply for funding.

Both LCPPs, meeting separately, discovered that their members often had different perceptions of what was meant by a basic literacy term. Yet, they had all regularly used the term at meetings and assumed understanding around the table. Differences in meaning occurred among organisations and, particularly, across sectors.

Some of the discrepancies resulted from the fact that delivery agents had operated in relative isolation. Although theoretically members worked towards a seamless system of education, in reality their programs did not dovetail too often. Their actions and services did not impact upon each other in a day-to-day sense.

Delivery agents had traditionally used sector to differentiate their services. This approach was no longer relevant within the new LBS training model. Simply put, each member delivered MET-funded literacy training using the same parameters and descriptors.

These new descriptors required members to rethink their relationship to each other. They had to describe their services in new ways.

Sometimes, this meant justifying their agency around the table: whom it served, how, where, and why. As a result, the discussion took on a new intensity. Members knew that the process they had embarked upon would impact upon prospective plans, and probably funding levels, if not in the upcoming year, then further in the future.

Participants were wary of the LSP process itself and where it would lead. They were somewhat uncomfortable with redefining how they worked together and the role of the LCPP.

Explore definitions across “sector lines”. Are perceptions different depending upon “sector”?

Work to develop guidelines. Don’t get hung up on developing the “perfect” definition!

Focus on language used in LBS program reform. How do members and their organisations define LBS terms?

They were accustomed to reporting service delivery changes, but not to identifying overall needs as a group, and together making decisions to enact change. They were not accustomed to questioning each other about the way other programs operated, let alone their validity.

Members perceived a lot was at stake, and rightfully so. Duplication of services, for example, could now be identified across sectors as well as within sectors. By looking primarily at LBS levels and delivery models when examining services, similarities appeared that “on paper” hadn’t been an issue in the past.

The LSP process required trust around the table. Members needed to be willing to state up-front their concerns or responses. This was not an easy task, and members needed encouragement throughout the facilitation process.

Traditionally, members tended not to challenge assumptions made about their services around the table. Nor did they ask for clarification about or question services delivered by others. It was easier “to let the matter go” to avoid “rocking the boat”. Concerns or disagreements were sometimes talked about away from the table, but would seldom be brought up “officially” at the table.

The new LBS model and the LSP forced members to interact in a more detailed and straightforward manner. The searching for common ground proved to be a positive experience. The process of figuring out language and how members would agree to use it helped to develop trust around the table. This trust was imperative to the designing of a Literacy Service Plan. Trust will need to be addressed and fostered around the table if it is an issue.

What terms?

Terms directly related to LBS program reform, particularly the service function training, were discussed. These included:

- Service model range: 1-1, small group, class

Encourage members to state their concerns up-front. Build trust.

Recognise that the LSP process may bring to the surface some difficult issues and conflicts. People will probably be wary of the task, and have preconceived ideas about it. Be ready! And be positive!

- Skill levels: 1, 2, 3
- Number of hours: Part-time, full-time

Other terms were not discussed, and ideally should have been, if time had permitted. For the two LCPPs involved, it has been suggested that these be worked into a schedule for the upcoming year, leading toward the creation of the next LSP.

One important issue not discussed included developing a shared understanding of student contact hours: how each agency figured them out, an agreement about what constituted a contact hour, and perhaps even a method for standardised calculation around the table.

The other service functions also should have been discussed to clarify and formulate a common understanding around the table. However, time simply ran out. The lack of discussion may have also resulted because members were not yet ready to focus on these functions in detail. They needed to work through the new funding application first to familiarise themselves with how the functions applied in practical terms to their agencies. Having done that now, they should be able to discuss the range of service functions around the table in a useful way.

Clear definitions from MET could not be provided for all of the terms used in program reform. Perhaps, at the time, some of these definitions were still in the process of being shaped in response to field experiences and questions. The LCPP committees were encouraged to develop their own definitions upon which members could agree, and then would apply locally. **Communication difficulties soon arose, rising from the fact that programs did not have a clear understanding of each other's services.**

We started by focusing on the service function training.

Consider:

- ➔ service models
- ➔ literacy levels
- ➔ part-time/full-time learning

1-1 meant something different when used by school board and college-based programs than it did when used by community-based programs. This led to misunderstandings and frustrations when it came to applying language that

Service
delivery
models

adequately described the services of each, and ultimately, to the task of creating the LSP.

Teachers and instructors tended to use 1-1 to describe individual instruction within a group setting, or a meeting that might take place between the teacher and the student outside the class to support or facilitate learning. They felt the term legitimately applied to the description of their activities.

Community-based programs saw the 1-1 designation as central to their mode of existence, and perhaps even to their continued survival. They felt the term should be used solely to describe a volunteer tutor/learner program, both to avoid confusion and distinguish services. They felt frustration that they had to have this discussion around the table – they had assumed clear understanding by all partners.

“Ownership” of the 1-1 term had broader implications for community-based groups. For them, 1-1 included in its definition a unique scenario that applied to their programs, for example, the training of volunteers and ongoing support of matches. Importantly, 1-1 involved an environment where learners at a very basic level could receive the attention of one person directed solely at him or her for the duration of the tutorial, a situation that does not happen in a group.

The discussion around the definition of small group and class pointed to a similar difficulty, and perhaps was an offshoot of the 1-1 discussion. The simple part was assigning a student number to a small group and a class. It was decided a small group consisted of 2 to 8 learners. A class consisted of 9+ learners. The definition, however, didn’t satisfy. Members felt instructional style or approach also played a part, as well as a student’s learning preference or needs.

In general, it was decided that a class situation required an instructional style that was teacher-directed to a greater degree than small group or 1-1, simply due to logistics.

As well, both small group and class facilitated interaction between learners, and this was viewed as another important

What do members mean when they talk about:

- 1-1?
- Small group?
- Class?

What will members agree to mean around the LCPP table (and in the LSP) when they talk about 1-1? Small group? Class?

aspect of training within these two delivery models. Learners would probably need a certain level of “social” skills, and some literacy skills in order to participate. This discussion, however, pointed out further misunderstandings/unclear images about what services each agency provided, and how they delivered them.

The term “class” brought along with it certain “baggage”. It conjured up images of a traditional classroom setting with the teacher in control at the front of the room. Both groups agreed this approach was inappropriate for adult education and was not what was meant when referring to the “class” delivery model around the table.

However, that alone did not alleviate concerns. College programs, in particular, wanted a word that would differentiate their services from school board classroom programs. They felt “class” did not adequately describe what they did in the college setting. They felt frustrated using the LBS language, and thought other agencies around the table did not truly understand their programs. The agencies agreed. They did not understand and some weren’t sure if there programs fit into the realm of literacy.

Further discussion revealed the source of the frustration and helped to resolve it. Self-directed learning is central to the college approach. Although students meet in a group, they are often working on individual tasks, and along individual paths, identified through their training plan. College instructors spent a lot of time meeting individually with the students (1-1), both inside and outside the “classroom”. Students are encouraged to work on their own outside formal class time (another source of difficulty, since MET’s understanding of student contact hours involves a measurement of hours spent in direct contact with the instructor rather than a measurement of outcomes).

In the end, the new LBS terms themselves worked to clarify services. With activities related to the tutorials categorised into five delivery service areas, it became obvious

through discussion and exploration of the language that the college programs fit into the spectrum of literacy training. Portions of the College programming had focused upon an area relatively new to many other literacy agencies but that now was built into LBS. These included information and referral, literacy assessment, and training plan development (as well as academic upgrading or training).

One LCPP committee chair chose to create a new term for use around the table that would refer to the kind of programming offered by College and others who may use a similar approach – large group. Therefore, the range of service delivery models had been restated to include 1-1, small group, large group, class.

The other LCPP decided to acknowledge the limitations of the word “class”, but to use it with caution to refer to a variety of situations with 9+ students.

The discussions proved worthwhile, even though they extended the length of the process. It gave members the opportunity to learn more about each other’s approaches and clientele. It gave members a chance to vent frustrations, identify and address misconceptions, and reach consensus. Most importantly, it cleared the way for further planning. **The LCPP can’t make a plan until each member has a clear understanding of the building blocks they will use to build it.**

Literacy Levels

What do members mean when they talk about offering Level 1? Level 2? Level 3?

Many of the agencies had applied their own level system to their programs. These levels did not have a cross-reference or relevance “across the board”. Level 1, or the first stage of entry, could be very different from agency to agency. Differences applied not only to content and approach, but also to the learner’s literacy skill, this last factor having the greatest impact upon the LSP process.

LBS levels were not being commonly used in our LCPP areas at the time. Members were in the process of developing an

understanding of them through the learning outcome field trials, and the final version had not yet been distributed by MET.

The task of creating an LSP, however, meant that agencies had to state the levels of learners their programs would service. In order to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of services across the region, and to put forward the appropriate agency to meet a particular need, the language had to be standardised.

Two agreements helped this process:

→ First, the language developed to talk about levels would apply around the LCPP table and for the creation of the LSP only.

Agencies might still use on-site their internal systems. However, the LCPP would develop an understanding of a level system as it applied to literacy learning in the broader sense and the LSP.

→ Second, terms chosen to describe the training for a particular agency in the LSP would refer to general circumstances; that is, describe the situation for the large majority of program users.

It was agreed that flexibility had to be worked into the overall system. Some overlap of services is desirable. This overlap had to be acknowledged, and even encouraged, in order to meet the unique needs of individuals, and to facilitate a smooth flow of learners between organisations.

For the sake of LSP planning, and to provide an accurate overall picture of literacy training in the region, those around the table needed to identify only those services that were the rule, rather than the exception, for their agencies. Otherwise, every LBS training level would be “checked off” by every agency as applying to it, and there would be no differentiation of services.

An organisation, for example, that agrees around the table to

What will members agree to mean around the LCPP table (and in the LSP) when they talk about Level 1? Level 2? Level 3?

It helped the process when members reached an understanding that:

→ the language collectively agreed upon to describe levels would be used around the LCPP table and for the sake of LSP planning.

→ the LSP would reflect the main level(s) an agency would serve, and not exceptions to the “rule”.

provide Level 2 & 3 classes may have a person who needs help at Level 1 and is accepted into the program. Any number of extenuating circumstances may exist: perhaps the learner lives across the road and has no way to get to a program several miles away. Likewise, a community-based group primarily serving Level 1 & 2 may have a student receiving help at Level 3.

However, within the region-wide Literacy Service Plan, it is important that agencies “claim” only those levels (and in some cases even service delivery models) which are their primary focuses.

A difficulty arose in developing a shared understanding of a “basic” or “novice” literacy learner. **Members had to reach an agreement that an entry-level student in one program may not necessarily be an entry-level student when looking at the literacy spectrum in the area as a whole.**

The purpose of defining terms is simply to ensure that when one member uses LBS terminology others have a clear understanding of what is meant.

This meant that a student might be considered at Level 1 in an internal system, but around the LCPP table, be at a level 2 or at an “intermediate” level. It also meant that some agencies that defined themselves as serving basic or novice learners (Level 1) had to rethink this position, and restate who were their clients.

Otherwise, the final LSP will not truly reflect community needs or the intentions of members.

This “reshuffling” of perspective was extremely important when it came to putting together a realistic map of what literacy services looked like across our LCPP areas as a whole, and what they should look like in the future to meet the needs of a range of learners.

The issue wasn’t simply a matter of language, but also one of **understanding**. In general, the 1-1 programs served people with a much lower entry point of literacy skill. Community-based agencies had to educate others around the table about whom it was they served and in a sense, “claim” the basic level as their own.

School board or college literacy programs, for example, did not necessarily see the same types/levels of learners coming

through their door as a 1-1 program. Their viewpoint of a “generic” learner at the beginning of the literacy spectrum, therefore, was different from the 1-1 program.

Interestingly, by the end of the discussion, several of the members who served learners in class or group situations stated that they could not meet the needs of this basic learner. They clearly saw this person being served by a 1-1 program. This worked to strengthen the relationship between 1-1 programs and others around the table, and underlined a resolve to work together to keep the 1-1 programs alive and healthy. They filled a vital role, and any LSP would not be complete without this service delivery model.

New approaches were worked into the final LSP and were a direct result of taking the time to develop a common language and understanding. Partnerships were established between community-based and school board programs aimed at lower skilled learners. Community-based, 1-1 tutors would work within a school setting, and the agencies would come together to offer joint small groups.

The LBS levels, in themselves, were thought to be inadequate for planning purposes around the LCPP table. The learning outcome field test supported these discussions. It showed that many providers found LBS Level 1 too broad. The LBS level system did not adequately recognize the learners at the very beginning of the literacy spectrum and who made up the majority of the clients in community-based groups. Nor did it, in some ways, adequately address learners at the other end of the spectrum, those at the verge of moving on to new opportunities.

Both groups felt the need to redefine literacy level for use around the LCPP table. One group discarded the Level 1-3 system, feeling it confused matters in light of the several layers of “levels” already in existence within educational institutions. They choose to talk instead about basic, intermediate, advanced, and transition.

The process of defining terms highlighted GAPS that were eventually addressed in the LSP as concrete proposals.

The other group kept the concept of levels, but spoke in general terms about the skills or outcomes expected at each one. They didn't intend these descriptions to be exact or definitive in a binding way, but rather to paint a picture of the client who would fit within a specific level, for the sole purpose of discussion and creation of an LSP. For that reason, they wouldn't be used beyond the LCPP table.

Both LCPP groups found that three levels did not describe or differentiate their services in a useful way for their planning. They each added a fourth, a transition or bridging level. Again, developing a common language led to practical strategies developed around the table for inclusion in the LSP.

This fourth level focused on directly preparing students to leave their present literacy program and to enter another literacy or educational program, training opportunity, or the workforce.

One result was identifying the need for a "bridging" or "transition" level, with agencies agreeing to deliver this service as part of the LSP.

It was generally agreed around the table that the literacy community as a whole had not done a good job of preparing students for success in other settings. This was identified as a "gap" or an area where special attention should be focused by the LCPP and worked into the Literacy Service Plan. Members identified the need for practical strategies to support a seamless system of literacy education. They saw the need to make a concerted effort to **help clients experience success when they left the literacy arena.**

Further discussion identified main areas for transition. Bridges needed to be formed "program to program". Strategies were required to help learners move between literacy agencies. These were addressed in the LSP, identified through and influenced by the process of finding a common language.

Agency partnerships also resulted as a bridging strategy. These were identified in the LSP.

Several strategies were devised so that learners would become familiar with the staff at other agencies, and their methods of operation. Some of these included instructors from one

agency visiting or working at other sites. For example, the school board offered a small group literacy tutorial at a 1-1 community-based agency. Still another proposal included various literacy deliverers sharing a location, a modified form of “one-stop shopping” for the learner. In general, it was agreed that agencies had to make a greater effort to go to the learner, rather than assuming the learner would find the way to them.

Another similar bridging need identified was moving students between service delivery models. The “leap” between 1-1 and class was difficult for many learners to negotiate. It wasn’t only a matter of handling the differences between literacy level and tutorial content (although this was also important), but being able to learn in a group situation. Small groups focusing on transition were identified both as a gap and a solution, and became part of the LSP.

Perhaps the transitional need identified that presented the greatest challenge was preparing learners to move from literacy programs to higher levels of education, training, or employment. Simply identifying the gap and putting a language “tag” on it (Level 4 or bridging) was an important first step. It put the challenge into a concrete form that could be worked into Literacy Service Plans, and gave it a specific name for discussion around the table.

The third term for clarification around the LCPP table was part-time/full-time learning. One committee did not have time to adequately address the issue, and simply left it up to the individual agency to state which type of situation applied to them. A discussion may need to be pursued at a later date. The other LCPP committee did tackle the definition, and once again, members held varying viewpoints. Finally, they agreed that 12.5+ hours of tutorials per week constituted full-time learning.

What do members mean when they talk about part-time learning? Full-time learning?

What will members agree to mean around the LCPP table (and in the LSP) when they talk about part-time? Full-time?

Timelines

If necessary, adjust your timelines to suit the needs of the group. In our case, it meant scheduling an extra meeting at this time.

It had been anticipated that the process of defining training levels, service delivery models, and part-time/full-time learning would take a small portion of a literacy service planning session.

However, the process spanned two meetings for one LCPP group, and a full meeting for the other. An assumption had been made by the facilitator that literacy providers held a common understanding of these terms. This was not true. Indeed, many misunderstandings existed and needed to be resolved before useful planning could take place.

The discussion of basic terms laid important groundwork. The temptation was to “jump” straight into the actual creation of the LSP; that is, getting “on” with the task at hand. However, as a result of taking the time to develop a common understanding of language, members experienced a better quality of communication and had a greater understanding of the issues affecting literacy delivery in the area as a whole.

As well, defining terms identified difficulties at the beginning of the process, and prevented them from “ballooning” into larger problems later on.

Some of the challenges may simply have been adjusting to program reform. It takes time to assimilate new direction, if only to agree to re-label familiar concepts with new language. It also takes time to adjust to change, particularly if that change is viewed with trepidation and concern.

For some LCPPs, the difficulty might lie in convincing members that defining basic terms is worthwhile in the first place. Perhaps it is simply enough to agree discussion will be curtailed if it becomes apparent that participants are already “on the same wavelength”. This confirmation in itself is useful and allows the literacy service planning process to proceed on solid ground. Participants can use the same language, confident that everyone agrees on what it means.

Committees, however, may find through discussion that more differences exist than they had originally thought. The span between these differences will need to be closed in order to build a plan that is relevant to all partners around the table, and can be supported and implemented by them.

LCPP committees within Project READ Literacy Network serve very different geographical areas and populations. One represents primarily an urban centre (although there are rural considerations), and consists of three major cities and two smaller ones. The other serves a population that is 50% centralised in one city, and 50% rural, spread over a very large geographical area and containing several small communities.

Members were well aware of the geographical and population factors in their areas. However, they had not, as a group, focused on the ramifications to their overall literacy service delivery.

Members hadn't viewed their services by looking at their region or county in its entirety. **Did their collective services meet the needs of the LCPP area? Was there a fair and equitable distribution of services across the geographical territory? Could most residents access the various models and training levels with reasonable ease? Did some areas have an abundance of training opportunities, and others, very few or none?**

Historically, agencies had offered training at a specific site in their community. The site usually met the needs of the individual agency and learners in the vicinity, but hadn't been looked at as one "piece" that fits into a "whole". Neither had the location of delivery services been examined in detail around the table from a common-good perspective.

Exploring duplications (i.e., two similar programs operating within walking distance or along the same bus route) or gaps (i.e., a community having no access to a specific service

Local Communities

What are some of the unique features that define your LCPP area? And that will impact upon the LSP?

Begin the process of looking at the region from an overall perspective. Think about population distribution, travel patterns, size of your area, demographics, or other relevant issues that will impact upon the LSP.

model) occurring within a geographical setting, or according to population density, was a new exercise for both LCPPs.

Think about the geographical lines that divide your LCPP area into separate communities requiring their own literacy delivery services.

One might argue that literacy services grew in a particular fashion out of need and, therefore, the present distribution of services was satisfactory. In some cases, this was true, and the LSP process supported the fact.

The planning task was not to deny the validity of specific agencies and their training. Rather it was to examine the needs of the region as a whole and better plan to meet these needs. Consequently, various actions could (and did) result. In some cases “status quo” prevailed, not because it was the status quo, but because it was the best for the region, shown by an examination process applied in an authentic manner.

In other instances, locations of agencies/services were found to serve the area more effectively if shifted from one community to another, or between sites within a single community. In still others, partnerships were designed to fill gaps, often a shifting or re-allocation of services and delivery models rather than starting something “brand new”.

The LSP process also resulted in urging/supporting deliverers to come up with action plans to prevent duplications. For example, an amalgamation study is underway in Waterloo Region to join four agencies that offer similar services in overlapping geographical areas. The LSP process showed that LCPP members saw amalgamation as a positive and necessary action.

Be ready for the discussion to highlight challenges and solutions that may be useful to “set aside” and bring up later when the group is creating specific proposals for inclusion in the LSP.

The duplication of 1-1 was undeniably apparent when agencies around the table began to map out services required in a particular community, and discussed the services already in place or which agencies wanted to fill the need. It brought the duplication question to the forefront, and opened the way for other difficult questions to be voiced, often bringing with them an emotional element. (Such issues included the large seniors’ and learning disabled programs in the region.)

Many of these questions had been quietly asked away from

the table, but not at it, perhaps because there had been no urgent need. Why stir the hornet's nest if it didn't matter to your program/agency personally? The responsibility, however, had now been handed directly to the LCPP and could not be ignored. Times had changed, and the change demanded new responses. For example, did the LBS model recognise philosophy or approach (i.e. Laubach vs. "needs-based") as a reason to justify a program? Could the LCPP justify in its LSP the existence of similar programs within the same geographical area?

Perhaps surprisingly, the answer to the last question was yes, **if members chose to do so, and could back up their collective decisions with a reasoned response based on facts.**

This perhaps is the greatest value of the LSP process. It encourages dialogue and tough examination, and forces the LCPP to fashion justifications for acting in a specific way, justification not only to funders, but also to themselves. They know collectively why a specific decision is good for their LCPP area, and can back it up.

The LSP also meant identifying service gaps by geographic areas, acknowledging these as shortcomings, and making a commitment to address them in the future, if possible. It is important to recognise that not "every good thing" can be accomplished in a single plan or within a short time period. Priorities needed to be set. Some change, to be less disruptive, is best done over time. In other cases, the LCPPs found that a change could not be implemented within current funding levels.

Post or distribute maps of the LCPP area. Where are the boundaries that define local communities?

Defining Boundaries

The first step in this portion of the planning was simple. Members examined their LCPP area as a whole, and divided it into communities. **A community was defined as the area within which a learner would travel to participate in literacy training.**

We defined a local community in this way:

- a group, population, or “neighbourhood” of learners loosely defined by locale
- the boundaries of the community are established by movement, that is, the distance learners will generally travel to participate in literacy training
- the boundaries are flexible

One approach is to put participants into pairs or small groups. Ensure a mix of sector and agency per group.

Give participants the task of dividing the LCPP into local communities based on their experiences and observations.

Have them record and post their results on a flip chart.

Several factors could influence the final “definition” of local community, including population density and growth, distance to travel, ease of travel (i.e., bus routes), travel patterns of residents, and general income levels (could the average clientele hop in a car and travel to a literacy centre?).

Overlap was expected, and the boundaries were recognised to be fluid. It was acknowledged that members were dealing in generalities. Every situation wouldn’t apply to every learner, nor equally to every service delivery model or sector. These last factors were vital to preventing the process from being bogged down. Each step in the LSP process could be a “research study” in itself. To be done thoroughly, the process would take concerted time and effort.

Like any creative act, an LSP takes shape through process. Members needed to accept that they could not arrive at the definitive answer at each step, but at best, give an overview or their “best shot”. They had to trust their instincts, bringing together their experiences, allowing themselves to be influenced by each other, and then deriving a response from which they could proceed. Perfection was not required, nor likely to be achieved.

Members of the larger of the LCPP committees (Waterloo Region) worked in pairs to divide the area into local communities. In hindsight, the task proved to be a good starting place for planning (although we hadn’t begun with this step). It was objective in nature, and members could complete it without feeling the need to “defend” individual programs or make choices that would directly affect funding.

In general, groups working independent of each other created similar divisions for the region. Specific urban centres were Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, New Hamburg, and Elmira.

These local communities were viewed as geographical catch basins. They included several smaller villages or areas where residents were accustomed to traveling in order to access services or goods in general, whether groceries, a movie, or whatever.

Large group discussion added another category – rural routes. It was agreed that different strategies were needed to serve people living in these areas, and that this could best be accomplished if rural routes were viewed as a community in themselves. In a sense, this meant giving rural routes an elevated status by recognising them along with the five major urban areas.

The exercise proved useful as a prelude to the actual detailing of the LSP. Members focused upon the communities and their unique needs/qualities, rather than simply examining programming already in existence within specific geographical boundaries. This shift in perspective is imperative for creating an LSP that looks ahead to new possibilities, instead of looking back to reaffirm what is already in place.

Other advantages of establishing boundaries for local communities: **it gave a framework upon which to “hang” planning, allowed the group to view the overall task from a different viewpoint, and helped them to identify geographical gaps – areas/groups of learners that weren’t presently being served within their local community.**

The discussion also brought to the forefront or “verbalised” realities that existed within specific areas and would impact upon the LSP. For example, although the Kitchener-Waterloo area borders Cambridge, HWY 401 acts as a barrier.

Cambridge residents will not normally travel to K-W to shop, access services, or participate in literacy training. Cambridge residents view themselves as separate from, and independent of, their neighbours. The exercise reinforced that it was important to treat Cambridge as its own community, and not throw it into a kind of “regional salad bowl”.

Interestingly, it also pointed out that Cambridge has boundaries within itself. The city was created through amalgamation of three communities. In general, people living

Compare results.

Note similarities.

Start by identifying communities upon which everyone is in agreement.

Work from there to establish an agreement about other communities.

Establishing Need

As with the other steps and topics, a discussion of geography, boundaries, and local communities will offer important information that will shape the final version of the LSP — what training will be offered in a specific location and site.

in Preston and Galt wouldn't travel to Hespeler to access literacy training. As well: the increase in commercial density along HWY 24 meant this corridor was fast replacing more traditional downtown cores as a travel route and destination for Cambridge residents, another factor impacting upon plans, and the location of services.

These, however, are details particular to a specific community. More important to the overall LSP process, the examples show the kinds of observations that the activity identified and around which it prompted discussion.

It would be wrong to imply this portion of the LSP had proceeded without "wrinkles". There were difficulties with the task, particularly when the communities were examined in greater detail. Some members feared the group had been too quick to make assumptions concerning travel patterns and local need.

Concerns included: how could they say with certainty that learners would not move from community to community to access programming? What are common travel patterns? How could they identify them? Were there other solutions more suitable than offering literacy programming in "under-serviced" areas/communities?

One suggestion included inviting members from community groups to talk about how they viewed the situation from their experiences; i.e. staff from neighbourhood associations. Another idea was examining postal codes of a random number of learners from each agency/site to establish a snapshot look at where people were coming from to access programming.

Acknowledge that the group may not have all the information to "definitively" breakdown the area into local communities.

The greatest reservations involved local communities that had been defined through the LSP process, but had not been focused upon in the past – in other words, that represented large gaps in service. In the Waterloo Region, these communities included Elmira, New Hamburg, and the rural routes. In many cases, these areas had very little literacy

programming (although agencies with their main offices in KW or Cambridge provided 1-1). In some instances, past services had been withdrawn because of previous funding cuts.

Members were uncomfortable talking about geographic areas with which they were unfamiliar. It was easier to talk about areas where they had already provided programming. They were hesitant to make predictions about literacy needs in these “newly-defined” or “new-focus” areas. They were even less willing to jump in and provide programming.

Part of the difficulty was pinpointing needs in an accurate way that could rationalise the creation of new services or approaches. They wanted to proceed with caution, and weren’t willing to commit moving into an area (particularly taking the risk as an individual agency). In-depth study was required, perhaps greater than that which they could do around the LCPP table. By the end of the LSP, they felt the need for an “environmental scan” by an independent researcher to provide them with further information about a variety of topics that would impact upon planning.

The other factor was a second-guessing of the task at hand. The group knew it was working towards building a regional LSP, and anticipated the various implications associated with this task. Their guidelines specifically included working within current funding levels. There might be a bit of room for increase, but not much. Waterloo Region already received its fair share of funding when viewed from a provincial standpoint.

Delivering services within New Hamburg and Elmira, therefore, could mean taking services away from other locales, primarily in Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge. Yet, programs in these areas were perceived as necessary around the table, and were already well established.

Shifting or changing services within Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo was a much easier task, since it meant less risk.

Plan to explore the issue as part of the general job of the LCPP, and incorporate the findings into future LSPs.

Note that the LSP doesn’t have to meet ALL the needs or gaps identified through the process.

It is okay to state needs, and then put some of them aside to address in future years when the group is in a better position to respond.

Encourage reasonable risk-taking. Note that the LSP does not have to feature solely large, dramatic changes, but can mean smaller “shifts” in services, such as relocating a small group to another local community; or an agency agreeing to reallocate its funds by cutting down the size of one of its existing programs, and using the money to set up another.

Funding, after all, is tied to student contact hours. Why would an agency jeopardise present funding to move into new areas where they could not predict, with certainty, student contact hours, and therefore, could not guarantee themselves stable funding levels? This fact becomes even more pressing with the new funding model, where agencies receive payment on a quarterly basis, and will have funding “adjusted” if targets aren’t met.

Delivery agencies need positive and consistent incentives to make in-depth changes. Perhaps the best approach would be a guarantee of financial stability for “risk-taking” from MET.

As well, providers were simply more confident that they knew the needs within the K-W and Cambridge areas, and therefore, could rearrange or shift present programming to meet them.

Finally, time played a factor. The Waterloo Region group simply ran out of it. Focusing attention upon Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge, and making real change within these local communities took almost three full meetings. LCPP members felt they needed more time and data before they could effectively plan “beyond the surface” for New Hamburg, Elmira, and the rural areas.

This underlines the same fact that is repeated throughout the LSP process. To do the task thoroughly, and honestly, requires an extended period. LSP is probably best an ongoing task (although the emphasis given to it may change over the course of the year). In any case, committees need to set aside time dedicated solely to the LSP and without other agenda distractions.

Board and Other Input

The LCPP committee in Wellington County initially found identifying local communities a relatively easy task, although difficulties with their results arose away from the table. Although threatening to derail the LSP, these difficulties were ultimately useful. They pointed out shortcomings in the

process. They emphasised an important factor that had been overlooked by the facilitator in planning the steps and timeline for the project, namely the role in the decision-making process of Boards and other governing groups or individuals, such as school principals. It is an issue that has impact beyond this specific LSP task, and that needs to be studied and resolved in general.

Questions include: What is the relationship of the LCPP to other decision-making bodies to which an individual agency is attached and even governed? Which takes precedence? Can LCPP members speak with certainty and authority around the table? Can they make decisions that commit an agency to a particular path or that will have fundamental impact upon how an agency operates? If the LCPP is not able to make these decisions unilaterally, how can the group proceed without being “bogged down” in process? How can members look out and plan for the overall good of the region or county (which is the purpose of literary service planning)?

A difficulty arose in the consulting process. Community-based boards were not (for the most part) consulted at the beginning of the process, but after the LCPP had discussed and reached consensus about boundaries and local communities. This was partly due to meeting schedules that did not dovetail, oversight, and most importantly, to the lack of mechanism/precedent within the LCPP itself for consultation and implementation of findings into decision-making.

Probably, the issue has not risen often in the past. But as LCPPs take on greater and greater responsibility for overall service delivery for a geographical area, it will need to be resolved.

Discussion around the LCPP table pointed out the issue was not isolated to volunteer boards, but other decision-making bodies associated with a delivery agency too. For example, schools and colleges had collective agreements with unions

Find ways to incorporate Board, staff, or other input into the process.

Clarify around the LCPP table who can make decisions for a particular agency.

that could put restrictions on LCPP participation or disclosure. LCPP members working in school systems answered to their respective principals and ultimately to an elected Board. Members from Colleges also worked within a greater framework, and were accountable to other groups of people outside literacy.

For this particular project, the issue was never satisfactorily resolved. LCPP members from community-based programs (where the concerns had originally been raised) proceeded with the task, asking their Boards for patience, and assuring them that their feedback had been duly noted. It was accepted that this was a pilot project and by nature, hadn't had "the bugs" worked out of it. Indeed, the process was meant to identify these bugs.

A simple answer is that Boards need to be consulted, and the time must be taken to do it. This is, of course, true. How you get to the end is sometimes more important than the end itself. Having said that, it is also important to point out difficulties in implementation of Board input, not to circumvent the need for it, but help find solutions.

Board meetings didn't necessarily coincide with LCPP meetings in such a way to easily bring information back and forth. Boards had other issues "on their plate" that took precedent on their agenda or prevented adequate attention to the LSP. For example, Annual General Meetings and elections were occurring, and other important issues were being discussed, such as the amalgamation project in Waterloo Region. A turnover of Board members also meant educating new people to the workings of the agency, and then later, (perhaps) taking a look at placing the agency within the larger LCPP picture. Board members were often concerned and rightfully focused on their individual agency, and not necessarily the greater picture. The difficulty is balancing the need to consult fully, and proceeding forward for the good of the whole within a reasonable timeline.

In any case, mechanisms need to be developed around the

table for soliciting feedback from players outside the direct membership and incorporating this feedback into LCPP decisions. By the same token, once decisions have been made, it is important to communicate them to the larger literacy field. This includes Board members, school principals, or other “authoritative” people, but also front line staff.

Communication is extremely important as planning becomes more and more a collective process, and the delivery of literacy services of the LCPP area is seen as a whole, rather than separate parts. It is a viewpoint of literacy that needs to be communicated throughout the system in order for the LSP to have full impact. For example, for a seamless system to truly be effective (which should be an outcome of the LSP) tutors and instructors, as well as coordinators, and even tutor trainers need to be familiar with the overall philosophy that generated the plan, and “buy” into it.

Some LCPP members did consult staff and Board members, bringing feedback to the table before planning decisions were made. This was the intended process, but it didn’t always happen. A booklet outlining the steps for the planning process was distributed beforehand and most participants did their “homework” before the meetings. This was particularly effective when members consulted with others in the organisation. It also helped to have done some “pre-thinking” about the specific task for the meeting.

An important tip for literacy service planning around the table is ensuring members know ahead of time the scope of the discussion so that they may consult, contribute effectively, and be prepared for decision-making.

One board felt the ramifications of the planning decisions made around the LCPP table had too much impact upon their agency. Their concern involved not only the concrete decisions, but also the changes in the way of viewing who and how literacy should be delivered throughout the area. They were right. The LSP process radically changed the traditional approach.

Encourage LCPP members to consult with people at their agency before a meeting and in-between meetings so that they can make decisions around the table — at least in principle.

A Rural/Urban Split

LCPP members in Wellington County had identified an urban local community (the City of Guelph), and several small rural ones. The group generally thought that rural residents wouldn't travel to the urban centre, but may access programming in their closest towns and villages. The rural communities highlighted include Fergus-Elora areas, Erin area, Clifford, Harriston, Drayton, Palmerston, Arthur, and Mount Forest.

The LCPP had traditionally viewed itself as an equal division between rural and urban, and divided responsibility of agencies and services along these lines. Members saw their collective services like a jigsaw puzzle. They "fit" together in a geographical sense. The geographical area covered by the LCPP is extremely large, and adds another element to the "mix".

In general, agencies did not step across the jigsaw boundaries to deliver programming in another's territory. In large part because of this viewpoint, members hadn't examined overall delivery needs around the LCPP table. In the past, they hadn't seen this discussion as their role.

Members were careful about the kinds of comments they made and questions they asked each other. For example, did an agency that serviced rural areas have the right to comment upon issues about programming within the city limits? And vice versa? Could members "step" across rural/urban boundaries to offer services (or seek permission around the LCPP table to do so) if another agency could not meet the demand?

These kinds of questions were not fully addressed or resolved around the table, but the fact that they arose shows a change in the level of interaction and the way the LCPP operated.

Gaps in services in Wellington County were identified through a look at geography, population distribution, the rural/urban split. Members were already aware of the inequitable distribution of services across the county. The

process “laid the facts” on the table, and gave members the job of collectively responding.

Half of the population of Wellington County lives in rural areas. Yet, the majority of literacy service options was available in the urban centre. It wasn't a case of the urban centre having “too much,” but the rural areas having too few choices.

Primarily, rural areas were serviced by one agency. This agency offered individual tutoring. It did this well within a challenging environment (i.e., the special difficulties inherent to delivery in a large, spread-out rural area). The school board also had rural programming, but was limited to class size. It was too expensive to pay teachers to deliver services in areas without maintaining a minimum number that was reached.

This points out a problem with providing a range of service delivery models in rural areas. Special strategies or incentives need to be developed. For example, greater financial support (than simply multiplying \$ times student contact hours) might encourage agencies to put small groups and classes in under-served areas, or offer special programming.

Special circumstances also need to be encouraged and accepted around the LCPP table. For example, in an urban setting a class might require 15 students minimum. In a rural setting, a lower number might be set, simply to support and maintain the principal of equitable services across the LCPP area. The fact that a literacy group meets might be more important than the number in it. However, agencies are hesitant to set up programming that will incur a financial loss, especially since they must project student contact hours in advance in their business plans, and are strictly held accountable. This doesn't encourage risk taking.

The rural-urban split presented another problem. The mandate of the agency that serviced the rural areas was to deliver 1-1 programming. A shift to other delivery models meant a change in this mandate.

Concerns based on the jigsaw model played a factor. Organisations moving into the rural areas meant a single agency would no longer be the sole presence. Student contact hours were already down for this agency, and there was worry about the impact upon enrolment. This mirrored similar concerns expressed by an urban delivery agency about a rural provider picking up the slack for programming in the city limits.

Finally, the division of the rural areas into several local communities resulted in a similar discussion as developed at the Waterloo Region LCPP. **Group and Board members strongly felt they needed more data before they could state with certainty the literacy needs in a particular local community and make plans accordingly.** They wanted an environmental scan/research project to give them the information they required. They didn't want to make concrete plans relying on their "gut" feelings, past experiences, or commonly used statistics. One suggestion included interviews conducted throughout the county with residents who were not literacy students to gain a fresh look at the issue.

It made sense that every delivery model couldn't be supported in every local rural community. It also made sense that new delivery models and options should be made available to rural residents. So which local communities would be provided programming? Which models? Which agencies? Which sectors? Who was willing to step in to offer these services? In light of financial constraints and other uncertainties?

The LCPP didn't have the answers to these questions. However, by dividing the county geographically into a series of local communities, and examining service gaps, it could now voice the questions, and begin to make important inroads. Partnerships resulted which offered new programming as a "field test" in rural areas. This crossing-over of boundaries would not have happened without the LSP process.

Target Groups

“Target Group” was the third major area defined. Both groups created a “profile” list of their clients, and then chose priority groups based on regional need. They also looked at groups of people who weren’t presently being served, and that formed a gap in services that needed to be addressed. The Aboriginal community, youth, and inmates in the new Women’s Prison were highlighted as high priority target groups, as well as people in the workforce, the unemployed, young mothers on social assistance, seniors, the mentally challenged, and the deaf and hard of hearing.

One difficulty with the task was simply logistical. The lists of client groups became long and unwieldy. A flow chart approach to organising information worked better the second time the task was presented. Facilitation started with a general statement about who literacy agencies served as stated by the LBS program reform criteria: adults/youth 16 years +, out of school, Levels 1 & 2 (IALS). The LBS focus: people without work, particularly social assistance recipients.

This statement, in itself, prompted heated discussion. Again, the discussion was useful, although it prolonged the process. Members expressed concern about the LBS focus and the ramifications of the choice of IALS Levels 1 & 2 identified as the criteria. They worried that the unemployed, and especially the under-employed, would be “cut off” from literacy training, if not formally, then informally, with literacy workers having to focus upon those without work.

Both LCPP groups had difficulties with the philosophy or “sub-text” beneath this statement of focus. Did it imply that the literacy community would eventually be told that it could not serve those with jobs?

Cambridge was experiencing a mini-boom in employment, with several of these new opportunities at the “low-end” pay scale. Region-wide, there are many industries and factories, with an increase in demand for a higher-skilled worker.

Those around the table expressed the viewpoint that

Begin the discussion on target groups by reviewing the LBS criteria and focus.

Next, have members think about their “audience” or clientele.

Who do they serve? Who SHOULD they be serving, according to community need? Are there gaps or discrepancies?

literacy agencies have an important role to play in educating people within the workforce. This was seen as a priority, and not an interest that lies outside the main focus. The employed (and their employers) is a group they felt they should be providing services to and targeting for marketing.

Brainstorm a list of “target groups” for your LCPP area. Sample entries may include seniors, single mothers, and youth.

Next, set priorities from the list. Base choices on the specific or unique needs of your LCPP area.

Back up your choices with hard data. For example, what is the level of need for this group?

Have members bring to the table stats or other evidence to support their choice. This will be useful when rationalising your final draft of the LSP.

Level 1 and 2 (IALS) as the literacy range initially caused concern. Again, the difficulty was figuring out how the various levels dovetailed, and identifying preconceived ideas about what the range entailed. A regional workshop explaining the IALS results alleviated concern, since Levels 1 & 2 represented a very large group of people and a vast range of literacy skills. Indeed, for some, it represented literacy skill levels much higher than they had been presently serving, and so did not exclude their present clientele. The experience, however, points out the need to communicate clearly intentions to the field, since the assumptions can cause needless worry.

Finally, the last concern with establishing target groups involved focusing too much on special audiences to the detriment of the general population. It was decided that programs serving a general audience, adults and youth with literacy needs, should be recognized and treated as a priority as well.

The task proved useful from many perspectives. It gave agencies another way to differentiate their services, and to identify gaps and duplications. It offered an alternate view from which to evaluate effectiveness in meeting regional or countywide needs. It brought concerns and misconceptions to the table for discussion.

It also gave members “permission” to ask difficult questions, and provided the opportunity for other members to respond. Two such target group clientele included the seniors program and programming for the mentally challenged. The results were a presentation of budget/funding breakdown, demographic data, and reasoning to explain and justify

programming choices, a discussion that hadn't happened previously around the table.

An agreement was also reached during the later stages of the LSP to cap size for these groups, and potentially shift some of the funds within an agency to provide other services identified by the LCPP.

In Wellington County, the exercise caused concern for some Board members, who felt the target groups chosen by the LCPP did not reflect their input. They also felt the target groups were not relevant to the programming they were mandated to provide.

In hindsight, facilitation should have emphasized that establishing target groups was simply another tool to help in the real task at hand: developing a Literacy Service Plan. Preliminary tasks were useful not as “carved into stone” precepts, but rather, as tools to help communication around the LCPP table.

Most importantly, preliminary tasks turned the attention of the LCPP members to the “overall” needs of the area. This, perhaps, was one of the most difficult challenges. Defining language and establishing target groups encouraged members to think in broader terms, and prepare them for a discussion of identifying literacy service needs in the region in general, rather than only from the viewpoint of their own agency.

Recognise that establishing target or priority groups doesn't necessarily mean excluding others. It is a way to differentiate the services of agencies and to identify gaps.

The largest challenge with the next part of the LSP was not simply restating what historically was in place across the LCPP area. One strategy included focusing on new or “repackaged” initiatives that grew from previous discussions, rather than starting by mapping out existing programming. In preparation, the facilitator met with each person around the LCPP table on a 1-1 basis. These meetings were time-consuming for the facilitator, but extremely valuable. They allowed the facilitator to identify challenges to the LSP task that needed to be addressed and resolved, on an individual as

**Brainstorming
and looking at
new solutions**

The preliminary work is now done. It's time to start fashioning proposals for discussion around the LCPP table.

Meet with participants individually. Listen carefully! Get their ideas, especially about what they'd like to see initiated in the LCPP area. Try out the ideas of others on them! Begin to look for potential areas of consensus.

Recognise that even "griping" by a participant can be turned around and reworded as gaps or needs, and sometimes even specific proposals!

Review all your notes. Highlight needs, gaps, duplications, themes, or even specific programming ideas that have emerged through the initial stages of the process and the 1-1 conversations.

well as group basis. But just as importantly, **the meetings isolated potential solutions and new programming possibilities for the group to study later around the table.**

The 1-1 meetings had no formal structure or agenda, and are best described as conversations. Members simply talked about how they saw the process, and ideally, what they'd like to see initiated in the LCPP area.

Interestingly, themes emerged which hadn't been addressed around the LCPP table, and were important to the LSP. **In some cases, members were hesitant to express a concern or viewpoint, but would talk about it in confidence.** This allowed the issue to be brought up around the table by the facilitator without identifying it with a particular person. The result was a more open dialogue among members, and the hurdle of introducing a topic overcome in a non-threatening way.

Several ideas were pulled out and highlighted for discussion from the 1-1 meetings. This gave members a concrete starting point for the next stage of their planning, acting as a bridge between preliminary tasks and the actual creation of the LSP, and encouraged important pre-thinking between meetings.

Wellington County members began the brainstorming process by discussing ideas to address the larger gaps identified through group discussions and the 1-1 meetings.

Two obvious gaps emerged. One involved rural needs, and the other, urban. Rurally, it was agreed residents should have access to more options than 1-1. For the urban areas, it was agreed lower level students in the community-based program needed options to allow them to participate in literacy training on a (near) full-time basis.

From this brainstorming, a strategy was developed and approved to offer rural residents small group learning through a partnership between Wellington County Literacy Council and Conestoga College. The idea was approved in principle

by the LCPP and the partners worked out the details.

The proposal was later brought to the LCPP table again as a “line item” on the LSP chart. Discussion ensued, and the item was passed. The solution was ideal. One agency had experience in a rural setting. It knew the area, and had contacts through which to spread word of the new program. The other had a new and specific program to offer rural residents, the Employment and Training Readiness component of the College Literacy classes.

Partnership solved the problem of an outside agency parachuting into the area, and the anxieties that the prospect had caused. It also meant shared risk-taking, and therefore, a willingness to try something new. The College did not have to take full responsibility for setting up a program that may or may not be successful in the rural area. It did not have to make decisions about location, etc., but could focus on providing the instructors and curriculum.

The community-based host also benefitted. The arrangement offered new options to clients and attracted people who might not normally have approached a literacy agency. The partnership offered an opportunity to explore new models. The agency also planned to make 1-1 tutorials available to the students to supplement their learning, and to help them make the transition to a group scenario.

Interim funding provided the Wellington County Literacy Council and Conestoga College with the opportunity to field-test the small group before committing to it in the next year’s business plan.

At last notice, 7 learners had signed up for the program, in itself a tremendous accomplishment, and a tribute to the LSP efforts. It must be stressed that this partnership represents an enormous jump or shift in thinking, as well as the services provided, by this LCPP collectively. It wouldn’t have happened without the LSP process, and the willingness of the two agencies to risk an approach outside the traditional mode

Probably by now many useful and concrete suggestions have been voiced. Organise and present these for discussion around the LCPP table.

Work to turn the ideas into concrete proposals. Whenever WHO should deliver the service is quite apparent and in agreement around the table, attach the name of the agency to the proposal.

Ask the representative from that agency to develop the idea further.

Don’t overlook possible partnerships! Have both partners work out the details together and report back to the group.

of operation for the area.

Risk factor cannot be downplayed. It is imperative that efforts are made around the LCPP table and by MET to support “non-historical” plans. Programs require positive encouragement to initiate change. Ideally, this might mean MET setting a specific amount of money aside to “test” change or act as an incentive. It might mean firmer guarantees that flexibility (re: business plan quarterly reports) would be applied to agencies attempting to implement a new option that had been identified and agreed upon at the LCPP table.

Originally, facilitation steps had called for members to identify all the training needs of each local community using LBS service models and levels. This approach didn't work.

It was easier to talk about a few major gaps or obvious needs that had emerged as they related to a specific community or within the region as a whole.

The other major initiative for the LCPP included a proposal for a full-time small group offered by a community-based agency and targeting basic or entry level learners. Co-ordinators reported that learners themselves had been asking for more tutorial hours. The new small group would also serve as a transitional link to other training or educational programs. The process for turning this proposal from brainstorming stage to an LSP line item followed the same basic steps. The member proposing to offer the small group consulted with others from her agency, and brought the plans back to the LCPP table for approval, and inclusion in the LSP.

These two initiatives (along with a few smaller ones) were highlighted for the upcoming funding year. It was recognized that these were major undertakings for the small LCPP. The group also strongly felt it needed to conduct further research before it could undertake other changes, particularly within the rural communities.

We built upon these, and then filled the other “pieces” as a clearer “picture” of what service delivery might look like began to take shape.

A different approach was used to facilitate the process for the Waterloo Region LCPP. At a meeting, six stations were set up around the room. Each represented a local community. Also distributed ahead of time, and then posted at each station, were the suggestions/comments from the 1-1 meetings that related to the particular community.

Three master sheets (flip chart) were posted at each station. Headings included: A/ What's delivered now? By whom?

B) What's needed? C) Brainstorming ideas.

In groups of three, members rotated from station to station. They gathered around the flip charts and recorded their input on the master sheets. They discussed the unique needs of each community, identified gaps, brainstormed solutions, and wrote down what their agency presently offered. By the end of the exercise, members had created a collective snapshot of each community, and had begun to fashion a preliminary LSP.

The information from the master sheets was distributed to LCPP members between meetings for referral. They were given the task of consulting with staff, Board members, and others at their agency, and bringing to the next meeting their specific proposals for the upcoming year. It was also pointed out that the brainstorming ideas contained several partnerships. Members were asked to explore their partnerships, contacting each other if they wanted to pursue them, and bringing tentative arrangements to the table.

A phone call by the facilitator was made between meetings to each member to remind them of the tasks that needed to be done, to answer questions and concerns, and to provide encouragement.

These calls were extremely important as they kept members on track, and drew members' attention to identified gaps and proposed solutions that might involve them. This facilitated the process, and helped to ensure the end-result of the LSP did not simply repeat the "historical" approaches of the past.

At the next meeting, the six stations were again set up. Group members were each given stick-on "post-it" notes. They were asked to write down one specific proposal from their agency per note, and then to post their notes on the flip chart for the corresponding community.

Interestingly, the results portrayed a visual picture of gaps that remained, and the need members felt for more information before they could make program commitments. Noticeably

Adapt facilitation to suit members. For example, the larger LCPP group preferred breaking into small groups to tackle hands-on tasks. They liked to get up, move around, and bounce ideas off each other. They were extremely task-focused.

For the larger LCPP, the following approach worked well:

- Set up stations about the room — one per local community.
- Post at each station 3 flip chart sheets headed: "What's offered now?" "What's needed?" and "Brainstorming Delivery Ideas".
- Divide members into small groups and have them rotate among stations at their own speed.
- Ensure a "mix" in the groups, re: sector, agencies.
- Have small groups discuss and then add to the flip chart their ideas concerning each community.

- Members also recorded if they were already providing services in the community and what these were (i.e., name of agency, service model & level).
- At the end of the meeting, transcribe flip charts and distribute notes to members.
- Ask members to use the notes to prepare concrete service delivery proposals from their agency for discussion at the next meeting.

At the next meeting:

- Again set up stations by community.
- Post a flip chart sheet at each station.
- Give each member a handful of post-it notes (with stick-on backing).
- Have members write one proposal from their agency per post-it, and stick it on the corresponding flip chart sheets.

fewer notes were posted in the “new” local communities that were highlighted through the LSP process: New Hamburg, Elmira, and the Rural Routes.

Time was also provided at LCPP meetings for discussion, interaction, and planning among members. It was important to work this into the agenda, since LCPP members didn’t always have the time to contact each other outside meetings. Other responsibilities at their agencies took priority, a factor that facilitation had to accommodate. On occasion, personalities and past experiences played a part, with certain players unwilling to initiate contact. This hesitancy became less of a factor as the process proceeded, and plans took shape around the table.

Sometimes, new partnerships and configurations emerged as a result of the proposals. For example, small groups for entry level and intermediate students were identified as a gap in Kitchener-Waterloo. Transition groups were also identified, both inter-agency and inter-levels. Two agencies banded together to fill this gap by offering a joint small group. Another provider asked to join the effort once the proposal was laid on the table.

Small groups had not been successful in the past due to lack of a minimum number of students willing to participate. By coming together and “pooling” interested students, minimum numbers should be attained and bridging occur as a result. Details still needed to be worked out; i.e., how to dovetail different approaches such as Laubach, community-based, and school board. This was work, however, to be done away from the table by the individual agencies.

It was important that the LCPP table dealt with the “larger picture”, rather than the specifics. Members were asked to approve entries or proposals in principle, and leave it up to the players/partners to handle details and report back if necessary.

It was also important to encourage members to think of the LSP as a shaping process. Members won’t get it

“right” the first time out, nor should they think of their first attempt as perfect. A group effort means that input changes the collective output. Nothing is carved in stone, but can be modified through the process. Emphasizing this perspective also served to calm anxieties that people often feel when asked to try a new approach.

Proposals were inputted and organised in a chart form so that each proposal represented a line entry. This was done by the facilitator, and then distributed to members. It organised information so members had an overall view of what was proposed, and could further shape the LSP.

The Waterloo Region LSP was organised by local communities. Columns included: Location or Site, Target Group, LBS Service Function, LBS Training Delivery Model and Level, Delivery Agent(s), Activity (specific details; i.e., part-time/full-time, how often tutorials occurred, etc.), # of student contact hours by location, Advantage or Rationale (why this proposal has been accepted around the table).

The chart was modified with use. Members could not fill in student contact hours initially. At this point, they had not yet received their grant applications, and weren't sure HOW to answer this accurately. Rather than slowing down the process, this column was left blank to be filled in after grant applications were finished, and members had worked through the process.

Another addition to the chart: **Does this proposal represent something “new” or a modification to present services?**

This chart entry was important as a planning tool and to readily identify for participants changes that had been made. In a sense it also served as positive feedback, showing that the process had initiated new ideas and results.

Both LCPPs asked that the chart reflect funding source. They wanted to know whether a specific proposal would be funded through MET dollars (fully or partially), or had other funding

Formalising the LSP

Organise the proposals into a form that the first draft of the LSP will take.

We used a chart organised by local community for the larger LCPP.

For the smaller LCPP the chart was organised into rural and urban service delivery.

Column headings in the LSP chart included:

- Location or Site
- Target Group
- LBS Service Function
- LBS Training Delivery Model and Level
- Delivery Agent(s)
- Activity
Specific details; i.e., part-time/full-time, how often tutorials occurred, etc.
- Student contact hours by location or site
- Is this proposal new or a change from the past?
- Advantage or Rationale
Why this proposal has been accepted around the table.

sources. This issue opened up another area that wasn't fully resolved around the table. Should the LSP reflect ALL literacy programming, regardless of WHO funded it? Or just LBS programs? Did LCPP members have the right to "veto", or perhaps even simply to discuss, programming that had other funding sources or were self-sufficient?

Some agencies were reluctant to disclose all of their services, and did not want some entries to appear in the chart. This meant members around the table did not fully know programs offered by other members. The facilitator worked to overcome this hesitancy, suggesting that "all the cards" needed to be put out on the table in order to make community plans.

The Wellington LCPP process followed a different path. New programming ideas were first formalised into chart form and discussed/approved line item by line item.

At the next meeting, the group looked at programming presently in existence. Members reported on and answered questions about their agency's service delivery. The facilitator recorded and posted these "entries".

The facilitator had mistakenly assumed that LCPP members were already familiar with the details of each other's programming. This was simply not true. However, the approach worked well, if somewhat accidentally. By focusing first on overall large gaps, the Wellington County LCPP made significant strides in new directions rather than simply "tinkering with" the historical approach.

Existing programming was entered into LSP chart form for the next LCPP meeting. An overall discussion ensued, but not line by line. Time simply ran out. As well, members had perhaps accomplished as much as they could at this "go around" at planning. They needed time to absorb the new approach, and to become more comfortable with the general LSP concept.

The delivery agencies around the Wellington LCPP table all intended to apply for funding to support programs already in

existence. However, they took the concept of working within current funding levels seriously. One large agency agreed that new programming it intended to introduce would be absorbed and not result in a request for new dollars. Some of the smaller groups had experienced a drop in student contact hours, and new programming could possibly bring them “back up” to current levels.

A few of the new major initiatives may require a small increase in overall government funding dollars allocated to the County. It is the hope of the facilitator that this is provided in order to support the philosophy underlying literacy service planning, and the moves made by LCPP members towards an equitable distribution of services across the LCPP area and into rural areas.

The Waterloo Region LCPP added two steps to the process. It did a review of the “what’s needed” notes from a past meeting by community, and used this information to modify the LSP. The facilitator also created a “checklist” by community to show models, levels, and target groups that would be served by the proposals. As well, the group did line-by-line reviews of each proposal on the table.

This last step took two full meetings, yet still felt rushed. Three communities were reviewed in detail: Kitchener, Waterloo, and Cambridge. Time ran out, but the members also felt that they did not yet have adequate information to make plans for the Rural Routes, New Hamburg, and Elmira. These gaps were noted for future LSP planning.

The line-by-line analysis was useful to this LCPP. They had made several new proposals in response to the LSP process, and many partnerships had resulted. Line examination allowed members to clarify through questions, and to debate justifications for specific entries. Further modifications took place to the plans. Between meetings, the facilitator updated and distributed the LSP charts.

The LSP process to this point had spanned three-and-a-half

Once you have entered the proposals in LSP chart form, distribute to members.

Ask members to come to the next meeting prepared to discuss the proposals, and to fill in gaps in the chart. Initial proposals probably won’t have included all the details — that’s okay!

Discuss the proposals item by item. Can the LCPP collectively approve the proposal? If not, why not? Can the entry be modified?

Give members the opportunity to ask for clarification about each proposal.

Revisit past notes. Look at the LSP as a whole and community by community. Have needs been met? Are there duplications? Does the LSP plan require further modification?

Be realistic in terms of probable funding levels. Recognise that, when considered collectively, the proposals will probably all need to fall within current funding levels received in the LCPP area (although you can always try!).

Consider other ideas: Can we shift dollars around within an agency or the area as a whole? Are there other sources of funding?

Work at the LSP until the group can approve it.

months. These last steps occurred in December before the Christmas break. In January, LCPP members focused on their business plans, and submitting applications for funding for the upcoming year. This dovetailed with the LSP process, and brought this portion of it to an end. Members needed the plans to formulate their grant applications.

The LSP to date was distributed in January to each member. Although not quite complete (still lacking contact hours and funding sources), the primary information was in place.

Also included were footnotes that clarified specific entries, and identified gaps or other important information that needed to be recorded for future planning.

There was a satisfaction in formulating the major portions of the plan to end in time for the grant applications. The members had LCPP support. They had clearly thought through their proposals, rather than simply maintaining status quo.

Perhaps the greatest satisfaction to the facilitator came from the fact that a new process had been put in place. Usually, agencies would apply in January for funding to support specific programming, and then would report back to the LCPP, which might compile a region or countywide listing. This time, the order was “reversed”. Agencies based their business plans on proposals that had already been presented around the LCPP table.

It is a timeline that MET may wish to maintain and work into their future calendars. It makes sense to complete the LSP and submit a final version a few months prior to the upcoming year’s business plan. For one, the proposals will have immediate relevancy. Some plans can be made a year in advance, and gaps can be identified through long-term planning. However, the LSP must also make room to adapt to changes in the literacy field, and more importantly, in the specific LCPP area. That, it seems, is what community planning is all about.

Concluding Remarks

The Waterloo Region and Wellington County LCPP committees have made a good start to their respective LSPs. It would be misleading, however, to present the viewpoint that the process had been “taken” as far as it could. There are still inroads to make, and issues to resolve. As time progresses, members will find better and better ways to work collectively to meet the overall needs of their area. Planning is indeed a process.

In closing, the facilitator wishes to draw attention to three factors she feels vital to creating an LSP, and have been impressed upon her through the process. First, an LSP takes time to be done properly. It is unfair to the participants, and ultimately to the learners, to short-change the process. Second, participants need to approach the task in an honest and positive manner; if necessary, giving the LSP process the “benefit of the doubt” that it can work. Participants need to bring their own experience to the table, but be willing to listen and work with others to create the best plans for the area. Third, the LSP needs to be considered a “living document”. It is a plan in progress, and shaped by a process.

This last point needs to be taken to heart by both the local planning committees and MET. Locally, members must put proposals on the table and then collectively shape them to respond to the community need. Government needs to remain flexible to allow LCPPs to adapt their plans as necessary. Planning committees can’t feel a threat of being “corralled” by their own document – either by its shortcomings, oversights, or exuberance. Otherwise, groups won’t be willing to take risks, but will tend to maintain the “status quo”.

Finally, MET must find ways to support the efforts of the committees in their planning. Once again, risk-taking comes to mind, and needs to be encouraged. The facilitator does not have the answers and understands the necessity for working within current funding levels. Both committees diligently kept “funding ceilings” in mind. However, people also need

An LCPP won’t be able to meet every need through a single LSP.

Yet, the plan will be used to help funders decide how money is distributed. Find a way to include in the final LSP those gaps and concerns that members want to address in the future and for which agencies may someday request funding.

One approach is to add footnotes or endnotes to the LSP.

positive incentive to initiate change.

Asking the hard questions around the table, and then having the courage to act upon them, needs some guarantees in return. This may simply mean clearly laying out the rules beforehand, but balancing them with a flexible approach. It may also mean going out of the way (financially or otherwise) to ensure shifts in services are recognised, rewarded, and given adequate time to work.

Attachment: Sample LSP Report Template

LSP TEMPLATE

Serving (local community): _____

Model: _____

Agency & Location	Target Group	Service Functions	Training Level
Which agency delivers the service? Where?	To whom?	Which services are offered at this location?	What levels of literacy training?
		<input type="checkbox"/> Information & Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Training Plan Dev. <input type="checkbox"/> Training <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation & Follow-up	
Activity	Exit Outcome	Contact Hours	Advantage/Rationale
How many learners? How often? Duration?	What do most learners want to achieve?	Time spent with students?	Why do we need this program?
	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Further Training <input type="checkbox"/> Further Education <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Goals <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Setting		

Model: _____

Agency & Location	Target Group	Service Functions	Training Level
Which agency delivers the service? Where?	To whom?	Which services are offered at this location?	What levels of literacy training?
		<input type="checkbox"/> Information & Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Training Plan Dev. <input type="checkbox"/> Training <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation & Follow-up	
Activity	Exit Outcome	Contact Hours	Advantage/Rationale
How many learners? How often? Duration?	What do most learners want to achieve?	Time spent with students?	Why do we need this program?
	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Further Training <input type="checkbox"/> Further Education <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Goals <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Setting		

Sample LSP Entry #1

Serving: Kitchener Waterloo**Model:** Small Group

* requires further funding

Agency & Location	Target Group	Service Functions	Training Level
Which agency delivers the service? Where?	To whom?	Which services are offered at this location?	What levels of literacy training?
Waterloo Region District School Board in partnership with LCK-W, Core Literacy (amalgamated) at St. Louis Campus Waterloo	Adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information & Referral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literacy Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training Plan Dev. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evaluation & Follow-up	Level 1
Activity	Exit Outcome	Contact Hours	Advantage/Rationale
How many learners? How often? Duration?	What do most learners want to achieve?	Time spent with students?	Why do we need this program?
Part-time, ongoing Approx: 6 learners/group Mon & Wed. afternoons 37 weeks	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further Training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal Goals <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Setting	TCH: WCDSB: 740 hours Core: 185 hours LCK-W: 185 hours SCH WCDSB: 828 hours	Fills delivery model gap identified through community planning; serves Waterloo; acts as a transition/bridging group agency to agency, and from 1-1 to group/classroom.

Model: Small Group

Agency & Location	Target Group	Service Functions	Training Level
Which agency delivers the service? Where?	To whom?	Which services are offered at this location?	What levels of literacy training?
Waterloo Region District School Board Cameron Heights Secondary School Night School, Kitchener	Adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information & Referral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literacy Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training Plan Dev. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Evaluation & Follow-up	Level 2, 3, bridging
Activity	Exit Outcome	Contact Hours	Advantage/Rationale
How many learners? How often? Duration?	What do most learners want to achieve?	Time spent with students?	Why do we need this program?
Mon./Thurs. part-time; evenings 5 hours/week 32 weeks approx. 16 learners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Employment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further Training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further Education <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Goals <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Setting	TCH: 2560 hours SCH: 2670 hours	Bridging identified as a priority target group; transition throughout system; evening small group—fills needs of learners employed during day.

Sample LSP Entry #2

Serving: All of Waterloo Region

Model: 1-1

Agency & Location	Target Group	Service Functions	Training Level
Which agency delivers the service? Where?	To whom?	Which services are offered at this location?	What levels of literacy training?
Project READ Literacy Network	OntarioWorks clients NB: Not MET funded	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information & Referral <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literacy Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training Plan Dev. <input type="checkbox"/> Training <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation & Follow-up	All levels
Activity	Exit Outcome	Contact Hours	Advantage/Rationale
How many learners? How often? Duration?	What do most learners want to achieve?	Time spent with students?	Why do we need this program?
1.5 hour individual assessment; averages 15 learners per month	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further Training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal Goals <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Goal Setting	SCH: 540 hours	Efficient and appropriate routing of OntarioWorks clients to literacy agencies.

Model: Small Group

Agency & Location	Target Group	Service Functions	Training Level
Which agency delivers the service? Where?	To whom?	Which services are offered at this location?	What levels of literacy training?
Project READ Literacy Network at various locations	Parents, caregivers NB: Not MET funded	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information & Referral <input type="checkbox"/> Literacy Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Training Plan Dev. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation & Follow-up	Family Literacy Workshops
Activity	Exit Outcome	Contact Hours	Advantage/Rationale
How many learners? How often? Duration?	What do most learners want to achieve?	Time spent with students?	Why do we need this program?
2 hour workshops 4 times per year	<input type="checkbox"/> Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Further Training <input type="checkbox"/> Further Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Personal Goals <input type="checkbox"/> Goal Setting	N/A	Preventative initiative; proven demand through attendance at workshops

**Attachment:
Sample LSP Chart Workbook**

Developing an LSP Service Delivery Plan

This workbook is designed to help Waterloo-Wellington LCPP members create a service delivery plan. It focuses upon the LBS service function training (although optional exercises are suggested for other service functions). At the end, participants will have together created a training service delivery plan for our LCPP area. This task is required by MET. The process is expected to take two meetings of the LCPP as a whole, and some preliminary thinking or planning by each member.

How to proceed...

1. **Browse through the workbook** to get an overall “feel” for the types of decisions you’ll be asked to make.
2. **Work on A-D on your own before our next LSP meeting.** Jot down your ideas. Remember to think about the needs of our area as a whole. If you require more space to write, photocopy the pages.
3. **Be ready at the LCPP meetings to work through A-D again.** We’ll pool and discuss our ideas to create a “master copy” together.
4. **Between meetings, you are asked to work on E by consulting with members of your specific agency.** Bring back the results to our second LSP meeting. We’ll finish our planning by focusing on F (and perhaps G). We will also create a master chart of service delivery for our LCPP area as a whole.

Keep in mind that we must work within the current funding levels. This factor will have a large impact upon the plans we make.

Helping the process along...

Steps A-G in this booklet lead participants from an overall view of the literacy needs in our LSP area to concrete ways in which their specific agencies will deliver training. For the planning process to work, it’s important that participants come “to the table” with a common perspective or starting point. Here’s what we’re asking:

- Put aside an historical approach of how you looked at things or did them in the past (whether as an individual agency or as an LSP as a whole).
- “Step outside” the perspective of your particular job and agency – at least at the beginning stages of our planning. We’ll return to our specific roles, and the services each agency delivers, at the mid-point of our planning.
- Focus on the literacy needs of the people in our area and see where that leads us in our planning! Consider people we have not yet reached as well as the makeup of our present learner base.
- Start the planning process from a broad perspective. As we move further along, narrow your focus and think in specific terms.

A. Decide: Who will we serve?

LBS criteria:

- 16 years and older
- Out of school
- Levels 1 & 2

LBS focus:

People without work, particularly Social Assistance Recipients

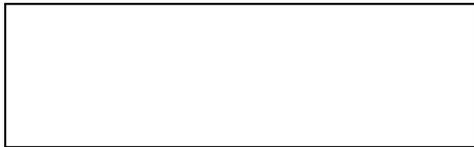
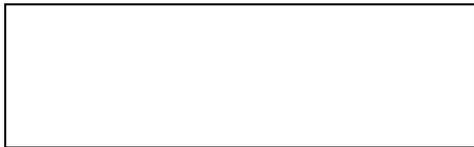
Step 1:

Consider our LSP area as a whole. What are the main groups of people who need our services? Examine the demographics in our area, literacy levels, special needs, and other factors. List one group in each box. There may be overlap. That's okay! Are there sub-groups in each main group? If so, record them. Work across the page.

Main Groups

Sub-Groups

Step 2: Evidence of need or Rationale

		<input data-bbox="716 850 1092 909" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="716 919 1092 978" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="716 989 1092 1045" type="text"/>	<input data-bbox="1128 877 1498 1024" type="text"/>		
				<input data-bbox="716 1066 1092 1125" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="716 1136 1092 1194" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="716 1205 1092 1262" type="text"/>	<input data-bbox="1128 1094 1498 1241" type="text"/>
					
				<input data-bbox="716 1520 1092 1579" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="716 1589 1092 1648" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="716 1659 1092 1715" type="text"/>	
				<input data-bbox="716 1757 1092 1816" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="716 1827 1092 1885" type="text"/> <input data-bbox="716 1896 1092 1953" type="text"/>	<input data-bbox="1128 1785 1498 1932" type="text"/>

Step 2:

- ✓ Analyse each main group
- ✓ Provide concrete **Evidence of Need or Rationale** for literacy training. (For example, what % of the population does it represent in our LSP area? Do we have related literacy statistics? Are there other factors?)
- ✓ Record

Step 3:

- ✓ Set priorities.
- ✓ Ensure the priorities reflect the overall need of our LSP area and are supported by evidence you have given. Record below. Also record your rationale. Why these priorities?

Our LSP Priorities

Rationale



B. Decide:

What communities are within our LSP?

Community of learners:

- a group, population, or “neighbourhood” of learners defined by locale
- the boundaries of the community established by movement — the distance learners will generally travel to participate in literacy training
- these boundaries are flexible.

Step 1:

- ✓ Consider the geography of our LSP. Think about the ease of movement or flow of learners within the area as a whole. Will learners in general travel throughout our area to participate in literacy training?
- ✓ If the answer is “no”, proceed through the following steps to help us define the “communities of learners” within our LSP.

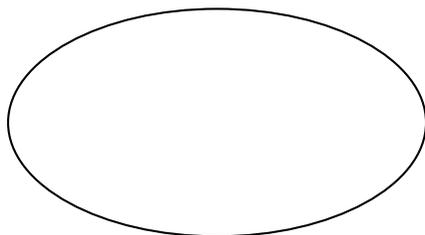
Step 2:

- ✓ Identify central locations in our LSP. These may be cities, towns, large neighbourhoods, rural areas, or may be defined in another way. That’s up to us!
- ✓ Record the name of a central location in the centre of each circle below. Then work across the page. Record smaller places included in, or encompassed by, each location (that is, where learners will travel with relative ease to participate in literacy training).

Step 3:

- ✓ Now set general boundaries for each community. Give your rationale for these boundaries. (For example, where will learners not travel to participate in literacy training? Why? [i.e., no public bus access])

Step 1: Location



Step 2: Areas included



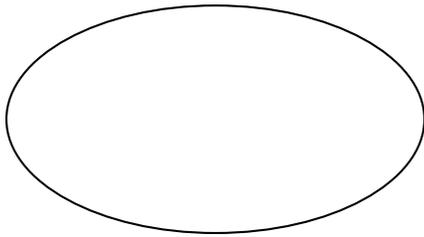
Step 3: Rationale

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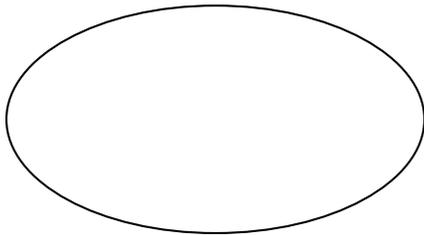
Step 1: Location

Step 2: Areas included

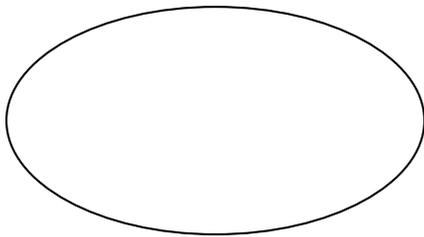
Step 3: Rationale



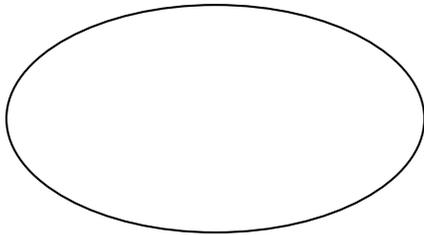
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Step 4:

✓ Optional: Summarize by sketching a rough map of our LSP area and circling the general location of each community of learners. Recognize the communities are “fluid”. Boundaries may change with the type of service offered and the individual learners.

C. Decide:

What training does each community need?

- LBS service functions:**
- Information and referral
 - Literacy assessment
 - Training plan development
 - Training
 - Evaluation and follow-up

- Service model range**
- 1-1 tutoring
 - Small group
 - Classroom

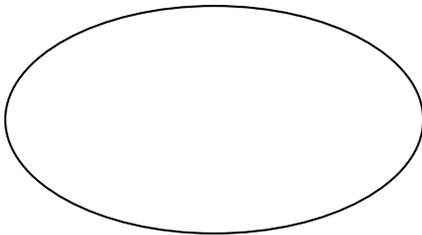
- Literacy skills level**
- Level 1
 - Level 2
 - Level 3

Step 1:

- ✓ Consider the main groups/priorities we established (A) and the communities of learners (B).
- ✓ Consider the LBS service model range and literacy skill levels.
- ✓ Remember to plan within current funding levels.
- ✓ What training does each community need? Use the chart below to help in the planning
- ✓ First write the community in the circle. Then work across the page. Check off training needed.
- ✓ Finally, record rationale for your choices (if relevant) and main groups or priorities served.

When planning, keep in mind that not all training options will be required in each community. For example, a reliable public transportation system may mean learners can access a higher-level or specialized program outside their immediate community. However, LSP members may find each community still needs a localized 1-1 program for learners at Level 1.

COMMUNITY

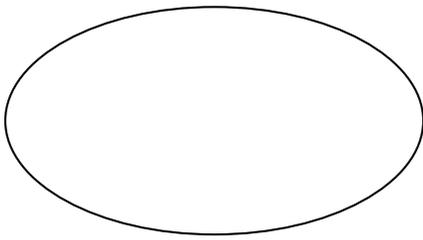


- 1-1**
- Level 1
 - Level 2
 - Level 3

- Small Group**
- Level 1
 - Part-time Full-time
 - Level 2
 - Part-time Full-time
 - Level 3
 - Part-time Full-time

- Classroom**
- Level 1
 - Part-time Full-time
 - Level 2
 - Part-time Full-time
 - Level 3
 - Part-time Full-time

Rationale:
Main groups/priorities



1-1

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

Small group

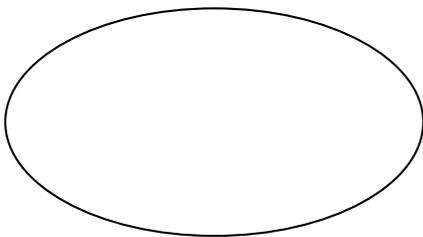
- Level 1
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 2
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 3
 - Part-time Full-time

Classroom

- Level 1
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 2
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 3
 - Part-time Full-time

Rationale:

Main groups/priorities:



1-1

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

Small Group

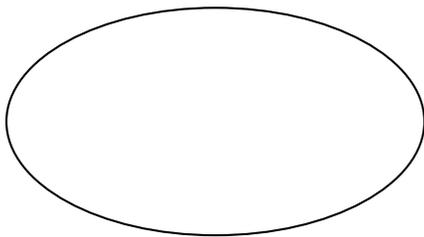
- Level 1
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 2
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 3
 - Part-time Full-time

Classroom

- Level 1
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 2
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 3
 - Part-time Full-time

Rationale:

Main groups/priorities:



1-1

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

Small Group

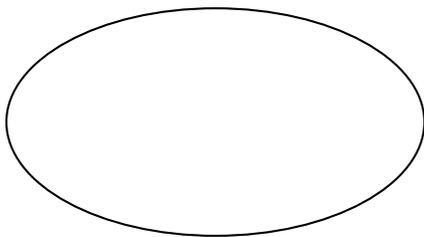
- Level 1
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 2
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 3
 - Part-time Full-time

Classroom

- Level 1
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 2
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 3
 - Part-time Full-time

Rationale:

Main groups/priorities:



1-1

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

Small Group

- Level 1
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 2
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 3
 - Part-time Full-time

Classroom

- Level 1
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 2
 - Part-time Full-time
- Level 3
 - Part-time Full-time

Rationale:

Main groups/priorities:

D. Brainstorm:

How might we deliver services to these communities in new ways?

We've mapped out what training is needed in each community of learners in our LSP area. Recognizing that funding will not increase in the near future, can we find new and creative ways to meet these training needs?

Step 1:

- ✓ Think about how we can better work together to meet training needs in our LSP area.
- ✓ Brainstorm new approaches or fine-tune "old" ones.
- ✓ Consider partnerships, satellite programs, division of responsibilities among agencies, etc.
- ✓ Be creative! Suggest whatever! (We won't hold you to it!)

Great Ideas!	Which priority or training need would be met?	Is the idea worth pursuing? Why?
		
		
		
		
		
		
		
		

Other LBS service functions:

- Information and referral
- Literacy assessment
- Training plan development
- Evaluation and follow-up

Step 2:

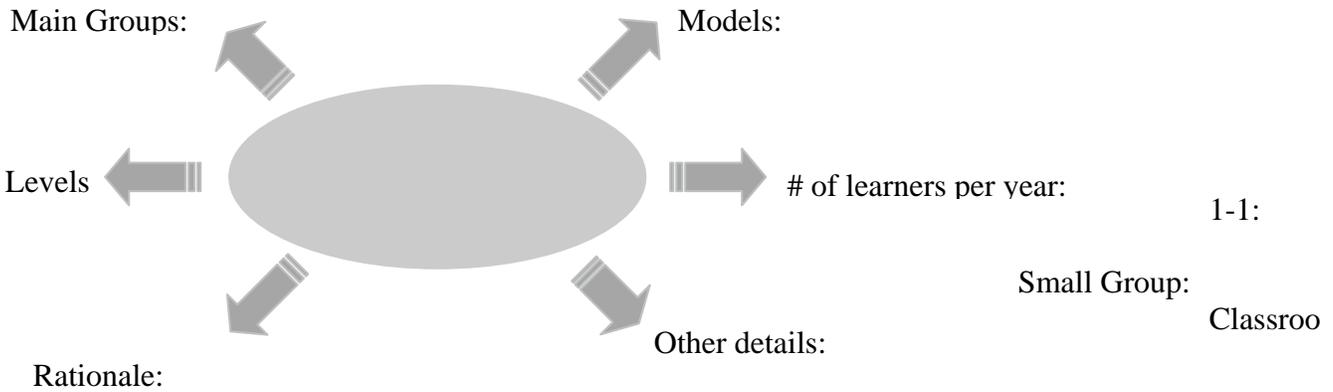
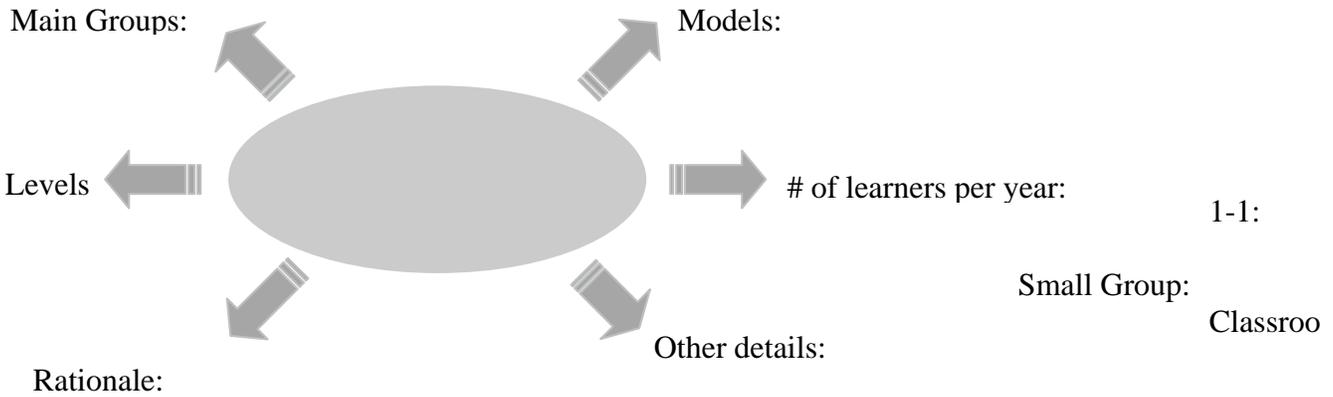
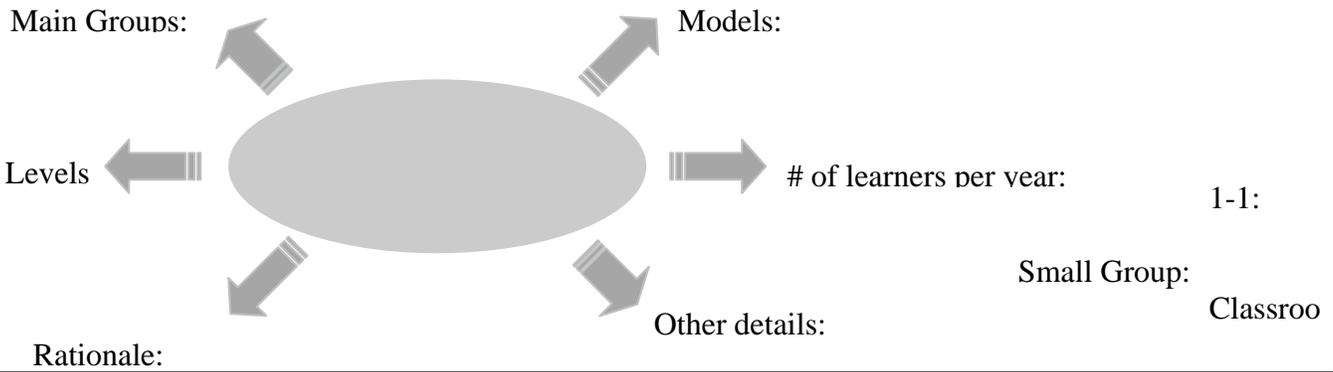
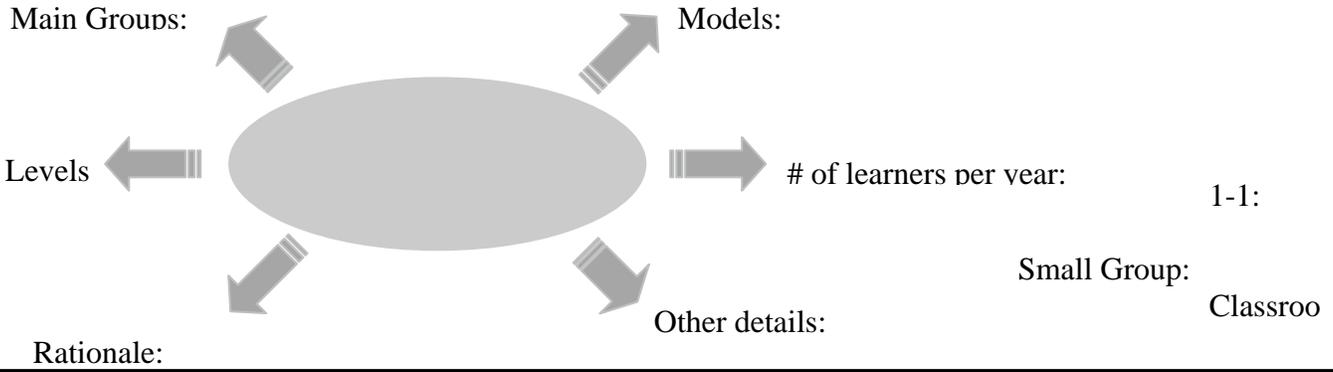
- ✓ Now consider the remaining four LBS service functions.
- ✓ Consider as well tutor/staff training (and if you wish, other service development areas).
- ✓ How can we better work together to serve our LSP as a whole, and individual communities of learners?.
- ✓ Optional: work through C. again, but apply the exercise to other functions.

Great Ideas!

Which priority or training need would be met?

Is the idea worth pursuing? Why?





F. Decide:

What training will we deliver as a whole?

Step 1:

- ✓ Integrate the training plans of all agencies. Start by filling in the name of a community.
- ✓ Consider: Who is best able to deliver a specific service to the community?
- ✓ Record the agencies that will provide this specific service to the community, as well as other pertinent facts. Provide rationale. Why this agency?

COMMUNITY:

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

COMMUNITY:**Agency:** _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

COMMUNITY:**Agency:** _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Agency: _____

Main groups served: _____

Levels: _____

of learners per year: 1-1: _____; small group: _____; classroom: _____

Site: _____

Other details: _____

Why should this agency provide this particular service (rationale)?

Step 2:

- ✓ Take a look at our overall plans.
- ✓ Are we providing a full range of literacy training across our LSP area? Have we met the priorities we established?
- ✓ Are there unserved needs or gaps? Overlap or duplication in a community?
- ✓ If needed, “revisit” the plans and modify them.
- ✓ Then identify the remaining overlaps and explain why they are necessary. Identify unserved needs or gaps for future planning.

Overlap:

Reasons:

Overlap:

Reasons:

Unserved needs for future planning:

Step 3:

- ✓ Fill in the Master Chart for service delivery in our LSP area (to be provided).
- ✓ Look at the Master Chart as a group. Discuss. Are we satisfied? Revise, if necessary.
- ✓ Finished? Congratulations! We did it!

G. Decide:

What about the other service functions?

Other LBS service functions:

- Information and referral
- Literacy assessment
- Training plan development
- Evaluation and follow-up

Step 1:

- ✓ Repeat E and F focusing upon other LBS service functions.
- ✓ Consider tutor/staff training (and if you wish, other service development areas).
- ✓ Consider as well our brainstorming ideas!
- ✓ What will your agency provide?
- ✓ How does this fit into the needs of the LCPP as a whole, and the services of other agencies?
- ✓ What should the Network provide?

My agency's plans:

How this fits into the needs of our LSP area as a whole:

The Network should provide:

How this fits into the needs of our LCPP area as a whole:

**Step 1: To Guide Your Thinking**

- ✓ Think in broad terms of your LSP as a whole.
- ✓ Step outside your usual perspective. Put aside (for the time being) an “historical” approach of how you looked at things or did them in the past.
- ✓ Consider people you have not yet reached as well as the makeup of your present learner base.
- ✓ Look at the demographics of your LSP area.
- ✓ Take into consideration the percentage of the target populations you identify to the population at large. Does your choice of target groups reflect the balance? Is there a group you have missed and that should be part of your plan?
- ✓ Look at special populations. Does a specific need exist that might not be reflected in the demographics?
- ✓ Justify your choices. Provide concrete reasons.

**Step 2: To Guide Your Thinking**

- ✓ Think about your learners in your LSP area.
- ✓ How far will they travel to move along the “continuum of learning” to access different programs as their needs change?
- ✓ Are there boundaries that define particular communities of learners within your LSP area? Where are these boundaries?
- ✓ Are there reasons other than geography that impact upon your choice of boundaries?
- ✓ Draw these boundaries (if any) on a map of your LSP area.
- ✓ Give reasons that explain or justify these choices of boundaries.

**Step 3: To Guide Your Thinking**

- ✓ Think about your target populations that you established in Step One.
- ✓ Think about each community of learners that you established within your LSP area in Step Two.
- ✓ List the training options you need to provide in your LSP area in order to offer a complete range of services as required by your target populations.
- ✓ Now identify the training options that you need to provide in each community.
- ✓ Don't lose sight of your target populations. Do they differ for each community? Will these differences impact upon the services offered in each community?
- ✓ Check off those services that are presently offered.

Step 4: To Guide Your Thinking

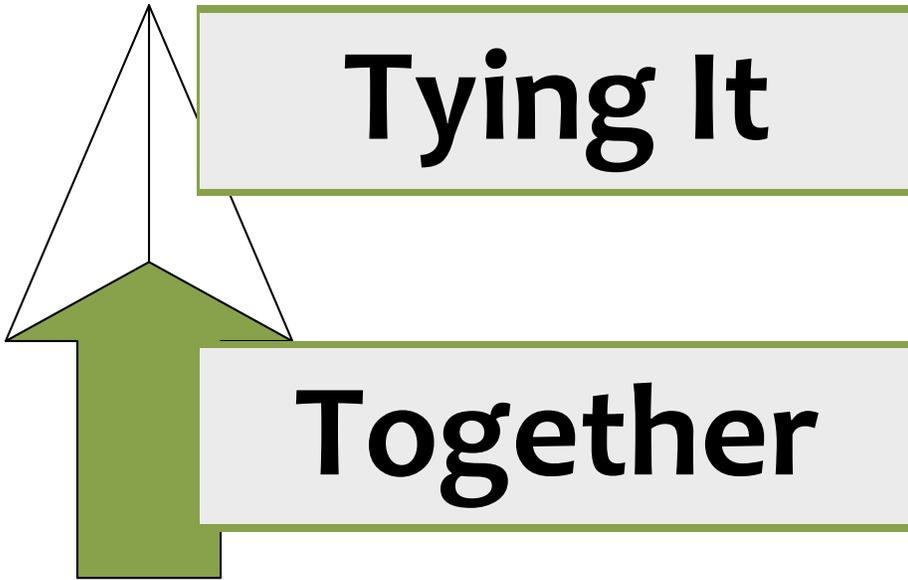
- ✓ Think about partnerships.
- ✓ Think about new solutions; i.e., satellite programs, rather than brand new programs.
- ✓ Think about new ways to meet the needs you have established, but within the present level of funding.
- ✓ Think about the range of functions focused upon within the LSP. How can you provide these in your LSP area, and/or your geographical community, in new ways? More efficient ways?
- ✓ Be creative.

Step 5: To Guide Your Thinking

- ✓ Keep in mind the results of the previous steps.
- ✓ How will the LSP member agencies work together to meet the needs identified?
- ✓ As an individual organisation, what services will you provide or would you like to provide?
- ✓ Give projected data for the upcoming year for your individual organisation: contact hours, # of learners, etc.
- ✓ How do these plans fit in with the overall Community Service Plan?
- ✓ Are there gaps you have identified that will not be met at the present time, but you would like to meet in the future? As an LSP? As an individual program?

Part 3: Tying It Together

Recommendations



Recommendations

1. Extend the community planning process to include other non-literacy community service providers.

This recommendation sounds straightforward. Literacy practitioners know they need to involve non-literacy providers in their work. Without this extended participation, the “system” doesn’t “work” the way it is supposed to work. Referrals aren’t made or, once made, aren’t followed through. Adults who have literacy difficulties show up at the door of these other service providers, but don’t make their way through the literacy door. The literacy field markets its services to counterparts in other fields. Connections are made, resulting in useful contacts, but there is the general sense that more could be done.

Many of the “connections” with non-literacy community providers involve an exchange of information. “Visitors” come to workshops or LSP meetings to explain their services, and literacy providers, in turn, explain their services. This is an important activity, but it isn’t community planning. It can lead to community planning, if the information gathered and exchanged is analysed and then acted upon to improve or change literacy service delivery. It is a valuable preparatory step to a literacy services plan, but the information must be solicited with this overall purpose in mind, and then actually recycled into the planning process.

Preparatory work is sometimes difficult to do in a satisfactory and “complete” way. Time is always at a premium, with deadlines pressing upon the planning body. But preparatory work involving non-literacy community programs would provide a solid foundation upon which to create plans. This recommendation, however, goes further. It involves inviting other service providers to take a role in literacy services planning by exploring community needs together, and developing responses as equal partners and stakeholders who share a common clientele.

Literacy providers in Waterloo Region and Wellington County have now participated in the development of two detailed Literacy Services Plans. (Committees across the

province have also participated in literacy services planning.) Literacy service deliverers are familiar with the process, as well as the issues and challenges. They have an understanding of literacy needs in their community, and the range of services offered. They are aware of the programs offered by other LBS agencies around the LSP table, why these are needed, who these serve, and how they are different from their own programs. LSP members are now in a position to expand the planning process to include others. This will facilitate the LSP exploring adult literacy needs from a different perspective, build non-traditional responses to service delivery, and forge new alliances that should result in greater (and more successful) referrals.

If LSP Committees decide to invite other agencies to participate in planning, preliminary work will need to happen around the LSP table. Which agencies to invite and why? How should they participate? Will they want to participate? How will decisions be made when including a larger group and non-literacy agencies? Are other groups invited as equal partners in the process or to provide input to which the LSP may then respond in their own planning?

Some of these issues were indirectly addressed when developing the LSP Guidelines, particularly through the discussion of Membership (page 21). The Guidelines offered a concrete vehicle to explore these issues, and to begin to fashion a future vision of the role and nature of the LSP Committee. Both the Waterloo Region and Wellington County Committees decided to limit LSP membership to literacy agencies funded by TCU to provide the LBS program. The question remains how to involve an extended audience in the community planning process. This is one of the challenges worth exploring as the LSP Committees continue to evolve, and to work towards refining their services to more precisely meet the needs of their communities.

Recommendations

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2. Integrate community planning into LSP meetings as an ongoing process.

Developing the Literacy Services Plan through responding to local community needs should be viewed as an ongoing process that spans the year. Ideally at least a portion of each LSP meeting would be dedicated to “planning”.

The planning process requires ample opportunity for interaction, discussion, and problem-solving. Facts and statistics based on research, demographics, and other issues that impact on the planning process must not only be gathered, but analysed and discussed among the LSP membership. This discussion often takes longer than is planned; however, giving this aspect of the process “due time” will mean a Literacy Services Plan that is well thought out and that the members can support.

The LSP Guidelines make an attempt to balance info sharing, networking, and other day-to-day “maintenance” required to operate a group or Committee with “developmental” or planning preparatory tasks among LSP members. As a next step, the membership would need to design a long-term framework to guide their community planning. Plans need to incorporate flexibility to deal with new situations that arise in the community, and new directions that arise as a result of group interactions and participation in a creative process.

An ongoing planning process would allow Committees to explore issues at a pace and in a way that encourages creative responses. It would allow time to negotiate partnerships and shape new service delivery offerings. It would ensure the LSP is, foremost, a planning body.

3. Develop a tool for evaluating the work of the LSP.

The LSP Committees attempted to provide performance indicators to accompany the various sections of the LSP Guidelines. This proved to be a more difficult task than initially planned. The creation of the Guidelines, in itself, is concrete evidence that the Committee is working together in an effective and productive way.

Beyond that, how does the LSP evaluate its own work? How can the membership tell if its meetings and accomplishments have had a positive impact on the community it serves?

As a planning body, evaluation also means “looking back” at each literacy services plan created. Did the plan “do” what it was “supposed” to do? How does one measure a plan’s success? What kinds of performance indicators and/or measurements are truly meaningful and helpful to future planning? How can the results of the evaluation be used to modify a present plan or affect the next plan?

The development of evaluation tools specifically designed for use around the LSP table will answer these and other questions. The outcome will be a better planning process, and literacy services plans that better meet the needs of local communities and most importantly, adult literacy students.

Recommendations