

PRACTITIONERS AS LEARNERS: A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT REPORT

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FORWARD

Practitioners as Learners: A Professional Development Project was initiated by the Saskatchewan Literacy Network in 2003 for the purpose of identifying and meeting the growing and changing professional development needs of practitioners in Saskatchewan. The National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), funded the project in partnership with Saskatchewan Learning.

This Professional Development plan reflects the contributions of many literacy practitioners who provided input on the development of the plan through surveys, focus groups and in-depth interviews. I wish to thank the practitioners who contributed their time, energy and ideas to the project. I would also like to acknowledge the support and guidance provided by the Project Advisory Committee. Finally, I would like to thank colleagues in other provinces, most notably Literacy Alberta, who generously shared information on their professional development efforts and plans.

As I reflect on the work that has been undertaken in the past two years, I see we have already made significant progress towards the development of a more systematic and planned approach to professional development in Saskatchewan. New partnerships are being formed, new processes are being developed for inviting input on professional development needs, new tools are being developed to communicate what learning opportunities are available, and new administrative systems are being put into place to manage requests in a timely and efficient manner. While these are important first steps, I know that we are in the formative stages of implementing a comprehensive, longer-term professional development plan.

We welcome your continued input and involvement as we take these next steps!



Debbie Griffith
Executive Director
Saskatchewan Literacy Network

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Survey and Interview Participants:

Peggy Adamack	Brenda Mellon
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Carmen Bussiere	Terri Peters
Deirdre Crichton	Debbie Griffith
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Janice Thomas Gervais	Nicole Stainbrook
Bula Ghosh	Liz Thompson
Katrina Ham	Mark Williment
Bebe Ivanochko	Lisa Zackowski
Rita McCallum	Anonymous (24)

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Lastly, thanks to those who graciously served on the Advisory Committee for this project throughout 2003-2005.

Advisory Committee:

Carla Moffat & Sheryl Harrow, READ Saskatoon
Leona Harasym, Piapot Daycare & Aboriginal Head Start program
Carmen Bussiere & Shirley Penner, Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network
Bebe Ivanochko, Northlands College
Debbie Griffith, Saskatchewan Literacy Network
Lynne Mourot, Saskatchewan Literacy Network
Donna Woloshyn, Saskatchewan Learning

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

The central goal of this project was to research, develop, implement and evaluate a professional development plan for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan. The project involves four objectives:

- (1) To research the professional development interests and needs of adult and family literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan and conduct a literature review.
- (2) To develop a comprehensive professional development plan based upon consultations and a literature review.
- (3) To pilot and evaluate professional development opportunities in alignment with feedback from practitioners and project stakeholders and the findings of the research conducted and recommendations documented in objectives 1 & 2.
- (4) To develop collaborative and cooperative relationships with programs, organizations, government departments and regions with interests in professional development for educators.

This report details what we learned about both what practitioners need and want to learn to improve their practice and how they prefer to learn.

WHY A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN?

In 1995, the SLN conducted a needs assessment and analysis of literacy organizations and programs titled: Assessment of Literacy Practitioner Training Needs in Saskatchewan (1996, Roberta Baker).

In the ten years since this assessment was conducted, the literacy field in Saskatchewan has changed dramatically. The changes include:

- ***An increased number of literacy activities, programs and practitioners.*** The survey for the project in 1995 was distributed to 19 literacy programs and 16 community

organizations. Literacy programming now extends well beyond the groups consulted in the 1995 Assessment.

For comparison, the survey for this project, *Practitioners as Learners: A Professional Development Project*, was distributed to 152 individuals who have literacy responsibilities as part of their jobs. This represents over four times the number of individuals to whom the 1995 survey was distributed.

- ***The integration of literacy into other types of programs.*** Increasingly literacy activities are woven through programs whose primary focus is not literacy, blurring the boundaries that used to distinguish literacy work from other social and education based work. For example, programs and organizations such as Kids First, Community Schools and early childhood programs are increasingly incorporating or integrating literacy activities into their programming.
- ***An expansion of family literacy*** in the last ten years. The number and variety of family literacy training requested has increased. The communities, group and programs requesting the training are increasingly diverse as well.
- ***Increased interest in literacy*** regionally, provincially and nationally. More organizations and communities are involved with literacy which is reflected in the increasingly broad range of groups requesting funding for literacy work. Provincially, work on a Provincial Literacy Strategy began in 2000. Recently, the Council of the Federation (established in 2003 by the 13 Premiers in Canada) acknowledged the importance of literacy by creating a Council of the Federation Literacy Award.
- ***Access to federal funds for literacy initiatives.*** With a budget of \$30 million, the National Literacy Secretariat supports a number of new literacy projects and initiatives. However, the NLS does not fund direct or ongoing delivery of literacy programming. The most recent budget called for the creation of a comprehensive literacy strategy and increased the federal budget for literacy by \$30 million over three years.

*-Feedback
from
practitioners
over the last
few years
indicates that
their
professional
development
needs are
changing.-*

- **Increased access to provincial funds for family literacy.** In 1998 Saskatchewan Learning introduced the Family Literacy Initiative through which \$300,000 is distributed annually in the province. The Family Literacy Initiative has supported community based family literacy programs and services in Saskatchewan's larger urban centres (i.e., Lloydminster, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Melfort, Tisdale, Saskatoon, Biggar, Regina, Moose Jaw, Swift Current).

Along with, and perhaps because of, the changes in the field, feedback from practitioners over the last few years indicates that their professional development needs are changing. As the primary provider of literacy professional development in the province, the SLN was keen to identify the learning needs in the field and ensure that the field's needs continue to be met. This was the impetus for this project.

We hope that this project provides a solid foundation for planning literacy professional development in the coming years, but also provides the flexibility to meet the changing needs of the field in the future.

WHO HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE PLAN AND THE PROJECT?

A project advisory committee guided this project. The Literacy Professional Development Plan was developed with input from practitioners through:

- A survey distributed to 152 individuals who have literacy responsibilities as part of their jobs (28% response rate).
- Thirteen follow-up interviews with literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan who completed the survey.
- Three people who support and/or deliver literacy professional development in Saskatchewan.
- A focus group held on October 27, 2004 that involved sixteen practitioners.

WHAT IS CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT?

This report consists of three sections:

1. Literacy Professional Development Context & Delivery
2. Participants' Input and Recommendations
3. Literacy Professional Development Plan

The first section of this report will be of interest to those who would like to better understand past delivery and context of literacy PD, including: what has been delivered, delivery statistics, how literacy PD has been funded and delivered, and where it has been delivered.

The second section of this report documents the results of the survey, interviews, focus group and input from those with responsibility for delivering and supporting literacy professional development in the province. This is a lengthy section that will be of interest to those who would like to better understand how the PD plan emerged.

The outcome of the research is the Literacy Professional Development Plan in part three. This section of the report may be sufficient explanation of the project, the data and the recommendations for many readers. It is intended to serve as a working document for planning literacy professional development in Saskatchewan in coming years.

Section 1: Literacy Professional Development Delivery & Context

OVERVIEW

This section explains and explores current and past delivery of adult, general and family literacy professional development opportunities provided or coordinated by the Saskatchewan Literacy Network (SLN), including:

- Types of literacy professional development
- SLN professional development delivery statistics
- How literacy professional development is funded
- How literacy professional development is delivered
- Where literacy professional development is delivered

It must be noted, however, that literacy practitioners access professional development from a variety of organizations and in a host of different ways. This section concentrates on the opportunities provided by the SLN because this information was accessible. The data from the surveys and interviews reported in Section 2 of this report highlight other organizations and types of training in which practitioners engage.

TYPES OF LITERACY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The SLN has developed and/or offered the following family, adult and general literacy training workshops in response to requests from the field for training and resources in specific areas.

Types of Family Literacy Training offered from 1998 to 2004	
Type of Training	Description
Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS)	<p>Offered since: 1999</p> <p>Description of program: A-LAPS is an extension of the LAPS program (see LAPS description on page 16 for more information). It is a gentle, culturally sensitive approach to parenting and literacy.</p> <p>Objective of facilitator training: To prepare individuals to facilitate A-LAPS programs in their</p>

	<p>community.</p> <p>Description of facilitator training: The A-LAPS facilitator training prepares individuals to facilitate A-LAPS groups in their communities. It covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation • Literacy • Parenting • Community involvement • Facilitating groups of Aboriginal participants and/or cross cultural groups <p>For whom: Individuals interested in facilitating A-LAPS programs in their communities.</p> <p>Length of facilitator training: 3 days</p>
Come Read With Me (CRWM) facilitator training (Direct Adult - Indirect Child)	<p>Offered since: 1993</p> <p>Description of program: CRWM is based on the premise that parents and children learn together and enhance each other's lives. The <i>CRWM</i> program uses children's books as a starting point for development of literacy skills and discussion of a wide range of parenting issues. CRWM is a flexible program that may be adapted to a variety of settings. The goals of the CRWM program are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To help parents recognize their important role as their children's first teacher • To encourage reading as "fun" and valued • To assist parents in helping their children develop literacy skills • To give parents opportunities to identify their own knowledge and skills, learn new skills and put their skills into practice • To help parents with low literacy skills read to their children and improve their reading skills • To empower parents and encourage them to pursue further adult education opportunities <p>Objective of facilitator training: To prepare individuals to facilitate CRWM programs with adults in their community.</p>

	<p>Description of CRWM facilitator training: The CRWM facilitator training prepares individuals to facilitate CRWM groups in their communities. It covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child development • choosing age appropriate books • modifying books to suit older or younger readers • using craft ideas, finger plays, and songs and rhymes • informing parents about literacy and learning <p>The training also raises more general issues such as the basic principles of adult education, the background and philosophy of the family literacy movement, the principles of small group instruction, and the importance of assessment and evaluation.</p> <p>For whom: Individuals interested in facilitating family literacy programming in their communities.</p> <p>Length of facilitator training: 3 days</p>
Family Literacy Foundational Training	<p>Offered: August 2001</p> <p>Description of program: Foundational training is the result of an inter-provincial collaboration. It provides practitioners with a wide variety of information needed in order to provide quality family literacy programs. It is designed to encourage new understanding and critical reflection that leads to continual improvement in practice.</p> <p>Objective: To provide a consistent knowledge base for family literacy practitioners across Canada.</p> <p>Description of training: <i>Foundational Training in Family Literacy</i> includes the following topic areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding Family Literacy 2. The Practice of Family Literacy in an Unjust World 3. The Dynamics of Working with Parents 4. Understanding Children and their Development

	<p>5. Understanding Emergent Literacy 6. Working with Families in a Family Literacy Setting 7. Working with Communities 8. Administering a Family Literacy Project 9. Evaluating Family Literacy Projects 10. Best Practices in Family Literacy 11. Adult Literacy within Family Literacy Programs 12. Community Development from a Family Literary Perspective</p> <p>For whom: Family literacy practitioners</p> <p>Length of facilitator training: 5 days</p>
KEYS to Family Literacy	<p>Offered since: 2002</p> <p>Description of program: <i>Keys to Family Literacy</i> is a family literacy program for people in conflict with the law. It was developed and piloted in the Pine Grove Correctional Centre. The Program components include: <i>Come Read With Me</i> (a program for parents which uses children's books to improve literacy skills, discuss parenting issues, and develop skills and confidence in reading and interacting with children); storytelling; parenting issues; and writing process.</p> <p>Objective of facilitator training: To prepare individuals to facilitate <i>Keys to Family Literacy</i> programs in their community and/or in penal facilities.</p> <p>Description of facilitator training: The Keys facilitator training covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of parents as first teachers • Strengths based facilitation • Brain development • Sharing books with children • Storytelling • The writing process • Starting and delivering programs

	<p>The training also explores the principles of adult education, the background of family literacy, the principles of small group instruction, and the importance of assessment and evaluation.</p> <p>Participants also have the opportunity to practice the development of session plans and the delivery of session for parents.</p> <p>For whom: Individuals interested in facilitating <i>Keys to Family Literacy</i> programs in their communities and/or in penal facilities.</p> <p>Length of facilitator training: 3 days</p>
Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) facilitator training (Direct Adult-Indirect Child)	<p>Offered since: 1998</p> <p>Description of program: LAPS began in Alberta. It is designed to strengthen the literacy skills of parents by focusing and building on their parenting skills. The creators of this program, Elaine Cairns and Laureen MacKenzie, have found that many parents who may have literacy problems are deeply concerned about their children's progress in school. By developing discussion and learning about issues that are meaningful and relevant to parents (i.e. increasing children's self-esteem, anger management, coping with behaviour problems), parents begin work on their own literacy skills in a way that builds on their expertise and life experience. Groups meet weekly for approximately one and a half hours over a period of about eight weeks.</p> <p>Objective of facilitator training: To prepare individuals to facilitate LAPS programs in their community.</p> <p>Description of facilitator training: The LAPS facilitator training prepares individuals to facilitate LAPS groups in their communities. It covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation • Literacy • Parenting

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating multicultural groups • Community involvement <p>For whom: Individuals interested in facilitating LAPS programs in their communities.</p> <p>Length of facilitator training: 3 days</p>
Nurturing With Rhymes facilitator training (Direct Adult-Indirect Child)	<p>Offered since: 1999</p> <p>Description of program: This program is based on the Parent-Child Mother Goose model developed in Toronto. It gives participants a chance to learn and practice songs, rhymes, and storytelling suitable for use with babies and young children. Participants attend sessions with their children for approximately one hour a week over a period of several weeks. A trained facilitator leads the group as participants and children sit in a large circle going over both traditional and new material. At the end of the session there are participant handouts available to take home.</p> <p>Objective of facilitator training: To prepare individuals to facilitate Nurturing with Rhymes workshops in their communities.</p> <p>Description of facilitator training: The training focuses on learning and practicing rhymes, songs and stories that can then be passed on to parents and other caregivers.</p> <p>For whom: Individuals interested in facilitating family literacy programming in their communities.</p> <p>Length of facilitator training: ½ or 1 whole day</p>
Parents Role Interacting With Teacher Support (PRINTS) facilitator training	<p>Offered since: 1998</p> <p>Description of program: <i>Parents Roles Interacting With Teacher Support</i> was developed by Dr. Mary Cronin (Saskatchewan) and Dr. Bill Fagan (Newfoundland). PRINTS helps parents foster early literacy growth in their children by showing parents the very important role they have as a child's first</p>

(Direct Adult- Indirect Child)	<p>teacher. PRINTS also helps teachers to see the ways home and school can work together to provide a common basis for learning. An Aboriginal PRINTS program has been developed and piloted and is being made available to Saskatchewan practitioners.</p> <p>Objective of facilitator training: To prepare individuals to facilitate PRINTS programs with adults in their community.</p> <p>Description of facilitator training: The PRINTS facilitator training prepares individuals to facilitate PRINTS groups in their communities. It covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Steps/contexts for literacy learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Books and book sharing ◦ Talk and oral language ◦ Play ◦ Environmental print ◦ Scribbling, drawing and writing • Roles that parents play in their children's learning • Supporting parents in their roles as teachers <p>For whom: Individuals interested in facilitating PRINTS programs in their communities.</p> <p>Length of facilitator training: 1 day</p>
Rhymes, Songs and Storytelling	<p>Offered since: 2001</p> <p>Description of Program: Young children love to hear rhymes, songs and stories. They love to hear the sound of a parent's voice. Rhymes, Songs and Storytelling programs help parents build a repertoire of activities to use with children to improve language development and parent-child interaction.</p> <p>Objective of facilitator training: To prepare individuals to facilitate Rhymes, Songs and Storytelling workshops in their communities and/or to assist parents to interact with young children, during home visits and other one-on-one situations.</p>

	<p>Description of facilitator training: This workshop will provide an opportunity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learn new skills and ideas that will nurture literacy development • learn and practice rhymes, songs and stories • share favourite rhymes, songs and stories • obtain tips for successful parent programs • have fun while learning <p>For whom: People who work with parents and caregivers of babies and toddlers.</p> <p>Length of facilitator training: 1 day</p>
Storysacks (Direct Adult – Indirect Child)	<p>Offered since: 2000</p> <p>Description of Program: The Storysacks program uses a community development approach to supporting literacy in families. Community members work together to create Storysacks which children and adults use to develop their literacy skills. Storysacks give parents a fun way to enjoy books and reading with their children.</p> <p>Objective of facilitator training: To prepare individuals to facilitate Storysacks workshops in their communities.</p> <p>Description of facilitator training: Storysacks facilitator training answers the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a Storysack? • Why use Storysacks? • Who can use Storysacks? • Who can make Storysacks? <p>Participants also get hands-on experience planning and actually constructing the Storysacks.</p> <p>For Whom: Individuals interested in promoting family literacy in their communities.</p> <p>Length of facilitator training: 1 day</p>

Types of Adult and General Literacy Training offered from 1998 to 2004

Type of Training	Description
Level 1: Tutor Training	<p>Offered since: 2000</p> <p>Objective: (1) To provide participants with enough information to begin working with literacy learners. (2) To provide participants with concrete examples of activities that can be used directly with a literacy learner.</p> <p>Description: Topics covered include: literacy rates; adult learning; reading stages and strategies; writing; spelling; tutoring tips; and comprehension. The training can be modified for all levels of learning. Participants receive a tutor-training manual that is easy-to-read and easy-to-use.</p> <p>For whom: Tutors who will be working with adult learners.</p> <p>Length of training: 3 days</p>
Level 2: Drawing the Line	<p>Offered since: 2001</p> <p>Objective: To provide literacy practitioners with some background material to offer guidance in the challenging process of drawing the line between teaching and counseling in adult literacy programs.</p> <p>Description: Dr. Jenny Horsman, community educator and researcher who has spent more than two decades in the literacy field, wrote this kit that is based on her research, experience and writings. Topics in <i>Drawing the Line</i> include: naming the presence of violence; balancing needs and respecting boundaries; bringing the whole person to learning; and taking safety seriously.</p>

	<p>For whom: Practitioners who are interested in learning more about affective issues in literacy work.</p> <p>Length of training: 1 day</p>
Level 2: Intake and Assessment Processes	<p>Offered since: 2001</p> <p>Objective: To promote a common understanding of assessment and provide literacy practitioners with some information and resources for intake and assessment within their programs.</p> <p>Description: This workshop promotes a common understanding of assessment among literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan. Each topic is supplemented by several resources and sample forms that can be modified to fit a program's needs. It includes information on: intake processes, assessment, initial assessment, on-going assessment, exit assessment, resources and sample assessment tools.</p> <p>For whom: Literacy practitioners who are interested in learning about intake and assessment.</p> <p>Length of training: 1 day</p>
Level 2: Learning How to Learn	<p>Offered since: 2001</p> <p>Objective: To provide information on adult learning and an opportunity for participants to reflect on their learning and the learning of those with whom they may work.</p> <p>Description: This interactive workshop contains information on: learning and learning styles; principles of effective learning; metacognition; reading, listening and note-taking skills; time management; memory, study and test-taking skills.</p> <p>For whom: Literacy learners or practitioners who are interested in exploring adult learning from a number of different perspectives.</p> <p>Length of training: 1 day</p>

Level 2: Numeracy Kit	<p>Offered since: 2001</p> <p>Objective: To provide information on different strategies that a tutor or practitioner may use to help adults learn basic math skills.</p> <p>Description: Highlights of the Numeracy workshop include: a discussion of the definition of numeracy versus math; basic numbers and number sense; fractions, decimals and percentages; understanding data; measurement, spatial sense and geometry; identifying algebraic patterns; and overcoming obstacles in learning.</p> <p>For whom: Literacy practitioners and tutors who are interested in learning about helping adult learners with basic math skills.</p> <p>Length of training: 1 day</p>
Online Workshops	<p>Offered: 2002-2003</p> <p>Objective: To introduce participants to online learning and information on a topic area, and guide participants through an online discussion related to the topic.</p> <p>Description: In 2002-2003, four online workshops were offered to literacy practitioners. The topics included: Learning Disabilities; Volunteer Recruitment; Aboriginal Literacy; and Learning How to Learn Online.</p> <p>For whom: Literacy practitioners.</p> <p>Length of training: These workshops each occurred over a two to four week period</p>
Orientation for New Coordinators	<p>Offered since: 1998</p> <p>Objective: To provide new literacy coordinators with an introduction to the literacy programming in Saskatchewan and the literacy field generally.</p> <p>Description: The topics covered from year to year</p>

	<p>vary; however, they often include: literacy in Canada & Saskatchewan; family literacy, adult literacy; learning and development; program development; program evaluation; resources; and eLit.ca.</p> <p>For whom: Those who are new or returning to literacy work.</p> <p>Length of training: 2 days</p>
Plain Language	<p>Offered since: 2000</p> <p>Objective: To provide information about and practice writing in plain language.</p> <p>Description: This workshop guides participants through the art of writing and formatting in plain language. Participants have the opportunity to reflect on their own work and make appropriate changes.</p> <p>For whom: This workshop is designed for those who want to communicate more clearly with the public or their clients.</p> <p>Length of training: This workshop is delivered over a ½ day or a full day.</p>
Proposal Writing	<p>Offered since: 2000</p> <p>Objective: To provide information on the elements involved in proposal writing and to guide literacy practitioners through the proposal writing process.</p> <p>Description: This workshop introduces participants to a step-by-step approach to writing proposals to government and funding organizations. Participants are introduced to the typical components of a proposal, provided general guidelines for writing proposals and additional resources for more detailed information on proposal writing. The full-day workshop allows for hands-on proposal writing practice.</p>

	<p>For whom: Anyone interested in writing a proposal for a literacy project.</p> <p>Length of training: This workshop is delivered over a ½ day or a full day.</p>
Provincial Literacy Meetings	<p>Offered since: mid -1990's</p> <p>Objective: To provide an opportunity for networking, information sharing and learning about literacy in Saskatchewan.</p> <p>Description: The SLN has partnered with Saskatchewan Learning in planning and coordinating two provincial literacy meetings each year. These meetings often serve a professional development function for practitioners in that they provide an opportunity to connect with others in the field and participate in workshops and presentations related to their work.</p> <p>For whom: These meetings are open to anyone involved with or interested in literacy in Saskatchewan.</p> <p>Length: Meetings are one or two days long and are held twice a year.</p>

SLN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DELIVERY STATISTICS

Family Literacy Training Delivered from 1998 - 2004

(does not include FL Foundational Training delivered in August 2002 to 12 participants over 5.5 days or 33 hours)

Year	1998-1999 (estimated)	1999-2000 (estimated)	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
# of types of training	4	2	2	5	9	7
# of training sessions held	11	10	9	10	20	17
# of hours of training delivered	174	186	144	114	188	181
# of participants	144	110	84	89	222	202

Adult & General Literacy Training Sessions from 1998 to 2004

(does not include the provincial literacy meetings)

Year	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
# of types of training	4	2	9	7	8	5
# of training sessions held	4	2	14	23*	8	10
# of hours of training delivered	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	39 (does not include online workshops**)	76
# of participants	N/a	N/a	167+	289+	100	128

*2001-2002 – received funding to develop and deliver proposal writing and plain language workshops

**2002-2003 – 4 of the sessions listed occurred online and lasted between 2 to 4 weeks each.

HOW IS LITERACY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDED?

The SLN does not receive consistent funding to deliver professional development; rather, when funding is received, it is typically for the development and pilot testing of training materials. For example in 2001-2002 the SLN received funding from the National Literacy Secretariat to formally develop and pilot test proposal writing and plain language workshops. Likewise in 2002-2003, the SLN received project funding from NLS to offer four online workshops. The NLS has been the only, albeit limited, source of funding for the delivery of adult literacy professional development in Saskatchewan. Since 1998, Saskatchewan Learning has provided \$ 50,000 annually to the SLN for family literacy training, support and networking in the province.

Beyond the year in which funding is received for development and pilot testing, the SLN tries to recover the cost of training through workshop fees. A fee schedule is set for each year based on the estimated costs of delivering training. SLN members receive a reduction in the training fees, and for those without access to professional development dollars, the SLN has, in some cases, waived fees. For several years, the SLN has encouraged literacy programs to include a request for professional development funds when submitting project proposals for funding.

For the past two years, 2003 - 2005, the SLN has received funding from the NLS for adult and family literacy practitioner training as part of the professional development project. This funding allows the SLN to offer 2 workshops in family literacy and the same number in adult literacy, based on the professional development plan and needs expressed by the field.

HOW IS LITERACY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DELIVERED?

All of the past family literacy training was delivered face-to-face in a workshop format. In addition to the figures shown above, Foundational Training in Family Literacy was held for 5 days in August 2002, with 12 participants from Saskatchewan and 12 from Manitoba. 12 trainers were involved in this weeklong training.

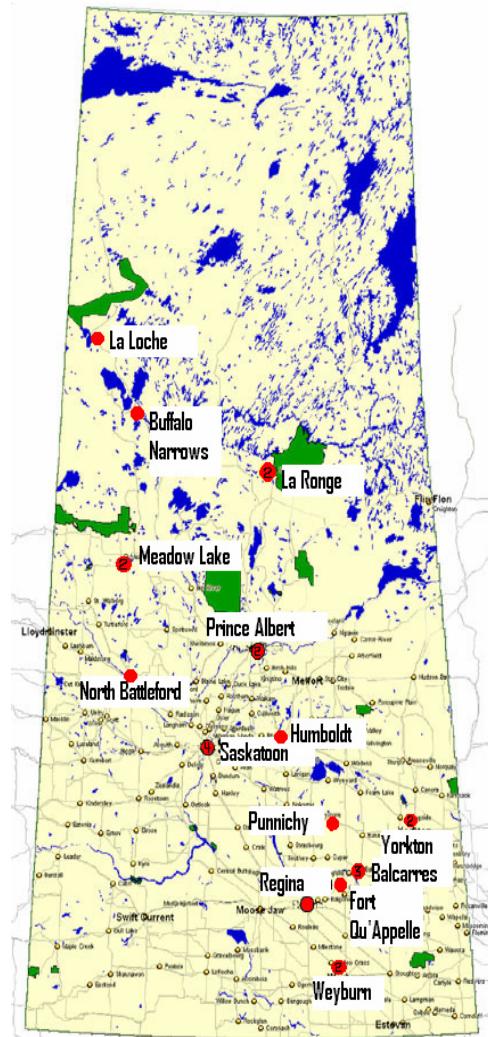
The SLN Family Literacy Coordinator facilitated much of the family literacy training reported in the table above. Some training, such as Come Read With Me, requires more than one facilitator. In these

cases, the SLN contracts trainers who are qualified to co-facilitate particular training modules. These trainers are family literacy practitioners working in diverse programs throughout the province.

With the exception of four online workshops in 2002-2003, all of the adult and general literacy training offered by the SLN over the last six years has been delivered in a face-to-face workshop format. An SLN staff member facilitated most of the training with a few exceptions, including the online workshops, in which outside experts or facilitators were hired.

WHERE IS LITERACY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DELIVERED?

Over the past two years (2002-2003 and 2003-2004), training opportunities were offered in fourteen different communities throughout the province. The map below highlights the communities in which training occurred.



Section 2: Participants' Input and Recommendations

INTRODUCTION: PRACTITIONER INPUT

In early 2004, the Saskatchewan Literacy Network distributed a professional development survey to 152 individuals in the province who have literacy responsibilities as part of their job. 43 or 28% responded. The intention of this survey was to explore the literacy professional development needs and interests of literacy practitioners. The data from the surveys was compiled and is reported in the first part of this section.

Additionally, 13 interviews were conducted with practitioners. The purpose of the interviews was to elaborate on the information shared in the surveys. The interview data are summarized in the second part of this section.

In the fall of 2004, 16 individuals involved with literacy in Saskatchewan participated in a focus group at the Provincial Literacy Meeting. The purpose of the focus group was to collect information about the accuracy of the draft plan that emerged from the survey and interview data and solicit suggestions for revisions and changes. The focus group discussion is summarized in the third part of this section.

Three individuals who are responsible for supporting and/or delivering professional development opportunities were consulted as part of this project. Their recommendations and observations conclude this section of the report.

The data from the surveys, the interviews and focus group provided us with information to build a foundation for a literacy professional development plan in Saskatchewan.

SURVEY RESULTS

All percentages are based on the total number survey respondents: 43.

Part One: Background Information

a) Where do you work?

Responses to this question: 44

Respondents who answered this question: 43

Workplace	Responses	Percentage
Community based/ Non-governmental/ Non-Profit Organization	18	42%
Post-sec	12	28%
Pre -K-12	5	12%
KidsFirst	2	5%
Aboriginal Head Start	1	2%
Health	1	2%
Libraries	5	12%

b) What is the main focus (mandate) of the organization or program for which you work?

Respondents who answered this question: 38

- 25 or 58% of respondents indicated that the main or primary focus of their organization or program was Basic Education, Literacy and/or ESL.
- 9 or 21% of respondents cited a number of different mandates including pre-K development, supported employment, health promotion, library related activities, education about domestic violence, community re-integration, labour partnerships and development and parenting skills. For these respondents, literacy was a secondary activity.
- 9 or 21 % of respondents did not answer this question.

c) Does your program or organizational budget include funds to pay for your professional development costs?

Responses to this question: 43

Respondents who answered this question: 43

PD costs paid by employer	Responses	Percentage
Some	25	58%
All	15	35%
None	3	7%

d) Does your program or organizational budget include time for you to participate in professional development opportunities?

Responses to this question: 43

Respondents who answered this question: 43

Time provided by employer	Responses	Percentage
Some	28	65%
All	13	30%
None	2	5%

- Two of the 3 respondents who indicated that they do not have organizational funds for PD costs also indicated that they do not have work time to participate in PD. These two respondents work for a CBO/NFP/NGO.

Part One: Closing comments from respondents

- Seven respondents offered comments at the end of this first section.
- One respondent indicated that PD was most often offered at his/her place of employment.
- Others provided more detail with regard to the provision of funds and time for engaging in professional development activities by their employer: each person is assigned part of the budget for PD; PD must be approved by a supervisor; PD costs and time are covered up to a maximum amount because resources are limited; given time off; time is provided for PD that takes place during the work week; organization does not pay for university courses, but will pay for most other PD; in addition to an annual PD allocation, a fund to which we can apply for PD money is accessible.

Part Two: Your Role and Work in Literacy

a) What is your job title?

Responses to this question: 42

Respondents who answered this question: 42

Type of Job	Responses	Percentage
Administrator	13	30%
Coordinator	13	30%
Direct Delivery	14	33%
Other (health nurse, board member)	2	5%

Job Title	Responses	Job Title	Responses
Literacy Coordinator	3	Manage, Basic Education & Literacy	1
Family Literacy Coordinator	3	Public Health Nurse	1
Program Head	3	Program services coordinator	1
Teacher & Literacy	2	Literacy Instructor	1
Executive Director	2	Outreach Coordinator	1
Teacher	2	KidsFirst Supervisor	1
Literacy Service Programmer	2	Project Director	1
Admin Director	1	Adult Literacy coordinator	1
Assistant Principal	1	Home visitor/ Family support	1
Student Support Coordinator	1	Project Manager	1
Regional Coordinator	1	Board member, focus committee member, Regina Learners Support Group	1
Children's Support Worker	1	Communications Coordinator	1
Program Director	1	Basic Education Coordinator/Counsellor	1
Personal Advisor	1	Adult Basic Education Instructor	1
Volunteer Facilitator of Family Literacy	1	Literacy Facilitator	1
Regional Director	1	Learning Centre Coordinator	1

b) Which of the following best describes your role?

Responses to this question: 54

Respondents who answered this question: 42

Role	Responses	Percentage
Literacy coordinator	16	37%
Other	10	23%
FL facilitator and/or advisor	9	21%
Administrator/manager	7	16%
Literacy tutor	3	7%
Literacy instructor	3	7%
Children's support	2	5%
Public library worker	1	2%
Public health nurse	1	2%
Literacy facilitator	1	2%
No answer	1	2%

c) For how many hours per week (paid time) do you work on literacy related activities?

Responses to this question: 39

Respondents who answered this question: 39

# of hours	Responses	Percentage
0-10	14	33%
11-20	5	12%
21-30	3	7%
31-40	16	37%
No paid time	1	2%

d) For how many months per year are you employed to work on literacy related activities?

Responses to this question: 39

Respondents who answered this question: 39

Months per year	Responses	Percentage
0	3	7%
1-5	1	2%
6-9	4	9%
10	12	28%
12	19	44%

e) How many unpaid (volunteer) hours per week do you work on literacy related activities?

Responses to this question: 37

Respondents who answered this question: 37

Hours per week	Responses	Percentage
0	11	26%
1-5	22	51%
6-10	2	5%
20	1	2%
Fluctuates	1	2%

f) For how long have you been involved with literacy?

Responses to this question: 41

Respondents who answered this question: 41

Years	Responses	Percentage
Under 1 year	1	2%
1- 3 years	4	9%
4 - 9 years	14	33%
10 + years	22	51%

g) To which age group do you belong?

Responses to this question: 41

Respondents who answered this question: 41

Age group	Responses	Percentage
25 and Under	2	5%
26-30	2	5%
31-40	11	26%
41-50	14	33%
51-60	10	23%
Over 61	2	5%

h) Is your literacy work directed towards children, youth, families or adults? (please check all that apply)

Responses to this question: 103

Respondents who answered this question: 43

Population	Responses	Percentage
Adults	36	83%
Families	28	65%
Children	21	49%
Youth	18	42%

How many serve all groups?

- 13 of the 43 respondents, or 30%, serve all groups
- 20 of the 43 respondents, or 47%, serve at least three of the aforementioned groups
- 26 of the 43 respondents, or 60%, serve at least two of the aforementioned groups

i) If you work with children, youth or families, please comment on the type of work you do with these groups.

Responses to this question: 41

Respondents who answered this question: 31

Type of work	Responses	Percentage
FL – general programs/activities	17	40%
CRWM	7	16%
ALAPS	3	7%
FL Promotion	3	7%
Storysacks	2	5%
Work with parents	2	5%
ESL FL	2	5%
Work with children	2	5%
Distribute/loan books/reading materials	2	5%
Nurturing with Rhymes	1	2%

j) If you work with adults, what type of literacy work do you do?
(please check all that apply)

Responses to this question: 105

Respondents who answered this question: 38

Type of work	Responses	Percentage
Adult literacy	27	63%
Aboriginal literacy	17	40%
ESL	17	40%
Basic ed (5-10)	14	33%
Workplace literacy	9	21%
Family literacy	7	16%
Youth literacy	7	16%
Promotion support & advocacy	3	7%

Assist with referrals	2	5%
Develop resources	1	2%
Community learning groups	1	2%

Part Two: Closing comments from respondents

- Sixteen respondents offered comments at the end of the second section.
- Respondents' comments reflected great diversity in their roles and work in literacy. Their work involved: helping to choose programming, research and promotions; classroom instruction; networking and linking with other programs for referrals; participation on local coalitions and advisory committees; writing grant proposals; offering one-to-one tutoring programs; offering community learning groups for seniors; training tutors; teaching Nobody's Perfect Parenting and incorporating family literacy into each lesson; offering a literacy program for people who wish to re-enter the workforce; basic education program; develop partnerships with other organizations to offer services to learners and families; preparation of communications materials; conduct surveys on literacy needs in communities and workplaces.
- Responses suggested that many respondents have many different roles related to literacy.

Part Three: Past Involvement with Literacy Professional Development Activities

a) How well have your literacy professional development needs been met in the last year?

Responses to this question: 43

Respondents who answered this question: 41

	Responses	Percentage
Partially	22	51%
Completely	17	40%
Not met	2	5%
N/a	2	5%

b) How have your literacy professional development needs not been met in the last year?

Respondents who answered this question: 25

The following **barriers** to accessing PD or factors that prevented individuals from accessing literacy PD were **mentioned by more than one respondent**:

- No time to attend training
- Lack of money/funding to attend training
- Need more specific opportunities geared to specific positions (ex. Coordinator of a one-on-one tutoring program, literacy instructor, literacy facilitator)
- Training was cancelled

Respondents desired the following training/PD:

- ALAPS
- Recruiting learners
- CRWM
- Practical instructional strategies
- Opportunity to share with agencies other than SLN
- Proposal writing
- Discussions/learning about literacy issues as a whole (stats, rates, etc)
- Storysacks
- Assessment & assessment tools
- Information on level 1 & 2 Benchmarks
- Aboriginal Culture & working with Aboriginal people
- More in-depth training

c) What literacy professional development opportunities have you engaged in the last year? Please list them in the first column. In the second column, please indicate the organization that facilitated the professional development opportunity.

Respondents who answered this question: 33

- The 33 respondents to this question identified 77 professional development opportunities in which they engaged in the last year. These opportunities are categorized below:

PD Category	Specific Types of PD	Total
Literacy, Basic Education & Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• RPL tutor conference• Conference – quality in ABE• IRA Conference• SABEA Conference (2)• Intake & Assessment	26

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy Stats and Implications • FAST program – literacy component • New Coordinators Training (2) • Reading cognition • Aboriginal Literacy Workshop • Learning Disabilities (2) • Tutor Recruitment (2) • BE Redesign (2) • FAE/FAS • Adult Education – Quality Programs • Provincial Literacy Meeting (4) • Only liaisons with other literacy project in Regina. • Writing Out Loud Workshop 	
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management/Supervisors workshop • Publicity Workshop • Time Management • Conflict Resolution • Government Relations/Advocacy • Group Facilitation Skills Development • Coaching • Visioning • Curriculum Development • Understanding Charitable Returns • Changes to Privacy Act • Proposal Writing Workshop • Literature search/ reading (self) • Enneagram Workshop • Staff Conference • Workplace Learning conference • Voluntary Sector Conference 	17
Family Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come Read With Me (4) • Storysacks (4) • LAPS Training • Family Literacy Day activities • How to Run Reading Circles 	11
ESL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESL Workshop • ESL Tutor Training (2) • ESL Train-the-Trainer (4) • ESL Evaluation • SCENES Conference (2) 	10
PLAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLAR training • PLAR Delivery • PLAR Conference (2) • PLAR Workshop 	5
Board training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board orientation • Board training. 	2
Community Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset-based Community Development (2) 	2
Computer training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer training • Microsoft Publisher 	2
TOWES Essential Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TOWES Essential Skills (2) 	2

- 27 different organizations were identified as facilitating the professional development opportunities in which respondents engaged. They are listed according to how frequently they were identified.

Organization	Responses
Saskatchewan Literacy network	30
Saskatchewan Learning	9
Regina Public Library	5
Saskatchewan Institute for Applied Science and Technology (SIAST)	3
Volunteer Saskatoon	3
Community Development Association of SK	2
Cumberland Regional College	2
Movement for Canadian Literacy	2
Parkland Regional College	2
Rutgers University	2
Saskatchewan Adult Basic Education Association (SABEA)	2
Saskatchewan Council for Educators of Non English Speakers (SCENES)	2
Academy of Learning	1
Big Brothers	1
Bow Valley College	1
Canadian Association for Prior Learning and Recognition	1
CIC	1
Colleges	1
Frontier College	1
International Reading Association	1
Northlands College	1
OSTD	1
Prince Albert Literacy Network	1
Regional Intersectoral Committee	1
University of Saskatchewan	1
Wild Rose Foundation AB	1
Workplace Education MB steering committee	1

d) Throughout the past year, approximately what percentage of your literacy professional development occurred during your personal time and what percentage occurred on work time?

Respondents who answered this question: 40

During personal time: average = 36%*

During work time: average = 80%*

** The percentages do not add up to 100% because this question was answered inconsistently. For example, one respondent indicated that they do 40% on personal time and 100% on work time and this adds up to 140%.*

e) What percentage of the costs associated with the literacy professional development opportunities in which you engaged this past year were covered by your employer, what percentage were covered by you personally and what percentage did other sources cover?

Respondents who answered this question: 37

Employer: average = 90%*

Personal: average = 20%*

Other: average = 49%*

**Again, this question was answered inconsistently.*

f) Are you currently taking classes that will lead to a diploma, certificate or degree that is related to your job?

Responses to this question: 43

Respondents who answered this question: 40

	Responses	Percentage
Yes	7	16%
No, but I'd like to	21	49%
No, not interested	12	28%
N/a	3	7%

- Those who answered "yes" indicated that they were pursuing: specific training, courses, bachelors, masters or doctoral degrees.
- 17 of the 21 respondents who answered "no, but I'd like to," indicated a program that they may pursue in the future:
 - Community Development
 - Family Involvement in Education
 - Social work
 - Children's literature
 - Linguistics/ TESOL (2)

- Adult Ed. Certificate or Degree;
 - Life Skills Certification (2)
 - Masters (6)
 - PhD (2)
- For those who did not have an interest in taking classes, they indicated that they already had academic degrees.

For those who indicated that they would like to take classes that will lead to a diploma, certificate or degree related to their job, their interest included:

- 8 or 38% of them indicated that they were interested in pursuing graduate studies (Phd. or Masters)
- 3 or 14% indicated an interest in ESL or TESOL
- 2 or 10% indicated an interest in life skills certification/training
- Other interests included: Family Involvement in Education, social work, children's literature, Adult Ed. Certificate or Degree and community development

Part Three: Closing comments from respondents

- Twelve respondents offered comments at the end of the third section.
- Two respondents indicated that they already have the degree (formal certification) that they need and one respondent indicated that they did not have a particular PD need throughout the last year.
- Several respondents commented that they have had very positive learning and PD experiences and good access to PD
- Several participants made requests or suggestions: would like to see a closer partnership between SK Learning and the SLN for providing PD to teachers throughout the province; difficult to find a balance between PD that is relevant to newcomers and more in depth opportunities for established literacy practitioners; would like to know more about learning styles and literacy; particularly like the more in depth opportunities offered by SLN.

Part Four: Future Involvement with Professional Development Activities

a) What types of activities do you do in your current position?

Responses to this question: 1234

Respondents who answered this question: 43

Activities in which respondents engage at work listed in descending order.		
Activity	Responses	Percentage
Write reports	37	86%
Organize meetings	36	84%
Plan/implement promotion activities	36	84%
Participate in professional development activities	36	84%
Acquire resources	36	84%
Coordinate classes/groups	34	79%
Evaluate program	33	77%
Design and develop program	33	77%
Maintain resource collection	33	77%
Work with community partners to identify and meet literacy needs/ Community development	33	77%
Establish and maintain partnerships	33	77%
Plan and conduct short-term (ex. one year) projects	33	77%
Write proposals	32	74%
Develop resources	32	74%
Teach or facilitate classes/groups	32	74%
Meet with learners	31	72%
Plan/implement outreach activities	29	67%
Provide referrals to learners	29	67%
Develop/monitor budget(s)	28	65%
Document and recognise learner achievements	28	65%
Monitor finances	27	63%
Explore funding sources	27	63%
Maintain a program office	27	63%
Involving parents in their children's education	27	63%
Adult education	27	63%
Create and revise policies and procedures	26	60%
Document and recognise volunteer contributions	26	60%
Prepare budgets	26	60%
Participate in research activities	24	56%
Assess learners	24	56%
Recruit and interview staff	23	53%
Create and revise mission and vision statements	22	51%
Supervise staff	22	51%

Plan/implement fundraising activities	21	49%
Train staff	21	49%
Emergent literacy	20	47%
Develop curriculum	20	47%
Plain language writing	20	47%
Train tutors	19	44%
Provide ongoing support to tutors	18	42%
Recruit tutors	16	37%
Recruit learners	16	37%
Recruit members for boards or committees	15	35%
Tutor learners yourself	14	33%
Match tutors and learners	14	33%
Evaluate instructors	13	30%
Evaluate tutors	13	30%
Monitor tutor-learner pairs	12	28%

Responses to this question: 231

Respondents who answered this question: 26

Activities in which respondents would like more training listed in descending order.

Activity	Responses	Percentage
Design and develop program	11	26%
Plan/implement promotion activities	10	23%
Write proposals	9	21%
Develop curriculum	9	21%
Work with community partners to identify and meet literacy needs/ Community development	9	21%
Plain language writing	8	19%
Develop resources	8	19%
Establish and maintain partnerships	8	19%
Assess learners	8	19%
Involving parents in their children's education	7	16%
Plan/implement outreach activities	7	16%
Explore funding sources	7	16%
Document and recognise learner achievements	7	16%
Adult education	7	16%
Recruit tutors	6	14%
Train tutors	6	14%
Develop/monitor budget(s)	6	14%
Evaluate tutors	6	14%
Maintain resource collection	5	12%
Plan/implement fundraising activities	5	12%
Create and revise policies and procedures	5	12%
Evaluate program	5	12%
Recruit members for boards or committees	5	12%
Document and recognise volunteer contributions	5	12%

Prepare budgets	5	12%
Monitor finances	5	12%
Evaluate instructors	4	9%
Create and revise mission and vision statements	4	9%
Participate in research activities	4	9%
Plan and conduct short-term (ex. one year) projects	4	9%
Acquire resources	4	9%
Provide ongoing support to tutors	4	9%
Teach or facilitate classes/groups	3	7%
Train staff	3	7%
Write reports	3	7%
Supervise staff	3	7%
Emergent literacy	3	7%
Recruit learners	3	7%
Maintain a program office	2	5%
Tutor learners yourself	2	5%
Participate in professional development activities	2	5%
Match tutors and learners	1	2%
Monitor tutor-learner pairs	1	2%
Coordinate classes/groups	1	2%
Recruit and interview staff	1	2%
Meet with learners	0	0%
Provide referrals to learners	0	0%
Organize meetings	0	0%

b) In what other areas would you like training or professional development opportunities?

Respondents who answered this question: 13

- Marketing and recruitment
- Family Literacy
- Something to help me be a better teacher
- Working with community partners
- Aboriginal; intercultural; community development; real stories/real people
- Proposal/grant writing
- Statistics, demographics
- Being kept up to date with on-going literacy surveys and stats. Provincial as well as National Literacy Statistics/facts.
- Organizational leadership and board development, Aboriginal literacy
- Learner assessment; proposal writing
- Aboriginal Culture and literacy; learning disabilities – adult

- Participatory approaches with culturally diverse learners, community development
- Workplace Essential Skills; TOWES; Prior Learning Assessment Recognition

c) At this stage in your career, what are you looking for from literacy professional development? (check all that apply)

Responses for this question: 90

Respondents who answered this question: 42

	Responses	Percentage
Connecting with others	34	79%
Specific training related to the duties of my job	25	58%
Sharing the expertise I have	19	44%
In-depth learning opportunities	11	26%
N/a	1	2%

- The following topics were suggested by respondents:
 - Program/project evaluation
 - How to use qualitative research results to satisfy quantitative funding/management demands
 - Financial administration
 - Tutor and learner support (recognition, retention, etc.)
 - Research, community development
 - Family literacy

d) In addition to the Saskatchewan Literacy Network (SLN), which organizations will you look to for literacy professional development opportunities that address your needs?

Respondents who answered this question: 34

The table below indicates which organization they look to, in addition to the SLN, for literacy professional development:

Grouped according to type of organization			
Type of organization	Responses	Percentage	Organizations
Community Based Organizations (CBO's)	33	77%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer Saskatoon (2) • SABEA (2) • SALN (2) • Banff Centre of Management; • Movement for Canadian Literacy • CSAE (Canadian Society)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of Association Executives) • Learning Disabilities Association, Regina Chapter • Elizabeth Fry Society • Other CBOs with similar interests • Other agencies which specialize in using volunteers. • NAFLD • Sask Library Association • Centre for Family Literacy • Family Literacy Project – Regina, • Circle Project, • Frontier College • United Way • Saskatchewan Reading Council (2) • International Reading Association (2) • Community Development Agencies • Canadian Public Health Association; • Family Literacy • Plain Language Association. • Regina literacy groups; • Intergenerational Grandmothers • Family Resource Projects of Canada; • Saskatoon Adlerian Society; • Parent Education Saskatchewan.
Post-secondary Institutions	16	37%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other post-secondary agencies/colleges • Northlands College • Colleges (3) • SIAST (3) • U of S (2) • U of R • U of S Ext. Division (2) • St.FX • University (2)
Government	8	19%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship and Immigration Canada; • Sask Tourism and Education

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sask Learning (5) • Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board
Libraries	6	14%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public library; • Library, • SK Libraries • Regina Public Library • Canadian Library Association; • Saskatchewan Library Association
Conferences	2	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vitalize conference • Health and Literacy program/resources/conference;
Other	2	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/team-building consultants • Literacy professional development – if SLN doesn't do it, then who should?
Other provinces	1	2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy Alberta
Schools	1	2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School division

e) In what types of professional development would you like to participate in the future (ex. web-based courses, conferences, workshops)?

Responses to this question: 60

Respondents who answered this question: 38

Type of PD	Responses	Percentage
Workshop/courses	23	53%
Conferences	17	40%
Web-based courses	9	21%
All/any	4	9%
Face to face	3	7%
Distance learning/correspondence	2	5%
Misc. - Broad range with an emphasis on content - "Boardmaker" program	2	5%

f) How should face-to-face literacy professional development opportunities be delivered geographically?

Responses to this question: 54

Respondents who answered this question: 41

PD delivery geographically	Responses	Percentage
Regionally	25	58%
Centrally	24	56%
Other	3	7%
N/a	2	5%

- Seven respondents offered additional comments:
 - Connect with STF on central or regional training development
 - Nationally, internationally
 - Concurrent sessions in different centres using teleconference
 - Regionally where feasible/possible (2)
 - Saskatoon works
 - Dependent on type of training

g) How should the timing of face-to-face literacy professional development opportunities be organized?

Responses to this question: 48

Respondents who answered this question: 41

PD delivery	Responses	Percentage
Annually	28	65%
Upon request	11	26%
Other	8	19%
Bi-annually	1	2%

- Twelve respondents offered additional comments.
- Several respondents emphasized the need to have advance notice of training for planning and allocating funds. One respondent recommended an annual training calendar so that practitioners can plan for PD, while still ensuring that PD is flexible enough to accommodate needs throughout the year as they arise.
- Other respondents emphasized their preference for the timing of PD opportunities.

h) What are some of the challenges you currently experience in accessing literacy professional development?

Responses to this question: 36

Respondents who answered this question: 33

Challenge	Responses	Percentage
Finding time or getting time away from work; timing of training	16	37%
Lack of expertise/trained facilitators	2	5%
Not accessible (not local; too far to travel)	6	14%
Don't know about opportunities	2	5%
Money/Funding	6	14%
Very little available	1	2%
Overwhelmed by the number of opportunities available (not knowing what will meet my needs)	1	2%
Finding relevant/interesting topics	2	5%

i) What supports do you currently have and what supports would you find helpful in accessing literacy professional development?

Responses to this question: 39

Respondents who answered this question: 33

Support	Responses	Percentage
Employer/ workplace/supervisor/co-worker support	11	26%
Funding/financial support	7	16%
Connections with other community agencies (SLC, SALN, RPL, non-literacy focused organizations)	6	14%
SLN/ SLN notifying the field about training opportunities	4	9%
Local training	3	7%
Time/Paid time	2	5%
Access to a computer/email	2	5%
NALD	1	2%
Childcare	1	2%
Central location to find out about PD	1	2%
Credit/recognition from formal institutions	1	2%

j) How important is it for you to receive recognition or a certificate for the training you have taken or will take?

Responses to this question: 42

Respondents who answered this question: 42

Importance of recognition	Responses	Percentage
1 (very important)	10	23%
2	6	14%
3	12	28%
4	9	21%
5 (not important)	5	12%

- Five respondents offered additional comments. Respondents remarked that recognition or a certificate were important for portfolios and professional files.

Part Four: Closing comments from respondents

- Four respondents offered comments at the end of the fifth section:
- One respondent expressed a concern that family literacy and "literacy" practitioners are not qualified and therefore are set apart from other professionals.
- Two respondents indicated that they enjoy the interaction between the individuals at PD events, one of whom suggested that while regional training might be more accessible to practitioners, the opportunity to meet with others from across the province at centrally based training is appreciated.
- One respondent suggested that it would be helpful if Literacy Coordinators/facilitators had other ways of receiving funding for professional development.

Part Five: Accreditation

- a) How important is the development and implementation of an accreditation process for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan?

Responses to this question: 42

Respondents who answered this question: 42

Importance of development of an accreditation process	Responses	Percentage
1 (very important)	11	26%
2	16	37%
3	12	28%
4	2	5%
5 (not important)	1	2%

- b) If you indicated that accreditation is important, what do you suggest as some of the “next steps” for exploring accreditation for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan?

Responses to this question: 24

Respondents who answered this question: 24

Suggestions for “next steps” for exploring accreditation:

- Have SIAST recognize Literacy Modules: plain language, Come Read With Me, Storysacks.
- Conduct a comprehensive provincial discussion with recognized certifying agency/bodies.
- A series of focus groups to determine the skills and skill sets required for a good literacy practitioner.
- Should be recognized as an alternative learning field by the U of S Masters Program. Literacy should also be part of the B.Ed. program.
- Explore ways to recognize prior learning and experience.
- Look at what is happening in other provinces throughout the country.
- Make it worthwhile; not too time consuming.
- Research the needs of practitioners. Possibly do a survey of staff in the field have. Determine how SLN training modules can be clustered.
- Develop a skills assessment and work with competencies – what do we need to learn, how will programs be delivered, how will accreditation be determined – to meet needs’ province-wide.
- Outline objectives and criteria for accreditation and how assessment of practitioners would occur.
- Depends on who is in charge of the accreditation. I would be strongly against accreditation if the government were in charge of any part of it. The government is too conservative and slow an entity to oversee this kind of project in my opinion.
- Working with SIAST and the universities to identify course content that matches their curriculum – even a Prior Learning Credit indicating a certain number of hours of Literacy Training should be equivalent to a certain no. of hours related to learning.
- Recommend that the accreditation process, if developed, be optional vs. mandatory.

- Provincial Steering Committee to connect to other provincial steering committees.
- Developing processes so there is equal access.

Part Five: Closing comments from respondents

- Seven respondents offered comments at the end of the fifth section.
- Respondent reiterated the need to incorporate Prior Learning assessment into an accreditation process.
- Two respondents expressed concern about the possibility of exclusion of those who have years of experience in literacy, but no formal "paperwork" to back it up.
- One respondent also expressed trepidation at any accreditation process overseen by government.
- One respondent commented that accreditation should dovetail with the values of employing organizations.
- One respondent suggested that the value of accreditation lies in the credibility it would bring to literacy.
- One respondent expressed a concern accreditation being a step towards professionalization which tends to exclude people. What we really need, suggested this respondent, is adequate funding to sustain programs and pay practitioners decent wages.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

The interview process was semi-structured. An interview guide was used which included questions related to five broad topics:

- Reasons for attending PD
- Topics for PD (content of PD)
- Delivery of PD
- Recognition (Accreditation/Certification)
- Barriers and supports

This section provides a summary of the interviews based on these topics.

Reasons for attending PD

Interviewees cited 21 different professional development events that they had participated in recently. The table below lists these events in the left column along with the reasons for attending and the impact of the event in the right column.

Reasons for attending PD		
Event	Number of Interviewees who referred to this event	Reasons for attending and impact of attending
Provincial Literacy Meeting	3	<p>Excellent opportunity for networking, learning and information sharing.</p> <p>Connecting and networking were seen as important at these meetings because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Of the isolation of literacy work• It helps one to get a better sense of what is happening in the literacy community• It helps one to stay connected and learn about what is happening at the provincial level through SLN and Sask Learning <p>It was noted by a few interviewees that the connecting and networking often happen informally at events such as the provincial literacy meeting (during breaks, lunch, etc).</p>

		<p>It was suggested that the spring meeting (April 2004) was a "top rate" meeting because there was a good balance between networking, sharing information and reflection; and the topics at this meeting were interesting (ie. Judy Baker's talk about MB family literacy initiatives, Carmen and SALN's contributions). One person said that she got ideas for new projects from this meeting.</p> <p>One individual cited being "told to go" (by a boss) as the reason for attending this meeting</p>
Conference	3	<p>Directly related to work and work context.</p> <p>Good chance to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get different and more theoretical views of adult basic education • Hear from the people who do the research; level of expertise was phenomenal • Talk to people working in different contexts
Come Read with Me	2	<p>It was good to make linkages with others who are doing similar work</p> <p>It was delivered well; CRWM is a base for Family Literacy work</p>
Management Training	2	<p>New to position as a manager.</p> <p>Found that the information was not new, but it was good to hear it again and review it.</p> <p>Insufficient interaction and participation in the workshop.</p>
Meetings & events	2	<p>Various meetings were cited as good opportunities for meeting others who do similar work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National meetings • Definition derby • Network meetings
New Coordinator's Training	2	<p><i>New Coordinators training was seen as important for new coordinators and those new to their positions in literacy.</i></p> <p><i>The primary benefit of attending New Coordinator's training was the opportunity to connect with others and network.</i></p>

Asset Based Community Development	1	<p>The topic is interdisciplinary, portable and relevant to work and interests.</p> <p>Got excited about the possibilities; made a presentation to the board; impacted awareness and thinking</p>
Early Childhood development	1	Attended because it's part of the background I need and we may be involved in a related project in the next year.
Enneagram workshop	1	<p>Staff development workshop</p> <p>Better understanding of how colleagues connect</p>
Expert presentation	1	<p>Directly relevant to work.</p> <p>Got information that will help better serve clients.</p>
ICAMS	1	Required to take this training because we run a LINC training (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) program.
Informal or self-directed learning	1	I'm an avid researcher – try to keep on top of things: learning disabilities, literacy throughout Canada.
Jenny Horzman's workshop	1	Directly related to present work situation.
Online workshops	1	Took workshops to fill some gaps in what I know about literacy: Aboriginal Literacy workshop and Learning Disabilities workshop
Plain Language workshop	1	<p>Had to develop posters and flyers as part of job</p> <p>Things had to be written in plain language so people could read and understand them.</p>
Prior Learning and Recognition	1	This particular workshop was aboriginal focused, so it was a good introduction to Prior Learning Recognition in specific circumstances.
PD days organized by employer	1	Had a choice between a number of different sessions available to all employees.
Proposal Writing Workshop	1	<p>Wanted to learn the funding vocabulary and get a better understanding about what is all involved with preparing a proposal</p> <p>It was helpful to learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where to get money from, • Tips and types of language for

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> proposal writing and fundraising The difference between goals and objectives That I'm not the only one who is frustrated and unfamiliar with the process of proposal writing
Storysacks	1	Good background on family literacy. Didn't have this background when I entered my position.
Teleconference	1	Good introduction to a topic.
Workplace Essential Skills workshop	1	<p>Topic is connected to literacy.</p> <p>Supervisors recommended attendance as interviewees responsibilities in this area will increase in the future.</p> <p>Conducted a mini workshop following the training and have requests for another workshop</p>

Interviewees mostly spoke about formal, work-related learning opportunities; however, a few noted a preference for less or informal learning. The provincial literacy meetings were discussed specifically by three participants, but others also referred to these meetings throughout their interviews as a form of PD.

The **reasons for attending PD** cited by interviewees primarily consisted of:

- Chance to connect with others and network
- Opportunity to get away from work, reflect on what one is doing and possibly link with others
- A desire to learn specific skills or techniques, or to gain certain knowledge; to learn how to do something or how to do it better
- Opportunity to learn more about something directly related to work
- Chance to review or be reminded of something, or to have something reinforced
- PD as an opportunity to better understand what is expected
- For some, there was an expectation in the workplace that they attend PD
- Keeps you sharp and generates motivation for work

- For some, the choice to attend PD was driven by the reputation of a facilitator and a desire to tap into their particular expertise
- Some interviewees referred to PD and learning specifically as a normal part of work

The **impact or outcomes of attending PD** echoed many of the reasons cited for attending PD:

- Connections with others; more contacts; finding out what people are doing
- Affirmed/reinforced that I knew it or was on the right track; found out I already knew it; realized I wasn't way off track with what I was doing
- New information
- Directly relevant to my daily work; helped me do my work better; more confident and skilled
- Helped me look at things differently
- Realized that the program was more flexible than I thought
- Provided information for future work; will apply in the future
- Learned a lot; learned new things
- Most PD, for me, is not that valuable (been in the field for some time); got very little out of PD I've attended (due to lack of relevance)

Topics for PD (content of PD)

The table below summarizes the topics for PD in which the interviewees were interested.

Topics for PD in which interviewees were interested	
Suggestions for Specific Content	Suggestions for Connecting & Sharing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative stuff • Interconnectedness of literacy and other services; forming partnerships • How to support learners in an holistic way • New information on learning disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect in smaller groups with others working in literacy • Information on other programs so that appropriate referrals can be made • A PD event may be a coming together of professionals from different areas – time to interact with others not directly working in

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESL: need training and materials on ESL literacy • Aboriginal Literacy • Fundraising • Need more basic information for new practitioners • Volunteer data management; volunteer recruitment; letting volunteers go • Assessment and Evaluation; how to measure what works • Children's literacy • Facilitation skills • Less traditional ways of approaching literacy; popular education • Numeracy; fractions • Behavioral literacy; life skills • Conflict resolution • Family literacy • PD focused on instructors and instruction 	<p>literacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting with the resources that are out there and available • Resource sharing opportunities • More connectedness between people working in children's literacy • Programming ideas (ex. in depth information on what is happening elsewhere) • Learning about how others do aboriginal literacy programming or family literacy in cooperation with schools
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Delivery of PD

When asked about their preferred delivery method for PD, interviewees identified four delivery methods. The table below lists these four methods along with a summary of related comments from interviewees.

Preferred PD delivery method	
Delivery method	Summary of Interviewee comments
Face-to-Face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of interviewees expressed a preference for face-to-face PD opportunities • Reasons for this preference included:

	<p>opportunity for networking, interaction, opportunity to get away from work and distractions, bigger commitment to face-to-face PD than PD delivered by other means</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The types of face-to-face PD identified by interviewees included: conferences, workshops, networking meetings, resource exchanges, panel discussions, peer sharing, small group work and mentorship.
Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few interviewees expressed an appreciation for the learning that results from the "behind the scenes conversations and side-chats" that occur at formal events. Interviewees also talked about informal learning at work: conversations in the hallways and during breaks.
On-the-Job	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One interviewee identified the steep learning curve that one is confronted with when starting a new job. This promotes learning and mentorship.
Online/Web-based	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few interviewees had previous experience with web-based PD The majority of interviewees acknowledged that online delivery is important for those for whom access to face-to-face opportunities is difficult. Several interviewees said that they would try online learning, but expressed concern about setting aside time for it and having appropriate technological support. One respondent felt that delivering PD online devalued it. Two interviewees suggested that online PD might be better suited to more concrete subject matter. Two interviewees were clear that online learning was not something that interested them. Two interviewees said that they had positive experience with learning online.

Generally, interviewees felt that the best form of delivery of PD is face-to-face; however, several suggested that the delivery method should influence by the PD topic or individual learning goals. Several interviewees expressed frustration with traditional expert-based PD.

Interviewees suggested many ways in which practitioners may be invited to participate in PD delivery:

- Send out a questionnaire or simply ask about areas of expertise and interest in delivering PD.
- Demonstrate interest and willingness to tap into the knowledge out there.
- Ask people personally: "you've done such an interesting job in this area, would you consider talking about this at our next event?".
- Give people enough advance notice to work it into their budget, and work plan for the year.

One interviewee cautioned that there is a balance between being efficient and being inclusive and this must be considered when engaging practitioners in providing PD.

Additionally, several suggestions were made for ways in which practitioners may be involved in providing PD:

- Panel discussions
- Workshops
- Presentations
- Share or presentations at provincial meeting
- Sharing through stories
- Writing an article for the newsletter or some other publication
- Participating on an advisory committee
- Becoming a trainer
- One-on-one: working with individuals interested in a particular topic/area
- Small group discussion
- Web based conversations using listservs, bulletin boards, etc.
- Small conferences for sharing experience

When asked if they were interested in providing PD, most interviewees said yes. The following topics were identified by interviewees as areas in which they have expertise or areas about which they would be comfortable providing PD:

- Parenting and literacy
- Child behaviour
- Communication skills
- Training volunteers

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Aboriginal communities • Adult education • Participatory approached to adult education • Learning styles • Working with ESL literacy learners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation skills • Literacy and language • Learning disabilities • Theatre and drama • Adult education: theory and discourse • Writing |
|--|--|

General recommendations regarding delivery of PD included:

- Keep an inventory of the things people are doing and the expertise they have.
- SLN serve as the link between front line literacy workers; SLN should be the hub for resources and support (ie. it would be helpful to know where various Storysacks are throughout the province).
- Start a practitioners speakers bureau.
- The low cost of training is admirable.
- Would like to work towards more recognition for family literacy professional development.
- Start a small committee to provide recommendations/feedback to the SLN staff in terms of planning the provincial meetings.

Recognition

Interviewees were asked for their thoughts about two areas related to recognition: importance of receiving a certificate for competing training or workshops and the importance of accreditation.

Accreditation is a process by which practitioners can be given credit for what they learn and the skills they acquire. It culminates in recognition that a practitioner has achieved competence in literacy provision.

Importance of Certificates: Some interviewees felt that receiving a certificate was important and cited the following reasons:

- Important to have the credentials when applying for jobs.

- There isn't much recognition for literacy work, it would be nice to have something to recognize the experience and knowledge people acquire in this field.
- Shows others that you have been active in the community.
- Certificates and/or recognition are always an incentive.
- It helps to ensure quality programming.
- Assists with keeping track of what you've taken; provides a record.

Other interviewees were *neutral* with regard to receiving a certificate following training, but acknowledged that a certificate is more important to some than others and that it helps to open doors for some people. For some interviewees, receiving a certificate or recognition for training was *unimportant*. They offered a number of reasons:

- Prefer informal learning.
- Too much paper; don't expect formal recognition.
- The reward is not in the certificate, it's in the learning experience.
- Not very important, but it may be much more important to someone at an earlier stage in their career.
- Already have or are pursuing formal academic certification, so receiving certificates for training isn't that important.
- Certificates have more value early on in one's career.

Accreditation: Very few interviewees were opposed to accreditation in the literacy field. The interviewees who felt accreditation was *important* cited the following reasons:

- Both SLN and Sask Learning need to recognize that no one should pass through the door unless they are qualified.
- Why would we not expect accreditation for literacy practitioners when we expect it for ECE.
- Many folks are interested in getting anything of substance.
- Many practitioners do not receive very good treatment or recognition from their employers. They need support and help in terms of training, particularly to validate what they are doing.
- There are large segments of the literacy community that would benefit from accreditation.
- There should be a minimum level in the accreditation process.

- Could use a similar model to first aid: basic and advanced.

For those who indicated that they were *neutral*/regarding accreditation, they provided the following thoughts:

- May be more of a priority for those without formal certification.
- Might lose good people as a result of it; might serve to keep people out.
- Accreditation means nothing because of lengthy seniority in organization.
- Important for those with little job security
- Should not be expected; most beneficial if taken by choice not required.
- I'm more ambiguous than neutral.
- It's difficult to certify things like literacy.

For those few who felt that accreditation was *not important*, they suggested that accreditation is not a very good motivator and that it is of little interest to those who already have formal certification or degrees.

Interviewees had several suggestions and general comments about accreditation:

- There must be some recognition of prior learning and experience.
- Accreditation seems to carry more accountability than a certificate.
- You would need to phase it in.
- It could be a series – some could be done as an option at one of our provincial meetings and some could be done on one's own or online.
- Accreditation would recognize involvement in the community and demonstrate commitment to work.
- It's challenging to design something on a province wide level that will actually make a difference in the quality of delivery of literacy services.
- How would you deliver accreditation? Scheduled workshops? Mentoring?

The interviewees were divided when asked whether they would be interested in taking PD that would lead to accreditation. Two indicated that they would not be interested and three indicated

that they would be interested. For the remainder of the interviewees, the decision to take PD that would lead to accreditation would depend on who recognized it (ex. Saskatchewan Learning) and whether there would be a prior learning recognition component.

The table below summarizes the reasons for and against offering accreditation for literacy practitioners.

Reasons for offering accreditation	Reasons for not offering accreditation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for those who don't have a degree or certificate • Job security; future job opportunities • Affirmation of what is known and recognition of experience and what has been done • Learning new things • Improves practice; would benefit learners • Provide consistency • Indicate to others that one is qualified and capable • Shows that literacy is here to stay • Makes the work more professional • Better leadership • Would keep us in line with other provinces who are using accreditation • More men might be drawn to literacy if there was accreditation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some people may not have time to do it • Accessibility • May cause some to be overconfident and overestimate what they can do; may provoke a sense of false confidence • Lack of recognition • Financial burden it may place on some • Gate-keeping • Could possibly discourage grass roots activity • Difficult to determine what is valuable and what need to be included in accreditation • If not tied to pay, what incentive is there? If tied to pay, the government will have to increase funding • Resources, time, getting people organized, transportation issues • Creates a hierarchy • Can be problematic if it is linked to funding

Barriers and Supports

The table below provides a summary of the barriers and supports related to accessing PD that interviewees identified.

Barriers and supports	
Supports	Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A central network that we could access to learn about different PD opportunities• A check-in every so often to see what people want for PD – maybe at the provincial meeting• Availability• Good supports at work• Flexibility• Subsidizing PD for practitioners• Recognized by employers as something that will be of benefit• Money/funding• Overcome distance through online training• Face-to-face seminar time needs to be added to online• Have it locally or at least within the province• Reduced fee for those who just want to receive copies of the information rather than attend• Shared travel arrangements (traveling with others for PD opportunities)• Annual PD funding and paid time from employer• Scholarships/bursaries for literacy practitioners for University studies	<p>Most often cited barriers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time• Getting away from work• Getting away from home responsibilities• Timing/ not enough advance notice• Money, funding and costs• Travel/location <p>Other barriers mentioned by interviewees include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weather in SK and travel sometimes• Travel costs not covered by employer• Who's putting it on• Relevance – want to get the most bang for my buck; Hard to sift through what's worthwhile and what's not; afraid it'll be a waste of time• Type of PD• Internal politics; Power and control on the part of employer• Attitudinal barriers

Interviewees suggested the above-mentioned supports could be provided by or through the province (Sask Learning), their employers and the SLN.

When asked specifically about their thoughts about the **support they receive from their program/organization/workplace**, interviewees reported differing levels of support. Some indicated that employer support was very good or excellent and one interviewee indicated that the support for PD exceeds what employees want. Several interviewees indicated that support was good, but that there were significant financial constraints that

limited participation in PD activities. For some, there was no financial support for PD, and yet for others, allocating money for PD was seen as necessary and non-negotiable.

One individual suggested that PD can be very inequitable from one employer to other; therefore, it may be necessary for the SLN to subsidize P.D. for literacy practitioners who do not receive support from their employers. A few interviewees had concerns about how employers determine what is valuable and what they will support. In one case an interviewee was sent to an international conference, but the employer would not subsidize university courses. Several interviewees reported taking university courses and programs on their own time and funding their studies personally. One interview suggested that fees should be flexible so that those who can't afford the training can still attend. A couple of interviewees requested more PD opportunities for volunteers.

FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

On October 27, 2004, 16 individuals involved with literacy in Saskatchewan participated in a focus group at the Provincial Literacy Meeting. The purpose of the focus group was to collect information about the accuracy of the draft plan that emerged from the survey and interview data and solicit suggestions for revisions and changes.

Reasons for attending PD

Focus group participants felt that the themes outlined in the draft plan were reflective of the reasons why practitioners attend professional development opportunities. However, they also suggested additional reasons:

- The certificate awarded for completing training
- To improve programs
- Opportunity to "fill the vessel" and recharge and rejuvenate; "you can't give if you have nothing inside to give"
- The possibility of positive unanticipated outcomes
- Inspiration and synergy from being with others
- As learning needs change over time, so too do the reasons for attending PD
- Opportunity to hear other people's ideas
- Upgrade skills

Topics for PD

Participants offered a few suggestions related to topics for professional development:

- Include volunteer recruitment along with volunteer management in the list of topics about which practitioners would like to learn more.
- One participant suggested reviewing the practicality of reviewing learning needs on an annual basis, suggesting that this may be too often. Another participant suggested that this may not be often enough, that frequent staffing and volunteer changes mean changes in training needs.

- The in-depth learning opportunities should piggyback on another function – ie. Provincial literacy meeting.

Delivery

Participants offered a couple of comments and suggestions regarding the planning and delivery of PD:

- When planning training, consider hiring from within the province first if the expertise exists, before going outside the province.
- When possible hold training in conjunction with the provincial literacy meeting.

Recognition (certificates and accreditation process)

Participants primarily focused on talking about accreditation. Some expressed a desire to participate in an accreditation process so that they could demonstrate to others that they are qualified.

Many participants reiterated the need to incorporate recognition of prior learning into such a process. A few participants expressed concern about the financial burden that accreditation could inflict on some individuals and organizations and did not want to see it come at the expense of programming.

Participants concluded that accreditation is more important to some than others. Some asked whether there were enough people interested to pursue the development of an accreditation process.

Barriers & Supports

Participants had several suggestions related to barriers and supports.

- Include child care as a potential barrier to accessing PD
- There is a lot of work involved in the last recommendation – The SLN continue to work with provincial and federal funders to ensure adequate funding for literary PD—it is important to look at other models such as Alberta's
- We need the learning calendar earlier next year in order to budget and plan the time away
- When promoting PD, it is important to explain why it is important, outcomes and how it will help the organization

- Another barrier is getting a sub or replacement when away
- For some travel is a barrier, but others want to get outside their community – to be completely away from work to learn and reflect.

Reflections & closing comments

At the end of the focus group, participants were invited to share closing reflection or comments. Several participants stated that the plan and recommendations were reflective of their experiences. For some participants, it was affirming to participate:

- "thank you SLN for listening"
- "going in the right direction – walking the talk"
- "excellent job – glad you are really listening. I feel really supported by SLN because of this."

Participants felt that the document was easy to read and well laid out. One participant reflected that she was "amazed at the depth, thought and consideration" that went into the project. At the end of the focus group session, there was an expressed sense of confidence in the accuracy of the plan among participants.

DELIVERY AND SUPPORT PERSPECTIVE

In 2003-2004, three individuals who have responsibilities for supporting and/or delivering literacy professional development participated in conversations about PD for this project: the SLN Adult Literacy Coordinator, the SLN Family Literacy Coordinator and the SLN Executive Director. Their observations and suggestions are summarized below.

Reasons for Participating in PD

Observations:

- Some attendees are new to literacy with little background in Adult Literacy and Family Literacy. They often feel overwhelmed and do not know where to start, so they come to training to try to find some guidance and make contacts.
- Some have more experience but still have a strong desire to network with others who are doing similar work.

- Some people see it as compulsory or perceive that it is strongly encouraged.
- Some people attend for personal reasons, ex. Personal interest.
- Some attend hoping to improve their practice or learn about different approaches.
- Sometimes reasons for participation are extremely practical. For example, those who take a proposal-writing workshop are often faced with writing proposals as part of their job.

Topics (PD content)

Observations:

- Storysacks training has been very popular. It is a one-day training, which is relatively concrete and takes a community development approach to Family Literacy which appeals to many people.
- Come Read With Me and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS) have also been popular.
- Tutor Training was very popular in the north this past year.

Suggestions:

- SLN needs to redo a lot of the training material to make it visually appealing.
- The Proposal Writing workshop materials need to be polished. Is the SLN the organization that should be delivering Proposal Writing workshops?
- We need more in-depth training and more practical training.
- Need to explore developing, facilitating or partnering to offer the following training:
 - Working with cross-cultural groups (ex. protocols). Increasingly, people are asking for information and opportunities to learn about working with cross-cultural groups and it seems to be more and more important in literacy work.
 - Evaluation. People are asking for information about evaluation and how to report to funders. Perhaps the SLN could do a joint training with Saskatchewan Learning in this area.
 - Informal learner assessment and portfolio development seems to be an increasingly of interest to the field.

- Transformative and transformational learning. Adult Basic Education Redesign is doing a lot of work in this area. It may be an area to explore in the near future.
- Facilitation skills. Many practitioners are asking for training in how to facilitate and how to be inclusive when working with groups.
- People want to know how to better work with those with special needs, handicapped, FAS-FAE and/ or learning disabilities. SLN many not be the organization to deliver this type of training. Instead, SLN may partner with another organization with expertise in this area.

Delivery

Observations

- There has been a lot of turn over in the adult literacy coordinator position. Has this impacted the service the field receives?
- The family literacy coordinator has remained in her position for several years, people know her and family literacy in the province has benefited from the continuity she has provided.
- Provincial Literacy Meeting – we have asked people for some solid feedback and we listened and changed the format.
- The delivery and facilitation of training through SLN is stronger than the actual training materials and modules.
- When communities or organizations band together and request training there seems to be an increased sense of ownership. When the training is organized by community members and occurs right in the community, the training is more successful.
- The cities seem to have difficulty organizing themselves.
- Tried one year to put out a calendar, but ended up canceling 80% of that training.
- Manitoba includes training that others offer on their calendar. Funding is tied to training.
- Training has been very popular in the north. There may be several reasons for this: pay is linked to hours of training; people want the training and certificate for their portfolios; Bebe has been a champion for literacy and literacy training in the north.

- There is a broader base of people coming to training (ie. KidsFirst, HeadStart etc). This is allowing the SLN and training participants to build more extensive networks and partnerships.
- There is a broad range of experience and education among those who attend training.
- Face to face training seems to be the preferred method of delivery for training.
- People seem to respond more favorably when training is less formal.
- We keep hearing people talk about an interest in a provincial literacy conference.
- For some of the adult or general literacy training that runs over the course of more than one day, it would be helpful to have a co-facilitator.

Suggestions:

- We need to develop an annual training calendar. People want flexibility and advanced notice.
- Should determine a maximum number of trainings per year so as not to burn out staff.
- Need to determine target locations to take training to.
- For those communities who are not requesting training or support, or do not have a champion, we need to ensure that they know about the available training and how to access it.
- We may want to explore a leveled training system. For example, we may offer an Introduction to Literacy for those new to literacy.
- Renaming New Coordinators Training may ensure that the training appeals to anyone working in literacy, not just Coordinators.
- Training has to be participatory and people have to practice. There is a lot of learning that takes place from discussion and participants learn a lot from one another.
- If online training is offered, it must be accompanied by face-to-face training. Ultimately, there seems to be more interest in regional training than online training.
- We need a better mechanism for people to learn what is available.

Recognition

Observations

- Everyone currently receives a certificate if they complete training. This is particularly important to those with little formal training and many northerners.
- With regard to accreditation, practitioners seem to be divided; however, generally, it seems to be increasingly important, as people need to be more portable.
- Many have expressed the need to tie accreditation to pay and the importance of recognition accreditation by Saskatchewan Learning.
- When asked, people start thinking about the work involved and how complex the development of an accreditation process would be.
- Gate keeping is a concern of many practitioners when they begin to think about accreditation. It would be important to take into consideration prior learning, but how do you measure it?
- There are concerns about who would control the process is an accreditation process was developed.
- The development of an accreditation process is a complex and something that we cannot jump into too quickly.
- Accreditation involves work outside of the classroom (exams, papers, etc). There is a difference between sitting in on a workshop and taking a class for credit.
- Accreditation may increase the value and credibility attribute to literacy work and it may assist in changing the “pink collar,” low paying status of literacy work.
- There is some fear among those who aren’t formally trained when they hear about accreditation.

Barriers and Supports

Observations

- Support from practitioners’ organizations or workplace is important for practitioner participation in PD.
- We need to recognize that there may be a discrepancy between what employers deem important to learn and what employees desire to learn through PD.
- Employers may be supportive by working with employees to develop individual PD plans.

- Time, travel, and money can all be barriers or supports for practitioners.
- Personal and family concerns may also present barriers. For example, many single parents find it difficult to be away from home.
- People need dollars to attend, but funding is increasingly hard to find. People also need internal financial support from their organizations. An example that illustrates this is the decrease in attendance at provincial events. Some people just do not have the money to attend.

Section 3: Professional Development Plan

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Introduction

In 2003, the Saskatchewan Literacy Network embarked on a project called Practitioners as Learners: A Professional Development Project. The central goal of this project was to research, develop, implement and evaluate a comprehensive professional development plan for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan. We set out to explore both what practitioners need and want to learn to improve their practice and how they prefer to learn.

Project objectives include:

1. To research the professional development interests and needs of adult and family literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan and conduct a literature review.
2. To develop a comprehensive professional development plan based upon consultations and a literature review.
3. To pilot and evaluate professional development opportunities in alignment with feedback from practitioners and project stakeholders and the findings of the research conducted and recommendations documented in objectives 1 & 2.
4. To develop collaborative and cooperative relationships with programs, organizations, government departments and regions with interests in professional development for educators.

*~We set out
to explore
both what
practitioners
need and
want to
learn to
improve
their
practice
and how*

Why a Professional Development Plan?

In 1995, the SLN conducted a needs assessment and analysis of literacy organizations and programs titled: Assessment of Literacy Practitioner Training Needs in Saskatchewan (1996, Roberta Baker).

In the ten years since this assessment was conducted, the literacy field in Saskatchewan has changed dramatically. The changes include:

- **An increased number of literacy activities, programs and practitioners.** The survey for the project in 1995 was distributed to 19 literacy programs and 16 community

organizations. Literacy programming now extends well beyond the groups consulted in the 1995 Assessment.

- **For comparison, the survey for this project, Practitioners as Learners: A Professional Development Project, was distributed to 152 individuals who have literacy responsibilities as part of their jobs.** This represents over four times the number of individuals to whom the 1995 survey was distributed.
- **The integration of literacy into other types of programs.** Increasingly literacy activities are woven through programs whose primary focus is not literacy, blurring the boundaries that used to distinguish literacy work from other social and education-based work. For example, programs and organizations such as Kids First, Community Schools and early childhood programs are increasingly incorporating or integrating literacy activities into their programming.
- **An expansion of family literacy in the last ten years.** The number and variety of family literacy training requested has increased. The communities, group and programs requesting the training are increasingly diverse as well.
- **Increased interest in literacy regionally, provincially and nationally.** More organizations and communities are involved with literacy which is reflected in the increasingly broad range of groups requesting funding for literacy work. Provincially, work on a Provincial Literacy Strategy began in 2000. Recently, the Council of the Federation (established in 2003 by the 13 Premiers in Canada) acknowledged the importance of literacy by creating a Council of the Federation Literacy Award.
- **Access to federal funds for literacy initiatives.** With a budget of \$30 million, the National Literacy Secretariat supports a number of new literacy projects and initiatives. However, the NLS does not fund direct or ongoing delivery of literacy programming. The most recent budget called for the creation of a comprehensive literacy strategy and increased the federal budget for literacy by \$30 million over three years.
- **Increased access to provincial funds for family literacy.** In 1998 Saskatchewan Learning introduced the Family Literacy Initiative through which \$300,000 is distributed annually in the province. The Family Literacy Initiative has supported community based family literacy programs and services in Saskatchewan's larger urban centres (i.e., Lloydminster,

North Battleford, Prince Albert, Melfort, Tisdale, Saskatoon, Biggar, Regina, Moose Jaw, Swift Current).

Along with, and perhaps because of, the changes in the field, feedback from practitioners over the last few years indicates that their professional development needs are changing. As the primary provider of literacy professional development in the province, the SLN was keen to identify the learning needs in the field and ensure that the field's needs continue to be met. This was the impetus for this project.

Who has contributed to the plan and the project?

A project advisory committee guided this project. The Literacy Professional Development Plan was developed with input from practitioners through:

- A survey distributed to 152 individuals who have literacy responsibilities as part of their jobs (28% response rate).
- Thirteen follow-up interviews with literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan who completed the survey.
- Three people who support and/or deliver literacy professional development in Saskatchewan.
- A focus group held on October 27, 2004 that involved sixteen practitioners.

What is contained in this plan?

This plan begins with background information about the project and a summary of the ways in which PD opportunities are currently delivered in Saskatchewan. Following this, themes that emerged from the survey and interview data are summarized and recommendations are made.

Where do I get more information about this project?

This plan is part of a larger project report that, in addition to the Professional Development Plan, contains detailed information on:

- Literacy professional development context & delivery
- Participants' input and recommendations
- Survey and interview tools used throughout this project

- A bibliography on related literature

An electronic version of the full report can be accessed at www.sk.literacy.ca or at www.nald.ca. For more information about the project, please contact the Saskatchewan Literacy Network by phone at (306) 653-7368 or 1-888-511-2111 or by email at saskliteracy@sasktel.net.

CURRENT DELIVERY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This section briefly summarizes the types of professional development offered by the Saskatchewan Literacy Network (SLN), provides an overview of the PD delivery statistics and explains how and where the SLN delivers PD.

Types of Literacy Professional Development

Between 1998-99 and 2002-2003, SLN offered 9 different types of family literacy professional development and 10 types of adult and general literacy professional development. These are listed in the table that follows.

Types of Literacy Professional Development offered by the SLN	
Family Literacy PD	General and Adult Literacy PD
Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS)	Level 1: Tutor Training
Come Read With Me	Level 2: Intake and Assessment Processes
Family Literacy Foundational Training	Level 2: Numeracy Kit
KEYS to Family Literacy	Level 2: Drawing the Line
Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS)	Level 2: Learning How to Learn
Nurturing With Rhymes	Plain Language
Parent Role Interacting With Teacher Support (PRINTS)	Proposal Writing
Rhymes, Songs and Storytelling	Online Workshops
Storysacks	Orientation for New Coordinators Provincial Literacy Meetings

SLN Professional Development Delivery Statistics

The tables below provide an overview of the number of professional development opportunities provided by the SLN from 1998-99 to 2003-2004 and the number of participants involved in professional development opportunities each year.

Family Literacy Training Delivered from 1998-1999 to 2002-03 <i>(does not include FL Foundational Training)</i>						
Year	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
# of training sessions held	11	10	9	10	20	17
# of participants	144	110	84	89	222	202

Adult & General Literacy Training Sessions from 1998-1999 to 2002-2003 <i>(does not include the provincial literacy meetings)</i>						
Year	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004
# of training sessions held	4	2	14	23*	8	10
# of participants	N/a	N/a	167+	289+	100	128

*2001-2002 – received funding to develop and deliver proposal writing and plain language workshop

How is Literacy Professional Development Funded?

The SLN does not receive consistent funding to deliver professional development; rather, when funding is received, it is typically for the development and pilot testing of training materials. For example, in 2001-2002 the SLN received funding from the National Literacy Secretariat to formally develop and pilot test proposal writing and plain language workshops. Likewise in 2002-2003, the SLN received project funding from NLS to offer four online workshops. The NLS has been the only, albeit limited, source of funding for the delivery of adult literacy professional development in Saskatchewan. Since 1998, Saskatchewan Learning has provided \$ 50,000 annually to the SLN for family literacy training, support and networking in the province.

Beyond the year in which funding is received for development and pilot testing, the SLN tries to recover the cost of training through workshop fees. A fee schedule is set for each year based on the estimated costs of delivering training. SLN members receive a

reduction in the training fees, and for those without access to professional development dollars, the SLN has, in some cases, waived fees. For several years, the SLN has encouraged literacy programs to include a request for professional development funds when submitting project proposals for funding.

For the past two years, 2003 - 2005, the SLN has received funding from the NLS for adult and family literacy practitioner training as part of the professional development project. This funding allows the SLN to offer 2 workshops in family literacy and the same number in adult literacy, based on the professional development plan and needs expressed by the field.

How is Literacy Professional Development Delivered?

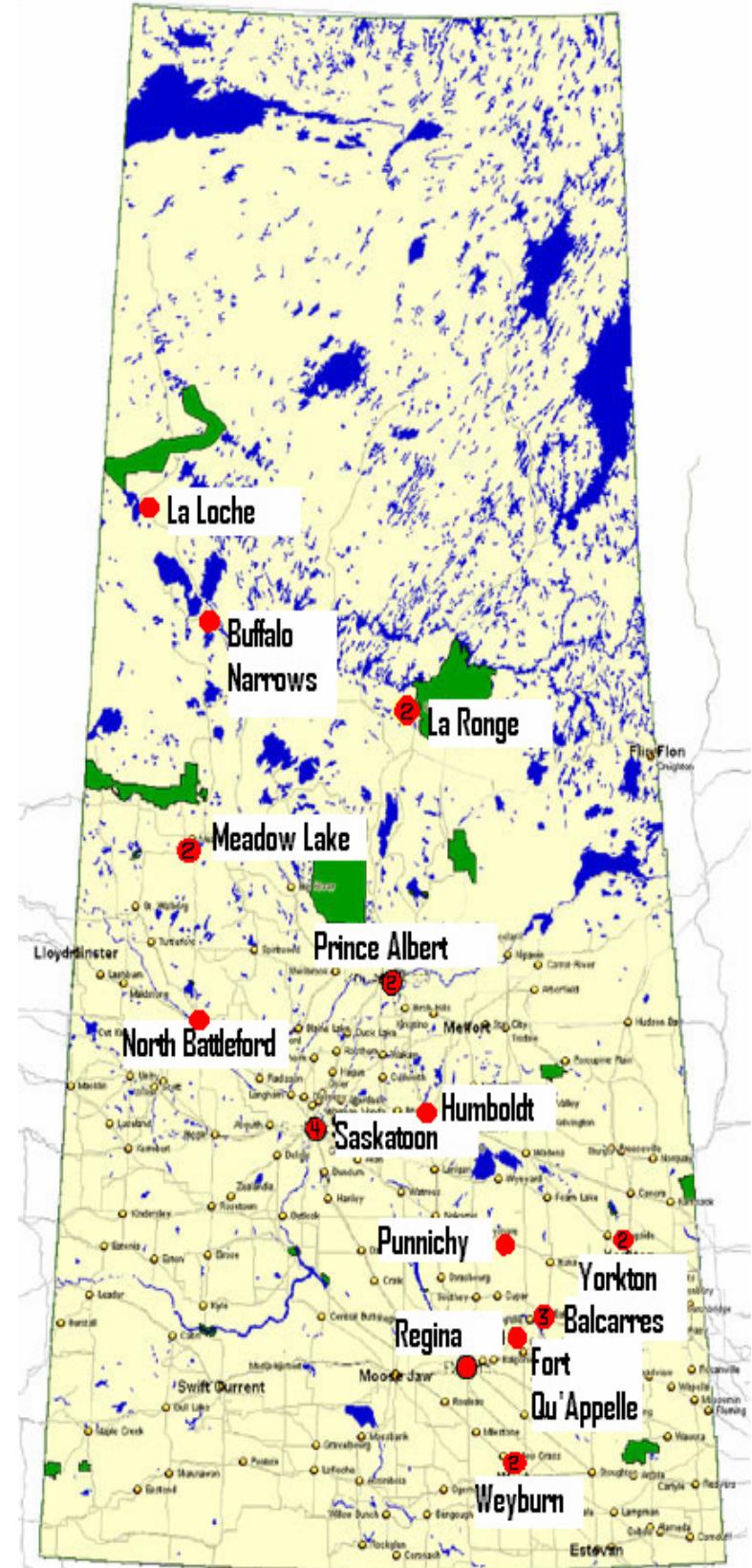
All of the past family literacy training was delivered face-to-face in a workshop format. In addition to the figures shown in Table 2, Foundational Training in Family Literacy was held for 5 days in August 2002, with 12 participants from Saskatchewan and 12 from Manitoba. 12 trainers were involved in this weeklong training.

The SLN Family Literacy Coordinator facilitated much of the family literacy training reported in the table above. Some training, such as Come Read With Me, requires more than one facilitator. In these cases, the SLN contracts trainers who are qualified to co-facilitate particular training modules. These trainers are family literacy practitioners working in diverse programs throughout the province.

With the exception of four online workshops in 2002-2003, all of the adult and general literacy training offered by the SLN over the last six years has been delivered in a face-to-face workshop format. An SLN staff member facilitated most of the training with a few exceptions, including the online workshops, for which outside experts or facilitators were hired.

Where is Literacy Professional Development Delivered?

Over the past two years (2002-2003 and 2003-2004), training opportunities were offered in fourteen different communities throughout the province. The map below highlights the communities in which training occurred.



THEMES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section begins with an overview of background information on the participants in this project. A summary of the themes that emerged as well as recommendations follow. These themes and recommendations are organized under five headings:

1. Reasons for attending PD
2. Topics for PD
3. PD Delivery
4. Recognition
5. Barriers and Supports

Background on Participants

The following description of the background on participants is drawn exclusively from the survey data. All individuals who participated in an interview also completed a survey.

Type of workplace: 42% of the respondents work for community based, not-for-profit or non-governmental organizations and 28% work for post-secondary institutions. The remainder of the respondents worked for the school system (Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12), KidsFirst, Aboriginal HeadStart, Health or Libraries.

~42% of the respondents work for community based, not-for-profit or non-governmental organizations ~

Focus of organization or program: 58% of the organizations for which respondents worked, basic education, literacy and/or ESL was the main focus. For 21% of the respondents' organizations, literacy was a secondary focus.

Type of work: 30% of respondents indicated that they were administrators, 30% indicated that they were coordinators, 33% were responsible for direct delivery of programming.

Hours and months worked: 52% indicated that they work less than 30 paid hours on literacy related activities per week and 37% indicated that they worked between 31 and 40 paid hours per week. 44% of respondents are employed to work 12 months a year, 28% are paid to work 10 months per year and 18% indicated that they are paid to work under 9 months per year. 51% of respondents work 1-5 hours of unpaid time per week.

~51% have been involved with literacy for over 10 years~

Length of involvement with literacy and age: 2% of respondents have been involved with literacy for under one year; 9% have been involved for 1 to 3 years; 33% have been involved for 4 to 9 years; and 51% have been involved with literacy for over 10 years.

Only 10% of respondents are under 31 years of age. 26% are between 31 and 40 years old, 33% are between 41 and 50 years old and 28% are 51 and over.

Population with whom respondents work: 30% of respondents work with children, youth, adults and families, 47% work with three of these aforementioned groups and 60 % work with at least two of these groups. 83% of respondents indicated that they work with adults and 65% indicated that they work with families.

How well PD needs have been satisfied: 40% of respondents said their literacy professional development needs had been completely met in the last year, 51% said their needs had been partially met and 5% indicated that their needs had not been met. The barriers that practitioners have experienced in accessing PD are identified on page 23.

Reasons for attending PD

Themes

Literacy practitioners are a diverse group with varying levels of skill and expertise, different roles, different learning styles and different work contexts. As such, practitioners participate in PD opportunities for a host of reasons that include (listed in no particular order):

- Networking, connecting with others and sharing ideas, information and expertise
- Synergy and inspiration from being with others
- Opportunity to "fill the vessel" and recharge
- Need for specific job related information or skill training/upgrading
- In-depth learning
- Affirming knowledge
- Perceive particular PD opportunities as compulsory or expected
- Desire to improve their practice and/or improve program

- Opportunity to get away from work and experience something different
- Workplace or employer expectation of participation in PD
- Desire to remain sharp and motivated
- Desire to learn from a facilitator who has a particular area of expertise or repertoire of experience.
- The possibility of positive, unanticipated outcomes
- The certificate awarded for completing the training

Recommendations

The themes identified from the interview and survey data point to several recommendations that may also stand as best practices for literacy PD in Saskatchewan.

~ Recognize that practitioners' learning needs change over time as do their reasons for participating in PD. ~

- Offer a variety of literacy PD in terms of topics, depth and delivery method.
- Recognize that practitioners' learning needs change over time as do their reasons for participating in PD. One PD opportunity will not fit all individuals, nor will one type of PD opportunity fit the needs of the field every year.
- Recognize that while learning specific skills and acquiring certain knowledge are two reasons why practitioners attend PD events, many other motivators such as networking and sharing are equally important.

Topics

Themes

Participants' observed that their learning needs change depending on a host of work-related factors. They also emphasized that relevant and appropriate content and process are equally important.

Those responsible for the delivery and support of literacy PD highlighted the following trends:

- Family literacy learning opportunities, particularly Storysacks, Come Read With Me (CRWM), and Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS) workshops, have been increasingly popular throughout the last few years.
- The Tutor Training Kit was developed by the SLN as a tool to assist literacy practitioners in delivering tutor training;

~ The SLN develop an annual process, ideally in spring of each year, through which the learning needs of individuals working in literacy are solicited and prioritized, planned for and then addressed the following year.~

however, Tutor Training has been delivered several times in the last few years by SLN staff. It is not sustainable for the SLN to deliver this training; rather, the role of the SLN is to train and support practitioners to deliver tutor training.

- Proposal Writing Workshops are consistently in demand. Participants' learning needs often extend beyond proposal writing and include program development and evaluation.

The needs of practitioners new to the field appeared to be somewhat different than the needs of those who have been in the field for some time. Those new to literacy were looking for learning opportunities that were focused around a general topic with plenty of time for networking. Many of the practitioners consulted for this project who had been in the field for several years expressed a desire for more in-depth learning opportunities.

It was also noted that throughout the duration of this project, the interest and participation in family literacy training and programs has flourished in recent years.

There are several topics about which practitioners would like to learn more:

- Program design and development
- Planning and implementing promotional activities
- Proposal writing, fundraising and funding sources
- Curriculum and resource development
- Establishing partnerships and working with community partners
- Plain language
- Learner Assessment (Informal assessment and portfolio development)
- Aboriginal Culture and working with Cross-cultural groups
- Program Evaluation
- Working with learners with learning disabilities, FASD and/or special needs
- ESL and ESL literacy
- Volunteer management and recruitment
- Learning opportunities for volunteers
- Information sharing, networking and access to resources
- Facilitation skills
- Less traditional ways of doing things (ex. Participatory practices; transformative and transformational learning.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • Family literacy:
Come Read With
Me, Aboriginal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy and Parenting Skills,
Storysacks • Literacy Benchmarks • Community Development |
|--|---|

Recommendations

- The SLN develop an annual process, ideally in spring of each year, through which the learning needs of individuals working in literacy are solicited and prioritized, planned for and then addressed the following year.
- The SLN review and revise where necessary its current adult and general literacy training packages to ensure they are clear and accessible, particularly Proposal Writing and the Orientation for New Coordinators.
- The Orientation for New Coordinators be renamed, formally developed and restructured to ensure that it is inclusive of all individuals who are new to literacy, not exclusively coordinators.
- A program development module be developed to compliment the Proposal Writing workshop materials.
- The SLN review its mandate and role with regard to offering and facilitating Level 1: Tutor Training.
- The SLN continue to offer family literacy training widely.
- The SLN develop a framework for family literacy support and training in SK.
- The SLN explore the tiered and modularized literacy training models used in other provinces.
- The SLN ensure that a minimum of one in-depth, expert facilitated learning opportunity, on a topic requested by practitioners, be organized each year.
- The SLN use the following questions to aid in decision making with regard to how best to address the need when planning to meet the learning needs expressed by the literacy field:
 - Is this topic addressed by training that the SLN currently offers?
 - If yes, is it addressed adequately and appropriately? Does it meet the needs of participants and are those working in literacy with learning needs in this area able to access this training?
 - If the topic is not addressed by training available through SLN, is this topic addressed by learning opportunities provided by an external source?

- If yes, is there a possibility of partnering or collaborating with another organization to offer a learning opportunity in this area, or is it possible to disseminate information about the learning opportunity to the literacy field?
- If there is nothing offered by the SLN or external sources in the area, is the area one that connects with the mandate of the SLN to develop and plan workshops?
- The above-mentioned questions should be applied to the topics identified by participants throughout the interviews and survey for this project (these topics are listed on page 16 in themes).

Delivery

Themes

Practitioners clearly indicated that face-to-face PD opportunities are their preference, particularly workshops and conferences. Face to face opportunities allow for informal discussion, networking, participation, reflection and reduce the sense of isolation that many literacy practitioners feel. Some participants suggested that getting away from their workplace (ex. attending PD in another location) was helpful because they could then completely focus on learning and networking, not their day-to-day tasks. It was also suggested that delivery should be influenced by the topic, as some topics are better suited to certain delivery methods.

Networking, interaction and small group work were all mentioned as important components of face-to-face PD opportunities. As well, participants mentioned that a safe learning environment is critical for discussion, learning and testing new approaches, ideas or practices. Practitioners indicated varying preferences about the length of training in which they prefer to participate. Some preferred workshops over a short period of time, others preferred course formats that run over a longer period of time. 58% of survey respondents prefer regional delivery of PD opportunities and 65% would like to see annual delivery.

Distance or online PD delivery is not a preferred means of delivery for the majority of practitioners; however, many practitioners are open to trying it. Limited access to a computer and unreliable internet connections present challenges for some practitioners in terms of online learning and information sharing.

~ 44% of practitioners are interested in sharing their expertise~

Informal learning that occurs outside formal sessions was also highlighted by participants as important, as was on-the-job learning. This learning often goes unrecognized and unsupported.

Participants mentioned networking and exchanging information and resources most frequently as an important learning process.

In addition to participating in PD as learners, 44% of practitioners are interested in sharing their expertise. Those who were new to the field were interested in learning from those with more experience than themselves, and those with experience were at a point in their career when they felt comfortable in particular areas. Those interested in sharing their knowledge and expertise had a variety of suggestions for sharing information and for approaching practitioners to share –formal, informal, small and large groups, panel, etc. It was suggested that a list of resource people, as well as a list of what people are doing ought to be developed, something like a practitioners' speakers bureau.

Practitioners indicate that they are increasingly looking to the Provincial Literacy Meetings as PD opportunities. These meetings, along with other PD events, have been drawing a broader range of people in recent years. These individuals are from a variety of organizations, some of which have literacy services as their primary focus, but many of which have literacy as a secondary focus.

Communities and organizations throughout the province have begun to self-organize and request training from the SLN. These workshops have been very successful. This has been more common in rural communities and very rare in cities.

Recommendations

- The field receive advance notice of all PD opportunities, ideally in the form of a PD calendar that lists the dates and location of all SLN training as well as relevant training offered by other organizations. Moreover, this calendar should be available in print and electronic format to ensure that practitioners have access to this information.
- The SLN build relationships with organizations that offer training relevant to literacy work and include training

~The informal networking that occurs during PD opportunities, often at lunch and breaks, be respected and planned for by ensuring adequate time for breaks.~

offered by other organizations, relevant to literacy work, in the annual PD calendar.

- PD opportunities be marketed widely with particular attention to communities from which little representation at PD events has occurred.
- Literacy PD opportunities continue to be delivered in different regions throughout Saskatchewan.
- Structure time for networking and connecting with others into every PD opportunity.
- When possible, hold annual, in-depth, expert facilitated learning opportunities in conjunction with another event such as the Provincial Literacy Meeting to reduce travel time and costs for practitioners.
- The informal networking that occurs during PD opportunities, often at lunch and breaks, be respected and planned for by ensuring adequate time for breaks.
- Deliver PD face to face when appropriate and possible.
- Explore online or distance delivery of PD as an alternative delivery method.
- The SLN further tap into the expertise of practitioners in the field by requesting participation on advisory committees and/or panel discussions, and as workshop leaders, facilitators or speakers in their respective areas of expertise. The SLN develop a list of resource people from the field along with information on their areas of expertise.
- The semi-annual Provincial Literacy Meeting be recognized as an important PD opportunity for literacy practitioners. As such, it is recommended that this meeting be planned with careful attention to participants learning and networking needs.
- The SLN develop a standard registration and evaluation process for all PD opportunities.

Recognition

Themes

Responses varied in terms of the importance of receiving certificates for participating in training depending on one's role, experience and previous education. For those who had well-established careers and formal certification, certificates were less important than for those who were beginning their careers and hoping to strengthen their portfolios or resumes.

Practitioners' responses varied when asked about the development of an accreditation process, but this seems to be increasingly important as people feel the need to be more portable. While the majority (27/42) of respondents to the survey felt that the development of an accreditation process for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan was either important or very important, they had many questions:

- Who would recognize the certification?
- Who would control the process?
- How would the standards or criteria be established? Who would decide what is important and should be included?
- Will levels of pay be tied to certification? If yes, funding for salaries will need to increase.
- Would it be an optional or required process?
- If an accreditation process is developed, what are reasonable time lines for it to happen?

Several further concerns emerged, including a fear that accreditation would be used for gate keeping or exclusion. Participants indicated that if an accreditation process was developed it would be critical for practitioners to have the opportunity to receive credit for prior learning.

While there were many concerns and questions expressed, along with acknowledgement of the sheer complexity of developing and administering an accreditation process, many advantages of developing an accreditation process were also identified. The table below lists the advantages and disadvantages of developing an accreditation process for practitioners as identified by interviewees.

Reasons for offering accreditation	Reasons for not offering accreditation
Good for those who do not have a degree or certificate	Some people may not have time to do it
Job security; future job opportunities	Accessibility
Affirmation of what is known and recognition of experience and what has been done	May cause some to be overconfident and overestimate what they can do; may provoke a sense of false confidence
Learning new things	Lack of recognition
Improves practice; would benefit learners	Financial burden it may place on some

<p>Provide consistency</p> <p>Indicate to others that one is qualified and capable</p> <p>Shows that literacy is here to stay</p> <p>Makes the work more professional</p> <p>Better leadership</p> <p>Would keep us in line with other provinces who are using accreditation</p> <p>More men might be drawn to literacy if there was accreditation</p>	<p>Gate-keeping</p> <p>Could possibly discourage grass-roots activity</p> <p>Difficult to determine what is valuable and what needs to be included in accreditation</p> <p>If not tied to pay, what incentive is there? If tied to pay, the government will have to increase funding.</p> <p>Resources, time, getting people organized, transportation issues.</p> <p>Creates a hierarchy</p> <p>Can be problematic if it is linked to funding</p>
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Some participants who favoured the development of an accreditation process recommended a model that would consist of basic and advanced training, similar to a First Aid model.

Recommendations

- Certificates continue to be given to individuals who participate in workshops.
- The SLN continue to maintain a record of the workshops that individuals attend and provide this information to individuals as required (ex. For portfolio development).
- The SLN begin to develop a process for recognition of prior learning and experience that will involve clear descriptions and learning outcomes for all types of training.
- Clearly the development and administration of an accreditation process is a large, complex and costly undertaking. It is recommended that interest in the development of an accreditation process, as well as the anticipated benefits, and the development and administrative work involved, be further explored, including:
- Consultations with practitioners, literacy organizations and employers of literacy workers.
 - Consultations with other provinces and organizations (ex. SCENES) that have developed or are considering the development of an accreditation process.
 - Research into the skills and competencies of individuals doing literacy work.

- Discussions with Saskatchewan Learning about promotion and support of accreditation.
- Explore how recognition of prior learning and portfolios could be integrated into an accreditation process.

Barriers and Supports

Themes

There were several different barriers and supports identified by participants:

- Getting time away from work.
- Child care.
- The timing of learning opportunities.
- Money or funding to attend (some practitioners are using their personal money to attend PD opportunities).
- Travel – location, weather.
- Personal/home issues if away from community.
- Lack of advance information on available training.
- Relevance and value of PD.
- Getting a sub or replacement when away.
- Internal barriers in organizations.
- Institutional support (colleagues or employers).

Recommendations

- When possible, training subsidies be available for practitioners wishing to attend training, but unable to afford to attend.
- Free PD opportunities be offered when possible.
- A bursary program for literacy workers wishing to continue their education formally be explored.
- Explore the strategies used by other organizations and those identified in the literature for overcoming barriers to accessing PD opportunities.
- Acknowledge the individual, field and organizational barriers and supports that practitioners encounter when attempting to participate in professional development opportunities.
- The SLN continue to work with provincial and federal funders to ensure adequate funding for literacy PD.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this project was to research, develop, implement and evaluate a comprehensive professional development plan for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan. This involved Saskatchewan literacy practitioners every step of the way – from advisory committee participation to surveys, interviews and a focus group. The thoughts and recommendations from the field collected throughout this project formed this professional development plan, the impact of which has already begun to influence how literacy professional development is offered in the province. We hope this plan continues to provide guidance for planning literacy professional development in the coming years, but also provides the flexibility to meet the changing needs of the field in the future.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: SURVEY



Practitioners as Learners: A Professional Development Project

— Literacy Professional Development Survey —

Part One: Background Information

a) Where do you work?

- Community based organization
- Post-secondary (ex. college, university, etc.)
- School (K-12)
- Kids First
- Aboriginal Head Start
- Early Childhood Intervention
- Other (please specify) _____

b) What is the main focus (mandate) of the organization or program for which you work?

c) Does your program or organizational budget include funds to pay for your professional development (PD) costs?

- Some of my PD costs
- All of my PD costs
- None of my PD costs

d) Does your program or organizational budget include time for you to participate in professional development opportunities?

- Some paid time
- All the paid time I need for PD
- No paid time

Please note any comments that you want to add to your responses above.

Remember: return your form to be entered for the gift certificate draw.

Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope by February 20th 2004

page 1



Part Two: Your Role and Work in Literacy

a) What is your job title? _____

b) Which of the following best describes your role?

- Literacy tutor
- Literacy instructor
- Family literacy facilitator
- Literacy coordinator
- Other (please specify) _____

c) How many hours per week (paid time) do you work on literacy related activities?

_____ hours

d) How many months per year are you employed to work on literacy related activities?

_____ months

e) How many unpaid (volunteer) hours per week do you work on literacy related activities?

_____ hours

f) How long have you been involved with literacy?

_____ years

g) To which age group do you belong?

- under 25
- 26-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- over 61

Remember: return your form to be entered for the gift certificate draw.

Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope by February 20th 2004

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- h) Is your literacy work directed towards children, youth, families or adults? (please check all that apply)
- children
 youth
 families
 adults
- i) If you work with children, youth or families, please comment on the type of work you do with these groups.
- j) If you work with adults, what type of literacy work do you do? (please check all that apply)
- adult literacy English as a second language
 basic education (5-10) workplace literacy
 Aboriginal literacy youth literacy
 other (please specify) _____

Remember: return your form to be entered for the gift certificate draw.

Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope by February 20th 2004

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Part Three: Past Involvement with Literacy Professional Development Activities

- a) How well have your literacy professional development needs been met in the last year?
- my needs have been met completely (please go on to question c)
 my needs have been partially met (please go on to question b)
 my needs have not been met (please go on to question b)
- b) How have your literacy professional development needs not been met in the last year?
- c) What literacy professional development opportunities have you engaged in during the last year? Please list them in the first column. In the second column, please indicate the organization that facilitated the professional development opportunity.

Remember: return your form to be entered for the gift certificate draw.

Professional Development Opportunity	Organization that held or facilitated the opportunity

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- d) Throughout the past year, approximately what percentage of your literacy professional development occurred during your personal time and what percentage occurred during work time?

___ % occurred during my personal time ___ % occurred during my work time

- e) In the past year, what percentage of the costs associated with literacy professional development were covered by your employer, what percentage were covered by you personally and what percentage did other sources cover?

___ % contributed by employer

___ % contributed by me personally

___ % other (please specify) _____

- f) Are you currently taking classes that will lead to a diploma, certificate or degree that is related to your job?

yes (please specify program) _____

no, but I would like to in the future (please specify the program that interests you)

no, I'm not interested in pursuing a diploma, certificate or degree

Please note any comments that you want to add about your past involvement with literacy professional development activities.

Remember: return your form to be entered for the gift certificate draw.

Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope by February 20th 2004

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Part 4: Future Involvement with Professional Development Activities

a) What types of activities do you do in your current position?

Activity	Place a ✓ next to all the activities in which you engage at work	Place a ✓ next to all the activities in which you would like more training
Maintain a program office		
Adult education		
Emergent literacy		
Involving parents in their children's education		
Recruit learners		
Meet with learners		
Assess learners		
Provide referrals to learners		
Document and recognise learner achievements		
Tutor learners yourself		
Match tutors and learners		
Monitor tutor-learner pairs		
Recruit tutors		
Train tutors		
Evaluate tutors		
Provide ongoing support to tutors		
Recruit members for boards or committees		
Document and recognise volunteer contributions		

Remember: return your form to be entered for the gift certificate draw.

Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope by February 20th 2004

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Remember: return your form to be entered for the gift certificate draw.

Activity	Place a ✓ next to all the activities in which you engage at work	Place a ✓ next to all the activities in which you would like more training
Coordinate classes/groups		
Teach or facilitate classes or groups		
Plain language writing		
Develop resources		
Develop curriculum		
Recruit and interview staff		
Train staff		
Supervise staff		
Evaluate instructors		
Develop/monitor budget(s)		
Design and develop program		
Create and revise mission and vision statements		
Create and revise policies and procedures		
Evaluate program		
Acquire resources		
Maintain resource collection		
Plan/implement promotion activities		
Plan/implement outreach activities		

Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope by February 20th 2004

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Remember: return your form to be entered for the gift certificate draw.

Activity	Place a ✓ next to all the activities in which you engage at work	Place a ✓ next to all the activities in which you would like more training
Plan/Implement fundraising activities		
Write proposals		
Explore funding sources		
Prepare budgets		
Monitor finances		
Write reports		
Organize meetings		
Plan and conduct short-term (ex. one year) projects		
Participate in professional development activities		
Participate in research activities		
Work with community partners to identify and meet literacy needs/ Community development		
Establish and maintain partnerships		

b) In what other areas would you like training or professional development opportunities?

c) At this stage in your career, what are you looking for from literacy professional development? (check all that apply)

- connecting with others in the field
- specific training related to the duties of my job
- in-depth learning opportunities (please specify what you would like the focus to be)

Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope by February 20th 2004

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Remember: return your form to be entered for the gift certificate draw.

- sharing the expertise I have acquired throughout my career
 other _____

d) In addition to the Saskatchewan Literacy Network (SLN), to which organizations will you look to for literacy professional development opportunities that address your needs?

e) In what types of professional development would you like to participate in the future (ex. web-based courses, conferences, workshops)?

f) How should face-to-face literacy professional development opportunities be delivered geographically?
 regionally centrally other (please specify) _____

g) How should the timing of face-to-face literacy professional development opportunities be organized?
 upon request annually other (please specify) _____

h) What are some of the challenges you currently experience in accessing literacy professional development?

i) What supports do you currently have and what supports would you find helpful in accessing literacy professional development?

j) How important is it for you to receive recognition or a certificate for the training you have taken or will take?

Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope by February 20th 2004.

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Please note any comments that you want to add about your future involvement with literacy professional development activities.

Part Five: Accreditation

What is accreditation? Accreditation is a process by which practitioners can be given credit for what they learn and the skills they acquire. Accreditation recognizes a practitioner's competence in literacy provision.

Why are we asking about accreditation? Some practitioners have indicated that they are interested in pursuing an accreditation process and other provinces are exploring accreditation processes. We want to hear literacy practitioners' thoughts about accreditation.

- a) How important is the development and implementation of an accreditation process for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan?

1	2	3	4	5
very important				not important

- b) If you indicated that accreditation is important, what do you think are some of the "next steps" for exploring accreditation for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan?

Remember: return your form to be entered for the gift certificate draw.

Please note any comments that you want to add about accreditation.

Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope by February 20th 2004

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Part Six: Acknowledgement and Follow-up

- a) May we include your name in the acknowledgements section of the reports for this project?
- Yes No
- b) May we include comments from your survey responses in the reports for this project?
- Yes No
- Please contact me so I may review the comments you wish to quote.
- c) Are you interested in participating in an interview about your professional development needs and interests? The purpose of the interview is to elaborate on the information provided in this survey.
- Yes No

d) Contact Information

Please provide your contact information if:

- *you indicated that you would like to be acknowledged in the project reports and / or*
- *if you indicated that you would like to be contacted to review your comments before they are included in the project reports and / or*
- *if you are interested in participating in an interview.*

Name:

Program/Organization:

Phone:

Email:

Remember: return your form to be entered for the gift certificate draw.

Thank you for completing this survey!
Your input will inform the development of a literacy professional development plan.

Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope by February 20th 2004

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APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Practitioners as Learners: A Professional Development Project Interview Guide

Confirm interview time

Review consent choices:

- Name
- Email

a) May we include your name in the acknowledgements section of the reports for this project?

Yes No

b) May we include comments from your interview responses in the reports for this project?

Yes No

Please contact me so I may review the comments you wish to quote.

Review purpose of interview: The purpose of the interview is to elaborate on the information provided in this survey. Answer any questions interviewee may have

Remind people that you have reviewed their completed survey

Begin Interview

Reasons for attending PD

Introduction There are many reasons that people attend professional development. The next few questions are about *your* reasons for attending PD.

1. Think about one professional development event you took part in recently. What was the event?
2. What were your reasons for taking part? (what motivated you to participate?)
3. What was the impact for you of attending this professional development opportunity? (What do you get out of it?)
4. When you completed the survey you checked the PD you've been involved in during the past year. [Refer to survey and give examples as necessary.] What were your reasons for participating in those PD activities?

[*Summarize*]

Is there anything you would like to add about reasons for attending PD or the impact of the PD you've attended? [If so, what?]

Topics for PD (content of PD)

Introduction The next questions are about content or topics related to your work that could be addressed by PD.

5. In your day-to-day work as _____ [consult survey for job title(s)], what questions and issues come up about your practice? [**Prompt:** Think about your work during the past week. What questions came up for you?]

[**Summarize** the questions the person raises.]

6. Your questions suggest a number of topics for PD [*give some examples* from what they have said] What other topics are you interested in?

[**Summarize** responses about topics]

7. Which of the topics that you have mentioned are the priorities for you right now?

Is there anything you would like to add about topics for PD? [If so, what?]

8. [Only ask if pertinent - check survey] you indicated on your survey that you are interested in taking a certificate or degree in the future, what topic/focus are you considering?

Delivery of PD

Introduction The next questions are about how you would like PD to be delivered and how literacy practitioners might be involved in providing PD.

6. PD can be delivered in a variety of ways. What delivery methods would work best for you? [As needed, ***provide examples:*** workshops, networking, conferences, courses, online learning, and professional reading.]

7. In the past few years, some PD has been offered online, using the internet. Some people enjoy this method and others don't. I'd like to hear your views about online delivery of PD.

[Possible probing questions: Have you had experience with web based courses? What types of things would you do on the web? Where and when would you do web based learning (office/home, work time/personal time)?]

8. There are a number of ways that literacy practitioners could be involved in PD. So far we've talked about your interests as a learner. What ways might literacy practitioners be involved in providing PD? [Prompt if needed: facilitating PD, serving on advisory committee, writing workshops or course materials]

9. [Consult survey in advance Part 4 c] Are you interested in being involved in providing PD. [If so, in what ways?]

[***Summarize*** responses about delivery.]

Is there anything you would like to add about delivery of PD? [If so, what?]

Recognition (Accreditation/Certification)

Introduction The next questions are about recognition for literacy practitioners' participation in PD.

10. You indicated on your survey that receiving recognition or a certificate for training is _____(very, somewhat, not) important. I'd like to hear your views about this (know the reasons for your choice).

11. There has been some discussion about having a program of certification or accreditation for literacy practitioners. I want to clarify that it is not the purpose of the professional development project to develop a certificate program, unless that is what coordinators say they want.

You indicated on your survey that the development and implementation of an accreditation process for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan is _____(very, somewhat, not). I'd like to hear your views about certification.

12. Would you be interested in taking PD that would lead to certification?

12. What are some reasons for offering certification for literacy practitioners?

13. What are some reasons for not offering certification for coordinators?

[***Summarize*** responses about recognition]

Is there anything you would like to add about recognition for PD? [If so, what?]

Barriers and supports

Introduction The last questions are about barriers and supports to PD.

14. What makes it difficult for you to take part in professional development? (These difficulties could be work related or personal.)
15. What kinds of supports help or would help you take part in professional development?
16. Where could these supports come from?
17. I noticed that your program does / does not pay for PD and does /does not provide time for participation in PD [review Part 1 c]. Is there anything you would like to say about the support your program/organization/workplace provides for you to take part in PD? [If so, what?]

[***Summarize*** responses about barriers and supports.]

Is there anything you would like to add about barriers and supports? [If so, what?]

18. What other comments or suggestions about PD would you like to make?

Thank you for taking part in the interview.

I will call you back or email you if I find that I've missed something or need clarification. Is that all right with you?

Thank you for taking part in the interview. I will write up the interview. Would you like a copy of the write-up? [If they want a copy of the write-up, indicate that you will send it by email attachment, if possible]

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

**Focus Group
October 27, 2004
Provincial Literacy Meeting**

1. Welcome
2. Introduce self and observers
3. Introduce project
 - a. The central goal of the project is to research, develop, implement and evaluate a comprehensive professional development plan for literacy practitioners in SK.
 - b. Year two of a three year project
 - c. Year one involved data collection (survey and interviews)
 - d. This information along with info about past delivery of PD has been compiled into a report
4. Round of introductions
5. Purpose of this focus group:
 - To collect information
 - The accuracy of the draft PD plan (are we on the right track?)
 - Suggestions for revisions or changes
 - Prioritise recommendations
6. Why a focus group?
 - a. Focus groups tend to encourage synergy from the interaction between participants
 - b. Often yields data and input that would not be possible with other techniques – and is often used to compliment other techniques
7. How will your input be used? (strengthen and refine the draft plan)
8. Confidentiality – data will be reported with no names attached

9. Guidelines – participation, reflection, openness, respect, focus, confidentiality
10. Questions /concerns
11. Outline process
 - a. We will look at the findings and recommendations for each section
 - i. Reasons for attending PD
 - ii. Topics
 - iii. Delivery
 - iv. Recognition
 - v. Barriers and supports
 - b. We will ask ourselves three questions when exploring each section:
 - i. Did we get it right? (Is it accurate - Is your experience reflected in the themes?)
 - ii. If no, what changes do you recommend?
 - iii. What are the priorities
 - c. Distribute copies of the plan
 - d. Quickly review “background information” of the plan

12. Taking a step back: reflecting on the plan

13. The last word is yours: anything else that you'd like to say that may be helpful in developing the PD plan.

14. If there is anything that you didn't get a chance to say, but would like to pass along, please feel free to write them and pass them along

15. Closing, thank you.

APPENDIX D: BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKPLACE LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

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