

*The reason I joined this program...*

**Creating a database of learner goals  
for program planning**

**Report of the Learner Goals Database Project  
North York, Ontario  
1997-1998**

**by Guy Ewing**

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## *Acknowledgements*

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Thanks to Donna Zener for supervising this project with interest and enthusiasm.

Thanks also to the members of the North York Local Literacy Committee for their involvement in every stage of the project. The members of this committee were: Juliette Christiansen, Literacy Options; Carol Henry, Seneca College; Shelley Marks, The CNIB Literacy Program for Deafblind Adults; John McLaughlin, Preparatory Training Program; Shobha Oza, Preparatory Training Program; Joan Robinson, Toronto Public Library, North Region; Gordon Ryall, The Adult Education and Training Program, Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf; Mary Trant, Seneca College; Donna Zener, Toronto District School Board (North York).

Finally, special thanks to all of the instructors, teachers, tutors and program staff who were involved in this project, and to the learners who took the time to talk with me about their goals and dreams.

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## *Executive summary*

Two hundred and twenty-seven adult learners in North York, Ontario were surveyed about their reasons for coming to literacy programs. A concordance program was used to identify frequently occurring words in the text of the learners' interviews or written statements. The texts were then coded, and entered into a database, where they could be grouped and regrouped according to various criteria. In this way, it was possible to discover categories of goals in the texts, rather than imposing them on the texts.

The most common kinds of life goals that emerged, in their order of frequency, were (1) finding a job, (2) preparing for further upgrading, (3) learning how to do everyday tasks better, (4) getting an education, and (5) learning how to help children with their school work. Another kind of goal, (6) learning how to communicate better, was particularly important to learners with disabilities

Two significant secondary findings were: (1) sixty-one per cent of learners mentioned more than one kind of life goal, for example, finding a job but also learning how to help children with their school work; (2) sixty-four per cent of learners who had job goals did not have further upgrading as a goal.

At the North York Local Literacy Committee, discussion has begun about whether this broad range of goals and combinations of goals can best be met by focussing on different kinds of goals in different programs, or by responding to a variety of goals in each program, or by a combination of both approaches.

This project brought into focus the large number of learners who intend to look for work after attending literacy programs. The Committee is exploring ways of obtaining funding for a training plan developer with vocational guidance expertise to help learners, individually and in groups, to develop their training plans for particular job goals.

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## *An overview of this report*

Section 1 presents a rationale for developing a learner goals database, and describes the development of a methodology for creating this kind of database using a learner-centred approach to goal identification that is consistent with other learner-centred literacy work.

Section 2 presents findings from the input of learners in literacy programs in North York.

Section 3 presents conclusions, both about the learners' input, and about the process for developing a database of this kind.

Section 4 describes responses to the project by the North York Local Literacy Committee, program staff, and learners.

Sections 5 and 6 provide the complete texts of the two most important pieces of learner input, the learners' goals statements, and suggestions for changes to adult literacy programming in North York, respectively.

Section 1 can be read as a manual for developing and analyzing a database for learner input. In addition, Section 3 points to general lessons about this kind of database work that were learned by doing this project.

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## *1 Why and how*

### *The challenge of getting learner input*

A central tenet in adult literacy work as it has developed in Ontario is learner-centredness, the belief that, in some sense, adult literacy learners should direct the learning process. Exactly what this means in practice is subject to discussion and disagreement. But belief that the learner should be at the centre and in charge of her own learning is essential to most literacy workers.

Following from this belief is the belief that learners should be involved in program planning. If the learning process is learner-driven, learners must have a say in developing the program which supports this learning process.

Ways of involving learners in program planning are well established in small learning groups and classes. Small group facilitators and classroom instructors use various ways of involving learners in planning how the small group or the class will operate.

Learners have also been involved in program planning on the boards of directors of community programs, at networks, and on committees at boards of education. Here, they have not been as central in the planning process as in small groups and classes, where learners are the majority. Where learners are a majority, the discussion must be accessible to learners. Natural processes of linguistic communication ensure that the language and content of the discussion is understood by its participants. This is not the case on planning bodies, where learners are usually outnumbered by more literate volunteers, staff, and administrators. Usually, these planning bodies try to be inclusive, but when the chips are down and the discussion becomes heated, literacy learners often get left aside in a flurry of polysyllabic words and references to written material which they are not yet able to read.

With the advent of Local Literacy Committees, which will co-ordinate literacy programming in designated regions such as municipalities or counties, the voices of learners are getting even harder to hear. In the new Megacity of Toronto, where there are four Local Literacy Committees, no permanent committee member is a learner. But the Local Literacy Committees are overseeing and co-ordinating changes in literacy programming which affect learners. It will not help learners to have participated in class planning with their instructor if their class has been eliminated, or reconstituted in a way that no longer meets their needs.

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How can learners' perspectives be incorporated into the work of the Local Literacy Committees? Learners can be invited to join the committees, and the committees can work to ensure that they are truly included in committee discussions. But there will still be something missing: a mechanism for discovering the whole range of learners' perspectives throughout the whole geographical area represented by a local literacy committee.

The project which is reported on here, The Learner Goals Database Project in North York, was designed to explore one kind of answer to the need for learner involvement in the community-wide planning process. This project combined a learner-centred process of goal identification with computer database technology. This combination may seem improbable, so let me provide some explanation at this point.

### *A learner-centred process of goal identification*

An essential ingredient in learner-centred literacy work is ensuring that learners can play a role in shaping discussions, their vocabulary, their form, their content. The Learner Goals Database Project was based on discussion of this kind. I surveyed 227 learners in North York programs, using one of three open-ended formats. The most common format was one-on-one open discussion. I surveyed 149 learners in this way. I surveyed an additional 48 learners by means of class discussions, which I facilitated. An additional 32 learners filled out questionnaires which asked for long written answers. I also spoke with five learners in a class for adults with developmental disabilities, learners at the North York Adult Development Program. For these learners, linguistic communication is hard, and they had difficulty understanding my questions and responding to them directly. I have written a description of my discussion with these learners, which I include as an appendix.

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In the discussions, my agenda was scripted by a survey sheet which I developed with the help of the North York Local Literacy Committee. An example of this survey sheet, is shown on the left-hand side of this page and of the following pages.

**Introduction** "Please help by answering these questions. Your answers will help program planners understand what adult students want."

**Part A** Answers to be dictated by the learner. The interviewer should draw out the learner, so that his/her answers are as detailed as possible.

1. Learner's statement of why s/he came to the program.

General reasons

Immediate reasons

2. Reasons for coming to this particular program, rather than another program.

3. How did s/he find out about the program?

4. Where does s/he live? (Major intersection.)

5. "What do you want to do with reading, writing and math now, and how do you see yourself using reading, writing in the future?"

Now:

In the future:

6. "How does this class/program fit into your plans for the future?"

7. "What were you good in at school?" Follow-up question: "Why?"

8. "What were you not so good in at school?" Follow-up question: "Why?"

8. "What changes would you like to see in adult classes/programs at North York ?"

The initial questions on this survey sheet were designed to get learners talking about their goals. The questions are repetitive or overlapping. They were prompts, rather than questions that absolutely had to be addressed within the assumptions that shape them. As the project progressed, I began to ask a single two-part question at the beginning, because this question seemed to be a good prompt: "Why did you come to this program, and what do you want out of this program?" This simple question would usually start the discussion flowing.

As the learner talked, I would write down what he said, using his own words to the extent that this was possible. It was like transcribing a language experience story. This methodology makes the learner the focus, and gives her license to take the discussion where she wants it to go.

**Part B** Short questions for the learner to answer alone, or with the help of an interviewer.

10. Sex **M** **F**

11. Is English your first language? Yes No

12. If no, what is your first language? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you read and write in your first language?

Yes No A little

Did you learn English in school?

Yes No

13. How many years did you go to school? \_\_\_\_\_ years

14. Have you ever used a keyboard for writing? (Either computer or typewriter)

Yes No

15. Is it difficult for you to write without a keyboard?

Yes No

16. In your class/program, do you use any of the following?

Special computer equipment? Yes No

Specify:

Other special equipment, such as hearing aids?

Yes No

Specify:

Braille? Yes No

An intervenor? Yes No

Explain:

An attendant? Yes No

Explain:

Do you use a wheel chair Yes No

Having transcribed the learner's goals statement, I would read it back to the learner for possible changes or elaborations. Although there were few changes, there were many elaborations. The discussion mainly moved forward when the learner considered what he had said, and saw a need to say more. I did ask follow up questions. I often asked one of the questions on the survey sheet: "How does this class/program fit into your plans for the future?" But it is my impression that most of the elaboration was learners' comments on the transcribed texts of their own goal statements, not answers to my follow up questions.

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Is it difficult for you to come to class?

Yes    No

If you said "yes", please check what is difficult.

No money for TTC

Health problems

Travel problems

No childcare

Looking for work

Long hours at work

Other:

How many days a week do you want to go to a class/program?

\_\_\_\_\_ days

How many hours a day do you want to go to a class/program?

\_\_\_\_\_ hours

When do you want to go to a class/program?

Morning    Afternoon    Morning and Afternoon

Evening    Afternoon and Evening

Morning and Evening

learners' goals statements.

In the group discussions, I also transcribed what learners said. This was like doing group writing. In some of the classes, I was able to note down who said what, and in other classes I was not.

The final step was to send the learner a typed transcript of the goals statement for changes or elaborations.

I never asked all of the questions in Part A of the survey sheet. I always asked at least one question about the learner's goals, and "What changes would you like to see in adult classes/programs in North York?"

Part B of the survey sheet asks short information questions, which I went through quickly. In some cases, particularly in the group discussions, I did not get a chance to ask all of these questions. The main purpose of the survey was to find out what learners wanted from literacy programs in North York. The questions in Part B were added because the survey seemed like an opportunity to collect additional information, some of which might be correlated to patterns that emerged in the

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Some learners wrote answers to the questions on the survey sheets, including some of the better writers in my class, the learners in the Preparatory Training Program (PTP), and OBS Level 2 learners at the Yorkgate campus of Seneca College.

The learners in PTP wrote after discussion with their instructors. The other learners wrote after discussions facilitated by me.

### *Applying computer database technology*

It may not be immediately obvious how these open-ended formats, using well-established learner-centred methodologies within the Language Experience Approach, fit with computer database technology. In fact, computer database technology makes it possible to use these kinds of open-ended formats to survey large numbers of participants with comprehensible results. Databases can be used to crunch numbers, but they are also an efficient tool for analyzing texts. They allow us to find patterns in what the texts say, while keeping these texts available for instant reference, in case we want to understand the context of what was said.

A database is a collection of “fields” that can be “searched”. When you create a database, you create “fields”. For example, when I started developing the Learner Goals Database, I created a field for each of the questions on the survey sheet. Into each of these fields, I entered the answers which learners have given to that question. On the next page is an example of the beginning of one of the “records” that I created in this way. The headings for the fields are abbreviated versions of the questions on the survey sheet.

As the project progressed, I realized that, since I was treating the various questions about goals as variations on the same question during the discussion with learners, I should combine all of the answers to these questions in the “Goals” field. This would put all of the text about goals in one place in the database, making the learners’ goals statements easier to compare. So, in the final version of the database, “Goals now”, “Future goals”, and “Plans” were eliminated as separate fields.

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<b>Learner</b>	0004
<b>Program</b>	NYBE, Flemington Resource Centre, morn
<b>Program location</b>	SE Don Mills/Eglington
<b>Goals</b>	I want to learn English: talking, writing, reading. I also want math sometimes.
<b>Why here</b>	My son is close in daycare. If something happens, I am here. I save my time for my children. We are neighbours who help each other. We have children together. It's like my country. I know everybody here. It's quiet here. If you go to another place, there is noise. They talk to much in other places. Here it is quiet. I learned a lot of things, driving, citizenship. I can work by myself.
<b>How here</b>	
<b>Where live</b>	SE Don Mills/Eglington < 1km
<b>Goals now</b>	I need reading, writing, spelling. Maybe I want to work at anything. It doesn't matter, any work. But I need reading and writing for everything. If I drive a car, I have to know where to go. If I buy medicine, I have to know what it is. The daycare, the school, everyone, they send letters. I have to read the letters.
<b>Future goals</b>	Maybe I can be a cashier.
<b>Plans</b>	
<b>Good at</b>	In Ethiopia, the schools were in Amharic. We didn't want it. And women didn't go to school. After I was 10 years, I went to school for six years at night. It was a school for ladies only. The teachers were volunteers. They had volunteers for the ladies. I learned a little Arabic, maths and English.

Having created fields and entered text and numbers into these fields, I could now “search” the fields for various kinds of information. For example, I could search for the word “job” in the “Goals” field. Or I could search all of the “Where live” fields with the value “< 10 km” in them. Having done this search, I could read through the records with the searched-for words or numbers that were “found” by the database. That is, I could look for keys words and phrases in the texts to discover what learners were talking about, as well as compiling factual information, such as how far learners travelled to get to their programs. I could do this without losing the original context in which the words and phrases were used.

More than that, by using a concordance program in conjunction with the database, I was able to discover words and phrases that learners were using rather than making assumptions about what words and phrases would be important, and then looking for them. Concordance programs were developed to study patterns of word use in literary and religious texts. Among other things, a concordance program

counts the occurrences of words in texts. Using a concordance program on the text in the “Goals” field, a list of words and their frequencies in the text was generated. The first page of this list is shown below.

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## Corpus word list

1417	8.1437%	i
1066	6.1264%	to
623	3.5805%	and
461	2.6494%	the
425	2.4425%	a
416	2.3908%	my
278	1.5977%	in
230	1.3218%	for
217	1.2471%	want
209	1.2011%	have
189	1.0862%	me
175	1.0057%	english

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172	0.9885%	you
161	0.9253%	it
160	0.9195%	is
152	0.8736%	school
148	0.8506%	get
148	0.8506%	that
143	0.8218%	so
142	0.8161%	this
134	0.7701%	read

---

132	0.7586%	of
123	0.7069%	but
121	0.6954%	because
119	0.6839%	job

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116	0.6667%	can
111	0.6379%	go
111	0.6379%	i'm
108	0.6207%	learn
108	0.6207%	was
105	0.6034%	do
105	0.6034%	like
105	0.6034%	writing

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104	0.5977%	be
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The words which are underlined and bolded were frequently occurring words that could plausibly indicate goals. These words became the building blocks of my analysis of the learners' goals statements.

Having identified these words, I found that they could be grouped into broad categories of goals that learners talked about. I called these broad categories of discussion "themes". The tables on the next page show how I grouped words under these themes.

99 0.5690% reading

---

97 0.5575% now

95 0.5460% here

95 0.5460% need

91 0.5230% when

88 0.5057% help

87 0.5000% write

---

85 0.4885% more

85 0.4885% with

84 0.4828% math

---

82 0.4713% program

82 0.4713% they

78 0.4483% good

78 0.4483% very

76 0.4368% came

76 0.4368% know

74 0.4253% if

71 0.4080% it's

68 0.3908% can't

68 0.3908% don't

66 0.3793% improve



Note that the themes were named for words that occurred under themes, usually frequently occurring words. For example, the words “reading” and “writing” occur in the table under the theme called “reading/writing”, and the word “jobs” occurs in the table under the theme called “jobs”, along with other words indicating job goals. So the themes were not imposed on the list of learners’ words about goals; they are superordinate words, indicating general categories, that came from the list itself.

**Reading/writing**

read	134
writing	105
reading	99
write	87
spelling	23
Total	448

**Speaking/listening**

speak	29
speaking	11
conversation	6
talking	6
hearing	5
Total	57

**Job**

job	119
working	17
business	13
office	10
jobs	8
career	7
mechanic	5
nurse	5
Total	184

**Children**

children	37
kids	21
daughter	5
son	5
Total	68

**Education**

Education	61
Total	61

**English**

English	175
grammar	14
vocabulary	7
ESL	6
Total	195

**Computer**

computer	34
computers	11
Total	45

**Everyday**

letter	13
letters	11
newspaper	10
application	7
everyday	7
forms	7

**Math**

math	84
maths	20

**Upgrading**

college	50
university	18
upgrade	17
upgrading	13
courses	6

Total	104
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OBS	5
Total	109

paper	7
sign	7
money	6
bank	5
license	5
Total	85



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I decided to group the themes into two broad categories, based on the kinds of goals that the themes addressed. I grouped themes about what learners wanted to study in the short term — reading, writing, English, math, speaking and listening, computers — under what I called “study goals”. I grouped themes about learners’ larger, more long-term goals in life — getting a job, going on to further studies, doing everyday tasks better, helping children, getting an education — under what I called “life goals”. On the previous page, the “study goals” are grouped in tables in the two columns on the left, and the “life goals” are grouped in tables in the two columns on the right.

In the database, I created a new field for each of these themes. These fields were places where I could make notes on how learners were talking about each of the themes. These notes could then be searched for further information. For example, as I read through the learners’ discussion of job goals, I began to notice that some learners specified particular job goals, such as “mechanic” or “cashier,” while others just spoke about getting a job, or about getting a “good job” or a “better job”. Other learners mention jobs, but in the context of improving their reading and writing so that they could function better at their jobs. Based on these observations, I began to write the following characterizations in my new “Job” field: “Get a particular job”; “Get job”; “Get a good job”; “Get a better job”; “Do job better.” In a database, it is important to use the same wording for the same concept, to make searches easier, so I was careful to use these exact wordings consistently.

Databases allow you to create different “layouts” of the data. The first layouts of the data, “Layout 1”, was simply the survey sheets in database format. In the “Goals” layout, I juxtaposed a learner’s goals statement with fields for the themes that I had identified. This is shown on the next page.

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**Learner 0004**

**Program:** NYBE,  
Flemingdom Resource  
Centre, morn.

I want to learn English:  
talking, writing, reading. I also  
want math sometimes.  
I need reading, writing,  
spelling. Maybe I want to work  
at anything. It doesn't matter,  
any work. But I need reading  
and writing for everything. If I  
drive a car, I have to know  
where to go. If I buy medicine,  
I have to know what it is. The  
daycare, the school, everyone,  
they send letters. I have to  
read the letters. Maybe I can  
be a cashier. In Ethiopia, the  
schools were in Amharic. We  
didn't want it. And women  
didn't go to school. After I was  
10 years, I went to school for  
six years at night. It was a  
school for ladies only. The  
teachers were volunteers.  
They had volunteers for the  
ladies. I learned a little Arabic,  
maths and English.

<b>Read write</b>	Y
<b>English</b>	Y
<b>Math</b>	Y
<b>Speak listen</b>	Y
<b>Computer</b>	
<b>Job</b>	Get a particular job: cashier (but will accept any job.)
<b>Upgrading</b>	
<b>Children</b>	
<b>Education</b>	
<b>Everyday</b>	Driving, medicine, letters from daycare.
<b>Communication</b>	
<b>L1 English</b>	N
<b>Years in school</b>	6
<b>Specific</b>	E, PJ
<b>General</b>	
<b>Study only</b>	
<b>Disability</b>	

In addition to the themes which I originally identified, “Communication” appears as a theme in this layout. As I read through the learners’ goals statements, I came to understand that communication is a particularly important theme for learners with disabilities of various kinds: hearing impaired, deaf-blind, learners with motor difficulties. So even though the words “communication” and “communicate” only occurred in the text a total of 26 times, it was a word that addressed an important life goal for a particular group of learners.

Later, to do further analysis, I added other fields to this layout. For example, to find out how learners’ job goals correlated with years in school and first language, I imported the “Years in school” and “L1 English” fields into the “Goals” layout. I also created new fields to indicate what kind of specific life goals

learners discussed, and what kinds of general life goals they discussed. For example, in the above record, the learner discussed the specific life goals of reading maps and signs, reading medicine labels, reading letters from the school and the daycare. I noted these specific life goals by putting an “E” for “everyday tasks” in the field labelled “Specific”. I also noted the specific (although tentative) job goal of “cashier” with a “PJ” for “particular job” in the “Specific” field. I also created a “Study only” field where I could note which learners had mentioned study goals, but not life goals. Finally, I created a field called “Disability” where I typed comments which learners made about physical disabilities or learning disabilities.

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I applied the same procedures that I used to analyze the learners' goals statements to analyze their suggestions for change. First I created a word frequency list using the concordance program. Then I read through the records that included each word, and came up with a list of themes. Then I created a special layout, a "Changes" layout, with a field for each of the themes where I could make notes. Then I read through the records, making notes on the themes, and creating new fields as previously hidden themes became apparent. I did not import fields into the "Changes" layout to look for correlations. I did add a field called "Other changes", because there were suggestions for change which did not fit into any of the themes.

## *Conclusion*

I will present an analysis of the learners' goals and suggestions for change in subsequent parts of this report. I will also present specific guidelines for doing the kind of data collection and analysis which I describe in this report. I conclude this part by affirming what I hope to have demonstrated, that the marriage of a learner centred goal setting process of goal identification and computer database technology is desirable, possible, and not overly complicated.

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## 2 *Findings*

### *Introduction*

In this section I present statistics from Learner Goals Database Project in three areas. First, I present statistics on learners from the answers to the questions in Part B of the survey sheet. These are statistics about who the learners are, kinds of supports they need, and difficulties that they face attending literacy programs. Then I present statistics on learners' goals, and point to some correlations between these statistics and the general statistics. Finally, I present statistics on learners' suggestions for changing programs.

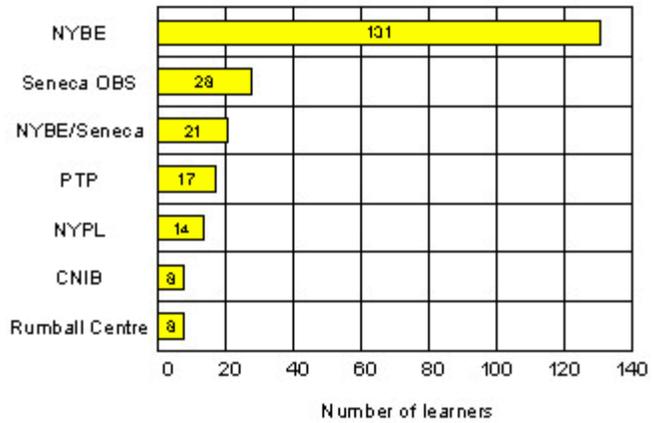
### *Statistics on learners*

These statistics were not gathered in every category for every learner, as I mentioned in Section 1. The learners' goal statements were the main focus of the survey, and if time ran out, or if other circumstances intervened, Part B of the survey sheet was dropped. The learners were interviewed during their learning time, and I was careful not to take too much of this time. But although these statistics are not complete, they provide substantial information about the learners.

As I outlined in Section 1, there is input from 227 learners on the database. The breakdown by program is shown in Chart 1, on the next page.

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“NYBE” refers to the North York Board of Education Adult Basic Literacy/ Numeracy (ABL/N) programs. “Seneca OBS” refers to a Level 2 OBS class at the Yorkgate campus and a Level 2 class and Level 3 class at the Leslie campus. “NYBE/Seneca” refers to three programs that are run co-operatively by NYBE and Seneca College at the college’s Newnham campus: the class for people with learning disabilities, the class for physically disabled adults

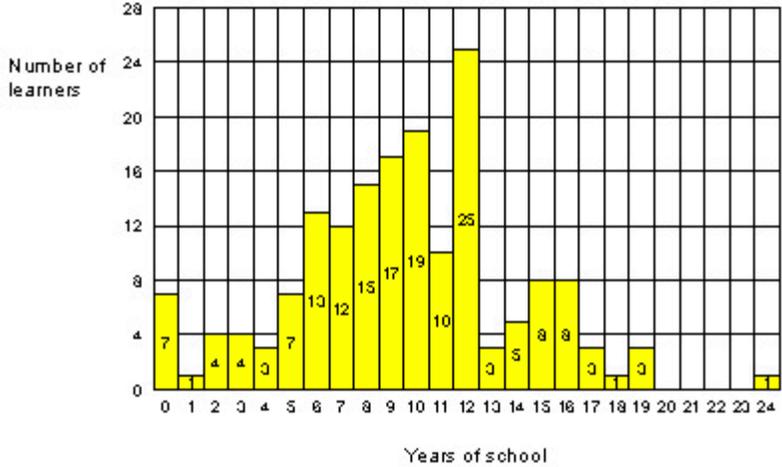


who use augmented communications, and the Literacy Options program, which provides space and resources with the class for physically disabled. In the database, I labelled the last two classes “Literacy Options”, as I surveyed these two classes together, in one group discussion. “PTP” refers to the Preparatory Training Program, at the Preparatory Training Program, East Training Centre. “NYPL” refers to the North York Public Library programs at the Downsview Library, the York Woods Library, the Fairview Library, and the Central Library. “CNIB” refers to the CNIB Deaf-Blind Literacy Program and “Rumball Centre” refers to the literacy class at The Bob Rumball Centre for the Deaf. The number of learners in NYPL programs is small, proportionate to the size of the programs. Because all of the learners in this program work in tutor-learner pairs at various times throughout the day, and because tutor-learner pairs can be flexible, and often rearrange their meeting times, I was not able to talk with as many learners in these programs as I would have liked to.

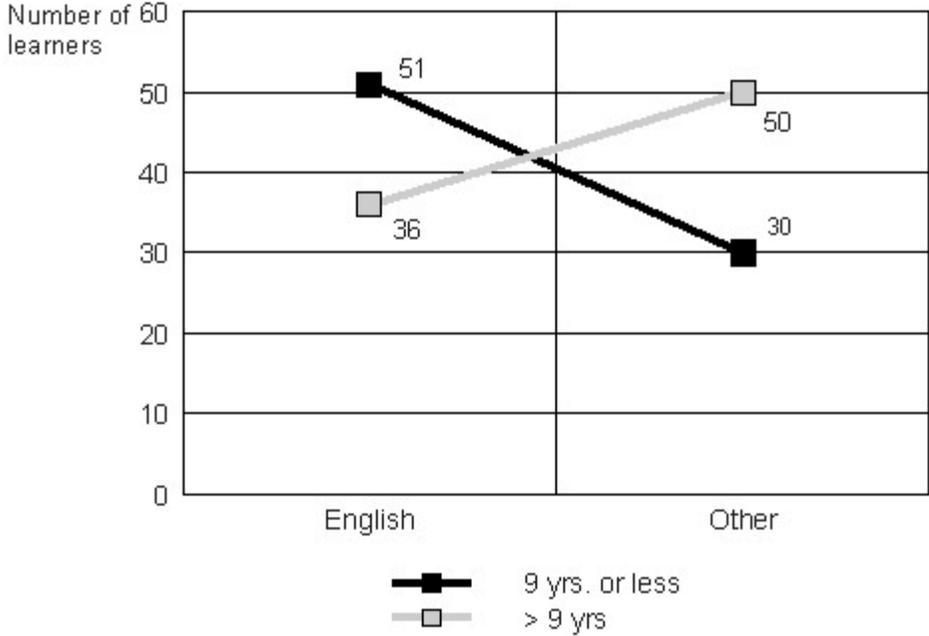
Of the learners who responded to the questions about gender, about two thirds of the learners were female.

More than half of the learners spoke English as a first language.

Although there was a substantial number of learners with very little education, including seven with no education, the figures for years of school cluster around 6 - 12 years, as Chart 2 shows.



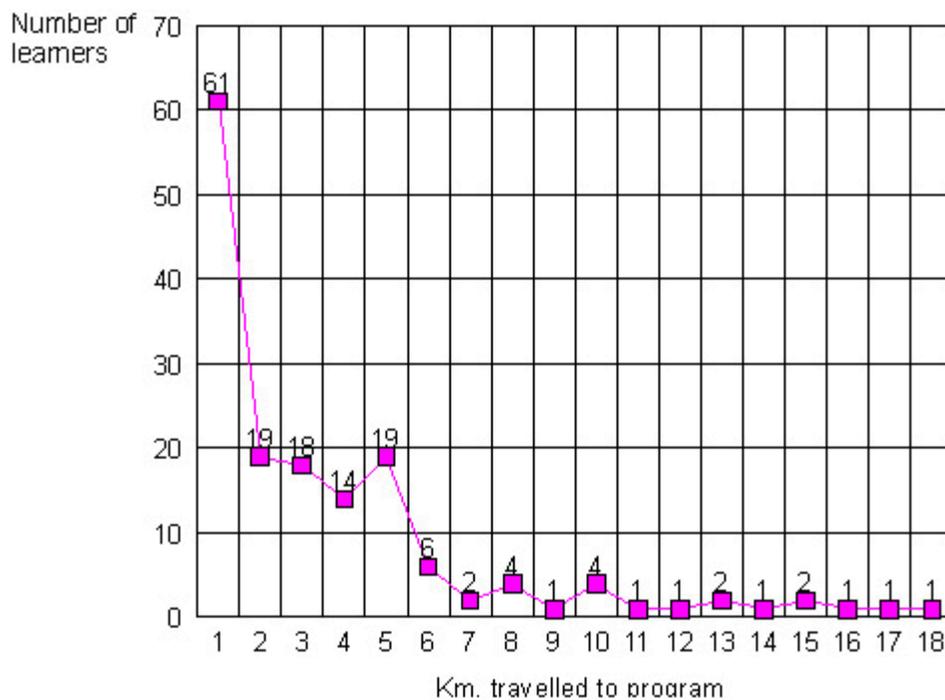
There was an inverse relationship between years of school and first language, as Chart 3 shows. Twenty-eight percent of the second language learners had post-secondary education. Some had advanced degrees. For some second language learners, ABL classes or OBS classes were a means to improving written English.



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For example, one OBS Level 2 student wanted to improve her written English before taking a university program in genetics. For one student in an ABL class, a television producer in his native country, it was an opportunity to participate in discussions with native-speaker literacy students, as a way of improving his spoken English. For one elderly man, a school principal in his native country with 24 years of education, it was a way of improving his English so that he could teach Arabic. Under the new LBS guidelines, these learners would be excluded from literacy programs, because of their level of education in their first languages. Although this makes sense as a policy measure to ensure that resources allocated for basic literacy are used to provide basic literacy instruction, one must wonder how these kinds of students will be able to access classes in the future. The ABL and OBS classes have been flexible in accommodating such students in the past, especially if they had few options, because of income or difficulty travelling. As the new LBS program is instituted, it will be important to ensure that there are ways of continuing to provide opportunities for these highly skilled students to find ways of applying their skills in Canada.

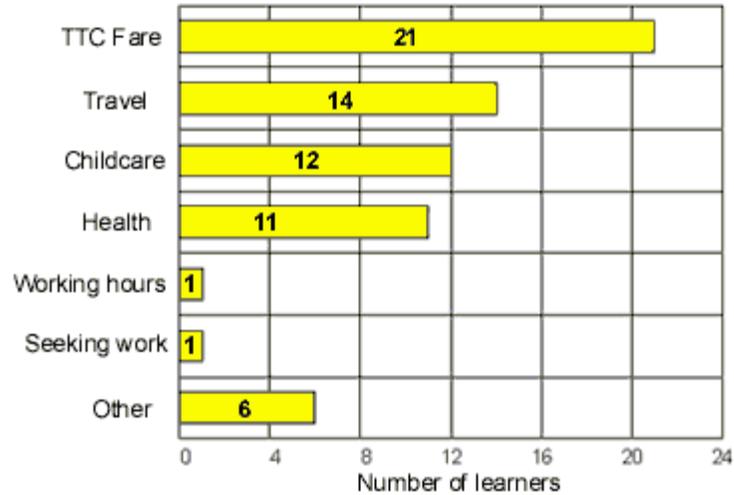
Many learners lived close to their programs. Thirty-nine percent lived within one kilometre of their programs. Eighty-three percent lived within five kilometres of their programs.



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About forty percent of learners said that it was difficult to come to their programs. The most common difficulties were money for transit fares and other difficulties having to do with travel, such as the amount of time required.

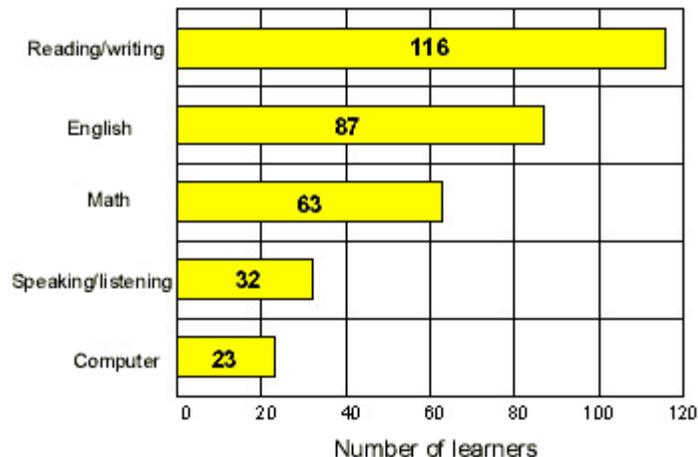
Chart 5: What makes coming to programs difficult



### *Statistics on learners' goals*

As I explained in Section 1, learners talked about two kinds of goals, study goals and life goals. Chart 6 shows the study goals that the learners mentioned in their goal statements.

In addition to study goals, all but 15 of the learners talked about life goals. Learners talked about both specific life goals and general life goals. The specific life goals named particular upgrading programs, particular jobs, particular everyday tasks, and particular kinds of activities such as helping children with school, communicating with employers, doing a particular job better, or doing a particular volunteer job better. Here are some examples of specific life goals:



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**“I want to go to adult secondary school, but there are no programs right away. I would like to do a whole program in business skills.”**

**“Maybe I can be a cashier.”**

**“If I drive a car, I have to know where to go. If I buy medicine, I have to know what it is. The daycare, the school, everyone, they send letters. I have to read the letters.”**

By contrast, some learners spoke about their life goals in more general terms, as in the following examples:

**“I need to finish this class, then I want to go to another school.”**

**“When I go to school, I get knowledge, then I get Canadian experience, then I go to work.”**

**“I really need to know how to read, write and do math in everyday life.”**

Some kinds of goals do not come in both specific and general versions. Although “upgrading” can refer to a specific upgrading program or be left vague, “education” is inherently a general idea. We can see this in how learners spoke about “education”.

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**“I want to continue my education as far as I can. High school, college, whatever I can. If you know something, it's good for you. I would like to raise my kids' education. If you don't have an education, you can't raise your kids' education. I'm old. It's hard. But that's the reason I want to continue, to raise my kids' education.”**

**“Without education, it's really hard. Reading is understanding. I didn't get much schooling. If I could get it now, and I'm getting it now, and I feel that it's really helping. The more you read, the more you gain.”**

**“I find it very hard going back to school and being a single mother, but I got to do it or I won't be able to help my children. I want them to be well-educated.”**

Other goals, such as helping children with their school work, seem to be inherently specific (although, as two of the above statements indicate, this specific goal can be framed by the general goal of helping children get an education.)

It is an important finding of this project that most of the learners spoke about life goals, and that most of the learners spoke about at least one specific life goal. It is also important that most of the learners (sixty-one per cent) had more than one goal, and that learners talked about educational goals, including inter-generational educational goals. I will have more to say about these findings in the next section of this report.

Charts 7 and 8 on the next page show the statistics on general life goals and specific life goals. I obtained these statistics by reading through the learners goals statements and coding them as “general” or “specific” in the Goals layout (described in Section 1).

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Chart 7: General life goals

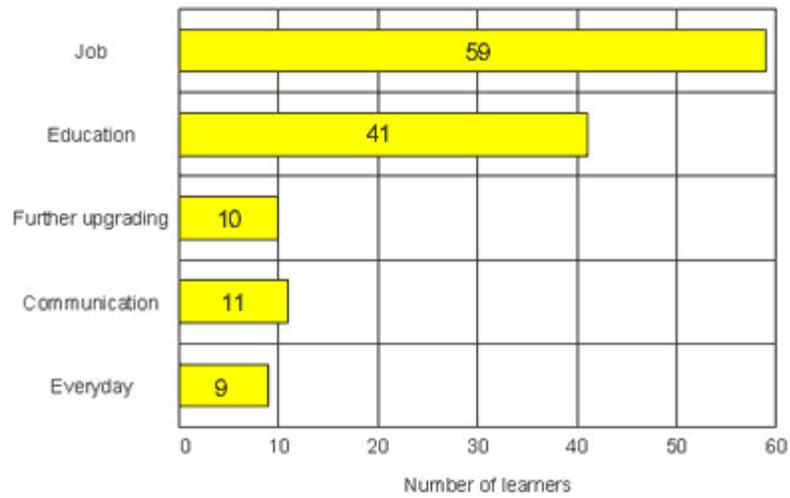
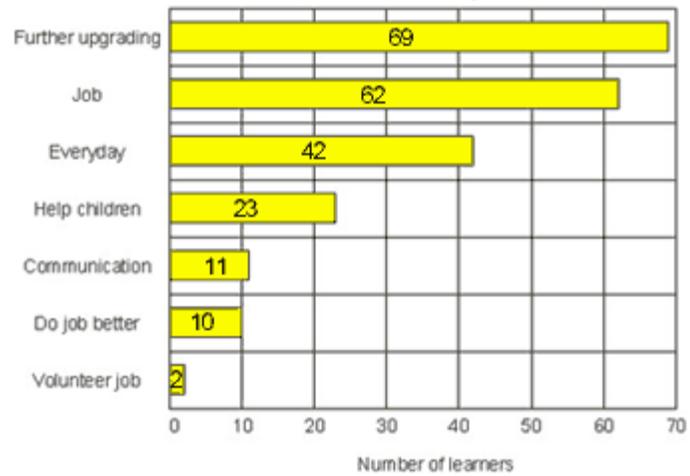


Chart 8: Specific life goals

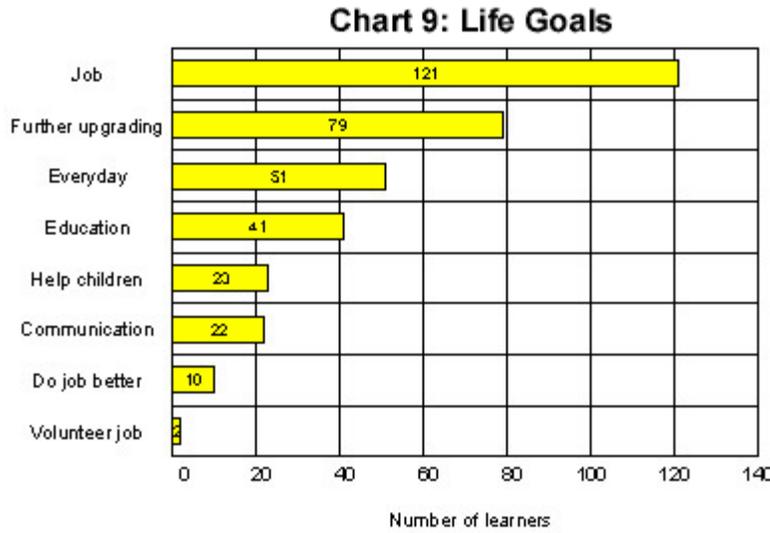


## Details about learners' specific job goals

Program	Job Goal	Years of school	Previous work	Upgrading	May not need upgrading	English?
NYBE	nurse					Y
	babysitting	0				Y
	mechanic	0		Y		Y
	homecare	0				Y
	printing or mechanics	0				Y
	cooking/baking	few				
	masonry/tiling	few	masonry and tiling in Jamaica	Y		Y
	plumbing/electricity	few (English speaker who went to French school)	building superintendent			Y
	dressmaking	2			Y	
	chef	3	chef in Isreal			
	nursing	4		Y		Y
	hairdressing	5		Y		Y
	cashier	6			Y	
	machine operator	6		high school		Y

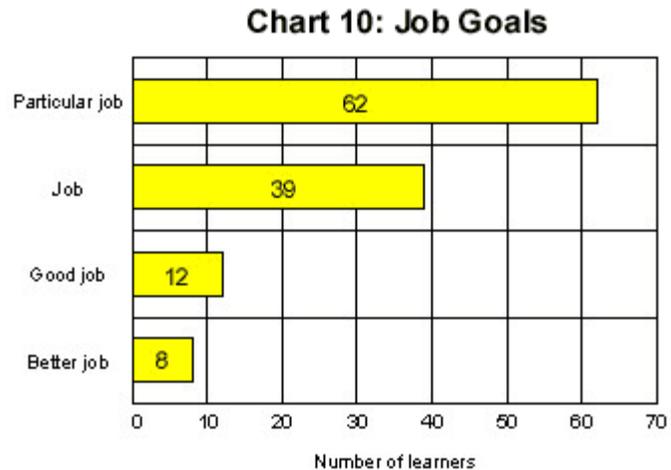
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Chart 9 shows the combined statistics for all life goals.



The most common life goals had to do with jobs. As I mentioned in Section 1, I did detailed analysis on learners' job goals. Chart 10 shows the breakdown of specific job goals, such as wanting a particular job such as cashier, and the more general job goals of wanting a job, wanting a good job, or wanting a better job. More than half of the learners mentioned particular job goals.

There follows on the next page a table listing the particular jobs that learners wanted. The table also shows the learners' years in school, previous work experience, upgrading goals, and first language. In addition, there is a column for indicating learners who did not mention upgrading and who may not need upgrading. Most of the learners did not mention further upgrading as a goal, but it appears that many of these learners who did not mention further upgrading may not, in fact, need further upgrading to obtain the jobs they want. So learners' failure to mention further upgrading does not necessarily indicate a lack of awareness of the job market.



## Details about learners' specific job goals

Program	Job Goal	Years of school	Previous work	Upgrading	May not need upgrading	English?
	cashier	6			Y	
	own business	7			Y	Y
	clerk	8	job training			
	truck driver	8	factory work		Y	Y
	mechanic	8				
	own business	9			Y	Y
	fixing alarms, fixing mechanical things	9		high school		Y
	cake icing	9		job training	Y	Y
	animal grooming/hairdressing	9		high school		Y
	ECE worker	9, some ECE training in Nova Scotia		college		Y
	personal support worker	10		college		
	food services	10		high school then college	Y	
	nurse	10				Y
	nursing	10		high school		
	write for a newspaper	10			Y	Y
	own business	11			Y	
	homecare	11				Y
	packing	11			Y	

## Details about learners' specific job goals

Program	Job Goal	Years of school	Previous work	Upgrading	May not need upgrading	English?
	teach English back home	12		college or university		
	cosmetology	12		high school		Y
	clothes designer	12		high school then college		
	fixing computers	12		high school or college		Y
	aesthetics	12 (Gr. 12, Basic)		high school		Y
	lawyer	12		accepted at Emery C.I.		
	underwater welding	12				
	sports teacher	13	sports teacher in mother country	high school then university		
	office job	14				
	ECE worker	14	teacher	high school, then college		
	media work	16	t.v. director in mother country		Y	
	banking job	17		high school (for business skills)		
	teaching Arabic	24		high school		

## Details about learners' specific job goals

Program	Job Goal	Years of school	Previous work	Upgrading	May not need upgrading	English?
Seneca OBS	community work			college		
	computer programmer			college		
	fashion designer			college		
	geneticist			university		
	social work			college		
	nursing			college		
	write children's stories	7			Y	Y
	computer analyst	10		college		Y
	accounting	14		high school, then college		
	accountant, office work	16	accountant in mother country			
	bookkeeping	16	bookkeeper in mother country			
	medical doctor	18	medical doctor in China			
NYBE/Seneca, LD	floristry	13				Y
	designing bicycles	14	designing bicycles	college		Y

## Details about learners' specific job goals

Program	Job Goal	Years of school	Previous work	Upgrading	May not need upgrading	English?
NYBE, Augmented Communication/Seneca, Literacy Options	advocate for the disabled	5 "...but only in body, not in mind."			Y	Y
PTP	computer technician	9		GED		Y
Rumball Centre	hairdresser					

Learners with particular job goals were more likely to have further upgrading as a goal than learners with general job goals. Out of 62 learners with specific job goals, 30 mentioned further upgrading, while only 13 of the 59 learners with general job goals mentioned further upgrading.

As Charts 11 and 12 show, learners whose first language was English, and learners with more years of school were more likely to have particular job goals.

**Chart 11:  
First language and kind of job goal**

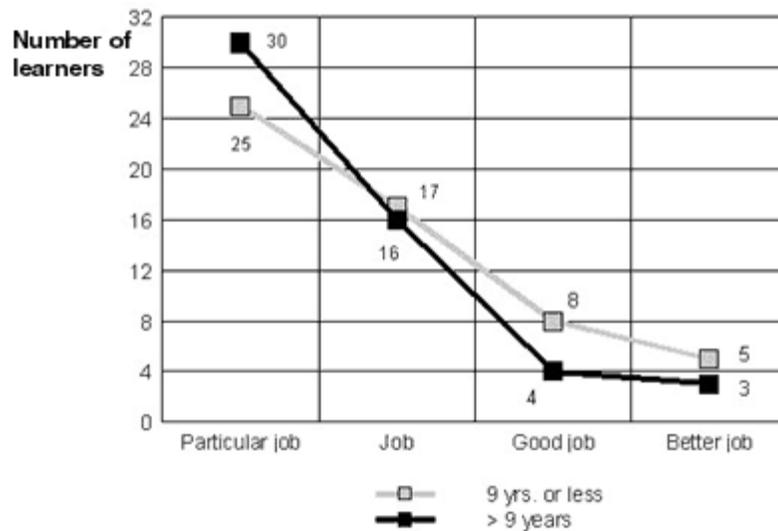
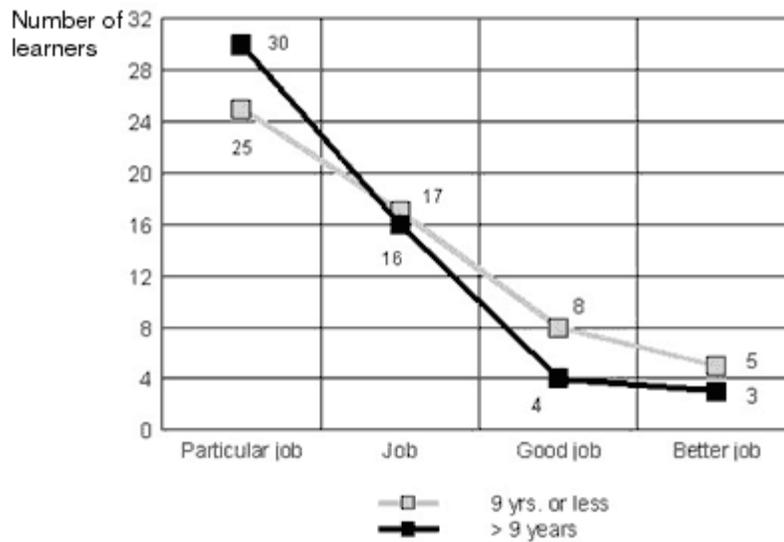


Chart 12:  
Years of school and type of job goal



Learners who speak English as a second language and learners who have few years of schooling do, in fact, have fewer job choices, so these learners were probably being realistic in not specifying particular jobs. As one learner said, “. . . after school finished, find a job, so I work. Beause no English, I don't know. No pick job. Any job.” On the other hand, for some learners, less fluency in English and less schooling could simply mean less knowledge about the job market, and a need for job counselling.

Learners with job goals also had other goals. The table below shows that, of the 121 learners with job goals, significant numbers stated other, overlapping life goals as well.

### How job goals overlapped with other life goals

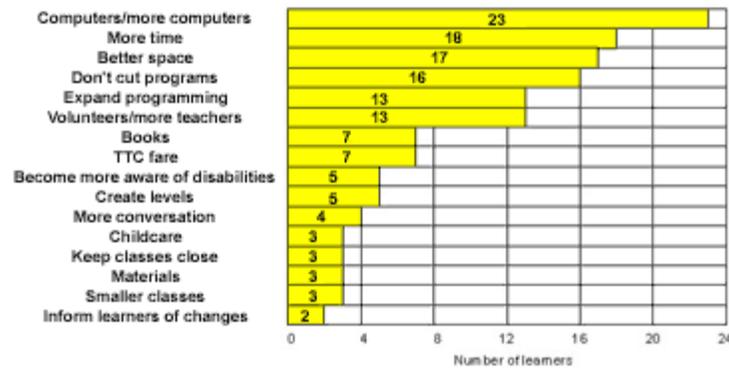
	Number of learners
Further upgrading	44
Education	24
Help children	24
Everyday	21
Communication	12

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## *Statistics on suggestions for change*

Learners made a variety of suggestions for change. Chart 13 shows suggestions made by more than one learner.

**Chart 13: Suggested Changes**



The most common suggestion was to get computers or to get more computers for literacy programs. Here are some of the learners' comments about the need for computers.

**“The only thing I made an appeal about is getting a computer. I don't know anything about computers. In today's world, you've got to get the modern things that are around you.”**

**“And also, we need computers. Because this country is all computers. My kids need it. Even the bank. What do you do if you don't understand computers?”**

**“We will like to learn the computer. The background now is more computer, and we don't know anything about computer.”**

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**“I would like to see computers. There are computers at my job. Most things you have to go on the computer to do it. Now I have to ask people to get it for me.”**

The second most common suggestion was more time, although in answering the question on the survey sheet about whether or not they had enough study time, a majority, 117 out of 158, said that they did.

In some NYBE classes, space was an issue.

**“When a lot of people come, it get choked up. You can't write properly, it jams you. It stops you from writing it up.”**

**“Change the classes like this room. The room, the way people are sitting, no good desks, no blackboard.”**

“I come with my friend last week. He come in the class. He said, ‘This is not a school.’ I said, ‘This is a school.’ He said, ‘Here there are no walls. On the walls we have to put maps.’ He said, ‘Is this a private school?’ I said, ‘No, it is paid for by the government.’ This is not a good place for a class. I come here in the morning, I have to clean one hour to prepare the class, then I have to set up the table.”

As might be expected in the current atmosphere of government cutbacks, a number of learners made eloquent appeals to maintain the current level of programming.

**“The knowledge is the basement. If you cut the adult school, you will be making a building without a basement. If the parents' knowledge be strong, the children will be strong. I don't know how can I help my children. If the adult doesn't have knowledge you are destroying the future. Because the family is the root of the tree. If the roots are destroyed, what happens to the tree?”**

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**“I don't know, I just started. I was having a hard time getting this class, because a lot of them were for credit courses, and I don't need credit courses. It's hard to find the right class. I'm sure there are a lot of people in my situation. They have been working, but if they don't have an education, they won't have a job in the future. Many of the jobs require computer knowledge or other technical knowledge. If people don't have the chance to re-educate themselves for jobs, you're going to have more welfare costs, more crime and prostitution: Crime City.”**

**“I would just like people to have a chance to learn, because maybe they never had the chance to learn. Don't close the door on adult classes.”**

**“I cannot begin to say how much the school has helped me so far, and how much confidence I am gaining. I don't feel I am an illiterate person. And in the class, all the students feel the same way. So we beg of whoever is in charge not to cut funds for the school. We need to learn and to be proud of ourselves, and for our children to be proud of us. Remember, education is an investment. Thank you.”**

Other learners called for expanded programming.

**“They should create more choices for people to come to school. More classes. More places that have classes. For people who want to go full-time, create full-time classes, not two half-time classes.”**

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**“There should be training for mechanics, electronics. You should be able to spend part of each week doing job training. The daycare should be for everyone, not just for ESL students.”**

**“I would like to see deaf, blind and deaf-blind people in new programs, something like learning Braille, maybe use the adult section of the library, with books transcribed into Braille.”**

**“Set up a program to help people get part-time work when you are a student. There would be an arrangement with particular companies.”**

**Student A: “The [Board ESL programs] need to find out what the student wants. Guide the people. At first, nobody asked me ‘Why are you here?’ ”**

**Student B: “They don't ask you at first. You find your way by accident.”**

**Student C: “A counsellor should ask, ‘What do you want?’ Maybe its a cultural thing. Maybe people here think it's none of their business. But they should not be afraid to ask. It's o.k. to ask people.”**

**“We need more support for people with head injuries. People with head injuries need lots of support, and they need time.”**

Some learners complained that, because of the diverse needs of learners in classes, instructors did not have enough time to give everyone the help they needed. Two kinds of suggestions emerged from this complaint. Some learners argued for more volunteers or more instructors.

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**“It would be good to have a volunteer. There's too much for one teacher. Sometimes, I worry about the teacher, because there are so many people that don't know to read. Everyone calls the teacher, ‘Teacher, can you help me,’ at one time.”**

**“We need more teachers. Bobby's good, but we need more help. We don't get enough attention. Different levels, different people.”**

Other learners argued for different levels.

**“Different levels. They should have a Group One for Level One, and a Group Two for Levels Two and Three, and they would get better. And then there'd be more attention with One. And the Two and Three would get more of what they need for today.”**

Other learners said there should be smaller classes, although this request was not clearly related to concern about the diverse needs of learners.

Learners called for more books and materials, bus tickets, and childcare.

Learners with disabilities called for more understanding of the various kinds of disability.

**“People have to understand that people who are physically handicapped are not necessarily mentally handicapped. We need education for staff, so that, for example, people understand movement problems. And they should understand that if people are asking for help, they need help. I did need help. Teachers didn't help me in the past, when I was young.”**

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**“People who teach kids need to be educated. I was put into special needs classes, but the teacher didn't know why I was there. They thought that if I concentrated, I could do it. The teacher didn't know what a learning disability was. I strongly feel that teachers should learn about learning disabilities. I didn't find out until college that I had a learning disability. If I had know earlier that I had a learning disability, I would have taken a different route.”**

**“There should be a test to show if a person can do something even if they have a learning disability or a physical disability, and even if they don't have the academic qualifications. Keep an open mind.”**

Some said that it was important to keep programs close to where learners live. Some wanted more English conversation practice in class. Two learners asked that learners be kept informed as program reform takes place. One of these learners thought that it would be useful for learners to meet with instructors to discuss these changes.

There were also other suggestions made by individual learners. These can be read, along with the complete texts containing all of the suggestions, in Section 5.

## *Conclusion*

From the learner-centred, open ended formats for discussion that were used in this project, much input with a high degree of specificity emerged. Given the opportunity, learners spoke clearly about themselves, their goals, and their suggestions for change. Given the clarity of the responses, it was possible to apply detailed statistical analyses, particularly with respect to learners' goals.

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## 3 *Conclusions*

### *Introduction*

In this section, I discuss what was learned from the Learner Goals Database Project. I begin by discussing what was learned from the learners' input, and then discuss what was learned about the process of creating a database for learner input.

#### *What was learned from the learners' input*

The input which learners gave to us in this project is rich and complex. There is much to be learned from this input. Below is a list of generalizations which are apparent to me. Other generalizations will emerge as others examine this input on the database.

- Learners knew what they wanted from literacy programs. This is indicated both by their articulation of life goals and by their suggestions for change.
  - The most common goal was jobs.
  - Many learners who mentioned jobs in their goals statements did not necessarily want to go on from their literacy programs to further upgrading.
  - Most learners had more than one kind of goal.
  - Learners described literacy learning as “education”, not “training”.
  - A significant minority of learners found it difficult to attend literacy programs, mainly because of the cost of public transit.
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- Learners wanted better resources.
  - Although learners in classes often mentioned that they were pleased with their instructors, some pointed to the need to provide more focussed instruction than now exists in large, multi-level classes, either (1) by using more volunteers or more than one instructor in a class, or (2) by creating levels.
  - Learners with disabilities felt that there needs to be more awareness of their issues by educators.

### *Learners knew what they wanted*

The learners' goal statements came out of open ended questioning. As the project progressed, my simple question became: "Why did you come to this program, and what do you want out of this program?" To this open ended question, which did not demand any particular kind of response, most learners responded by clearly articulating, not only what they wanted to study in the short term (reading, writing, math, computer skills . . .) but also by articulating long term life goals (getting a job, going on to further upgrading, learning how to do everyday tasks). Often, they articulated their long term life goals with a high degree of specificity. They specified what kinds of jobs they wanted, what kinds of further upgrading they were working towards, what kinds of everyday tasks they needed reading and writing for. As Charts 7 and 8 (Section 2) show, the goals statements contain more specific goals than general goals in the areas of upgrading (69 specific : 10 general), jobs (62 specific : 59 general), everyday tasks (42 specific : 9 general), and an equal number of specific and general communication goals (11:11). I considered the goal of helping children in school, contained in 23 of the goals statements, to be specific in all cases. Altogether, 73 percent of learners articulated at least one specific life goal (and possibly general life goals as well.)

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While the specificity of many of the learners' life goals indicates they were clear about what they wanted, stating a general life goal did not necessarily indicate a lack of direction. A general job goal could indicate that a learner would accept any available job; some learners with general job goals explicitly said this in their goals statements. Or it could indicate that the learner would do any job that they could manage physically, given a medical condition that precluded heavy work. Or it could simply indicate that the learner did not think that it was necessary to be more specific.

In the database, education was designated as an inherently general goal, but wanting to get an education does not indicate a lack of clarity about one's goals in life.

In addition to indicating that they knew what they wanted from literacy programs by articulating life goals, learners articulated clear, practical suggestions for improving adult literacy programs in North York. Some of these suggestions will be discussed below, and the suggestions may be read in their entirety in Section 6.

The learner's input in their goals statements and in their suggestions for change has the following implications for program planning.

- Learners' life goals can be used to guide programming. If learners have clear life goals, then programs can be planned to help them meet these life goals.
- Learners are a good source of ideas for improving programming.

## *Jobs*

The most common life goal in coming to an adult literacy program in North York was to get a job. Most of the learners surveyed stated job goals (121/227).

Given the importance of jobs to the learners, adult literacy programming in North York clearly needs to devote resources to work-related literacy and numeracy.

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A step in this direction was taken by the North York Local Literacy Committee in May, 1998, when, partly in response to the input of learners in the Learners' Goals Database, it decided to explore ways of finding funding for a learning plan developer, to help learners, individually and in groups, to develop their training plans for particular job goals.

### *Not going on to further upgrading*

Only thirty percent of learners mentioned further upgrading in their goals statements. Only thirty-six percent of learners with job goals mentioned further upgrading, including twenty-two percent of learners with general job goals and about fifty percent of learners with specific job goals. The table on specific job goals in Section 2 suggests that many of the learners with specific job goals who did not mention further upgrading probably did not need further upgrading to meet their job goals.

It seems certain, then, that a significant number of learners were hoping to go directly from adult literacy programs directly into the workforce. The implications for programming are huge. If learners are using literacy programs, not as entry points for upgrading, but as an education in itself, literacy programs must provide them with more than just a few academic skills. They must provide an education that will help to prepare people for life in this society. For learners who will not go on to secondary and post-secondary programs, literacy programs must provide some of the tools for using literacy and numeracy for work, critical thought, and social participation that learners with more time and opportunity acquire in secondary and post-secondary programs.

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## *More than one kind of goal*

Sixty-one per cent of learners had more than one kind of life goal. The most common goal was a job, but, as the table on page 29 shows, the learners who wanted jobs also wanted other things: to get further upgrading, to pursue an education, to help their children in school, to do everyday tasks involving reading, writing and numeracy, and to communicate better. The following goals statements illustrate this.

**“I come to this school because I like improve my English. First of all, I would feel in control with other people, and also I cannot do the heavy job I used to do. I want to improve my reading and writing so that it suits my circumstances. The government should give the opportunity to immigrants to go to school, because here the language is different from the country people come from, and language is important in so many ways. I want to better my skills, so that I can possibly find an occupation where I can speak, read, and write freely. I want the basics, not college or university. If somebody gives me a paper to sign and I can't understand it, it's like I'm lost. I don't know whether to sign it or not. I can see it with my parents. They depend on me. They don't know what to do. They don't know what to say. And sometimes I feel that I don't know what's going on in the hospital. And we're part of this society we live with, when it comes to vote, understand which way to go. And it's good if you can communicate with your children and your grandchildren. Because even in old age it's important if you live here, you feel comfortable here in every way. When I came to Canada, I went straight to work. But now I realize that language, it means a lot to me.”**

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**“I come because I was getting frustrated when I come to work. I get frustrated when I couldn't read and write something. Reading and writing is very important, especially in Canada. You need it so you don't have to depend on anybody. I felt that when I go anywhere I had to fill out an application and read things. I was feeling really frustrated. If you sit at home, it doesn't do you any good. You have to read to your kids. You can't help them. If you lose an education, you lose your self-esteem. You have to. It's very embarrassing if your kid comes home with a letter and you can't read it, and the kid gets hurt because you can't read to him. Sometimes, when the kids grow up, they will disrespect you. If you have your kids and you can't help them, you lose. The job that I last did was embroidering, and in embroidering, you have to be able to use the computer to read the tape that does the logo. You have to choose the thread on the computer. Then you have to write down what you did.”**

Because learners had multiple goals, their goals overlapped. One learner might want to get a job and another learner might not, but they might both want to improve their reading and writing so that they could help their children in school. The implication for programming is that streaming learners according to their goals is not possible. If you put the learner who wants a job in one program and the learner who does not want a job in another, you must either create two kinds of programming in each class, or deny the learner who wants a job part of the programming he wants. In the first case, you do not have streaming at all, in the second case you have streaming that does not meet learners' needs.

### *“Education”, not “training”*

The learners regarded education as an important goal, both for themselves and for their children. This can be seen in the learners' statements about “education” on page 21. It can also be seen, throughout the goals statements, in learners' comments about the need for dignity and power, for example:

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**“I live in the country. I would like to see what's going on in the country. I read a paper, I can digest it for myself and not have to hear from somebody else or t.v.”**

**“I have seen in this program that people come here thinking that just because they have a physical disability they are like babies, but as they progress in this program, they are progressing into responsible and mature adults. I have seen that happen.”**

When learners talked about “training”, they were referring to specific job training, which was something to do after getting an “education.”

**“I like to improve my education. The first step is to improve my education. Now I can get a skill training course. When I get up to that level. Then I can get a job.”**

In the last few years, perhaps because of the administrative structure of the Ministry of Education and Training, the term “training” has been applied to literacy work. For example, learners’ study plans have sometimes been called “training plans.” But it is apparent that the adult literacy learners in this project saw their literacy programs as providing more than “training.” I will happily follow their lead, and think of literacy programming as “education”.

### *Difficulties*

It has to concern us that about forty percent of learners find it hard to come to their programs, most commonly because of a lack of money for bus fare.

“Every month, I make only \$420. I can't pay the TTC tickets. When I don't have the money, I can't come.”

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**“If I have money, I get the TTC. If I don't, I cannot come to school sometimes, or I walk one hour.”**

**“I cut my grocery to come to school.”**

**“When I run out of money, I walk. When I go to the YMCA, they give me ticket.”**

Apparently, bus tickets will be available under the new Literacy and Basic Skills program. Given the difficulties with bus fare identified in this project, providing bus fare would obviously be a good policy initiative.

### *Better resources*

As discussed in Section 2, learners were eloquent on the need for better resources for adult literacy classes, including computers, more time, better space, and books.

### *Multi-level classes*

The learners had generally positive things to say about their instructors, but they felt that they could not always get the help they needed in large classes of students with diverse needs. Learners saw two kinds of solutions to this problem: (1) the creation of different levels, and (2) more volunteers or more instructors in a single class. As Board of Education classes are reconfigured next year under the new Literacy and Basic Skills program, it might be possible to experiment with both kinds of solutions.

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## *More awareness of disabilities*

Disabled learners spoke of the need for more awareness of disabilities among educators. This is clearly an area where more professional development would be beneficial.

### *What was learned about creating a database for learner input*

In addition to learning from the learners' input, this project created the opportunity of learning about the process of creating a database for learner input. Some of the important lessons that were learned are as follows.

- A statistically analyzable database can be created from open-ended, learner-centred discussion.
- A concordance of the texts of learners' statements will provide a quick, rough sketch of the themes that learners were talking about.
- The themes identified by the concordance program can be analyzed by creating new fields in the database, corresponding to the themes, and by "taking notes" on the themes in these fields.
- Any generalizations made about the learners' statements should be checked by reading through the original statements.

### *Creating a database from open-ended, learner-centred discussion*

The survey sheet that was used to question learners included some specific information questions, but the most essential part of the database, the texts of learners' goals statements and suggestions for change, were created from open-ended, learner-centred discussion. This project shows that, by putting such information into a database, it becomes statistically analyzable data. So it is possible to arrive at statistics and generalizations without forcing learners into discussions that they do not see the point of and do not want to have. Learners were able to discuss their goals and ideas in their own terms. Thanks to the database, this input could be analyzed statistically.

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## *Using a concordance program*

A concordance program can be used to analyze texts in a database for commonly occurring words. A word frequency list generated by a concordance program can be used to get a first impression of what learners are talking about. In this project, this first impression corresponded quite well to the final results of the analysis. This can be seen by comparing the table of word frequencies in the goals statements in Section 1, on page 11, with the chart of kinds of goals in the goals statements, Charts 6 and 9 in Section 2. The various categories of goals are in the same frequency order in the final analysis as in the first impression, although the exact numbers are different.

Using a word-frequency list as the starting point of the analysis allows for the use of categories created in the discussion itself, rather than imposed on the discussion from the beginning in the form of specific questions. In other words, it allows for the use of open-ended, learner-centred discussion as the starting point.

The concordance program that was used in this project was MonoConc for Windows, produced by Athelsan, 2476 Bolsover, Suite 464, Houston, TX 77005, (713) 523-2837, [info@athel.com](mailto:info@athel.com), <http://www.athel.com>.

## *Themes as fields*

Once themes in what learners said are identified with a concordance program, these themes can be added to the database as new fields. These fields can then be used to “take notes” on what learners said about the themes. For example, the types of jobs that learners are looking for can be noted in a new “Jobs” fields. Once these “notes” are structured or restructured to have consistent wording, searches can be done on these notes. For example, every record that contains the words “Get a particular job” can be searched, to find out how many learners specified particular jobs in their goals statements, and to see what these particular jobs were. This method worked successfully in this project. It was not hard to follow this method, given the ease with which current database programs, designed for use by businesses, can be structured, restructured, and viewed in different ways. The database program used in this project was Filemaker Pro, v. 4.

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## *Referring back to the learners' actual words*

At each stage of the analysis, it is necessary to check generalizations against what learners actually said. For example, finding “jobs” high on the word frequency list leads to the generalization that learners are talking a lot about jobs, but it does not actually tell us what learners are saying about jobs. They might be saying that they want jobs, or saying that they do not want jobs, or complaining about their jobs. Similarly, having determined that most learners had at least one “specific” life goal, it is important to read over the actual goals statements to make sure that the designation of “specific” is consistent in each case and makes sense in the context of everything that the learner said.

There is no way of getting around a careful reading of the learners' actual words. Putting these words on a database allows for quick generalizations, but these generalizations have to be checked. That a database preserves original texts, and allows these texts to be easily grouped and regrouped as generalizations change and need to be checked, makes this kind of checking feasible.

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## *Conclusion*

In general, what was learned from the Learner Goals Database Project was that (1) it resulted in useful generalizations from the learners' input, and that (2) it was not formidably difficult to do. I have no hesitation in recommending the further use and development of this kind of marriage of learner-centred literacy work and computer data analysis. Reading this report, making any necessary inquiries on AlphaPlus, spending an hour or so doing the tutorials in the Help menus of software programs, and drawing on Ontario's wide-ranging experience in learner-centred literacy work should enable any literacy worker to apply this approach to learner input for planning.

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## ***4 Responses to the project***

### *Introduction*

In this section, I discuss responses to the Learner Goals Database Project at meetings of the North York Local Literacy Committee, and in discussions with individual committee members, program staff, and learners.

### *The North York Local Literacy Committee*

At the North York Local Literacy Committee, discussion centred around the finding that most of the learners came to literacy programs with job goals, but did not articulate upgrading goals. In this report, it is argued that this puts an onus on literacy programs to provide support for learners who are going directly from literacy programs into the job market. The committee considered this argument, and decided to explore ways of seeking funding for what was described as a “training plans developer”. This would be a person with special expertise in relating training plans to job skills. My understanding is that the training plans developer would be available to all literacy programs in the North York area, and would help learners, individually and in groups, to develop their training plans for particular job goals.

In Section 3 of this report, I make another point about this finding which was not echoed at the committee, that for many learners a literacy program may be the last opportunity to get an education. In this case, it is important that literacy programming be broad, inclusive, and humanistic. I would argue that literacy programs cannot be thought of simply as the first step in a “second-chance” education. It must be a kind of education in its own right.

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There was discussion at the Committee about the need for programs that focus on particular goals. It was argued that such programs provide content for literacy learning, making literacy learning easier. This argument contradicts the argument in Section 3 of the report against “streaming” for different goals, an argument based on the finding that most learners have more than one goal. This will be a continuing discussion at the committee.

So, for the Committee, this project brought into focus the need for helping learners who are going directly from literacy programs into the job market. It provided impetus for the committee to explore ways of meeting this need. It also initiated discussion about the proper balance between programming that focusses on particular goals and programming that can be responsive to a variety of goals.

### *Discussions with individual committee members*

In follow-up discussions with individual members of the committee, there was both praise and criticism for the project. In general, the project was praised for raising issues. Several of the members of the committee mentioned that the findings about learners’ job goals were both surprising and significant. One committee member was interested in the prevalence of long-term goals in the learners’ goals statements, and relative vagueness of their short-term goals, arguing that this points to the need for the more thorough development of a process of short-term goal setting in literacy programs. The project was praised for involving the Local Literacy Committee at every stage.

The main criticism of the project was that it failed to find a balance between the goals of learners in North York as an undifferentiated group and the goals of learners in different kinds of programs. In response to this criticism, I ran a search on the database to find out how the ordering of goals differed in different kinds of programs. I found that each kind of program had its own ordering of goals, as indicated in the table on the next page.

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	All Learners	NYBE	Seneca OBS	Literacy Options /Lit Lab	The LD Class, Seneca	PTP	NYPL	CNIB	Rumball Centre
<b>Jobs</b>	1	1	2	3	1	1	1	0	2
<b>Upgrading</b>	2	2	1	0	0	2	3	3	0
<b>Everyday</b>	3	3	4	1	3	4	2	1	3
<b>Education</b>	4	4	3	3	2	2	5	0	0
<b>Children</b>	5	5	0	0	0	4	5	0	0
<b>Communication</b>	6	6	4	2	0	3	4	2	1

The ordering of goals for the Board classes was the same as for learners as a whole. (Recall that by far the largest number of learners surveyed were in Board classes.)

In the Library programs, the ordering of goals was similar to the ordering of goals in the Board programs.

In the Learning Disabilities Class at Seneca College in the Preparatory Training Program, jobs was the first goal, but the similarity to the Board classes stopped there.

The remaining programs were quite different. In the Seneca OBS programs, further upgrading was the main goal. In the Literacy Options/Lit. Lab. program, everyday tasks was the first goal, and communication the second goal. At the Bob Rumball Centre, communication was the first goal.

Clearly, there is a danger that a learner goals database can underrate the value of particular kinds of goals to particular subgroups of learners in one undifferentiated mass of data. More precisely, the presentation of data can do this. In fact, the particular characteristics of programs do become apparent as soon as the question of these particular characteristics is raised. The database allows for quick answers to various questions, as the above table demonstrates (although the samples are too small to be statistically significant.)

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Because a database also retains the original texts of learners' statements, it contains rich information about how we should interpret and reinterpret data. For example, while I was searching for the numbers in the above table, I came across the following statement by a learner at Literacy Options: "This class is not just an ordinary class. It's a class to help overcome our disabilities." This statement echoes the philosophy of the staff, that, for physically disabled people, literacy and numeracy cannot be learned in isolation from the larger goal of overcoming physical disabilities.

A database of this kind can help us to recognize the goals and priorities of the majority of adult literacy learners. But it can also help us to recognize the diversity of goals and priorities among these learners, so that we can enrich literacy programming to accommodate the whole range of goals and priorities articulated by them.

Perhaps, as some members of the committee suggested, future databases should be constructed simultaneously in different programs, and then combined. This would make them more useful to each program, and would make differences between programs more evident.

### *Discussions with program staff*

Program staff in Board classes and in Library programs have spoken positively about the study. They have told me that the report creates an accurate picture of the learners that they work with. Program staff in some of the other programs report have told me that they do not recognize their learners in the report. One experienced program staff person praised the open-ended, learner-centred process that I used for discussing goals with learners.

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## *Discussions with learners*

Learners have spoken positively of their involvement in this project. They have told me and their instructors and staff people that they were working with that they appreciated getting written copies of their statements. There were positive comments about the importance of finding ways to listen to learners.

## *Conclusion*

Criticisms of this project have centred on how much attention was given in the analysis to differentiating programs and different groups of learners. The criticism has not been about the methodology used in interviewing learners and constructing the database. In fact, the database has shown its capacity to answer questions raised by these criticisms. In other words, it is a responsive tool for analysis and re-analysis.

The database has provided impetus for decision-making and policy discussion. It has also given learners a way of having input into the program planning process. It has proved itself as a tool for asking questions and raising issues.

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## 4 *Learners' goals statements*

**M**y parents were in the military for 25 years. I was the only child who was behind in school. I have a problem with my vowels, with my reading and writing. I have four years and five months before retirement. I was planning to go home to Victoria, B.C. But I want to improve my skills first so I can read the signs, stuff like that. I want to enjoy life a little, but I can't read and write very well. I'm kind of embarrassed. I'm the oldest. All my brothers and sisters can read and write. I have a little problems with my hearing, my vowels. One of my brothers has college. He does computers. I have another one who worked in the military for 25 years. I can't seem to catch the vowels. If I can get enough reading skills, I'll go back where I came from.

**T**he reason I joined this program is that I work at York University, but I'm at a very low level. So the reason I joined this program is to better myself in reading, writing and math. I'm making progress, although I still need work in spelling, and I'm not a big fan of math. I've been in this program for about seven years. Before I joined this program, I didn't know how to read and write. I'm improving slowly. Being at York, they're all educated, so explaining things to them, you have to be into things. Say for example a professor comes up and starts talking to me, I can't have a good conversation with him because I don't know enough things. I don't read the paper. When professors come up with big words, I don't know how to reply. I just smirk and walk off.

**M**y writing and spelling brought me here. I couldn't even write one sentence. Now I can. It's basic to have reading and writing. The volunteer job that I do for Community Living requires reading and writing. You have to read reports. I do some of the fundraising. To get the information for fundraising, you have to be able to read. From 1984 to now there's a lot of improvement in my writing and everything else. When I started here, Sam asked me to read a book. I read it. Sam asked me why I was coming to his program. I said I needed spelling and writing. I taught myself how to read. Most of the kids in the 70s didn't learn how to read and write. It's disgraceful in this country, our own people don't know how to read and write. In the 70s, the kids wouldn't read and write. What happened was that kids like me who had medical problems, disability problems, were shoved into workshops. I was one of them. Some of the trainees who had a learning disability didn't get the help they needed. It's a problem that they didn't have programs to help the kids.

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I want to learn English: talking, writing, reading. I also want math sometimes. I need reading, writing, spelling. Maybe I want to work at anything. It doesn't matter, any work. But I need reading and writing for everything. If I drive a car, I have to know where to go. If I buy medicine, I have to know what it is. The daycare, the school, everyone, they send letters. I have to read the letters. Maybe I can be a cashier. In Ethiopia, the schools were in Amharic. We didn't speak Amharic. We didn't want it. And women didn't go to school. After I was ten years, I went to school for six years at night. It was a school for ladies only. The teachers were volunteers. They had volunteers for the ladies. I learned a little Arabic, maths and English.

Why we come to school for learn English ESL., I like to learn English. This is my hope, my wish: I got knowledge. Speaking, writing, knowing are important for life. This class is very good, but my idea is that I need more speaking, because conversation is better than reading and writing. Conversation helps reading and writing. Conversation helps a person more. Everybody has got knowledge. Make sure my English is good. Canadian experience, then I go to work. Nine years ago, I came to Canada. It is very shameful for me when I don't understand. I passed driver school. I got hairdressing, also the ESL class. Six years ago, I stopped. I sat at home without knowledge. Just I was nervous. I was like mad. My mind make my heart sick, my body sick. I have 24 years experience in an office in the Ministry of Finance in Afghanistan. But I have no Canadian experience. Here, nobody knows who I am. When you teach me, when you know me, after that you will respect me. When I was 12, I was fifth in my class. Then I went to typing school. I went to school in the morning and worked in the afternoon. My father married, and I supported my family. Then I went to Grade 9 at night school. When I got to Grade 9, my family opposed me. They didn't want me to be out at night. I continued the office work. I read books. I got knowledge by myself. I love knowledge. I love books. My brothers graduated from school. My sisters graduated from school. I supported them all the while. God helped me. I was very famous. I was the best typist in Afghanistan. I worked in a private office. Nobody believed it.

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I think my English not good enough. Anyway, I would like to study English for my language and education. It's a good thing. I like to improve my education. The first step is to improve my education. Now I can get a skill training course. When I get up to that level. Then I can get a job. I had a job in Canada as a sewing machine operator, but I would like to study computers. Maybe I could work as a clerk.

I want to learn some English and reading and writing and understand more everything so that tomorrow we can get better jobs. Even if we go and work in a factory somewhere, we need good English. Sometimes I go to the bank and I don't understand. Sometimes I have to take an interpreter. Sometimes I understand the words, even the long words, but I don't understand what they are saying. Also, filling out forms and understanding important letters. If I have an important letter to write, I ask my friends to help me. I am from Malaysia. I know English, but I don't understand paperwork. Reading is very hard. What are they saying? But I can write in English now a letter. My English is improving a bit.

Actually, I was working for two years at a steel company as an office clerk. Now I am laid off. My son is going to daycare. They need a letter from the school. I started yesterday. I want to go to adult secondary school, but there are no programs right away. I would like to do a whole program in business skills. I am interested in getting into banking work. Most of the agencies are hiring people with banking skills. When I call, they ask if I have banking skills.

I want many things. I want to improve my writing and reading and communication skills, too. Mainly I am looking for a job. This can help me. Also, I can help my children. I studied science in my country. I need to find the meanings of the English words. My children's friends come to my home. I help them in science. I am learning many things. Yesterday, I learned three big words, how to put them into sentences.

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I want to improve my English and grammar and reading and writing. Before, I was working in an office. My reading and writing is not enough. I'd like to work in an office.

I want to learn English. I get a job.

I am speak. I want to speak more and more English and to study. I want to help my children study. I am now read a little, but writing, more spelling. I like job. I'm looking for a packing job, but I can't find it. I went looking last week. They said come back in a week.

I want to learn more English. It will help me to communicate with my neighbours, in stores. Most of us are from countries in which English is not the first language. So if we come to the class, we can learn English so we can adjust to the new environment. I am taking a credit course in computers at night. If I become very conversant in English, I can find a job easily so I can support myself.

I came to the class to study English, to learn English. When I learn reading and writing, I can get job. Is important for me to get a job. I had 17 years of education. I was a nurse in my country. I worked as a director of nursing at the hospital. I have 35 years of experience in the hospital. If I have the language, I can use this experience. Also, I want to do something for my country. Canada is a very helpful country. I want to give something back for this country. It helped me very much. I have to do something. When I can do something for this country, I will feel comfortable.

I came to this class to learn English more, and to have social talk, and to have opportunities for a job if I learn English. Without English, I can't talk. I am like a statue. If I get a job in the office, then I need to write.

Basically, I came here for reading and writing. I don't want to get reading or writing to get to a college or whatsoever. It's just to apply for a job, so I could get a proper job. It's not if and but. I definitely need this school. Now I'm reading a little. I'd really like to get a Grade 12 or so, but it's a long process. If I got about a Grade 12, it would be o.k. Sometimes I think if I got a job I would take it, but I still need the reading and writing. I don't want to jeopardize it.

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**M**y father said, “Can't go to school.” But it's very difficult in this country when you don't go to school. I have trouble. I don't go to school here, only this year. It's very necessary for me, because I have children. The children need help. I have a problem when the children need help, because I don't speak English well. It's stressful not to speak the language. I am very happy in this school, because the teacher is very polite. Writing is a problem for me. Write again and write again. It's a big problem for me. It's hard. The citizenship test was very hard. I want English for my life, not for a job. My husband has a job.

**I** can't read too much, and I can't spell. It's the spelling I need mostly, and the math. I have to do more reading and more spelling and the math to get into job training. I want to do cake icing.

**I** need to improve my English, especially reading and writing. I have a job already, but I need the class because my writing is not all that good. This class is really helpful to me. I want to continue my education, apply for high school, and then college. I want to get my ECE. I'm working at a daycare now. I will have to pay for college, because they won't give a loan for part time. I will continue to work and pay for college. I was a teacher in my country. I taught Grade 3. Then we went to Pakistan and I taught Grade 9 —11 geography. I want to be a teacher here, because I was a teacher in my country. I always wanted to be a teacher. When I came here, I went to English class for 6 months. Then I got training in a daycare. Then I had children and stayed at home for four years. Then I worked in a daycare for four years. Now, I am going back to school. 6 months of English is not enough.

**I** am coming to school because everything is for English. If you want to go to work, if you want anything, everything is English. It's important for life. It's very important. You're coming anything, bill, anything, it's English. If you don't know English, it's a problem. I need to finish this class, then I want to go to another school. I want to learn underwater welding.

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I have a big problem because I am a single mother. It's very hard for me because I can't read and write. When I go for a job, people say, "You need to read and write." I would like to learn dressmaking, but every school I go to, they say I need more English. When the school gives my children homework, I can't help them. Also, I can't fill application forms. I feel shame when I go somewhere and they say, "We have a job, but we can't hire you because your English is so poor." Thanks to the government for what they give, but I want a job.

Why I come to this class is to learn to read, because I didn't get this opportunity in my country to go to school. I come to this county with five children. I schooled them. Now I am alone. I want to improve my reading and writing and some math. I live in the country. I would like to see what's going on in the country. I read a paper, I can digest it for myself and not have to hear from somebody else or t.v. To go look for signs and things, you know where you're going. Sometimes you have to ask someone and it's very embarrassing. People are so rude. It's better to get lost. I was a machine operator. I had to count things. I had to operate a computer. It was hard. Sometimes people used to help us. But what about the next day and the next day? You can't keep getting help. Right now, I am fighting Compensation, and they don't want to consider my appeal. They write things down. You can't read it. They tell you, "This is what you said," but it may not be what you said. They turn it in a different way, and it's on paper. I worked for 21 years in one company. Now I want to go to school.

English. To speak English. To learn English Second Language, reading, writing, spelling, so after school finished, find a job, so I work. Because no English, I don't know. No pick job. Any job. I have high blood pressure, so I can't do hard work.

I speak nice, but I don't know how to read and write. I come here for to read and write. I thought maybe slowly, slowly, I learn more how to read and write. I would be able to fill up an application for a job on my own. That's the reason.

To learn. How to read. How to learn good. I don't know my plans.

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I want to first of all write and read. Some math, to prepare to more jobs. Talking. So that the people understand what I'm saying. When you answer the phone and take a message. I'm so happy in school. I can talk more clear. I am read and write a little bit. Before I come here, I can't read nothing. And my daughter says, "You see, now I have to be careful when I'm talking. She knows everything now." I can't believe it. For me, it's like a miracle. My granddaughter says, "Grandma, come read." When I read to her, she says, "Oh, Grandma, that's great! She says to my oldest son, "Come and sit and hear what Grandma learned." I'm so happy. Before, I went anyplace and I had to talk English, I had to bring someone with me. I had to bother people. They lose time. Now, I can defend myself. I read the newspaper every day to find a job. I like to come to school, but it's important to get a job. If I get a job in the afternoon, I can come to school in the morning. It depends on what time the job ends. If it ends at twelve midnight, I can't get up to come to school.

I came to this class to learn English. Writing English is very important in Canada. I'm looking for a job a long time. They say, "You must speak English. So sorry." I understand now my problem, is old lady. They don't hire old people. Now I understand English a little. The teacher is a good teacher, an excellent teacher. Before I don't understand English, speaking, nothing. Is very important I come to a school everyday. The strike, I worried. I stay home. Is very important I continue school.

I came here to learn more, because in my country I didn't go far in school, so I just want to catch up where I leave. I came for the job purposes, and also for the future. Actually, I want to study more English and the math.

I'm coming here right now because, when I was going to school, I was into drugs and drinking and stuff like that, so I thought I'd come to this program so I could get my Grade 12. I started my own business in landscape maintenance and renovating. I've been in the business for about seven years, but it hasn't been getting ahead, because of my reading and writing. I coach minor league ball hockey. If I know what's going on in the school now, and a kid comes up to me and asks me to help him with his schoolwork, I won't be able to give him input. That's more or less how I was brought up, to help people. I used to be in Yorkdale. I ended up teaching the kids, as I was getting help in reading and writing myself.

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To improve my English, number one, and also math. That's the main reason. What about down the road, what about computers? Learn how to do it, because it's the way it's going to be. It's the writing on the wall. Everything's changed so fast. It's the technology, that's what's happened. So I can move into the regular class or college down the road. Maybe down the road I will get into fixing computers. That's the main thing. My old work was restoring furniture, but that work's gone. This is now. That's it. Times have changed. The market has changed. Education. Either you have that, or you're not going nowhere. In my father's day, his first language was Norwegian, they didn't have language classes. But today, if you don't have the education . . . You have to have Grade 12, and still there's no guarantee you'll get a job. In my grandparents' day, they learned it by the book and by the radio and the newspaper. But now it's different.

My English and math. I want to go to Emery to get Grade 12. When I get my Grade 12, I want to make food services.

My English is not proper, and I want to learn more about English. I haven't been to school for a very long time and I have a lot of catching up to do. Then again, if I come and learn, I can help my children better. So I have a lot of reasons. You get better English, that mean you have a better chance of getting a job or going up in grade. So that mean you start with a lower class and you go to a higher. I need more English.

Because I want to improve my grammar and maths a little more. I went to Emery and I wasn't good, so she sent me back. Now I'm not getting daycare, so I am only come to school two day. I expect to come here only three month, to push fast, but now I have no daycare. I pay for a babysitter two days. My education is not so good. I went to school six years. I was going every day to school. I want to do a well—paid job because I'm separated from my husband and I have to maintain myself and my kids.

I'm coming to better myself, that I could better myself and help my children with their work. And also to get a job.

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I'd like to help out other students in this program after I improve my reading and writing. I'm not working right now. I'm waiting to get my license. I'm going one day at a time.

I want to learn to read well and get a good job someday. I work as a mechanic. I want to get further in the mechanic. Someday, I can open a business of my own. I want to help out the community, to help out others.

I just want to learn to read and write so I can get a job and catch up on my English. I'm interested in printing or mechanics. For printing, you need to read and write good and do math to measure and know what size of type to use.

The reason I'm over here is that I want to upgrade in maths to go back to high school. I want to go back to high school to get a diploma in cosmetology. I used to go to Rawlinson High School. I dropped out because I got a job. I never finished high school. I came back here to see how much I could remember from high school. I have to take an exam in September to go back to high school.

I need this for myself, learning for myself I have for speaking. I need this for English. My English is very low for speak. The reading, I have no problem. I have problem for speak. And I need math. I like a future job, when I finish this class. I want to go for a job. I don't want more school.

We have a few troubles. First of all, we come to this country and we don't have English. And we need job. And we need daycare. My baby is 18 months old, and he doesn't have any daycare. I want to continue my education as far as I can. High school, college, whatever I can. If you know something, it's good for you. I would like to raise my kids' education. If you don't have an education, you can't raise your kids' education. I'm old. It's hard. But that's the reason I want to continue, to raise my kids' education.

More English and math. I have a lot of things. I need high school. I need to finish college as a clothes designer.

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To learn more English and math, that's why I came. I want to get a nice job. I want to go to high school.

I come because I was getting frustrated when I come to work. I get frustrated when I couldn't read and write something. Reading and writing is very important, especially in Canada. You need it so you don't have to depend on anybody. I felt that when I go anywhere I had to fill out an application and read things. I was feeling really frustrated. If you sit at home, it doesn't do you any good. You have to read to your kids. You can't help them. If you lose an education, you lose your self—esteem. You have to. Its very embarrassing if your kid comes home with a letter and you can't read it, and the kid gets hurt because you can't read to him. Sometimes, when the kids grow up, they will disrespect you. If you have your kids and you can't help them, you lose. The job that I last did was embroidering, and in embroidering, you have to be able to use the computer to read the tape that does the logo. You have to choose the thread on the computer. Then you have to write down what you did.

When I was in my country, Jamaica, my mom told me she couldn't afford to send me to school. I have a son up here, so he file for me up here. Then I go back. Then he signed for me, but I couldn't sign nothing. My son said, “You can't stay here and not do nothing.” This teacher teach me to read the words, but sometimes I forget. I ask Erin to help me learn the signs so I can get around by myself and stand on my own feet. I would like to do babysitting. I love kids. But I have to be able to read better. Canada is a good country. I leave so many years to come to school, so I feel happy. I am so happy to come to school. I am so glad for Canada. Canada is a nice country, because I didn't know my name. My friend carried me to the food bank. He said, “You can sign your name?” So I signed it. I told him, “I didn't know how to do this before, you know.” He said, “You know, so many people come to this country, and they can just make an X.” Anywhere I go, I can sign my name. I can go to the bank and sign my name. I can do it. I send my children to school. All of them can read. I went to the market to sell vegetables. Only I can't read. And they said to me, “You have to go. Before, I didn't know when I was born. I know it now by coming to school. I love Erin. She is a nice teacher. She don't rough me. She do me good. She would show me things over and over, because she want me to get things in my head.”

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**M**y problem is I can't read properly, so I want to learn to read properly and do math and English. I really want to do designing and I want to do homecare, but do homecare you have to be able to read the prescriptions. I have a daughter and she come home from school and she want me to help her with her work, and I want to be there for her. I go for jobs and I have trouble filling out application, and because of that, you can't go for what you want. You always stay back.

**I** come to this school to have a better education, to read and write, so I can go to college and get a better job. I want to take homecare. You have to have a Grade 10 to go ahead with that.

**I** came from a different country. I didn't go to school for a long period of time. I came to Canada with my family. I got divorce. So I'm a single parent. It's time for me to stand on my own two feet and do something for myself. So I came back to school. I'm also interested in hairdressing and chef, but for me to do this, I have to get upgrading in math and English.

**F**irst, I came to improve my English. I want to speak good English, writing for working, like a college or university, or when I go back to my country I can teach English.

**I** just want to learn good English. It's more for speaking. If I have a chance, I'm going to high school and going to university. If I stay here in Canada, I want to be a teacher, a sports teacher. I have experience like that in my country.

**W**ell, I understand much more than I speak English, so I need practice to speak with other people, and grammar. I've never been in school in Canada. I was in Vancouver. I had to pay for school over there. But I know English from Bulgaria, from my school for secretary over there.

**I** come here to learn how to spell and how to write English again. I come in the afternoon, because I do my housework in the morning. I had a stroke nine years ago. I had to wait until my kids were in school. Now they are in school full day. I used to be a good speller and a good writer. After my stroke, I couldn't write, but I could scribble. No one else could understand me. I had to learn to write with my right hand again. To get my writing back will probably take me a couple of years. I just started last year in September. Janet has me writing in my journal twice a week. I only write a paragraph or so. Last time, I only had two words wrong. That' s a lot better than last year.

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I want to build up my career, and right now I am on unemployment, and I got into a big fight. They told me that I could take English, but I didn't know that it have to be a night. I work for a landscaper, that's why I got laid off for the winter. The company likes me very much and they want me to be a supervisor. But I need more English, and I can only learn for two or three months in the winter. When I am working, I have to time to learn English. I work thirteen and fourteen hours a day. I can't go to school, even at night. So Doreen [the instructor] wrote me a letter, and the unemployment give me special permission to come here. I had to fight for things, and I have two kids, so it's not easy. I also plan to take a landscaping course in March, but I need English first. I was a bookkeeper in my country. If I get some more English, the landscaping company won't lay me off in the winter. I can do office work.

I think that my English is important so that I can work in Canada. And also I learn about Canada and Canadian social rituals. It's very hard for new people coming to Canada. I think that without the classes, I couldn't find a job. Now, I work full time, but I come to class in my leisure time. Maybe if students had to pay more, people wouldn't come, and they would lose their chance forever. Because new people coming to Canada think they will use their money more effectively. They will think to spend their money on buying a home or some essential thing, and they won't learn about Canada. When a new immigrant comes to Canada without an education, they have a very limited social circle. I don't think they can help Canada very much. Now that I have taken this course, I can take care of my family and my children. So I think that this class is very essential for the new people. I think that they Canadian government should do something for the new people. If the government brings people to Canada and doesn't help them, it will be a problem. There won't be a way for them to get involved in Canadian society. For example, because I came to this class, I feel that I can communicate with you right now.

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I want to learn more. I want to know more about Canada, even the vocabulary and writing. The program help me a lot. For those three months, I feel I know much knowledge. Now if I pick up the newspaper, I can get 80% of what I read. Before, it was difficult to read the newspaper. I read about car accidents in the newspaper. After reading the newspaper, I had an accident. Because I read the newspaper, I know my rights. The other party didn't show me her documents, but I argued with her. I know the law. I think this class can help me to find a job. Even some of the slang and idiom I can't understand. But now it is good for me to understand the Canadian people. I want to finish this program this year. Then, if I find a job, I won't continue. But, if not, I will continue here.

I came to this class mainly to change my life in terms of career, change my life meaning in the work field, find out what the market is asking for a what are the benefits for me. And if it helps me to grow and help the country, maybe Canada could get something of what I have learned. I'm thinking of having my own business. Right now, I'm a beautician. I'm in the beauty world. However, I'd like to learn more about the corporate world so that my awareness is always there.

In my country, I was a t.v director. I want to get media work here in Canada, but first of all, I need to improve my English, especially in writing and reading, because in this kind of job, you have to have good communication skills.

Because I came to improve my math skills . I have to improve my grade to 11 or 12. Sometimes I get a good job, but then they give me a test and I don't have Grade 12, so I don't get to stay at the job. You have to have Grade 12 to be a machine operator. I can get a job short term, but what about the long term? And I want to improve my grammar so that when I speak my speech is correct and I don't give the wrong information. So that my accent doesn't say one thing when I mean another thing.

I want to be able to read properly and write, and maths. I have problems with math, and there's a lot of things now that I don't understand in school. I want to learn.

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**N**ext year, I want to get a job. So my reading and writing, I need upgrading because I want to find a job. Going to another class after this would be good, but I need to get a job.

**F**or me, I was doing upgrading here. I'm leaving today. I was here for 3 months. I'm going for tests at Emery C.I. today. I want to finish Grade 12 at Emery, take a diploma and go to university. I would like to be a lawyer.

**I** would like to read and write my own letter. I want to write letters to Jamaica without I ask anyone, and I want to read my mail from the government without I ask anyone, and I would like to fill up application forms, because I can't do it. Sometimes I don't want someone to read my letter. And when I go to Jamaica, my children don't understand what I'm writing. And I speak English, but I want to speak it properly.

**I** need upgrading on my math and English, writing and reading. I need it for my children first of all. They go to school, and they need it for their homework. I also need it for my future so that I could get a better job. With upgrading, I should go on to nursing. I could get a skill. And no one could fool I you. You could understand. Without education, it's really hard. Reading is understanding. I didn't get much schooling. If I could get it now, and I'm getting it now, and I feel that it's really helping. The more you read, the more you gain.

**I** learn English. I come here, I learn the English, because now I don't speak the English. I can't work. My family is very big. I have 7 children. I come here. After 6 months, I want to get a good job. I go to factory. They say, "You not English." I can't get job.

**I** want to upgrade my English. I wanted to go to Emery, or another school, but I have to improve my English first. In my country, I graduated from university. I was a teacher and a principal for 16 years in an Arabic school. I would like to teach Arabic here if I get more English.

**I** miss my education back home. Now I have a chance. I have to find some education. I want to go to find a job. I am a forklift driver. If you don't have any language, you can't find a job. You have to know how to write. You have to know math to operate crane. I am a full mechanic, but I need the language and math.

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I'd like to get a little education out of it. I'm retired now. I live by myself, and I'd like to read a little once in a while, or write a letter. Figure out my own expenses. I have a house. I'd like to do a bit of bookkeeping. Keep track of your important output, be able to balance my figures.

Some reading and writing. I just want to learn how. When I came here, I lived with my mom and dad. Now my mom and dad live on the bottom deck, and I have the top deck with my own private entrance. One of the reasons I'm here is so that I can read the cooking directions. I have to figure out the grocery cards, the price tags, to see if it is high or low and how to know the difference. And then you have to figure out the laundry soap, too, if it's a big enough price.

I would like to practice my writing and reading. I am a newcomer, just 4 months. I have been in an ESL class for 3 months. When I was in school I learned English for 6 years in high school. About 20 years ago, I learned some French in my country. Eight years ago, my son came here, so I studied English. I took private lessons, but my reading and writing is poor. Here it is really good. Suzan can give me individual attention. I keep a journal. I know fine arts, and I graduated in the university. I have been a fine arts teacher for 25 years. So I would like to take university courses in art history and philosophy. I need writing and reading.

Because learning English is important for my life. I'm not born in Canada. I come in Canada a couple of years.

I need help with some reading and math and all that.

I guess to help me improve my education or what I missed in my last years of grade school or junior high school.

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**F**or myself. It's for my reading and my spelling. When I was a lot younger, the teacher didn't have enough time to teach me, and this class is teaching me a lot. When I was in school, they said I had a learning disability, so I just want to improve what I missed in school. I'm taking one step at a time.

**B**ecause I come from Russia so I speak Russian. My English is not so bad, but I'd like to improve more. My counsellor told me where to come to school. This is a good class because there are not too many people and the teacher gives attention to me. I want to improve my English because I'm from Russia.

**E**ducation I had never got when I was in Nova Scotia, both reading and writing, and math is really hard. It's really frustrating. I want to be a daycare teacher, so reading and math is what you really need. I did the early childhood education program in Nova Scotia for a year and then I got sick. I'm interested in ECE.

**U**pgrade spelling, math and English. I'm in recreation right now. I was looking into building bikes, but I was told that was out of my reach, because of my English and math. So I can't get the program. So anything in the outdoor field. But I might be able to get into the field through my knowledge of bikes. I race bikes and I'm good at designing them.

**G**et more education. This is for my own personal goals. I am working part time and doing studies on the side.

**M**y reason was agreeing in order to keep my job, to extend my contract. They extended my contract based on my coming here. I am an administrative assistant at a daycare centre. I used to be an assistant daycare teacher. I want to learn how to deal with a learning disability. How to use different strategies. Also, to give me strength not to let other people put me down.

**I** came to this program because I have a learning disability. The only way I was going to get help without being embarrassed about getting the help was to come here and be in a room with other people with learning disabilities. It's better than just going to the college trying to get things done.

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I started Seneca at first, and I was doing my courses. I had problems keeping up with my studies, so I just walked into the special needs office. They sent me to a counsellor, and she sent me to another counsellor. The counsellor who did the testing told me that I had a learning disability, but she didn't tell me what kind. Because my learning disability is profound, she told me I should either stick with Suzan's class or continue at the college. But continuing at the college didn't make any sense to me, because I didn't know what my disability was. So I went to Suzan's class, but I still didn't know what kind of learning disability I had. I had to be tested by Pat Hatt. She confirmed what Suzan had suspected, that I had auditory processing difficulties. What I was studying before was micro computer, but that was several years off, and I am working part time, and looking for full time work. By the time I got around to finishing, it would be maybe 5 or 6 years. I decided to have a new career choice. I decided to get myself tested. So they gave me a list of jobs, but not considering learning disabilities, so I have to consider that myself. Finally, I decided on floristry. I'm just getting into my own studying. I'm tired of schooling. Maybe I'll consider schooling in the future if I can't get a job from my own knowledge.

The following points ( 1 - 15) were made in a group discussion.

1. Communication. Being an effective communicator. Using technology.
  2. Expressing ourselves truly and fully.
  3. It also helps me in my social life, with my friends.
  4. This program helps to build my education.
  5. I was able to go to another computer class and to have a job placement for two years. And also for my personal life. I got married. We have our own apartment, and we're going to get our own place soon. I am out in the community, and my confidence and self—esteem is high. It helps you to become more independent. It builds up your self esteem.
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6. When we do personal empowerment, I feel like we're not just friends; we're all a family, and we bring all our problems to the table and we all discuss it and after we do that we get it off our chest and then we can all live our lives again.
  7. This class is not just an ordinary class. It's a class to help overcome our disabilities. It's one of the best programs in Ontario.
  8. You get to make your own answer.
  9. And there's no right or wrong answer. You can say whatever's on your mind.
  10. And it helps you in body and spirit and mind and it uplifts you and it helps you to keep going on and to be a better person in life.
  11. My mother and father don't speak English. The location should be so that people want to come. It's very important for people to learn where to go.
  12. It's the only place where a person with disabilities can come, and who speak English as a Second Language.
  13. I get to work in things that I need in my life, like banking. Also, I get to make friends and learn to stand on your own.
  14. I get to work on my self—esteem, and more than that
  15. I have seen in this program that people come here thinking that just because they have a physical disability they are like babies, but as they progress in this program, they are progressing into responsible and mature adults. I have seen that happen.

I've been coming here for many years. I like coming to not be sitting home and watching TV and to read more and more. I'm coming to help me more in my job, like my spelling and my writing. I work at the Bank of Nova Scotia, processing cheques. When I talk with somebody at work now, I talk more slowly, so they understand what I'm saying. I'd like to achieve more. Now, people, you could do more than just sit and watch TV or soap operas. There's more to life. If my writing and spelling improve, it could help me get a job on day shift at the bank. If my writing gets really good and my spelling, I would apply to Seneca College again. They referred me here.

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**R**eally, what I want out of the program, first of all I missed in my younger days because my mother and father had quite a few children. But and working on it. I'm reading my Bible and signs, and also I want to own a car, and I know that I have to read and write to get my license. Otherwise, people might lose their lives. So I joined the program so at least I would get my driver's license, and also I believe in God, so I would like to be able to read the Bible. And fill out application forms. I know that it is good if you can see things for yourself. You may not know everything, but you can see some things for yourself, and read and write for yourself.

**W**hat I want right now, I have an education, but I would like to better myself. Because sometimes you daughter asks you to read something, and you can't do it. You feel very bad. And any business at all, if you're looking for a job, you have to fill out a form, and you can't really do it. And now they have math, and you have to do it if you're going to an agency. Everything now is writing. They say if you can't do it you can't really qualify for the job. Because I experience that.

**I** came here to read and write. I can't learn to read and write. I'm learning a little now. The only thing I could do was write my own name. I'm still young. I want to learn. Before I was afraid to come to school because I was afraid that people would laugh at me, but people told me, "Don't be afraid, if you have to learn, you have to learn." When I was little, my mom and dad sent me to the French school, but I don't speak none. All my family is French except me. I'd like to be a building superintendent and a supervisor. I know a lot about plumbing and electricity. I do that already, without reading. It would help me get the paper to prove that I can do it.

**I** born in Jamaica, and I used to go to school in Jamaica, but I never got to finish school. I been here 5 years. I was a mason and a tiler back home, so I'm going back to school to get my papers here.

**I** would love to read and write. The job I'm doing now, I'm not sure I can do it until I'm 65. So I'd like to be able to do a little filing or something. I think it's very important to be able to read and write. I really prove that. I think if it continue I will get to remember. Now, I'm trying to get my citizenship, and I pray that I will be able to do it then.

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The following points (1-10) were made in a group discussion.

**1.** Why I came to school is that in the future it will help me find a job. It will help me to communicate with the hearing community in a better way.

**2.** I want English and math to help me find a job in the future. I came to help me develop English skills. I'd like to learn about computers, too. All of us are interested in jobs. I'm ready right now. It's a health issue right now.

**3.** I came for English and writing. I want to learn about that because my skills aren't that strong yet. I want to be able to develop my skills more, just for shopping and everyday life, for communication. I am sort of interested in work, but my focus right now is on communication and everyday life.

**4.** In the future, I'd like to get a job.

**5.** Just for math I want to continue. I have a job already in the workshop downstairs.

**6.** I came for my English skills and reading skills. I want to get more skills in that. In the vocabulary, I don't know what it means. A lot of times, communication, misunderstandings, it's very tough for me. Miscommunication happens. So I just want to communicate smooth. And my plans for the future: I 'm thinking of working as a hairdresser, but to have a job like that, in the future I need to communicate better. I need more communication. Communication can be a real problem sometimes. It can be really tough.

**7.** I do tailoring and sewing during the week. I find communication very tough with the sewing teacher. All the other people were hearing people. So I communicate well enough.

**8.** I came just to learn, because it's important to improve our skills in English. I came here from Hong Kong, so it was important for me to learn English and ASL also.

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**9.** Before I grew up in Toronto. I went to the Toronto School for the Deaf and Parkview High School. It didn't really give us homework. It was really very poor. They didn't have yearbooks. They didn't do anything. The shop classes were good, but the writing classes weren't so good. And in the shop class, they didn't separate the hearing and the deaf, and everything had to be explained slowly. They didn't have interpreters. They had to keep showing and showing us. They'd have separate groups, hearing and deaf, then they'd get merged together in the shop class. It was good to have them together, but the education just wasn't very good. People didn't get their needs met. Those schools are closed now. I think they closed in '82. That's why I came here. I like the teacher, I like the group. I'm really much more satisfied. Like here, the tables are set up so you can sign. They are set up to meet the needs of deaf people.

**10.** My first language is English, and a little bit of signing. English and signing, I learned them together. I was in a special class. It made me very depressed. There was very little math. Everything was all really basic. So now I have trouble with vocabulary, for example. I need now to make it better and better, on the phone and so forth. But I'm improving, going to the class. There are still a lot of misunderstandings. Sometimes people don't understand me when I'm typing. People don't understand the English and typing.

**I** did not want to learn when I was younger. They didn't help me. I was the only non-speaking student in the class. I am very good in math. I want to be independent and writing and reading helps me do that at home. My dream is to be an advocate for people who are more severely disabled than me. I want to give people help. I need to be able to read and write to do that.

**I** just need to learn. Back home, I didn't learn much. To read and write and take a trade later on, because there isn't too much you can do without an education. When I came here first, I didn't know anything. Now I can read, now I can write, so I can do something better with my life. What I want to learn to read, Maurice will let me do it. I have to do paperwork where I work. Maurice will teach me to get my license. Now I'm going for citizenship. Then, after, I go for a trade. I want to be a machinist. That's the kind of work I'm doing. I work in a parts manufacturing company. After two months on the job, my boss said, "We need educated people at this job." But Maurice told me, "Don't worry, you will learn." And I did.

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Well, in my younger days I didn't go to school. It's important that you read and write. I'm trying, but there are things that I can't remember. It's hard to concentrate. It would be good to have a tutor, because sometimes you need special attention. The most important thing is reading and writing; then you can think about the next step. You got to read and write before you say, "I want to do this, I want to do that." If I could, if I get my education, I'd like to do cooking, baking and stuff like that. Pastry cook. Coming in this country, I realize that reading and writing are very important.

Because I am here in Canada for 22 years, I want to learn English better, and write better. Nobody forced me to do it. I like to do it. Sometimes you want to express yourself, and you cannot. I want to improve myself. I don't want to be behind anybody. When you know how to explain better, people treat you better. And I don't need computer. Because when you know how to read and write, the computer comes easy. You know, I could stay at home and watch t.v. But the problem is the t.v. don't talk back to you. It's better to come here than to sit in front of the t.v. like a bum.

I come just to learn how to read better English, and write. I'm a Jehovah's Witness. It gives me more chances to do more reading and be a witness to people. I can read, but I know I can do better, and that's what I want to do. We really have a good teacher. He tell us how to pronounce word and that is the key. Now I can stand before a lot of people and read the Bible. As for me, he is really helpful for all of this. This doesn't go for me alone, but for everyone in the class. When I'm gone, it will be here for other people. Because some people don't have the chance to go to school. This really improve me.

I had put it off for a long time, because I had kids when I was young, and I just put it off for a long time, because I didn't have the courage, but I wanted to help my kids. My niece brought me here. When I first came here, I couldn't read two lines. But now I can read. I also got my drivers' license through this class. My goal is I like to fix things. If I could be a mechanic, I would do it. But if I can't get there, I would be satisfied to read and write. I also have a good job at Magna Corporation, and if I need help with something at work, I can bring it here and Maurice will help me. So far, I'm proud of what I know. Actually, my kids are proud of me, too, because they see how tired I am, and I still go to school. And last week my daughter was having trouble with math, and I was able to sit with her and teach her.

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This is my first night here. The reason I came here is I have a low academic level. And the reason I came here is I want to be employable. So I hope this two hours a week can bring me up to a basic level.

I can't read and write so well. I want to go to high school and get a job.

I'm looking for a good program, and success in this program. Most of all, the English; that is the main stuff that I want to get done, because right now the main problem that I have is the reading and the spelling. I want to go as far as I can, because the work that I'm interested in is mechanic, so I'd like to go to high school and get a diploma and become a something. My grandmother never really sent me to school. Now since I started attending this class, I notice a little improvement.

I can't read and write. I work very hard to bring my children here. I told them the opportunity to go to college and university is here in Toronto. Take it. And sometimes you just want to write a letter for yourself, and it's so hard. You feel bad. So I said to my children, "You can read, you can write. Help yourself. Go back to school." I have a little seven-year-old, and I'm trying my very best. I always take her to a Saturday school for her learning. Sometimes she don't understand, but I say, "Try, and take what you can." I would like to get a job.

I came here because I want to find a better job, and I didn't have enough skills to find a good job. I couldn't see myself in a high school, and now I can. I have the opportunity to further my education and do better, because of my lack of education. I'm focussing on the math. I had a lack of math.

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I need to get into my maths. I failed my maths at DeVry. I need to get the maths in my head. I'd like to go to college.

I came out to learn more, and just came to do more skills, because I couldn't do anything with math and reading and writing. I'm much improving now. I came to get a future, and help out with my career.

The reason why I'm here is I can't read and I can't write. And I'm in here 6 months, and there's a lot of improvement in my reading and writing. I want to be a nurse. After this class, I want to go to high school so I can complete my nurse education. Before, if you ask me to write "the" I can't write it, but now I can do more than that. I can write my own letter, I can read books to my kids. Before, when my kids brought home books to read, I couldn't read them, but now I can. And it help me all over. I'm in this country 11 years, but I have trouble finding a job because I can't fill out applications properly. This program help me a lot.

I come to the class because I want to upgrade myself. The math, I was very low. I'm feeling very good about myself. I'm feeling very good. I want to go to work. You got to learn your math for work. And the English. I couldn't even read when I started last year in September. Now I can pick up a book and read it. And my spelling. I'm really proud of myself, because I learned so much.

I like this school very much. It's very convenient for me. I live just down the street. I want to improve writing and reading, and my English, and just to improve myself. I have been here for a long time, and I don't know to speak English, to read and write. It would be good to read and write English, because I'm in Canada now.

I like to improve my skill writing and reading, also math. Then I want to take some course for high school, and then college. Writing and reading is hard for me, and also grammar.

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**Y**our reading and writing needs to smooth before you can go to college. I speak o.k., but when I read I have problem. When I spell, I can't even write an essay. My math is o.k. I do fraction. But my dream is to learn. I hope for a long time.

**I** am coming far way, Sherbourne and Wellesley Streets. This program is good, every day is writing journal, and the grammar is good. Before I go to Broadview School. That is close to my home. They have high maths, many students in one class. My friend is coming here. I ask, "What do you have?" He said, "They have basic maths." So I changed to here. I miss before the maths. My first class is this program. I need if you go cashier. Helping my children. Very important, maths.

**I** do have a Grade 12 diploma. I've been working for 20 years. When I started working, my spelling and math were poor, and they got worse over the years, because I didn't compose letters, and I didn't do math. The letters that I did write were all fill-in-the-blanks. And I always had to ask people, "How do you spell this word?" and "How do you spell that word?" and I got fed up with that. When, because of a business merger, I had to reapply for a job, they told me that I didn't have the proper qualifications for the filing job that I was already doing. Everybody's job description had been rewritten to include more skills and qualifications, even though my particular job didn't actually require all these skills and qualifications. I had been doing that job for 20 years, but I didn't have the proper qualifications for it. I decided to go into the health field, but I have to upgrade my language and math skills. And if I didn't go into the health field, I would still need this. My next step will be looking into the brochures for colleges and private programs. The health care field is something I'm interested in, but I'm interested in different career ideas: computer, art, writing.

**T**he purpose of me coming to the program is that I am trying to get into the esthetics program at Bathurst Heights S.S. I have a learning disability. I took the test at Bathurst Heights several times, but I didn't get in. Mr. Faber, the principal, told me that if I upgraded my English and math, they would accept me into this program. And now I find that I have to take the test again. I'll take the test again, but I'm also looking into other things.

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I like the class, because my speak problem and I learning grammar, too. English my main reason. Now I learn English grammar. I write paragraph. Before, I can't understand a person who is speaking. Now I can. This is not for job. When I go somewhere, shopping mall, I need. Sometimes I tell my children storybook, I need. Sometimes I talk to my neighbour, I need. I go to the mall everyday. I need English first. The teacher at my son's school calls a meeting, I need English.

I only have grade 9. I left school when I was really young and foolish. I learned a lot when I was out of school, but I find that you need an education to get a lot of jobs. So I came back, and I've learned a lot more than I learned in 20 years within the academic field. I've been here about a month and a half. I'd like to go over to Bathurst Heights to get my Grade 12. After the March Break, I'll be writing my entrance test. I'd like to get into some kind of work like alarm systems, or fixing mechanical things. This will probably involve a college course, probably a couple of years.

I want to learn. I don't write so good. I don't speak so good English. No my language. I want to learn English so I can find a job when I finish.

The reason why I come to this program, I want to better my life, read, write, fill out forms, go to high school, go to a better school, get a trade, get a job.

I have worked for the Board of Education as a caretaker for 10 years, but now we have to use computers. We have to do work orders. We have to update our reading and writing. The Board offers classes, but I didn't like the Board classes. I felt we were wasting time, that system they were using with the journals. So I made some investigations, and I found this program here. It took me a while. I asked ESL teachers. That's why I'm here, and I appreciate the opportunity.

I didn't know about this program before. A friend of mine told me, "You should go to this program, because you should get more skills," because sometimes I have trouble talking to people. So I came for an interview here, and I started it. The most particular thing I want is math, because plus and times, I get them mixed up. Because I get confused with my times tables, and sometimes when people ask me how I'm doing, I still need to practice doing my math. I had a learning disability. Sometimes with the tests I didn't understand the question, so I decided not to go to school anymore. So I think this is the right program for me.

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I would like to improve my English skills. I would like to get Grade 12 standard in English and maths. Then I am able to apply Accounting program in college. I know if I want to attend college I must upgrade my English. Otherwise, I can't go ahead my future goals. I have been learning some English grammar and practicing my listening skills. It is help me to fit into my plans for the future.

I came to the program to help prepare me for college and upgrade myself in the areas and subjects I need help in.

To improve the English and to learn computer (basic and more). Prepare for a college course or university. But the first choice is college program, and finish a profession job. In the future, I want to be able to use my reading, writing and math to work with other groups. I want to write a job report, or whatever related to my job. Furthermore, I live in this country. I need to know what a Canadian know. This program make me ready for the college course, and the society understanding. Furthermore prepare to find a profession job that I have 14 years experience in that. But unfortunately my job is a specific job, so I have to study another course.

To continue my education. This is my first step. I was an accountant and I want to be at least an office clerk on whatever, so as long as it is accounting. So I know my plan and I know what I am going to do.

The reason why I came to OBS program is to improve my English. I preferred OBS to adult school because it gets me into college environment.

Improve my English in writing, reading and speaking. Learned about computer, which are very useful in a life. Recall math, after than you finished school 10 or 12 years ago, you forgot everything. I'm learning how to write a short story. My grammar is improving. This program is good preparation for college or to find a better job.

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To upgrade and move on to something better. I want to perfect the subjects for later use. In the future, I want to write children's stories.

I want to improve my English language as soon as possible. I am from Iran. In Iran I was medical laboratory technician. In Canada, I want to continue my education. First, I want to go college and after that I want to continue in university. This program is very helpful. Now, it helps me a lot to improve my English language, and in the future I want to move on to college or university, so it helps me a lot. There are a lot of counsellors who can help me by giving me the information about continuing my education.

I came to this program to improve my English, because I am a newcomer. Also, I want to be familiar with a system of education in Canada and be prepared to go to college. I really need to know how to write, read and do math in everyday life, because I live in this country. I have to know it. In the future, I'll need reading and writing more, because I hope to find a job. That is impossible without reading and writing.

I came to Seneca College to improve my knowledge which I had before and go through the college. They teach me all I need, which is English, math and computer class.

I came to the OBS program to get my diploma. As an early high school dropout, I never had the chance to finish my education, due to family circumstances. To improve my self worth and self esteem. To finally complete something. With math, I would like to improve my skills and refresh my memory from the experience I knew from the past. Being Acadian, I used a lot of the Acadian slang. So English has been helping me to improve my speech. Math and writing will help me in the future, because I am interested in business. How does this program fit into my plans for the future? I will be able to smile and say, "Yes, I've completed high school (Grade 12), and I have a diploma." It will also help me to improve my resume.

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I'm planning to go to university. Before entering university, I'd like to improve my English skills and knowledge during this spare period. This program is totally different from other ESL and LINC program. I can learn a lot useful knowledge and prepare for studying in university. For me, math is easy, because I have learn these concepts already. But English is my second language. I need to improve my listening, reading and writing. I need more communication. Many people in this program have different levels. We can change our knowledge and learn from teachers a lot. It really fits my plans to go to university. I know it will be more hard to study in the future. And here I get pressure to finish my courses and do it best.

The cause of that, why I came into this program, is that I want to complete this program and move on college programs. Right now, I'm in struggle to develop my knowledge of English, math, computer and I feel myself better than before. I'll have a bright future. If I continue this program and enter into college programs, I'll have good enough knowledge of reading and writing in English and will be able to solve mathematics problems.

To improve my skills and also this program provide me with a certification which is equivalent to OSSD, Ontario Secondary School Diploma. OBS also prepares me for college. After OBS, I intend to move on to college. I want to improve my skills and ability in all subjects. Since I intend to go to college and do computer programmer/analyst, I need all of the subjects, especially maths. Maths, English, and computer literacy fit right into my future plans. As for Contemporary Society and Environmental Science, I look as personal learning for myself.

I came to the LBS program because I want first to improve my English listening and speaking and also to review my English writing and maths that I've already studied before in my country (Vietnam). In addition, I want to learn the computer basic that is new to me. And then later, after I complete this program, I want to move on some college course. This program helps me a lot in preparing me for my future college course.

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The following plans for further study (1-10) are from a group discussion.

1. Nursing.
2. College — don't know which program.
3. Social studies, community work.
4. Social work.
5. Fashion area.
6. Computer programmer.
7. Computer.
8. I don't decide now which program.
9. Computer, technology.
10. Health, genetics (university).

I came here last September. I need to improve my English skill. I was a doctor back in China, but I can't find work here in Canada. So I have to improve my English so that I can contribute to Canada, and to my family here.

I want to go to one of the computer programs, so I want to improve my English, and as soon as possible, I would like to start.

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When I came to Canada about four years ago, I was located in the North Holland Landing area, and there wasn't much convenience for adult education. I had to go to Richmond Hill for one year. I was never satisfied with what I got. When I came down here, I also wasn't satisfied. My husband said that this program will help you. The teachers have a more professional reputation. The main problem is the language for me. Maybe this is my personality; I have to be perfect . . . although I will never be perfect. I want to solve the English problem. Then I would like to continue my education. Back home, I was a bookkeeper. So maybe I will take the bookkeeping program.

I came to the program to improve and upgrade and to be better prepared for the job market. This program will help me improve English writing, therefore better job opportunities.

I need my Grade 12 maths and English to do the course I'm interested in. This was the best program available, because I really need to upgrade my maths and English.

I came in this school for one reason to improve my English and math and prepare myself for easy entry to college. I want to take some technical courses. I want some knowledge of computers. Now I can easily read, write and talk.

My reasons for coming to this program is to upgrade my math, English and communication skills. With my reading, writing and math I would like to get a decent job.

The first reason I do upgrading is for math and English, and I would like to go for my GED, and this program will help me to acquire Grade 12 skills. I would like to get into a certification course and to do that I need Grade 11/12 skills. My goal now is to use my reading and writing and math skills to further my education in computer studies. In the future I would like to become a computer technical, which will require more schooling. I wish I could of just gone to take the test, but I really need to prepare for my Grade 12 equivalency test.

I came to this program to get some upgrading in math and English. I plan to use it in the future on the job and to help my children.

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I came to this program for two reasons, which are to further my English and math skills, and I was able to get into this program through the help of Social Assistance. With reading, writing and math I can learn all the things like: how to write a resume, how to do a cover letter, how to write business letters, etc. In math I would do fractions, arithmetic, and especially metric. In the future, I would like to use these important skills to get a good job. This program helps me a great deal by showing me more than the basic skills that are required for a good job.

I improve my English and get a computer knowledge to find a job. I am fine in reading and good in math. But in communication I need more practice. To get a job, you need communication. In this program I came to know so many new words and vocabulary to improve in English.

Three reasons. (1) More confidence in working. (2) More opportunity in choosing different posts and companies. (3) Further study: upgrading English skill.

To improve my communication skills. I want to have good knowledge of language and computer skills.

To improve my English.

I came to this program to further my English and math skills. I had six months to upgrade myself. I think I have learned a lot. I wish my time was longer, but for now I can satisfy with what I have accomplish. It will help me to get a better job and I have a better understanding of what I need to become successful in the future. In the future, I would like to further my education.

Improving English in vocabulary and grammar. Practicing English in conversation. I want to understand communication, and then to express communication.

To learn English. Now: studying. In the future: working.

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**W**ant to improve oral English. I have no trouble in reading, writing and math.

**I** came to the PTP program to study math and English and computers to try and better myself and find employment. It is helping me learn things that I didn't know and to get a better education. In the future, it will help me understand things in reading, math and computers. This program is helping me get reading for future education.

**I** can have more confident when writing and reading, and everyday life. To move on to college or a different program. It will help me to better structure my sentences and my spelling. It will also allow me to continue my education.

**I** came here to talk, and for a party. The program here shows people things. I learn words here, then ask people what the words mean. It gives me something to talk about with people. This is a hobby.

**I** came here for reading and writing goals. Right now, I want to use reading and writing for improving learning, reading the newspaper, typing on the Internet, and for budgeting. As for the future, this is a difficult question to answer.

**T**o learn the computers to be able to write letters and to improve ASL communication skills.

**T**o learn about something. To read stories and work on math. To get support for filling out a forms for work. To improve vocabulary skills. For self improvement; this makes me feel better about myself.

**I**mprove my understanding of English, math, increase my knowledge base, change print on letters, maps, etc., (make materials accessible). My immediate goals are to update my resume, develop a knowledge of English idioms, and to understand the vocabulary of health concerns that arise in my family. I want these skills for job advancement, and to have literacy skills equal to my children. I want to be skilled in the English language so that I can be a more effective interpreter for my spouse.

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I wanted to learn some computer skills. I wanted to learn the computer so that I could do my writing independently and read my printed materials in Braille through the computed scanner and maybe in the future learn Internet and electronic mail. For now, I will try and grasp some of the uses of the computer, then I will think further.

I came to learn 10 years ago. I learned reading and writing. I learned about heart and stroke, about nutrition, and I read a few health books. I want to learn computer keyboarding. In past at the CNIB, I learned basic math and played literacy games on the computer. I used to read a newspaper for newcomers. Maybe it is no longer published. I want to learn e—mail and Internet, but it is very hard to see the mouse and pointer. I want to go to community college. I can see now with my RP eyes. I used Visual Tek. I use language to communicate on electronic mail. I hope to learn math. I hope I can learn Braille to read Braille printouts. I hope an intervenor will help me access e—mail from my apartment building. I want to continue with my weekly classes because I can't hear well enough to make out very well in night school (i.e. community college or high school).

I want to learn more English and math. I want to have assistance to read mail, to have texts and reading materials enlarged. I want to read mail and read sports magazines. In the future, I want to play math games on the computer, and to be independent.

Basically, I'm here just to learn stuff like upgrading my skills, but my English is a lot stronger than my math, but now I'm at my Grade 9 math, and I'd like to get tested on it. I just want to upgrade. And I'm also taking correspondence courses from the Independent Learning Centre. I just finished the first part of the history course. And I seem to be getting good marks. I'm hoping to be continuing these courses. They're letting me do it at my own pace.

What I need is I cannot do money for 30s, 40s and right on up. I'm very good with reading and writing and spelling, but I'm not good with arithmetic. I've been out of school for a long time. I've been taking seizure medicine since I was 16, plus I take nerve medicines. I'm on disability. I'm slow with my addition, subtraction, my multiplication. I've been out of school since 1992. I was in the normal classes. Then they decided to switch me to different levels. I kept transferring schools. It got on my nerves. I went to a number of schools when I was little. They kept trying to figure out what skills I had. Also, I had a nose problem. I talk through my nose, so kids made fun of me, and they couldn't talk with me. Then I had a nose operation. I did the Futures program after the nose operation. At 13, I did my first job. I do have to get upgrading a bit in English. A bit of my spelling, just a little. And I like geography. I really need upgrading in science.

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Writing, typing, numbers. I like working with other people.

I have four children and also my wife has a back problem and two children I take to school, one full-time, one part-time. So all of the time I come to class to read and write something. The spelling is OK. It's not great. But sometimes there's a different word and I don't understand, but writing and reading is main thing. I can copy, but I have a problem for reading and writing. This is the situation I have. My teacher always tell me to help my children, but I have trouble for that. When a letter comes from my country, I have to take it to a friend. And it's confusing for my children when we speak Persian at home.

I would like to express myself regarding school and how it has been with me personally. I am a forty-eight-year-old lady. I came to Canada when I was sixteen years of age. I came from a family of eight. My family was very poor back home, in Italy. Since I immigrated to Canada, especially the first years, it has been a struggle. I always had two jobs. Therefore, I never had time to go to school. It has been very embarrassing when I have to write something to read at work. I always tried to find excuses. It was very humiliating and degrading. Then I got sick and I wanted to be sent to school for some kind of training. This way, I would do something, but because I didn't have much education, they said that it wouldn't be worth it for them to send me to school. It would take too long to get up to Grade 10 or 12. As I was sick, a few years ago I was taking a correspondence course. I had a teacher that was assigned to me. She would check my work and talk to me on the phone. Then I got sicker and I couldn't concentrate, so I had to stop for a few years. When I was feeling a bit better and wanted to start again, I found that the course wasn't available any more, because the government had cut funding. Two years ago, I was happy when my friend told me about the adult basic program that they had at Jane School, and now they have over on Wilson. I try very hard to go. Unfortunately, I can't go every day, because of my back, but I have a very nice understanding teacher. When I can't go, he saves me the work, and I do it at home. I cannot begin to say how much the school has helped me so far, and how much confidence I am gaining. I don't feel I am an illiterate person. And in the class, all the students feel the same way. So we beg of whoever is in charge not to cut funds for the school. We need to learn and to be proud of ourselves, and for our children to be proud of us. Remember, education is an investment. Thank you.

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I want to upgrade, because my kids are in school. I want to be able to teach my children the right way. I can expect them to finish high school, because I am going to finish high school. I am here to upgrade on my writing, grammar and math. If the teachers would have shown me this, I would not have this problem that I have now. That's why I am here now, to learn what I missed out on. I think it is very important to have the knowledge how to do grammar and reading and writing and math. I need to work on my math, grammar and writing. I find it very hard going back to school and being a single mother, but I got to do it or I won't be able to help my children. I want them to be well-educated. I would like to go to night school and get all my credits and get my Grade 12. I want to become a hairdresser. I think that this class is helping. Since I came here I started writing my thoughts and ideas down on paper. I couldn't believe it. I shocked myself, because I never thought that I had the ability to write some good stories. Now, every day I learn reading. Before I would never touch a book. Also, I am working on my math.

I came to this program to get my upgrading because I didn't get it when I was growing up. I went to vocational school. I dropped out of school because I had to stay home and look after my brother. I wish I had my education. If I had it, I would not be in school now. I need my education if I want to get something I want. I would like to have a career so I can be proud of myself. I fit into the class very well, because I know this program is what I want, so that I can get into a career. I would like to get into grooming animals in the future, or maybe hairdressing.

I came here for confidence in writing and speaking in public. I enjoy. I love. It helps me. I feel good. I can't cut class. I wait to come in the morning.

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**M**y motivation is learning about maths and English some more. I would like to be able to run my own business after this program. Thanks for you people.

**I** like here. I like contact with people, and I like learning English and everything I need. My children come to Canada, and it help me help them if I learn English. Maybe they will come here. I study, study. When I am arrive, I cry. Nothing, nothing. Now I am happy. If I am healthy, in the future I working.

**M**y reason to be here is to learn to read and write better, because I have a problem with reading and writing. I'm looking in the future to open a business, too. I want to learn the computer, too. I want to do things that I never did before to survive in the world.

**I** know how to read and write, because I went to Frontier College for 4 years before I came here. But they couldn't do any more for me, so I am here. I want to learn the money, because I don't want to be ripped off in the store. It's part of everyday life.

**I** want to learn to read, to read good. And I want to try to have a good education. I'm trying to make a good education. I am hoping to write for a newspaper.

**I**'m here for doing money, and learning how to do the computer, because I want to get a job doing the computer. And I want to work on the ads and money, because I don't want the stores to rip me off. I need to how much change I spend and how much I get back.

**I** have a disability with reading and writing. I want to be a chef, but the reading and writing stop me. It stops me with more things, but that's my disability. I can't even work at McDonald's, because I can't read. I can cook, but I can't read. You can stay at McDonald's your whole life, but it's not a future. Thanks to the teacher.

**I** came to the program because my handwriting was not good at all, and neither my spelling, and I was really embarrassed when I sent out cards. That's mainly what I do, send out cards. So I came to get help in those two areas of writing and spelling. I've come a good way now. I've done the alphabet in printing. I've done the section with commas and stuff like that, and I wrote letters. So I've gone a far way already in the program, and a little up in English also, because of the letters.

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**J**ust I want to upgrade my language first, and go to the society, because I'm living here. I want to help my children. I'm doing everything for myself. Now I just want to improve my language. Then I can decide what I want to do, what kind of work I want to go to. It's very helpful. For a long time, I wanted a chance to speak face—to—face. I didn't have this in the ESL class. Sam, [her tutor] helps me with problems. I bring the papers and Sam helps me. For example, today I brought a paper about volunteer jobs. I will ask him to help me with it.

**T**he class is very important to me. I learn a lot. It's very important to me. I feel education is my future. I feel that, without education, I can't go forward. I want to go forward. I want to have a success.

**I** feel education is the most important thing in my life, especially reading. I want to do much more than I'm doing now. I wish I could be what I want to be when I reach about 30 or 40. Without it, I won't be anywhere. It's so important to me, I cannot even tell you. That school [ALFA] really helped us before. I'm coming here I can read directions. I can fill a form. Like even sitting in the bus you see little notes that it's good to know about. And you feel proud of yourself reading it. And I wish the government will give us more. And I say thank you to all the teachers, because they really help us a lot.

**I** am very glad for this school, because I didn't have the opportunity when I was young. Now I came to this country and I was introduced to this school, and it's a blessing for me. Things that I never knew, I know now. As I go doing daily things, I know about it. Reading is very exciting. I thank the teacher that really help me to be where I am at this moment. And I hope by God's help to go further. At the place where I work, you have to be able to read the numbers on the books for funeral parlours. I have to read it, look for the covers I must use, make the book, and ship it out to the customers. This school helped me to keep my job.

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I thank God for this school here, because when I was younger, my school years, I was very poor. But as I come to this country here, and see how I have to work, I know that my education is very important. So I want to continue to come to school and to be a good reader, even graduate from Bathurst Heights with a certificate. Thanks all the teachers who's helping me to get my literacy and be a good reader.

It's important to be reading. Sometimes you get a letter or something, you need to read it. When I came to this country, it were hard, so one friend called me and said, "Why don't you go to Bathurst Heights to further your education?" I wasn't too hard to fill the forms. They didn't ask too many questions. Thanks to the teachers for their patience.

Because I want to learn more to better my life. That means to get a good job, and I'm interested to go further, because it help me a lot, and I hope in the future they might have it back at Bathurst Heights. I have seen lot of changes, like reading, writing, spelling. Also my maths are very good. I don't do well, but I would like to further that, too.

I came to the program because I can't read or write very well, and since I came to the program, I'm doing great. I would like to be a nurse. I have to start. I have to learn to read and write first. I hope I will get there.

You see, like I didn't get much time to go to school in my country, because I had to work. So I immigrated here, and I get a chance, so I take it. I work, but it's hard work. You know what it's like in a factory. I want to get a better job and support my family. I want to become a truck driver, and at least you have to get some reading and writing skills to drive. You need the basic skills to do the work. I've been going to school steady since I came here. My wife's coming to this school in the evening. She's taking the computer keyboard. I really appreciate that they're going to keep it.

Because I find it interesting and it keeping me occupied and I get busy and know a lot more things. I thinking of doing this for a while. I don't know how long. I make improvement with the class that I can go on to the next class.

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Well, I am one of those people who has never been a benefactor of education, from childhood up. So I saw an opportunity and I go for it. I'm happy to go for it. I'm sorry that the school is going to be cut off. I have a lot of things left to be done. You're never too old to learn. I want to continue for real. I'm interested in maybe move on to the next level. I'm basically doing two programs. I'm doing math also.

What I want out of the program is to learn more about to read. It is very hard sometimes when your children ask you questions and you don't know what to say. You can't even read them a book. I want to become a nurse. I think it's good that we have these classes, because we come from these small islands and we don't get the opportunity there, and I want to make the best of this opportunity. I think it's very good when your children ask you questions and you can answer them with a proper pronunciation. I want to learn to read. I want to make sure that I know what I'm doing, get everything right. These are peoples' lives that you are dealing with. That's what I want to do. I want to give back to society the best that I can, and for my children's future too.

To learn more, to read and write better that I can help my kids with their homework and things like that. I can make out a good job application on my own better. So it's very important to come to class to learn. When you can read and write, that's the key for life. Like, when your kids come home from school with their homework and need help and can't help them, ask you something with their questions or with their math. And when you don't know the answer to it, as a parent it makes you feel so embarrassed that you can't give them the answer. You can't help with this homework. Like to you, you can't read and write, and there are times that you need to know and you can't tell them. So it is very embarrassing to you, the parent. So going to learn is a very, very good thing to this person who wants to improve himself in reading and writing. I need to move on. There are better days ahead.

Basically, I want to get myself upgraded. My main intention is to start a business of my own, so in order to do that, I have to learn reading skills.

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I come to this school because I like improve my English. First of all, I would feel in control with other people, and also I cannot do the heavy job I used to do. I want to improve my reading and writing so that it suits my circumstances. The government should give the opportunity to immigrants to go to school, because here the language is different from the country people come from, and language is important in so many ways. I want to better my skills, so that I can possibly find an occupation where I can speak, read, and write freely. I want the basics, not college or university. If somebody gives me a paper to sign and I can't understand it, it's like I'm lost. I don't know whether to sign it or not. I can see it with my parents. They depend on me. They don't know what to do. They don't know what to say. And sometimes I feel that I don't know what's going on in the hospital. And we're part of this society we live with, when it comes to vote, understand which way to go. And it's good if you can communicate with your children and your grandchildren. Because even in old age it's important if you live here, you feel comfortable here in every way. When I came to Canada, I went straight to work. But now I realize that language, it means a lot to me.

I came to the program because I needed more upgrading in math and English and writing as well. I went to Yorkdale to do the test. I did not pass, so I was recommended to come here to Yvonne Adult School. From here, I want to take my knowledge and so on to the Yorkdale adult school, receive my Grade 12, and then after that find a job or take a course.

I came to this class, because I would like to improve my reading, writing, and speaking. I want to further my education to the highest level. I see myself at the university level.

To learn to read and write. I think this is a good thing for me. I will be able to help myself and my children. I want to upgrade my education in the future. I want to go to high school or college. This class is a great start for me.

I came to this program to improve my English and maths. I'm planning to go to a high school, and to George Brown College after high school.

Because I want to learn reading English and writing. Helping my children. Before, I couldn't help my children. But now I'm feeling better. I was reading to my daughter. When I learn English speaking and writing, I hope I will go to high school or college.

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I want to improve my English. This is the main thing. I want to go to George Brown, to the personal support worker program, so I want to improve my math and English.

What I really want is to read very well and spell so that I can be able to go to college in the future, so I can find a good job.

Why I come here, because I wanted to read and write, because I wanted to help myself, and I wanted to help my grandchildren, so I could read a story for them or so. Reading and writing is important in any country anyway. And so that I could do my business myself and the other people wouldn't have to read it. And if I could read, I know I could get a good job. Because everything is resume and “What was your last job?” and “Do you have education?” and I get frustrated. I wonder if I will ever get my reading.

Reading and writing. I couldn't read before. Now I can read more. It will help me get a job. The math will help. Some places, you have to count.

The first year, because I need practice with English. The second year, because I need more experience talking to people. And then I like with computer. For the future, I want to help people when the people have disabilities. I'd like to help these people as a volunteer. I want communication for everybody. When you come here, you don't have experience of everything. So you need to make contact person—to—person. That means the people that don't speak English need to make conversation together.

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## 5 *Learners' suggestions for change*

First, I'd like to see more learning the vowels, the sounds. I find a lot of ones that come in don't have the vowels, the sounds. Second, one evenings is not good enough. Three evenings plus homework would be good.

Is there anything they can do about getting rid of "The Literacy Program?" At first, I didn't want to come here. I was afraid my friends would think that I'm a complete idiot. How would you feel about it if people found out that you were going to a "literacy" program? There should be a greater variety of learning activities. They should push computer courses. They should teach students how to use computers. There needs to be a greater variety of books. Give people more of an idea of what to study so they aren't lost in society. One and a half hours is not enough. But, at the same time, in a class I'm too shy. I don't speak up.

I think they should continue doing these programs. 25 years ago, there were no programs. Teachers would shove kids to the back of the class and let them rot. Programs like this help. They helped me to read and write. These programs should be open to the adults and to the kids.

More conversation. The knowledge is the basement. If you cut the adult school, you will be making a building without a basement. If the parents' knowledge be strong, the children will be strong. I don't know how can I help my children. If the adult doesn't have knowledge you are destroying the future. Because the family is the root of the tree. If the roots are destroyed, what happens to the tree?

They should create more choices for people to come to school. More classes. More places that have classes. For people who want to go full-time, create full-time classes, not two half-time classes. The classes in the morning and in the afternoon repeat. In the afternoon class, I would like to have a computer.

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**M**any people from my society live near here. This is very helpful for them.

**E**nglish is o.k. I have no skill in computer. I want to learn English, only.

**T**he class is perfect, because our teacher makes us aware of the political and economic situation in this country by scanning the newspaper. She teaches us grammar. I think it's perfect.

**I** feel there should be more speaking. Speaking power.

**T**he teacher's doing o.k. The only thing I made an appeal about is getting a computer. I don't know anything about computers. In today's world, you've got to get the modern things that are around you. Sometimes, I ask me the kids and everything, and they ask a lot of questions.

**F**or now, it's o.k. The teacher gives a little sentence. I write it very carefully, very slowly. I don't have practice with my fingers. It's very important the practice.

**W**e need a computer, but we can't get a computer right now. A computer would help a lot.

**W**e need a computer in the school. If you go more for life, you want here computer. It's very important.

**I**n the class, we work as a group to help each other. We need someone to help us. We need a volunteer, because the teacher is only one person. And also, we need computers. Because this country is all computers. My kids need it. Even the bank. What do you do if you don't understand computers? They change it day by day. We have to work hard to learn.

**I** think the whole system needs to be changed, because people who are coming to school and who aren't working should have bus fare. You get frustrated, you get sick. They say they are helping you, but they are just pressuring you. They don't give you the help you need to help yourself.

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A computer course. It would be better for you. The worker said. It would be better to have it here.

I'm just new. It's six weeks ago. I like it. The teacher's good. He explain nicely. Everyone understands.

Different levels. They should have a Group One for Level One, and a Group Two for Levels Two and Three, and they would get better. And then there'd be more attention with One. And the Two and Three would get more of what they need for today.

I want to use the computer. Because in future, if you get your own business, you have to do everything by yourself. And typing.

Computer would be good.

They need someone to help Kerry. This one call him and this one call him.

In that classroom, it would be nice to have a computer, but the classroom is too small. We already have a volunteer. There are some people who really need the volunteer more than I do. The volunteer comes twice a week. It will be nice to have a volunteer every day. There are some of us might know a word but we don't know the meaning. The room is too small to have more than one volunteer.

It would be good to have a volunteer. There's too much for one teacher. Sometimes, I worry about the teacher, because there are so many people that don't know to read. Everyone calls the teacher, "Teacher, can you help me," at one time.

Computer. Now everything in job is computer, computer.

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My tutor is good, and I like what they're doing to help out people to read.

We need a bigger classroom. When a lot of people come, it get choked up. You can't write properly, it jams you. It stops you from writing it up.

I think that the Board should find some more books. Most of the students have to buy their own books. Because if we get books from them we can pass them along. Someone else can use it. Erin should have a library where you can borrow books.

We don't want them to cut the education.

We would like to continue the education. We don't want to cut the education.

Make the class small.

The classroom is too small. We need more computers. We just have one computer.

The classroom is too small. She needs a bigger classroom. She needs a phone, because when you phone upstairs, nobody gives her the message. She's a very good teacher. I went to many school, but she really take the time and help me. I feel she deserve a big classroom and a phone.

To keep the schools open, because we need it.

They should really give adults a chance more to come to school. Right now, they're pushing people to get jobs. But if you don't get an education, you just get a job that will lay you off in a few months. They should help people to get an education. This is what we all want. Because the basic thing is if you don't have an education it's hard. There's a lot of people that go out to work and get laid off. Where are you going to find work if you don't have an education. There should be training for mechanics, electronics. You should be able to spend part of each week doing job training. The daycare should be for everyone, not just for ESL students. They should get a better class. The class be too full, the class we get. We need more supplies, more pencils. Sometimes the teacher have to bring her own supplies like more lined paper. They don't give this program money for TTC. You have to find your own. They should really do something about the tickets. A lot of people can't find the money to come to school.

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I find if students are slow learners they should have a workshop to go to, for training or something. If they can't take studying, they should have a workshop to go to. Students can go to school for years without getting it through their heads. These students should do job training. They need daycare for single moms. They should bring it together. Why should the ESL be different? The class is too small. Sometimes I have to get up and go out to breathe. The air gets so stuffy. We need supplies, paper, books. We need computers that we can use every day. Now, we can use the computer once a week. They shouldn't cut the adult classes, especially for single mothers. They should have a program where single mothers could get training for jobs. I find the program should have TTC tickets. Some students have to travel. That's why they can't be in school regular.

I would like to plan good topics, one topic we choose from the newspaper, and talk about that, not something that is just for the moment. For example, one teacher said, "What do you want to talk about?" Then the students give one subject, another subject, another subject. Many classes happen that, the teacher says, "What do you want to talk about?" and then you waste time. It is better to talk about a specific subject. It's better when the teacher chooses something. And what I notice is that there are many people that talk in different languages. When the teacher is talking, they translate in their own language. That interrupts the class. It would be good if everybody speaks English in the class.

If I understand the program, you get a better result if you a little change the system in the adult school. I don't like it. Now, students come every day. And it's not the same level in the classroom. It gives you better results to have the same level. In the morning class, the old people is just literacy and the young people talk. It's not fair for the old people. In Sweden, you take a test and you go to a class at your level. And after that, you go to university and learn Swedish. And on the other side, there are adult classes for people who don't know how to read and write in their language. You need both.

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**I**t's my first day here. In the morning, the ESL class is too easy for me, so I need a higher level. I need some exercises for more sentences and grammar, and to speak. There is no test to prove what you know. The teacher explains things which I know very well. It's good to have some tests to know what level you are. I like more a teacher who gives you more exercises than gets us to speak. I feel that nothing helps my speaking, because I say something and I don't know if it's correct.

**I**f you take the English courses, you can take the higher courses. So it's good for Canada. Otherwise, I won't be a happy person, and I wouldn't be helpful. How can I help if I don't have the chance to improve myself? It's affecting everybody. It affects the kids, because if the person isn't happy, it affects that person's kids. And the person who is unhappy goes to the doctor and costs money for the government. If you don't have a future, what can you see? If your aren't established, you can jump into a bad life. And the drugs. If you don't have a future. It's very important to have a ladder to climb on. This is the basic course. This is the next step. Step by step. This is why it's important to have this program. Lot's of people have a big experience on the job, but because they don't speak English well, its not going to come out. They're very smart. It's a lot of experience for everything. We can improve. It's much cheaper for the government to give English to these people than to train people for the skills. In Europe, you have to study full time. It's not like here where you just take a course here and one there. It's just a business here, taking courses, and not what Canada wants. They want skilled people. For this, you need full time courses. It shouldn't be for \$500 you take this little course. A lot of people can't afford that.

**T**he government should give people a free class at first, maybe 3 months, but they should charge after that, unless the family is very poor, then it should be free. I think that the lower classes, they shouldn't change every 3 months. For the lower classes, 3 months is not enough. I think that in Canada everybody has the right to learn.

**T**hings are OK.

**M**y major concern is that the programs are great, but I call around and I can't get these programs in the evening. I'm being accepted for telecommunications at Centennial. But I want to continue my upgrading. I cannot find an upgrading class after 5:00. I've called around. I've been looking. I have friends who would also like to upgrade in the evening. My other concern is that people may need upgrading, but the test makes them nervous. Show us a way to prepare ourselves so that the nervousness about exams goes away. Doreen [the instructor] makes us comfortable, so that they could take the test. But what if they walk out of Doreen's room? They might be too nervous to take the test. Also, the tests are confusing. If you're going to teach it in certain way, ask it in that way.

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I like the way that Doreen teaches. She's very concerned about what the students would like to know. In classes like ESL, the teacher tries to keep up with the weak students. Most of the students are not participating. The teacher thinks that they are weak in conversation. This forces the teacher to go very slowly. This makes it uninteresting. Here I like to wake up and go to the class, because I know there is going to be something very useful. If most teachers would try to find out what students want to know, it would make the classes more interesting for the students.

I cough up my pocket money for tea and juice. Sometimes the teacher does it and sometimes I do it. It should be provided. Also, more time would be good. Now if you have to pick up your kid at 11:30, you only get 2 hours.

I'd like a better classroom, and when the school is full, I think we need a second teacher. Can we get somewhere better than here? I don't like where the school is.

I don't want to waste any time. I only came here three days ago, but I think maybe the class is little low. I'm afraid I won't be furthered by this.

Change the classes like this room. The room, the way people are sitting, no good desks, no blackboard. And have full-time classes. Can they provide bus tickets?

I would really like to go to a nice classroom, because it's too dirty here. The children dirty it up, and then we have to come in and sweep it up. I want a classroom where you can have tea, but now they lock up the kitchen here. I'm sickly. It's too dirty here. I want somewhere to make tea, because I have problem with my stomach. And then the washroom, it cannot work. This classroom don't good for us at all. Here, they divide the class, who can read properly and who cannot read properly, and who can speak English properly and the people from overseas. Over Kerry, those who don't speak English have to go to another class. I like over there. But I like Bobby. He have patience. Bobby's a nice teacher; he have patience with me. But I like to come to school at 9 and reach home at 4, because in that time I'd get good reading and understanding.

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**W**e need more teachers. Bobby's good, but we need more help. We don't get enough attention. Different levels, different people.

**I**n this class, all students want full time. The time is very short. The full time class is very far. I can't pay \$4 a day for the bus.

**W**e talk with our teacher. He is a good teacher. He is happy always. Never angry. He is a good character. We can ask him anything.

**I** come with my friend last week. He come in the class. He said, "This is not a school." I said, "This is a school." He said, "Here there are no walls. On the walls we have to put maps." He said, "Is this a private school?" I said, "No, it is paid for by the government." This is not a good place for a class. I come here in the morning, I have to clean one hour to prepare the class, then I have to set up the table.

**I** like the fact that this is not a school or a community centre, that it's in a quiet place, and that it's one-on-one, and there aren't 10 people doing the same thing. Everybody's doing a different thing. It's not congested. I went to night school for 5 years. I was a nobody. I sat behind someone's head.

**W**e're using their tables. [The church's.] We're using their chairs. We don't have our own class. And I'm a special Olympian, so I'm strong. But I'm going to have an eye operation in two weeks, so I won't be able to lift tables for the class.

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Here is not enough for my time. Better for 2 or 3 hours, other places study computer and other grammar. I like, because I spend here a time. I spend 2 to 3 hours a day for other program. Who finds it for me, I thank them. I have enough time.

A blackboard and some computers, maybe. And the tables. I have a bad back, so I can't help with the tables.

We should have more computers, some that work. We used to have some computers, but they don't work anymore, and we need a printer, too. We used to have a blackboard. We need a blackboard, too.

What I'd like for changes is for the teacher to give more time to the students. Have better areas and not setting up tables and chairs every day. We want the tables set up for us. And we just have to sit down and do our work.

Communication is very important, too. To learn English, you have to speak with people. Group is important. It is not only English improving, it is you have to improve your speech. You learn from other people. If you speak to me, I listen to you, I know how to say that now.

If school was a little longer. I think it should be from 9 to 3:30. I find it is hard, especially for a woman, to lift the tables, so it's hard to set up the class. Our teacher has arthritis.

Small group is good. I can pick things up better. I find a larger class is more difficult. It's very hard for me to pick things up. There should be a test to show if a person can do something even if they have a learning disability or a physical disability, and even if they don't have the academic qualifications. Keep an open mind.

I don't know much about the programs in North York, but here, full day would be good, so if you were working part time, you could chose when to come, morning or afternoon.

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There needs to be more access to this kind of class. We should have this class also in the evenings. I'm fortunate, because my job begins at 1:00. If my job didn't start at 1:00, I think I'd lose my job. Also, people who teach kids need to be educated. I was put into special needs classes, but the teacher didn't know why I was there. They thought that if I concentrated, I could do it. The teacher didn't know what a learning disability was. I strongly feel that teachers should learn about learning disabilities. I didn't find out until college that I had a learning disability. If I had known earlier that I had a learning disability, I would have taken a different route.

There should be a newsletter for people with learning disabilities. Generally, people with learning disabilities don't want to stand out, and if there's a newsletter, they won't stand out, but they will know what's going on. I've made this suggestion before. It's been recognized, but not implemented. Maybe we should use our names. People should know who has learning disabilities, that they are actual people. My other suggestion is that teachers should be made aware of the different types of disability and how to spot who has learning disabilities. And also you have to know that not everything is a learning disability. But if a person applies himself, and he or she is not learning, maybe there's something keeping them from learning. Also, there should be two full-time teachers with overlapping times, maybe 9 - 3 and 1 - 4. That way, students would get to have both teachers. Ideally, there would be two teachers all day, but we are in a time of cutbacks. \*More hours would be better, because I'm in college. Some of the classes are hard to get around to come here. But if you have two teachers, it would be super important that you have teachers that people will trust. You can tell Suzan what the problem is, and she will know what to do. Until you get to know the teacher, you won't let them help you to the fullest.

It would be good to have classes in the evening. Then if I had a 9—5 job, I could come afterwards. Sometimes, I wish that the class was a little longer.

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The following suggestions (1-9) were made in a group discussion.

1. We need more teachers.
2. We need a bigger room.
3. We need updated computers. We could use twice as many computers. We only have seven computers that can run Windows 95.
4. We need more software.
5. We need more advisors for this kind of program.
6. We need more programs.
7. We need more ESL.
8. We need more support for people with head injuries. People with head injuries need lots of support, and they need time.
9. We're not vegetables.

I hope they don't cut the program, because most adults just sit there and give up.

Everything is quite OK. Really, I have one day a week, and there's only me myself alone. Just as I leave work, I attend the program, because I like it and it's a good help to me. I should have been in this program a long time ago. But everything has a time. This is the right time for me. And I like everything about it. People can help themselves, and I hope it can continue.

In this school, it have a lot of people now. I don't know if they can give us a tutor. We will like a tutor, because everybody asking for the teacher's attention. We will like to learn the computer. The background now is more computer, and we don't know anything about computer. I don't know if you can supply us with the bus tickets, because sometimes we want to come, but we can't because we don't have the money for the bus. And it would be good to have money to pay babysitters at night.

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Daycare would improve it. And more breaks. It would be easier for the teacher and that. If it weren't for the teacher, no one would learn anything. Before I came here, I couldn't read that work. I learned a lot now.

Each of us is on a different level. Some sometimes the teacher has to work with one person because they're not up to standard. So maybe you need another person. But for now he's doing good. Each person is at a different level. He have to spend more time with some than with some. But it would be better to have another person than different levels of class, because it's encouraging for students to see other students moving on.

Each student is at a different level, so for the teacher to do it by himself, I think he would need a tutor to help. But I wouldn't want to leave Maurice to move into a different level. Because what I can know now is because I started with Maurice. If I wasn't relaxed with Maurice, I don't think I'd make much progress, because he makes you feel comfortable.

The following suggestions (1-7) were made in a group discussion.

1. If the other schools have deaf students, deaf people need to be comfortable with each other. People should be able to get the information and share. It's important to be comfortable, same as here. This is very comfortable.
2. It would be better to have separate classes for deaf and hearing people. The deaf and hearing people could interact at breaks.
3. It would be good to have computers, one for every three students.
4. It would be good to have classes for different levels.
5. Flexible hours are important.
6. Afternoon classes would be good.
7. It would also be good to have classes at night for deaf people who want to study at night.

People have to understand that people who are physically handicapped are not necessarily mentally handicapped. We need education for staff, so that, for example, people understand movement problems. And they should understand that if people are asking for help, they need help. I did need help. Teachers didn't help me in the past, when I was young.

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I would like to see computers. There are computers at my job. Most things you have to go on the computer to do it. Now I have to ask people to get it for me.

I think that it's better to start at the beginning. I went to Level 3 ESL. I don't think they should push you ahead until you have the writing. In Canada, you have to be equal to everybody. If you don't improve yourself, you're dead.

I like to mention a little about Maurice, because he's a very patient and understanding person, because sometimes you would learn something and then fall back, and he understand that. Because you can relax here and not think about your problems, and he have lots of patience. Because sometimes you would come here and you have all these problem at home, and you wonder if you will learn, but the class is like a family, and he treat everybody equal. It's not that one person know more than the other person, and it makes you comfortable. We need tutors. Sometime, Maurice don't get the time to spend with us that he want to. It would be fun and nice if we could have a computer so the ones that could understand could practice, because right now, everything out there is computers. That would be great.

The main focus is that I get along with my tutor. Where I went before, my tutor said that she couldn't help me, that I wasn't capable.

I like the classroom very much. I just come one month, and I'm getting on very well.

I'd like to see a lot of improvements, like getting new books. I'd like this class to continue as long as it can, because I'm willing to come as long as I can. It's close to where I live. If this class were to move to another school, according to where the school is located, it might be difficult for me to go to school and go to work.

I like the class. I love the class. The class is quiet, and the teachers them is very good. They take a time out to teach we something, what you need. For word, what I was looking, I would see the word and I wouldn't know the word, and they would teach the word over and over again. I like a quiet place. You don't hear any bad word, you just think about what you're learning. It's o.k. with me.

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I think it is o.k. the way it is. I been here for about a year and four months. I think by September, I should be in high school. I learn a lot better.

We have to leave the building at lunchtime. We should have our own cafeteria. You can get sick walking around at lunchtime. We should have more reading books and math books and text books to learn. I really want to see more assignments, the way they do at high schools. We're all at a different level. We should have more activities, like gymnasium. I think the school should have things like that. And we should have some dances, graduation parties. We're in school, but we're not doing the things they're doing in high school.

Right now, what we need, I think we need more books, more reading books. This will help us get more improvement.

I don't think any changes should be made.

The teacher asked if it bothered us the different levels, but I don't mind. The only thing that would bother me is if they moved far away. I don't know if I could go, because of family circumstances. The teachers are very good.

We have to leave at lunchtime, whatever the weather is. That's horrible to me. If we have different kinds of subjects. Because some people want to be fast. Why don't they do skills for some people, like hairdressing, so people have choice. You can get skills, then you go for jobs. It's human. Not everybody is the same. Even babies. You teach me, I catch fast. But another person may not catch it, and he is losing his time. One catches everything, another person is slow. But they still need to do something. If you don't improve, it's boring. Wherever I go, I see this problem. Some people are excited working by hand. Some people are excited reading and writing. I am student, and I saw those things. If they are not solved, these two things are not there, and people sit and waste their time while they take money from the government, the country will die.

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I'm under the welfare, so TTC tickets would be good.

I don't know, I just started. I was having a hard time getting this class, because a lot of them were for credit courses, and I don't need credit courses. It's hard to find the right class. I'm sure there are a lot of people in my situation. They have been working, but if they don't have an education, they won't have a job in the future. Many of the jobs require computer knowledge or other technical knowledge. If people don't have the chance to reeducate themselves for jobs, you're going to have more welfare costs, more crime and prostitution: Crime City.

I feel that they should have a lot of trade programs, training program, where you can learn hands-on. I took a test that said that I was mechanically inclined. I just want to know where am I going after this? Am I wasting my time? I don't want to have to go to square one again and live in limbo again from day one.

I don't like 10:30 break. More English class. Only lunchtime break. It's too short for me.

I think that the educational requirements are a little strict. Sometimes you can know more than the person who is hiring you, but you don't have it on paper, so they look at you differently, as lower than them. It lowers peoples' self-esteem. I don't know much about the adult education system. I've only been here about a month and a half. I guess more books for the teacher would be good. More paper. She only has so much she can give out. It would be good to have more information about the changes that are happening to the adult system. It would be good if teachers and students could meet on these issues.

Everybody is happy. Because if you not come to school, you can't do nothing. You can't work. You can't do nothing. It's nice for learning. I don't know any improvements. I just happy to coming.

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What I would like to see, two or three nights would be better for us. Two or three nights, we would learn more. The basic thing I would like to learn, I would like to stick to it more, reading, writing letters out in the world, filling out forms to get a job, go to the banks, everything done by yourself. Right now, it kind of hard for me. My reading is kind of poor. The one night is hard for me. The one night is hard for me.

I think here they accommodate our needs. Maybe later, when I get some more knowledge of it, I will want to get into something more advanced. I think that here they're more oriented to help you. A lot of people are still going to the Board class, but then again, those people can't defend themselves. They taught us computer, but how much can you learn with a big class? There were too many people in the class and different people had different needs. But nobody spoke out. Some people were even scared. They definitely want us to do more paperwork. We have to do the time card on the computer.

I would like students to work hard and come to school on time in adult classes/programs in North York.

The class of computer increase. Some sort of courses like physics put in course. Because of the students' requirements options course have to be fit in this course.

Regarding the OBS programs: to give choices like science. I don't need to take science, because I was an accountant and I want to be at least an office clerk on whatever, so as long as it is accounting. So I know my plan and I know what I am going to do.

I would like to see length of the program shortened.

I'd like English, math and computer, but I don't like science, which we are forced to take. I think it is a good idea to choose a subject which you needed in a future. More computer classes!

Some subjects will help, some are a waste of time. Should be more choice in subjects. If a student is moving faster than course, retest for next level.

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This program helps me to move on to college. I wish there were some program similar to this program, but helps us to go to university free.

I like to study with people who really like to study. This program is very serious, but in other [Board of Education] course I met people who wasted me and teacher's time.

We need more computer class.

More computer programs. A choice in the programs that'll be more helpful in the field that one is interested in.

Government should set up more classes/programs like OBS in North York. It's good for some adults who has some language level and knowledge. I suggest more computer classes should be given to talk about new concepts like Win 95, Internet, multimedia, software, hardware, etc., etc.

More computer class for mature students.

More communication with counsellors. Someone to take your concerns and opinions on paper, so they can keep on file for the yearly annual meeting, instead of once per year. Perhaps a suggestion box. A library or quiet study room.

The following suggestions (1-17) were made in a group discussion.

1. I spent one year at Overland Learning Centre, and I find that the teachers don't care for your improvement. They don't care for people individually.
  2. They don't find that people are improving.
  3. The Board classes are leveled, but we can't say that at the advanced level everyone can talk at the same level.
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4. They should pay more attention to the people who know. They should look at the background of the student.
  5. The Board classes are large, but the same people always talk.
  6. The Board teachers are not really teachers. They are not trained to be teachers. When they are teaching for second language, they teach different ways They teach one piece of grammar, then they ask you to write two pages.
  7. I went to Overland for six months, and then to Georges Vanier. I wasted a lot of time before I came here.
  8. The Board programs should have a counsellor. Any individual should be asked, "What are your goals?" Students should be placed according to an entrance test.
  9. Friends are better than counsellors.
  10. There should be different programs for different purposes.
  11. At Overland, there were too many people mixed together.
  12. They [Board programs] need to find out what the student wants. Guide the people. At first, nobody asked me, "Why are you here?"
  13. They don't ask you at first. You find your way by accident.
  14. A counsellor should ask, "What do you want?" Maybe its a cultural thing. Maybe people here think it's none of their business. But they should not be afraid to ask. It's o.k. to ask people.
  15. Also, in the Board programs, nobody is corrected. The teachers are afraid to correct. They are not responsible.
  16. I think other programs don't teach English as seriously. They just count how many people.
  17. They waste a lot of our time that way.

I have some information that I never had, for example, job market and how to get established. We emphasize English grammar, writing, reading, but we need more counselling and information on the job market, and how to get into university or college. I wanted to go to Seneca College to take some accounting courses, but they don't give me a chance to take the test,because I'm in Level 2. The reason I am staying at Level 2 is that I don't get a chance to practice English. So I have to wait. I think it is very important to start to learn, and to try and find a job.

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I think this is really good. I need math. I need computer. I have both of them here. It's perfect. If they can organize all of the programs like this the result will go up. Since September I was in Overland. It was not good. We were wasting our time. But here I am making a lot of improvements in English and math. Because there the students come from I don't know. They were not serious. The teachers too. But here the students are very serious about their goals and I worry what will happen in September for us. I think that the other programs have to separate who has to study and who has to work. Each school has to have different kinds of classes. I went there for TOEFL. Every day maybe half the people come.

The other programs I took were not serious. As I understood it, the program, people used to pay money to come to this program. Why I am saying it's not serious, you didn't have to come or not come. At Overland, people are maybe one half here. My classmates' knowledge was so different. They had different kinds of backgrounds. And I am interested in an academic background. I really find that it is good here, since we review everything. Different areas are good. Introducing Canada is important. What is Canadian culture? What are Canadian traditions? This helps us to adjust.

I can't think of any. I like this program very much.

I like to see more subject introduce.

More time in school. I want to have more classes where there is writing and reading and more testing. We need more challenge.

I would like to see computers introduce for both English and math classes. I think that would make classes more interesting and teach them computer skills as well.

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I would like to see the classes extended from four or five months to a full year, so that students could get a complete education like a real school. Most of the people in this course do not get enough time to absorb all the knowledge, so that they could get a good job.

Get a suitable computer instructor who has knowledge in teaching.

Better to start everybody same time.

In adult classes/programs in North York, it is not necessary for any changes.

Small group and focus demand.

Smaller classes.

I think this program should change its plans for improving oral English. PTP should instruct learners how to communicate with others on specific situations, such as bank, telephone, airport, etc. I would like to see that there will be an oral English classes in PTP.

I feel no changes are necessary.

I do not want to be involved in thinking of program changes. Staff should decide.

Teachers must be able to communicate better in ASL. People need one-on-one instruction in ASL, the same as CNIB.

This question does not apply to me as I am not in the regular program. I have been learning about the computer with a volunteer tutor, CNIB Deaf—Blind Services Literacy department and we have been working on a computer from my apartment building.

I would like to see deaf, blind and deaf—blind people in new programs, something like learning Braille, maybe use the adult section of the library, with books transcribed into Braille.

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lasses need more computers.

I've got a good suggestion. My suggestion is for exams. I'm not saying for all of the students, but for me: yeah.

I

t's not so bad here. Before at school I used to get confused. I'd have to go all the way downstairs just to go to my locker to get my books. Here it's all in one place. Plus in a big school you don't know many people, and that makes you nervous. I used to be scared to go out. I used to sit in my own back yard.

I

like it all.

I

would just like people to have a chance to learn, because maybe they never had the chance to learn. Don't close the door on adult classes, because it's very important that we get the education that we need. I blame the schools for not teaching us the proper way. In my opinion, the reason why I am behind and I am here now is the Board of Education's fault. When I was in kindergarten, they failed me for no reason. So when I was in Grade 4 they skipped me from Grade 5 to Grade 6, because they said they couldn't fail me. So now I missed Grade 6. I wasn't ready. Then they put me in Special Ed. in Grade 7 because I was behind, and I was never taught fractions, and I never had the chance to learn proper. That's why I am here now.

I

would like the adult programs to change so that people can get a better education. The government shouldn't cut back on the education programs. I think people need that, because a lot of them come from different countries, so please don't cut them. They should really keep it open and not close the schools. And especially for all these people who come from other countries. They really need their education. If they don't have their education, how are they going to get a job? Because it takes a long time to get up there. They're just going to go onto welfare. Mike Harris should put money into the schools before he builds Sea World and things like that, and the roads and all the other things he's doing. And he should stop laying people off.

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I would be happier if I could take books home to do my homework.

Set up a program to help people get part—time work when you are a student. There would be an arrangement with particular companies.

We need taped, talking books.

It would be good if the class continued through July.

They shouldn't change the registration fee. Some people can't afford it.

I think they should give book. All the material that we need, just so that we can keep it.

I hope the government doesn't cut here. I was for about two years in an ESL class, and just they taught grammar, and the adults didn't have the chance to talk and improve their talking and writing. Just they learn grammar, and they didn't have the chance to use what they learn. The classes are very big, 30 to 40.

It's good here how they give you the test to see what you can do, and if they see you can't do much, they don't dwell on it. They just place you. They know exactly what to do.

They should make it better, because there are a lot of kids that can't read and write. We have our little book to look at, but it's not enough. Miss Thomas really help me. She's a very patient teacher. If you don't know a word, she will turn it around and you will get it. She doesn't want you to spell the word. She wants you to read.

For my opinion, it's going good.

So far, I see that they're doing their best. Everything is OK so far for me. The school that I was going to at Danforth was 2 hours, and here it's 3 hours, so you get one more hour. I want them to keep this school

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I love everything. I just love the class.

It's good when teachers are willing to teach. It's really important. If teachers don't really want to, that's a problem. Adult education is very important to us. I would like to have more nights to the English, and I don't think one night is enough. Sometimes, when I have something one week, I forget next week. Sometimes, it's a bit hard when you have to wait, and you have to catch up in one night.

More days a week. What you learn in one day, you will forget it. When you learn more days, you will remember it better. Two days for English, two days for math.

So far, I don't see any problem. For myself, my main concern is for people who didn't get the opportunity to learn to read and write. I don't think it's fair to deny them that right. I think we should get notification for what's going to happen next year.

That this program will continue so that it can help with difficulties that people have with their English reading and writing.

I think they shouldn't change the adult education, because it helps adult people to get a good job, because we come here to learn English so we can get a good job or a job to do.

If they cut the other classes. Right now, we have a hope, but if they cut the other classes, we don't have a hope.

It would be good if students could have first choice at Board of Education jobs, like caretaking and maintenance. A volunteer in the class would be good. Even a volunteer one day a week would be good.

For now, I think they're trying their best. I'm seeing a difference in my life, my reading. I think for now things are OK. Flexible hours are important.

More math books. Spelling books.

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## *Appendix*

### *North York Adult Development Program*

It was hard for the students at the North York Adult Development Program of the Metro Toronto Association for Community Living to discuss their goals with me, because, for these students, linguistic communication is hard. However, they did tell me what they were working on, and they showed me what they were doing. Staff provided me with further information.

Here is what the students said they were working on:

- “Computer, numbers, letters.”
- “Numbers, writing reading.”
- “Printing. D. [student's name] learn names for things.”
- “Writing, reading, numbers.”
- “Computer, typewriter, letters.”

The students showed me how they learned the names of the letters from picture cards and from working on the computer. The computer program that I saw allowed the students to click on a letter to hear it's name.

One student showed me that she could spell the names of people she knew.

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The students work on words and numbers that can be of practical use to them. They learn their own names, the names of the days of the week, the names of the months, the names of TTC stations. One student is working on the numbers in the elevators. Students work on telling time and counting money. One student has progressed to 5-digit addition and subtraction.

During my time in the class, I saw several examples of how learning to resolve problems verbally was an important part of the program.

Staff told me that “communication is the biggest goal.” (In this, the students at ADP are like many students with disabilities of various kinds who mentioned “communication” as an important goal. For many of these students, literacy and numeracy fit within this larger goal of communication, and I have made communication one of the themes for analyzing goals in the database.)

The students that I talked to about transportation did not regard it as a problem, since they were driven. Some were driven by parents, others came by taxi.

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If you would like this database on disk, please contact:

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***Please specify whether you would like the database in  
Filemaker 4.0 format or in tab-delineated text.***

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