

## Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Initiative

### COMMUNIQUE #4 - February 2010

The OALC is an MTCU led initiative operating under the umbrella of the three learning ministries. This is the fourth in a series of **official** communiqués to be distributed regularly between now and the scheduled implementation of the OALC in January 2011. Previous communiqués can be found at <http://forums.alphaplus.ca/forum-22.html>

#### **Piloting Team**

The CESBA team of Tony daSilva and Jane Barber, working with CCI Research Inc ([www.cci-research.com](http://www.cci-research.com)), organized piloting in over 100 agencies across the province. See Communiqué # 3 for a full description of piloting process and participants.

#### **Pilot Coordinator Training**

A full-day Pilot Coordinator Training event was held on January 19, 2010 at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel, Toronto. All sectors and streams were represented. Coordinators and representatives from the curriculum development team discussed the curriculum framework, the goals of the piloting exercise, roles and responsibilities of coordinators, timelines, and feedback mechanisms. The overall response to the materials and to training was positive.

#### **Pilot Feedback Methodology**

All participating practitioners from the pilot agencies will be asked to complete an online survey providing feedback concerning the framework. In addition, 30 practitioners will be asked to provide detailed feedback for the curriculum development team to use both in reviewing the work done to date and in the continued development of the remainder of the framework.

#### **Piloting Schedule**

Timelines	Activities
<b>January 19, 2010</b>	Pilot coordinators for each of the sectors and streams receive training
<b>January to mid February</b>	Pilot sites for each of the sectors and streams receive training
<b>February to mid March</b>	Pilot sites carry out piloting activities and provide feedback
<b>March 10</b>	All surveys submitted; detailed feedback submitted; summary report
<b>March 15-20</b>	Summary report and feedback materials submitted to Executive Directors
<b>March 31</b>	Summary report and feedback materials submitted to Curriculum Development Team
<b>April - May</b>	Data analysis, additional focus group discussions; piloting report generated; piloting results shared with the field

## External Validation

The Ontario Literacy Coalition in cooperation with the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities is interviewing stakeholders to inform the development of the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum (OALC). These stakeholders include employer associations, labour organizations, training and education providers, and others whose clients may have literacy issues. These organizations have a stake in what adults learn and how their skills are assessed in the Literacy and Basic Skills Program of Employment Ontario. For example, employers might be looking for a reliable measure for entry-level skills. Unions wish need to ensure members have requisite skills to advance. Training organizations may receive learners from the LBS Program and wish to appropriately place them.

The new curriculum and assessment approach needs to meet the needs of various stakeholders, the public, and learners. To date, approximately 20 representative stakeholders have provided input to date. Areas for inquiry include:

- standards for literacy program curriculum
- reactions to the five transition pathways
- the transition pathways, and exit points
- reactions to the competencies
- relationship of OALC and other educational credentials

In addition, these external stakeholders are being asked to provide their reaction to the competencies as well as a detailed description of one of the competencies showing tasks groups and tasks by level.

The Executive Directors Committee will be briefed in March on the key themes and the OALC Steering Committee will receive detailed information on the results for the validation process for consideration in future modifications of the OALC.

## OALC Curriculum Development Team

The Curriculum Development team was struck in October 2008 to develop a new Curriculum Framework that will meet the needs of Ontario learners in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The team was developed with representation from all sectors and streams and major representative agencies in the literacy field in Ontario. The work of this team has resulted in an elegantly simple, innovative, and relevant framework which will meet the needs of all adult learners. In recognition of their extraordinary efforts, here are your team members.

### **Jane Barber - CESBA**

*Jane Barber has been involved in adult literacy for more than 20 years as LBS instructor, program manager and independent consultant. While working primarily with CESBA and the School Board sector, Jane has developed resources (e.g. The Goals Requirements Handbook, Designing Down, Assessing Up, LBSpractitionertraining.com, mygates.ca and the Pathways trilogy) and/or provided professional development training (Train Ontario 1&2, and*

CIPMS) on behalf of every LBS support organization in the sectors and streams (except for one). Jane loves to teach and is always enthusiastic about innovative strategies and ideas that support the day-to-day work of managers and practitioners, enhance program delivery, and improve the educational experience and success of learners.

### **Alan Cherwinski ALPHAPLUS**

Alan is the Manager at AlphaPlus Centre. He has a strong, practical suite of information technology management and business analysis skills. Prior to joining AlphaPlus in 1997, Alan was part of a team at George Brown College that developed a pre-internet online communication network to establish the first online links between Ontario's widespread literacy delivery agencies. At AlphaPlus he now oversees the administration and development of multiple Web-based learning management systems. He has implemented user-friendly knowledge sharing sites, and works on AlphaPlus' online databases and Web services.

### **Robyn Cook-Ritchie COMMUNITY LITERACY OF ONTARIO**

Robyn Cook-Ritchie manages the consulting company, RCR Consulting, which has focused on adult literacy for the past twelve years. She has been involved in over twenty research and development projects. She is currently the Literacy and Basic Skills manager at the Grand Erie District School Board and is a working team member for the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Initiative. Prior to working in the literacy field, Robyn obtained her B.A. in Anthropology and Sociology from Wilfrid Laurier University and her Bachelor of Law degree from the University of Alberta. She lives in Brantford with her husband and two children.

### **Rose Etheridge DLI**

Rose joined Deaf Literacy Initiative in January 2009 as a part-time project assistant researcher on the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum project. Currently, she is a full-time project coordinator for phase two of the OALC project. She also works at George Brown College as a part time faculty in the American Sign Language and Literacy Instructors Program (ALIP). Rose graduated from Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. with Bachelors of Arts in English and has plans to complete her Masters in Deaf Education. In the past, she worked as a literacy instructor at Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf in Toronto and as a community outreach coordinator at Deaf Access Simcoe in Barrie.

### **Karen Geraci OLC**

Karen Geraci's adult education experience includes both literacy and English as a Second Language, with a focus on assessment and resource development. For the last six years she has worked with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada to develop Essential Skills Profiles. She also works regularly with the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks on projects examining occupational language requirements. On the OALC initiative, Karen has drawn on her knowledge of the Essential Skills to help develop the new curriculum framework.

### **Dee Goforth CSC**

Dee Goforth has worked in the field of adult literacy for nearly 30 years. During that time Dee has taught in community-based, school board and college settings. She has worked with a variety of learner groups including youth, the homeless, social assistance recipients, First Nations and incarcerated adults. As a consultant, Dee has been involved in a number of research projects including labour market analysis for regional literacy networks, retention of learners in college adult upgrading programs, and the Learner Skill Attainment Framework.

### **Donald Lurette La Coalition**

Donald is an Acadian from Northern New-Brunswick who has worked in Ontario for the past 20 years. Most of his field experience in literacy and adult education comes from his work in Ontario as a practitioner, a program designer,

a program coordinator, a field researcher and a special project manager. His interests lie in best practices, innovative program designs meeting learner's complex needs and field research. His academic background is in Andragogy, Environmental Studies and Public Administration. He is currently working on provincial reforms with regards to literacy programming in Ontario and other provinces on behalf of francophone provincial and national organizations, with a focus on program reforms, workforce literacy and literacy issues for linguistic minorities. He is also interested in the implications of shifting to a more integrated and comprehensive programming approach as a "toile de fond" for reforming literacy programs and literacy practices in many jurisdictions.

### **Marissa Mazulla OLC**

Marisa Mazzulla brings her experience in assessment, research, curriculum guidelines and learning materials development to the project. Her on-going work includes researching and writing Essential Skills Profiles, developing materials for use with literacy and English language learners and defining language demands for occupations. She has contributed to projects for both national and provincial organizations including the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Ontario's Ministry of Education and the Alberta Food Processors Association.

### **Aleksandra Popovic PTP**

Aleksandra Popovic has been working in the adult literacy field for over 18 years. Her role at PTP includes program and personnel management, policy development, as well as involvement in research, training, and resource development projects - such as the OALC. She has additional experience as a presenter, case manager, youth counsellor, and teacher/instructor in literacy, workplace, academic and special education programs. Aleksandra holds a B. Psychology, B. Education with A.Q. in ESL/ESD and Special Ed., and is trained on a number of assessments.

## **Contact Information**

If you have any questions or concerns or wish to provide feedback, we welcome your comments. Please contact your appropriate sector, stream or Ministry representative.

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Also providing support for this project are OLC, Alphaplus, PTP, and MTML.