

# **Working Together for Adult Literacy: An Adult Literacy Strategy for New Brunswick**

*Action Plan*

*Progress to Date 2010-2013*

## Introduction

---

In December 2009, the Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL) published *Working Together for Adult Literacy: An Adult Literacy Strategy for New Brunswick*. Subsequent to the release of the strategy, an action plan (April 2010-March 2013) was developed. The execution of the 3-year action plan will take place within two 18-month phases (April 2010-September 2011 and October 2011-March 2013).

This document reports on the achievements, progress and challenges experienced within each of the strategic priorities during the first phase of the action plan.

### PRIORITY 1 - REDUCE BARRIERS AND INCREASE PARTICIPATION

---

As an initial step towards a better understanding why we are not reaching the vast majority of the target group (low skilled adults), work has been focused on research, promoting benefits, and enhancing access to quality information on opportunities. Actions that were taken include:

- ✓ Completed research on barriers to participation.
- ✓ Established a Marketing & Promotions Committee which includes representatives from: National Adult Learning Database (NALD), Literacy Coalition of NB (LCNB), La Fédération d'alphabétisation du Nouveau-Brunswick (FANB), Laubach Literacy NB (LLNB), Community Adult Learning Network (CALNet) and Community Adult Learning Services (CALs).
- ✓ Partnered with other Atlantic provinces, through CAMET, to launch two series of television ads (*Literacy. It's More Than You Think.* campaign) in both official languages. The first series of ads aired in the fall 2010 and the second aired in the fall 2011.
- ✓ Participated in the NB Literacy & Essential Skills Partnership provincial tour with NALD, LLNB, LCNB and FANB. The goal of the provincial tour was to enhance communication and information sharing with referring government departments and community stakeholders.
- ✎ While progress has been made to increase awareness and thereby increase the number of referrals, additional work is needed to review internal processes and continue communication with key partners.

Phase 2 will focus on the following actions:

- ✓ Finalization of Phase 2 of the CAMET awareness campaign. The second phase will focus on the distribution of employer and learner champion posters (specific to each province) during International Adult Learner Week (September 2012) and a media blitz campaign (news segments and a newspaper ad).
- ✓ Presentations to raise awareness of the benefits of adult literacy skills to referral agents, potential provincial partners and employers.

### PRIORITY 2 - INCREASE NUMBER AND RANGE OF ADULT LITERACY OPPORTUNITIES

---

In order to encourage adults to engage in opportunities to develop their skills, actions have been taken to support existing service growth, to explore opportunities to embed training and to encourage innovation. Actions that were taken include:

- ✓ Continued implementation and expansion of the WES program.
- ✓ Developed the mobile Digital Literacy model and piloted the program in three regions.

- ✓ Continued and expanded support of services offered through CALNet and LLNB.
- ✓ Supported the pilot of 1:1 tutoring for francophone adult learners through FANB.
- ✓ Supported a pilot project for family literacy through FANB, which targeted the literacy and essential skills of francophone parents. Training supported skills that parents would use with their children, their family and in their community.
- ✎ Apprenticeship & Occupational Certification is a key partner in embedding literacy training with other learning opportunities. The WES program has implemented several initiatives throughout the province with apprentices needing to attain certification or pass a trade related exam. A review of the service delivery model is needed to evaluate their efficiency and effectiveness at achieving the desired outcomes.
- ✎ The development of strategies to address barriers to participation was not addressed in the first 18 months of the action plan. This deliverable was moved to the latter part of the strategy time frame.

Phase 2 will focus on the following actions:

- ✓ Continued roll out and evaluation of the new Digital Literacy model.
- ✓ Development and establishment of WES provincial partnerships which support increasing the number and range of available adult learning opportunities.
- ✓ Expansion of 1:1 tutoring services for Level 1, francophone learners.
- ✓ Review and identification of next steps related to opportunities for family literacy.
- ✓ Development of an incubation model for shared ownership of WES.
- ✓ Development of a recognition and certification plan for WES.
- ✓ Creation of strategies to address barriers to participation.
- ✓ Implementation of a hub pilot concept.

### **PRIORITY 3 - ENSURE QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS.**

---

Focused attention has been paid to enhancing the quality of programs through implementing the Quality Framework and reviewing practitioner qualifications and professional development. Actions that were taken include:

- ✓ Completed provincial consultations and developed the *Quality Framework for Adult Literacy and Essential Skills Service Delivery*.
- ✓ Delivered a series of presentations to service delivery partners of the *Quality Framework for Adult Literacy and Essential Skills Service Delivery*.
- ✓ Initiated the development of key performance indicators and measures. Identified a process for reviewing processes for monitoring learner progress.
- ✓ Provided training for key groups who would be responsible, in the pilot sites, for the coordination, consultation, internal assessment and/or evaluation related to the framework.
- ✓ Conducted a review of hiring practices and requirements of literacy personnel involved in services delivery. Finalized a policy, *Standardized Professional Development Policy* and the *Standardized Professional Development Procedure*, related to the best practices identified from the review.
- ✎ The next step in reviewing the standards of process and success of programs is to break

down the key performance indicators and measures at the regional level and then to develop a program(s) evaluation framework for CALS. This work is also schedule for the latter part of the strategy in order to provide time for partners and staff to integrate all of the changes from the initial implementation of the strategy.

Phase 2 will focus on the following actions:

- ✓ Completion of internal assessments for the Quality Standards framework.
- ✓ Review and refinement of a professional development framework for literacy personnel.
- ✓ Participate in CAMET activities related to increasing standards, knowledge and skills for adult literacy and essential skills practitioners.
- ✓ Development of a program evaluation framework.
- ✓ Review of data collection, analysis and reporting (second phase of implementing key performance indicators and measures).
- ✓ Define and document current and planned learner pathways. This documentation will be made available on the GNB website.

#### **PRIORITY 4 - STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS TO DEVELOP ROBUST AND EFFECTIVE ADULT LITERACY SYSTEM.**

---

Progress towards achieving the objectives of the strategy has been furthered by the valued commitment of partners to enhance services and working relationships through interdepartmental collaboration and strategic development. Actions that were taken include:

- ✓ Conducted provincial consultation and initiated the development of the *Workplace Essential Skills (WES) Strategic Plan*.
- ✓ Participated in the New Brunswick Adult Literacy Coordinating Committee.
- ✓ Continued to work with the CALNet Provincial Advisory Committee to support community based service delivery.
- ✓ Participated in the *New Brunswick Literacy and Essential Skills Partners* provincial tour and roundtable.
- ✓ Initiated the development of a framework for provincial partnerships.
- ✓ Established one provincial partnership with the Association for Early Childhood Care Educators of New Brunswick (ECCENB) and initiated exploratory discussions with several other potential partners.
- ✎ Work towards supporting the Family Literacy Strategy was not achieved during the initial 18 months of the program. Due to the extent of the work needed to achieve other objectives within the strategy, this has been postponed to the second phase of the strategy.

Phase 2 will focus on the following actions:

- ✓ Continued participation in the following:
  - NB Literacy Coordinating Committee
  - NB Literacy and Essential Skills Partnership group
  - CALNet Provincial Advisory Committee
- ✓ Ongoing review of service delivery funding.
- ✓ Further strengthen inter-departmental and stakeholder collaboration, review stakeholder

roles and responsibilities.

## Key Outcomes

---

- ✓ In 2011-12, more than 3,200 adults received training from one of the 168 adult literacy classes throughout the province.
- ✓ 66% of exits from CALCs were for successful reasons such as: curriculum complete, attained employment, attained their GED, transferred to another CALC or the CALC session ended.
- ✓ The number of GED or Adult High School Diplomas handed out increased by 40% in 2009-10 has been maintained in 2010-11 and 2011-12. More than 1,200 GED or Adult High School Diplomas were handed out each year.
- ✓ A shift from E-Learning Centres to a mobile provision of basic computer skills training is taking place and is showing positive outcomes to date. Within the first months (Mid-October 2011 to March 2012), 990 individuals received basic digital literacy training.
- ✓ In 2011-12, 735 individuals both employed and unemployed were engaged in 64 WES initiatives.
- ✓ To date, over 150 employers have been engaged by the WES program.
- ✓ Employers report the impacts of WES training include: decreased staff turnover, improved morale, decreased need for supervision/worker's more autonomous, fewer safety issues and greater productivity.

## Conclusion

---

Phase 2 of the action plan provides numerous opportunities to further advance the state of literacy and essential skills in the Province. Through strategic action and continued partnerships, we move closer to the vision that all New Brunswickers have the opportunity to develop the literacy skills they need to participate fully at home, at work and in their communities.