

# Promoting Provincial Partnerships: Motivation, Process and Outcomes

Final Report  
December 2008



**College Sector Committee  
for Adult Upgrading**



*"Empowering the Spirit,  
Ensuring Survival"*  
**Ontario Native Literacy Coalition**

## **Promoting Provincial Partnerships to Promote Essential Skills: Motivation, Process and Outcomes**

### **Background**

Although literacy has a long history in Ontario, a major step forward was taken in 1986 when the provincial government formally recognized that the cultural differences of Anglophone, Francophone, Native and Deaf Ontarians needed to be recognized in the design and delivery of programming. Colleges, community-based organizations and school boards are funded to provide adult literacy programming across the province. Organizations were created to provide support to each of these “sectors”, along with the Francophone, Native and Deaf “streams” by working with their respective members to develop resources and materials, coordinate training, conduct research and assist in implementation of government initiatives. The significance of these organizations is their ability to perform these functions within the legislative, operational, governance and cultural confines of their respective memberships.

Program reform in 1998 resulted in the “Literacy and Basic Skills” (LBS) program. The new program was supported by program guidelines, an accountability framework and new reporting requirements. Support organizations were heavily relied upon by their members and government to develop approaches, materials, resources and tools to help programs successfully implement program reform. Many of these products can be found on their respective web sites, and a review of them illustrates both the similarities and differences required to support implementation within each program delivery sector.

Canada and Ontario signed a Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) in November 2005 leading to implementation beginning in January 2007. This agreement included accountability and reporting requirements as well as the integration of provincial and federal labour market development programs and services, and resulted in the creation of Employment Ontario (EO). This network of training and employment programs and services was launched in January 2007 and is scheduled to be fully implemented by July 2010. A complementary Labour Market Agreement (LMA) was signed in February 2008 with implementation of this agreement beginning in April 2008.

LBS and Academic Upgrading are foundational programs in the Employment Ontario network of programs and services. Much work has begun – and will continue – as EO moves towards full implementation. The LBS and Academic Upgrading support organizations have been providing leadership and support to EO implementation in

several areas of importance to LBS and Academic Upgrading programs. These include:

- Providing information and training in the Continuous Improvement Performance Management System
- Developing a Learner Skills Attainment Framework with an Essential Skills focus for reporting purposes
- Preparing programs for Essential Skills integration
- Creating opportunities for information sharing among various EO service providers
- Preparing and delivering projects designed to integrate literacy/Essential Skills training with life, vocational or apprenticeship preparation training
- Outreach to employer groups
- Developing online programs and practitioner training

The enormity and diversity of work to be accomplished in a relatively short period of time created the opportunity for support organizations to explore working in partnership on initiatives where similarities were greater than differences. This would be a new way for provincial organizations to approach providing services to their members.

### **Overview of the Project**

Promoting Provincial Partnerships to Promote Essential Skills (PPES) was led by the College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading (CSC) and the partners included three other provincial organizations involved in adult literacy/upgrading: Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO), Ontario Association of Continuing Education School Board Administrators (CESBA) and the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition (ONLC). This project created an opportunity to explore and document how effective partnerships between provincial organizations could be identified and developed, and outline the challenges and benefits of developing partnerships at the provincial level. The vehicle, or secondary product to exploring and documenting the partnership was Essential Skills training for partner organizations' memberships. Discussions prior to proposal submission identified this as an important focus of both federal and provincial employment and training services, and a value-added benefit to organizational members.

### **Project Objectives**

The LBS and Academic Upgrading history coupled with the Canada and Ontario LMDA provided opportunity and motive to develop and propose this project. The objectives were:

1. To develop a partnership among the College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading (CSC), Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO), Ontario Association of Continuing Education School Board Administrators (CESBA) and the Ontario Native Coalition (ONLC)
2. To document how effective partnerships across sectors are identified and developed
3. To outline the challenges and benefits of developing partnerships and common approaches at the provincial level
4. To create dialogue among four stakeholder organizations on key issues regarding implementation of Essential Skills in adult literacy and upgrading programming
5. To focus the partnership on identifying and developing the common message and content to be included in Essential Skills training for practitioners
6. To test the relevance, viability, effectiveness and usefulness of this type of approach among key provincial stakeholders with a wide range of views and operational requirements

### **Process**

Discussions between the Executive Directors of the four partner organizations had determined an interest in exploring working in partnership, introduced an overall approach and led to a proposal submission to secure resources to move forward. Confirmation of project funding was received in early summer. The Executive Directors formed the Provincial Advisory Committee and a Project Lead was contracted.

Scheduling an initial partner meeting during the summer proved difficult, and this time was used to research information on private- and public-sector partnerships. This proved useful to structuring the initial meeting, developing draft documents for discussion and modification, identifying potential benefits and challenges and ensuring partners had opportunity to shape the project.

The initial research identified both similarities and differences in partnership approaches generally, and private- and public-sector partnerships specifically. Three important features of partnerships identified through the research were identified and adopted. Documents were drafted to be discussed and completed at the initial meeting:

1. Draft Terms of Reference, Mission, Vision and Values Statement
2. Potential project challenges and benefits document

### 3. Project objectives and descriptive statements survey

Each partner organization was funded to contract an individual to carry out project work. Those individuals formed the Project Working Group. The initial meeting included 3 of the 4 partners and 2 project workers. A separate meeting was scheduled with the fourth partner and their project worker to seek input and review and complete documents.

The initial meeting included re-visiting the proposal submission and approval, and project budget information was disclosed. Information previously distributed regarding Partner Roles and Responsibilities was re-visited and modified. The group agreed that reducing the number of Advisory Committee members from 3 to 2 per organization would create more flexibility in the project budget as travel costs would be reimbursed by the project. Draft contracts were distributed and discussed to ensure that needs or concerns of partners were addressed.

Initial research provided many examples of Terms of Reference and provided valuable components and ideas for inclusion in the draft T of R for this project. A significant amount of time at the first meeting was spent reviewing and discussing this document. The “Collaborative Process for Committee and Project Work” and “Code of Conduct for the Provincial Advisory Committee” borrowed heavily from work of the Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee. The partners felt these sections of the draft T of R created a standard easily agreed to by all, and helped to alleviate any tentativeness about the partnership project. The Ontario Native Literacy Coalition provided an overview of the Aboriginal Sharing Circle practice which encompasses the Seven Grandfather Teachings. Essential elements of these teachings include Wisdom, Bravery, Honesty, Respect, Love, Truth and Humility. This was included in the code of conduct with the unanimous support of all partners. The introduction of the Seven Grandfather Teachings was an opportunity for members of the non-Aboriginal groups to begin to learn about Aboriginal culture. Content from the T of R was used in reviewing and modifying the draft Mission, Vision and Values Statements.

Any undertaking presents challenges and benefits, and the undertaking of this project was no different. Research suggested that identifying potential challenges and benefits, with opportunity to add others, at the beginning of the project created opportunity for recognition and sharing of differing viewpoints and ensures that the partnership can be structured to provide positive experiences and outcomes for all partners. A document identifying a list of potential benefits and challenges, with

opportunity for additions and comments was completed by partners. An aggregate of these documents was used for discussion. Challenges and benefits were re-visited at the end of the project to document whether potential challenges and benefits were realized, and identify whether new ones had surfaced during the project.

A base line survey identifying project objectives with descriptive statements was also completed by partners. The combined responses created a base-line to measure program outcomes, identify areas of concern or areas the partners might want to focus on, and inform the final report. This information was also re-visited at the end of the project.

A considerable amount of time in the first two meetings was spent reviewing, discussing and modifying these documents using the combined responses. End of project discussions identified that this work is critical to a partnership. This work by the Advisory Committee (as identified in end of project interviews) was viewed as:

- a very powerful approach
- confirming and solidifying a common focus and purpose across partner organizations
- strengthening commitment
- increasing understanding of the need being addressed
- helpful to discussion of shared and differing viewpoints
- setting the stage for collaboration and compromise
- important to the process of input, revision, modification and agreement
- validating the value of the partnership for all partners
- balancing roles and equity among partners
- important to building trust
- crucial to completion of final product/deliverables
- setting the bar for provincial partner relationships, collaboration and consensus
- creating a “benchmark” for future partnered endeavours
- supporting an approach that included openness and open-mindedness, a meaningful purpose, respectful relationships, tolerance for interruptions to the project and a learning experience for the Advisory Committee and Project Workers

Initially, the project training product had been conceived as a workshop to be jointly delivered in various appropriate venues such as Annual General Membership meetings or conferences. Discussion identified that focusing exclusively on Essential Skills workshops would limit the number of practitioners who would benefit. Participation in training events is affected by time, distance, professional development budgets and availability of training. An online training opportunity was under development by a partner organization and the group began to focus on the development of a workbook or manual that would serve as a basic introduction to Essential Skills and could be downloaded and printed as a reference tool. A workbook

or manual would provide an “anytime, anywhere” opportunity for introduction to Essential Skills. This change in focus from workshop to manual was seen as a compromise that allowed all four partners to leverage work underway by one of the partners. Although not anticipated, this compromise supported the spirit of collaboration and compromise described in the draft Terms of Reference (T of R) and created an excellent segue to the T of R discussions. The budget was re-configured to provide a limited amount of funding for editing and desk topping the final product.

The partners agreed the manual would meet needs of practitioners in all four constituencies seeking support in becoming familiar with ES. As a basic introduction to ES, the manual would help ensure a common baseline of knowledge across the province, and set the stage for further professional development. The Advisory Committee identified the manual should include:

- history of literacy and ES in Canada
- information about ES research
- how ES are of benefit to learners
- practitioner quotes or case studies
- tools or templates where possible
- examples of ES applications in contexts other than work

In order to ensure common ES themes and messages were incorporated in the manual, the project lead developed a self-directed refresher of ES research and HRSDC web site which was followed by a half-day session in Toronto.

Teleconferences and e-mail were the primary modes of communication following the initial start-up meetings. This proved useful to the Advisory Committee as the electronic documentation allowed for easy storage of communication for future reference, and was identified as one of the “smaller” lessons learned to carry forward to other partnerships.

The manual outline was discussed and developed by the project workers on a teleconference. Chapters were assigned to individuals based on their interest in the chapter topic.

Project workers were encouraged to showcase the project as opportunities were presented. Tools and templates were piloted in workshops previously scheduled at 20 of the 24 colleges and a presentation was delivered at the CESBA and ONLC conferences.

The Advisory Committee discussed recruiting a practitioner from one of the Aboriginal programs to provide input to the project workers. A practitioner was recruited and participated as her time permitted, providing feedback to content and approaches. One of the most difficult aspects of developing the manual was including an Aboriginal perspective and culturally-sensitive approach to ES. The non-Aboriginal partner project workers were provided a valuable introductory learning experience about Aboriginal culture and customs, but feel the end product is limited in reflecting this perspective.

Previous commitments, family and staff health issues and the requirement to respond quickly to provincial implementation initiatives caused the development stage of the manual to lose focus and momentum several times. The project working group developed a close and supportive relationship through this project, and used the strength of the relationship to re-focus. Changes to the Essential Skills web site mid-project required workbook content to be re-written to match the updates.

### **Outcomes**

See the combined partner responses, "Project Objectives, Combined Responses". (Appendix 6) Overall, project partners agree with the descriptive statements about the project objectives. There is some disagreement regarding Objective 5 which reflects the difficulty integrating approaches that are reflective of Aboriginal culture. The project objectives and resulting outcomes are presented below.

- 1. To develop a partnership among the College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading (CSC), Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO), Ontario Association of Continuing Education School Board Administrators (CESBA) and the Ontario Native Coalition (ONLC)**

Working together in partnership was a new experience for these provincial organizations. The creation, discussion and modification of the Terms of Reference, Mission, Vision and Values Statements and collection of initial information took considerable time, but partners felt this process created an excellent foundation. This time also allowed partners to get to know one another better and created shared goodwill. The approach and process is being used as a template in other partnerships.

- 2. To document how effective partnerships across sectors are identified and developed**

This report documents how the partnership developed. It describes process, documentation and data collection tools. Availability of this documentation and associated tools will simplify and expedite new partnerships, and will be modified and evolve. As an example, one partner is using the Terms of Reference with modifications in a new partnership. Identification of the partnership resulted from a shared need – supporting practitioners to embrace and integrate ES in programming. Future partnerships will be identified based on shared need as this creates the focus and commitment of partnership.

### **3. To outline the challenges and benefits of developing partnerships and common approaches at the provincial level**

Identifying potential challenges and benefits at project start up created opportunity for discussion and sharing of differing viewpoints. Discussion of potential challenges ahead of time made them more easily accepted, understood and resolved when they did arise (e.g. difficulties in scheduling face-to-face meetings, loss of momentum, difficulty integrating Aboriginal culture into the workbook). Partners also felt this helped focus the group on using the partnership to meet members' needs, ensured the partnership was win/win for all involved, and created an interesting mix of viewpoints and opinions.

The development of the manual created the largest challenge. Very little information – or tools and resources – supporting ES integration in contexts other than work is available. Many of the partners' members provide programming for learners seeking increased independence or moving to an academic environment. It was important to develop examples for these contexts to create ES buy-in of members delivering programming for these goal paths, as measurement of ES gains will be a performance indicator in Ontario adult literacy and upgrading programs. Common messaging regarding ES was an important factor in this.

This was also true for developing “culturally-sensitive” approaches to ES. Canadian workplace culture has been the basis of ES research and development. Internet research identified that there are several Aboriginal groups in British Columbia developing culturally-sensitive ES resources and programming and there may be much to learn from these groups. A benefit identified by the ONLC project worker was the other partners' openness to learning more about Aboriginal culture and the shared frustration in trying to develop approaches that honoured Aboriginal culture and integrated ES.

**4. To create dialogue among four stakeholder organizations on key issues regarding implementation of Essential Skills in adult literacy and upgrading programming**

Creating dialogue among the four stakeholder organizations has been a major benefit of this project. Prior to this project, formal communication took place on an as-needed basis. More importantly, the project has deepened relationships and opened the door to informal communication and discussion regarding operational differences, potential approaches or concerns before they become a source of conflict or difficulty while respecting the organizations' differences. This increased dialogue has also produced an atmosphere of collegiality and collaboration.

**5. To focus the partnership on identifying and developing the common message and content to be included in Essential Skills training for practitioners**

Initial work of the project workers included a self-directed exercise to become familiar with the ES web site followed by a half-day training session. This created a common understanding of ES among the group and supported e-discussions regarding non-work related applications as the manual was developed. This common messaging in the project products – and individuals knowledgeable about ES within each of the partner organizations – is a valuable on-going legacy of the project. Project products include:

- partnership document templates including Terms of Reference, Mission, Vision and Values Statement, Benefits and Challenges data collection checklist, Baseline Survey
- project overview and outcomes presentation PowerPoint
- Essential Skills Basic Introduction Manual

**6. To test the relevance, viability, effectiveness and usefulness of this type of approach among key provincial stakeholders with a wide range of views and operational requirements**

Partners interviewed at project end provided very positive feedback to the relevance, viability, effectiveness and usefulness of a partnership approach. The following quotes support this:

- project created a “benchmark” for working in partnership and consensus

- experience has introduced seeing more opportunities of partnership and the value of working in partnership – partnership is a new way of thinking
- project created understanding that organizations work with different cultures, needs and approaches, and each of these can be recognized and respected within a partnership
- continued partnership is both important and doable
- leadership role by one of the partners important
- initial work of partnership vital to success

Several potential challenges identified at project start up were identified as benefits at project end. (Appendix 4) Similarly, some benefits initially identified were seen as challenges at project end. Several respondents identified that some of the challenges will always be so, and recognition of that is the first step to resolving or working with it.

This project was viewed as a project with sub-projects within it – the overall partnership development, creation of a manual, and workshops and updates for partner groups.

### **Best Practices**

Information compiled from data collection, written communication and discussions throughout the project was gathered and categorized. Emerging themes that supported completion of project products and deliverables were captured in an overall statement and validated with project partners. The following are Best Practices identified as a result of this project. Project partners agree that incorporating these practices will support success in future partnerships.

1. The partnership addresses a need
2. Each partner is committed to the project and has a joint stake in it
3. Partners accept joint ownership of the project and a project lead is designated
4. Partners agree upon the partnership Terms of Reference, Mission, Vision and Values. Agreements are documented and shared
5. Partners analyze and discuss potential benefits and challenges of the project
6. Partners develop and agree to the roles and processes of the partnership
7. There is full disclosure of project documentation and resource information

8. Power (defined as authority, accountability, responsibility and influence) and resources are shared among partners
9. Communication is open and accessible
10. Project decision-making endeavours to build consensus within the limitations of the project resources

# Appendices

- Appendix 1      Terms of Reference
- Appendix 2      Mission, Vision and Values Statement
- Appendix 3      Challenges and Benefits Checklist
- Appendix 4      Challenges and Benefits Checklist Results
- Appendix 5      Committee Member Base Line Survey
- Appendix 6      Committee Member Base Line Survey  
Pre- and Post-Results
- Appendix 7      References

## **Provincial Partnerships to Promote Essential Skills Provincial Advisory Committee Terms of Reference**

### **Statement of Work**

The College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading is undertaking a pilot project to determine and document best practices in developing partnerships among and between education and/or training organizations for the benefit of learners and practitioners. The vehicle for partnership is the development of cross sectoral Essential Skills training for practitioners within all streams.

### **Scope**

Essential Skills are the skills people use to carry out a wide variety of everyday life and work tasks. It is imperative that adult literacy and upgrading practitioners have the knowledge and skills to support learners in their understanding and acquisition of these skills. Towards this end, the Provincial Advisory Committee will advise, guide and support the project in the creation of a common base of understanding and training.

### **Committee Objectives**

The Objectives of the project, and subsequently the Provincial Advisory Committee are:

- to create dialogue among four stakeholder organizations on key issues regarding implementation of Essential Skills in adult literacy and upgrading programming
- to document how effective partnerships across sectors are identified and developed
- to outline the challenges and benefits of developing partnerships and common approaches at the provincial level
- to develop a partnership among the College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading (CSC), Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO), Continuing Education School Board Administrators (CESBA), and the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition (ONLC)
- to focus this partnership on identifying and developing the common message and content to be included in Essential Skills training for practitioners associated with each of these organizations
- to test the relevance, viability, effectiveness and usefulness of this type of approach among key provincial stakeholders with a wide range of views and operational requirements

## **Desired Results/Outputs**

The Provincial Advisory Committee will provide guidance, advice and support to the process leading to the documentation of:

- identification and development of cross sectoral, provincial partnerships
- challenges and benefits of such partnerships
- common messaging and content for delivery of Essential Skills training to adult literacy and academic upgrading practitioners
- relevance, viability, effectiveness and usefulness of this type of approach when involving organizations with a wide range of views and operational requirements

## **Overview of Project Process**

The process will involve four stakeholder groups:

1. College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading
2. Community Literacy of Ontario
3. Ontario Continuing Education School Board Administrators
4. Ontario Native Literacy Coalition

### **1. Advisory Group**

- Provincial Advisory Committee (PAC) members identify project workers with appropriate skills, knowledge and expertise from within their respective organization members
- PAC develops a mutually-acceptable mission, values and guiding principles statements for the project to ensure common understandings of purpose, beliefs and behaviours
- PAC advises their respective project workers of mutually agreed to approach, but also is responsible for supporting respect for the different philosophies each partner brings to the project
- PAC members are individually responsible for ensuring their mandate is fulfilled with respect to the project
- PAC members are responsible for the management of their respective project worker's obligations, while supporting their worker's collaborative engagement in the project
- PAC members will meet up to four times during the life of the project.

### **2. Project Management**

- Project management and administration will be provided by the Executive Director, College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading. This includes logistics and administrative support.
- Project Lead will be provided by the CSC Project Worker. The Project Lead will be in regular contact with all Project Workers and will serve as liaison to both the Project Manager and the Provincial Advisory Committee.

### **3. Project Work**

- The project will be conducted with guidance, support and advice from the Provincial Advisory Committee and Project Manager.
- Up to four face-to-face meetings of the Project Working Group will take place over the life of the project. Communication between meetings will be through telephone and e-mail contact.

### **Collaborative Process for Committee and Project Work**

This Provincial Advisory Committee is inspired by the "collaborative process" approach, wherein the preparation of the project workers, the commitment of the parties involved, and notions of fairness, representativeness, openness, transparency, mutual respect and efficiency in the pursuit of the objectives, is of utmost importance.

The principal characteristics of a process of this nature are as follows:

1. The participants agree to engage in a collaborative process that implies a mutual effort towards understanding and respect for the opinions of others.
2. The work of the Provincial Advisory Committee will be self managed, and will operate by general agreement of the whole group.
3. Provincial Advisory Committee members are invited and involved as individuals, and are drawn from stakeholder groups identified above. The composition of the Provincial Advisory Committee is intended to be indicative of the range of the different stakeholder organizations directly interested in the task undertaken.
4. Participants have an accountability to their own constituency (to speak from the knowledge and interests of the constituency) and to the Provincial Advisory Committee and the committee process (to contribute fairly and constructively while respecting the agreed terms of reference and code of conduct and to strive for success in the committee process).
5. The mandate of the Provincial Advisory Committee is in keeping with a public interest approach, which dictates the need for transparency of sources, the process and results of the work, and which respects the requirement for collaboration between the parties.

### **Code of Conduct for the Provincial Advisory Committee**

Members of the Provincial Advisory Committee have agreed to abide by a code of conduct to guide their approach and relationship in this project. This code of conduct is reflective of the Aboriginal Sharing Circle practice, which encompasses the Seven Grandfather Teachings. Essential elements of these teachings include Wisdom, Bravery, Honesty, Respect, Love, Truth, and Humility.

The code includes the following operating principles:

1. Collaboration - The participants agree:
  - to proceed in a spirit of mutual respect, openness, and collaboration, striving to achieve the required objectives;
  - to create a thoughtful, open, candid, and constructive exchange;
  - to ensure that the process evolves in a timely fashion;
  - to respect the motivations and beliefs of the other participants;
  - to aim toward a consensus, with the goal of producing a unanimous report which will identify the points of agreement, differences in principles, and unresolved matters;
  - to allow, in cases of severe differences, a participant to include their objection in the report;
  - that the minutes of the meetings will state the decisions of the committee, actions to be taken, and any objections raised by members;
  - to not publicly denounce other participants or the process, or to look to apply outside pressures on the committee.
  - that considering that the Provincial Advisory Committee is based on collaboration, it is possible for the participants to take steps outside the normal conduct of full committee interactions that will favour the actions of the committee, such as personal meetings, private consultations, small group discussions, etc. However, it is important that the committee is informed of these events.

1. Representation - The participants agree:
  - To proceed according to their conscience in the pursuit of the objectives. Participation in the advisory group implies a desire of each participant to actively contribute towards the success of reaching the objectives;
  - That they have been asked to join the advisory group as individuals, drawing upon their wide and deep experience and views. Participants will generally speak from their own experience, as well as drawing upon the knowledge base and interests of the constituency/organization they represent - in that sense participant views may be seen as indicative of their constituency. However, as this is not a formal stakeholder negotiation, participant contributions should not be seen as representing the official, comprehensive or conclusive views of their constituency/organization. In general, the advisory group will interact and advance their work 'in the moment' without outside reference. Where necessary, it is the responsibility of the participant to consult with their constituency to determine his or her exact mandate, ideally before or early in the process;
  - In exceptional circumstances, participants may ask to consult with their organization before making a final

decision on a given point. This consultation should not unduly slow the pace of the committee work;

- To respect the rules of confidentiality from the beginning of the committee's work. Participants should also use discretion in representing the interactions and individual opinions of others, and not attribute views by name outside the committee.
- That CSC will make information about the project and the terms of reference publicly available including the Objectives, the membership of the Provincial Advisory Committee and the Code of Conduct.
- The Executive Director, College Sector Committee for Adult Upgrading shall serve as the public spokesperson for the project.

2. Assumptions - The participants agree that :

- the established process of collaboration, that brings to the committee people who are involved with the subject and who have diverse interests, assumes the establishment of a climate of confidence and trust;
- it is important to allow and encourage the process to be flexible to accommodate changing needs, but it is also important to trust the process and to stay involved until completion;
- committee meetings are private, to favor the development of confidence and mutual understanding;
- committee members will respect the agreed confidentiality and will follow it both inside and outside of the working committee.

## *Appendix 2*

### **Provincial Partnerships to Promote Essential Skills Mission, Vision and Values Statements**

#### **Mission**

The mission of this project is to provide the groundwork for further development of partnerships between provincial organizations to benefit staff and volunteers associated with the various partner organizations. Additional beneficiaries include learners/clients. This will be accomplished through embarking on and documenting a partnership process and development of Essential Skills practitioner training built on common messaging and content.

#### **Vision**

Strategies and processes developed at the provincial level will model best practices at regional and local levels. Ultimately, this supports organizational capacity to achieve demanding objectives through partnership.

#### **Values and Guiding Principles**

The Provincial Advisory Committee is inspired by the collaborative process and values the potential of working in partnership. This code of conduct is reflective of the Aboriginal Sharing Circle practice, which encompasses the Seven Grandfather Teachings. Essential elements of these teachings include Wisdom, Bravery, Honesty, Respect, Love, Truth, and Humility.

The Provincial Advisory Committee agrees that all participants will:

- ◇ proceed in a spirit of mutual respect, openness and collaboration, striving to achieve the required objectives;
- ◇ to create a thoughtful, open, candid and constructive exchange;
- ◇ to ensure that the process evolves in a timely fashion;
- ◇ to respect the motivations and beliefs of the other participants;
- ◇ to aim toward a consensus, with the goal of producing a unanimous report which will identify the points of agreement, differences in principles, and unresolved matters;
- ◇ to allow, in cases of severe differences, a participant to include their objections in the report;
- ◇ to not publicly denounce other participants or the process, or to look to apply outside pressure on the committee.

**Provincial Partnerships to Promote Essential Skills  
Perceived Potential Challenges and Benefits List  
(collected from various partnership publications)**

**Challenges**

- fear of unknown
- potential “scrutiny” by partners
  
- requirement to work in new ways
- increased communication requirements
  
- increased need for flexibility and compromise
  
- organizational culture preventing full participation (culture clash)
  
  
- competition between stakeholders
  
- lack of trust
- initial investment of time, resources and staff
  
- potential for shared PD funding base
  
- differences in operational requirements

**Benefits**

- wider collaboration
- increased opportunity for collaboration
- improved transition of learners
- establishment of a new network or forum
  
- increased opportunity for staff training and PD
  
- decreased cost for staff training and PD
  
  
- enhanced practitioner confidence
- positive effect on standards
  
  
- increased funding opportunities
- better support at the local level
- improved ES training for learners
- a “leveling of the playing field”

These are intended only as “food for thought”. Check those that ring true and add other benefits and challenges that occur to you below.

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Appendix 4

**Challenges and Benefits Checklist Results  
(6 pre- and post-surveys returned)**

Item	Pre-Survey		Post-Survey	
	Challenge	Benefit	Challenge	Benefit
Fear of unknown	2		3	2
Partner scrutiny	3			5
Work in new ways	2		3	3
Increased communication needs*	1		2	5
Need for flexibility/compromise	2		1	4
Culture clash	5		2	3
Stakeholder competition	3			3
Lack of trust	0			
Time, resources, staff investment	4		3	3
Shared PD funding base		1		5
Operational differences	4		3	
Wider collaboration		4	1	5
Increased collaboration opportunity		5		6
Improved learner transition		5	2	3
Creation of new network/forum		5	1	4
Increased staff training/PD*		5	2	5
Decreased PD costs		5	1	4
Enhanced practitioner confidence		3	1	4
Positive effect on standards		2	1	5
Increased funding opportunities		4		3
Better support at local level		4	1	1
Improved ES training for learners		5	1	5
Leveling of the playing field		3		4

\* respondent identified both challenge and benefit

**Provincial Partnership to Promote Essential Skills  
Committee Member Base Line Survey**

The purpose of this survey is to collect thoughts and opinions of the project partner organizations relative to the Objectives at the beginning of the project. This will serve as a base line to measure project outcomes against, identify areas of concern or areas the Committee may want to focus on, and inform the final report. Please provide answers by checking appropriate the appropriate box. Please add comments, including concerns, in the space provided. If additional space is required, please use the back of the page.

**Objective**

**-to create dialogue among four stakeholder organizations on key issues regarding implementation of Essential Skills in adult literacy and upgrading programming.**

The preferred method of dialogue in this project is:

- meetings       telephone       e-mail discussion       combination of all 3

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Dialogue between provincial organizations is important to furthering developments in the field of literacy, especially in the area of Essential Skills:

- Strongly agree     Somewhat agree     Somewhat disagree     Strongly disagree

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There are few opportunities for interaction and dialogue among the partner stakeholders and this project provides a welcome opportunity:

- Strongly agree     Somewhat agree     Somewhat disagree     Strongly disagree

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**Objective**

**-to document how effective partnerships across sectors are identified and developed**

I anticipate this project will lead to further dialogue and partnerships among provincial groups involved in delivering adult literacy and Essential Skills programs and services:

- Strongly agree    Somewhat agree    Somewhat disagree    Strongly disagree

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I have partnership experience I bring and will apply to this project:

- Strongly agree    Somewhat agree    Somewhat disagree    Strongly disagree

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Project documentation will provide valuable information to other provincial groups:

- Strongly agree    Somewhat agree    Somewhat disagree    Strongly disagree

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**Objective**

**-to outline the challenges and benefits of developing partnerships at the provincial level**

I believe that there are both challenges and benefits to developing provincial partnerships:

- Strongly agree    Somewhat agree    Somewhat disagree    Strongly disagree

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I believe the benefits will outweigh the challenges of developing provincial partnerships:

- Strongly agree    Somewhat agree    Somewhat disagree    Strongly disagree

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**Objective**

**-to focus the partnership on identifying and developing the common message and content to be included in Essential Skills training for practitioners associated with each of the organizations**

There is merit in ensuring that common messages and content be delivered to practitioners associated with each partner organization:

- Strongly agree    Somewhat agree    Somewhat disagree    Strongly disagree

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Common messages and content in sectoral training will support promoting both the value of and teaching practices associated with Essential Skills in programs across adult literacy programs in Ontario:

- Strongly agree    Somewhat agree    Somewhat disagree    Strongly disagree

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Common messages and content in sectoral training will support common assessment among programs and inform appropriate referrals:

- Strongly agree    Somewhat agree    Somewhat disagree    Strongly disagree
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**Objective**

**-to test the relevance, viability, effectiveness and usefulness of this type of approach among key provincial stakeholders with a wide range of views and operational requirements**

I anticipate that there will be positive outcomes to the relevance, viability, effectiveness and usefulness of this approach among provincial partners:

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

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I anticipate there will also be challenges in each of these areas:

- Strongly agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Strongly disagree

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Each of these questions will be re-visited at the end of the project.

Appendix 6

**Committee Member Base Line Survey  
Pre- and Post-Results**

The project objectives identified in the proposal submission were discussed by partners present at the initial meeting. A base line survey was completed by the partners at the beginning and end of the project. Six surveys were returned at the beginning of the project and 5 at end of project. This survey was created to identify and measure project outcomes against, identify areas of concern and inform the final report. Pre- and post-survey results are presented below.

**Objective 1**

**-to create dialogue among four stakeholder organizations on key issues regarding implementation of Essential Skills in adult literacy and upgrading programming**

Dialogue between provincial organizations is important to furthering developments in the field of literacy, especially in the area of Essential Skills:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>5</b>			

There are few opportunities for interaction and dialogue among the partner stakeholders and this project provides a welcome opportunity:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>6</b>				<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>		

**Objective 2**

**-to document how effective partnerships across sectors are identified and developed**

This project will lead to further dialogue, collaboration and partnerships among provincial groups involved in delivering adult literacy and Essential Skills programs and services:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>6</b>				<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>		

I have partnership experience I applied to this project:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>		

Project documentation will provide valuable information to other provincial groups:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>	<b>1 N/A</b>		Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>		

### Objective 3

**-to outline the challenges and benefits of developing partnerships at the provincial level**

I believe that there were both challenges and benefits to developing this provincial partnership:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>		

I believe the benefits outweigh the challenges of developing provincial partnerships:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>6</b>				<b>5</b>			

### Objective 4

**-to focus the partnership on identifying and developing the common message and content to be included in Essential Skills training for practitioners associated with each of the organizations**

There is merit in ensuring that common messages and content be delivered to practitioners associated with each partner organization:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>5</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>4</b>		<b>1</b>	

Common messages and content in sectoral training supports promoting both the value of and teaching practices associated with Essential Skills in programs across adult literacy programs in Ontario:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>4</b>		<b>1</b>	

Common messages and content in sectoral training supports common assessment among programs and informs appropriate referrals:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>		

**Objective 5**

**-to test the relevance, viability, effectiveness and usefulness of this type of approach among key provincial stakeholders with a wide range of views and operational requirements**

There will be and continue to be positive outcomes to the relevance, viability, effectiveness and usefulness of this approach among provincial partners:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>			<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>		

There will also continue to be challenges in each of these areas:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>	<b>1 N/A</b>	
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<i>OSP Curriculum Essential Skills Curriculum Linkages Teachers Guide</i>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		

This project has created opportunity and process to address challenges amongst the partners:

Pre-Survey	<b>6 surveys</b>			Post-Survey	<b>5 surveys</b>		
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>		

## Appendix 7

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