

Outcomes of a Province-Wide Consultation

The Big Picture Up Close

Literacy and Learning in BC

Prepared for **Literacy BC**
by Stacey Huget
HUGET Consulting

March 2002

With Grateful Acknowledgement of Funding from the **National Literacy Secretariat (Human Resources Development Canada)** and the **Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission of BC**

Copyright 2002, Literacy BC

National Library of Canada Cataloguing in Publication Data

Huget, Stacey.

The big picture up close

ISBN 0-9695709-9-6

1. Literacy programs—British Columbia. 2. Literacy—
Study and teaching. I. Literacy BC. II Title.

LC154.2.B7H83 2002 374.0124'09711 C2002-910510-2

We would like to acknowledge the research and logistical assistance of Maxine Adam during this province-wide consultation.

For further information on adult literacy and basic education programs, contact:

Audrey Thomas, Education Officer
Ministry of Advanced Education
P.O. Box 9877 Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, B.C. Canada V8W 9H8
Telephone: (250) 387-6174
Fax: (250) 952-6110
Email: audrey.thomas@gems5.gov.bc.ca

For further information on literacy in British Columbia, contact:

Literacy BC
601 – 510 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6B 1L8
Telephone: (604) 684-0624 Fax: (604) 684-8520
Toll free in B.C.: 1-800-663-1293
Email: info@literacy.bc.ca

Summary of Contents

Foreword: Not Just *Another* Consultation Report!

At a Glance: Executive Summary

Page

The Point and the Process	1
Recurring Themes	3
Implications for Action	8

Shifts in Awareness and Understanding

The Big Picture	13
Up Close	13
Changing Awareness	13
Impact of IALS Data	14
Adjusting Our Vision	15

The Murk Around Literacy

The Big Picture	17
Up Close	17
A Multitude of Perspectives	18
Contradictory “Grade Level” vs. “Functionality” Definitions	19
“Cradle to Grave” vs. Age-Specific Distinctions	20
A Rose By Many Other Names	20
As for “Basic Skills”	21
“Lifelong Learning” Resonates	21
Adjusting Our Vision	21

Whatever Literacy is – It is Apparent, Relevant, and Compelling

The Big Picture	23
Up Close	24
Intergenerational Consequences Within Families	24
Apparent in the School System	24
For the First Nations Community	25
For the English-as-a-Second-Language Community	25
Integral to So Many Other Social Issues	26
Consequences for Employability	27
Preventing Entry to Apprenticeship	28
The Foundation for All Work-Related Training	29
An Economic Issue In Which We Need to Invest	30
It Has Begun to Be Recognized As Such	31
Adjusting Our Vision	33

Traditional Learning Paths: Not *Everyone's* Road to Success

The Big Picture	35
Up Close	35
Alarming Drop Out Rates	35
Caliber of Teachers' Skills	36
Delivery Issues and Educational Reform	36
The Myth of the Grade 12 Hiring Bar	37
Gaps in Meeting Employment-Related Upgrading	38
School and Apprenticeship	38
Barriers to Access	39
A Difficult "Sell" to Some	39
The Need for a More Holistic Approach	39
The Reality for Education Institutions	40
Adjusting Our Vision	40

Successful Strategies: Multiple Points of Entry

The Big Picture	41
Up Close	41
Early Childhood Strategies	41
Family Literacy Programming	42
Youth and Work-Readiness Programming	42
Alternative Schooling	43
Entry Level and Pre-Apprenticeship Training	43
Transitional Employment Training	44
Workplace Learning Strategies	44
Union Involvement	45
School District and College-Based Programming	46
Learning in Correctional Facilities	47
First Nations Programming	47
Adult Tutoring, Community Learning Centers, and "Storefronts"	48
Adjusting Our Vision	50

Keeping the Learner in Focus

The Big Picture	51
Up Close	51
Better Assessments and Research	51
Addressing Learning Disabilities	52
Experiential, Non-Academic Learning	52
Applied Curriculum	52
Flexible Delivery	53

Distance Education	53
Drawing Out Those Most in Need	54
Setting Realistic Expectations	54
Adjusting Our Vision	55

Mind the Gaps: Community-Based Partnership and Collaboration

The Big Picture	57
Up Close	58
Literacy Needs Are Not Always Being Met	58
Regional Coordination and Networking	58
The Need for Community-Based Collaboration	59
The Challenges to be Overcome	60
What it Looks Like When it Happens	61
Adjusting Our Vision	66

Respecting Community Differences: One Size Doesn't Fit All

The Big Picture	67
Up Close	67
Rural Communities are Different From Urban Centers	67
Not All Urban Centers are the Same	68
First Nations Communities	68
Resource-Based Economies	69
Community Make-Up	69
Adjusting Our Vision	70

Program Funding: Responsibility, Sustainability, and Accountability

The Big Picture	71
Up Close	72
Responsibility for Funding	72
The Jurisdictional Blur	74
Sustainable vs. "Faucet" Funding	75
Rigid or "Flavour of the Month" Funding	75
Funding "Access" to Programs	76
FTE-Based Funding	76
Cadillac Funding	77
Competition for Resources	77
Private Sector Investment	77
Rigorous and Flexible Measures of Success	78
Adjusting Our Vision	79

APPENDICES

Appendix A – The “Field” of Literacy Practitioners: It’s a Muddy One

Appendix B - Organizational Awareness and Direction

Appendix C - Outcomes of the Literacy Practitioners’ and Learners’ Visioning Conference

Appendix D - List of Conference, Survey, and Consultation Participants

Appendix E –Survey Instruments and Consultation Interview Frameworks

Foreword: Not *Another* Consultation Report!

No, this is certainly not just another consultation report. Rather, this document lays out for all to see the outcomes of an extraordinary province-wide consultation process that took place throughout British Columbia from September, 2000 to August, 2001. If you want to have an up-to-date, comprehensive sense of what British Columbians think and believe about “literacy and lifelong learning”, here it is.

I well remember participating in the Visioning Conference in December, 2000. The enthusiasm and commitment from such a diverse group was inspiring. The huge room simply bubbled throughout the event. While I did not participate in the follow up surveys or the consultations in 40 communities throughout the province, I was well aware of the schedule and the determination of the planners to respect the views and perspectives of all. This report confirms that the planners and reporters were excellent listeners.

You will find commentary and action recommendations on every key area of literacy – from its definitions to its delivery, from strategies to success formulas, from initiations to interventions – and much more. As a result, this is much more than a British Columbia document. It is a significant contribution to the Canadian and international literature on literacy. Its recommendations have application well beyond British Columbia.

I found this report on a complex, ‘murky’ topic easy to follow. I was impressed particularly by the observations about the roles that schools might play in addressing literacy issues – and the limitations that schools have in meeting the needs of people throughout this province. I found the emphasis on the need for more community capacity-building and partnerships very encouraging. I was even more delighted to read no single ‘solution’ had been proposed as though there were a simple answer to a matter of such far-reaching social, economic, and personal consequence.

So, what now? Like many other readers, I have stacks of excellent reports sitting on my shelves, untouched after a first or second reading. What a shame it would be if this report were to get the same treatment! This report cries out for implementation – for action – for urgent action – and that will be a special challenge especially in these severe economic times in this province.

I urge all of us individually to ask: What can I do to follow up on the recommendations contained in this report? I urge all of us collectively to ask: What can we do together to make this consultation process truly meaningful and of practical and lasting benefit for British Columbians?

Paul Gallagher
Gallagher & Associates
March 2002

At a Glance: Executive Summary

The Point and the Process

Some Background...

In December of 1989, the report of the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee (PLAC) to the Minister of Advanced Education, Training and Technology was published. It laid out a framework for the development of literacy programs and strategies in the province for the decade following the 1990 International Year of Literacy.

During the intervening decade, much has been done. New programs have been initiated. People with literacy challenges have reached out for learning opportunities. Funding has been increased. Some changes in government policies have been implemented. However, the 1994 International Adult Literacy Survey and more recent studies continue to raise questions about how much has been concretely accomplished in the literacy field and what the most effective strategies might be for the future.

In the year 2000, marking the tenth anniversary of the release of the PLAC report, Literacy BC decided it was time to step back, review what has been accomplished, and think longer term. To that end, it initiated a year-long province-wide consultation on literacy and learning that would explore in depth the fundamental issues of awareness, program activities, delivery strategies, policy directions, leadership, and sustainability.

Our Intent...

The consultation was intended to serve a number of key objectives:

- to review, synthesize and create an overview document of what has been accomplished in the literacy field over the past ten years;
- to increase awareness about literacy issues among diverse communities;
- to develop benchmarks for measuring progress over the next five years, and create a baseline of data regarding these indicators;
- to build consensus among individuals, community organizations, educational institutions, government, businesses and unions about what needs to be done over the next five years, and who can best do it;
- to identify the current realities and future changes facing learners, practitioners, policy makers and decision makers;
- to contribute to the development of a long term strategic plan for literacy and learning in British Columbia; and
- to provide a model for consultation that could be replicated in other parts of Canada.

Our Approach...

This province-wide consultation on literacy and learning in BC comprised five separate but interrelated methodologies:

Literacy Practitioners' and Learners' Visioning Conference...

140 learners, practitioners, administrators, funders, and others attended Literacy BC's *Setting an Agenda for Tomorrow: Making a Difference* conference, November 30th to December 2nd, 2000 – at which they listened, dialogued, and created visions for the next decade.

Leaders in BC Telephone Survey...

300 influential business, labour, education, and government representatives were interviewed by telephone as to their experience and perspectives around literacy, learning, and skills development in this province.

Province-Wide Community Consultations...

205 educators, business people, union representatives, government representatives, community development workers, and educators from 35 communities outside the Lower Mainland were interviewed in person as to their experiences and perspectives on literacy and learning in this province.

Supplementary Business and Labour Telephone Survey...

An additional 100 businesspeople and union representatives were interviewed by telephone as to their experience and perspectives around the basic skills of the BC workforce.

Workforce Literacy Practitioners' Telephone Survey...

25 of BC's workforce literacy practitioners were interviewed by telephone (and by e-mail) as to their opinions and aspirations around professional development and best practices for their field.

In total, over 675 people in more than 40 communities throughout BC were engaged in this consultation, including:

- representatives from School Districts, colleges, alternative schools, and Community Skill Centers
- family, adult, and workforce literacy practitioners
- community development workers
- industry representatives, both from business and organized labour
- government representatives from the BC Ministries of Education; of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (now the Ministry of Advanced Education); of Social Development and Economic Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources); of Children and Families; and from Human Resources Development Canada
- representatives of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission and of Forest Renewal BC
- First Nations peoples

Recurring Themes

From a “big picture” perspective, there were many recurring themes throughout the consultation. While expanded upon in the sections that follow, here is a brief summary:

Shifts in Awareness and Understanding...

- A majority of people reported an increase in their own awareness and understanding of literacy over the last three years – and particularly that they have a broader view of what it entails.
- Most people said they do not remember hearing of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) and of those who have, most underestimated the percentage of Canadians who are at IALS level 1 and 2.
- There is significant interest in having local, community-specific data around literacy.

The Murk Around Literacy...

- Literacy is often described in contradictory ways – and is, for that reason, confusing. Many people, for example, refer to it as a broad and inclusive continuum of contextually relevant skills – along the lines of the five IALS measures or as overlapping with employability skills. Others, particularly educators, define it as a clearly measurable grade or academic achievement level. Without reconciling these two notions of literacy in some way, the confusion around the term will likely continue.
- Similarly, conversations about literacy seem to be segmented into age- or context-related silos. That is, distinctions are drawn between “family literacy”, “adult literacy”, and “workforce literacy”, for example, with the implication that separate streams of programming are required. At the same time, the notion of “literacy and lifelong learning” seems to be universally understood – but implies a more holistic and seamless approach to the issue.
- Literacy issues are bundled up with numerous other issues – making it that much more difficult to define, identify, and address.
- Literacy tends to be positioned as either a philanthropic issue or a socio-economic issue. Current messaging about literacy does not reconcile these opposing views.
- The word “literacy” is seen to have negative connotations. Numerous other terms are used in its place, including “foundation skills”, “employability skills”, “basic skills”, and “essential skills”.

Whatever Literacy Is – It is Apparent, Relevant, and Compelling...

- The majority of people view literacy to be relevant to their lives in some way – and see it as serious relative to other social issues.
- Literacy is bundled up with numerous other issues: isolation; family crises; substance abuse; income assistance and financial constraints; anger management; poor lifeskills; poor communication skills; inappropriate social behavior; learning disabilities; fetal alcohol syndrome, etc. The origins of any cause-and-effect patterns, if there are any, are not clear.
- Various government agencies – income assistance, family services, employment placement, social services, corrections, mental health – encounter people with low levels of literacy and describe them as having “fallen through the cracks of society”.
- In many communities, the need for literacy programming is greater than the interventions that are available.
- Literacy in the family is critically important. However, “at risk” families, while relatively easy to identify, have been difficult to engage in the learning process using current strategies.
- Literacy in the school system is seen to be a significant challenge – with figures of 20-30% below grade level skills frequently reported and drop out rates as high as 45%. Literacy issues with teenagers are well-hidden and undetected.
- Literacy is a significant issue among First Nations peoples. A number of factors compromise the relevance of traditional paths to literacy and learning among native peoples.
- Literacy is also a significant issue for new Canadians whose first language is not English – and who may not be literate in their first language – but, again, drawing these people into upgrading programs has been difficult.
- Literacy is closely related to one’s ability to find and keep employment. Many existing and displaced workers do not have access to the basic skills upgrading they need – with significant socio-economic consequences.
- While many people recognize the pivotal importance of literacy in our society, its significance is often seen as a “gave at the office” philanthropic issue rather than as a more “bottom line” socio-economic issue.

Traditional Learning Paths: Not *Everyone’s* Road to Success...

- Estimates that traditional approaches to education just don’t work for approximately 30% of children, teens, and adults are relatively consistent. There are many who believe educators and those in the literacy community need to stop trying to wrap learners around a system that doesn’t work for them and, instead, begin wrapping our interventions around them – in a more inclusive and holistic way.
- There are no guarantees that a grade 12 education “guarantees” certain basic skills.

-
- Teachers tend to teach “how to read” up to grade 3 or so. At higher grade levels, teachers’ expertise is in teaching the content, not the reading process, of learning.
 - Traditional education does not necessarily develop the skills and contextual understanding people need to succeed in the contemporary world of work.
 - The resources in our educational institutions are spread very thin. They cannot be expected to meet all the needs of society.

Successful Strategies: Multiple Points of Entry...

- Intervention strategies do or should take a variety of forms, including:
 - early intervention programs
 - family literacy programs
 - youth and work-readiness programs
 - alternative schooling
 - entry level and pre-apprenticeship training
 - transitional employment training
 - workplace basic skills upgrading
 - First Nations programming
 - adult tutoring and community “storefront” learning centers
 - learning centers in correctional facilities
 - school district and college-based programming
- While none of these strategies are adequately resourced to meet the need they address, several seem to be particularly under-resourced. These include programming for First Nations, “at risk” teens, and those who are in the workforce and in need of basic skills upgrading.

Keeping the Learner in Focus...

- There is a perceived need for better strategies or more resources around:
 - assessment methods
 - flexible, learner-centered delivery systems
 - experiential and applied, non-academic learning
 - learning disabilities

-
- Drawing out those with the most serious literacy issues is a continuing challenging.
 - Particular sensitivity is required around the expectations educators and those in the literacy community give to and have of adult learners.

Minding the Gaps: Community-Based Partnership and Collaboration...

- While numerous programs and strategies to foster literacy and learning are in place throughout the province, they are far out-stripped by need.
- Greater inter-agency cooperation and coordination, and more of a community-based approach to intervention, are necessary. Effective interventions around literacy require collaboration among government agencies, training providers, and business and labour.
- Collaboration is hampered by issues of trust, time, resources, and rivalries over funding. Confidentiality issues are also problematic.
- Throughout the province, Regional Literacy Coordinators play a meaningful role – but are significantly under-resourced.
- Despite the mutual benefit they would derive from working together on basic skills upgrading and workplace learning strategies, tensions between labour and management continue to impede action.
- Partnerships and collaboration around literacy and learning do exist throughout the province and provide a rich variety of models on which educators and those in the literacy community can build, including:
 - collaborative education delivery
 - “in kind” contribution arrangements
 - program-specific partnerships
 - partnerships with First Nations
 - educator/employer partnerships
 - labour/management partnerships
 - dialogue, liaison, and referral
 - strategic alliances and “learning community” initiatives

Respecting Community Differences: One Size *Doesn't* Fit All...

- Communities – and community differences – are more than just geographic. The circumstances and needs of First Nations people are different from those of non-aboriginal people, for example. Moreover, there are significant differences in the circumstances and needs within the “community” of First Nations peoples throughout the province.

-
- The circumstances and needs of rural communities are different in many ways from those of urban centers.
 - Communities whose economies are resource-based – of which there are many in BC – are in transition. The traditional supply of low-skilled employment opportunities is shifting as these industries are either in decline or becoming more technologically sophisticated and in need of higher-skilled workers. However, communities are in various stages of evolution with respect to denial, ownership, and action regarding the need to “reinvent themselves”.
 - Every community is unique. The array of agencies and providers – and the relationships among them – is different in every community. No one approach to intervention can meet the needs of all.
 - Despite this diversity, literacy is consistently seen to be bundled up with numerous other issues – and learning is consistently seen to be a fulcrum for effecting change and movement. This is true on an individual and a community level.
 - Life gets breathed into the notion of “learning communities” through individual leadership, tenacity, and inclusive trustful relationships.

Program Funding: Responsibility, Sustainability, and Accountability...

- As an issue, literacy is significantly under-resourced. While numerous programs and strategies to foster literacy and learning are in place throughout the province, they are far out-stripped by need.
- Given the interrelationship between literacy and other social and economic issues – including health, corrections, income assistance, welfare, First Nations, children and families, etc. – responsibility for funding is unclear. There is a greater need for strategic, inter-agency collaboration among government departments.
- Adjustments to funding priorities and eligibility criteria are time-consuming and administratively burdensome on service providers. So also is the inconsistency with which criteria may be interpreted at different regional government offices.
- Tuition freezes, FTE limits, and other forms of cutbacks in both the former Ministries of Education and of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (now the Ministry of Advanced Education) have placed an undue burden on the traditional educational institutional providers of literacy services. Moreover, age- and grade-level distinctions in the funding of these two Ministries make a “cradle to grave” approach to literacy and lifelong learning challenging.
- Limited, short-term, and project-based funding is a challenge for many service providers. Sustainable, long-term funding for actual delivery is what is needed.
- Issues of accountability and outcomes need to be explored – on the part of both funders and providers – so as to make them rigorous, flexible, and meaningful.

Implications for Action

There are many implications for action that might be derived from the findings of this province-wide consultation on literacy and learning in BC. After careful thought, the following are reflections on what all of the foregoing implies in terms of future action around literacy and learning in BC – loosely grouped for simplicity under the four headings of *Positioning the Issue*, *Programming and Delivery Strategies*, *Community-Based Collaboration*, and *Funding and Accountability*. They are the views of the author of the report and are intended to serve as the springboard for discussion and to contribute to the development of a long term strategic plan for literacy and learning in British Columbia.

Positioning the Issue...

1) Continue Benchmarking Awareness

There is value in continuing to track awareness and understanding around literacy issues on a regular basis so as to provide at least one indicator of the effectiveness of the communications strategies undertaken in the future. Using the identical telephone survey instruments used in the Leaders in BC and the Supplemental Business/Labour surveys, and using the findings of this first set of surveys as a benchmark, we recommend surveying randomly chosen representatives of these same groups every three years.

2) Be Diligent in Our Approach to Collecting, Promoting, and Using IALS Data

Educators and those in the literacy community should be cautious and diligent in their approach to using and promoting IALS and other data in three ways:

Firstly, there should be over-sampling in BC for the 2004 IALS data so as to have more accurate regional and community information.

Secondly, educators and those in the literacy community should not assume that just because people did not directly attribute their greater understanding of literacy issues to the IALS data, the promotion of those findings did not have an effect. We recommend continuing to communicate IALS findings as an integral part of our communications strategy about the issue.

Thirdly, having said that, we recommend being cautious in the over-use and over-statement of the IALS data. To avoid getting bogged down in discussions about the validity of the IALS data, greater emphasis should be placed on the implications of those findings rather than on the precise percentages of Canadians at Levels 1, 2, and 3.

3) Reconcile the “Disconnects” in Our Own Definitions of Literacy

Some of the murk around literacy is a result of the sometimes contradictory ways it is talked about. We recommend engaging educators and those in the literacy community in strategizing and agreeing on messaging that reconciles the two most problematic “disconnects” this consultation identified:

Firstly, there needs to be some way of reconciling grade level vs. continuum notions of literacy.

Secondly, literacy needs to be positioned as a socio-economic issue rather than a philanthropic, “gave at the office” issue.

4) Position the Issue as “Literacy and Lifelong Learning”

Literacy is mired in negative stigma and has given way to the use of alternative terms being used in many different contexts (eg. “basic skills”, “essential skills”, “employability skills”, “foundation skills”, etc.). While this use of alternative language serves a variety of purposes, it further contributes the murk and the stigma around literacy. We recommend using “literacy and lifelong learning” as the over-arching, umbrella phrase that describes all learning and skills acquisition.

5) Develop and Implement a Comprehensive and Integrated Communication Strategy

We recommend engaging educators and those in the literacy community in the development of a comprehensive and integrated approach to communicating about and promoting issues relating to literacy. Specifically, we envision a two-phase approach:

Firstly, that educators and those in the literacy community collaborate, along with the appropriate expertise and input from others, to create umbrella messaging about “literacy and lifelong learning” that all can use consistently and, thus, speak with the same voice.

Secondly, that they collaborate, along with the appropriate expertise and input from others, to create more precise messaging around specific aspects of literacy that resonate particularly well for specific audiences or in specific contexts – but that relate back to and are complementary with our overall messaging about “literacy and lifelong learning.”

6) Fully Embrace and Accommodate the Complexity of Literacy Issues in Our Messaging

Clearly, there are complex causes and consequences of literacy for all segments of society and in all the different ways it manifests itself. While it is useful to simplify the issue under a common umbrella statement about “literacy and lifelong learning”, it should be recognized that the issue resonates with different people in different contexts and for different reasons. Accordingly, further to #5 above, we recommend that the development of discreet and targeted messages fully reflect, embrace, and accommodate the complexity of the issue so that everyone who needs to, understands and appreciates its importance.

Programming and Delivery Strategies...

7) Support the Traditional Education System in Undertaking Necessary Reforms

Clearly, there are opportunities for improvements and reform within BC’s education system. A number of these have been identified and affirmed as part of this consultation. The most significant among them, in our view, is the need to move to a learning-outcomes based model and to one that recognizes both academic and non-academic outcomes. We recommend that

those in the literacy community ally with and support those within the traditional education system in their efforts to undertake reform.

8) Provide Traditional Education Institutions the Necessary Resources to Do their Job

Whatever the goals are for reform – be it smaller class size, more time for individualized instruction, more professional development and “in service” time for teachers, access to expertise around learning disabilities, and so on – the system is not adequately resourced to do all that is expected of it. We recommend that those in the literacy community ally with and support those within the traditional education system in their efforts to gain access to necessary resources.

9) Acknowledge the Contribution of Non-Traditional Learning Models

Given the consistency with which we heard that the traditional education system is not – for whatever reasons – meeting the needs of approximately a third of our children, teens, and adults, more attention and acceptance should be given to non-traditional learning models. We recommend that there be full support for any strategies which foster greater energy and garner greater resources for creative, inclusive, and holistic learning models – whether delivered as part of or alongside the traditional education system.

10) Acknowledge the Need for and Merit of Multiple Programming Strategies

Programming strategies do and should take a variety of forms. We recommend that all should be acknowledged and valued.

11) Create Stronger Linkages Between Different Providers and Strategies

While multiple programming strategies are essential, there is value in linking them under the notion of a “literacy field” that shares information, collaborates on strategy, and shares a common voice on issues of broader policy. To that end, we offer three recommendations:

Firstly, that stronger information networks and linkages be created among *all* providers.

Secondly, that bridges be built between such silos of “family literacy”, “adult literacy”, and “workforce literacy” so that all have a well-understood and seamless role in the overall pursuit of “literacy and lifelong learning”.

Thirdly, that the role of Regional Literacy Coordinators be expanded to serve as the glue between all of the multiple programming strategies being implemented in their Region – and that they be adequately resourced to do so.

12) Increase Activity in Literacy for First Nations, “At Risk” Teens, and Those in the Workforce

Based on the delivery gaps that became evident during this consultation, we recommend that three of the audiences for which educators and those in the literacy community have a particular opportunity to develop programming strategies are First Nations communities, “at risk” teens, and those in the workforce.

13) Continue to Promote and Implement a Learner-Centered Approach

Throughout the consultation, numerous and very specific learner-centered strategies and “best practices” were identified. *Appendices A and C* in particular document these in detail. We recommend the full support for all efforts to follow, implement, and expand on these. More specifically, we recommend forming a provincial group or task force who might further discuss, strategize, and report back with recommendations on some key challenges.

Community-Based Collaboration...

14) Foster Inter-Ministerial Collaboration on Literacy and Related Issues

Despite the enormity and complexity of the task, we recommend creating a BC Government Standing Committee on Literacy and Related Issues that would promote internal government collaboration across all Ministries for which some aspect of literacy is an issue. Working at a policy and program design level, this Standing Committee would develop a common and integrated approach to literacy and related issues throughout the province so as to streamline the delivery of services, close existing service gaps, and increase overall effectiveness for dollars spent.

15) Promote Inter-Agency Cooperation on Literacy and Related Issues at the Community Level

Alongside this more lofty effort, we recommend promoting inter-agency cooperation on literacy and related issues at the community level in tandem with or as an outcome of developing a comprehensive and integrated communications strategy for literacy and lifelong learning as outlined in *Reflections #5* and *#6*.

16) Acknowledge and Respect the Diversity of Our Communities

Regardless of whether they are geographic, cultural, or otherwise, we believe we must acknowledge and respect the diversity of communities throughout BC. With respect to literacy and learning in particular, we recommend supporting the right of individual communities to learn and draw from what happens provincially and elsewhere – but to self-determine how best it is applied at the local level.

17) Initiate and Support Strategies that Foster “Learning Communities” in BC

Despite the diversity of our communities, literacy and learning are consistently seen as a viable fulcrum for effecting socio-economic revitalization. We recommend that there be full support for any strategies which foster “learning communities” to develop throughout BC. More specifically, we recommend enabling communities to more easily share information with one another about those strategies (eg. community mapping, developing indicators of community vibrancy, etc.) and about their successes.

Funding and Accountability...

18) Develop Integrated and Realistic Funding Strategies – Both Federally and Provincially

There is a need for greater and more strategically integrated public-sector funding for literacy and related issues – as evidenced by the unmet needs identified in this consultation and by the profound, interrelated, and costly socio-economic impact these issues are having in this province. We recommend an approach to funding literacy and related issues such that:

- Limited, short-term, project-based funding be replaced, at least in part, with longer-term sustainable funding;
- Funding programs allow for direct delivery and provide for “access-related costs” (eg. transportation, childcare, etc.) associated with full learner participation; and that
- There be some integrated and strategic, inter-Ministerial approach to funding literacy and related issues so as to more readily enable holistic, socio-economic revitalization initiatives such as “Learning Communities”.

19) Collaborate on Meaningful Accountability Models

Issues around accountability and outcomes for literacy programs need further exploration. We recommend finding ways of engaging representatives of funding sources and service providers in a review of the evaluative criteria of programs so as to make them more flexible, more rigorous, and more meaningful.

20) Create Incentives for Private Sector Investment in Literacy and Lifelong Learning

Given the socio-economic impact of these issues, industry (i.e. business and labour) has a role to play in and much to gain from investing in literacy and lifelong learning strategies – particularly as they relate to school-to-work transition programs, workforce skills upgrading, and broader community development and revitalization. We recommend the government explore and develop incentives that would encourage them to do so.

Shifts in Awareness and Understanding

“We need society to understand the importance of literacy – as a #1 concern. Everyone is better for it.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“We have to stop using the ridiculous statistics that 26% of Canadians can’t read a simple document. It’s counterproductive IF it’s true.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

The Big Picture

- A majority of people reported an increase in their own awareness and understanding of literacy over the last three years – and particularly that they have a broader view of what it entails.
- Most people said they do not remember hearing of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) and of those who have, most underestimated the percentage of Canadians who are at IALS level 1 and 2.
- There is significant interest in having local, community-specific data around literacy.

Up Close

The following summarizes what we learned from the literacy practitioners’ and learners’ visioning conference, our two telephone surveys, and our community consultations.

Changing Awareness...

BC Leaders’ Survey

“Has your view of literacy changed in any way over the last three years?”

	All (%)
Yes	92
No	8

A significant majority of respondents reported a change in their view.

BC Leaders' Survey

"How has it changed?"

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Awareness	27	45	19	13	35	17	21
Broader View	26	21	17	29	23	44	29
Job-Related	11	10	29	9	8	-	14
Computer Technology	9	6	13	11	10	7	11
Essential	5	-	-	4	4	11	11
Other	5	1	2	2	10	7	7

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

Over half of the responses described a greater awareness and/or a broader understanding of literacy over the last three years. Interestingly, this was particularly the case for business (66%), educators (61%) and community development workers (58%) – and less so for labour (36%) and government (42%).

Respondents – particularly from labour – also cited a greater awareness of the relationship between literacy, work, and computer technology.

Impact of IALS Data...

- During the consultation, many people agreed that IALS statistics may in some cases be useful for program development on a broad basis, but that access to local data would be more relevant and useful.

BC Leaders' Survey

"Have you heard anything about the International Adult Literacy Survey?"

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
No	76	93	85	69	85	63	39
Yes	23	7	15	29	13	37	61

NOTE: Due to rounding, percentages may not exactly total 100%

Three quarters of respondents had not heard of IALS. Respondents from business, labour, and community development were particularly unlikely to have heard of it.

BC Leaders' Survey

"If yes, what was the percentage of Canadians found to be at the lowest 2 literacy levels?"

	All (%)
0-34 Percent	59
35-45 Percent	32
46-100 Percent	9

Of the 23% of respondents who had heard of IALS, 6 out of 10 underestimated the percentages of Canadians at the lowest two levels. Virtually all of those who accurately estimated the range as being 35-45 percent were either educators or workforce literacy practitioners.

BC Leaders' Survey

"If no, what would you guess the percentage to be?"

	All (%)
0-34 Percent	78
35-45 Percent	16
46-100 Percent	6

Of the 71% who had not heard of IALS (and who agreed to guess), nearly 8 out of 10 underestimated the percentages of Canadians at the lowest two levels.

Adjusting Our Vision

The following are our reflections on what all of the foregoing implies in terms of future action around literacy and learning in BC:

1) Continue Benchmarking Awareness

There is value in continuing to track awareness and understanding around literacy issues on a regular basis so as to provide at least one indicator of the effectiveness of the communications strategies undertaken in the future. Using the identical telephone survey instruments used in the Leaders in BC and the Supplemental Business/Labour surveys, and using the findings of this first set of surveys as a benchmark, we recommend surveying randomly chosen representatives of these same groups every three years.

2) Be Diligent in Our Approach to Collecting, Promoting, and Using IALS Data

Educators and those in the literacy community should be cautious and diligent in their approach to using and promoting IALS and other data in three ways:

Firstly, there should be over-sampling in BC for the 2004 IALS data so as to have more accurate regional and community information.

Secondly, educators and those in the literacy community should not assume that just because people did not directly attribute their greater understanding of literacy issues to the IALS data, the promotion of those findings did not have an effect. We recommend continuing to communicate IALS findings as an integral part of our communications strategy about the issue.

Thirdly, having said that, we recommend being cautious in the over-use and over-statement of the IALS data. To avoid getting bogged down in discussions about the validity of the IALS data, greater emphasis should be placed on the implications of those findings rather than on the precise percentages of Canadians at Levels 1, 2, and 3.

The Murk Around Literacy

“Literacy is an issue of shame and blame, something to be glazed over, hidden. People question the statistics; they do not understand the definition of literacy. Educational institutions see it as a ‘grade level’. We need better messaging.” – Workforce Literacy Practitioner during Consultation

“Literacy is not a charity, but a foundation for learning and life. Seen as a charity, the importance of literacy work is diminished, not an essential part of community socio-economic well-being. Seen as a foundation for learning and life, literacy is brought to the centre of the table.” – Report on Literacy Practitioners Visioning Conference

“My recommendation is that we stop using the word literacy all together and talk about lifelong learning.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

The Big Picture

- Literacy is often described in contradictory ways – and is, for that reason, confusing. Many of the people we talked to, for example, refer to it as a broad and inclusive continuum of contextually relevant skills – along the lines of the five IALS measures or as overlapping with employability skills. Others, particularly educators, define it as a clearly measurable grade or academic achievement level. Without reconciling these two notions of literacy in some way, the confusion around the term will likely continue.
- Similarly, conversations about literacy seem to be segmented into age- or context-related silos. That is, distinctions are drawn between “family literacy”, “adult literacy”, and “workforce literacy”, for example, with the implication that separate streams of programming are required. At the same time, the notion of “literacy and lifelong learning” seems to be universally understood – but implies a more holistic and seamless approach to the issue.
- Literacy issues are bundled up with numerous other issues – making it that much more difficult to define, identify, and address.
- Literacy tends to be positioned as either a philanthropic issue or a socio-economic issue. We have not created messages about literacy that reconcile these opposing views.
- The word “literacy” is seen to have negative connotations. Numerous other terms are used in its place, including “foundation skills”, “employability skills”, “basic skills”, and “essential skills”.

Up Close

The following summarizes what we learned from the literacy practitioners’ and learners’ visioning conference, our two telephone surveys, and our community consultations.

BC Leaders' Survey

"If someone were to ask you what 'literacy' means, what would you tell them?"

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Reading/Writing	67	81	77	73	68	48	39
Comprehension	37	33	50	36	44	24	36
Communication	25	27	31	24	15	24	36
Numeracy/Technical	20	9	21	18	15	33	29
Application	18	12	15	20	13	26	32
Other	9	9	2	4	15	9	14

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

Overall, two thirds of respondents' comments related literacy to reading and writing; another third referred to comprehension; a quarter to communication; and a fifth to numeracy and/or technical and applied skills.

What are particularly interesting are the differences among the groups: Educators and workforce literacy practitioners – those presumably closest to learners – were the least likely to refer to reading and writing and the most likely to refer to numeracy and/or technical and applied skills. Business, on the other hand, was the least likely to mention the relationship between literacy and these skills.

A Multitude of Perspectives...

"Literacy is too fragmented a concept. We need to make it simple." – Community Development Worker during consultation

- People's views around the notion of literacy vary significantly. This multitude of perspectives makes literacy a confusing and difficult concept to grasp and define.
- During the consultation, the employers and business representatives we spoke with said they were more concerned with "skills issues" than they were with "literacy issues". Indeed, they are most likely to think about reading and writing in the context of employability skills. For them, employability skills are perhaps a more accessible and less stigmatized concept than literacy.
- Many representatives from School Districts, on the other hand, seem more likely to think of the family aspect of literacy and to focus on early childhood intervention – perhaps because that addresses the need they are closest to.
- Clearly, literacy does not lend itself to universal definition. Each individual and each constituency group sees it differently – from the standpoint of their own situation and interests. That it is contextual makes its meaning much more difficult to define.

Contradictory “Grade Level” vs. “Functionality” Definitions...

“Literacy is Grade 8. Adult Basic Education (ABE) is anything over Grade 8.” – Educator during Consultation

“Literacy encompasses all adults who are capable of yet unable to read, write or perform mathematical or computer operations at a level that would permit them to function successfully in society and contribute to the economy. There are varying levels of literacy but at the most basic level it would include the ability to read and interpret signage, understand warnings on medicines and consumer products, complete basic job application/census information, calculate sales tax, work with a standard suite of computer software programs, and so on.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

“Literacy is reading properly, without hindrance, as well as writing, spelling, communicating effectively. It is also having confidence, being effective at getting a job, and being part of the community and involved in society. Literacy is a building block. Without it, one can be left behind, or marginalized.” – Community Development Worker during Consultation

“Literacy learners are being left behind. ABE is totally different than literacy, so there is an even bigger gap.” – Educator during Consultation

- Educators commonly defined literacy for us in grade-level terms, from grade 4, to grade 7 or 8, to grade 10. Moreover, many made grade-level distinctions between literacy and ABE. It was pointed out that, while this use of grade-level definitions serves an administrative purpose within educational institutions, it may also reflect the absence of more coherent and meaningful benchmarks around literacy. Grade levels provide a conveniently precise way of describing something that is inconveniently imprecise.
- While there is an obvious rationale and utility in such definitions of literacy, these views are counter-opposed to the broader “whatever skills you need for the task at hand” view of literacy.
- For some, literacy is a big umbrella – and represents the vehicle for lifelong learning, the building block without which one may become marginalized. According to participants in this consultation, it includes:
 - operating effectively in today’s society with computers, language, math, and reading
 - being able to write a coherent sentence
 - reading at a level where you can function in society
 - doing the math you are required to do on the job
 - reading and writing, technology, math
 - having a sense of power, of control over one’s life; being actively involved in the community; realizing one’s own potential
 - having emotional intelligence

-
- being able to apply, use, and interpret language – both written and oral
 - computer literacy
 - everything from the basics – the ability to read – through to numeracy, general competency, functional employability, likeskills
 - K-12 math and English as well as personal, career, health and wellness, and general life skills
 - problem-solving, interpreting information from symbols, being able to function and adapt outside one’s environment
 - being able to function in everyday life: paying bills, filling in forms, communicating with one’s child’s teacher, etc.
 - realizing one’s full potential
 - reading without hindrance, writing, spelling, communicating, having confidence, being effective at getting a job, being part of the community, being involved in society
 - having no personal or employment barriers: being able to speak publicly in a meeting, to lead projects, to get opinions and feedback.

“Cradle to Grave” vs. Age-Specific Distinctions ...

“I think we have to be careful to limit our discussion to the ‘adult’ literacy field ... it’s far too complex if it is broadened to include children and youth.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

- During the consultation, we repeatedly heard age-related distinctions being made around literacy. Early childhood literacy, youth literacy, and adult literacy were described as separate albeit inter-related issues for which separate streams of programming are required. However, others argued for the need for a more seamless and holistic approach to literacy – where, for example, integrated strategies for family, school, workplace, and community literacy might cross over and transcend age-related distinctions.

A Rose by Many Other Names...

- Throughout the consultation, we heard people say they didn’t like to call it “literacy” because the word has negative connotations. Instead, they preferred “plain language”, “foundation skills”, “essential skills”, “basic skills”, “cornerstone skills”, etc.
- Several union representatives we spoke with said that unions only respond to what the membership asks for – and members aren’t likely to come forward to ask for help with “literacy”.

As for “Basic Skills”...

Supplemental Business/Labour Survey

“If someone were to ask you what ‘basic skills’ are, what would you tell them?”

	All	Business	Labour
	%	%	%
Reading/Writing	28	26	31
Numeracy/Technical	21	18	26
Communication	18	22	12
Grade 10/12	13	13	12
Comprehension	8	10	5
Job Related	8	8	8
Other	3	2	6

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

The majority of employers and union representatives defined basic skills as reading and writing, numeracy and technical skills, and communication. Interestingly, employers were more likely to mention communication and union representatives were more likely to mention numeracy and technical skills.

“Lifelong Learning” Resonates...

- Respondents in the BC Leaders Survey were asked: “**If someone were to ask you what the phrase ‘lifelong learning’ meant, what would you tell them?**” Despite the expansiveness of the concept, virtually all of the respondents seemed comfortable with it and were clear and articulate about its meaning. While they used different words, they described “lifelong learning” in terms of an ongoing process and mindset and culture wherein people are empowered to and engaged in whatever learning or skills improvement they need or seek to fulfill their potential as students, family members, workers, or citizens – at whatever stage of life.

Adjusting Our Vision

The following are our reflections on what all of the foregoing implies in terms of future action around literacy and learning in BC:

3) Reconcile the “Disconnects” in Our Own Definitions of Literacy

Some of the murk around literacy is a result of the sometimes contradictory ways it is talked about. We recommend engaging educators and those in the literacy community in strategizing and agreeing on messaging that reconciles the two most problematic “disconnects” this consultation identified:

Firstly, there needs to be some way of reconciling grade level vs. continuum notions of literacy.

Secondly, literacy needs to be positioned as a socio-economic issue rather than a philanthropic, “gave at the office” issue.

4) Position the Issue as “Literacy and Lifelong Learning”

Literacy is mired in negative stigma and has given way to the use of alternative terms being used in many different contexts (eg. “basic skills”, “essential skills”, “employability skills”, “foundation skills”, etc.). While this use of alternative language serves a variety of purposes, it further contributes the murk and the stigma around literacy. We recommend using “literacy and lifelong learning” as the over-arching, umbrella phrase that describes all learning and skills acquisition.

5) Develop and Implement a Comprehensive and Integrated Communication Strategy

We recommend engaging educators and those in the literacy community in the development of a comprehensive and integrated approach to communicating about and promoting issues relating to literacy. Specifically, we envision a two-phase approach:

Firstly, that educators and those in the literacy community collaborate, along with the appropriate expertise and input from others, to create umbrella messaging about “literacy and lifelong learning” that all can use consistently and, thus, speak with the same voice.

Secondly, that they collaborate, along with the appropriate expertise and input from others, to create more precise messaging around specific aspects of literacy that resonate particularly well for specific audiences or in specific contexts – but that relate back to and are complementary with our overall messaging about “literacy and lifelong learning.”

Whatever Literacy Is – It is Apparent, Relevant, and Compelling

“One in four of our clients have low literacy and for long term clients, low literacy is probably an issue 50% of the time.” – Government Representative during Consultation

“There is a need for learning and upgrading in order to function well at work, at home and in our communities. Reasons for wanting education upgrading can be very different. Some workers find themselves less able to cope due to workplace restructuring; others who have been away from school for several years lack confidence, believing that the skills that once served them well are now outdated. Learning goals include high school completion, math, communication skills development, computer familiarization or reading and writing skills enhancement.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

The Big Picture

- The majority of people view literacy to be relevant to their lives in some way – and see it as serious relative to other social issues.
- Literacy is bundled up with numerous other issues: isolation; family crises; substance abuse; income assistance and financial constraints; anger management; poor lifeskills; poor communication skills; inappropriate social behavior; learning disabilities; fetal alcohol syndrome, etc. The origins of any cause-and-effect patterns, if there are any, are not clear.
- Various government agencies – income assistance, family services, employment placement, social services, corrections, mental health – encounter people with low levels of literacy and describe them as having “fallen through the cracks of society”.
- In many communities, the need for literacy programming is greater than the interventions that are available.
- Literacy in the family is critically important. However, “at risk” families, while relatively easy to identify, have been difficult to engage in the learning process using current strategies.
- Literacy in the school system is seen to be a significant challenge – with figures of 20-30% below grade level skills frequently reported and drop out rates as high as 45%. Literacy issues with teenagers are well-hidden and undetected.
- Literacy is a significant issue among First Nations peoples. A number of factors compromise the relevance of traditional paths to literacy and learning among native peoples.
- Literacy is also a significant issue for new Canadians whose first language is not English – and who may not be literate in their first language – but, again, drawing these people into upgrading programs has been difficult.
- Literacy is closely related to one’s ability to find and keep employment. Many existing and displaced workers do not have access to the basic skills upgrading they need – with significant socio-economic consequences.

-
- While many people recognize the pivotal importance of literacy in our society, its significance is often seen as a “gave at the office” philanthropic issue rather than as a more “bottom line” socio-economic issue.

Up Close

The following summarizes what we learned from the literacy practitioners’ and learners’ visioning conference, our two telephone surveys, and our community consultations.

Intergenerational Consequences Within Families...

- During the consultation, people told us that literacy problems often come up in pre-school even where communities have pre-school programs run by the City or School District or Child Development Centre. In their view, these programs are not necessarily reaching the parents and children who need them the most. They go on further to say that, in many homes, reading just isn’t valued.
- At-risk families are relatively easy to identify but offers of support are not necessarily accepted. If people don’t recognize the need for help, or they are intimidated about coming forward, they won’t participate.
- Several educators raised the issue of parents who are “organizationally inept” and don’t teach their children to be organized. One School District representative we spoke with described the effect that transient, low income families with substance abuse or other issues have on their kids. Their behavior contributes to learning disability syndromes as children become used to thinking around chaos instead of routine and predictability. Moreover, the number of “at risk” children is said to be growing and classes are becoming polarized as a result.

Apparent in the School System...

“In our community, teachers report that the students can’t read, so they can’t learn. There is a high drop out level.” – Educator during Consultation

“This is an international phenomenon: lack of support for early intervention, pressure on schools, pressure on teachers.” – Government Representative during Consultation

- A number of the School District Superintendents we interviewed expressed frustration at the literacy issues in their school. One reported that 20-25% of students in grade 3 are falling below their expected skill level. One estimated that 20% of the intakes at the college in their community are at a grade 9 reading level.
- Repeatedly during the consultation, people expressed concern about low literacy ratings, low rates of high school completion, and high drop out rates.

-
- A number of the educators we interviewed said that literacy issues among teenagers go largely undetected – hidden and undiagnosed. Even when it is detected, there isn't much in the way of solutions. Alternative programs, where they exist, are kids' last chance.
 - One Alternative School principal described an increasingly large group of boys who are showing up at his school with serious literacy problems. An early intervention program will be started in the school system within a couple of years – but he says they need a program in place now for the middle grades.
 - Several college ABE instructors lamented that the school system is not doing its job. They say it is graduating unskilled people because there is no accountability and teachers are told not to fail students.

For the First Nations Community...

“We need more programs for the aboriginal community that are accessible and stable.”
– Educator during Consultation

- The people we spoke with during the consultation overwhelmingly affirmed that literacy is a huge issue for First Nations peoples and cited a number of factors that compromise the relevance of traditional paths to literacy and learning among native peoples:
 - isolated villages spread out along the coast or inland
 - a largely oral vs. printed tradition of learning, with less emphasis on reading
 - a negative history with regard to traditional educational delivery (eg. residential schools)
 - the lack of employment opportunities available to those who do upgrade their skills
- In some communities the “push out” rate for First Nations in grades K-9 was cited as 80%. We were told that only 11% of First Nations kids graduate.
- Links between literacy and unemployment (eg. 90%) are one consequence of the issue.

For the English-as-a-Second-Language Community...

- Throughout the consultation, we were told that literacy is a huge issue for new Canadians whose first language is not English.
- Reaching these people and drawing them forward for upgrading was described as an ongoing challenge because of cultural and language differences.
- According to several representatives of the former Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources), many of the unemployed ESL clients they serve are not literate in their first language – and have even greater barriers to overcome.

Integral To So Many Other Social Issues...

“By educating our clients we give them choices and opportunities to deal with other problems. Increases in literacy can result in increases in confidence. Even a minor change can affect self image.” – Community Development Worker during Consultation

- Several groups of representatives we interviewed during the consultation from the former Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources) estimated that 25% of their clients have low levels of functional literacy. Moreover, they said there are often multiple issues with these clients, including: isolation, family crises, anger management, substance abuse, financial constraints, lifeskills, communication, community participation, poverty etc.
- Some people we talked with described a greater awareness and less stigma associated with literacy – simply by virtue of how many organizations encounter it as an issue. Referrals to community literacy organization come from the former Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources), social workers, hospital workers, counselors, and the Salvation Army.
- Throughout the consultation, we were told that literacy involves and touches on many other issues. A mine closure, for example, that displaces a worker with low literacy skills and who can't find other work, has a straining effect on their family, on finances, etc.
- Our discussions with a number of social agencies reinforced that literacy is bundled up with other issues. Individual Ministries (eg. the former Ministry of Volunteers and Cooperatives) can serve some needs, but addressing literacy takes time – and it requires life skills development as well.
- Numerous representatives of the various government agencies we interviewed – social services, employment placement, family services, corrections, etc. – reflected that they all encounter the people who have fallen through the cracks of our society – and that they are often the same people.
- Several people we interviewed during the consultation were from Correction Centers. One of them cited statistical evidence that a disproportionately high percentage of incarcerated individuals have low levels of literacy, some 85% have learning disabilities, and 20-40% are victims of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). Another told us that as many as 8 out of 10 inmates with literacy problems have them as a result of brain injuries. Then we were asked the question: “One has to wonder, though: Is the Correction Centre the best place to address these issues?”
- Learning disabilities are often related to literacy but many of the victims involved have processing difficulties that do not fall into definable categories of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), and dyslexia – and, as a result, do not qualify for treatment
- Some educators said that all other things (abuse, trauma, health etc.) being equal, adults who end up in literacy programs often have a learning disability that is never addressed. Clearly, the diagnosis and treatment of learning disabilities is a key issue relating to literacy.

Consequences for Employability...

“You’ve got to be able to read, write and communicate on the job or you might just find yourself without one.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Survey

“More demands are being made with regard to skills. People must be able to multi-task and handle stressful workplaces. The lower the skill level, the higher the frustration and the lower the belief in their own capacity.” – Community Development Worker during Consultation

Supplemental Business/Labour Survey

“How do basic skills relate to workforce education?”

	All	Business	Labour
	%	%	%
Foundational	36	32	45
Necessary for Employment	35	37	32
Minimum/Entry Level	28	31	23

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

Employers and union representatives described basic skills as a kind of starting point for workforce education. Union representatives were more likely to describe this starting point as being foundational whereas employers were more likely to refer to entry level requirements.

Supplemental Business/Labour Survey

“Is the issue of basic skills and workforce education relevant to your organization?”

	All	Business	Labour
	%	%	%
Yes	87	84	90
Indirectly	9	9	10
No	4	7	-

Clearly, this is an issue that is relevant to business and labour organizations.

Supplemental Business/Labour Survey

“If so, in what way?”

	All	Business	Labour
	%	%	%
Needed to Obtain/Do Job	38	44	26
Necessary for Further Educ.	20	25	12
Minimum Requirement	19	16	24
Health/Safety	8	2	20
Trades/Apprenticeships	7	2	18
Other	8	12	-

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

Both employers and union representatives most frequently described the relevance of basic skills and workforce education as being necessary to do the job, to go on to further training, or to meet the minimum requirements of the workplace. Interestingly, though, union representatives were considerably more likely than employers to relate basic skills and workforce education to health and safety issues and to apprenticeship and trades training.

- One community skills center estimated that 50% of the staff at a large plant need literacy upgrading. The plant needs their workers to upgrade their skills because technology is taking the place of menial skills. ESL was also cited as a significant issue.
- One person we met with cited research from the forestry sector showing that 43% of pulp mill workers have low levels of literacy.
- Union representatives reported that the industries they work in are becoming more technical and automated and that the lower end jobs are being eliminated – making the need for literacy and skills upgrading all the more urgent.
- A number of the union representatives we spoke with said there is increasing awareness among members around the need for skills upgrading. With the downturn in the economy, the labour market is highly competitive and that Grade 12 – which is increasingly becoming the hiring requirement – may not be enough to get ahead.
- Several representatives of Community Futures Development Corporations said that if literacy includes “employability skills”, then some 50% of their clients have “literacy” issues.
- In one community, the local Chamber of Commerce surveyed businesses about literacy. In that survey, employers emphasized their need for an adequately trained workforce.

Preventing Entry to Apprenticeship...

“If people don’t have basic skills they cannot succeed in apprenticeships.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“We have apprentices. It’s a highly skilled area, so the basics are expected.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Certified journeymen need math and reading skills in order to succeed.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- Throughout the consultation, representatives of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission said they encountered people interested in the trades who had challenges relating to learning disabilities, basic skills, and ESL. One office estimated that 10-15% of their clientele don’t have the basic skills they need – or haven’t used these necessary skills for some time.
- Representatives of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission office also say they are particularly exposed to low literacy issues because the trades are traditionally seen as not having high academic requirements – a myth of its own.

-
- If apprentices have basic skills issues, it often doesn't become evident until after a year. Even then, the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission can only encourage upgrading; it doesn't have a mandate to provide it. It often refers clients to Provincial Rehabilitation Services for assessments of learning problems and/or to the School District for math upgrading and to the college for ABE. Unfortunately, though, they said these are not solutions for everybody – because of shift-work that precludes attending regularly scheduled upgrading classes or because of previous “institutional trauma” that makes clients reluctant to attend – so they see a number of would-be apprentices drop off.
 - In several communities, Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission offices said they do not know where to send those who have basic literacy and/or learning disability needs.
 - Representatives of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission mentioned that numeracy is more likely to be a problem than reading and that many apprentices, interestingly, have had negative math experiences in school.
 - Apprentices in many trades, particularly carpentry, need to upgrade their math skills. Unfortunately, the curriculum that's offered is not applied curriculum – and is, some said, less effective for that reason.

The Foundation for All Work-Related Training...

“It's hard to do any workplace training if the basics aren't in place ... You need that foundation to build on.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“If you don't have the basics you just won't be able to engage in workforce education. You need the foundation first.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Health and safety issues are a major concern. Having the basic reading skills and comprehension go a long way in gaining high levels of accident prevention.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Survey

“Literacy is a difficulty for some and it affects the employee/employer relationship. It's a well hidden problem. We need campaigns to deal with the issue because everyone should be able to read and write and do basic math.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“In our ever-changing global environment, we have to keep workers knowledgeable. Workforce development is critical. We need effective workers.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“We are a learning organization. Our people are the intellectual capital of the company. They have to think about the job in more than one dimension – because it's always changing.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Work is always changing so people need to adapt by gaining more skills.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Having the basic skills to learn more skills is important to staying in the workforce.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- Several of the people we spoke with during the consultation said the business community doesn’t generally think of education as a critical issue – but that as soon as a major new employer comes to town, training and retraining become big issues.

An Economic Issue in Which We Need to Invest...

“Literacy gets good media coverage, but only as a charity on the ‘community page’ of the newspaper ... We need to make a more compelling case.” – Community Development Worker during Consultation

“Workforce education is about being competitive and reducing costs. You get a good return on the investment made.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“If our workers don’t have the ability to read or write well, they won’t be very productive.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“In order to stay competitive, we need highly skilled and flexible workers who are able to learn new skills and adjust to change.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“We need well educated workers to perform. Self esteem and pride are important to having healthy workers. It improves business. Our people are our equity.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Industry is becoming more technical and automated. The lower end jobs are being eliminated. It is stressful for members to be out of a job and to need upgrading.” – Labour representative during Consultation

“There are lots of well functioning people, but they lose jobs because of low literacy, then stay on our caseload too long. They work well, present well, and have experience – but still need literacy.” – Government Representative During Consultation

- Throughout the consultation, we heard from employment counseling agencies that 25% of their clients have low levels of literacy. They also said some 50%-60% have less than grade 12.
- One college ABE administrator described his institution’s students as having a low socio-economic background – with many on income assistance and many from First Nations communities.
- The correlation between unemployment or reliance on income assistance and literacy that was evidenced in the IALS data was borne out in many of our community consultations. In one community, a survey of unemployed men revealed that 51% of them had low levels of literacy.

- One Career Centre we spoke with said that 25% of their 1200 clients each year have low levels of literacy, and that another 50-60% have less than grade 12. Many others cited literacy as a pervasive issue – and one of the reasons they lose clients.
- Community support for literacy often takes the form of charity – in the form of donations from “in kind” services (eg. helicopter flights, santa services, etc.) or charitable events (eg. bingo).
- There appears to be a disconnect between the notion of literacy as a socio-economic investment and literacy as a philanthropic concept. In one community, for example, people described the attitude of local employers as being that their workers are replaceable and that there is no incentive to invest in skills development. At the same time, though, they described these employers as very willing to support the local community literacy association – because it’s a “good cause”.
- One community described literacy as being the “secret” in the community – even though it is significant enough to be clearly identified in their Community Economic Development Plan.

It Has Begun to Be Recognized as Such...

BC Leaders’ Survey

“Is the issue of literacy relevant to your organization?”

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes or Yes, Indirectly	92	85	96	96	90	98	93
No	8	15	4	4	10	2	7

A significant majority of respondents across all categories described literacy as relevant to their organization.

BC Leaders’ Survey

“If so, in what way?”

	All (%)
Need a Literate Workforce	63
It’s our Focus/Priority	34
Other	3

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

Among the 85% who said it was relevant to their organization (and offered an explanation as to why), over half of their responses mentioned the need for a literate workforce. Understandably, this was the overwhelming response on the part of business and labour respondents. Educators and workforce literacy practitioners and, to a lesser extent, community development workers described it as being relevant because it’s directly related to their own work.

BC Leaders' Survey

“Relative to other social issues, and on a scale of 5 to 1 (most to least), how would you rate the seriousness of the literacy challenge?”

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
5	18	11	24	7	15	27	22
4	48	49	43	56	49	56	38
3	26	30	27	29	26	15	33
2	7	11	6	7	10	2	7
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

NOTE: Due to rounding, percentages may not exactly total 100%

Two thirds of respondents rated literacy as important relative to other social issues. Educators were the most likely to feel this way (80%) while business was the least likely (50%).

BC Leaders' Survey

“Why do you feel this way?”

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Effect on Other Issues	33	21	19	38	42	46	43
Foundational	32	33	33	36	33	39	11
Other Issues More Important	25	31	21	24	27	17	25
Economic Impact	16	15	13	18	13	15	32
Impact on Workplace	12	12	25	13	4	11	4
Personal Impact	7	7	8	2	4	1	4

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

Among the 67% who rated the importance of literacy as a 4 or 5, the most frequent explanations given were that literacy affected and was foundational for so many other issues. Many respondents – and particularly workforce literacy practitioners and labour – cited the economic impact of literacy and/or its impact on the workplace as a reason for its importance.

Virtually all of the 33% of the respondents who rated the importance of the literacy challenge as a 2 or 3 relative to other social issues said they felt that other issues are more important.

Supplemental Business/Labour Survey

“How would you rate the importance of basic skills and workforce education, on a scale of 5 to 1 (most to least), with regard to other issues you face in your organization? Why?”

	All	Business	Labour
	%	%	%
5	38	44	25
4	29	30	28
3	14	7	28
2	9	8	11
1	9	11	7

NOTE: Due to rounding, percentages may not exactly total 100%

Interestingly, employers were slightly more likely (74%) than union representatives (53%) to rate basic skills and workforce education as among the more important issues they face in their organizations.

Adjusting Our Vision

The following are our reflections on what all of the foregoing implies in terms of future action around literacy and learning in BC:

6) Fully Embrace and Accommodate the Complexity of Literacy Issues in Our Messaging

Clearly, there are complex causes and consequences of literacy for all segments of society and in all the different ways it manifests itself. While it is useful to simplify the issue under a common umbrella statement about “literacy and lifelong learning”, it should be recognized that the issue resonates with different people in different contexts and for different reasons. Accordingly, further to #5 above, we recommend that the development of discreet and targeted messages fully reflect, embrace, and accommodate the complexity of the issue so that everyone who needs to, understands and appreciates its importance.

Traditional Learning Paths: Not *Everyone's* Road to Success

“Literacy learners are being left behind – it is the black hole of (this college).” – Educator during Consultation

“In many instances, formal educational institutions or environments are the very situations those will low literacy avoid, because they evoke the very place where some initial ‘failure’ occurred.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

“There is nothing in this community for those with low literacy levels.” – Educator during Consultation

The Big Picture

- Estimates that traditional approaches to education just don't work for approximately 30% of children, teens, and adults are relatively consistent. We need to stop trying to wrap learners around a system that doesn't work for them and, instead, begin wrapping our interventions around them – in a more inclusive and holistic way.
- There are no guarantees that a grade 12 education “guarantees” certain basic skills.
- Teachers tend to teach “how to read” up to grade 3 or so. At higher grade levels, teachers' expertise is in teaching the content, not the reading process, of learning.
- Traditional education does not necessarily develop the skills and contextual understanding people need to succeed in the contemporary world of work.
- The resources in our educational institutions are spread very thin. They cannot be expected to meet all the needs of society.

Up Close

The following summarizes what we learned from the literacy practitioners' and learners' visioning conference, our two telephone surveys, and our community consultations.

Alarming Drop Out Rates...

“We must realize that students in the alternative school systems are indicators of problems – canaries in the coal mine – and change the ‘moving people along for time served’ base to an ‘accomplishment’ base.” – Educator during Consultation

“We need to make sure kids know that in finishing school they have a better chance at employment opportunities.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- In many communities, educators and others expressed concern over high school leaving rates as high as 40%.
- For many, school has not been a positive experience. Kids haven't fit in. Reportedly, some have been abused.

Caliber of Teachers' Skills...

"Up to grade 4, children learn to read. After that, they must read to learn." – Educator during Consultation

- Throughout the consultation, we heard the concern expressed that teachers are not "reading teachers" and that there needs to be professional development programs to teach teachers how to teach reading and literacy.
- Several School District representatives explained that teachers teach reading up to grade 3 and that, after that, they focus on the content of the curriculum rather than the process of reading and learning. They feel this has to change.
- As well, several people expressed concern over the disparity in the quality of instruction that occurs from school to school – even within a single School District.

Delivery Issues and Educational Reform ...

"An industrial paradigm was applied to education and it was studied in pieces rather than with a holistic approach ... It became 'information dispensing' instead of 'knowledge creation'. Only when values, context and meaning are considered will learning start." – Educator During Consultation

"The problem lies with the education system. It is more like commodity production – getting people through the system – and that should not be the focus. Students should be able to work at their own pace. It's quality, not quantity." – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

"The Ministry of Education doesn't let students fail – but in the business world you can fail, and there are consequences." – Business Representative During the Consultation

BC Leaders' Survey

"If we as a society had unlimited dollars to spend, how do you think we could best increase the literacy of Canadians? That is, what do you think the most effective strategy would be?"

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Delivery	81	79	85	71	81	81	89
Funding	21	22	15	24	17	33	7
Awareness	18	19	10	31	15	9	25
Other	17	27	2	16	8	37	4

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

A significant majority of respondents across all categories believe that the way we deliver education and training needs to change. Increasing funding and awareness were also seen as effective strategies.

Supplemental Business/Labour Survey

“What do you feel are the challenges around ensuring that the workforce has basic skills to be able to engage in workforce training, to be employable, to be transferable?”

	All	Business	Labour
	%	%	%
Delivery Issues	59	47	80
Education System	23	25	20
Individual Motivation	18	28	-

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

Employers and union representatives related challenges with the basic skills of the workforce back to the way training and education is delivered – or, to a lesser extent, to the education system as a whole. Interestingly, employers were significantly more likely to consider individual motivation as part of the problem. Union representatives did not cite this as a concern – and were far more likely to be concerned with the way training and education is delivered.

Supplemental Business/Labour Survey

“What do you think the most effective solutions to deal with these challenges might be?”

	All	Business	Labour
	%	%	%
Delivery Strategies	43	33	58
Improve Education System	29	40	11
Funding	18	16	21
Awareness/Other	11	11	11

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

Understandably, given their answers to the previous question, union representatives were more likely to call for changes to the way training and education are delivered while employers express a need for broader improvements to the education system as a whole. Specific suggestions referred to such things as: accessibility, flexibility, non-threatening learning environments, ongoing training, paid time off, collaboration, and learner-centered approaches.

Funding issues – free programming, tax incentives for business, individual reimbursements and subsidization – were also mentioned.

The Myth of the Grade 12 Hiring Bar...

“We need to make whatever improvements it takes to be sure that kids coming out at the Grade 12 level are equipped with the basics.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Even if a would-be apprentice has their Dogwood, they still may not have the skills they need to enter an apprenticeship program.” – Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission Representative during Consultation

“The School District is a problem in that it passes students with very low literacy levels.”
– Government Representative during Consultation

- In a number of communities we heard reference to employers who hire only those with grade 12, the underlying assumption being an assurance that “basic skills” would not be an issue at that company if all employees were grade 12 graduates. At the same time, we heard educators and others in the same community lament the high numbers of grade 12 graduates who leave school with grade 9 level skills or less. Clearly, there is a disconnect in terms of expectations and understanding around the skills that grade 12 guarantees.
- A single employer can have a significant effect on a community – and change its views on literacy – by changing its hiring policy to a grade 12 minimum. Unfortunately, as we heard again and again, grade 12 is an artificial measure of literacy levels.
- Since so many mills and other employers have made grade 12 a hiring requirement, literacy is described as being less public or visible. It’s still as much of an issue as ever, just hidden.
- Many of the people we spoke with said that the school system is overly focused on covering curriculum rather than building actual skills. It also places too much emphasis on academic rather than non-academic outcomes (eg. self-esteem, etc.)

Gaps in Meeting Employment-Related Upgrading...

“Academic institutions don’t understand the experiential world of trades and business. They are often too rigid, formulated, and function in boxes.” – Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission Representative during the Consultation

- A number of the people we interviewed during the consultation from the former Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources) and with the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission expressed frustration at the limited options available for their clients to upgrade their skills in a way that meets their needs for employment or entry into apprenticeship. School District and College programming may be daunting for many of these people. In some cases, even when attending an education institution isn’t daunting – the waitlists are. While volunteer adult tutoring programs are available in some communities, they are not adequately resourced to be more than a part-time and long-term commitment for clients. In some cases, the timelines involved are simply too lengthy.

School and Apprenticeship...

“There is not enough attention given to trades/apprenticeships for students in high school. Apprentices are the key to getting people where they should be.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

Barriers to Access...

“The college is one of the few options for upgrading, but there is a large hinterland in this region – so access is a problem.” – Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission Representative during Consultation

- BC comprises many small and regionally isolated communities. Access to programs offered through the college and school district systems was described as a barrier for many.

A Difficult “Sell” to Some...

“The college offers programs but many of our clients do not want to go there.” – Government Representative during Consultation

“Often, adults are not comfortable returning to a school district continuing education or upgrading program, because of past experiences with the school system.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

- Throughout the consultation, people expressed the concern that colleges and School Districts offer adult upgrading – but only reach those who are comfortable joining conventional classes. Many adult learners have often had bad, even traumatic experiences at educational institutions in the past and are reluctant to return.
- School Districts offer free education for adult non-graduates yet it is difficult for these adults to participate. They need a safe place to feel accepted in and to belong – and, from their perspective, it isn’t the school.
- School Districts are not funded to teach graduates with literacy problems. Rather, they refer them to college ABE programs. For adults with low levels of literacy, graduates or otherwise, the college can be seen as a daunting institution.
- Many workers want to upgrade their skills but say there is nothing at the School District for them and the college is only available to them during the daytime when they’re working – or, in some cases, in the evening, when they may be working shifts.
- In a number of communities we visited, college staff told us that they run many programs, but that people just won’t register.

The Need for a More Holistic Approach...

“Programs must go to the community, not just the schools. Pride, family, and employment factors can all get in the way of going to school.” – Business person during Consultation

- Many of the people we spoke with expressed the need for literacy programs that are holistic. By this, they mean that literacy upgrading be offered in tandem with life skills training and counseling. The college system is not seen to meet this need.

The Reality for Educational Institutions...

“College funding is capped by the provincial government, so when low literacy students are sent here, problems arise. There have been 40 people on wait lists for fundamental English. There is very little attrition, so we can’t service them. Some must wait a year.”

– Educator during Consultation

- School Districts have too many demands on them and can’t fulfill all the needs; they are spread thin. Because they don’t have the resources to address everything, they focus on whatever their administration considers to be the basics.
- In some School Districts, schools are not funded to provide any programs for adults.
- According to some, all the blame mustn’t fall to the schools. Some of the people we talked to complained that parents don’t value and participate in their kids’ education. Others believe kids leave school because they have no future, no hope of jobs to go to, no perceived reason to go to school. They ask “where is the role of the school in all of that?”

Adjusting Our Vision

The following are our reflections on what all of the foregoing implies in terms of future action around literacy and learning in BC:

7) Support the Traditional Education System in Undertaking Necessary Reforms

Clearly, there are opportunities for improvements and reform within BC’s education system. A number of these have been identified and affirmed as part of this consultation. The most significant among them, in our view, is the need to move to a learning-outcomes based model and to one that recognizes both academic and non-academic outcomes. We recommend that those in the literacy community ally with and support those within the traditional education system in their efforts to undertake reform.

8) Provide Traditional Education Institutions the Necessary Resources to Do their Job

Whatever the goals are for reform – be it smaller class size, more time for individualized instruction, more professional development and “in service” time for teachers, access to expertise around learning disabilities, and so on – the system is not adequately resourced to do all that is expected of it. We recommend that those in the literacy community ally with and support those within the traditional education system in their efforts to gain access to necessary resources.

9) Acknowledge the Contribution of Non-Traditional Learning Models

Given the consistency with which we heard that the traditional education system is not – for whatever reasons – meeting the needs of approximately a third of our children, teens, and adults, more attention and acceptance should be given to non-traditional learning models. We recommend that there be full support for any strategies which foster greater energy and garner greater resources for creative, inclusive, and holistic learning models – whether delivered as part of or alongside the traditional education system.

Successful Strategies: Multiple Points of Entry

“The greater the variety of programming available the more the needs of learners can be met.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

The Big Picture

- Intervention strategies do or should take a variety of forms, including:
 - early intervention programs
 - family literacy programs
 - youth and work-readiness programs
 - alternative schooling
 - entry level and pre-apprenticeship training
 - transitional employment training
 - workplace basic skills upgrading
 - First Nations programming
 - adult tutoring and community “storefront” learning centers
 - learning centers in correctional facilities
 - school district and college-based programming
- While none of these strategies are adequately resourced to meet the need they address, several seem to be particularly under-resourced. These include programming for First Nations, “at risk” teens, and those who are in the workforce and in need of basic skills upgrading.

Up Close

The following summarizes what we learned from the literacy practitioners’ and learners’ visioning conference, our two telephone surveys, and our community consultations.

Early Childhood Strategies...

“Kids in grades 1-4 must learn how to read. If they don’t there are problems from then on because they have to read – and their teachers will assume they know how.” – Educator during Provincial Consultation

“The kids who are at alternative schools are there because they have behavior problems that keep them at low literacy levels – or their low levels of literacy are causing behavior problems.” – Alternative School representative during Provincial Consultation

-
- We were told about a number of intervention strategies relating to early childhood development and focusing on preschool and grades 1 through 4:
 - intense and structured one-to-one reading program with grade one students (Reading Recovery)
 - preschool programs and liberal childcare policies
 - preschool interventions with a speech pathologist for early language problems
 - individual phonological evaluations in kindergarten
 - School District surveys to identify problem areas
 - assistance for elementary teachers that includes a “best practices” guide about how to focus on balanced literacy
 - in-service literacy teacher training (i.e. how to teach reading) for teachers from Grade 7 to 12
 - library reading and story time programs

Family Literacy Programming...

“Parents are perhaps the strongest role models and influence in the home on attitudes of their children toward the importance of literacy.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

“Why is (the school system) failing? Less parental responsibility, less family structure.” – Educator During Consultation

- Throughout the province, there are intergenerational literacy programs – where children read with parents, grandparents, siblings, or caregivers.
- Many communities seem to have one or more family literacy programming strategies in place. In many instances there has been a demonstration of strong community support and awareness for these programs.
- We were told that the main challenges with these programs are threefold: 1) tenuous program funding; 2) covering participants’ transportation and childcare costs; and 3) reaching the “highest risk” parents and families.

Youth and Work-Readiness Programming...

“We need industry going into schools and informing students of what’s out there in the job market and what they’re going to need to succeed.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

-
- There is a need for transition programs for youth with behavior problems. One example that was given was a pre-employment program for youth with low abilities.
 - Some community-based literacy groups are only mandated to help adults – and yet they are aware of huge literacy issues for teens.

Alternative Schooling...

- Alternative schools were described as the “last stop” for kids.
- For these alternative schools to be effective, we were told that three components need to be in place: 1) commitment; 2) adequate resources; and 3) well-trained instructors.
- Alternative school principles told us of many students in their schools who are extremely bright, but have marginal skills and limited reading ability. They say they not only need trained reading teachers and more in-service time, but also more resources to develop and deliver hands-on and experiential learning and entrepreneurial training initiatives for students.
- Teachers at alternative schools would like more training on how to teach reading. Several said they need funding for a “learning assistant” position.

Entry Level and Pre-Apprenticeship Training...

“Getting the trades into high school is a good idea. It gets kids involved in skills other than the academic or professional route.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- Throughout the consultation, representatives of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission said they encountered people interested in the trades who had challenges relating to learning disabilities, basic skills, and ESL.
- Government workers with clients who are displaced workers from the resource sector recommended combining literacy training with apprenticeship training. They said many of those who need upgrading would not go to the college but would happily learn on the job.
- In many communities, mills have moved away from hiring apprentices. In one mill, for example, we were told that 10% of the workforce used to be apprentices – but that now there are none. Some believe that this move away from hiring apprentices will be reconsidered once the skills shortages become more apparent.
- Hiring apprentices should be mandatory for public sector institutions: schools, hospitals, municipal government.
- We need funding for apprenticeships and for basic skills preparation for apprentices. Employers say they cannot afford to hire apprentices without them.

Transitional Employment Training...

- Many of the people we interviewed expressed a need for more funding for transitional training that will enable low-skilled workers – in the resource sector as well as other sectors – to gain the skills to move onto better-paying, higher-skilled jobs.
- In one community we visited, a locally owned mill that does not require grade 12 in its hiring practices put new recruits through an orientation program – and described it as a non-threatening way of upgrading their skills and of screening out applicants who are not likely to succeed.
- Throughout the consultation we heard that workers often don't have the interpersonal skills and lifeskills that are crucial to the success of upgrading and transition programs. These have to be integrated into the training.
- We need to do a better job of developing training programs that fit the jobs the community actually has. We need to determine where there are skills shortages and then develop programs to fill them – on a community level.

Workplace Learning Strategies...

“Teach in the workplace itself; it has to be related to work to make learning meaningful.”
– Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“There was a move to combine literacy training and skills training, but it was found that clients needed to have a basic level of literacy before they can even commence work.”–
Community Development Worker during Consultation

“I hope that employers would assist willing employees to develop competencies. This will help with employee satisfaction and in turn employee retention.”– Participant in the
Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

“Business needs to recognize workers who gain skills are beneficial to them too. Everyone needs basic skills so they can improve their lives and society.”– Union Representative in
the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“The opportunity to gain basic skills in public schools is necessary for everyone to have a chance. Employers should pay money to improve their workforce. It's like buying and maintaining machinery, in a way.”– Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone
Survey

- The Contract Training and Marketing (CTM) Society – which is a college networking system that primarily looks for and responds to requests for proposals for industry training contracts – told us that basic skills hasn't come up as an issue, and that serving needs for literacy and community development is not their main focus. (Note that CTM is now defunct.)
- A number of the business people we spoke with during the consultation referred to “skills shortages” as a significant issue. Some of them saw a connection between this issue and the need for basic skills upgrading – and some did not. The focus of the local Chambers of

Commerce we spoke with, for example, was on e-commerce, human resource training, marketing, energy conservation, and computer skills.

- There are at least a dozen or so employers who have onsite learning centers that specifically and successfully address basic skills. Some of these were started with funding from Forest Renewal BC and/or the National Literacy Secretariat and then became 100% employer funded. Some always were. Program costs typically include the facility, instructor time, and all or part of the workers' wages.
- A single program in a single mill was found to be of benefit to 150 or 440 workers.
- Peer tutoring programs have had considerable success. Finding and training the right tutors – who are said to be cornerstones of these programs – can be challenging, but important. They are the ones workers will trust. They are the “champions” who can “sell” the program.
- The Joint Union Management Program (JUMP) training didn't use the words literacy or numeracy because of the negative connotation. Workers were afraid of not getting promotions if they admitted to literacy problems. Still, basic skills upgrading was a part of many courses – such as “Math Skills for Sawmillers”. JUMP training created a culture of learning that is still present in some of the mills. In total, there were 43 sites throughout the province and in Campbell River it had an 80% uptake with 1200+ employees.
- In many communities we visited, there is virtually nothing in place with regard to workforce literacy and few or no partnerships around learning among employers, unions, and aboriginal peoples – despite high First Nations populations.
- While they may be sympathetic to the issue of upgrading, we were told that small business owners often don't have the time to facilitate processes of worker transition and to access government programs.

Union Involvement...

“Negotiate in the collective bargaining process, and get the employer to contribute. We need to have more awareness around literacy and ensure that those lacking are not going to be punished for seeking assistance in gaining skills.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“We have to develop a learning culture at work, then work on literacy. Everyone needs to be learning, not just those who need basic skills. No one should be ostracized.” – Labour representative during Consultation

“If our members don't have basic skills, there is a problem. So we ensure there are opportunities available for them to gain the skills needed to do their job. They need to be able to understand safety rules and fill in reports.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- Unions can serve as the catalyst for members to learn and grow on the workplace – and to enhance their employability and earning potential in the process. One direct role unions can play is to offer courses that motivate, increase confidence, and enhance the skills of their membership.

-
- Negotiated training trusts – usually so many cents per hour worked – could be used for upgrading programs.
 - Health and safety is an issue around which both unions and employers agree. Providing basic skills upgrading in the context of safety training is a viable strategy.
 - One union we spoke with said their agreement is for 3 cents per hour for union training – but this is not necessarily literacy and basic skills training. They said they would need around 20 cents per hour for that.
 - Several volunteer-based literacy programs that are partnering with colleges for cost-shared funding from the National Literacy Secretariat and the former Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (now the Ministry of Advanced Education) cited the need for their staff to join the union as one of the barriers to program delivery.

School District and College-Based Programming...

“There needs to be more literacy programs – but within the college. Otherwise, the stigma involved for clients is an issue. The focus of the college is often to get the student to continue with them.” – Government Representative during Consultation

“Continuing education programs at schools and colleges increase opportunities for adults to learn.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- In many communities, most people we talked with said their community college is providing for and fulfilling the need for literacy upgrading.
- Participation rates in fundamental courses at colleges varied widely – from a 75% uptake to wait-lists. Enrollment in ABE is high and wait-lists are not uncommon.
- Throughout the consultation, we heard that there need to be more ABE seats available at the colleges. Administrators and educators expressed frustration that they aren’t properly funded to meet the demand. They said the province’s tuition free policy has created problems for the college system.
- Other educators suggested that wait-lists for their programs indicate that their programming is working. They attribute increases in demand for college-based programs to: greater awareness; more people coming out; less shame around the issue; more positive experiences; more tutorial opportunities; better assessment tools; more bridging classes (where they can advance on more than one subject in the same class).
- There is value in offering literacy courses at a college, because people can say they are “attending college”. They experience a sense of family and community, build confidence, and feel better about themselves.
- In some communities the average age of ABE students is 30 and many are people who didn’t finish grade 12 or who want to enhance the skills they learned in high school. Single moms, the unemployed, and people in dead-end jobs who want to upgrade were often identified.

-
- One college outreach worker said that literacy was once a big part of his job – but now the focus is on business, industry, and the community in terms of adult and business skill training. He says the college ABE program is good but the materials are not accessible to the low literacy population.

Learning in Correctional Facilities...

- There is a need for programs to help incarcerated people upgrade their skills. People who have criminal records are perceived to be high risk and it is difficult for tutors to go to their homes; at the same time it is difficult for these clients to come in for upgrading at a college or tutoring program because they are ashamed.
- One instructor at a correctional facility told us there was an initiative to put schools in all the jails. Currently, there are four in Prince George, Kamloops, Nanaimo, and Victoria. They are seen as being an important stepping stone out of jail. The educator is seen as someone from the outside – unlike the guards and other inmates – and can convey a sense of opportunity and reality.
- At one of the prisons, the educator works with counselors and psychologists to assess clients using an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach. Based on this assessment process, the educator develops an individual program. Every one of the inmates – and there are 400 students a year – is at a different level and is following a unique plan. Inmates get paid to go to school so as to motivate them and to prevent embarrassment and stigma.
- At one of the prisons, we were told that 85% of inmates claim to have grade 10 or less but most are at grade 6-7. Of the other 15%, they likely only have half the education they claim to. Most are in their early twenties and in on 3-6 month drug- or alcohol-related charges. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is reported to be present in some 20%-40%. Learning disabilities affect 85% and while these can be identified, there is no treatment. Interestingly, only 11% are First Nations whereas the provincial average is 18%.
- With their computer equipment, security and technical support are issues. So also are the high turnover of students and the expense and difficulty of obtaining and tracking books.
- There needs to be a more seamless bond between the schools in jail and the education institutions on the outside. However, we were told that political issues exist around whether inmates should be directed toward education or employment when they are released.

First Nations Programming...

“We’re in the fish farming business. Numbers are a must, as is reading of policies and regulations. We have a lot of First Nations employees who need to gain the basics, so we invest in them and they stay. It’s a very positive thing. It’s good to advance knowledge.”
– Employer in Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- The needs of First Nations are different from those of non-aboriginal people. Many aboriginal people had traumatic residential school experiences and now, as parents, are not as involved or supportive of their own children’s education. In one community, 65% of the children in

foster care are First Nations – even though First Nations accounts for only 6%-8% of the population. There is also a high teen pregnancy rate in the First Nation community – with aboriginal children comprising 50% of the high school daycare in one community.

- One band manager described literacy as a huge issue for the band. Their council supports the band’s Adult Learning School and their Alternate Program. The elders are committed to literacy training because they see that education is where the future is for aboriginal peoples and where self-government will come from.
- Several First Nations programs that were considered successful have nonetheless been ended due to lack of funding. As a result, large numbers of First Nations peoples who have literacy problems and who do not do well in institutional, mixed learning programs are not being helped. These programming gaps need to be filled with peer tutoring programs, drop-in learning centers, and other strategies.
- Throughout the province, some 35-90% of First Nations kids are in First Nations schools. In some regions, First Nations communities do not have a trusting relationship with the local School District or colleges. There is a need for better communication between them.
- Collaboration between mainstream educational institutions and First Nations is complicated by the diversity of the latter. In some regions, for example, there may be several First Nations communities – not all of whom have close relations.
- Programs need more funding and political support; greater cultural relevance; and onsite courses delivered by skilled and empathetic staff.
- It’s important to integrate Metis and First Nations content by involving all stakeholders (educators, industry, and First Nations) in all planning stages. Past failures have been due to it being “someone else’s curriculum”.
- First Nations need better orientation before entering apprenticeship because they have often had very negative experiences with school. They need a training program that is offered on the band site.
- There’s a need for more aboriginal peoples on boards and advisory committees.
- Bridging programs such as the Aboriginal Access Program and Forestry Access Program in Dawson Creek are described as being helpful. So also are land and resource management programs where aboriginal students can get work experience and scholarships along with access to curriculum that has First Nations content taught by First Nations teachers. However, there is a need for more First Nations teacher education programs.

Adult Tutoring, Community Learning Centers, and “Storefronts”...

“The government needs to recognize that clients have low life skills and low literacy. A combination program that addresses both needs to be created.” – Government representative during Consultation

-
- Community-based literacy organizations are able to serve a diverse clientele – many of whom do not want to go to school or have specialized goals that going to school wouldn't address. As well, some have time management or mental health issues. Drop in centers and tutoring programs build up their skills and their confidence and ease them onto more formal education – if that is what they want. It is an excellent “bridging” service.
 - Learning centers recognize that the literacy issue is intertwined with other issues: family problems, communication, anger management, financial management, lifeskills, time management, and community participation. Some centers offer workshops, small groups, speaking groups, and writing circles. They provide learner support in groups and this is very beneficial because it stops the isolation so many of them are experiencing.
 - Learning centers are useful in that they can respond to different needs. They can provide a place where one can “prepare to be successful” and a place to go “to change lifestyles”. However, these are difficult to measure statistically. Unfortunately, though, it is often these measures that funders ask for – and it is why the existence of many learning centers is tenuous.
 - Learning centers need to be resourced well enough to respond to the needs of low literacy clients. They say they need significant one-on-one time with their tutors – yet several learning centers we visited had ratios as high as 50 students to one instructor.
 - Learning centers also need more resources and venues to keep in touch with other tutors so they can share knowledge, help each other, and talk through frustrations. They often respond to a very diverse clientele and it is challenging to train tutors to meet these diverse needs.
 - Laubach tutors and staff instruct learners how to improve their basic and functional skills in reading, writing, numeracy, spelling and other lifeskills. The instruction is free, confidential, and adapted to the personal goals of each learner.
 - College-based Volunteer Adult Literacy Tutoring (VALT) programs are reported as being particularly successful in helping individuals meet their unique goals.
 - However, expectations around Laubach, VALT, and other tutoring programs are often unrealistic. It takes considerable time for a literacy student to get up to a college level. Students – who may attend two tutoring classes a week – don't fully understand what time it will take to get to their goal. For people with learning disabilities, the distance is even farther.
 - Some expressed the view that Community Skills Centers could play a greater role in literacy programming and basic skills upgrading in that they are community-based. They are comfortable places for the everyday person, offer independent study, are supportive, and are often conveniently located in a downtown storefront. Others expressed the view that Community Skills Centers are more suited for delivering pre-employment, job-related and technical training on a quick-response basis. In that and other respects, every community we visited was different.

Adjusting Our Vision

The following are our reflections on what all of the foregoing implies in terms of future action around literacy and learning in BC:

10) Acknowledge the Need for and Merit of Multiple Programming Strategies

Programming strategies do and should take a variety of forms. We recommend that all should be acknowledged and valued.

11) Create Stronger Linkages Between Different Providers and Strategies

While multiple programming strategies are essential, there is value in linking them under the notion of a “literacy field” that shares information, collaborates on strategy, and shares a common voice on issues of broader policy. To that end, we offer three recommendations:

Firstly, that stronger information networks and linkages be created among *all* providers.

Secondly, that bridges be built between such silos of “family literacy”, “adult literacy”, and “workforce literacy” so that all have a well-understood and seamless role in the overall pursuit of “literacy and lifelong learning”.

Thirdly, that the role of Regional Literacy Coordinators be expanded to serve as the glue between all of the multiple programming strategies being implemented in their Region – and that they be adequately resourced to do so.

12) Increase Activity in Literacy for First Nations, “At Risk” Teens, and Those in the Workforce

Based on the delivery gaps that became evident during this consultation, we recommend that three of the audiences for which educators and those in the literacy community have a particular opportunity to develop programming strategies are First Nations communities, “at risk” teens, and those in the workforce.

Keeping the Learner in Focus

“The active and open participation of learners in designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating policies and programs – and in lobbying and advocating for literacy – is essential.” – Report on Literacy Practitioner and Learner Visioning Conference

The Big Picture

- There is a perceived need for better strategies or more resources around:
 - assessment methods
 - flexible, learner-centered delivery systems
 - experiential and applied, non-academic learning
 - learning disabilities
- Drawing out those with the most serious literacy issues is a continuing challenging.
- Particular sensitivity is required around the expectations we give to and have of adult learners.

Up Close

The following summarizes what we learned from the literacy practitioners’ and learners’ visioning conference, our two telephone surveys, and our community consultations.

Better Assessments and Research...

- Several of the people we spoke with expressed the need for in-depth diagnosis as to why someone has a literacy challenge and suggested the province needs to develop an intake guide to evaluate such things as hearing, sight, right- or left-brained dominance, etc. One estimated that 80% of low literacy learners are kinesthetic/tactile learners – but they are not assessed in a way that accommodates different learning styles.
- School District representatives told us that there is a need for early assessments, new strategies and measurement processes, and a need to better analyze the reading process. They also said there is a need for more in-service training for teachers so they better understand how to teach reading.
- In one community, an employment counselor described his community as not doing a very good job of evaluating and responding to the needs of those with mental health issues (eg. bipolar disorder, chronic depression, schizophrenia). Those among this group who also have low levels of literacy are particular susceptible to “falling through the cracks”.

Addressing Learning Disabilities...

- Throughout the consultation, we heard that learning disabilities are pervasive but that the resources needed to address them are simply not in place in many communities – or inadequate at best. While there may be resources to assess learning disabilities in a given community, the expertise to intervene and assist those who are diagnosed with a learning disability is not.
- School system educators expressed frustration that they don't have trained individuals in the school system to deal with learning disabilities – either in terms of assessment or treatment.

Experiential, Non-Academic, Learning...

“Often basic skills provision means going in the back door – using innovative and human approaches. The issue is hard to get at.” – Workforce literacy practitioner during Consultation

- Programs are needed that focus on non-formal learning, value experiential learning, and teach people skills that are transferable to other situations.
- Getting at basic skills requires using innovative and sensitive approaches.
- The need to combine lifeskills with basic skills training was expressed frequently.

Applied Curriculum...

“Education needs to be relevant to the real world.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“We need to have more ‘hands on’ learning in high schools. We need to gear education toward providing skills that are necessary for the real world.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/labour Telephone Survey

“There has to be industry input into what is needed to be learned. This should be in conjunction with workers as well as educators.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- The relevance of curriculum in the school system was a concern raised by many of the employers who participated in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey.
- From the learners' perspective, training needs to be more practical and applied (eg. how to get your driver's license).
- Apprentices in many trades, particularly carpentry, need to upgrade their math skills. Unfortunately, the curriculum that's offered is not applied curriculum – and some believe it is less effective for that reason.
- Many colleges are beginning to work more closely with industry – particularly around trades and technical upgrading and through coop programs. Many also have Standing Committees with community and employer groups.

-
- One example of colleges working with industry is the development of a 120-hour, HRDC-funded Aviation Orientation Program to help students determine if they want to go into aviation and what the fit is between their skills and the requirements of aviation jobs. Literacy is an important consideration because aviation is a “precision industry” with extensive use of print materials and heavy safety control processes.

Flexible Delivery...

“The school system doesn’t meet the literacy needs; there is a need for more flexibility and alternative systems.” – Learning Center Representative during Consultation

“Delivery in the workplace is partly a time issue. Shift work is a big part of employment so finding a place and time that works is difficult.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

Shift work and unemployment/underemployment make it difficult to engage in on-the-job training.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- There is a need for more flexible hours and creative approaches to upgrading.
- A band manager in one community said that part of the reason school finishing rates had increased among First Nations students was that the system allows them to graduate at their own pace.
- Several libraries and community associations run outreach programs for people who are too intimidated or stressed to come to them.

Distance Education...

- There is a need for more distance education. Several Community Skills Centers we spoke with are interested in offering distance education involving online resources, mobile teachers, and learning circles.
- The upgrading needs of camp workers in remote areas are not being met. Many transient workers in remote camps are non-readers but they have limited access to upgrading. Some combination of interventions that include distance-based learning is needed.
- Basic skills upgrading was a need identified for homecare workers who are often working alone, in isolation.
- One particularly isolated community we visited has an electronic busing program in place – with computers placed in homes for upgrading purposes. Many people in rural areas have to drive a long way to and from work at the mills and don’t have a lot of time for upgrading. Distance-based learning from home makes it more convenient.
- Computer-based distance education is most effective when accompanied by human support; many believe it doesn’t succeed without it.

Drawing Out Those Most in Need...

“There is a reluctance to divulge, to come forward. There are many hiding places for low literacy clients.” – Government Representative during Consultation

“Getting people to admit they have a problem or need to gain more skills is a big challenge.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“The bar for literacy keeps going up. For older clients, the bar is just too high. They don’t want to go back to school, and experience doesn’t count.” – Community Development Worker during Consultation

- Many of service providers – college outreach workers, learning center staff, tutors, etc. – are concerned that they are not serving the people who need help the most. They struggle to draw people out who, for whatever reason, are not motivated to return to learning or are too fearful of doing so.
- Throughout the consultation we heard that people with low levels of literacy take a long time to build trust, connect, and come forward for help. They may not have had any reading before school and then, when they had problems in school, were made to feel they would be judged or even punished based on their ability to read or write – so they learn to isolate themselves as students, then leave school early.
- One college outreach worker said that many adults only come in the door after having got up enough nerve, but only 10% come back. Most never come back. Barriers include lack of confidence and social issues.
- In one community, a study revealed that 44% of adults (some 800 people) are without their high school diploma – yet only 12 came in to a storefront upgrading centre for upgrading.
- In one school district, we were told that there were 5 continuing education centers with teachers and assistants and they are open until 9 pm – accessible but very expensive. They take people at whatever level they are at up to Grade 12 and there are successes, but the biggest concern is all the people who don’t come forward. Many people have given up and do not see the need for upgrading. Literacy students are shy about studying with other students. They need to empathize with these clients because they are very fragile.

Setting Realistic Expectations...

- Students come into programs loaded with many issues besides just literacy – and they need to do more than just upgrade their reading and writing.
- Slow learners do not have the literacy skills to get on with life; those with less than grade 5 have reasons for low skills that are complex. There is a lot of pressure on the students because they think they are going to learn to read and it will change their life – but it is a very slow process and a long task. We need to give them clearer expectations, small successes, and be supportive.

-
- The biggest challenge is to nurture the trust and confidence to go into a program and hope to create an interactive, social, and participatory environment so the student will be ready for the task of learning.
 - We need to recognize individual aspirations and work with that – and we must give them realistic timeframes to achieve their goals – whether it’s employment or something else.
 - The issue is complex and there are no easy answers. As one person put it, “You have to feel your way through it to come up with individual solutions.”

Adjusting Our Vision

The following are our reflections on what all of the foregoing implies in terms of future action around literacy and learning in BC:

13) Continue to Promote and Implement a Learner-Centered Approach

Throughout the consultation, numerous and very specific learner-centered strategies and “best practices” were identified. *Appendices A and C* in particular document these in detail. We recommend the full support for all efforts to follow, implement, and expand on these. More specifically, we recommend forming a provincial group or task force who might further discuss, strategize, and report back with recommendations on some key challenges.

Mind the Gaps: Community-Based Partnership and Collaboration

“Everyone works from isolated perspectives, yet literacy is an overlapping issue.” – Educator during Consultation

“We need more cooperation. Everyone has to play a part to ensure that varied skills are learned. Not just financial support – but emotional and physical support and encouragement. Everyone needs an opportunity to gain new skills.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Literacy connects, and needs to be connected, with health, learning, work, individual well-being, self-esteem, confidence, citizenship, justice, safer neighbourhoods, and sustainable communities. Otherwise, left alone, literacy becomes a marginalized activity, not an essential community and societal priority.” – Report on Literacy Practitioner and Learner Visioning Conference

The Big Picture

- While numerous programs and strategies to foster literacy and learning are in place throughout the province, they are far out-stripped by need.
- Greater inter-agency cooperation and coordination, and more of a community-based approach to intervention, are necessary. Effective interventions around literacy require collaboration among government agencies, training providers, and business and labour.
- Collaboration is hampered by issues of trust, time, resources, and rivalries over funding. Confidentiality issues are also problematic.
- Throughout the province, Regional Literacy Coordinators play a meaningful role – but are significantly under-resourced.
- Despite the mutual benefit they would derive from working together on basic skills upgrading and workplace learning strategies, tensions between labour and management continue to impede action.
- Partnerships and collaboration around literacy and learning do exist throughout the province and provide a rich variety of models on which we can build, including:
 - collaborative education delivery
 - “in kind” contribution arrangements
 - program-specific partnerships
 - partnerships with First Nations
 - educator/employer partnerships
 - labour/management partnerships

-
- dialogue, liaison, and referral
 - strategic alliances and “learning community” initiatives

Up Close

The following summarizes what we learned from the literacy practitioners’ and learners’ visioning conference, our two telephone surveys, and our community consultations.

Literacy Needs are Not Always Being Met...

“Literacy has been an issue in the community for over 20 years and has never been addressed” – Government Representative during Consultation

- Even in communities where a number of service providers are in place, and even where there are good working relationships between them, people repeatedly voiced the concern that the need for literacy interventions is not being met. The need is greater than the community’s capacity to meet it.
- Even in workplaces that have had upgrading programs, the workers with really low literacy levels are not being reached.

Regional Coordination and Networking...

- There are 11 Regional Literacy Coordinators throughout the province who receive cost-shared funding from the National Literacy Secretariat and the former Ministry of Advanced Education, Training, and Technology (now the Ministry of Advanced Education) to provide 10 hours a week of regional literacy coordination.
- Where Regional Literacy Coordinators were known to the people we met with – primarily educators, community development workers, and government representatives – they received glowing praise for their work. They were described as being helpful in connecting different programs; in boosting morale and sharing information among various providers; and in coordinating adult tutor programs.
- However, frequently, the people we interviewed who are not associated with education or community development activity had never heard of their Regional Literacy Coordinator. This was particularly true of the business and labour representatives we met with.
- Unfortunately, given that Regional Literacy Coordinators are funded to work on such a part-time basis, that they can only scratch the surface of what might be done. From their perspective, they are not mandated or equipped to undertake networking outside the education and community development arenas – and the expectation that they might forge partnerships with industry around literacy is unrealistic.

The Need for Community-Based Collaboration...

“Government employees need to learn screening techniques and know about the resources in the community ... Government departments are not working together enough.” – Government Representative during Consultation

“Guiding principles are collaboration and partnership around facilities and programming, networking and student-focused courses.” – Educator during Consultation

“We need more business and education partnerships so students can better meet the needs of today’s economy.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Government has the responsibility to ensure society understands the importance of education (staying in school and getting training and upgrading). We need a culture of knowledge seekers.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- Many people expressed the need for more collaboration and partnership within their communities.
- Networking in this field is crucial for clients because they need a variety of resources. All agencies need to know what other groups are doing to empower the client – and they need to work together in a collaborative and client-centered approach. Often, agencies don’t listen to the real needs of the client.
- Some School Districts expressed a desire to work more closely with the medical profession, with child development agencies, and with the Ministry for Children and Families. They also talked to us about the need for greater networking and collaboration among school districts.
- Repeatedly throughout the consultation, people expressed a need for more strategic cooperation and collaboration among the social, economic, community development, and employment agencies in their communities. They believe their strategies and interventions – particularly around upgrading – need to be coordinated because they share so many of the same clients. Many expressed a frustration at the “shuffle them off to another office” approach.
- Agency clients today need “systems literacy” just to navigate through the bureaucracies that supposedly serve them. We need there to be better inter-agency knowledge and networking among agencies so that clients can be sensitively transitioned to whatever services they need.
- An integrated, community-wide approach to helping people also requires appropriate technology. Systems need to be in place, for example, that link literacy to other issues from the point of intake, no matter what the agency.
- Community mapping is seen to be useful in providing a community with an inventory of their assets and an indication of where there may be gaps in services. In the case of literacy, it would assist agencies in knowing where to direct clients who need upgrading – and of what options are available, depending on the client’s needs.

The Challenges to be Overcome...

“Residents think that the school should handle the literacy problem, but the school feels it needs the support and involvement of the community.” – Educator during Consultation

“You can only partner with people who partner back. There is a need to share resources, build on partnerships, and develop synergy. We need to make the best use of limited funding. Most people think it is the government that is responsible for the cost, but we don’t agree.” – Learning Center Representative during Consultation

- The government representatives we spoke with cited confidentiality requirements as the biggest barrier to inter-agency collaboration.
- Time is one of the greatest barriers to partnership building. Relationships and networking are hugely time-consuming. Many of the people we talked to affirmed the value of collaboration – but said they just have too much “on their plates”, and “so does everyone else”.
- Provincial ministries need to cooperate and coordinate their interventions more; however, because there are no incentives for them to do that, it doesn’t happen.
- Trust is a significant issue related to collaboration and partnership. In many cases, the relationships that do work are informal working ones where trust has been built up between individuals over time. Formal partnerships don’t work as well because territorial attitudes come out.
- In a number of regions of the province, rivalries exist between communities that are closely situated. One can be seen to be a “government town” that has all the government offices through which most of the available funding is churned back into that community. Another might be seen as the larger center where all the economic investment takes place – drawing all the infrastructural resources away from nearby, smaller communities.
- Rivalries and competition also exist among service providers. In some communities colleges, School Districts, and Community Skills Centers all vie for the same students – rather than carving out their respective niches and working together.
- Many community groups are competing with one another for the same funding.

What It Looks Like When It Happens...

“Action needs to occur in schools, families, neighbourhoods, community organizations, workplaces, government agencies ... No one can successfully take on literacy challenges alone.” – Report on Literacy Practitioner and Learner Visioning Conference

- Collaboration and partnerships can take many forms. The following is not intended to serve as a comprehensive catalogue of partnerships throughout the province, but it describes some of the countless examples we encountered during the consultation.

Collaborative Education Delivery

- In Fort St. John, the public library, Peace River North Teachers' Association, and Fort St. John Literacy Society all work together to serve the literacy needs in the community.
- School District 60 (Peace River North) partners with the Fort St. John Literacy Society for tutors and to consult as a resource.
- In Prince Rupert, the Career and College Preparation Program of Northwest Community College and the North Coast Community Skills Centre work together closely.
- Houston Link to Learning, Northwest Community College, and the previous Skills Centre partnered to deliver basic skills upgrading to the community, and to mines and mills in the area.
- The Skills Centre in Quesnel amalgamated with the College of New Caledonia and works with School District # 28 and the University of Northern BC. Last year, the College of New Caledonia and School District # 28 had 600 adults in basic language and math courses out of 6000 adult students.
- Literacy Nanaimo and the Career and Academic Preparations Department of Malaspina University College (MUC) have arranged a bridging relationship whereby different levels of literacy needs can be met. Learners can develop their basic skills through Literacy Nanaimo and then go on to MUC programs.

“In Kind” Contribution Arrangements

- The Chiron Learning Centre provides office space and facilities for the Literacy Coordinator for the Dawson Creek Literacy Society.
- The Fort St. John Literacy Society obtains “in kind” support from local businesses in a variety of fundraising initiatives, including: propane revenues for literacy events, helicopter rides for the Flight for Freedom awards, mall bingo, and Santa Services.
- In Williams Lake, the University College of the Cariboo has established a position in the Continuing Education Department for the Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) program.
- The Adult Literacy Centre in Campbell River is an initiative of the Continuing Education Department of School District # 72. The Centre donates space for the Campbell River Literacy Association and offers tutor training.
- The Community Skills Centre for the North Island and Region offers space and computers to the Continuing Education Learning Centre. The School District provides curriculum and instructors.

Program-Specific Partnerships

- The City of Dawson Creek partners with the Child Development Centre to deliver preschool programs.
- Fort St. John Public Library, Northern Lights College, and Fort St. John Literacy Society are partners in several cost-shared projects.

-
- The North Coast Community Skills Centre assisted SkillPlan with a pilot of the Test of Workforce Essential Skills (TOWES) instrument in Prince Rupert
 - The Ministry of Education, Field Services Division in the Terrace area and the Coast Mountains School District # 82 worked together to develop an Early Literacy Program.
 - “Cooperative Adventure” is a joint initiative of the Parents and Teachers Literacy Group in Terrace.
 - Northwest Community College and Terrace Volunteer Bureau partner on the joint Community Readers and Writers Program.
 - Job Wave is an initiative of the Community Futures Development Corporation of Fraser Fort George, Prince George Native Friendship Centre, and the Open Learning Agency Skills Centre.
 - VALT (Volunteer Adult Literacy Tutoring) program receives funding and referrals from the College of New Caledonia, Prince George
 - The Whuneez Society operates the Nechako Learning Centre in partnership with School District # 91.
 - University College of the Cariboo in Kamloops offers a literacy program in Merritt through the Continuing Education Department – with funding from the BC Ministry of Children and Families. There is also a similar program offering family literacy programming for single moms in Kamloops.
 - The Town of Parksville, its School District, and Malaspina University College are partnering to develop a new Parksville Alternative Secondary School site.
 - Camosun College and the Vancouver Island Regional Correction Centre partner to provide instructors for the school located in the Centre. Students can arrange to have programs transferred from that institution to the College.

Partnerships with First Nations

- The Northern Lights College First Nations Education Coordinator provides liaison between First Nations and local industry. Funding for scholarships and co-op placements for Aboriginal programs are obtained through networking with area employers. This has enabled bridging programs such as Aboriginal Access Program and Forestry Access Program.
- Northern Lights College, School Districts 59, 60, and 81, and Simon Fraser University partner on several initiatives for First Nations – including the Teacher’s Education Program (TEP) and the Alaska Highway Consortium (AHCOTE).
- Northern Lights College partners with Alliance Pipeline, PoCo, West Coast Energy, and Petro Canada on its Land and Resource Management Program – which includes aboriginal teachers and curriculum and offers work experience and scholarships to First Nations students.
- First Nations in the Terrace area cooperate with the Ministry of Education, Field Services Division on the “Reading 44” program.

-
- In Kitimat, the Learners Opportunity Group (LOG) works with the local band school to deliver literacy programming.
 - Northwest Community College offers the Haisla Village band school site adult assessments and management programs.
 - Aboriginal clients of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission who need to upgrade their numeracy skills have access to private tutors from First Nations bands, with after-school tutoring delivered at Malaspina University College.

Educator/Employer Partnerships

- The Nechako Learning Centre and Vanderhoof Specialty Wood Products partnered to create an orientation program that is a non-threatening workforce education program and a proactive screening device.
- The Field Services Branch of the Ministry of Education has created Career Technical Centers to eliminate barriers to student transition to post-secondary education and the workplace. They are a partnership between the k-12 system, the post-secondary system and industry. The Centers provide students with quicker paths to a variety of options, including employment, apprenticeships and the continuation of post-secondary studies.

Labour/Management Partnerships

- Canfor, Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada - Local 400, and Forest Renewal BC partnered on the Gordon Neufeld Learning Centre in Taylor.
- Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada provides encouragement, and Canfor is the funding partner for the LEAP (Learning and Education Assisted by Peers) program to address foundation skills at local mills in Prince George.
- A training trust exists between the IWA (International Wood Workers of America) and employers whereby 3 cents per hourly wage is used for upgrading.
- The University College of the Cariboo in Kamloops offers trades and technical upgrading, and works with business and labour to offer co-op programs. They also have Standing Committees with community and employer groups.

Dialogue, Liaison, and Referral

- In Dawson Creek, the Chiron Learning Centre and the former Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources) work together to serve the literacy needs of mutual clients.
- The North Peace Adult Education Council is a group of education providers and businesses that meet monthly to talk about training and basic skills needs in Fort St. John.
- Interconnect Training and Employment Services works with Human Resources Development Canada, Forest Renewal BC, the Workers' Compensation Board, local unions, and Northwest Community College on joint worker transition projects.

-
- The Smithers Community Service Association has strong relationships with government departments offering employment benefits, social assistance and mental health services so as to service mutual client needs.
 - The Industry and Training Apprenticeship Commission refers clients to Provincial Rehabilitation Services to assess learning problems, to the School Districts for math upgrading, and to the College for ABE in Prince George.
 - In Prince George, the Open Learning Agency Skills Centre assesses clients for learning disabilities and low levels of literacy and then refers them to the School District, Project Refocus for First Nations, or Volunteer Adult Literacy Tutoring (VALT) program as appropriate.
 - The six Adult Learning Centers in School District # 91 work closely with the high school, the Nechako Literacy Society and Volunteer Adult Literacy Tutoring (VALT) program.
 - In addition to a course calendar, the School District #28 Continuing & Adult Education Department at the Helen Dixon Centre advertise its programs through government departments relating to social services and children and families, and through local organizations such as the Women's' Centre and the Friendship Centre.
 - The Cariboo Chilcotin Community Skills Centre serves clients referred to them from BC Works, Human Resources Development Canada, First Nations, Workers Compensation Board, and the IWA in Williams Lake.
 - The Industry Training Apprenticeship Commission in Kelowna works with 5 School Districts in the area to promote their College Preparation Program.
 - The former Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources) works closely with Project Literacy in Kelowna on client referrals.
 - Literacy Nanaimo receives learner referrals from the former Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources), social workers, the hospital, employment counselors, Salvation Army, Workers Compensation Board, and First Nations groups.
 - The Literacy Instructor and Tutoring Program Coordinator of the Malaspina University College campus in Parksville have very supportive relationships with such community agencies as the Career Centre, Vocational Rehabilitation, Horizon Management, and the provincial departments for social development and children/families.
 - The Community Adult Literacy and Learning Society (CALLS) partners with health agencies, Opportunities Career Services, North Island College, and the Aboriginal Head Start Program in Courtenay.
 - The Spectrum Job Search Centre in Victoria works with the former Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources), the Ministry of Children and Families, and Human Resources Development Canada and sends clients to the Victoria READ Society for Adult Basic Skills or to the ABE Program at Camosun College.
 - The Adult Literacy Centre in Campbell River works with the Workers Compensation Board, Forest Renewal BC, the former Ministry of Social Development and Economic

Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources), and Human Resources Development Canada to identify clients.

- In Port Hardy, the Continuing Education Department of the School District works with North Island Foundation Skills to provide employability skills training and job search information.

Strategic Alliances and “Learning Community” Initiatives

- One Northern community we visited has struck a strategic alliance among Human Resources Development Canada, the City, the School District, the college, the Friendship Centre, and the Chamber of Commerce. After 15 years of effort, graduation rates, post-secondary enrollments, and the numbers of First Nations students are all rising. A learning culture has emerged in the community.
- In Williams Lake, the Cariboo Chilcotin Partners for Literacy include the Cariboo Mental Health Association, the library, the University College of the Cariboo, the Learning Disabled Society, Rotary, Child Care Resource and Referral, First Nations Treatment Centre, the Caribou Chilcotin Community Skills Center, and a local insurance company called Barton Insurance.
- Upper Skeena Development Centre and the community of Hazelton have partnered in an effort to develop a learning community.
- In the South Okanagan area, a number of groups have come together to address literacy and basic skills – including the Okanagan University College Employee Intervention Program (EIP) and Regional Literacy Coordination; the Open Door Centre (employment and career resource centre); Connections (employment counseling and assessment); the Desert Rose Society (for Learning Disabled); the Penticton Public Library; and federal and provincial human resources departments.
- The Columbia River Basin Trust and Kootenay Alliance for Literacy represent diverse alliances across 20 communities in the East and West Kootenays.
- In Port Alberni a number of groups have come together to develop an assessment of the community’s literacy needs and to develop a plan of action to address those needs. These include North Island College, the Port Alberni Friendship Centre, Human Resources Development Canada, School District #70, Alberni-Clayoquot Resource Centre, Port Alberni Community Skills Centre, the Centre for Community Enterprise, Nuu-cha-nulth Tribal Council, Pacifica Papers, BC Ministry of Human Resources, the Alberni-Clayoquot Skills Centre, the Sunshine Club (seniors group), the Port Alberni District Labour Council, the Chamber of Commerce, the City of Port Alberni Parks & Recreation Dept., the Hospital Employees Union, and Weyerhaeuser.
- Several clusters of School Districts are seeking to achieve “learning communities” in their region. One group has made a proposal to the Ministry of Education and the former Ministry of Advanced Education, Training, and Technology (now the Ministry of Advanced Education) to do so – on the premise that literacy is an economic and social imperative. Literacy is a common theme and issue for all the groups.

Adjusting Our Vision

The following are our reflections on what all of the foregoing implies in terms of future action around literacy and learning in BC:

14) Foster Inter-Ministerial Collaboration on Literacy and Related Issues

Despite the enormity and complexity of the task, we recommend creating a BC Government Standing Committee on Literacy and Related Issues that would promote internal government collaboration across all Ministries for which some aspect of literacy is an issue. Working at a policy and program design level, this Standing Committee would develop a common and integrated approach to literacy and related issues throughout the province so as to streamline the delivery of services, close existing service gaps, and increase overall effectiveness for dollars spent.

15) Promote Inter-Agency Cooperation on Literacy and Related Issues at the Community Level

Alongside this more lofty effort, we recommend promoting inter-agency cooperation on literacy and related issues at the community level in tandem with or as an outcome of developing a comprehensive and integrated communications strategy for literacy and lifelong learning as outlined in *Reflections #5* and *#6*.

Respecting Community Differences: One Size *Doesn't* Fit All

“Locals know the local situation – our own people’s needs. Let us address them, not strangers.” – Community Development Worker during Consultation

“People don’t realize the connection between literacy, employment, and economic prosperity. The literacy issue is seen as a government education department responsibility instead of a community issue.” – Workforce Literacy Practitioner during Consultation

The Big Picture

- Communities – and community differences – are more than just geographic. The circumstances and needs of First Nations people are different from those of non-aboriginal people, for example. Moreover, there are significant differences in the circumstances and needs within the “community” of First Nations peoples throughout the province.
- The circumstances and needs of rural communities are different in many ways from those of urban centers.
- Communities whose economies are resource-based – of which there are many in BC – are in transition. The traditional supply of low-skilled employment opportunities is shifting as these industries are either in decline or becoming more technologically sophisticated and in need of higher-skilled workers. However, communities are in various stages of evolution with respect to denial, ownership, and action regarding the need to “reinvent themselves”.
- Every community is unique. The array of agencies and providers – and the relationships among them – is different in every community. No one approach to intervention can meet the needs of all.
- Despite this diversity, literacy is consistently seen to be bundled up with numerous other issues – and learning is consistently seen to be a fulcrum for effecting change and movement. This is true on an individual and a community level.
- Life gets breathed into the notion of “learning communities” through individual leadership, tenacity, and inclusive trustful relationships.

Up Close

The following summarizes what we learned from the literacy practitioners’ and learners’ visioning conference, our two telephone surveys, and our community consultations.

Rural Communities Are Different from Urban Centers...

“The literacy challenge here is enormous: diversity, socio-economic differences, and attitudes towards school in isolated rural areas – where the students aren’t engaging and contact with the parents is difficult.” – Educator During Consultation

-
- Huge geographic areas with small and isolated communities make service delivery difficult. Not only do the distances make it logistically challenging, small populations compromise the economic viability of doing so. Programs are difficult to fund and expertise in such areas as learning disabilities is difficult to attract.
 - Access to infrastructural technologies (eg. fiber optic cabling) make it difficult for rural communities to attract the kinds of employers that would contribute to economic renewal, job creation, and program funding.
 - Northern communities in particular express a sense of inequality with those in the South and Lower Mainland. They feel the profits and benefits derived from the resources extracted in their region go elsewhere.
 - Some of the people we interviewed during the consultation believe that people in their community are just not interested in education and literacy – that it wasn't valued.
 - Long distances and separated communities, in many parts of the province, make communication, collaboration, and support quite difficult. Service providers can easily become isolated and frustrated.
 - There are limited resources (eg. regional literacy coordinators or government field staff) to bring people together locally and regionally to create more collective plans and actions.
 - Learners with unique challenges (eg. learning disabilities and Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder) need unique supports. Often, in smaller communities, these are not available.

Not All Urban Centers are the Same...

- Metropolitan areas need to be seen as a series of overlapping, diverse communities. Local priorities will vary from community to community. What is needed and available in Port Coquitlam, for example, might be quite distinct from what is needed and available in Surrey.

First Nations Communities...

- The people we spoke with during the consultation overwhelmingly affirmed the need for literacy programs for First Nations peoples in BC and cited a number of factors that compromise the relevance of traditional paths to literacy and learning among native peoples. However, there are enormous variations in the circumstances of First Nations throughout the province – and it would be a mistake to consider them as a single and homogeneous community.
- Some bands, for example, particularly those who are reluctant to develop partnerships with traditional education institutions, have their own education delivery systems. Others have stronger relationships with mainstream service providers.

-
- The experience and issues facing First Nations on- and off-reserve are very different.
 - A number of different bands throughout the province are in the throes of negotiating for land claims and self-governance. The concept of literacy and lifelong learning may be more or less in the forefront of their thinking as a result.

Resource-Based Economies...

- Communities with economies that are resource-based (i.e. agriculture, forestry, fishing, oil and gas) are in a state of transition. The traditional supply of low-skilled employment opportunities is shifting as these industries are either in decline or are becoming more technologically advanced and in need of higher-skilled workers.
- In many cases, there is a large supply of unskilled or low-skilled workers displaced from resource-based industries and for whom literacy and basic skills is an issue – particularly in terms of their employability. In some communities, the true rate of unemployment is estimated to be at 50%.
- Displaced workers comprise all age groups. Many mature workers left high school early to take well-paying work in the resource sector – only to be laid off or to find that they haven't the skills to embrace new industry processes or technologies. In some cases, youth continue to have unrealistic expectations for finding and keeping jobs in the resource sector. In other communities, where the hope for employment is seen to be bleak, it is difficult to keep kids in school; a "what's the point" mentality exists.
- Largely with Forest Renewal BC funding, a number of forest companies have until recent funding cuts offered workers opportunities to upgrade their skills or to retrain for work in other sectors. However, very few workforce basic skills programs exist among resource industries outside the forest sector.
- Even in regions of the province where the economy is based on agriculture, manufacturing, and the service sector – literacy is an issue. Seasonal workers and workers displaced due to the introductions of technologies and processes don't have the skills for other employment elsewhere.

Community Make-Up...

- Even within regions of the province where many of the economic circumstances are similar, individual communities address literacy issues differently.
- Some communities rely heavily on the programs – which vary in extent – that are delivered by educational institutions. In others, tensions exist between these institutions; some work closely together and others decidedly do not.
- Some communities are driven more by grassroots partnerships. A few have struck effective partnerships among a variety of providers: school districts, colleges, literacy associations,

Friendship Centers, unions, employers, and even other government agencies. These latter, however, are the minority.

- There are also variations in the emphasis literacy interventions take. Some communities have mobilized considerable capacity around early childhood intervention programs and family literacy initiatives. Others have a strong focus on at-risk youth. Others still – albeit fewer – are more concerned with workforce and employment-related literacy programs.
- Some communities are heavily influenced by the transient nature of the workers in their region. The residents are turning over on a regular basis so there is a lack of continuity – which affects progress, partnerships, access to expertise, even funding.

Adjusting Our Vision

The following are our reflections on what all of the foregoing implies in terms of future action around literacy and learning in BC:

16) Acknowledge and Respect the Diversity of Our Communities

Regardless of whether they are geographic, cultural, or otherwise, the diversity of communities throughout BC should be acknowledged and respected. With respect to literacy and learning in particular, we recommend supporting the right of individual communities to learn and draw from what happens provincially and elsewhere – but to self-determine how best it is applied at the local level.

17) Initiate and Support Strategies that Foster “Learning Communities” in BC

Despite the diversity of our communities, literacy and learning are consistently seen as a viable fulcrum for effecting socio-economic revitalization. We recommend that there be full support for any strategies which foster “learning communities” to develop throughout BC. More specifically, we recommend enabling communities to more easily share information with one another about those strategies (eg. community mapping, developing indicators of community vibrancy, etc.) and about their successes.

Program Funding: Responsibility, Sustainability, and Accountability

“Funding is a central issue. Ongoing and expanded government support is essential; as is support from individuals, service clubs, corporations, and foundations. However, the latter cannot be a replacement for adequate government support.” – Report on Literacy Practitioners Visioning Conference

“Expectations need to be expanded all around: learners of teachers and institutions; teachers of learners; parents of children; children and parents of school systems; literacy organizations of government; employees of workplaces...” – Report on Literacy Practitioner and Learner Visioning Conference

“Building stronger support for literacy programs will only happen by paying attention to both broad goals (eg. reaching the potential of all citizens for lifelong learning) and to the specific interests of the parties (eg. business, colleges, government, and practitioners) whose increased support and commitment is needed.” – Report on Literacy Practitioner and Learner Visioning Conference

The Big Picture

- As an issue, literacy is significantly under-resourced. While numerous programs and strategies to foster literacy and learning are in place throughout the province, they are far out-stripped by need.
- Given the interrelationship between literacy and other social and economic issues – including health, corrections, income assistance, welfare, First Nations, children and families, etc. – responsibility for funding is unclear. There is a greater need for strategic, inter-agency collaboration among government departments.
- Adjustments to funding priorities and eligibility criteria are time-consuming and administratively burdensome on service providers. So also is the inconsistency with which criteria may be interpreted at different regional government offices.
- Tuition freezes, FTE limits, and other forms of cutbacks in both the former Ministries of Education and of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (now the Ministry of Advanced Education) have placed an undue burden on the traditional educational institutional providers of literacy services. Moreover, age- and grade-level distinctions in the funding of these two Ministries make a “cradle to grave” approach to literacy and lifelong learning challenging.
- Limited, short-term, and project-based funding is a challenge for many service providers. Sustainable, long-term funding for actual delivery is what is needed.
- We need to explore the issues of accountability and outcomes – on the sides of both the funder and the provider – so as to make them rigorous, flexible, and meaningful.

Up Close

The following summarizes what we learned from the literacy practitioners' and learners' visioning conference, our two telephone surveys, and our community consultations.

Responsibility for Funding...

“Employers know what they want and are best at providing it. Government should play a role in assisting us in creating programs. They have the resources.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Work-related training programs should be shared between both government and employers because it is the only way to ensure both the employed and unemployed have access.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

A joint effort is a must. All are working to benefit themselves: Individuals gain money and a better standard of living; employers get workers; and government benefits when individuals contribute to society and the economy.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Employers don’t have the time and resources to pay for the basics – so government should pay. Then, for specific job-related training, the company should pay some of the expense.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Who should pay? It needs to be a cooperative effort – government, employers, and employees working together to ensure people are learning the skills they need to do the job.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

BC Leaders' Survey

“Whose responsibility is it, ultimately, to increase the literacy of Canadians?”

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Government	50	40	63	53	50	50	46
Society Overall/Collective	49	46	46	49	54	52	50
Individuals	27	31	23	24	17	30	36
Educators	22	22	6	24	21	35	29
Employers	13	13	17	18	4	17	14
Parents	11	13	2	16	8	15	11
Unions	3	-	10	2	-	2	11

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

The majority of responses placed responsibility with government and/or with society as a whole. Interestingly, labour was slightly more inclined to see the government responsible, and business slightly less inclined.

Individual responsibility was mentioned in 27% of the responses. Interestingly, workforce literacy practitioners were the most likely to feel this way, and labour the least.

About a fifth of the responses placed responsibility with educators. Interestingly, educators themselves were the most inclined to feel this way, and labour the least inclined.

Employers, parents, and unions were the least likely to be seen to be responsible for increasing Canadians' literacy.

Supplemental Business/Labour Survey

“Whose responsibility is it, ultimately, to provide basic skills upgrading and workforce education? Why do you feel this way?”

	All	Business	Labour
	%	%	%
Employers	32	31	34
Government	25	24	27
Individuals	24	29	13
Educators	7	9	3
Unions	6	2	12
Society Overall	5	3	7
Other	2	1	3

NOTE: Due to rounding, percentages may not exactly total 100%

Employers and union representatives agreed (57%) that responsibility rests with employers and/or with the government. Interestingly, employers were much more likely (29%) than union representatives (13%) to see the issue as an individual responsibility. Also interesting were the 12% of union representatives who saw some of the responsibility falling to the unions.

BC Leaders' Survey

“How should literacy strategies and programs be funded? Why do you feel this way?”

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Government/Taxes	82	76	96	84	75	78	89
Employers	28	19	35	18	21	19	54
Society Overall/Collective	12	10	4	16	13	17	7
Education System	12	16	8	16	8	17	7
Unions	7	3	13	16	-	4	14
Program Users	6	6	2	9	-	6	18
Community Agencies	5	3	6	9	4	7	4
Donations/Charities	5	3	-	11	8	4	4

NOTE: As many respondents gave more than one answer, percentages do not total 100%

In the majority of responses, government and/or taxation was seen to be the appropriate funding source for literacy programs. Labour respondents were the most likely to feel this way.

Employers were the second most likely source of funding to be mentioned – with workforce literacy practitioners and labour respondents saying so the most frequently.

Other responses were society overall and the education system. Funding from unions, program users, community agencies, and donations/charities were also mentioned.

Supplemental Business/Labour Survey

“How should basic skills upgrading and workforce education be funded? Why do you feel this way?”

	All	Business	Labour
	%	%	%
Government/Taxes	39	39	40
Employers	36	37	34
Program Users	12	15	9
Unions	7	3	13
Education System	4	5	3
Community Agencies	1	1	1

NOTE: Due to rounding, percentages may not exactly total 100%

75% of employers and union representatives said basic skills upgrading should be funded by government and/or employers. Interestingly, employers were slightly more likely (15%) than union representatives (9%) to believe individuals should pay. Some union representatives believe unions should provide funding.

The Jurisdictional Blur...

“Education is a government responsibility.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- The “jurisdictional blur” between federal and provincial government responsibility – and between specific provincial ministries – was cited as confusing and time-consuming for service providers. People complained of “too much energy lost on chasing funds instead of delivering programs”.
- Throughout the province, representatives of the former Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources) confirmed and lamented low levels of literacy among their clients. However, they said their mandate is to return these people to employment as quickly as possible – and not to fund 3-5 year programs to help them acquire the skills they need to do so.
- Likewise, the focus of Forest Renewal BC is on rapid re-entry into employment and, to that end, it provides learning grants to individuals. However, unlike in the past, those individuals must already have basic skills. Still, they said “But literacy is an issue and it comes up over and over.”
- Field officers in several ministries expressed frustration that their “head office” counterparts were too removed from the situation to fully appreciate the size of the problem – or the tragedy of it.

-
- Numerous people we consulted said the capacity of their community and the political and/or fiscal will to address the basic skills needs – particularly of “barrier clients” – is not there.
 - Some community-based literacy groups can only help adults – and yet they are aware of huge literacy issues for teens.

Sustainable vs. “Faucet” Funding...

“Last year we had a cost-shared grant project that was undertaken by a local person and several adults and it started a home-based literacy program. This year the funding was cut, so we have no literacy coordinator in our community. I did submit a funding proposal to keep it going, but it was rejected. It seems unfair somehow; we spent so much time and energy raising awareness about literacy.” – Educator during Consultation

“Our literacy program went for 3 years, used peer counselors and touched 30% of the worker population. There were many success stories, better attitudes and increased self esteem. It worked very well – until the funding stopped.” – Labour representative during Consultation

- Storefront literacy and tutor drop-in centers are particularly struggling for sustainable funding. A demand for unrealistically fast results in terms of employment placement, changing criteria, and little expertise in (or time for) non-governmental fund-raising mean that many of these organizations are living on very short timeframes. They need longer-term block funding periods so they’re not spending all their time raising funds – but actually delivering the service.
- Learning Centers lamented the need for more funding to provide more hours, more venues, more tutor training, more instruction materials, etc.
- It often takes 2-3 months just to overcome an individual’s fear, then another 1-3 years to upgrade. There needs to be long enough funding and support to build their skills to a solid point.
- Community partnership initiatives take time. In order for them to succeed, funders need to agree and commit to 5 year funding blocks.
- One HRDC-funded program that was learner centered (eg. using a combination of videos, tapes, tutors, and classroom-based instruction), holistic (eg. addressed nutrition, provided transportation, offered counseling), and partnership-driven (eg. liaison with corrections and other community organizations) became so successful that it had a 40-person wait-list. Then the funding was cut.

Rigid or “Flavour of the Month” Funding...

“Literacy is studied to death, but nothing happens. Funding requests have to be tailored to the current ‘flavour’ and also involves unrealistic timeframes of 3-5 years.” – Community Development Worker during Consultation

-
- Often grant monies are only for specific initiatives, and then they get shut off. We heard several people refer to shifting priorities on the part of funders. Priority used to be on literacy programming ... then on research ... what next?
 - Several representatives of programs funded by the former Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (now the Ministry of Human Resources) reported that the criteria for funding changes on a regular basis – with the consequence that fewer people are being referred and funded to participate.
 - The “moving target” of funding criteria was cited as a problem by many of the community-based literacy program representatives we spoke with. So also was the conception on the part of government agencies as to the time successful interventions should take.
 - Government policy dictates that clients need career plans before they receive funding, but often they are not ready to develop career plans – or their career goals change as they learn.

Funding “Access” to Programs...

“Basic literacy is very part-time. It needs to be developed into a full-time program so it doesn’t take so long for people to get through the process.” – Government during Consultation

“It’s important for decision-makers to realize that not all employees can just take time off work, find childcare and get to classes for training.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

- According to some, it is not enough to offer literacy programs alone. People are often unable to participate because they lack other supports (eg. daycare, nutrition, safe housing, transportation, etc.) Often, training is paid at a flat daily rate – but with no provision for the costs of daycare or transportation.
- One of the gaps identified is the lack of funding for people who are not immediately employable or who cannot meet the goals or program criteria necessary for funding.

FTE-Based Funding...

“What’s the point of funding trades and technologies if ABE funding isn’t in place to ensure there are skilled workers?” – Educator during Consultation

- For many programs, funding based on Full Time Equivalency (FTE) positions is problematic. For example, a Learning Center may receive funding based on 200-250 students registered by the end of September – but by the end of the school year, they may have had 600 students go through their program.
- School Districts and colleges complained about the restraints on FTE-funding in general but one of their specific complaints was the capping of the number of ABE students they are allowed to accept.

-
- ABE programs need more hours for students and more instructors. Literacy funding should not be the thing that is cut from the provincial budget. We need to get people at the decision-making level to understand that basic skills are what enable students to go on to other levels of training

Cadillac Funding...

- One funding program – through Forest Renewal BC – provided funding of up to \$8,000 for each worker in an attempt to promote learning and retraining. There was considerable resentment on the part of those outside the program based on what they saw funded (eg. very expensive pilot training) and the relative lack of accountability for the use of those funds. In the end, the funding program was cut.

Competition for Resources...

“Literacy groups are not talking to each other or sharing resources. There is territorialism.”
– Educator During Consultation

- Relationships between Community Skills Centers, learning centers, and education institutions are often strained because everybody is fighting over the same funds.
- Continued competition among different literacy organizations, programs, and institutions – particularly in the face of scarce resources – is seen to impede collective efforts.
- A number of the educators and community development workers we spoke with suggested bringing funding sources together and ‘conspiring to do good’. Funds could be amassed in regional pots that are equitably distributed to groups that work together on the issue.

Private Sector Investment...

“We need to give companies a tax incentive to encourage training.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Cost is a challenge ... especially when the market conditions are tight.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“The challenge is up to the worker – they need the training. It’s not up to us to provide these things.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Employers need to train. It is their responsibility. They need to realize there will be a crisis in 10 years with skill shortages.” – Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission Representative during Consultation

“Government must recognize that workforce education costs money and should offer businesses credit or incentives for workers’ education.” – Business person during Consultation

“Nobody wants to foot the bill ... but shortages of skilled workers is going to be a big problem.” – Employer in the Supplemental Business/Labour Telephone Survey

“Unions are responsible to their members to maintain and upgrade their skills. Employers should have to contribute something since they benefit.” – Union Representative in the Supplemental Business/Telephone Survey

Rigorous and Flexible Accountability Measures of Success...

“In terms of measures of success, employment is a valid measure – but not the only one. There is a need for more flexibility for people with multiple issues. Their starting point should be considered when evaluating success. Some steps might be minor for some, but huge for others.” – Community development worker during Consultation

- Many of the service providers we spoke with during the consultation said that while they thought they were valuable, too much emphasis is placed on quantitative measures of success:
 - numbers of calls, walk-ins, client retention, referrals
 - statistical evidence that literacy levels are increasing (eg. test scores)
 - placements in other training
 - employment placements
- Some felt that quantitative outcomes are not always a valid indicator of success. A program may appear to be effective according to the funder’s criteria – number of referrals made in a certain time period, for example – but that doesn’t necessarily mean the individual was directed to where they need to go or were helped in some meaningful way. Poorly informed or insensitive referrals, however numerous, may merely have entrenched dependencies.
- The notion of panning back and seeing the bigger picture – rather than evaluating very specific program-outcomes – came up often. We need to ask ourselves what we really wish to achieve. That is, we need authentic measures of success and accountability – not just academic achievement or employment ones.
- Much of the frustration we heard on the part of service providers was that it is difficult to measure or prove that someone’s life has changed in a positive way or that they are somehow better able to function in and contribute to society:
 - developing self confidence, coping skills, empowerment
 - discovering and expressing one’s own leadership qualities
 - getting involved in the community
 - moving on in one’s life, joining things, looking for places to develop, going places to improve one’s life

-
- beginning to talk about and “own” one’s issues
 - acquiring the ability to learn
 - changing lifestyles (eg. becoming drug-free)
- Moreover, some believe it is problematic to make value-based assumptions around whether one kind of change is of a higher order (and more deserving of funding) than another.

Adjusting Our Vision

The following are our reflections on what all of the foregoing implies in terms of future action around literacy and learning in BC:

18) Develop Integrated and Realistic Funding Strategies – Both Federally and Provincially

There is a need for greater and more strategically integrated public-sector funding for literacy and related issues – as evidenced by the unmet needs identified in this consultation and by the profound, interrelated, and costly socio-economic impact these issues are having in this province. We recommend an approach to funding literacy and related issues such that:

- Limited, short-term, project-based funding be replaced, at least in part, with longer-term sustainable funding;
- Funding programs allow for direct delivery and provide for “access-related costs” (eg. transportation, childcare, etc.) associated with full learner participation; and that
- There be some integrated and strategic, inter-Ministerial approach to funding literacy and related issues so as to more readily enable holistic, socio-economic revitalization initiatives such as “Learning Communities”.

19) Collaborate on Meaningful Accountability Models

Issues around accountability and outcomes for literacy programs need further exploration. We recommend finding ways of engaging representatives of funding sources and service providers in a review of the evaluative criteria of programs so as to make them more flexible, more rigorous, and more meaningful.

20) Create Incentives for Private Sector Investment in Literacy and Lifelong Learning

Given the socio-economic impact of these issues, industry (i.e. business and labour) has a role to play in and much to gain from investing in literacy and lifelong learning strategies – particularly as they relate to school-to-work transition programs, workforce skills upgrading, and broader community development and revitalization. We recommend the government explore and develop incentives that would encourage them to do so.

Appendices

Appendix A – The “Field” of Literacy Practitioners: It’s a Muddy One

Appendix B - Organizational Awareness and Direction

Appendix C – Outcomes of the Literacy Practitioners’ and Learners’ Visioning Conference

Appendix D - List of Conference, Survey, and Consultation Participants

Appendix E –Survey Instruments and Consultation Interview Frameworks

The “Field” of Literacy Practitioners: It’s a Muddy One

As part of the consultation, we sought to explore what is meant by “the field” of literacy practitioners in BC – and to get a sense of whether there are any common aspirations among them in terms of “best practices” and professional development. Specifically, based on the outcomes of the Literacy Practitioners’ and Learners’ Visioning Conference and the outcomes of the Workforce Literacy Practitioners’ Telephone Survey, we explored:

- how practitioners define their field of work;
- who they feel should be responsible for delivering literacy programming;
- whether they have a shared view of “best practices and principles”;
- what kinds of professional development opportunities they have, or would like to have; and
- whether they believe there should be standardized training for literacy practitioners.

The So-Called “Field” ...

“The literacy field is diverse, across different communities, programs, colleges, and community organizations. This richness is a strength. However, little will be achieved without overcoming the fragmentation within the literacy field. Competition among persons and organizations directly concerned with literacy diminish what can be accomplished together. Without a coherent, strong voice for change, little action will be achieved.” – Report on Literacy Practitioner and Learner Visioning Conference

“(The literacy field is comprised of) anyone teaching or learning basic skills (reading, writing, spelling, math) at below a Grade 12 level, and where the student is over 18.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

“Any perspectives involved with literacy—including students, tutors, educators, administrators planners, counselors, community organizations, workplaces, governments, education institutions – (should be considered part of the field). It would encompass: fostering and promoting literacy and the continuation of learning; raising awareness; research; development and delivery of programs; support, advocacy...” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

- In a survey of workforce literacy practitioners, we asked: **“How would you define “the literacy field”? Who all and what all does it encompass?”** We heard at least two sets of responses. The first was narrow and very concise in its description:
 - The field is comprised of those with an ABE background. Literacy is a discreet skill set achieved through a sequential learning process.

While, the second was broader and more inclusive:

- The field is anyone or everyone involved in providing an opportunity for people to learn or to gain confidence in their ability to learn.
- The literacy field should be accessible by all individuals who wish to develop or raise their skills to a certain competency level – such as those defined in IALS.
- The literacy field encompasses the entire community: family, unions, schools, colleges. Everyone from people living on the street to people working in high paying jobs needs access to literacy materials and help.
- The literacy field includes all the people involved in promoting and providing services that help improve literacy skills. This refers primarily to the instructors, tutors, administrators, and researchers/writers directly involved in this work. But it can also include the learners themselves and the workplace and community members who support and take part in various programs and initiatives.
- Literacy has a broad definition and a broad spectrum. It *is* community development – in the broadest sense of the word.
- The literacy field refers to all the people, in all the roles who support or research people in developing, using, or understanding literacy as individuals or members of a group.
- The Literacy Field is a broad spectrum of “activities and support” encompassing everyone from the highest levels of government policy makers to the front line volunteer who enjoys reading children’s stories at their local library, and every interested or affected person in between.
- One group defined “the field” of literacy into several smaller groups of “deliverers”, “consumers”, “community partners” and “government”:

Deliverers:

- family literacy
- community literacy
- college/school district ABE
- workplace literacy

Service Facilitators and Providers:

- coordinators
- managers
- administrators
- support staff

Consumers:

- people who attend learning programs and/or meet with tutors, coordinators, instructors, managers

Community Partners:

- social and health agencies and workplaces

Government:

- agencies
- services
- policy makers

Responsibility for Program Delivery...

“Grass roots organizations, community organizations, education institutions, workplaces, private institutions, public institutions, prisons, social agencies” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

“There are legitimate roles for professionals, for schools and colleges, for private and public sectors, for unions, for co-workers and for volunteers...” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

“Adult and post-secondary education agencies/organizations (should be delivering programming).” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

“The best literacy deliverers are peer tutors — people who work in the same environment as the learners. These people are aware of the obstacles faced by the learner and are capable of providing ongoing support and encouragement.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

- To further explore the notion of a “field” of literacy practitioners, we asked workforce literacy practitioners a slightly different question: **“Who should be delivering literacy programming?”** Once again, we heard two sets of responses. The first was narrow and very concise:
 - Union-minded college instructors
 - Professional educators should support the delivery, but do not need to do the actual delivery (eg. they can use peer tutors)
 - Peer Counselors can reach people with low literacy needs and can respond better because they are peers; with them, learners are not intimidated by teachers talking down to them

While, again, the second was broader and more inclusive:

- Individuals and organizations representing many different backgrounds and contexts can contribute to literacy programming. Educators from the school districts and colleges, tutors from organizations such as

Frontier College and Laubach programs, independent adult education consultants, and peer tutors in workplaces can all play a role.

- For adults who did not get these basic schools from the school system there should be opportunities to have individual tutoring, attend small classes, learn on a computer with a facilitator available, or go back to high school. Tutoring can be provided by trained volunteers who should have experienced facilitators available for resources and feedback.
- Adult education is based on a constructive model – starting from where the learner is and moving to a goal that is meaningful to the learner. An effective way to program is to offer pre-courses focusing on the literacy components of a content related course. For example, learners might enroll in a pre-safety course to learn about medical/science vocabulary, search skills, etc.
- Literacy is everyone’s business. A wide network of community agencies (including employers, government, educational and not-for-profit organizations) would be most effective, particularly if their efforts could be coordinated under a commonly recognized national program, perhaps available on a public education television channel with accompanying printed material – a kind of “Sesame Street for Adults”.
- Can be delivered by a mix of sources: colleges and other educational institutions, not for profits, not for profits that are run as a business (eg. Career Prep orgs), and volunteers. There is a need for trained professionals to oversee the work. There is no one who has been in the field for 20 years, except perhaps those who work in institutions (libraries, unions, hospitals), so there’s no stable force to keep the continuity of the literacy field ongoing. We can’t have new people in all the time; we need to have an existing field.

Best Practices and Principles...

“The most important ‘best practices’ from my personal perspective is one where serious partnerships are encouraged and nurtured for the benefit of the learner. Partnerships between educators and funders and employers and unions and volunteers and communities in every mix imaginable are what constitutes ‘best practices’....because they can evaluate and intuitively react to the needs of the learners.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

- In a survey of workforce literacy surveys, we asked: **What would you describe as the most important “best practices” around literacy programming?** Here is what we heard...

Learner-Centered

- Learner centered (e.g. learner’s goals first). Guidance from an educator. Needs to be a realization that there is no quick fix.
- Listen to the needs of the individual. Start where the person is (to build confidence) and not where you think they should be. Use materials that represent the type of work or purpose the client wants to achieve.
- Students must be considered equal partners in learning. A variety of techniques and materials should be available. Programming must address students needs
- Respectful—non judgmental programming

-
- Provide an atmosphere that allows students to take risks in their learning and take responsibility for their learning
 - Student centered
 - Participation of students in as many aspects of the program as possible,
 - a wide variety of instructional strategies and materials appropriate for the individual student
 - Programming that is customized to the particular learners' needs and backgrounds. This involves knowing the learners and their contexts well (individual, community, as well as work lives), and designing instruction that is relevant and accessible to the learners.
 - Literacy that promotes opportunities for the application of not just skills but individual voice (confidence and interpersonal skills)
 - Use the interests of your learners to focus on real life skills that will help them right now
 - Involving learners (and any other 'partners' in planning and evaluation as well as in other aspects of a program)
 - Use of a wide range of options, methods and supports to make places for a wide range of need and style and motivations and goals
 - Opportunities for credentials or documentation of learning to apply to whatever the learner has in mind
 - Programs should open doors so I feel some kind of advocacy role is important
 - Education – literacy programs should create keepers and champions by making sense of the experiences people have
 - Process comes out of what the student wants to learn; must start from where the student is and give them what they want.

Clear and Realistic Expectations

- Planning with clear goals and objectives
- Be very careful with terms and language used to “sell” the program (eg. do not use the word “literacy”)
- Use honest examples and set realistic goals for your learners
- Undersell what you can do for people, but get them in the door
- Keep it simple e.g. in the advertising and the concepts to “sell” the program

Flexible

- variety of flexible, learner-centered assessment procedure
- Be flexible, do not have rigid lesson plans

Delivered By Professionals

- trained staff who keep up to date with developments in the field
- opportunities for staff training and development
- Instructors and tutors who are trained and knowledgeable about the principles and techniques of adult education and effective literacy instruction. For workplace educators specifically, the principles and techniques include understanding and involving the goals and culture of the workplace in program and curriculum planning.
- Must be qualified people in the literacy field; need trained people or train them. It involves more than reading.

Evaluated

- Ongoing evaluation to assure program effectiveness
- Regular reviews and focus sessions for the Tutors by trained adult/teen/ child educators and program coordinators
- On-going formative evaluation to keep a program on track (near goals) and flexibility to make changes
- Must have good programs; do needs assessments and evaluations at the end
- Evaluation and accountability of programs for the benefit of consumers, i.e., show real progress and provide an incentive for the sacrifice learners have to make

Inclusive of the Community

- Programming that involves the wider community around the learners and instructors, so that learning is both integrated with and supported by that community.

Peer-Tutored

- Try to use peers if possible
- Careful selection of Tutors (interviews) to find the right type of person to lead the student/learner

Laddered or Leading to Credential

- Facilitates access to other learning opportunities

Workplace Accessible, Relevant and Supported

- In the workplace situation, institutions and unions must make it happen. Must assign representatives and give paid time off, during work hours, for joint committee work on literacy. This is so that people will be available, and the time will not take away from other priorities (e.g. family).

-
- On-site delivery of program; program is offered during work hours; learning materials/resources are relevant to the worksite
 - Employers who have taken an interest in employee literacy and developed workplace programming seem to have been the most effective. As well, programs are always more appropriate when they are tailored to the individual's specific literacy needs, involve the individual in setting literacy goals and integrate with the individual's daily routine.

Confidentiality

- Confidentiality

Professional Development...

“There are not many (opportunities for professional development). It seems as if every one is on their own.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

“I am unaware of very many professional development opportunities.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

- In a survey of workforce literacy surveys, we asked: **“What professional development opportunities exist for the field? What opportunities would you like there to be – in general and for you, personally?”** Here is what we heard:

Existing Opportunities

- Access to research and professional journals and communities on line, in books and libraries
- Enrolling in and attending conferences, symposiums and formal education
- Work experience
- Paying attention to what happens and thinking about it is an area of growth for any practitioner who reads and attends and works
- Literacy BC Summer Institute
- Canadian Labour Congress workshops
- WWestnet conferences
- Jobsite training and orientation
- More national than provincial connections
- Colleagues I can talk to
- Adult education diploma and degree programs are available through colleges and universities

Potential Professional Development Strategies

- Union-based “train the trainer” courses
- Labour-based literacy working group or provincial committee
- Standardized tutor training, tutor workshops
- Workshops that are specific to new developments in the field
- Literacy certificate and diploma programs
- Forums to discuss common issues
- Journal club where people could read and talk together and connect their experiences and thoughts back to the theory and reports “in the field”
- Formalized information exchange and practice sessions
- Variety of seminars
- On line courses
- Bi-monthly meetings with a professional development component
- Local working groups
- Mentoring Program
- Workplace tours
- Annual conference

Topics of Interest

- Workplace Initiatives
- Learning Disabilities
- Language Acquisition
- Emotional Intelligence
- Barriers
- Program Planning
- Evaluation and assessment
- Learning styles and strategies
- Learning Disability Assessment
- Working with adults with FAS/FASE
- Curriculum Development

-
- Use of Technology in Literacy programs
 - Community development and literacy links – and all the tensions around that
 - Essential skills profiling
 - Adapting Curriculum

Reservations

- No use having professional development for support persons or volunteers outside the college system if there is no money to hire that person
- Needs to be more support for instructors to access professional development opportunities – including time off, financial aid, and guidance to know what is available and what is most suitable

Standardized Training...

“I don’t think a credential is necessary. I think ‘good intention’ is often better than all the pieces of paper one can collect. A true teacher carries something special within them.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

“Initially I was pretty firm in my belief that this field required ‘credentials’.....however, I WAS WRONG. I have seen more successes come from informal literacy training and would like to see these opportunities continue.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

“Some form of training/credential is consistent with the ‘best practice’ of providing sound service to learners. How to provide this credential and by whom is very problematic. It’s hard to imagine a standard curriculum that would serve all potential educators well or be fair to them. There is also the issue of ‘specializations’ within the literacy field, such as family literacy and workplace literacy — would each of these call for a credential of its own? Whatever the training or credential involves, recognition of prior learning/experience would have to be a large component.” – Participant in the Workforce Literacy Practitioner Survey

- In a survey of workforce literacy practitioners, we asked: **“Do you believe “the field of literacy” should involve some standardized training and/or form of credential? What, for whom, and by whom – specifically?”** Here is what we heard:

Limited Support

- We would support a standard or level of education so that a person had a common vocabulary and a theoretical foundation
- It would have to have a PLAR component – tempered by real life, rather than an imposed or artificial standard
- Providing there is money for salaries and training, it is a great idea – so long as it isn’t too restrictive
- It should be possible to get an undergraduate degree in adult education

-
- Training could take the form of a post-graduate certificate or diploma offered by the college system for professionals to work with volunteers and employers in creating literacy programming for their community or workplace
 - There is a need for credentialing and the colleges or universities should provide it – not Literacy BC

Reservations

- We are concerned that efforts toward assisting practitioners to obtain recognition and relevant professional development not be used as a means of gate-keeping people from the profession
- If our strength is our breadth, then standardizing is counter-productive
- There is a need for training, but not standardized training

Conclusions

Based on the foregoing, we make the following conclusions:

- Given the diversity of interventions in place throughout the province – and the divergent background of those delivering them – there is no clearly defined “field” of literacy practitioners.
- For the most part, practitioners do share a common sense of best practices and principles.
- There is somewhat of a “divide” between those practitioners involved in community and family literacy programming and those involved in workforce literacy programs.
- Among practitioners involved in workforce literacy, there is very little consensus as to aspirations for professional development or standardized training.

Organizational Awareness and Direction

As part of the Leaders in BC Survey, we sought to establish benchmarks as to people's awareness and understanding of several initiatives or organizations involved in lifelong learning and skill development among adults, these being the:

- BC Workforce Literacy Initiative;
- Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission; and
- BC Business Employability Skills Board.

The BC Workforce Literacy Initiative...

BC Leaders' Survey

"There are a number of organizations or initiatives in BC who are involved in lifelong learning and skill development among adults. Have you heard of the BC Workforce Literacy Initiative?"

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	46	34	56	42	33	50	86
No	53	66	42	56	67	46	14

NOTE: Due to rounding, percentages may not exactly total 100

Nearly half of all respondents had heard of the BC Workforce Literacy Initiative. Understandably, awareness was highest among workforce literacy practitioners (86). Interestingly, it was lowest among business (34) and community development workers (33).

- When asked what the Initiative is or does, there are some who know ...
 - is part of Literacy BC
 - advocates for workplace literacy
 - promotes literacy
 - promotes research and product development through the workforce
 - a mechanism for bringing interested parties together to actually start up different programs
 - series of strategies funded by National Literacy Secretariat to upgrade literacy in the workplace
 - to mostly promote knowledge concerning literacy in business and industry
 - tries to create different forums to publicize and promote workplace initiatives and tries to support them with very few dollars

-
- working hard to create better awareness among business people for literacy upgrading in the workplace
 - assists people in the workplace to get assistance with their literacy in one way or another
 - promote and enhance literacy in the workplace
 - mandate to increase awareness of literacy as a problem and strategies to deal with it in the workplace
 - literacy promotion in the workplace
 - assists businesses interested in workplace-based literacy programs
 - promotes literacy in the working sphere of people's lives
 - acts as a network bringing together groups concerned about literacy; tries to find specific ways to improve people's literacy skills that meet the needs of the particular community
 - an initiative of Human Resources Development Canada that works with business, labour, and government to upgrade literacy skills
 - encourages organizations to encourage literacy skills within their own boundaries

 - coordinates literacy initiatives in the workplace
 - works with employers to improve literacy in existing labour force
 - research and literacy promotion
 - gets issues recognized; consultation; accessibility issues; raises awareness
- There are some who think the Initiative is something other than what it is...
 - a city employer that encourages people who are having reading problems to upgrade their skills
 - works with employers and employees by funding literacy training projects
 - spreading out public funds through the workforce
 - working for a minimum standard for unions
 - provincial government people, labour leaders and industry leaders participate in a program to develop literacy
 - employer/employee initiative to promote literacy in the workplace
 - they did a labour market information survey for people with disabilities
 - non-profit agency funded by government
 - provides literacy training to employees who worked in engineering, drove trucks, etc
 - available for grants
 - trains workers

- has pilot projects and models for workers to acquire literacy
- tries to establish literacy guidelines for a variety of trades and industries; is made up of members from a number of business areas and has developed a checklist of what skills its employees should have
- There are some who really don't know what the Initiative is...
 - thinks they've read about it in some Literacy BC newsletters but can't recall what they do
 - not clear
 - is it Literacy BC?
 - no particular knowledge but believes they make sure workers have or upgrade their literacy skills

The Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission...

BC Leaders' Survey

"There are a number of organizations or initiatives in BC who are involved in lifelong learning and skill development among adults. Have you heard of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission?"

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	72	64	88	82	48	81	86
No	27	36	13	16	52	19	14

NOTE: Due to rounding, percentages may not exactly total 100

Seven out of ten respondents had heard of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission. Interestingly, awareness was lowest among community development workers (48) and business (64).

- When asked what the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission is or does, most respondents know...
 - has responsibility for apprenticeship training in BC; design and monitor education and training standards for industries and trades and fund apprenticeship programs
 - sets standards for apprenticeship training
 - supports pre-apprenticeship training, trades certification, and works with employers and unions on skills issues
 - stimulate interest in the trades
 - assists in the development of apprenticeships; develops apprenticeship programs in new fields that weren't covered before; attempts to link secondary schools and colleges; accesses a meeting place or idea development center with business and labour
 - runs apprenticeship programs and works a great deal with post-secondary institutions

-
- helps people get into trades and technology
 - provides funding, education and guidance to apprenticeship programs
 - promotes apprenticeship in high school and among teenagers
 - looks for ways to provide access to and skills training on the job
 - find out what the industry's needs are and determines curriculum for apprenticeship
 - sees where to put resources so people have access and opportunities for training outside the traditional academic stream
 - manage, develop, and evaluate education and training for all industries in BC and designate occupations and industry for education and training programs and apprenticeships
 - has many functions: apprenticeships, ensuring people are aware of alternatives to college education, channel people into trades programs, create opportunities
 - government organization that links up demand and supply in trades
 - lobby organization to promote trades and the need for jobs that don't require a university education; do education and forms of apprenticeships; research and policy writing; new apprentice employment
 - encourage more people to go into apprenticeship programs to ensure there is not a trades skill shortage;
 - provide advice and input in various fields regarding apprenticeships
 - responsible for funding and leadership for apprenticeships for post-secondary institutions; liaison role with industry to find out what the needs are and to work with industry, employers, and unions
 - primary mandate is to ensure a formalized curriculum in the trades in BC and to ensure the curriculum is followed
 - working with people preparing for work and making more uniform training available so that employers know what they are doing; more options that high school to university; take a trade; prior learning and assessments, transferability; life laddering; experiential learning
 - But some are a little less clear...
 - funds training for schools and youth to build their technology skills; not sure what they do for adults
 - undertakes workplace initiatives that have to do with computer skills
 - a consortium of education and trades
 - an umbrella organization that looks at the skills training requirements of industry in BC and makes
 - curriculum recommendations to schools based on these observations
 - helps adults gain employment, filling out documents, job interviews, training
 - A few of those interviewed offered opinions on the work of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission...
 - Apprenticeship doesn't work well in the province; the criteria is too rigid and too long and has insufficient cooperation from unions and employers.

- Folks in BC say it is great!
- It is my understanding that they are struggling with what they do.
- They're in trouble because they are not meeting needs.
- Doesn't do a very good job because they don't focus on policy and their structure is too big and cumbersome.

The BC Business Employability Skills Board ...

BC Leaders' Survey

"There are a number of organizations or initiatives in BC who are involved in lifelong learning and skill development among adults. Have you heard of the BC Business Employability Skills Board?"

	All	Bus	Lab	Gov	CD	ED	WLP
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	22	24	8	16	10	46	29
No	78	76	92	82	90	52	71

NOTE: Due to rounding, percentages may not exactly total 100

Only two out of ten respondents had heard of the BCBESB. Interestingly, educators were the most likely to have heard of the Board (46).

- When asked what the BCBESB is or does, some respondents know...
 - came from the Chamber of Commerce
 - building on the work of the Conference Board of Canada
 - promotes the acquisition of basic employability skills among people in BC; promotes heavy participation of businesses in their programs because their aim is to improve the level of employability among BC's workforce
 - a new Board, the first in Canada, with a mandate to have tools for employment in order to keep up with today's job market
 - private sector board with representation from business and literacy organizations; determines what skills are most important for employees to have in order to meet the needs of employers
- But most do not...
 - provincial counterpart to the Conference Board of Canada
 - sub-group of the Business Council
 - power breakfasts
 - have a website that lists occupations and profiles of occupations/wages and opportunities and what training is required
 - assesses employees' abilities and recommends possible employment opportunities

-
- conducts surveys, research
 - improving standards
 - teaches skills; is a partnership between government, employers and unions
 - Some respondents expressed their opinion on the work of the BC Business Employability Skills Board:
 - too much emphasis on attitude; haven't done as good a job on identifying actual skills that employers need

Outcomes of the Literacy Practitioners' and Learners' Visioning Conference

The outcomes of this conference, as reported in the following document prepared by Gavin Perryman of Perryman & Associates, were integrated as much as possible in the body of *Literacy and Learning in BC: The Big Picture Up Close*.

Here though, is the December, 2000 conference report in its entirety: *Setting An Agenda For Tomorrow – Making A Difference Together*.

Introduction

The conference, bringing together diverse people from across the Province, was one key step in a broader consultation with the literacy field in British Columbia. Learners, practitioners, administrators, funders, and others came together for two and a half days to listen, dialogue, and create visions for the next decade. This report summarizes the themes that emerged throughout the conference.

Literacy B.C. is in the process of carrying out interviews and focus groups in 33 communities across the Province, 300 telephone interviews with key decision-makers, and an analysis of the research of the past decade into best policies and practices.

Out of all of this, Literacy B.C. hopes that a renewed vision for literacy work in British Columbia will emerge for the next decade, building on the strengths of the past, and creating strategies and commitments that will make a measureable difference.

This report needs to be read as an initial document, that raises ideas, but does not necessarily indicate consensus across the literacy field.

Over-arching Themes

Ten key over-arching, and inter-connected, themes kept surfacing in the conversations at the conference.

1. Literacy connects, and needs to be connected, with health, learning, work, individual well-being, self-esteem, confidence, citizenship, justice, safer neighbourhoods, and sustainable communities. Otherwise, left alone, literacy becomes a marginalized activity, not an essential community and societal priority.
2. Literacy is not a charity, but a foundation for learning and life. Seen as a charity, the importance of literacy work is diminished, not an essential part of community socio-economic well-being. Seen as a foundation for learning and life, literacy is brought to the centre “of the table”.
3. Action needs to occur in schools, families, neighbourhoods, community organizations, workplaces, government agencies, ... No one can successfully take on literacy challenges alone.
4. The literacy field is diverse, across different communities, programs, colleges, and community organizations. This richness is a strength. However, little will be achieved without overcoming the fragmentation within the literacy field. Competition among persons and organizations directly concerned with literacy diminish what can be accomplished, together. Without a coherent, strong voice for change, little action will be achieved.
5. Funding is a central issue. On-going and expanded government support is essential; as is, support from individuals, service clubs, corporations, and foundations. The latter cannot be a replacement for adequate government support.
6. Learning should be fun.
7. The active and open participation of learners in designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating policies and programs; and, in lobbying and advocating for literacy, is essential.
8. Literacy should be seen as an individual right, within Canadian society.

-
9. Expectations need to be expanded all around: learners of teachers and institutions, teachers of learners, parents of children, children and parents of school systems, literacy organizations of government, employees of workplaces,
 10. Building stronger support for literacy programs will only happen by paying attention to both broad goals (for example: reaching the potential of all citizens and life long learning); and, to the specific interests of the parties (for example: business, colleges, government, and practitioners) whose increased support and commitment is needed.

A Vision Of The World In Ten Years Time

The discussions at the conference about the successes of the past, the current challenges, and the possible directions for the future began to create a vision of what might be accomplished in ten years time. There is much more work to do here, to carefully define the desired outcomes for literacy work across the Province, and to set benchmarks that will make a discernible difference.

- Increased participation at every level of literacy programs
- Increased participation of learners in all aspects of community life
- Increased “buy-in” among everyone to the importance of literacy and lifelong learning
- Significantly increased funding for literacy
- Communities that see literacy as an issue belonging to everyone, and that see literacy programs as benefiting everyone
- Learners acknowledged as whole, diverse, valued persons, with their own capacities, strengths, needs, and interests
- Safety and comfort for learners expanded; and, fears, shame, stigma, and “labelling” reduced
- Less duplication of effort and competition among agencies and programs; more effective and efficient use of resources; and more collaboration
- Less fragmentation and isolation of people and organizations involved in literacy programs and activities; more connections and joint work
- Increased opportunities for people to participate and learn
- Higher enrolment rates, more students, and lower drop out rates
- Fewer people in jail
- Reduced drug and alcohol abuse
- Increased local economic activity
- More people prepared for an increasingly competitive workforce

-
- Fewer people and families on social assistance and employment assistance programs
 - Less poverty
 - Safer communities
 - Healthier communities and families
 - Reduced absenteeism and accidents in the workplace
 - Fewer revolving doors, where people join a program, leave, find a job, leave, re-enter a program,
 - No longer a need for adult literacy programs because all students are graduating with full basic literacy skills

Common Principles To Underlie The Common Work

A number of common principles, values, and beliefs became clearer at the conference. These could serve to “glue” the diverse literacy field together; and, to undergird stronger partnerships locally, regionally, and provincially. The challenge is to craft a set of principles that are broad enough to encompass the whole field; yet, specific enough that they have concrete meaning.

1. Learners are key ambassadors for literacy. They have important roles to play in building public awareness and support.
2. Learner involvement is essential. Learners need to be involved as active participants in identifying what they need and how best they learn, as well as in evaluating literacy policies, programs, and practices.
3. People learn in diverse ways, for different reasons, and at their own paces. They also face unique barriers to learning (for example: learning disabilities, physical access, lack of access to daycare, low incomes, ...). Literacy policies, programs, and activities need to be fully responsive to this diversity. “Cookie cutter” approaches will not work.
4. Learners come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Literacy policies, programs, and activities need to be fully responsive to cultural diversity.
5. The critical importance of responding in a timely manner when a person is ready to learn, and to enter a program, needs to be fully recognized. Ensure that there are sufficient literacy programs and classes so that, when learners are ready to take a step, they are not blocked by wait lists.
6. Learners, practitioners, administrators and others in the literacy field bring both capacities that are strengths to build on for the future, and needs and challenges that need to be addressed.
7. Building and developing community should underlie all literacy policies, programs, and practices. This means connecting people together, and working from individual, family, workplace, and community assets and strengths.
8. Funds for literacy programs and activities should be seen as social investments for the long term future of individuals, families, and communities.

-
9. The long term benefits of literacy programs for reducing costs (for example: prisons, drug and alcohol services, employer training programs, ...) need to be promoted. Literacy is prevention.
 10. Lifelong learning is a healthy way of life for everyone. Everyone can learn, and can continue to learn. People who teach children, youth, and adults need to fundamentally hold this belief
 11. Supports are essential for successful learning outcomes. They include a learner' family and friends, and related community groups. Learners could be encouraged to ask these individuals for assistance. Practitioners can offer coaching and modeling to all in order to make these interactions more successful.
 12. Research is a valuable tool to develop and evaluate programs and to advance the knowledge and practice within the literacy field. Practitioners and learners should be supported to do research, and to learn from the research available.
 13. Literacy practitioners, groups, organizations, and institutions need to be held accountable for the success of learners.
 14. Literacy programs should be explicitly designed with both social and academic outcomes in mind.

Directions And Action Ideas

Nine directions for renewing and strengthening literacy efforts over the next decade emerged out of the discussions at the conference. Within each direction, there were multiple ideas of what could and should be done, though little consensus about which action ideas will be more important.

1. Taking a community approach
2. Increasing awareness
3. Building resources and tools
4. Preventing further literacy challenges
5. Supporting and motivating people to act
6. Expanding, innovating, and evaluating programs
7. Expanding funding
8. Identifying and acting upon key Provincial policy issues
9. Other ideas

1. Taking A Community Approach

Taking a community approach is based on a perspective that literacy is more than the separate programs offered by workplaces, community organizations, and educational institutions. Literacy needs to be seen as a core part of the broader community development agenda.

- Provide supports for communities to take responsibility, and create and implement their own visions, plans, and structures, with less “top-down” directives and more flexible funding programs
- Map literacy assets in local communities, and build on these assets
- Create community learning access centres focusing on easy access for learners, non-threatening assessments for learners, regularly updated roadmaps to the programs available locally, peer supports and buddy programs, and pulling service providers together regularly
- Create a seamless continuum of literacy and lifelong learning programs in each community
- Establish local learners’ councils and speakers’ bureaux
- Organize annual local or regional learners’ conferences
- Give greater control over programs to learners and instructors
- Build community collaborative efforts and partnerships (for example: through coordinating all of the different literacy programs under one organization, initiating joint projects, encouraging people to learn from each other, making greater use of the internet, and joint community planning)
- Bring together different aspects of literacy (for example: workforce, family, and adult literacy)
- Educate people working in diverse community and local government agencies (for example: schools, B.C. Benefits and HRDC) so that they have greater awareness of literacy issues, the needs of learners, and the community opportunities for help and support
- Make more widespread use of diverse community facilities; and diverse community resources such as volunteer tutors and mentors. Provide programs in diverse places where learners gather everyday.
- Identify literacy levels as indicators of community health (for example: in official community plans)
- Integrate literacy programs with community development efforts, creating opportunities for students to use their literacy skills in the community
- Link literacy to community economic development, the healthy communities movement, the safer communities movement, ...
- Envisage community in many different forms, from workplaces to families, and from geographic communities to Provincial special interests

2. Increasing Awareness

Over the past decade, building public awareness of literacy issues has been a priority. Some successes have been achieved. This work needs to be continued, though people at the conference suggested that it needs to be carried out more on a grassroots basis, with each person in the literacy field committed to being a strong ambassador and advocate.

- Create a comprehensive public awareness initiative, targeted at businesses, labour unions, foundations, politicians, and parents; using multiple media approaches; and, led by a Provincial literacy coalition
- Promote the awareness among adults of the importance of literacy for everyone because of the changing complexities of communities and workplaces
- Focus on the concept of building learning communities and learning organizations, where everyone is considered a learner as well as a teacher at various stages of their lives, and there are opportunities for everyone to share their strengths and special abilities
- Involve adult learners in promoting awareness among younger people about the importance of literacy and learning through personal story telling
- Focus public awareness efforts on reducing the “stigma” felt by learners; and, on giving literacy a “human face” that acknowledges the pain and suffering
- Provide a “seal of approval” for businesses, community organizations, and government agencies who demonstrate the capacity to serve people with different literacy skills, using literacy audits
- Build personal commitments to expanding public awareness, among all individuals involved with literacy
- Involve adult learners as advocates in public awareness campaigns

3. Building Resources And Tools

Learners, practitioners, and organizations concerned with literacy will always need better tools and resources to be effective.

- Carry out local research to better understand what works, grassroots needs, and local barriers.
- Expand the use of volunteers, and peer helpers, within classrooms and within the broader community.
- Make the research that is already carried out more easily available so that it can be acted upon locally
- Develop and promote a guidebook on best practices regarding accessible programs
- Provide tools for program self-evaluation
- Provide tools for community mapping and inventory processes

-
- Promote regional and provincial networking opportunities for people to learn together
 - Create more standardized approaches to the training of teachers, practitioners, and tutors in regard to literacy issues, learning styles, cultural diversity issues, learning disabilities,
 - Make better and more creative use of technology
 - Dedicate a portion of a province-wide, high capacity communications network for exclusive literacy use

4. Preventing Further Literacy Challenges

There was broad consensus at the conference that a key priority is ensuring that schools, and other community programs, are able to help each and every young person to graduate with the basic literacy skills they need to function in society. People do not want more young adults faced with the literacy challenges that have plagued persons, families, and communities in the past.

- Promote family literacy programs, both for younger children and for school-aged children
- Promote early development of literacy skills and activities (for example: in daycares and preschools)
- Promote early identification of children who have, or will face, literacy challenges (for example: learning disabilities); and, ensure that they get the support they need
- Implement universally accessible, free preschool programs across the province, that also offer opportunities for adult learning and interactions with children, as a way of linking families to learning opportunities and literacy programs, strengthening the health of families, and spreading the successes of family literacy
- Provide adequate financial support for daycares
- Provide affordable housing for families
- Ensure that schools and school districts take full responsibility for all students graduating with basic literacy skills, and provide schools with the resources they need to achieve this goal (for example: smaller classes, more time for individualized instruction, better professional development for teachers, increased awareness of literacy issues, and resources for working with children with particular disabilities)
- Encourage schools to become active in headstart programs
- Provide opportunities for children and youth in smaller communities to see larger pictures of their world, and therefore, the importance of learning
- Ensure that all teachers are trained in literacy issues
- Work with unions to open up opportunities for volunteers to work with young people on literacy issues in schools
- Link literacy with broader policies and commitments supporting all children, youth, and families
- Support neighbourhood learning exchanges

-
- Provide better training and professional development opportunities regarding the developmental needs and learning styles of children and youth for teachers, literacy practitioners, and parents
 - Work with the B.C. College of Teachers, the universities, and B.C.T.F. to ensure that new teachers are fully trained in literacy issues
 - Build partnerships among parents, teachers, schools, libraries, health units, and social service agencies to promote child and youth learning and development at home, in school, and in the community (for example: developing individualized education and learning plans)

5. Supporting And Motivating People To Act

Increased government, workplace, union, and community support for literacy will only come from linking literacy to the specific interests of diverse persons and organizations.

Many practitioners are feeling stretched, over-whelmed, and under-valued. Their own commitments to literacy can be put in jeopardy if they are not well supported.

- End pressures on learners who are financially supported to become employed before they are ready (for example: by expanding the concept of readiness to include such issues as self esteem and life skills); so as to support long term sustainability of people's learning and employability
- Create a B.C. Government standing committee on literacy issues that would promote internal government collaboration across ministries regarding literacy issues, and work toward a common government approach
- Promote the creation of tax incentives for employers related to creating learning environments and employer-supported training programs (for example: ABE and apprenticeship programs)
- Provide tax incentives to employees to encourage on-going learning
- Change the funding structure for schools and colleges, away from the number of students, to the outcomes achieved
- Provide better recognition, professional development opportunities, salaries, and working environments for practitioners
- Increase learning and professional development opportunities for teachers, literacy practitioners, and parents
- Avoid burdening practitioners with administrative, fund raising, and unrealistic requirements
- Promote businesses and labour unions taking responsibility for literacy issues by focusing on their interests
- Remove artificial barriers to employment (for example: math 11 and 12); and, ensure that employment programs and business hiring practices do not discriminate inappropriately against people with literacy challenges

6. Expanding, Innovating, And Evaluating - Programs

Many of the ideas raised about program development were focused on making it easier for learners to access the resources they need in a safe and welcoming environment.

- Pilot new reading programs
- Develop innovative ways to recruit learners into upgrading programs
- Look at models of program delivery outside of formal educational institutions (for example: soup kitchens, workplaces, family places, community centres, community schools, emergency shelters, store front offices, malls, alternative learning centres, on the street, and individual tutoring programs) so that communities see literacy as an issue belonging to everyone, learners are acknowledged as whole persons, comfort for learners is expanded, and fears and “labelling” are reduced
- Link literacy programs with other services (for example: daycare, transportation, counselling, advocacy, and letter writing) that learners, and their families may need, in single locations, so as to make it easier for learners to seek assistance
- Improve access to existing programs (for example: through better signage, more visible locations, friendlier atmospheres and staff, and storefront offices
- Support learners with daycare, parenting help, financial aids, counselling, job shadowing, healing, nutrition, ...
- Create learner friendly programs (for example: use of peer tutors and volunteers, flexible hours, welcoming environments, friendly staff, and access to other supports such as counselling), that ensure people can feel relaxed and supported, so that there is increased participation, attendance, and completion in programs; and, wider opportunities for learners to feel more self confident
- Create a province-wide vision statement regarding accessible, learner-centred, and learner-friendly programs; and, communicate this vision statement widely
- Provide a program certificate for accessible, learner-centred, and learner-friendly programs
- Open more literacy programs, and cut down wait lists, so that when students are ready to learn there are spaces available
- Involve learners in evaluating programs
- Ensure that literacy programs are designed, funded, and staffed to support people with disabilities
- Provide core funding to programs that have demonstrated continuing results and accountability
- Recognize that the traditional educational system will never be the answer for all learners

7. Expanding Funding

Funding is a pressing issue.

- Provide on-going, stable, long term, and responsive funding
- Create more flexible, and less bureaucratic funding processes
- Reduce the time that community practitioners need to spend on administrative and grant writing matters
- Create endowment funds for literacy programs, with support from governments, corporations, and foundations

8. Identifying And Acting Upon Key Provincial Policy Issues

The Province plays a pivotal role in funding, and creating policies, that support literacy efforts.

- Create a coherent and powerful lobbying voice for literacy in Victoria
- Create a B.C. Government standing committee on literacy issues that would promote internal government collaboration across ministries regarding literacy issues, and work toward a common government approach
- Promote the creation of tax incentives for employers related to creating learning environments and employer-supported training programs (for example: ABE and apprenticeship programs)
- Provide tax incentives to employees to encourage on-going learning
- Change the funding structure for schools and colleges, away from the number of students, to the outcomes achieved
- Provide better recognition, professional development opportunities, salaries, and working environments for practitioners
- Create a province-wide vision statement regarding accessible, learner-centred, and learner-friendly programs; and, communicate this vision statement widely

9. Other Ideas

- Look at successful models of change (for example: the women's movement and the environmental movement) to learn about successful strategies
- Ensure that there is a Provincial association to continue to bring people together so that they can talk with each other
- Promote learning from one community to another

-
- Create a Provincial Learners' Council with representation from every region of the province, and an active role at the Provincial policy level; and a provincial Speakers' Bureau
 - Develop a national policy on literacy and adult education
 - Ensure that people with learning disabilities have the resources and supports they need

Challenges In Moving Forward

The directions for the next decade that emerged at the conference were reviewed from the perspectives of different regions of the Province, and different aspects of literacy: workplace, family, adult, and learners. A number of challenges were identified.

1. Local priorities will vary from community to community, and region to region. Metropolitan areas need to be seen as a series of overlapping, diverse communities. No one approach will make sense in each community. Provincial and national policies and funding approaches need to be more flexible.
2. Long distances and separated communities, in many parts of the Province, make communication, collaboration, and support quite difficult. It is easy to become isolated, and frustrated.
3. There are limited resources (for example: regional literacy coordinators or government field staff) to bring people together locally and regionally, to create more collective plans and actions.
4. Community colleges are pivotal in offering adult education programs. Yet, their commitment to literacy is inconsistent. Literacy learners need to be seen as future college students.
5. Continued competition among different literacy organizations, programs, and institutions, particularly in the face of scarce resources, will impede collective efforts.
6. Participation by learners in policy and program design, development, implementation, and evaluation is key. Yet, it will not happen without on-going support and leadership; and, increased acceptance by literacy practitioners, organizations and institutions of the value of learner participation.
7. Broad ideas need concrete action implementation; otherwise, they are just part of reports that easily become dusty. Responsibilities need to be clearly assigned to specific organizations and institutions, with transparent accountability processes.
8. It is not enough to offer literacy programs. People are often not able to participate because they lack other supports (for example: daycare, nutrition, safe housing, transportation, ...).
9. Learners with unique challenges (for example: learning disabilities and ADHD) need unique supports. Often, in smaller communities, these are not available.
10. Taking a community approach will need to ensure that there is a common language, the stigmatization of learners is not increased, all parts communities are included, and workforce literacy programs are connected into family and adult literacy efforts.
11. Special attention needs to be paid to literacy issues in First Nations communities.

-
12. There is a lack of provincial infrastructures in support of family and workforce literacy efforts.
 13. Practitioners lack the time to become involved in community development initiatives.
 14. The differences (for example: in objectives, styles, and languages) between workplace literacy programs, and community and educational institutional programs, need to be better understood and recognized by everyone if broader community coalitions are to emerge.
 15. Convincing small businesses that they need to pay attention to workplace basic skills issues will be a major challenge.

List of Conference, Survey, and Consultation Participants

The following is a list of all those who participated in our province-wide consultation on literacy and learning in BC. It does not include those who were asked to participate but, for whatever reason, were unavailable to do so.

These codes are used on this list to indicate the method by which they participated in the consultation and the category of participant in which their views were reported.

Consultation Method

P	=	Leaders in BC Telephone Survey
P2	=	Supplementary Business/Labour Survey
C	=	Literacy Practitioners' and Learners Visioning Conference
L	=	Province-Wide Community Consultation

Participant Category

BUS	=	Business
CD	=	Community Development
ED	=	Educator
GOV	=	Government
LAB	=	Labour
WLP	=	Workforce Literacy Practitioner*

* Consultation with the Workforce Literacy Practitioners included (but was not limited to) the Workforce Literacy Practitioners' Telephone/Email survey

We would like to acknowledge and express our appreciation for the time these individuals took with us and the views they expressed. Thank you to all.

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Ken	Funk	President	Golden Valley Foods	P	Abbotsford	BUS
Ken	Becotte	Executive Director	Community Development Committee	P	Abbotsford	CD
Bernadine	Mitchell	Learner		C	Abbotsford	CD
Jensen	Corry	Department Assistant, College and Career Prep	University College of the Fraser Valley	C	Abbotsford	ED
Vicki	Grieve	Department Head, Career & College Prep	University College of the Fraser Valley	L, C	Abbotsford	ED
Tom	Unwin	Regional Coordinator, Fraser Valley Region	Abbot Square Community Education Centre	P	Abbotsford	ED
Wendy	Watson	Department Head, College & Career Prep, ABE	University College of the Fraser Valley – Abbotsford Campus	P	Abbotsford	ED
Michael	Higgins	Labour Market Analyst	Abbotsford Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Abbotsford	GOV
Bonnie	Sloat	Learner		L, C	Aldergrove	CD
Darlene	Rivers	Learner		C	Bella Coola	CD
Betty	Knight		Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy	L	Briscoe	CD
Neil	Hastie		Encorp Pacific Canada	P	Burnaby	BUS
Ken	Isomura	Labour Staff	United Way of the Lower Mainland	P	Burnaby	BUS
Marlene	Jan	Human Resources Department	CREO Products Ltd.	P	Burnaby	BUS
Barry	Law	Manager	Master Printers and Decorators Assoc.	P2	Burnaby	BUS
Penny	Limer	HRD Project Coordinator	Science Council of BC	P	Burnaby	BUS
Vicky	MacMillan	Senior VP, Learning Services	BCT.TELUS Communications	P	Burnaby	BUS
Nicole	Nelson	Office Administrator	Master Painters & Decorators Assoc.	P2	Burnaby	BUS
Judy	Kilcup		United Way of the Lower Mainland	P	Burnaby	CD
Andy	Wachtel		United Way of the Lower Mainland	P	Burnaby	CD
Jerry	Horne	Field Services Coordinator, BC Lower Mainland	Laubach Literacy of Canada	C	Burnaby	ED
Debbie	Payne	Facilitator	Open Learning Agency	C	Burnaby	ED
Trevor	Van Eerden	Director	Burnaby Community Skills Centre	P	Burnaby	ED
Pat	Bell	Acting Service Delivery Manager	Burnaby Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Burnaby	GOV
Patricia	Dewhirst	Manager, Equity and Diversity	Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission	C	Burnaby	GOV
Kerry	Jochen	Chief Executive Officer	Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission	P	Burnaby	GOV
Cliff	Andstein	Director	BC Government Employees Union	P	Burnaby	LAB
Brian	Brown	Directing Business Representative	Int'l Assoc. Machinists & Aerospace Workers	P	Burnaby	LAB
Allan	Bruce	Administrator, Joint Apprenticeship & Training Plan	Operating Engineers, Local 115	P	Burnaby	LAB
Bruce	Farmer	Executive Director	OPEIU Local 378	P	Burnaby	LAB

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Rod	Goy	Training Coordinator	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	P	Burnaby	LAB
Colleen	Jordon		CUPE	P	Burnaby	LAB
Jim	Pearson	Apprenticeship Coordinator	Hotel & Restaurant Workers (Culinary) Joint Liaison Committee	P	Burnaby	LAB
Charlie	Peck	Business Manager	Int'l Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	P	Burnaby	LAB
Patrice	Pratt	Director, Finance Admin. & Staff Development	BCGEU	P, P2	Burnaby	LAB
Keith	Renalds	National Researcher	CUPE National Office	P2	Burnaby	LAB
Gary	Steeves	Director	BCGEU	P	Burnaby	LAB
Ernie	Thiessen	Apprenticeship Coordinator	Elevator Constructors Apprenticeship	P	Burnaby	LAB
Mervyn	Van Steinburg	Director, Labour Participation	United Way of the Lower Mainland	P	Burnaby	LAB
David	Cory	Program Coordinator	Workplace Training Systems, OLA	P	Burnaby	WLP
Lynda	Fownes	Executive Director	BC Construction Industry Skills Improvement Council	P	Burnaby	WLP
Sue	Grecki		SkillPlan	P, C	Burnaby	WLP
Mark	Neilson	Workplace Training Systems	Open Learning Agency	P	Burnaby	WLP
Werner	Schulz	Workplace Training Systems	Open Learning Agency	P	Burnaby	WLP
Dini	Steyn	Training Consultant	Open Learning Agency	P	Burnaby	WLP
Elizabeth	Thompson		SkillPlan	P, C	Burnaby	WLP
Bill	Graham		College of New Caledonia	L	Burns Lake	ED
Anne	Boyd	Manager of Learning Resources & Instructional Support	Campbell River School District	P2	Campbell River	BUS
Rob	Patton	Staffing and Development Manager	Norske Skog	P2	Campbell River	BUS
Carol	Forbes	Adult Literacy Centre	Continuing Education – SD #72	L	Campbell River	ED
Florence	Redpath	Volunteer Tutor	Adult Literacy Centre – Continuing Ed – SD # 72	L	Campbell River	ED
Vicky	Simmons	Vice-Principal	Continuing Education	L	Campbell River	ED
Pat	Booth		CEP	L	Campbell River	LAB
Ian	Simpson	President	Communication, Energy & Paperworkers, Local 1123	P	Campbell River	LAB
Gordon	Grievies	Owner	Venture Mechanical	P2	Castlegar	BUS
Lex	Bass	Chair	Castlegar and District Community Council	P	Castlegar	CD
Marvin	Work	Coordinator, Developmental Education	Selkirk College	P, C	Castlegar	ED
Dean	Gandry	Superintendent of Occupation, Health and Safety	Celgar Pulp (Castlegar) Local 390	P2	Castlegar	LAB
Paul	Nedelec	Business Agent	Kootenay Council District of Carpenters	P2	Castlegar	LAB
Jim	Waldie	President	West Kootenay and District Labour Council	L	Castlegar	LAB
Eric	Sehn	Principal	Northern Lights College – Chetwynd Campus	P	Chetwynd	ED
Marilyn	Fane	President	Chilliwack Social Planning Council	P	Chilliwack	CD
Antoinette	McLemore	Learner		C	Chilliwack	CD

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Ramona	Soares	Fraser South Regional Office	Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security	P	Cloverdale	GOV
Linda	Guenther	Safety and Training Advisor	City of Coquitlam	P	Coquitlam	BUS
Jane	Promnitz	Facilitator		C	Coquitlam	BUS
Peter	MacDonald	Learner	Douglas College	C	Coquitlam	CD
Nita	Jacob	President	Adult Basic Education Association of BC	P	Coquitlam	ED
Laurel	Lawson	Assistant Administrator	Coquitlam Continuing Education	C	Coquitlam	ED
Darren	Froese	Service Delivery Manager	Coquitlam Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Coquitlam	GOV
Nupur	Talwar	Fraser North/Upper Valley Regional Office	Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security	P	Coquitlam	GOV
Tera	Coulter	Admin. Assistant	Comox Valley Economic Development Society	P2	Courtenay	BUS
Sylvia	Challand	Learner		C	Courtenay	CD
Pat	Herbert	Tutor, Adult Learning Centre Member, Board of Directors - C.A.L.L.S.		L	Courtenay	CD
Diane	Huddle		Opportunities Career Services	L	Courtenay	CD
Margaret	White	Member	C.A.L.L.S.- Board of Directors	L	Courtenay	CD
Judy	Brooks	Regional Literacy Coordinator	Adult Learning Centre – C.A.L.L.S.	L, C	Courtenay	ED
Leslie	Corra	Tutor Coordinator	Adult Learning Centre – C.A.L.L.S.	L, C	Courtenay	ED
Marianne	Fiendell	Instructor, ABE	North Island College	L	Courtenay	ED
Don	Jellie	Executive Director	Adult Learning Centre – C.A.L.L.S.	L	Courtenay	ED
Bob	Freer	2nd Vice President	IWA Adult Education Centre	P2	Courtenay	LAB
Sy	Peterson	President	IWA Local 363	P2	Courtenay	LAB
Susan	Archibald	Manager of Compensation and Public Affairs	Tembec Industries	P2	Cranbrook	BUS
Debbie	Morns		Cranbrook Boys and Girls Club	L	Cranbrook	CD
Ron	McRae	Dean, Instruction & Access Education	College of the Rockies (Cranbrook Campus)	P	Cranbrook	ED
Faye	Cobbe		Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy	L	Creston	CD
Gary	Kozdraski	Learner		C	Dawson Creek	CD
Alan	Tremayne	First Nations Education Coordinator	Northern Lights College	P, L	Dawson Creek	CD
Beth	Wilson	Manager	Obair Economic Society	L	Dawson Creek	CD
Shannon	Cross	Coordinator	Dawson Creek Literacy Society	C	Dawson Creek	ED
William	Deith	Director of Instruction	Peace River South - SD #59	L	Dawson Creek	ED
Lynn	Haugen	Owner/Instructor	Chiron Learning Centre	L	Dawson Creek	ED
Bob	Haugen	Manager	Peace Community Skills Centre	L	Dawson Creek	ED
Margaret	Jerke	Prior Learning Assessment & Recognition Coordinator	Northern Lights College	P	Dawson Creek	ED
Donna	Kane	Regional Literacy Coordinator	Northern Lights College	C	Dawson Creek	ED
Gerri	Goulet	Area Manager	BC Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security – Skills Development Division	L	Dawson Creek	GOV
Bill	Peterson	National Representative	Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada	L	Dawson Creek	LAB
Ted	Beninger		Delta Credit Union	P	Delta	BUS

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Peter	Podovnikoff		Delta Credit Union	P	Delta	BUS
John	Thomas	President	Delta Cable Communications Ltd.	P	Delta	BUS
Judy	Halbert	Regional Coordinator, Coast/Metro Region	c/o Delta Resource Centre	P	Delta	ED
Reni	Masi		Provincial Government of BC	P	Delta	GOV
Hamish	Roper	Apprenticeship Coordinator	Floor Covering Joint Conference Board	P	Delta	LAB
Audrey	Large	Learner		C	Duncan	CD
Evelyn	Battell	Instructor	Malaspina University College	C	Duncan	ED
Kate	Nonesuch		Malaspina University College	L, C	Duncan	ED
Bill	Roulteyl	President Local 180	IWA Canada	P2	Duncan	LAB
Michael	Hunter	Industrial Relations Analyst	Fording Coal Ltd.	P2	Elkford	BUS
Wanda	Aubin	Learner		C	Elkford	CD
Ray	Hughes	Director of Instruction	SD # 5-Southeast Fernie	P2	Fernie	BUS
Sarah	Abdallah		Fernie Women's Centre	L	Fernie	CD
Debbie	Johnston		Fernie Women's Centre	L	Fernie	CD
Leanne	Caillier-Smith	Fundamental Level Instructor	College of the Rockies	C	Fernie	ED
Melody	Edwards		College of the Rockies	C	Fernie	ED
Germaine	Hardy	Learner		C	Fort Nelson	CD
Kathy	Colburn	Regional Human Resources Manager	Canfor Forest Products	P2	Fort St. John	BUS
Trudy	Dorie	Executive Director	Fort St. John & District Chamber of Commerce	P	Fort St. John	BUS
Jill	Phipps		Phipps Employment Consulting	L	Fort St. John	BUS
Kimberly	DuBuque		Fort St. John Literacy Society	L	Fort St. John	CD
Darrell	Hargate		North East Native Advancing Society	P	Fort St. John	CD
Linda	Harvey	Executive Director	N. Peace Community Resources Society	P	Fort St. John	CD
Marsha	Triebner	Assistant Librarian	Fort St. John Public Library	L	Fort St. John	CD
Carol	Greenhalgh	Director of Instruction	School District # 60	L	Fort St. John	ED
Lesley	Lahaye	Director Student Support Services	Peace River North SD # 60	L	Fort St. John	ED
Margaret	Little		Peace River North Teachers' Association	L	Fort St. John	ED
Michele	Wiens	Literacy Coordinator	Fort St. John Literacy Society	L, C	Fort St. John	ED
Amber	Mooney	President	Canadian Union of Postal Workers	P2	Fort St. John	LAB
Maureen	Hamilton	Human Resources Safety & Management	Evans Forest Products	P2	Golden	BUS
Katherine	Fiebig		Golden Women's Centre	L	Golden	CD
Leslie	Adams		MSDES/Golden Women's Centre	L	Golden	GOV/CD
Dale	Hurren	Manager of Human Resources	Pope and Talbot	P2	Grand Forks	BUS
Ann	Doherty	Researcher	Learner's Opportunity Group Society	L	Hazelton	CD
Karen	Erickson		Learner's Opportunity Group Society	L	Hazelton	CD
Rachael	Janze	Family Literacy	Learner's Opportunity Group Society	L, C	Hazelton	CD
Dave	Jones	Chair	Learner's Opportunity Group Society	L	Hazelton	CD
Inga	Wilson	Manager	Hope Chamber of Commerce	P2	Hope	BUS

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Lynn	Campbell	Assistant to the Executive Director	Community Development Committee - Hope Community Services	P	Hope	CD
Billie	Lacombe	Learner		C	Houston	CD
Brenda	Anderssen	Manager	The Learning Centre/NWCC	L	Houston	ED
Sandra	Lavallie	Chair	Houston Link to Learning	L	Houston	ED
Dee	McRae	Regional Literacy Coordinator	Houston Link to Learning	L, C	Houston	ED
Rosemary	Oaks		Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy	L	Invermere	CD
Leona	Gadsby	Instructor/Regional Literacy Coordinator	College of the Rockies	L, C	Invermere	ED
Heather	Branden	Director of Human Resources	BC Lotteries	P2	Kamloops	BUS
Jackie	Frigone	Human Resource Manager	City of Kamloops	P2	Kamloops	BUS
Larry	Lemon	Public Affairs Manager	Weyerhaeuser Canada Ltd.	P2	Kamloops	BUS
Jan	Lingford	Chief Executive Officer	Kamloops Chamber of Commerce	L	Kamloops	BUS
Cheryl	Martin			C	Kamloops	BUS
Lesra	Martin			C	Kamloops	BUS
Dawn	McKenzie	Service Coordinator	Seasons Employment Planning Services	P	Kamloops	BUS
Shannon	McQuillan	Human Resources	Urban Systems	P2	Kamloops	BUS
Adele	Russell	Human Resource Manager	Weyerhaeuser Canada	P2	Kamloops	BUS
James	Hance	Learner		C	Kamloops	CD
Lenore	Mitchell	Staff Liaison/Development Services Dept.	Social Planning Advisory Committee - City of Kamloops	P	Kamloops	CD
Daniel	Smith	Learner		C	Kamloops	CD
Evelyn	Wal	Director, Board	Laubach Literacy of Canada	L, C	Kamloops	CD
F.R. (Fred)	Cunningham	Chair, College Preparation Dept.	The University College of the Cariboo	L	Kamloops	ED
Jane	Fitschen	Tutor Coordinator	Laubach Literacy of Canada	L	Kamloops	ED
Ray	Harkness	Program Assistant-Assessment Services	HALE - Holistic Adult Learner Enterprise	L	Kamloops	ED
Cher	McLean	Administrator, Academy Program	Executive Director - Laubach Literacy of Canada	L, C	Kamloops	ED
Gerry	Olund	Regional Coordinator	Ministry of Education - Field Services	P, L	Kamloops	ED
Cathie	Peters	Language/Literacy Coordinator	S D # 73-Kamloops/Thompson - Henry Grube Education Centre	L	Kamloops	ED
Jan	Seedhouse	Field Services Coordinator	British Columbia Interior - Laubach Literacy of Canada	L, C	Kamloops	ED
Brenda	Gradwell	Acting Community and Contract Manager	BC MSD & ES	L	Kamloops	GOV
Al	Thomas	Director	Kamloops Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Kamloops	GOV
Larry	Bancroft	President	CUPE Local 3500	L, P2	Kamloops	LAB
Joe	Davies	President	IWA Local 1-417	P2	Kamloops	LAB
Bill	Ferguson	Past President/Board Member	Kamloops & District Labour Council	P2	Kamloops	LAB
Kim	Smith	Staff Representative	BCGEU	P2	Kamloops	LAB
Denise	Gottell	Learner		C	Kaslo	CD
Mike	Bradshaw	Director of Communications	West Kootenay Power	P2	Kelowna	BUS

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Barb	Liversidge	Human Resource Staffing Manager	Telus	P2	Kelowna	BUS
Paul	Sorisseau	Training Coordinator	Interior Forest Labour Relations Association	P2	Kelowna	BUS
Cheryl	Farmer		Okanagan Family Society	C	Kelowna	CD
Doug	Findlater		Canadian Heritage	P	Kelowna	CD
Bob	Lindsay	Principal	Central School Programs and Services – SD # 23	L	Kelowna	ED
Helen	Raham		Society for the Advancement of Excellence and Education	P	Kelowna	ED
Lesley	Roberts	Program Coordinator	Project Literacy Kelowna Society	C	Kelowna	ED
Steven	Venier	C&D Manager	Project Literacy Kelowna Society	C	Kelowna	ED
Joanne	Yacheson		Okanagan University College	P	Kelowna	ED
R.J. (Bob)	Barten	Manager-Interior Kootenays	ITAC	L	Kelowna	GOV
Jon	Grass	District Supervisor	Labour Market Attachment	L	Kelowna	GOV
Marjorie	Hopkins	Training Consultant	BC MSD & ES	L	Kelowna	GOV
Alan	Niebergal	Program Referral Officer	BC MSD & ES	L	Kelowna	GOV
Werner	Schmidt	MP	Government of Canada – House of Commons	P	Kelowna	GOV
Mike	Terris	Director	Kelowna Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Kelowna	GOV
Sandy	Saver	Superintendent of Employee Relations	Cominco	P2	Kimberley	BUS
Wayne	Pelter	Principal	Continuing Education Centre	P	Kimberley	ED
Doug	Peterson	Employment Relations Officer	Eurocan Pulp and Paper	P2	Kitimat	BUS
Julie	Powell	Human Resources Advisor	Alcan Primary Metal Group	P2	Kitimat	BUS
Patricia	Rutsatz	Employee Relations Assistant	West Fraser Timber	P2	Kitimat	BUS
Mary Lou	Tremblay	Human Resources Advisor	Methanex Corporation	P2	Kitimat	BUS
Janette	Camazzola		Kitimat Literacy Services	L	Kitimat	ED
Cindi	MacIntosh		Kitimat Literacy Services	L	Kitimat	ED
Denise	O'Neil		Kitimat Literacy Services	L	Kitimat	ED
Larisa	Tarwick	Campus Director	Northwest Community College	L	Kitimat	ED
Rick	Belmont	President	Canadian Auto Workers	P2	Kitimat	LAB
Raymond	Raj	Education and Human Rights Coordinator	Canadian Auto Workers	P2	Kitimat	LAB
Norbert	Hartig	Manager	Kitimat Community Skills Centre	P, L	Kitimat	WLP
Shelly	Joyner	Regional Literacy Coordinator		L, C	Lac La Hache	ED
Erin	Kathroe	Regional Literacy Learning (PAL) Coordinator		L	Lac La Hache	ED
Cheryl	MacDermid	Learner		C	Langley	CD
Kathleen	Casprowitz		Sylvan Learning Center	P	Langley	ED
Gordon	House	Education Consultant	MGH Ventures Ltd.	P	Langley	WLP
Catherine	King	Education Advancement Coordinator	Lower Post First Nations	C	Lower Post	ED
Pam	Pfannmueller	Postmaster	Canadian Postmasters' and Assistants' Association-BC & Yukon Branch	P2	Lumby	LAB

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Mimi	Fourie	Human Resource Manager	E-one Moli Energy (Canada) Ltd.	P2	Maple Ridge	BUS
Christine	Carter	Municipal Planner	Social Planning Advisory Committee	P	Maple Ridge	CD
Andrew	Merilees	Adult Literacy Coordinator	Haida Gwaii Learning Circle Society	C	Masset	ED
Garry	Merkel		Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	P	Merritt	ED
Deanna	Reder	Regional Family Literacy Coordinator	University College of the Fraser Valley	C	Mission	ED
Pia	Rich	Education Facilitator	Mission Community Skills Centre	P	Mission	ED
Archie	Peters	Learner		C	Mount Currie	CD
Neal	Thevarge	Learner		C	Mount Currie	CD
Jennifer	Cliff-Marks	Regional Literacy Coordinator	JCM Consulting	L, C	Nakusp	BUS
Don	Johnston		Columbia Basin Trust	L	Nakusp	CD
Wendy	Attridge	Controller	Tradewind Electric	P2	Nanaimo	BUS
Cori-Lynn	Carlson	Executive Director	Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce	L	Nanaimo	BUS
Malcolm	Hargrave	Controller	VMAC	P2	Nanaimo	BUS
Sheri	Kirk	Employment Relations	Weyerhaeuser (Island Phoenix Division)	P2	Nanaimo	BUS
Karen	Lindsey	Research Analyst	Economic Development Commission	P2	Nanaimo	BUS
Chris	McPhil	Coordinator of Employment Services	Central Vancouver Island Health Region	P2	Nanaimo	BUS
Ken	Peterson			P	Nanaimo	BUS
Kathy	Reynes	Career Services	School District # 68	P2	Nanaimo	BUS
Kara	Williamson	Human Resources Administrator	Pope and Talbot	P2	Nanaimo	BUS
David	Johnson		Native Friendship Centre	L	Nanaimo	CD
Alison	Millward	Social Planner	City of Nanaimo-Social Planning Advisory Committee	P	Nanaimo	CD
David	Moddle	Executive Director, Counsellor	LifeWorks! Consulting Ltd.	L	Nanaimo	CD
Travis	Shaw	Learner		C	Nanaimo	CD
Mike	Grant	Dean and Instructor, Education and Instructional Technology	Malaspina University College	L	Nanaimo	ED
Stephen	Innis	Vice-Principal	VAST – SD # 68 – Nanaimo-Ladysmith	L	Nanaimo	ED
Richard	Johnston	Developmental Programs	Malaspina University College	P	Nanaimo	ED
Anne	Knott		Laubach Literacy of Canada	C	Nanaimo	ED
Carola	Lane	Superintendent	SD #68	L	Nanaimo	ED
Patrick	Ross	Regional Coordinator, Vancouver Island Region		P	Nanaimo	ED
Iris	Strong	Literacy Instructor	Malaspina University College	L	Nanaimo	ED
Jacqueline	Webster	Tutor Coordinator	Literacy Nanaimo	L	Nanaimo	ED
Lindsay	Wienkamp	Literacy Instructor	Malaspina University College	L	Nanaimo	ED
Lorna	Zaback	Coordinator	Career and Academic Preparations – Malaspina University College	L	Nanaimo	ED
Jim	Brown	Director	Nanaimo Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Nanaimo	GOV
Elli	Burke	Training Consultant	MSDES, Employment Services Centre	L	Nanaimo	GOV

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Stephanie	Dancevic	Training Consultant	MSDES, Skills Development Division	L	Nanaimo	GOV
Bill	French	Regional Director	MSDES	L	Nanaimo	GOV
Steve	Hancock	Community Development Social Worker	Ministry for Children and Families	L	Nanaimo	GOV
Jan	Kalmusky	Training Consultant	MSDES, Skills Development Division	L	Nanaimo	GOV
Jeanine	Manji	Training Consultant	MSDES, Employment & Benefits Division	L	Nanaimo	GOV
Eric	McKean	ITAC Counsellor	ITAC-Vancouver Island & Sunshine Coast	L	Nanaimo	GOV
Janet	Wright	Skills BC Coordinator	MSDES, Skills Development Division	L	Nanaimo	GOV
Dave	Angus	Business Rep	Teamster Local 213	P2	Nanaimo	LAB
Fred	Brown	Business Agent	United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners	P2	Nanaimo	LAB
Donn	Stanley	National Rep	CUPE	P2	Nanaimo	LAB
Rob	Tukham	PPWC Coordinator	Joint Union Management Program	P	Nanaimo	WLP
Glenn	Sutherland	President	Nelson Chamber of Commerce	L	Nelson	BUS
Pat	Gibson			L	Nelson	CD
Alec	Dergousoff	Assistant Superintendent	SD # 8	L	Nelson	ED
Gary	Emman		Selkirk College	P	Nelson	ED
Don	Truscott	Superintendent	Kootenay Lake School District	P	Nelson	ED
Dave	Chiz	Apprenticeship Counsellor	ITAC	L	Nelson	GOV
Rob	Thomson	Service Delivery Manager	Nelson Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Nelson	GOV
Lou	Boulinane	Business Agent	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	P2	Nelson	LAB
Roger	Collinson	President	Canadian Union of Postal Workers	P2	Nelson	LAB
Jim	Waldie	President	West Kootenay and District Labour Council	P2	Nelson	LAB
Margaret	Raymond			C	New Denver	ED
Richard	Sommerfeld	Manager of Plant	Kispiox Forest Products	P2	New Hazelton	BUS
Brian	MacLeod		Pulp and Paper Forum	P	New West.	BUS
Clive	Bellian	Regional Director	Dye and Durham Co. Inc.	P2	New West.	BUS
Jack	Clark	Brewery Manager	Labatt Breweries B.C.	P2	New West.	BUS
Dave	Quackenbush		New Westminster Chamber of Commerce	P	New West.	BUS
Mike	Sywyluch	General Manager	Weyerhaeuser, New Westminster Division	P	New West.	BUS
Vicki	Austad		Community Skills Centre	L, C	New West.	ED
Roberto	McConkey	Director, Centre 2000	Douglas College	P	New West.	ED
Russ	Pacey	Continuing Education	School District No. 40 (New Westminster)	P	New West.	ED
Shelley	Rivkin	Interdisciplinary Studies	Justice Institute of BC	P	New West.	ED
Caroline	Chalifoux	Secretary Treasurer	New Westminster District Labour Council	P2	New West.	LAB
Jean	Hamilton		UFCW	C	New West.	LAB
Leif	Hansen	President	United Food & Commercial Workers Local 2000	P	New West.	LAB
Jeff	Keighley	National Representative	Canadian Auto Workers	P	New West.	LAB
Bob	Morrison	President	Construction Labour Relations Association	P	New West.	LAB
Nolan	Eddy	Manager	UFCW Local 2000 Training Centre	P	New West.	WLP

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Jill	Gildersleve	Employment Consultant	BC Works	P	New West.	WLP
Kevin	Evans	VP, Government Relations in BC	Retail Council of Canada	P	North Van.	BUS
Paul	Gallagher		Gallagher & Associates	L, C	North Van.	BUS
Marni	Johnson	Human Resources Vice President	North Shore Credit Union	P	North Van.	BUS
Jefferson	Mooney	Chief Executive Officer	A&W Food Services of Canada	P	North Van.	BUS
Rob	Sanders		House of Words	P	North Van.	BUS
Marie-Luise	Berryman	Reference Librarian	North Vancouver City Library	C	North Van.	CD
Howard	Grant	Executive Director	First Nations Summit Society	P	North Van.	CD
Aimee	Nahani	Learner		C	North Van.	CD
James	Cooke	Dean	Capilano College	L, C	North Van.	ED
Judy	Rose	Coordinator	Capilano College	C	North Van.	ED
Carol	Schoen	Instructor	Capilano College	C	North Van.	ED
Gill	Eston	Director	North Shore Human Resources Centre Canada	P	North Van.	GOV
Christine	Garlick-Griffin			P	North Van.	WLP
Pat	Hodgson		Capilano College	P	North Van.	WLP
Rob	Wedel		Capilano College	P	North Van.	WLP
Karen	Dawe	Tutoring Program Coordinator	Malaspina University College – Parksville/Qualicum Campus	L	Parksville	ED
Joe	Panichelli	Acting Principal	PASS, Parksville Alternative Secondary School	L	Parksville	ED
Linda	Perkins	Literacy Instructor	Malaspina University College – Parksville/Qualicum Campus	L	Parksville	ED
Rosemary	Hodson	Student	OUC	L	Penticton	CD
Karen	Kellerman	Public Services Librarian	Penticton Public Library	L	Penticton	CD
Michou	Szabo		Open Door Centre	L	Penticton	CD
Lesley	Tanner		Desert Rose Society	L	Penticton	CD
Jill	Watson	Connections	Employment Assessment & Referral Center	L	Penticton	CD
Charity	Calder	Adult Tutor Trainer	c/o Regional Literacy Coordinator – Okanagan University College	L	Penticton	ED
Nancy	Noble-Hearle	Regional Literacy Coordinator	Okanagan University College	L	Penticton	ED
Sharon	Sola	Regional Coordinator, Okanagan/Mainline Region	c/o School District No. 67 (Okanagan Skaha)	P	Penticton	ED
Diane	Vaykovich	Early Intervention Program	Okanagan University College	L	Penticton	ED
Peggie	May		BC MSD & ES – Employment & Benefit Centre	L	Penticton	GOV
Nayda	Paruk	District Supervisor	BC MSD & ES – Employment and Benefit Centre	L	Penticton	GOV
Diane	Swanson	Employment Officer	HRDC-HRCC	L	Penticton	GOV
Eileen	Haggard	Educational Support & Curriculum Coordinator	Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council/SD #70	L	Port Alberni	CD/ED
Elverna M.	Baker	Manager & Business Information Officer	Alberni Valley Chamber of Commerce	L	Port Alberni	BUS

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Kathy	Gomez	Human Resource Manager	Pacifica Papers	P2	Port Alberni	BUS
Neil	Malbon	Information Centre Manager	Weyerhaeuser	P2	Port Alberni	BUS
Krista	Trembley	Human Resources Coordinator	Pacifica Papers	P2	Port Alberni	BUS
Elaine	Baird	West Coast Career Centre	ACRC	L	Port Alberni	CD
Ilona	Braideau		Sunshine Club	L	Port Alberni	CD
Sandy	Faust		NIC	L	Port Alberni	CD
Margaret	MavIntyre	Student	NIC	L	Port Alberni	CD
Jill	Moss	West Coast Career Centre	ACRC	L, C	Port Alberni	CD
Cindy	Stevens	Executive Director	Port Alberni Friendship Center	L	Port Alberni	CD
Inger	Weber	General Manager	Alberni-Clayoquot Innovation Society	L	Port Alberni	CD
Kelly	Johnsen	Post Secondary Counsellor	Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council	L	Port Alberni	CD/ED
Cheryl	Brenner	Tutor	Port Alberni Friendship Center	L	Port Alberni	ED
Sam	Frekitch		SD # 70	L	Port Alberni	ED
Colleen	Hanley	Counsellor	NIC	L	Port Alberni	ED
Neil	Jones	Manager	Alberni-Clayoquot Community Skills Centre	L	Port Alberni	ED
Tom	McEvay	Principal	Alternate Programs – SD #70	L	Port Alberni	ED
Viola	Ward	Instructor	NIC	L	Port Alberni	ED
Dionne	Dake	Intern	HRDC	L	Port Alberni	GOV
Mike	Kardynal	HRDC Manager	HRDC	L	Port Alberni	GOV
Theresa	Kingston	Parks and Recreation	City of Port Alberni	L	Port Alberni	GOV
Barb	Lewadnuk		MSDES	L	Port Alberni	GOV
J.A. (Jim)	Lockhart	Programs and Services Officer	HRDC	L	Port Alberni	GOV
Gay	Allen	Union Chairperson	Hospital Employees Union	P2	Port Alberni	LAB
Grant	Asman	Board Member-District Labour Council Rep.	Alberni-Clayoquot Community Skills Centre Society	L	Port Alberni	LAB
Jack	McLeman	President	Port Alberni District Labour Council	L	Port Alberni	LAB
Monty	Mearns	President	IWA	P2	Port Alberni	LAB
George	Rogers	2nd Vice President	IWA Local 185	P2	Port Alberni	LAB
Leslie	Wright	President	Teachers' Union	P2	Port Alberni	LAB
Annie	Blake	Plant Manager	Alpha Processing Ltd.	P2	Port Hardy	BUS
Brenda	Etherington	Executive Director	Port Hardy & District Chamber of Commerce	L	Port Hardy	BUS
Susan	Heisler	Learning Facilitator	Island Business School Inc.	L	Port Hardy	BUS
Jean	Sutter	Accountant	Lukwa Mills	P2	Port Hardy	BUS
Dennis	Umpleby	Band Manager	Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nation	L	Port Hardy	CD
Steve	Gray	District Principal	Technology, Resources & Continuing Ed.	L	Port Hardy	ED
Noel	Summers	Manager	Community Skills Centre for the North Island & Region	L	Port Hardy	ED
Tricia	Moore	President	Mount Waddington-North Vancouver Island District Labour Council	L	Port Hardy	LAB
Aniko	Juhasz	Manager	Port McNeil Chamber of Commerce	L	Port McNeil	GOV

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Jeannette	McAffer	Manager of Human Resources	City of Port Moody	P	Port Moody	BUS
Pat	Pattison	Facilitator	Educational Consulting Association	C	Port Moody	ED
Leanne	Ryz	Coordinator/Facilitator	Mile Zero Metis Society	C	Pouce Coupe	CD
Dick	Newson	Industrial Relations Super	Prince George Pulp & Paper (Northwood)	P2	Prince George	BUS
Noreen	Sawyer	Employee Relations Assistant	Canfor Northwood Pulpmill	P2	Prince George	BUS
Sherry	Sethen	Executive Director	Prince George Chamber of Commerce	L	Prince George	BUS
Darcy	Allen	Instructor	Prince George Native Friendship Centre/Project Refocus	L	Prince George	CD
Lynn	Florey	Managing Director	Community Planning Council of Prince George	P	Prince George	CD
Joanne	Short	Learner		C	Prince George	CD
Edel	Toner-Rogala	Chief Librarian	Prince George Public Library	L	Prince George	CD
Don	Zurowski	General Manager	Community Futures Development Corp.	L	Prince George	CD
Norm	Adams	Manager	OLA Agency/Skills Centre	P	Prince George	ED
Sandra	Day	Program Supervisor-Employment Services	Open Learning Agency Skills Centre	L	Prince George	ED
Pat	Hanki	Volunteer Adult Literacy Training	College of New Caledonia	L, C	Prince George	ED
Teresa	Saunders	Continuing Education	School District No. 57 (Prince George)	P	Prince George	ED
Marcia	Timbres	Dean, Foundations Div.	College of New Caledonia-Prince George Campus	L	Prince George	ED
Michelle	Van Nice	Northern Literacy Coordinator	College of New Caledonia	L	Prince George	ED
Jim	Edgar	Area Manager	Industry Training & Apprenticeship Commission	L	Prince George	GOV
Hal	Howie	Director	Prince George Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Prince George	GOV
Ken	Kelly	Regional Director	Industry & Apprenticeship Commission	L	Prince George	GOV
Cam	Miller	Regional Executive Officer	Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security	P	Prince George	GOV
Del	Bulman	Assistant Business Manager	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	P2	Prince George	LAB
Tom	Dawson	Northwood LEAP Coordinator		L	Prince George	LAB
George	Jalava	Business Manager & Finance Secretary	United Brotherhood of Carpenters & Joiners	P2	Prince George	LAB
Ann	Krauseneck	President	Prince George & District Labour Council	P	Prince George	LAB
Neil	Meagher	2nd Vice President	IWA Canada - Local 1-424, CLC	L	Prince George	LAB
Bruce	Spurrier	President	Industrial, Wood & Allied Workers	P	Prince George	LAB
Deborah	Vallee	Learner		C	Prince George	CD
Mrs. Yvonne	Simmons	Chamber Manager	Prince Rupert & District Chamber of Commerce	L	Prince Rupert	BUS
Ingrid	Clark	Manager	North Coast Community Skills Centre	L	Prince Rupert	ED
Dr. Robert	David	Superintendent	Prince Rupert School District	P	Prince Rupert	ED
Lee Ann	Gagnon	CCP	Northwest Community College	L	Prince Rupert	ED
Marie	Grinstad	ESL/Literacy	Northwest Community College	L	Prince Rupert	ED

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Nancy	Oliver	Continuing Ed.	Northwest Community College	L	Prince Rupert	ED
Sue	Rouse	Training Coordinator	North Coast Community Skills Centre	L	Prince Rupert	ED
Elizabeth	Wilson	Regional Coordinator, North West Region		P	Prince Rupert	ED
Dave	Smith	President	Prince Rupert Labour Council	P	Prince Rupert	LAB
Joy	Thorkelson	Northern Representative	UFAW	P2	Prince Rupert	LAB
Debbie	Stava	Coordinator, Extension Services	Northwest Community College	P	Prince Rupert	WLP
Nate	Bello	City Counsellor	Quality of Life Committee - City of Quesnel	P	Quesnel	CD
Ed	Coleman	District Coordinator	School District 28 (Quesnel)	L	Quesnel	ED
Carolyn	Hilbert, M.Ed.	Academic Advisor	Continuing & Adult Education	L	Quesnel	ED
Jasu	Kotak	ESL Instructor	School District 28 (Quesnel)	L	Quesnel	ED
Debra	Millward	Continuing Education, K-7	School District 28 (Quesnel)	L	Quesnel	ED
Cheryl	Schamehorn	Programs Manager	College of New Caledonia	L	Quesnel	ED
Victor	Johnson	President	Quesnel & District Labour Council	P	Quesnel	LAB
Gifford	Shaver	Learner		C	Revelstoke	CD
Carol	Miller	Literacy Coordinator	Okanagan University College	C	Revelstoke	ED
Keith	Leach	Manager of Human Resources	Slocan Group	P2	Richmind	BUS
Liz	McNally	Manager of Training and Development	London Drugs (Head Office)	P2	Richmond	BUS
Spence	Mikituk		Canadian Airlines International	P	Richmond	BUS
Annie	McKitrick		BC School Trustees Association	P	Richmond	ED
Leslie	Kiehlbauch	Volunteer Tutor Coordinator /Family Literacy Project Coordinator	Okanagan University College	C	Salmon Arm	ED
Jan	Sawyer	ABE Literacy Instructor	Okanagan University College	L, C	Salmon Arm	ED
Janet	Skulsky	Coordinator/Adult Literacy Facilitator	Families in Motion	C	Sardis	CD
Vicki	Dobbyn	Coordinator	Social Planning Task Force-Sunshine Coast	P	Sechelt	CD
Ernie	Pete	Learner	Smithers Community Services	C	Smithers	CD
Sharon	Robertson	Community Futures	Social Planning Advisory Council - Smithers	P	Smithers	CD
Jane	Boulton		Smithers Literacy Services	L	Smithers	ED
Sheila	Whincup		WED - Workplace Education Development	P	Sooke	WLP
Dennis	Hall	President	Selkirk Paving Ltd.	P2	South Slocan	BUS
Trudy	Boutwell	Secretary to Employment Relations	Elkview Coal	P2	Sparwood	BUS
Judi	Clarke		College of the Rockies	C	Sparwood	ED
Debbie	Cockell	Learner		C	Squamish	CD
Sabina	Frankland	Leaner		C	Squamish	CD
Shealagh	King	Coordinator	Squamish Volunteer Centre	P	Squamish	CD
Michelle	Lebeau	Regional Literacy Coordinator	Capilano College	C	Squamish	ED
Dr. Linda	Rossler	Superintendent	Howe Sound School District	P	Squamish	ED
Paul	Harrington	President	Squamish & District Labour Committee	P	Squamish	LAB

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Catherine	Bartell	Director, People Dev. & Practice Advancement	South Fraser Health Region	P	Surrey	BUS
Patsy	Bourassa	Executive Director	Surrey Regional Chamber of Commerce	P	Surrey	BUS
Dave	Calibaba		The Co-operators	P	Surrey	BUS
Dave	Pennal		The Co-operators	P	Surrey	BUS
Tony	Wood	Managing Director	Hospitality Industry Education Advisory Committee	P	Surrey	BUS
Margaret	Mercier	Learner		C	Surrey	CD
Pornchai	Reuanghrounh	Learner		C	Surrey	CD
Kelly	Riehl	Co-Manager	Metis Provincial Council	P	Surrey	CD
Robert	Chadwick		Continuing Education - Surrey	P	Surrey	ED
Beverly	Krieger	Instructor	Kwantlen University College	C	Surrey	ED
Derek	Nanson	Dean	Kwantlen University College	P	Surrey	ED
Dr. Fred	Renihan	Superintendent	Surrey School District	P	Surrey	ED
Caron	To	ESL Instructor	Surrey Delta Immigrant Services Society	C	Surrey	ED
John	Taylor	Employment Manager	Surrey Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Surrey	GOV
Matt	Buss	Apprenticeship Coordinator	Refrigeration Workers Apprenticeship	P	Surrey	LAB
Danni	Phillips		Hospital Employees Union	P*	Surrey	LAB
Mike	Probert	Apprenticeship Coordinator	Glaziers & Drywall Joint Trade Board	P	Surrey	LAB
Brain	Dyck	Divisional Controller	Slocan Forest Products Ltd. (Taylor Division)	P2	Taylor	BUS
Richard	Leask	Tutor	Gordon Neufeld Learning Centre	L	Taylor	LAB
Allana	MacAulay	President Local 400	CEP of Canada	L	Taylor	LAB
Kate	Nesbitt	Learner		L, C	Telkwa	CD
Linda	Bell	Manager	Terrace & District Chamber of Commerce	P	Terrace	BUS
Roger	Leclerc	Program Manager	Interconnect Training & Employment Services	L	Terrace	CD
Sharon	Beedle	Assistant Superintendent	Coast Mountain School District #82	L	Terrace	ED
Sue	Carson	Program Coordinator	Community Readers & Writers Program	L	Terrace	ED
Herb	Fader	Superintendent of Schools/CEO	Coast Mountain School District #82	L	Terrace	ED
Stephanie	Forsyth	President	Northwest Community College	P	Terrace	ED
Shirley	Kimery	Director	Terrace Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Terrace	GOV
Kevin	Nichol	Human Resources Manager	Kalesnikoff Lumber	P2	Thrumbs	BUS
Bill	Vernon	General Manager	Tofino Business Association	P2	Tofino	BUS
Brad	Dusseault	Principal	Wickaninnish Community School	L	Tofino	ED
Kim	Hoag	Coordinator	Wickaninnish Community School	L	Tofino	ED
Bill	Morrison	Instructor/Outreach	North Island College	L	Tofino	ED
Jason	Cregg	Employer Relations Specialist	Cominco Ltd.	P2	Trail	BUS
A.M. Angie	DeBiasio	Operations Assistant	Cominco Ltd.	L	Trail	BUS
Debbie	Martin	Senior Training and Development Coordinator	Cominco Ltd.	P2	Trail	BUS
Sylvia	McGregor	Director of Instruction	SD # 20 Kootenay-Columbia	L	Trail	ED
Janet	Morton		School District No. 11 (Trail)	P	Trail	ED

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Ev	Surgenor	Superintendent	SD # 20 Kootenay-Columbia	L	Trail	ED
Jane	Power	Coordinator, The Learning Centre	COMINCO Ltd., Trail Operations	P, L	Trail	WLP
Gonda	Waite	Human Resources Liason	Parks Canada	P2	Ucluelet	BUS
Roberta	Jensen	Office Manager/ Vocational Counsellor	West Coast Career Centre/Alberni Clayquot Resource Centre	P2, L	Ucluelet	CD
Gerry	Schreiber	past Program Coordinator	Tofino/Ucluelet Skills Centre	L	Ucluelet	CD
Nancy	Ashurst		BC Hydro and Power Authority	P	Vancouver	BUS
Rosalyn	Boniface		5 Star Events	P, C	Vancouver	BUS
Lauralee	Bowie		Lauralee Bowie Ski Adventures	P	Vancouver	BUS
Peter	Brown		Peter Brown Law Corporation	P	Vancouver	BUS
Dennis	Bruchet	Manager, Strategic Initiatives	Western Economic Diversification	P	Vancouver	BUS
Bob	Bucher		Pacific Blue Cross	P	Vancouver	BUS
Brian	Butters		ICBC Public Affairs	P	Vancouver	BUS
Rachael	Cabrera	Director, Human Resources	Delta Pinnacle	P	Vancouver	BUS
Jean	Cockell	Facilitator		C	Vancouver	BUS
Richard	Cohee		Vancouver Grizzlies	P	Vancouver	BUS
Joan	Cowderoy	Facilitator		C	Vancouver	BUS
Coralys	Cuthbert	Social Planning Department	City of Vancouver	P	Vancouver	BUS
Bob	DeClark		Pacifica	P	Vancouver	BUS
John	Hammond		William M. Mercer Ltd.	P	Vancouver	BUS
Deb	Jones	Principal Consultant	Well Advised Organizational Wellness Solutions	P	Vancouver	BUS
Michael	Kale			P	Vancouver	BUS
Christina	Kennett	Manager, Human Resources	Molson Breweries	P	Vancouver	BUS
Werner	Knittel	Director of Manufacturing	Alliance of Manufacturers & Exporters Canada	P	Vancouver	BUS
Jerry	Lampert	President	Business Council of BC	P	Vancouver	BUS
Maureen	Litkewich	Director of Education	Mining Association of BC	P	Vancouver	BUS
Frances	Long	Facilitator		C	Vancouver	BUS
Barbara	McBride	Facilitator	Pacific Association of Adult Educators	L, C	Vancouver	BUS
Jane	McIvor	President	McIvor Communications	P	Vancouver	BUS
Judith	McPhie	Facilitator		C	Vancouver	BUS
Suzette	Meyers	Producer/Director	Insight Documentaries	P	Vancouver	BUS
Deborah	Meyers	Facilitator		C	Vancouver	BUS
Bill	Moran		Public Service Commission of Canada	P	Vancouver	BUS
Janet	Morris-Read	Executive Director	BC and Yukon Hotel Association	P	Vancouver	BUS
Julia	Mosher	Human Resources Manager	Pan Pacific Hotel	P	Vancouver	BUS
Roberta	Mulholland		BC Yukon Hotels' Association	P	Vancouver	BUS
April	Olsen	Manager, Human Resources	Vancouver/Richmond Health Board	P	Vancouver	BUS
Al	Parsons		National Film Board	P	Vancouver	BUS
Gavin	Perryman		Perryman and Associates	C	Vancouver	BUS
Brenda	Plowman	President	Synap Tuit Group	P	Vancouver	BUS

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Glenn	Poier	Regional Group Director	Manulife Financial	P	Vancouver	BUS
Hari	Shivo		Molson Breweries	P	Vancouver	BUS
Alex	Shorten		Weyerhaeuser	P	Vancouver	BUS
Amanda	Silvers			P	Vancouver	BUS
Fred	Smith	Director, Group Insurance Marketing	Great West Life	P	Vancouver	BUS
Mark	Startup	President	Retail Merchants Association of BC	P	Vancouver	BUS
Marylee	Stephenson		CS/Resors Consulting Ltd.	P	Vancouver	BUS
Michael	Walker	Executive Director	The Fraser Institute	P	Vancouver	BUS
Mary	Wallace Poole	Executive Director	BC Human Resources Management Association	P	Vancouver	BUS
John	Winter	President	BC Chamber of Commerce	P	Vancouver	BUS
Gail	Woo	HRMS Coordinator	West Coast Energy	P2	Vancouver	BUS
Janet	Austin	Executive Director	Big Sisters	P	Vancouver	CD
April	Bennett		Vancouver Aboriginal Children & Family Services	P	Vancouver	CD
June	Blais	Learner		C	Vancouver	CD
Peggy	Bray	Program Assistant	Career Drive — Vincent Group — Workplace Consulting Ltd.	P	Vancouver	CD
Dana	Brynelson		Infant Development Program	P	Vancouver	CD
Cindy	Carson	First Call	Spotlight on Children and Youth	P	Vancouver	CD
Betty	Carter			C	Vancouver	CD
Gyda	Chud	Coalition of Child Care Advocates in BC	Vancouver Community College - ECE Dept.	P	Vancouver	CD
Joe	Dardano	Education Coordinator, Hope Learning Centre	Union Gospel Mission	P	Vancouver	CD
Carol	Dawson	Executive Director	Union of BC Indian Chiefs	P	Vancouver	CD
Janice	Douglas	Youth Services and Program Director	Vancouver Public Library	P	Vancouver	CD
Marianne	Drew-Pennington		Family Resource Programs of BC	P	Vancouver	CD
Valerie	Fronczek		Society for Children & Youth BC	P	Vancouver	CD
Ali	Grant		BC Coalition for Safer Communities	P	Vancouver	CD
Jennifer	Harrison		Save the Children	P	Vancouver	CD
Lois	Hollstedt	Executive Director	YWCA	P	Vancouver	CD
Shelley	Hourston	Program Director,	BC Coalition of People with Disabilities, Wellness and Disability Initiative	C	Vancouver	CD
Valerie	Hunter	Program Director	Vancouver Foundation	C	Vancouver	CD
Diane	Liscumb		Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre	P	Vancouver	CD
MaryLou	Matthews		BC Pediatric Society	P	Vancouver	CD
Carol	Matusicky		BC Council for Families	P	Vancouver	CD
Wilhelmina	Miles	Learner	Carnegie Learning Centre	C	Vancouver	CD
Jean	Moore		Canadian Mental health Association/ GVMHS	P	Vancouver	CD
Pat	Pitsula	Executive Director	The Law Foundation of BC	P	Vancouver	CD
Joyce	Preston		Office of the Child, Youth and Family Advocate	P	Vancouver	CD

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Pardeep	Purewal	Senior Communications Officer	BC Human Rights Commission	P	Vancouver	CD
Brenda	Rose	Fieldworker, Public Legal Education	Legal Services Society	P	Vancouver	CD
Jim	Sands	Project Coordinator	SPARC-Social Planning and Research Council	P	Vancouver	CD
Fran	Thompson		International Dyslexia Association, BC Branch	P, C	Vancouver	CD
David	Wells		BC Mental Health Association	P	Vancouver	CD
Lois	Yelland	Evergreen Community Health Center	Vancouver/Richmond Health Board	P	Vancouver	CD
Barbara	Ash	Associate Dean	Vancouver Community College	P, C	Vancouver	ED
Michael	Burris	Executive Director	BC Library Association	P	Vancouver	ED
Mary	Carlisle			C	Vancouver	ED
Dale	Dorn	Vancouver Community College	King Edward Campus	P	Vancouver	ED
Dr. Frank	Gelin	Co-Chair	BC Council on Admissions & Transfer	P	Vancouver	ED
Linda	Holmes	President	Langara College	P	Vancouver	ED
Paul	Hunt	Associate Dean, Technology Programs	Vancouver Community College	P	Vancouver	ED
Alva	Jensen	Inner City Consultant	District Learning Services	P	Vancouver	ED
Gillies	Malnarich		Centre for Curriculum Transfer & Technology	P	Vancouver	ED
Deanna	McLeod	Western Research Network on Education & Training	Faculty of Education - University of BC	P	Vancouver	ED
Gitta	Oldendorff	Director of Communications and Policy Analysis	Advanced Education Council of BC	P	Vancouver	ED
Donna	Palmer		Centre for Curriculum, Transfer & Technology	P	Vancouver	ED
Dr. Leo	Perra	President	Institute of Indigenous Government	P	Vancouver	ED
Thomas	Quigley		Vancouver Public Library	P, C	Vancouver	ED
Linda	Rider	Department Head	Vancouver Community College	C	Vancouver	ED
Maureen	Shaw	President	College Institute Educators Association	P	Vancouver	ED
Lee	Southern	Executive Director	BC School Trustees Association	P	Vancouver	ED
Sharon	Stephenson	Regional Coordinator, Coast/Metro Region	c/o Vancouver School Board Office	P	Vancouver	ED
Roxanna	Tatomir		Adult Learning Development Ass'n	C	Vancouver	ED
France	Vachon	Academic Director	Educentre	C	Vancouver	ED
Amea	Wilbur	Regional Coordinator	Frontier College - Students for Literacy	C	Vancouver	ED
James	Wright	Executive Director	Private Post Secondary Education Commission	P	Vancouver	ED
Karen	Anderson	LMDA Secretariat	HRDC Program and Policy Branch	P	Vancouver	GOV
Val	Anderson		Provincial Government of BC	P	Vancouver	GOV
Fred	Bass		City of Vancouver	P	Vancouver	GOV
Jocelyn	Bearisto	Programs Officer, Families and Justice	Ministry of Attorney General	P	Vancouver	GOV
Gordon	Campbell		Provincial Government of BC	P	Vancouver	GOV

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Linda	Charles	Director, Homelessness & Urban Partnerships	BC/Yukon Region - HRDC, Vancouver Regional Office	P	Vancouver	GOV
Jennifer	Clarke		City of Vancouver	P	Vancouver	GOV
Bill	Gardner	Regional Director	Human Resources Development Canada	P	Vancouver	GOV
Doug	Kinsey	Senior Commerce Officer	Industry Canada	P	Vancouver	GOV
Don	Lee		City of Vancouver	P	Vancouver	GOV
Tim	Louis		City of Vancouver	P	Vancouver	GOV
Joel	Macht	Research Assistant	HRDC	C	Vancouver	GOV
Shawn	Mendes		ITAC	P	Vancouver	GOV
Grete	Rasmussen	Intergovernmental & External Relations Consultant	HRDC	C	Vancouver	GOV
Louise	Riley	Programs Officer	Ministry of Attorney General	P	Vancouver	GOV
Judy	Rogers	City Manager	City of Vancouver	P	Vancouver	GOV
Irena	Skalbania	Consultant, LMDA Secretariat	HRDC	P	Vancouver	GOV
Michael	Bocking	President	Communication, Energy & Paperworkers Local 2000	P	Vancouver	LAB
David	Chudnovsky		BC Teachers Federation	P	Vancouver	LAB
Tom	Dufresne	President	Int'l Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union	P	Vancouver	LAB
David	Fairey	Director	Trade Union Research Bureau	P	Vancouver	LAB
Vas	Gunaratna	Manager	Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees	P	Vancouver	LAB
Dave	Haggard	Vice President	Industrial Wood & Allied Workers	P	Vancouver	LAB
Ralph	Hryhorczuk	Apprenticeship Coordinator	Carpenter/Interior Systems Mechanics	P	Vancouver	LAB
Stephen	Hunt	Director	United Steelworkers of America	P	Vancouver	LAB
Catherine	Jeffrey	BC Health Services Division of CUPE	Hospital Employees Union	P	Vancouver	LAB
Arne	Johansen	Apprenticeship Coordinator	Ironworkers Trade Improvement Committee	P	Vancouver	LAB
Wayne	Laxton	Apprenticeship Coordinator	Insulation Industry Apprenticeship Board	P	Vancouver	LAB
Phillip	Legg	Director of Policy Research & Legislation	BC Federation of Labour	P	Vancouver	LAB
Brenda	Makeechak		Canadian Labour Congress, Pacific Region	P	Vancouver	LAB
Fred	Muzin	President	Hospital Employees Union	P	Vancouver	LAB
Charlie	Naylor	Researcher	BC Teachers' Federation	P	Vancouver	LAB
John	Radosevic	President	Union of Fisherman & Allied Workers Union	P	Vancouver	LAB
David	Rice	Regional Director, Pacific Region	Canadian Labour Congress	P	Vancouver	LAB
Cindy	Stewart	President	Health Sciences Association	P	Vancouver	LAB
Carol	Sundin	Acting Director of Administration	BC Fed. of Labour	P2	Vancouver	LAB
Joie	Warnock	Representative	Communication, Energy & Paperworkers	P	Vancouver	LAB
Bob	Whitaker	Apprenticeship Coordinator	Carpentry Apprenticeship & Training Committee	P	Vancouver	LAB
George	Affleck		Community Newspapers Association	P	Vancouver	MEDIA

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Valerie	Casselton	Features Reporter	The Vancouver Sun	P	Vancouver	MEDIA
Russ	Froese	News Anchor	Global TV	P	Vancouver	MEDIA
Peter	Ladner	President	Business in Vancouver Media Group	P	Vancouver	MEDIA
Paul	Luke	Reporter	The Province	P	Vancouver	MEDIA
Mike	Maloney	Editor	The Vancouver Courier	P	Vancouver	MEDIA
Judi	Angel			P	Vancouver	WLP
Dr. Kathryn	Barker	President	FuturEd	P	Vancouver	WLP
Ron	Corbeil	Training Coordinator	IWA	P	Vancouver	WLP
Chris	Crapper			P	Vancouver	WLP
Tracy	Defoe	Educational Consultant		P, C	Vancouver	WLP
Ruth	Farrell	Molson's Learning Centre	Molson Canada	P	Vancouver	WLP
Julia	Harbinson			P	Vancouver	WLP
Virginia	Langdon		The Workplace Council	P	Vancouver	WLP
Gordon	MacDonald		Healthcare Labour Adjustment Agency	P	Vancouver	WLP
I.W. (Ian)	Nicol	Training Officer	BC Maritime Employers Association	P	Vancouver	WLP
Gary	Pharness		The Hastings Institute	P	Vancouver	WLP
Dave	Killam	President	United Food & Commercial Workers Canada	P	Vancouver*	LAB
Ray	Lemoigne	Regional Coordinator	Northeast Region	P	Vanderhoof	ED
Ray	Vickers		Nechako Learning Centre-SD #91 Nechako Lakes	L	Vanderhoof	ED
Renee	Lapierre	PhD	North Okanagan Employment Enhancement Society	L	Vernon	CD
Bertha	Phelan	Executive Director	First Nations Friendship Centre	P	Vernon	CD
Eva	Strom		First Nations Employment Services	L	Vernon	CD
Donna	Stewart	VALT Coordinator	Okanagan University College	L, C	Vernon	ED
Darrel	Stinson	MP	Government of Canada - House of Commons	P	Vernon	GOV
Bill	Burton	Director, Customer Service	Centra Gas British Columbia	P	Victoria	BUS
Willie	Blonde		John Howard Society of BC	P	Victoria	CD
Tim	Ewanchuk		LifeCycles	L	Victoria	CD
Don	Irvine		BC Community Networks Association	P	Victoria	CD
Loretta	John	Learner		C	Victoria	CD
Wendy	Koivisto			C	Victoria	CD
Susan	Kurushima	Executive Director	Project Literacy Victoria	C	Victoria	CD
Marlene	Paul	Aboriginal Business & Employment Coordinator	Centra Gas British Columbia	P	Victoria	CD
Christina	Peacock		Community Social Planning Council of Greater Victoria	P	Victoria	CD
Tim	Slobodian		Common Ground Community Mapping Project	L	Victoria	CD
Gary	Smith	Learner		C	Victoria	CD
Ellen	Szita		Victoria READ Society	L, C	Victoria	CD
Jim	Taylor	Executive Director	Association for Community Education	P, L	Victoria	CD
Sheila	Walker	Employment Counsellor	Spectrum Job Search Centre	L	Victoria	CD

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Irene	Corman	Regional Coordinator, Vancouver Island Region	c/o School District No. 62 (Sooke)	P	Victoria	ED
Carol	Larlee	Community Liaison	Adult Literacy Cost Shared Program	C	Victoria	ED
Donna	Miller		School District No. 62 (Sooke)	P	Victoria	ED
Bridey	Morrison Morgan	Learners Network Program Coordinator	Project Literacy Victoria	C	Victoria	ED
James	Stevenson	Instructor, Camosun College	Vancouver Island Regional Correction Centre	L, C	Victoria	ED
Deb	Ainsworth		Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security	P	Victoria	GOV
Gerry	Armstrong		Ministry of Advanced Education, Training & Technology	P	Victoria	GOV
Kim	Cholette	A/Manager - Communities and Workforce	Forest Renewal BC	L	Victoria	GOV
Mike	Corbeil		Ministry for Social Development & Economic Security	P	Victoria	GOV
Heather	Dixon		Ministry of Social Development & Economic Security	P	Victoria	GOV
Laurel	Gorden	Service Delivery Manager	Saanich Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Victoria	GOV
Al	Gorley	Chief Operating Officer	Forest Renewal BC	P	Victoria	GOV
Andrew	Lane	Director	Victoria Human Resources Centre Canada	P	Victoria	GOV
Sharon	Manson-Singer		Ministry of Children and Families	P	Victoria	GOV
Dawn	McKay	Director, University Colleges — Program Planning Branch	Ministry of Advanced Education, Training & Technology	P	Victoria	GOV
Dawn	Minty	Manager, Field Services Branch	Ministry of Education	L	Victoria	GOV
Doug	Moss	Field Liaise	Ministry of Education	L	Victoria	GOV
Brian	Robertson	Area Manager	ITAC	L	Victoria	GOV
Philip	Steenkamp	Deputy Minister	Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs	P	Victoria	GOV
Audrey	Thomas	Education Officer, Developmental Programs, College and Program Planning Branch MAETT		P, C	Victoria	GOV
Charles	Underfelder		Ministry of Education	P	Victoria	GOV
Dan	Wood	Executive Director	Contract Training and Marketing Society	L	Victoria	GOV
Trevor	Oram	President	BC Ferry & Marine Workers' Union	P	Victoria	LAB
Catherine	Reynolds		Heiltsuk College	L, C	Waglisla	ED
Delbert	Swanson	Learner		C	Wasa	CD
Lennard	Supernault	Learner		C	Westbank	CD
Janet	Mantyka	Regional Coordinator/ Literacy Instructor	Okanagan Regional College	L, C	Westbank	ED
Charmaine	Tennor	Learning Coach	CP Hotels & Resorts/Chateau Whistler	P2	Whistler	BUS
Lynda	Turner			C	White Rock	CD
Basha	Rahn	Coordinator	Social Planning Advisory Committee- Williams Lake	P	Williams Lake	CD
Laurie	Walters	Marketing Coordinator	Cariboo-Chilcotin Partners for Literacy	C	Williams Lake	CD
J.R. (Rob)	Anderson	Acting Dean	The University College of the Cariboo	L	Williams Lake	ED
Debbie	Demare	Vice Chair of CCPL - Cariboo Chilcotin Partners for Literacy	Continuing Education	L	Williams Lake	ED
Mary	Madden	Instructor	College of New Caledonia	L	Williams Lake	ED
Mary	Owens	Operations Manager	Cariboo Chilcotin Community Skills Centre	L	Williams Lake	ED
Nicky	Dunlop	Employment Consultant	BC Works!	L	Williams Lake	GOV

First Name	Last Name	Job Title	Company	Consultation Method	City	Category
Lars	Carlson	Staff Rep.	BCGEU	P2	Williams Lake	LAB
Wade	Fisher	President	IWA-Canada Local 1-425	L	Williams Lake	LAB
Terry	Tate	Financial Secretary	IWA - Canada Local 1 - 425	L	Williams Lake	LAB
Grace	Devaux	Instructor	Selkirk College	C	Winlaw	ED

Survey Instruments and Consultation Interview Framework

Leaders in BC Telephone Survey

Supplementary Business and Labour Telephone Survey

Workforce Literacy Practitioners' Telephone Survey

Consultation Interview Framework

Leaders in BC Telephone Survey

(Respondent Label)

Hello, my name is (whoever) and I'm calling to follow up on a letter you should have received recently from Literacy BC. We really appreciate your participation in this important survey. Do you have ten minutes or so now to answer a few questions – or shall we schedule another time that is more convenient?

1. First of all, if someone were to ask you what “literacy” is, what would you tell them?

___ ability to read/write
___ other:

2. Has your view of literacy changed in any way over the last three years? How – and why?

3. Have you heard anything about the International Adult Literacy Survey?

___Y ___N ___Possibly (go to IF NO below)

IF YES: Well, as you may know, the survey was conducted by Statistics Canada with several international partners and measured the “level” of literacy among adults from 22 countries. Basically, there were 5 levels with the lowest 2 considered insufficient to function effectively in today’s society. What was the percentage of Canadians found to be at these lowest two levels – do you remember?

Remember: ___ OR... What would you guess the percentage to be? ___

IF NO: Well, the survey was conducted by Statistics Canada with several international partners and measured the “level” of literacy among adults from 22 countries. Basically, there were 5 levels with the lowest 2 considered insufficient to function effectively in today’s society. What would you guess is the percentage of Canadians found to be at these lowest two levels?

4. Relative to other social issues how would you rate the seriousness of the literacy challenge? On a scale of 1 to 5 — with 1 being the least serious and 5 the most serious – where would you put it?

1 2 3 4 5

Why do you feel this way?

5. Is the issue of literacy relevant to your organization – and, if so, in what way?

___ YES:

___ NOT REALLY:

___ NO:

6. If we as a society had unlimited dollars to spend, how do you think we could best increase the literacy of Canadians? That is, what do you think the most effective strategy or strategies would be?

7. Whose responsibility is it, ultimately, to increase the literacy of Canadians? *(Check all that are mentioned, without prompting if possible.)*

___ government	___ employers
___ educators	___ unions
___ parents	___ society overall
___ individuals	___ other:

Why do you feel this way?

8. Who should fund literacy strategies and programs? *(Check all that are mentioned, without prompting if possible.)*

___ government/taxes	___ unions
___ education system	___ private donations/charity
___ program users	___ community agencies
___ employers	___ other:

Why do you feel this way?

9. If someone were to ask you what the phrase “lifelong learning” meant, what would you tell them?

10. There are a number of organizations or initiatives in BC who are involved in lifelong learning and skills development among adults. We’re going to ask you about three of them.

First of all, are you familiar with the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission – or ITAC?

Y N

IF YES: And, to your knowledge, what does it do?

How about the BC Business Employability Skills Board?

Y N

IF YES: And, to your knowledge, what does it do?

And have you ever heard of the BC Workforce Literacy Initiative?

Y N

IF YES: And, to your knowledge, what does it do?

Those are all the questions we have. If YOU have any questions about our survey or would like more information about literacy, you can call Literacy BC. Would you like their number? (684-0624 or 1-800-663-1293 outside lower mainland.) In any event, thank you so much for helping us out with this survey. Your views are important – and we do appreciate your time.

Supplementary Business and Labour Telephone Survey

(Respondent Label)

BUSINESS or LABOUR

Hello, my name is ** and I am conducting a survey on issues relating to a skilled workforce in BC. I would like to ask you 7 brief questions regarding workforce education and basic skills upgrading. *If they ask, say it is for Literacy BC (see www.nald.ca/lbc.htm or contact 604-642-4228)*

1. First of all, if someone were to ask you what do “basic skills” mean, what would you tell them?

2. How do they relate to workforce education? Explain please.

___ starting point

___ supplementary

___ other

3. Is the issue of basic skills and workforce education relevant to your organization – and, if so, in what way?

___ YES:

___ NOT REALLY:

___ NO:

Could you rate it in terms of importance, on a scale of 1 to 5, with regard to other issues you face in your organization.

1 2 3 4 5

Why?

4. What do you feel are the challenges around ensuring that the workforce has basic skills to be able to engage in workforce training, to be employable, to be transferable etc.

5. What do you think the most effective solutions to deal with these challenges might be?

6. Whose responsibility is it, ultimately, to provide basic skills upgrading and workforce education? *(Check all that are mentioned, without prompting if possible.)*

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> government | <input type="checkbox"/> employers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> educators | <input type="checkbox"/> unions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> parents | <input type="checkbox"/> society overall |
| <input type="checkbox"/> individuals | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

Why do you feel this way?

7. How should basic skills and workforce education be funded? *(Check all that are mentioned, without prompting if possible.)*

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> government/taxes | <input type="checkbox"/> unions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> education system | <input type="checkbox"/> private donations/charity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> program users | <input type="checkbox"/> community agencies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> employers | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

Why do you feel this way?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

Workforce Literacy Practitioners' Telephone Survey

1. How would you define “the literacy field”? Who all and what all does it encompass?
2. Who should be delivering literacy programming?
3. What would you describe as the most important “best practices” around literacy programming?
4. What professional development opportunities exist for the field? What opportunities would you like there to be – in general and for you, personally?
5. Do you believe “the field of literacy” should involve some standardized training and/or form of credential? What, for whom, and by whom – specifically

Consultation Interview Framework

All Stakeholders:

Benchmarks Around Awareness/Perceptions

1. How would you define the phrase “literacy and lifelong learning”?
2. Relative to other issues affecting society (such as healthcare, economic security, poverty) how would you rate the seriousness of the literacy challenge – on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the most serious and 5 the least?

3. Are you aware of the International Adult Literacy Survey?

4. Has your view of literacy changed in any way over the last three years? How – and why?

5. To your knowledge, what has been or is being done to address the literacy challenge in BC – by whom, and how effectively?

6. What *needs* to be done differently in the future?

7. What should our measures of success be – for an individual, for a program, for society?

8. How should literacy strategies and programs be funded? Why?

9. Where does literacy fit in terms of your own organization's priorities – and why?

10. What, if anything, is your organization doing to address this issue?

11. What would it take for your organization to “own” this issue to a greater extent?

Educators/Providers:

Furthering the Field

12. How would you define “the literacy field”? Who all and what all does it encompass?

13. Who should be delivering literacy programming?

14. What are some of the most effective delivery models for literacy programming – in your view or experience?

15. What would you describe as the most important “best practices” around literacy programming?

16. What professional development opportunities exist for the field? What opportunities would you like there to be – in general and for you, personally?

17. Do you believe “the field of literacy” should involve some standardized training and/or form of credential? What, for whom, and by whom – specifically?



#601 - 510 West Hastings Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 1L8
Telephone: **(604) 684-0624**
Facsimile: **(604) 684-8520**
Toll-free in B.C.: **1-800-663-1293**
E-mail: **info@literacy.bc.ca**
Website: **www.literacy.bc.ca**