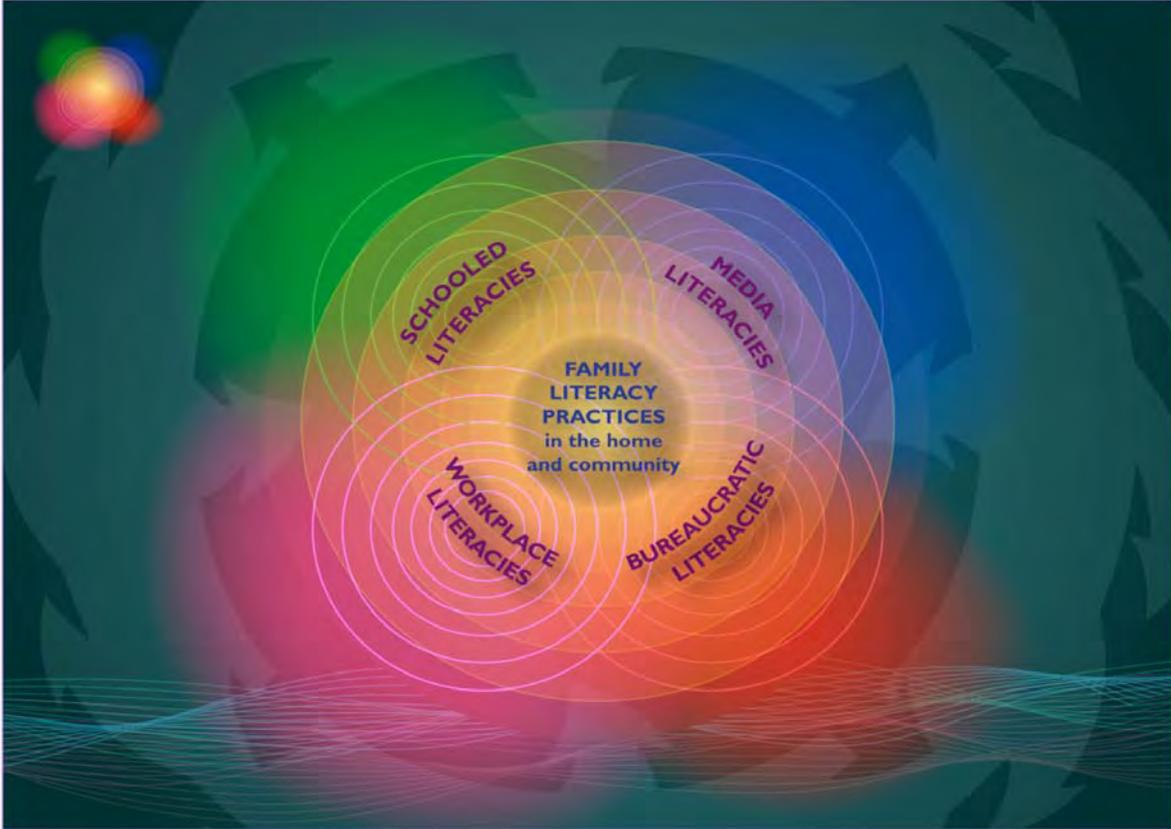


*From Vision to Action: Today and Beyond*



## **Strategic Framework for Family Literacy in New Brunswick**

Prepared by  
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(Information collated by Nancy McKay, Management Dimensions Inc.)

For the  
Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick

**January 2009**

**STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY LITERACY  
IN NEW BRUNSWICK (2008–2013)**

*From Vision to Action: Today and Beyond*

Presented by the Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick (LCNB)  
January, 2009

## STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY LITERACY IN NEW BRUNSWICK (2008–2013)

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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A particular thank you to the members of the Advisory Committee for giving so generously and enthusiastically of their time and expertise to plan the Forum and help move family literacy forward in New Brunswick.

### **The Family Literacy Project Advisory Committee:**

Kim Bauer, *Department of Education*

Annie Bélanger, *New Brunswick Public Library Services*

Cheryl Brown, *Quality Learning Saint John*

Shirley Downey, *Born to Read*

Lori Leach, *Department of Post Secondary Education, Training and Labour*

Barbara Lemieux, *Department of Social Development*

Pamela Nason, *UNB Centre for Research and Development in Early Childhood*

Jean Robinson, *Early Childhood Care and Education New Brunswick*

Anne Leslie, *Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick*

Lynda Homer, *Family Literacy Project Coordinator for the Literacy Coalition*

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Forum Participants (Annex 1)

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **The Need for a Collaborative Approach**

There is increasing awareness of the family as an important first site for literacy learning. All families in literate societies use literacy in a variety of ways at home and in their communities as part of their everyday lives. We know that families have a profound and lasting influence on how children participate in literate communities and become literate.

It follows that family literacy programs have enormous potential to maximize early literacy learning by building upon families' strengths and diverse literacy practices. However, a research report released by the Literacy Coalition in 2006, revealed that in comparison to most other provinces the family literacy field in New Brunswick is disconnected and patchy. While a number of different groups or agencies offer a range of activities and programs for family literacy learning, they are generally operating with inadequate resources and unstable funding. There are very few stand-alone family literacy programs in New Brunswick. Most family literacy support is embedded in programs with broader mandates.

Clearly, a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to family literacy programming is needed in New Brunswick - one that reflects current research findings, crosses traditional sectoral boundaries and maximizes resources.

## **New Brunswick Forum on Family Literacy Project**

The Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick (LCNB) was established in 1988 as a not-for-profit umbrella organization and serves as a provincial hub for literacy awareness, information, research, coordination and training. LCNB's overall aim is to increase literacy in partnership with others, and its work often connects the field, government, volunteer, and the wider literacy community.

In 2007, the LCNB held an initial forum bringing a group of literacy stakeholders together to talk about advancing family literacy in New Brunswick. At that Forum we quickly realized that more stakeholders were needed to sit around the table. We also recognized that a barrier to developing a cohesive strategy for family literacy was the lack of a shared definition of what we mean by family literacy.

Consequently, in 2008, LCNB launched the New Brunswick Forum on Family Literacy Project funded through the Knowledge Exchange Program of the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) with additional financial support from the New Brunswick Departments of Social Development, Education and Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour. This project resulted in:

- The preparation of a literature review and key issues document on Family Literacy for a multi-sector audience;
- The development of a working definition of family literacy;
- A two-day knowledge sharing Forum including workshop sessions; and
- The collaborative development of a Strategic Framework for Family Literacy in New Brunswick that includes:
  - Highlights of the literature review, definition of terms and key issues,
  - A conceptual model and definition for family literacy,
  - Guiding principles underlying the strategic plan,
  - Key priority areas,
  - Strategies and goals to implement the plan.

# LITERATURE REVIEW AND KEY ISSUES

## Definition of Terms

The literature review on Family Literacy (Homer, 2008) defines common terms associated with family literacy that are relevant to this Strategic Framework:

### *Diverse*

Family literacy practices are many and varied. They are dynamic and remain fluid to fit ever changing circumstances.

### *Socially embedded*

According to Wikipedia, “social” is defined as “self in relationship to others”. Social embeddedness is about the idea that family literacy practices are carried out within the social context of the family in the home or broader community.

### *Culture*

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) described culture as follows: “...culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.”<sup>1</sup> Research reveals the occurrence of a “wide range of culturally specific literacy practices among different communities” (Casper, 2003).

### *Negotiate*

To “deal with” or “manoeuvre”; to build, maintain and handle relationships.

### *Literacy*

Today, literacy is defined broadly as a set of social and cultural practices not simply a skill learned through formal schooling.

### *Literacies*

The term “literacy” in the singular is being replaced by the term “literacies” to capture its plurality. We see references to multiple and multimodal literacies and discussion of “schooling literacies”, “media literacies”, “bureaucratic literacies” and “computer literacies”, to name a few.

## Highlights from the Literature Review

### Considerations for Family Literacy Development in New Brunswick

In June 2008, the project released a Review of the Literature on Family Literacy (Homer, 2008). Several key considerations for family literacy development in New Brunswick were highlighted for the forum participants.

1. Intensive programs involving both children and parents over a period of time produce the most measurable positive outcomes.<sup>2</sup> The research also indicates that few such programs are available to families in New Brunswick. A study on family literacy released by the Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick, reported that only four intensive and comprehensive parent and child programs existed in the province, and even these are currently threatened by funding instability.<sup>3</sup>
2. Although it is commonly agreed that family literacy programs should be empowering and strengths-based, disempowering, deficit-based programs and practices continue to pervade the field.<sup>4</sup> Deficit discourse in public institutions and the media often portrays non-mainstream families as illiterate and lacking in literate culture and parenting skills. This view of families is not supported by current research. A large and growing body of research identifies the homes of economically disadvantaged, undereducated and non-mainstream families as having many literacy practices and supportive family values. However, these often go unrecognised in a deficit discourse that strives to fill a perceived void rather than build on families' strengths.<sup>5</sup>
3. Studies of literacy usage in real situations have resulted in literacies being understood as embedded social practices, not simply sets of skills that can be transported from one situation to another. This redefinition of literacy as social practice has led to a new understanding of how family literacy education might be most effective. Current research demonstrates that building on families' authentic literacy practices can be used to strengthen both their literacy knowledge and their ability to negotiate and influence social circumstances.<sup>6</sup>
4. Despite these findings, many programs continue to base their program on outdated notions of families and of literacy. A growing body of research suggests that despite their good intentions, programs may inadvertently undermine the very families they attempt to help.<sup>7</sup>
5. There are many possible explanations for the gap between research and practice in family literacy, including personal/professional, institutional and systemic. If this gap is to be addressed, current research must be effectively disseminated and broadly understood. Educators, administrators, policy makers and funders need opportunities to engage in dialogue and reflection about contemporary research, bringing their own experience and knowledge to the discussion.<sup>8</sup>

6. Although guiding principles for programs have been articulated, putting principles into practice is more complicated and takes significant effort and insight. Practitioners require high quality on-going professional development and training opportunities to support their practice. In addition, more practitioners need opportunities to participate in research in practice. This will help to close the gap between research and practice and contribute to the growing body of knowledge on family literacy education that is grounded in authentic experience.<sup>9</sup>

7. The role of government is to articulate the broad based goals and ambitions of literacy policies, insuring that they reflect economic and social considerations, and that they are adequately funded to achieve the desired outcomes.<sup>10</sup>

8. Program practice and curriculum ought to be based on sound principles and pedagogy informed by current research and developed in discussion with those involved in program delivery at all levels of the system.<sup>11</sup>

9. Collaborative relationships and connections between various social institutions and systems are necessary to ensure continuity of learning experiences for children. The challenge is to create connections that are truly collaborative and equitable.<sup>12</sup>

10. The degree of match between home and school contexts is a contributing factor in children's success at school. The mismatch or lack of integration between school and home literacies, combined with the dominance of school literacies is a major concern in family literacy research. It raises issues of social justice and begs the question as to "whose literacy counts?" There is a need to create more equitable relationships between families, schools and other institutions.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UNESCO. 2002. *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*.

<sup>2</sup> Brooks, G., Gorman, T., Harmen, J., Hutchinson, D., & Wilkin, A. (1996). *Family Literacy Work: the NFER Evaluation of the basic Skills Agency's Demonstration programmes*. London: Basic Skills Agency.

<sup>3</sup> Perry, J. (2006). *Live Horse 'Till the Grass Grows: A Study of Family Literacy in New Brunswick: Work, Outcomes, and Best Practices*, Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick pp. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Taylor D., (1997) *Many Families, many literacies: An international declaration of principles*. Portsmouth, N.H. Heinemann.); Auerbach, E, (1995) Which way for family literacy: intention or empowerment? In L. Mandell Morrow (Ed), *Family Literacy Connections in schools and Communities*. Newark, DE: International Reading Assoc. Pp11-27.;

<sup>5</sup> Tett, L, (2000). Family literacy in educational market place: A culture perspective. *International journal of life-long Education*, Vol. 16(2).; Handel, R.D. (1999). *Building family literacy in an urban community*. New York: Teachers College Press; Whitehouse,, M. & Colvin, C. (2001). "Reading" families: Deficit discourse and family literacy. *Theory into Practice*, 40, 212-219.

<sup>6</sup> Purcell-Gates, V., (2006) What does culture have to do with it? In B. Maloch et al., (Eds). *55<sup>th</sup> Yearbook of the National Reading Conference*. Oak Creek, W.I. National Reading Conference. Street, B., (1997). *The implications of the new literacy studies, for literacy education*. *English in Education*, Vol. 31 (3)pp 45-59.

<sup>7</sup> Caspe, Margaret (2003). Family Literacy: A Review of Programs and critical perspectives, *Harvard family Research Project*. <http://www.hfrp.org/publications-resources>.

<sup>8</sup> Nason, P. (2002) *Foundational Training in Family Literacy: Practitioner's Resource*, Centre for Family Literacy , Edmonton, chp. 4 pp 4-5

<sup>9</sup> Cairney, T. (2000) The Construction of Literacy and Literacy Learners. *Language Arts*, 77(6) pp 496-504.

<sup>10</sup> Hynds, J. (2007). Putting a spin on reading: the language of the Rose Review, *Journal of Early Literacies*, Vol.7(3).

<sup>11</sup> Soler, J. Openshaw, R. (2007) To be or not to be?: The politics of teaching phonics in England and New Zealand. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacies*. Vol. 7(3) pp 333-352.

<sup>12</sup> Tett, L. (2000). Family literacy in educational market place: A culture perspective. *International journal of life-long Education*, Vol. 16(92).;

<sup>13</sup> Nason, P. (2003). *Working Paper for the Health Canada FLIP Advisory Committee*, University of New Brunswick.

## Working Definition of FAMILY LITERACY

One of the first tasks of the steering committee was to agree upon a working definition and conceptual model for 'family literacy'. Defining "family literacy" is, and should be, ongoing. A definition carries with it underlying principles and beliefs that profoundly influence how we shape our family literacy programs. It also has significant implications for program practice, policy and funding. The conceptual models that follow were created by Lynda Homer and Pam Nason in conjunction with the Family Literacy Forum Steering Committee.

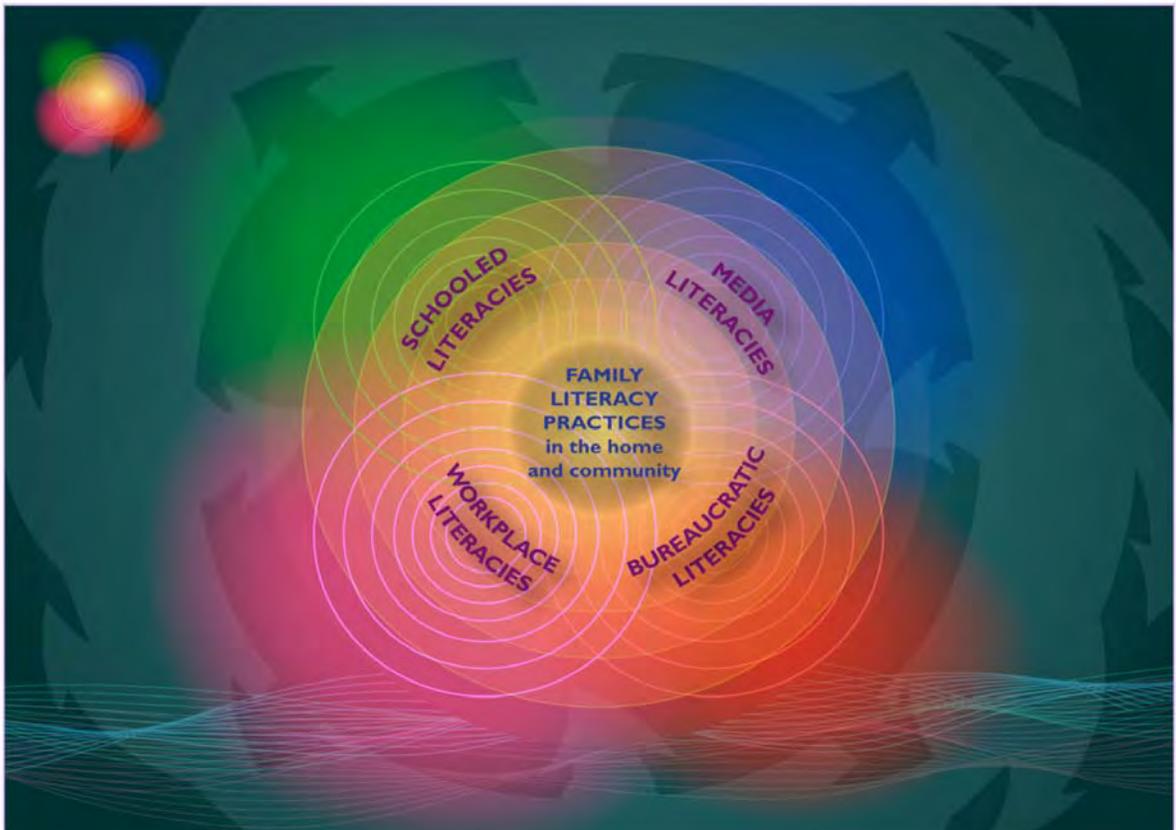
### Defining Family Literacy

For the purposes of the New Brunswick Forum on Family Literacy and this Strategic Framework :

*Family literacy refers to the literacy practices of parents, children and family members as they go about their daily lives and negotiate relationships both within the family and between family and broader community.*

- *The literacy practices of the broader community influence, and are influenced by the literacy practices of families.*
- *Family Literacies are diverse, socially embedded and culture specific.*

Diagram 1

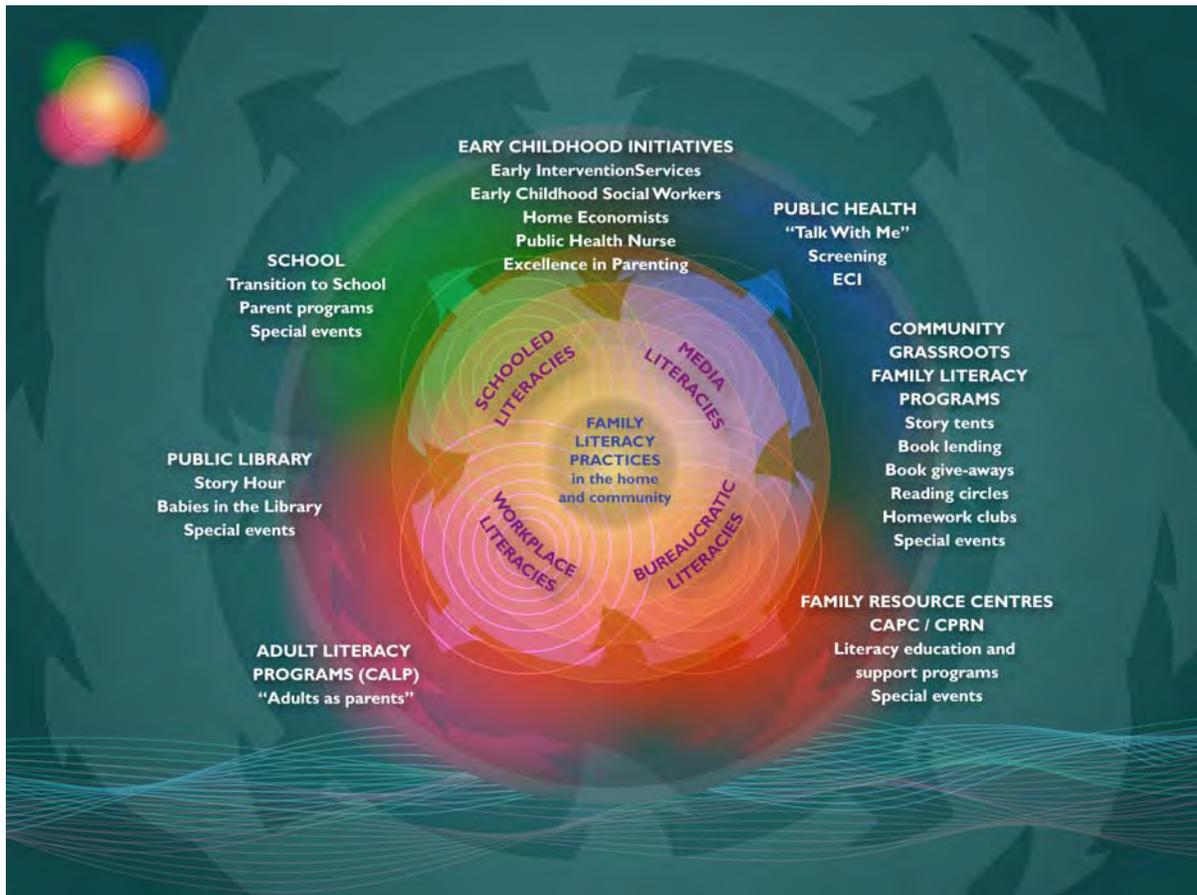


## Providing Family Literacy Learning and Support Programs

New Brunswick is challenged to:

- develop programs that recognize family literacies as a social and cultural practices
- adopt a more collaborative approach to family literacy programming.

Diagram 2



## Two-Day Knowledge Sharing Forum

The Family Literacy Forum held on June 24-25, 2008 brought together a wide variety of family literacy stakeholders: government representatives, researchers, front-line literacy educators, program providers, and parents to dialogue and contribute to the development of a collaborative strategic framework that could move literacy forward in New Brunswick. Fifty-one participants representing a wide range of agencies took part (*See Annex A for the List of Participants*).

The specific objectives of the Family Literacy Forum 2008 were to:

- Share knowledge: build consensus, capacity, commitment and cooperation among family literacy stakeholders;
- Support the development of a strong movement of people and programs;
- Inform stakeholders about key issues related to family literacy, and
- Contribute to the development of a provincial strategic framework for family literacy in New Brunswick.

To set the stage for the planning process, Forum participants heard a presentation by Keynote speaker, Dr. Purcell Gates, renowned literacy expert and Canada Research Chair with the University of British Columbia, Faculty of Education. Dr Purcell Gates has conducted research and published extensively in the field of family literacy. Her presentation was entitled Family Literacy as Social and Cultural Practice. In addition, Lynda Homer, Forum Coordinator, presented highlights from the research review on Family Literacy and Kiosk sessions showcased local family literacy programs and services. In response to each of these sessions, participants engaged in collaborative reflection and dialogue that generated the guiding principles and beliefs that underlie the strategic plan. On the second day of the forum, bilingual<sup>1</sup> facilitator, Nancy McKay led the strategic planning process. The notes from this process form the basis of the strategic plan that follows.

<sup>1</sup> Although there is a parallel Francophone Provincial literacy organization, we invited representation from the Francophone Family Literacy community, and some of our member organizations are bilingual. Our intention was to bridge the linguistic communities and share our thinking.

# STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY LITERACY IN NEW BRUNSWICK

## Guiding Principles and Beliefs

The following principles and belief statements provide a foundation and have informed the development of this strategic plan.

### **Principle 1**

Family literacies are diverse, socially-embedded and culture-specific practices.

### **Principle 2**

Literacies are social and cultural practices not simply skills learned through formal schooling.

### **Principle 3**

Access to family literacy support is a right for all children and families in New Brunswick.

### **Principle 4**

All families have literacy practices and family values; therefore programs should adopt a strength-based approach to literacy learning.

### **Principle 5**

Continuity is important across all sites of family literacy learning. Children's literacy learning is impacted by the degree of match or congruity that exists among home, school and community literacies.

### **Principle 6**

Adequate resources and stable funding are a critical factor in program quality.

### **Principle 7**

Program quality is dependent on the training and personal qualities of individuals involved with program delivery.

## **Key Priority Areas**

Seven key priority areas affecting family literacy programming effectiveness were identified at the forum.

### **1. Program approach and content**

### **2. Flexibility**

### **3. Universality**

### **4. Accessibility**

### **5. Staff Qualifications and Training**

### **6. Stable Funding**

### **7. Collaborative Approach**

Issues related to these key priority areas were identified by forum participants (*See Annex B*).

## **Anticipated Outcomes**

If these priority areas are effectively addressed, the impact on family literacy will be far reaching, touching program participants and their families, program providers, family literacy organizations, and communities.

The anticipated results include enhanced valuing of family literacy learning and support; funding that ensures program stability, capacity and responsiveness. This would mean increased program participation and better outcomes, including enhanced skills, opportunities and capacity of participants; and strengthened community capacity, collaboration and partnerships.

Program providers and literacy educators would benefit from improved working conditions; increased training and support and commensurate recognition of abilities and competence. In turn, this would lead to improved staff retention, more stability and enhanced program quality.

## **Mission**

To provide universally available and accessible family literacy education and support to all New Brunswick families.

## **Goals**

This Strategic Framework offers a unique opportunity to work together on common strategies for positive results. Through collaboration and partnership, strategies become more effective and will have a significant impact on family literacy in New Brunswick.

Forum participants identified the following goals and discussed strategies and key elements:

- A. Increase collaboration and alignment of efforts to advance family literacy education in New Brunswick.
- B. Develop and advance relevant, responsive and accessible community-based family literacy programs in New Brunswick.
- C. Build leadership and capacity within the family literacy community.
- D. Improve provincial legislation, policy and funding for family literacy in New Brunswick.

### **A: Increase collaboration and alignment of efforts to advance family literacy education in New Brunswick.**

#### **Objectives**

- I. Maintain and support the family literacy network.
- II. Provide on-going opportunities for dialogue, knowledge exchange and sharing of resources and expertise.
- III. Identify stakeholders and potential program partners from all sectors (i.e. community, government, private/business)

## **B: Develop and advance relevant, responsive and accessible community-based family literacy programs in New Brunswick**

### **Objectives**

- I. Promote a participatory approach to family literacy education that involves families and local communities in planning, delivery and evaluation of programs.
- II. Encourage programs to build upon local community strengths and expertise.
- III. Develop a flexible provincial framework document that will provide a supportive structure for family literacy educators as they co-construct their program content with families and their local communities.
- IV. Improve the referral process and increase networking opportunities for family literacy program participants.
- V. Decrease barriers to program participation (e.g. transportation, child care, responsive scheduling).
- VI. Increase public awareness and support for community-based family literacy education programs.

## **C: Build leadership and capacity within the family literacy community.**

### **Objectives**

- I. Endorse the Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick as the umbrella group to move Family Literacy forward in New Brunswick working in partnership with la Fédération d'alphabétisation du Nouveau-Brunswick.
- II. Establish a system of delivery for the national foundational training program, *Foundations in Family Literacy*, and for on-going professional learning for educators/facilitators.
- III. Build capacity for research in action and participatory evaluation.

## **D: Improve provincial legislation, policy and funding for family literacy in New Brunswick**

### **Objectives**

- I. Advance policy that promotes family literacy education and support as a right.
- II. Prepare literature reviews and position papers to ensure that family literacy policy is informed by current research, theory and practice in New Brunswick.
- III. Promote the establishment of a single focal point in government for family literacy (e.g. Secretary of State.)
- IV. Secure ministerial commitment and support for community-based programs for family literacy education.

- V. Secure sustainable funding for community-based programs for family literacy programs so as to ensure program stability.
- VI. Enhance working conditions and compensation so as to attract and retain high-caliber family literacy educators.

This Strategic Framework provides a systematic approach to addressing the challenges of family literacy education and support in New Brunswick. The Framework promotes a future with participatory and quality programs; a family literacy network; universal access; supportive legislation, policy and funding; effective recruitment and retention of participants and providers and leaders. Such a future would empower communities and families, thus enabling enhanced participation in the social, economic and cultural life of the Province.

## **IMPLEMENTING FOR SUCCESS**

The Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick, in partnership with others, is committed to leading the implementation of this Strategic Framework. To move from vision to action, a more detailed action plan will be developed in collaboration with the member organizations of the Family Literacy Network. This detailed action plan will identify activities, leadership, target dates and resources to achieve the goals.

To ensure accountability for family literacy in the province, the action plan will include a participatory evaluation plan that addresses both process and outcomes. Meaningful collaboration with key government and community partners and member organizations will be essential to the success of this undertaking.

The Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick will continue to provide leadership and coordination to support this collaborative family literacy movement.

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- [1] Tett, L., (2000). Family literacy in the educational market place: A culture perspective. *International Journal of Life-Long Education*, Vol. 16(92)

## **ANNEX A: Forum Participants (June 24-25, 2008)**

### **Forum audience included:**

- Professors/researchers in family literacy
- Relevant provincial government policy makers and program consultants and bureaucrats and staff who have responsibility for early childhood and family literacy (Social Development, Education, Post Secondary Education Training and Labour, Health)
- Educational Institutes and school-based personnel involved with Family Literacy
- Practitioners from community family literacy programs and organizations
- Early Childhood Initiative program staff involved in Family Literacy programming
- Early intervention workers
- Family Resource Centre staff
- ECCENB/SEPNB representatives and front line Early Childhood Educators
- Libraries
- Parents and learners involved in family literacy programs
- Born to Read Family Literacy Program Coordinator

### **Forum participants**

### **Organization/Affiliation**

1. May Lou Arseneault	New Brunswick Multi-Cultural Council
2. Kim Bauer	Department of Education
3. Karla Baxter Vincent	NBCC-Saint John
4. Robyn Baxter	Hampton Alliance for Lifelong Learning
5. Annie Bélanger	New Brunswick Public Library Service
6. Valerie Blyth	Care 'N' Share
7. Judy Boyd	New Brunswick Community College
8. Rhonda Broad	New Brunswick Department of Social Development
9. Cheryl Brown	Quality Learning New Brunswick
10. Deborah Campbell	Frontier College
11. Katherine Campbell	School District #17
12. Valerie Carmichael	School District #14
13. Patricia Harding Chase	Early Intervention
14. Victoria Cobham	New Brunswick Community College Saint John Campus
15. Angela Cook	Charlotte County Early Intervention
16. Lynn Cormier	Riverside Public Library
17. Paul-Emile Cormier	Conseil d'alphabétisation de Kent Sud
18. Sally Crawford	Frontier College
19. Jeanne d'Arc Doucet	A Family Place Inc.
20. Shirley Downey	Born To Read New Brunswick Inc

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| 21. Susan Embleton         | Family Resource Charlotte County                              |
| 22. Laura Garland          | Talk With Me – Early Language Services                        |
| 23. Victoria Purcell Gates | University of British Columbia                                |
| 24. Linda Gould            | Chatham Early Learning Centre                                 |
| 25. Kelly McLean Haley     | School District #14   |
| 26. Anna-Marie Hayes       | New Brunswick Association Family Resource                     |
| 27. Lynda Homer            | Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick                           |
| 28. Anne Hunt              | Early Childhood Centre, UNB                                   |
| 29. Lori Leach             | Department of Post Secondary Education,<br>Training, & Labour |
| 30. Anne Leslie            | Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick                           |
| 31. Barbara Lemieux        | Department of Social Development                              |
| 32. Mary Lynch             | Department of Social Development                              |
| 33. Nancy McKay            | Management Dimensions Inc.                                    |
| 34. Heather McKend         | New Brunswick Public Library Services                         |
| 35. Leslie Monaghan        | Social Development/Learning Unlimited in<br>Charlotte County  |
| 36. Sherry Harriss-Murray  | Talk With Me Early Language Services                          |
| 37. Pam Nason              | Early childhood Centre UNB                                    |
| 38. Yasmin Ojah            | YM-YWCA of Saint John   |
| 39. Penny Pacey            | Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick                           |
| 40. Marjolaine St-Pierre   | ECENB/SEPENB  |
| 41. Susan Pope             | Talk With Me Early Language Services                          |
| 42. Dr. Heather Richmond   | St. Thomas University   |
| 43. Jean Robinson          | ECCENB/SEPNB  |
| 44. Sherry Rose            | Early Childhood Centre, UNB                                   |
| 45. Tara-Lynn Scheffel     | Early childhood Centre, UNB                                   |
| 46. Julie Spence           | Chaleur Resource Centre                                       |
| 47. Kim Stewart            | Early Childhood Centre, UNB                                   |
| 48. Terry Thomas           | Woodstock Rotary Club   |
| 49. Ann Turner             | Talk With Me – Early Language Services                        |
| 50. Pam Whitty             | UNB Early Childhood Centre                                    |
| 51. Marian Zaichkowski     | Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick                           |

## **ANNEX B: Issues related to key priority areas – as identified by forum participants**

### **Priority Area 1. PROGRAM APPROACH & CONTENT**

- Lack of accessibility of family literacy support to all New Brunswick families (i.e. rural-urban challenges; lack of transportation, timing, location, waiting list, child care)
- Inadequate community support and ownership
- Need for more program planning and evaluation (adequate time, thorough, co-constructed to serve families and build upon strengths)
- Need more focus on community-based programs (flexible, relevant, practical, authentic, hands-on, culturally sensitive, inclusive, respectful, participatory, collaborative, responsive to local practices without making assumptions)
- Inadequate funding and resources (i.e. need a critical mass)
- Lack of awareness of current programs, resources and practices
- Need for provincial training and support (facilitation, needs assessment, program design, evaluation)

### **Priority Area 2: FLEXIBILITY**

- Family literacy programs should respond to community and population diversities
- More responsive programs will improved access to programs

### **Priority Area 3: UNIVERSALITY**

- Need for family literacy programs must reflect the size and scope of problem (urban/rural, bilingual programs, changing population demographics, immigration)
- Lack of literacy services and program for al, New Brunswickers
- Inadequate public funding
- Need for open-minded and welcoming environment for participants

#### **Priority Area 4: ACCESS**

- Need to legislate the right for all New Brunswickers to have access to family literacy support
- Programs require that location takes into account participant needs
- Lack of transportation acts as barrier
- Program schedule requires consideration of day of week, time of day, and frequency of sessions that meet community needs
- Expectations require clarification
- Cost often a barrier

#### **Priority Area 5: STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING**

- Insufficient recruitment of qualified people in support roles (e.g. family literacy expertise & community development is a resource; shortage of credentialed staff in rural communities)
- Need to identify core competencies and qualifications including those beyond credentials
- Insufficient support, training and recognition for program providers
- Require competitive and equitable salary and benefits (staff-based and for organization)
- Need team approach (e.g. diverse contributions, work together, relationships, community familiarity)
- Acknowledge and respect power relations between family, community & school literacy programs (e.g. equitable based forums where all have voice in decisions)

#### **Priority Area 6: STABLE FUNDING**

- Inadequate funding of organization and delivery of family literacy programs
- Lack of ability to sustain programs due to predominance of short term funding
- Need for non-profit and government funded agency focused on family literacy
- Lack of evaluation strategy

#### **Priority Area 7: COLLABORATIVE APPROACH**

- Relationships and networking (sharing best practices and experiences)
- Communication
- Requires time and support for planning and reflecting
- Need to value and provide leadership for collaboration
- Must have trust