

March 2000

Best Program Practices



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Introduction

Background

Historically, literacy programs within Saskatchewan have been housed within a relatively small number of institutions - namely, regional colleges, SIAST Institutes, READ Saskatoon and Regina Public Library. Many of these programs have been in operation for a number of years, and some have been involved in literacy programming for over two decades. These programs have, over time, gained considerable experience in meeting the literacy needs of adults within their communities.

Over the past several years, however, there have been significant changes to the nature and scope of literacy work being undertaken in Saskatchewan. Both the number and variety of literacy programs have increased dramatically because of changes in funding criteria and eligibility at both the provincial and national levels. As a result, more and more community-based organizations are now becoming involved in literacy work.

With this change comes both opportunities and challenges. Opportunities are present to share the collective knowledge that has been gained over the past two decades in literacy programming within Saskatchewan. Further opportunities exist with the ability of new community-based programs to meet a broader range of adult literacy needs. The challenge will be to ensure that all literacy programs are, and continue to be, of a high quality which will meet identified learner needs.

Process for the Development of Best Program Practices

In 1996, the Saskatchewan Literacy Network undertook a project funded by the National Literacy Secretariat to develop provincial tutor training materials. Over the course of that project, information on tutor training models was gathered from a variety of jurisdictions. In reviewing this documentation, the steering committee decided that in order to establish a Saskatchewan model for tutor training, a foundation of good literacy practice must first be articulated. This foundation, once developed, would then serve to guide further curriculum development efforts.

To that end, a Good Practice Task Force was established in November 1997. The committee included representation from a cross-section of literacy programs (urban, rural, northern, new and established) and Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training. The committee comprised:

- Gail Douglas**, Regina Public Library;
Evelyn Gaudet, Service francsaskois d'éducation des adultes;
Roshan Hemani, Parkland Regional College, Yorkton;
Kurt Hirschbeck, Field Development Coordinator, Saskatchewan Literacy Network (coordinated the process from September 1998 to June 1999);
Pat Hoffman (ex officio), Post Secondary Education and Skills Training, Regina;
Bebe Ivanochko, Northlands College, LaRonge;
Lynda Magerl, Learner Representative, Movement for Canadian Literacy, Swift Current;
Lynne Mourot, Prince Albert Literacy Network;
Diane Mullan, Seniors' Education Centre, University of Regina;
Debbie Purton, Literacy Specialist, Saskatchewan Literacy Network; and
Ruth Vandekamp, READ Saskatoon.

An electronic conference was set up on AlphaCom to help the committee develop the standards. The Task Force began by reviewing good practice documents and models that had been established, or were in the process of being developed, within several provinces across Canada. Quality standards for adult literacy programs in the United States and the United Kingdom were also reviewed. Following a thorough review and analysis of these documents and processes, the Task Force identified a list of key themes around which good practice standards, indicators and sample measures were later developed.

Consultation Process

Following the development of a draft document, initial feedback was obtained from the field at a provincial literacy forum organized by the Saskatchewan Literacy Network in June 1998. Further opportunities for input and feedback were provided through written comments, regional forums and a pilot test phase which was conducted from February to April, 1999. Sixteen pilot sites took place in the pilot test phase. Recommendations from the pilot test phase were reviewed by the Best Practices committee and, to the extent possible, amendments were made to the document based on feedback from the field.

This document is the result of Task Force efforts and input from the field. It represents a Best Program Practices foundation for adult literacy in Saskatchewan and provides an opportunity for programs to reflect on their current initiatives, identify strengths and plan further improvements.

If you have any questions related to best practices, or if you would like assistance in working through this process within the context of your own literacy program, please contact:



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Purpose of Best Program Practices

It is the intent of the Task Force that the standards be used for the following purposes:

- As an “educational tool” to develop a greater understanding of effective literacy practices;
- As a program “evaluation tool” to identify the strengths of current approaches and to examine areas which need improvement or further development; and
- As a “reference document” to guide literacy program and/or project planning and development.

Guiding Principles

The quality standards outlined in this document are intended to serve as a guideline for the development and enhancement of literacy programs within Saskatchewan. These standards represent a uniquely Saskatchewan-based model for literacy and are an expression of what is considered to be Best Program Practices.

The Best Program Practices framework has been developed to be flexible and responsive to meet the needs and realities of a broad range of literacy activities and programs. Thirteen standards, or key values and concepts that reflect excellence in adult literacy programming, have been outlined in this document. Each of these standards has then been broken down into one or

more indicators or key elements for program success. Sample measures include a range of suggested activities that could be undertaken to meet each indicator within a given standard. Programs are encouraged to choose and/or adapt sample measures that are most appropriate to their organizational and community context.

These standards, along with the accompanying indicators and sample measures, provide a picture of what an ideal successful adult literacy program would look like. They are not to be viewed as an unrealistic ideal, but rather as a goal to work towards. The statements, indicators and sample measures are not ranked in order of importance. The order is arbitrary.

Guiding principles underlying Best Program Practices include:

- **learner-centred programming**
- **universal access**
- **life-long learning**
- **developing pro-active, nurturing learning environments**
- **free services**
- **first language literacy**

Instructions

There are three parts to this package:

- Part One includes a **Program Questionnaire** which is to be completed by program staff, Board and/or advisory committee members.
- Part Two includes a **Tutor Questionnaire** which is to be completed by volunteer tutors.
- Part Three includes a **Learner Questionnaire** which is to be completed by adult learners within the program.

Part One – Program Questionnaire

This section is to be completed by literacy program staff, Board and/or advisory committee members. Instructions for completing this section are as follows:

Although your program may include a variety of services, the focus of this questionnaire is on adult literacy.

1. Read through each of the standards listed in Part One. Each standard includes:
 - A statement of the standard;
 - Indicators or key elements of success;
 - Sample measures in a checklist format; and
 - Questions to guide future program planning.
2. Complete the checklist by placing a checkmark (✓) in the column that best describes your program.
E.g.
 Yes No N/A
3. If you choose the word “other” in a list of examples, please specify.
4. Write your responses to the questions that follow the checklist.
5. Complete the “**Program Details**” information sheet on pages 7 and 8. Return this form to the Saskatchewan Literacy Network for inclusion in the Provincial Literacy Database.

Part Two – Tutor Questionnaire

This section was developed to get input from volunteer tutors. The questionnaire can be used in many ways – as a written survey, a telephone interview and/or as a guide for focus group discussions. You may ask all of the volunteer tutors within your program to provide feedback on your literacy program or you may wish to choose only a representative sample of tutors. We encourage you to use and/or adapt this questionnaire so that it best suits the needs of your program.

Part Three – Learner Questionnaire

This section was developed to get feedback from adult learners within your program. The questionnaire can be used in many ways - as a written survey, a telephone interview and/or as a guide for focus group discussions. You may ask all of the learners in your program to provide feedback on your literacy program or you may wish to choose only a representative sample of learners. We encourage you to use and/or adapt this questionnaire so that it best suits the needs of your learners and the program.

Note: When asking for feedback from learners, sensitivity is crucial. Be aware of both the literacy and comfort levels of learners to ensure meaningful responses. Some learners might feel most comfortable answering questions within a group discussion whereas other learners may wish to provide feedback individually – either orally or in writing. Whichever method works best for the learner, this input will be invaluable for future program planning.

Program Details

Please complete the following information:

Date evaluation started: _____

Date evaluation finished: _____

Contact person:

Position within the organization: _____

Name of organization: _____

Name of program: _____

Sponsoring organization/funder: _____

Geographic areas served by the program: _____

Program start date: _____

Program end date: _____

Is your program part of, or affiliated with:

- an educational institution
- public library
- workplace
- correctional institution
- independent in community with board of directors
- family literacy initiative
- national literacy organization
- other (please specify) _____

Number of staff:

full-time _____

part-time _____

volunteer _____

Number of learners: _____

How many learners in your program are continuing from last year? _____

Part 1: Program Questionnaire

Assessment

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program works with learners to assess individual interests, goals, learning strengths and areas of difficulty to direct instruction and enhance learning. It ensures that assessment is a process that develops self-confidence and self-esteem and supports the goals of the learners. If assessment is used:

1. It is not the only indicator of knowledge, skills and progress.
2. It is voluntary on the part of the learner.
3. The results are kept confidential.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- Assess learner skills and knowledge.
- Assure that assessments take a variety of forms.
- Ensure that assessment procedures and environment respect the learner's choice to participate and will have a positive impact on the learner.

Our program:

Yes	No	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Holds a confidential one-on-one interview with learners to identify and support their goals.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regularly reviews and modifies goals with the learner.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Encourages voluntary assessment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Encourages learners to take part in assessment decisions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Explains assessment tools and processes to the learner.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Assists learners in collecting work to document effort, progress, and achievement.

- Keeps learners' work in an assessment portfolio.
- Conducts follow up assessment.

Uses the following to measure learner progress:

- learner projects,
- ongoing competency based assessment,
- portfolio assessment,
- life-skills demonstrations,
- tutor/instructor observation,
- checklists,
- journals,
- exercises and workbooks,
- tutor/instructor and learner conferencing,
- learner self-assessments,
- standardized tests,
- written and oral responses,
- writing samples,
- audio tapes,
- reflection sheets,
- other (please specify) _____
- Records changes in learner behaviour and attitude.
- Encourages learners to fill in their own reports about the program and their progress.
- Encourages learners to record their changes in attitude and behaviour.

- Encourages learners to record their new uses of literacy skills.
- Tells learners that the results of the assessment are confidential.
- Gives learners feedback of the assessment.

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your program do to improve assessment?

What steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Community Based Programming

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program is aware of and responsive to the literacy needs of the community and has strong links with individuals, groups and agencies within its community.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- Identify the literacy needs of the community.
- Respond to the needs of the community.

Action is taken to ensure literacy programs establish and maintain community links.

Our program:

Yes	No	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Surveys the community to find out the needs of learners (needs assessment).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has an advisory body with representation from the community.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Allows learners' needs to direct program planning.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is community based versus institution based.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is represented on networking groups within the community.

Promotes its services by:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	newsletters,
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	personal contacts,
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	other (please specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Publicly credits the support it receives.

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your program do to improve the links it has within the community?

What steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Equity and Diversity

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program respects differences and is accessible to the broadest range of prospective learners in the community.

Processes and structures are in place:

- That value and are responsive to a variety of cultural, racial, gender and learning differences.
- That increase access and fair outcomes for all learners and potential program participants.

Our program:

Yes No N/A

 Reviews its recruitment practices to ensure that racial and cultural minorities and people with disabilities have the opportunity to participate.

 Uses program materials and resources that are free of bias e.g. gender, racial and cultural.

 Uses program materials and resources that are culturally sensitive and relevant.

 Uses plain language.

 Anticipates barriers to participation and completion.

 Gives support to learners to overcome barriers to participation and completion.

Operates from a location that is:

- accessible
- known to learners.
- Offers instruction at convenient times and days for learners and potential learners.

Is flexible enough to accommodate:

- a variety of learning differences,
- a variety of goals.
- Helps learners access other learning opportunities.
- Has appropriate supplies, adequate resources and appropriate furnishings to meet special needs e.g. adaptive equipment.

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your program do to improve equity and diversity in your program?

What steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Partnerships and Participation

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program works in cooperation or partnership with agencies and organizations - locally, provincially, and nationally - to ensure information and resource sharing with other agencies and organizations.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- ensure resource sharing with other agencies and organizations.

Our program:

Yes	No	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is a member of a local literacy coalition or association.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is affiliated with the Saskatchewan Literacy Network (SLN).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is aware of and participates in the National Adult Literacy Database (NALD).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Submits annual activity reports to the SLN.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sends resources created by the program to the public library, SLN, and NALD for wide distribution.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Actively participates in the Provincial Literacy Coordinators group (supported by the Saskatchewan Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Supports the Saskatchewan Literacy Foundation and/or other literacy fundraising efforts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Annually plans its communication and marketing strategy.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Participates in jointly sponsored literacy projects.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Makes referrals to other agencies and organizations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Receives referrals from other organizations.

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your program do to improve partnerships and participation?

What steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Learner Centred Programming

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program is learner-centered.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- ensure a learner centered approach.

Our program:

Yes No N/A

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Encourages learners to take part in designing their own learning. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Uses a variety of instructional approaches to accommodate individual learning needs/styles. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Involves learners in program development. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Involves learners in program evaluation. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has learner membership on the Board or advisory body. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Uses appropriate assessment processes to guide instruction (refer to listing on page 9). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Helps learners with career planning/pathing. |

Encourages lifelong learning.

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

How could your organization encourage more learner centered programming?

What would steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Planning and Evaluation

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program remains accountable by regularly planning goals and objectives consistent with: the needs of learners, the agency philosophy, and the demands of the funder.

Program evaluation is a measure of program impact. The results of program evaluation direct future planning. All participants (learners, volunteers, staff, management and board) should be involved in both collecting and providing information about the program strengths and weaknesses.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- Receive feedback from the general community about their needs and priorities for literacy programming.
- Develop the program's yearly plan and meet goals and objectives.
- Measure the program's successes against the stated goals and objectives, and to use this information in setting future goals and objectives.
- Distribute and communicate the annual report to all stakeholders for review.
- Regularly gather and give feedback on program successes.
- To annually review the literacy program's staffing and equipment needs and resources.
- Regularly review and communicate the accomplishments of literacy learners, program staff and volunteers to all stakeholders.

Our program:

Yes	No	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Produces an annual report.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	In its annual report, compares its goals and objectives with accomplishments and identifies new areas to improve on.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Makes the annual report available to learners, staff, volunteers and funders.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has a strategic plan.

- Develops an annual planning and reporting calendar.
- Advertises the annual meeting date well in advance of the scheduled date.
- Organizes an annual achievement day.
- Celebrates volunteer appreciation day.
- Holds an annual social event for all stakeholders.
- Holds community meetings.
- Networks to keep up with changing needs.
- Gathers information from all program participants in a participatory manner.
- Holds planning meetings with the board, management, staff, volunteers and learners.
- Includes learners in the planning of program events e.g. fundraising, marketing, communication.
- Holds regular meetings for tutors to network, share information and discuss literacy issues.
- Holds regular staff meetings.
- Encourages staff to share new ideas to enhance the program.

Collects written feedback from staff and tutors about:

- learner-tutor matching,
- learner progress,
- professional development needs,
- concerns.
- Annually reviews staff goals and achievements.
- Annually evaluates personnel (including volunteers).

- Publicizes learner and program accomplishments.
- Collects testimonials from learners who have gone on to achieve personal success.
- Encourages learners to participate in learner surveys, to determine improvements or needs, and to see how learners feel about the program.
- Follows up with learners after they have left the program.
- Systematically updates learner files.
- Records volunteer participation.

Determines staffing needs by keeping statistics on:

- number of staff, volunteers, learners,
- ratio of staff to learners,
- number of tutor-learner matches,
- length of time learners spend in the program,
- learners entry level,
- results of assessment,
- other (please specify) _____

Determines needs for:

- new equipment,
- materials,
- other (please specify) _____

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your program do to improve planning and participation?

What steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Content and Delivery

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program ensures learner confidentiality and reflects the principles of lifelong learning in content and delivery.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- Ensure that the literacy program responds to specific goals of individuals.
- Ensure that teaching and learning are dynamic processes that do not rely on any single limited approach or learning package.
- Ensure that content and delivery support and promote the development of transferable skills and lifelong learning.

Our program:

Yes No N/A

Provides a variety of learning options:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | one-to-one tutoring (volunteer model), |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | computer assisted learning, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | classroom, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | small group facilitation. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Uses participative and interactive teaching methods. |

Makes the following opportunities available to learners to apply newly learned literacy skills:

- presentations,
- discussions,
- guest speakers,
- field trips,
- films and videos,
- computers,
- other (please specify) _____
- Provides learners with a wide variety of materials that are relevant and interesting.
- Accommodates different learning styles, needs and interests.
- Encourages instructors and tutors to help learners review goals continually and revise as necessary.
- Is aware of provincial and national initiatives that support the development of transferable skills.
- Implements measures that support the development of transferable skills.
- Actively promotes lifelong learning.
- Respects the diverse experiences, backgrounds and goals of learners.
- Encourages first language literacy.

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your program do to improve aspects of content and delivery?

What steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Ongoing Funding

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program has adequate ongoing funding to provide the necessary resources for staffing, facilities, materials, and other support services the program needs to fulfill its mandate.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- Determine the appropriate time and money necessary for paid and volunteer staff.
- Evaluate program facilities.
- Obtain statistics, information and administrative support to write funding proposals.
- Network locally, provincially and nationally for information on funding issues and sources of new funds.
- Establish and review program activities in light of funding changes.

Our program:

Yes No N/A

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Operates a balanced budget. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Calculates and includes in proposals the dollar value of volunteer time (as in-kind donations). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Provides administrative support to prepare typed, finished copies of proposals and final reports in a professional manner. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Writes regular reports. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Keeps adequate statistics to support funding requests. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Encourages and supports literacy coordinators to attend relevant meetings (in particular, Provincial Literacy Coordinator meetings). |

- Designates certain staff to be in charge of fundraising and proposal writing.

Ensures staff and volunteers are aware of:

- community issues about literacy,
- other learning opportunities,
- the importance of contact with community members.

- Encourages staff, learners and volunteers to sit on provincial committees and task forces.
- Has access to the Internet.
- Accesses the National Adult Literacy Database (NALD) to keep up with literacy events, campaigns, reports, and research at the national, provincial and regional levels.

- Promotes itself and the resources available to learners.
- Works to lessen the effects of funding changes on learners.

- Consults all stakeholders when setting program and funding priorities.

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your organization do to secure ongoing funding?

What steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Program Administration

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program has appropriate and well-managed staff able to meet community needs. Programs are accountable for all funds received.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- Ensure confidentiality for all program participants.
- Ensure that qualifications and expectations of staff, board and volunteers are appropriate and specified.
- Review finances and to ensure financial viability and accountability.
- Ensure that adequate staff and volunteer time is given both to administration and programming.

Our program:

Yes	No	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensures confidentiality (by policy).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Only releases information with program participants' consent.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	During initial interviews, discusses the issue of confidentiality with tutors and learners.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has staff who are paid professionals with the skills, experience and education compatible with the requirements of the job.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has job descriptions for staff, board and volunteers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pays salary levels comparable to other similar programs within the province.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Has funding available to provide training and professional development for staff and volunteers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintains accurate and up to date financial records.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maintains accurate and up to date program records.

Keeps accurate and up to date attendance records for :

- staff,
- volunteers, and
- learners

Has methods in place to record:

- time worked,
- supplies used,
- equipment and maintenance,
- photocopying, and
- up to date inventory of resources.
- Provides staff and volunteers time to gather data and maintain records.
- Supports volunteers in the work they are asked to do and the information they are asked to deliver.
- Provides regular reports to funding sources.
- Ensures that travel costs are authorized by the organization and reimburses vehicle use.
- Writes down, distributes and follows an overtime policy.
- Adequately maintains its program site for staff to work in comfort.
- Follows occupational health and safety standards.
- Has adequate work space for all staff.
- Handles increases or decreases in staff in a professional manner.

- Ensures that resources are available to meet learner and program needs.

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your program do to improve administrative procedures?

What steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Professional Development

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program places a priority on professional development for program staff - both paid and voluntary.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- ensure appropriate initial and in-service training for program staff.

Our program:

Yes No N/A

- Provides an orientation for all staff.

Provides comprehensive initial training, including, but not limited to:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | program overview, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | philosophy and goals of program, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | staff responsibilities and code of ethics, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | principles of adult learning, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | principles of adult literacy education, |

- setting goals and designing lessons,
- assessing learning and progress,
- other (please specify) _____

Organizes training for staff on the following issues:

- learning style preferences,
- learning differences,
- cultural, racial and gender sensitivity,
- other (please specify) _____
- Communicates in an open and ongoing basis with staff and volunteers about their support needs.
- Has initial and ongoing training for staff and volunteers on support services available within the literacy program and the community.
- Subscribes to literacy magazines, journals and newsletters.
- Shares these magazines, journals and newsletters with staff to keep them up to date with developments in the field.
- Organizes in-service training to meet identified training needs.
- Encourages and supports ongoing professional development for program staff, board members and members of advisory bodies.
- Encourages staff to network with other literacy workers (outside the program).
- Recognizes training and expertise of staff and volunteers and uses it within the program, if appropriate.

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your program do to improve professional development for staff?

What steps would you need to accomplish this?

Mission Statement

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program has a clear philosophy that is reflected in its mission statement, goals, objectives and practice.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- Ensure that the program philosophy is clearly described in a mission statement that is regularly reviewed and up-dated by program participants including learners, volunteers, staff and board.
- Ensure the mission statement communicates the program philosophy to everyone involved in the program including new learners, volunteers, staff and other stakeholders.

Our program:

Yes No N/A

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Encourages all program stakeholders to participate in the development of the mission statement. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Develops, reviews and updates the mission statement. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Invites a qualified third party to guide the process of development and review of the mission statement. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Posts its mission statement in a prominent place within the adult literacy facility. |

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Includes in publications, where appropriate, the program philosophy as outlined in the mission statement. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ensures that the program philosophy is discussed with during the first meeting with learners, volunteers, staff and other stakeholders. |

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your program do to develop or improve the mission statement?

What steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Support Services

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program is aware of the needs of the community/learners it serves and of the resources and support services available to respond to those needs.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- Identify and respond to community/learner needs.
- Encourage cooperation and coordination between literacy programs and other support services.

Our program:

Yes No N/A

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ensures that the initial interview with learners and tutors includes discussion about literacy needs and other support services. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Helps learners access support services within the program and /or through appropriate referrals to other community services. |

Assists learners in accessing necessary support services that may include:

- transportation,
- childcare,
- counseling,
- assessment,
- information and referral for economic, cultural and social needs,
- other (please specify) _____
- Establishes partnerships between program and other human service agencies to ensure access and equity for learners.
- Has regular contact with other human service providers to share referral information and promote links between programs.
- Holds in-service presentations for other support service providers to gain mutual understanding, awareness, and appropriate referrals.

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your program do to improve support services?

What steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Program Accountability

A quality Saskatchewan adult literacy program follows accepted provincial criteria for successful programs, provides both quantitative and qualitative indicators of program success, and follows provincial standards for program development.

Processes and structures are in place to:

- Ensure a successful literacy program.
- Ensure the collection of quantitative indicators of success.
- Ensure the collection of qualitative indicators of success.
- Ensure learner evaluation.

Our program:

Yes	No	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensures that instructional activities develop learners' skills for real-life situations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enables learners to progress towards their goals.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Encourages learners to actively participate in the learning and evaluation process.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ensures that the evaluation process allows the learner to identify and measure their own progress.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Documents increased learner participation in literacy activities at home, at work and in the community.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Records instructor and tutor perceptions of student and program success.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Informs learners of the progress they make through the evaluation process.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Operates within its budget.

Records and reports information on:

a) Tutors:

- tutor demographics (i.e. age, gender, language background),
- number of volunteers and volunteer hours, and
- training sessions attended by volunteers.

b) Learners:

- learner demographics (i.e. age, gender, language background, disabilities),
- number of learners enrolled in the program,
- number of learners who achieve their goals,
- retention rate of learners,
- number of learners who enroll in further education or training,
- number of learners who enter the workforce, and
- annual cost per learner per year.

c) Staff:

- training activities attended by staff, and
- staff evaluations.

d) Community:

- community responses to the program.

What other activities does your program engage in to meet this standard?

What could your program do to improve program accountability?

What steps would you need to take to accomplish this?

Part 2: Tutor Questionnaire

Assessment and Learner Centred Programming:

1. Did you get useful information about your learner from the initial assessment?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

2. Does your learner participate in setting and reviewing his/her own learning goals?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

3. Does your learner actively participate in reviewing and evaluating his/her own progress?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

4. Do you get useful information about your learner from ongoing assessment?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

Planning and Evaluation:

1. How satisfied are you with the availability of program staff when you have questions or concerns?

Not at all Satisfied **Very Satisfied** **Don't Know**
1 2 3 4 5

Please explain:

2. How satisfied are you with the help program staff gives you?

Not at all Satisfied **Very Satisfied** **Don't Know**
1 2 3 4 5

Please explain:

3. Are you given an opportunity to network with other tutors?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

7. Were you given the opportunity to be involved in evaluating the program's effectiveness?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

8. How satisfied were you with your opportunity to take part in evaluating the program's effectiveness?

Not at all Satisfied **Very Satisfied** **Don't Know**
1 2 3 4 5

Please explain:

9. How satisfied are you with the program's recognition events for tutors?

Not at all Satisfied **Very Satisfied** **Don't Know**
1 2 3 4 5

Please explain:

10. Do you feel valued and appreciated as a tutor?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

Content and Delivery:

1. Do you have access to adequate resources?

- Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

2. How satisfied are you with these resources?

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Not at all Satisfied | | | Very Satisfied | Don't Know | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please explain:

Program Administration:

1. Were you given a job description and do you understand it?

- Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

2. In your opinion, is the tutor job description realistic?

- Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

3. Were the program's expectations regarding confidentiality clearly communicated to you?

- Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

4. Are you satisfied with the program's facilities?

- Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

Professional Development:

1. Did you receive initial training in the following areas:

- ___ program overview
- ___ philosophy and goals of program
- ___ tutor responsibilities and code of ethics
- ___ principles of adult learning
- ___ principles of adult literacy education

- ___ setting goals and designing lessons
- ___ assessing learning and progress
- ___ cultural diversity
- ___ learning styles
- ___ support services available to learners
- ___ other (please specify): _____

2. How satisfied were you with this initial training?

Not at all Satisfied			Very Satisfied		Don't Know
1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain:

3. Was anything missing from your initial training?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

4. Does your program provide additional training for tutors?

Yes No Don't Know

What, if any, additional training have you attended?

3. Were you given an opportunity to give input when the program reviewed its mission statement?

- Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

4. Do you think the way the program operates is consistent with its mission statement?

- Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

Program Accountability:

1. Do you keep records on:

- ___ learner goals
- ___ number of hours spent tutoring
- ___ ongoing assessment results
- ___ learner efforts, progress and achievement (portfolio of learners' work)
- ___ other (please specify): _____

Please explain:

2. Overall, how satisfied are you with the program?

Not at all Satisfied

Very Satisfied

Don't Know

1

2

3

4

5

Please explain :

3. What suggestions do you have for program improvement?

(adapted from: *Setting the Compass*, Association of Literacy Coordinators of Alberta, 1999)

Part 3: Learner Questionnaire

Assessment and Learner Centred Programming:

1. Did you get useful information from your initial interview?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

2. Do you take part in planning your own learning goals?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

3. What you learn and how you measure progress should be based on what you want and need to learn. Does this happen?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

Planning and Evaluation:

1. Are program staff available when you have questions or concerns?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

5. Were you asked to take part in helping the program set its goals and objectives?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

6. How satisfied were you when you took part in helping the program set its goals and objectives?

Not at all Satisfied **Very Satisfied** **Don't Know**
1 2 3 4 5

Please explain:

7. Were you asked to take part in evaluating the program's effectiveness?

- Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

8. How satisfied were you when you took part in evaluating the program's effectiveness?

Not at all Satisfied **Very Satisfied** **Don't Know**

1 2 3 4 5

Please explain:

Content and Delivery:

1. Does the program have enough books and other resource materials for you to use?

- Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

2. How satisfied are you with these resources?

Not at all Satisfied **Very Satisfied** **Don't Know**
1 2 3 4 5

Please explain:

Program Administration:

5. Do you know if the program keeps your records private and confidential?

Yes **No** **Don't Know**

Please explain:

6. Are you satisfied with the program's location, classrooms and/or meeting rooms?

Yes **No** **Don't Know**

Please explain:

Mission Statement:

Every literacy program should have a mission statement that includes guidelines and beliefs about how it should operate.

5. Do you think the program follows its mission statement?

Yes No Don't Know

Please explain:

Support Services:

4. The program should have information about different kinds of support services you could use. How satisfied are you with the help you receive in finding support services outside the program?

Not at all Satisfied **Very Satisfied** **Don't Know**
1 2 3 4 5

Please explain:

5. How satisfied are you with the help you receive in finding out about other education and training programs?

Not at all Satisfied **Very Satisfied** **Don't Know**
1 2 3 4 5

Please explain:

Program Accountability:

1. Do you feel encouraged and supported by your tutor?

Yes **No** **Don't Know**

Please explain:

2. Do you feel encouraged and supported by program staff?

Yes **No** **Don't Know**

Please explain:

3. Overall, how satisfied are you with the program?

Not at all Satisfied

Very Satisfied

Don't Know

1

2

3

4

5

Please explain :

4. What suggestions do you have for improving the program?

(adapted from: *Setting the Compass*, Association of Literacy Coordinators of Alberta, 1999)

Glossary

assessment	Involves identifying individual interests, goals, learning strengths and areas of difficulty to direct instruction and enhance learning.
barriers to participation	These are the numerous challenges that learners face and prevent them from fully participating in and benefiting from a program. They include learners' attitude towards learning and a host of external factors that restrict participation in literacy programs, e.g. personal problems, unsuitable program location, cost, no funding sources, etc.
community	The geographic area, which may range from a neighborhood to a much larger region, in which a literacy program is located. Depending on the context of the program, community may also refer to a specific interest group within the larger general population.
indicators	Key elements for program success. Each standard is comprised of one or more indicators.
learner centered	Learning plans, activities and resources are organized around the literacy needs, goals and interests of individual learners.
learners	Adults who are registered in a literacy program with the goal of improving their literacy and/or numeracy skills.
learning differences	These are preferred learning styles, e.g. visual, auditory, kinesthetic, etc.
learning options	Refers to the learners' preferred way of learning, e.g. individually, small groups, classroom, computer-based instruction, etc..

processes	Step-by-step procedures which are developed to help programs achieve a goal.
program participants	Individuals directly involved in a literacy program, including learners, volunteers, staff and board members.
sample measures	A range of possible activities which demonstrate how standards and indicators can be implemented within a literacy program.
self-directed learning	Involves learners in setting their own goals and directing their own learning.
special learning needs	Refers to the special adaptations that are required to accommodate learners of special target groups, e.g. physically challenged.
staff	Paid literacy program personnel unless otherwise specifically stated.
standards	The conditions that must be created or put in place for a literacy program to operate effectively and deliver quality services.
structures	Often outlined in policies, structures represent specific program components or organizational features.
volunteers	Individuals who donate time and energy to help achieve literacy program goals, including tutors, volunteer staff and board members.

Standards

Alphabetical Listing

Assessment

Community Based Programming

Content and Delivery

Equity and Diversity

Learner Centred Programming

Mission Statement

Ongoing Funding

Partnerships and Participation

Planning and Evaluation

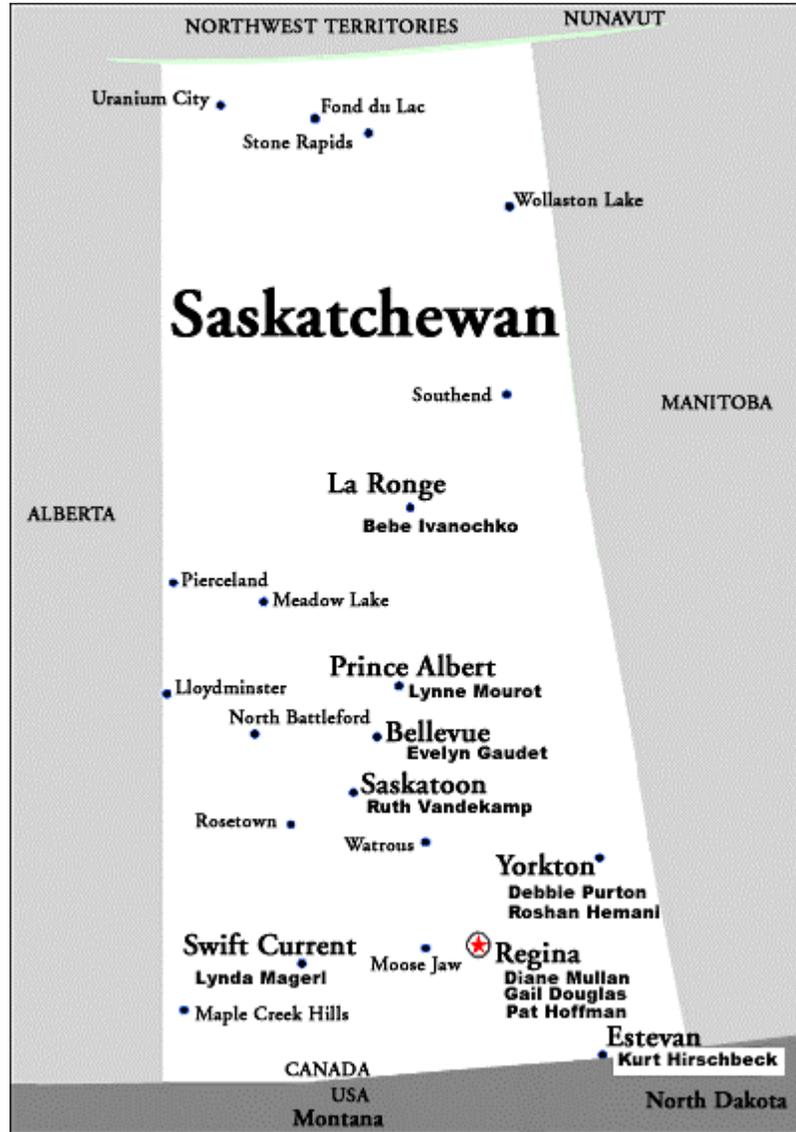
Program Accountability

Program Administration

Professional Development

Support Services

Best Practices Committee



Best Program Practices

Self-Evaluation Kit

March 2000

Order Form

In addition to statements of best practice, this document outlines processes and structures that should be in place for an ideal adult literacy program. This information is intended to serve as a guide to program planning and evaluation. This document will be a useful reference tool for reflecting on current practices and exploring options for further program enhancement.

This self-evaluation kit for adult literacy programs and related literacy projects was developed by the Saskatchewan Literacy Network with National Literacy Secretariat project funding.

Cost: \$12

(postage included)

Please make cheque payable to Saskatchewan Literacy Network

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