



# **Putting Literacy on the Public Agenda**

**A Briefing Package for CUPE Activists**



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CUPE's advocacy efforts regarding literacy and essential skills have focused on the federal government. However, recent federal changes mean that the provincial governments will now have funds to support literacy and essential skills activities in the workplace. There may also be additional support related to English as a second language (ESL) and the integration of internationally trained professionals and other workers into the workplace.

The potential for more funding for workplace programs may depend on how well labour and other partners influence the provinces.

This package will support your efforts to advocate for programs that meet the needs of our members and for a role for labour. The package includes:

- Introduction: Putting Literacy on the Public Agenda.
- [Background information about the federal-provincial Labour Market Development Agreements and Labour Market Agreements.](#)
- [A checklist and summary of provincial and territorial literacy activities.](#)
- [A longer overview of how each province and territory currently supports literacy programming](#), whether they provide funding for workplace literacy programs, and the relationship with labour. Most of the information has been drawn from the various governments' websites. We know that it may not always reflect the experience of those working on literacy "on the ground." If you have additional information for your province/territory, please send it to us at <mailto:literacy@cupe.ca>

Researcher and writer: Brigid Hayes, Literacy Consultant  
Editor: Anna Larsen, Labour Education Centre  
Coordinator: Sylvia Sioufi, CUPE [Literacy Program](#)



## **Introduction: Putting Literacy on the Public Agenda**

Recent federal changes create new opportunities for the provinces and territories to fund literacy activities. These new opportunities are contained in the federal-provincial/territorial Labour Market Development Agreements and Labour Market Agreements.

### ***Labour Market Development Agreements***

The March 2007 federal budget announced the federal government's full transfer of responsibility for labour market training to the provinces and territories. This will conclude a process that began in 1996 when the federal government reversed its long-standing claim to jurisdiction over labour market training.

This "devolution" involves the transfer to the provinces and territories of programs funded by Employment Insurance (EI Part II). Fully transferred Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDAs) are being finalized with each province and territory. These "EI Part II" programs help EI clients find and maintain employment, and include funding for basic and advanced skills training.

### ***Labour Market Agreements***

In March 2007, the federal government also announced \$500 million a year for provinces and territories for labour market training to begin in 2008/09. This new money is intended for employed workers with low skills or who work in low-skill jobs, and for unemployed workers not eligible for EI (for example, adults on social assistance). The federal government is finalizing Labour Market Agreements (LMAs) with each province and territory. Funding will come from general revenues.

The new funds replace a previous Liberal government plan to create Labour Market Partnership Agreements. Those agreements specified training priorities including support for literacy and essential skills. They also required provinces to create forums for the labour market partners (employers, labour, and government) to provide direction for spending these funds.

The new scheme by the Conservative government does not require a labour market partners' forum. Literacy and essential skills are a focus, at least in the agreements signed to date. However, the Labour Market Agreements are being negotiated behind closed doors by the federal government with each province. It is not clear if all provinces will negotiate similar provisions.

## **Putting Literacy on the Provincial Agenda**

The new federal-provincial agreements create an opportunity for CUPE activists to lobby their provincial governments to include funding for literacy and essential skills programs in the workplace. Our efforts will emphasize good practice, sustainable models, and support for employed workers.

Because the new Labour Market Agreements do not require a labour market partners' forum, labour has a responsibility to articulate directly the needs of its members. Our approach combines CUPE's literacy vision with "what's working" – positive examples of government policies and practices drawn from across the country.

## **CUPE's Literacy Vision**

CUPE has a long history of direct involvement in workplace literacy, including our national literacy program established in 2000. CUPE members have benefited from workplace basic skills programs, especially those workers who have had little access to educational opportunities or who need training in English or French as a second language. Workers have been able to build skills, adapt to changing job requirements, develop an interest in further learning and become more active in their union and community.

For CUPE, reading and writing are not ends in themselves. We understand literacy to be about reading the world, not just the words. Literacy is a tool for equity and social change, a means to further equality and access. We describe literacy as the skills we need for work, learning and life.

Workplace programs include:

- reading
- writing
- math
- using computers

- oral communication
- English or French as a second or other language
- upgrading for certification or further education
- critical thinking

CUPE shares labour's active commitment to policies and programs that secure:

- the right to learn for both employed and unemployed workers mandated by law
- a pan-Canadian strategy and system of adult education and training, which ensures quality programming and equitable access across the country
- a serious investment in literacy and training by employers and governments
- the integration of literacy in skills training and apprenticeship programs
- the development of a culture of learning in our unions and workplaces

While provinces and territories are responsible for education and training, the federal government must continue to play a role in developing policy and increasing funding for literacy.

## **What's Working?**

Examples of good government policies and practices can be used by CUPE activists when dealing with their provincial governments as part of an advocacy campaign to put literacy on the labour market policy agenda. We can identify good practices by asking questions about each province and territory. The overviews of provinces and territories included later in this package are also organized around these questions:

- How is literacy described or defined?
- Is there an adult literacy policy?
- How are literacy programs provided?
- Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?

# ***CUPE***

- Are there policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)? PLAR leads to education credit and/or employer recognition of workers' training and experience gained outside the school system.
- What is labour's role? Is there a business/labour/government partnership?
- What financial support is available for workers, for labour?

The positive examples below will help you in your lobby efforts.

## How is literacy described or defined?

Several provinces use grade levels and similar narrow measurements to describe literacy. However, the Yukon defines literacy as “a person’s ability to understand and use information and basic technology in daily activities at home, school, work and in the community in an attempt to reach personal goals and develop individual potential.”

In Quebec, a 2002 policy redefined literacy to account for the current context of a knowledge-based society, globalization, technological change, and the increased complexity of social and working life. Basic education should enable people to:

- understand and use written information in a range of contexts to meet their goals and broaden their knowledge and abilities
- communicate effectively with varied audiences
- use information and communications technologies for many purposes
- participate actively filling their roles as citizens

## Is there an adult literacy policy?

- Basic education.
- Manitoba recently introduced the first *Adult Literacy Act* in Canada.
- Skills Nova Scotia links skills development with education and training, including literacy.
- Nunavut has developed a draft Adult Learning Strategy. The draft outlines proposed actions to support the development of workplace and workforce literacy. These actions include basic education programs as well as financial incentives and programming supports for employers.
- PEI issued in 1996 a literacy strategy entitled, *Tough Challenges, Great Rewards: A Literacy and Adult Education Strategy* with the mission: “Equal access to adult education is a basic right of all adult learners.”
- Quebec’s policy for adult education, continuing education, and training provides basic education for adults; aims to maintain and continually upgrade skills; to acknowledge prior learning and skills through official recognition; and to remove obstacles to access and retention.
- The Yukon Literacy Strategy has as one of its objectives: To ensure that literacy programs are developed to address workplace literacy needs.

## **How are literacy programs provided?**

- Manitoba's adult learning centres provide much of the province's literacy programming. The UFCW Training Centre is accredited as an adult learning centre.

## **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

- In Manitoba, Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills programming is embedded and funded through the Ministry of Competitiveness, Training and Trade.
- The NWT government provides needs assessments for workplace education and wage subsidy programs. The territorial government also runs essential skills and training programs for youth and adults.
- Workplace Education PEI is the focal point for workplace literacy activity.
- Quebec's *Act to foster the development of manpower training* requires 1% of payroll in large firms to be used for workplace training, including literacy.

## **Are there policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

- Most provinces have Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) policies. PEI and Alberta have no official policies but support it in principle. The territories do not have policies.
- Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador have provisions for PLAR for workers, primarily through the apprenticeship system.

## **What is labour's role? Is there a business/labour/government partnership?**

- Manitoba's Workplace Education Steering Committee, coordinated by the provincial government, has labour representation.
- Labour is a full member of Nova Scotia Partners for Workplace Education. This multi-stakeholder committee advises the NS Department of Education on its workplace education program, including approving funding for workplace programs.
- In Quebec, all the labour market partners are involved with supporting workplace literacy activities through the *Commission de partenaires du marché du travail* (Labour Market Partners' Board). Its responsibility is to allocate funds collected under the *Act to foster the development of manpower training*.
- The Alberta Workplace Essential Skills committee has representation from labour. However, it is not strongly linked to the provincial government.

## **What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

- Manitoba provides financial support for Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills including the costs of an instructor and preparation time. Workplace-based programs are run by a project committee that includes labour.
- Workplace Education is available to businesses and labour organizations across Nova Scotia. The Department of Education Skill Development Coordinators assess learning needs, recommend programs, and help organizations select trained adult educators.
- Workplace Education PEI coordinators approach businesses, assist in organizational needs assessments, support instructors, and access funding for the workplace programs.
- In Quebec, funding is available for the development and recognition of skills, the adaptation of material for persons with disabilities, practitioner training, and setting up joint labour management committees.

- Saskatchewan's Innovation Fund provides financial assistance to develop or implement a community literacy plan. Community is broadly defined and includes labour-management partnerships focused on workplace literacy and essential skills.

## **Labour Market Development Agreements and Labour Market Agreements**

Recent federal changes create new opportunities for the provinces and territories to fund literacy activities. These new opportunities are a result of the Labour Market Development Agreements and Labour Market Agreements.

The May 2007 federal budget announced:

- The federal government will *complete the transfer of responsibility for the delivery of Employment Insurance (EI) Employment Benefits and Support Measures* to those provinces and territories that do not currently have full transfer *Labour Market Development Agreements*: Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, British Columbia, and Yukon. Once completed, all of the approximately \$2 billion in EI labour market programming will be delivered by the provinces and territories. These “EI Part II” programs help EI clients find and maintain employment.
- The federal government will *invest \$500 million annually* starting in 2008/09 under new *Labour Market Agreements* to be developed with provinces and territories. The funding will be allocated on a per capita basis. This new money will be used to provide training opportunities for people not eligible for EI, and to encourage employers to provide more training to their workers.<sup>1</sup>

### Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDAs)

Under the LMDAs, the federal government transfers funds collected through EI to the provinces and territories. They in turn must spend these funds according to the criteria outlined in the *EI Act Part II*. EI Part II provides funding for “Employment Benefits” for individuals. It also provides funding for organizations to deliver “Support Measures.”

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Canada *Budget Plan 2007*. <http://www.budget.gc.ca/2007/bp/bpc4e.html>.

## **Employment Benefits**

- *Skills Development* helps individuals obtain skills for employment, ranging from basic to advanced skills training. The program provides direct assistance to individuals as well as contributions to publicly-funded training institutions to cover costs not included in tuition fees.
- *Self-Employment* helps individuals create jobs for themselves by starting a business.
- *Targeted Wage Subsidies* encourage employers to hire individuals they would not normally hire without a subsidy.
- *Targeted Earnings Supplements* encourage individuals to accept employment by offering them financial incentives.
- *Job Creation Partnerships* provide individuals with opportunities to gain work experience that leads to on-going employment.

## **Support Measures**

- *Employment Assistance Services* funds organizations to provide employment services to the unemployed. This is the source of funding for many community-based organizations providing job search and other employment services.
- *Labour Market Partnerships* encourage and support employers, employee and employer associations, and communities to improve their capacity for dealing with human resource requirements and implementing labour force adjustments. This is the source of funding for many union Action Centres helping members laid off through closures (for example in the manufacturing and resource sectors).
- *Research and Innovation* supports activities that identify better ways of helping persons prepare for or keep employment and be productive participants in the labour force.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Employment Benefits and Support Measures Terms and Conditions.*  
[http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/sid/cia/grants/ebsm/terms\\_conditions.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/epb/sid/cia/grants/ebsm/terms_conditions.shtml)

## **Background to the LMDAs**

“The Labour Market Development Agreements have their origins in the longstanding constitutional debate between the Government of Canada and the provinces over which level of government has jurisdiction for training. The provinces, particularly Quebec, have long held that training and related employment programs and services belong under the broader jurisdictional umbrella of education. The federal government had maintained that training must be an area of shared responsibility.”<sup>3</sup>

By the late-1990s, the federal government had “devolved” (transferred) much of the responsibility and funding for training to the provinces and territories through the new *Employment Insurance Act, 1996*, and a series of Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDAs). The LMDAs were negotiated with each province and territory. Ontario was the last province to reach an agreement; its LMDA took effect on January 1, 2007. The federal government retained responsibility for inter-provincial labour mobility, national initiatives for youth, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and other pan-Canadian efforts.<sup>4</sup>

Prior to the 2007 federal budget, eight of these agreements were in the form of a *transfer* agreement under which the province/territory assumed responsibility for the design, delivery and management of programs and services similar to the EI Employment Benefits and Support Measures.

Five agreements were *co-managed*. In the co-managed agreements, Human Resources and Social Development Canada continued to deliver the benefits and supports. However, this federal department shared responsibility for the design, management, and evaluation of these programs with provinces and territories. The five co-managed agreements were with: Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, British Columbia, Yukon, and Nova Scotia (the latter was a Strategic Partnership which was a variation of the co-management model).

The 2007 Federal Budget called for *all* provinces and territories to move towards the transfer model. This coincided with the beginning of the last LMDA to be signed, which was with Ontario.

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<sup>3</sup> Toronto Economic Development. *A Labour Force Development Agreement for Ontario?* 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Kjell Rubenson, Richard Desjardins and Ee-Seul Yoon. *Adult Learning in Canada: A Comparative Perspective*. Statistics Canada. 2007.

**For CUPE activists in Newfoundland and Labrador, PEI, BC, Nova Scotia, Yukon and Ontario, the change to a full transfer model (or in the case of Ontario, the beginning of the LMDA) provides an opportunity to help shape the LMDAs.** Provinces and territories must deliver the benefits and supports as they are defined by EI legislation. Labour's input may help shape the ways in which provinces and territories integrate federal dollars into existing programming or re-configure programming.

## **General Concerns about LMDAs**

- A tendency to 'cream' or serve only the workers most likely to have a quick return to work (seen as the major indicator of success).
- The requirement for people who receive service to be EI Eligible. This excludes unemployed workers who do not qualify for EI and those who are employed.
- The reliance on service providers in the private and voluntary sectors. In many communities, Support Measures funding has been channelled to for-profit companies to provide employment services for unemployed workers. There is also a tendency to create competition among the various providers to the detriment of smaller target groups such as francophones outside Quebec and rural clients.

## **Other Key Factors**

As important as the LMDA negotiations are, we also need to address other key factors:

- Both levels of government will continue to play a major role in the overall labour force development system.
- An LMDA only impacts a slice of the overall system. A labour force development system is comprised of far more. Other elements include: the school and post-secondary education systems, immigration and settlement services, prior learning assessment services, training and other programs for employed workers. A wide range of industry, community, and government organizations fund and deliver programs and services.
- We can expect the focus on short-term results to continue to dominate: emphasizing a quick return to work whatever the job, over workers' need for employment with decent pay, benefits and working conditions.

- Regardless of who has responsibility, EI limitations apply. These limitations mean that only a small number of workers have access to LMDA-governed programs. The majority outside that sphere include many who fall outside any existing or proposed program.<sup>5</sup>

## **Labour Market Agreements**

The 2007 federal budget announced \$500 million per year to be transferred to the provinces and territories, on a per capita basis, for training of people who are not eligible for Employment Insurance. This is an attempt to address a problem since the 1996 EI Act – the lack of support for the training needs of employed workers and of those not eligible for EI.

Support for employed workers is focused on those “who may lack the basic skills – literacy and numeracy – and education to reach their full potential in the current marketplace.” English/French as a Second Language is included in the definition of literacy. Unemployed workers not eligible for EI include: “social assistance recipients, immigrants, Aboriginal Canadians, re-entrants [to the labour force] and unemployed individuals previously self-employed.”<sup>6</sup>

An earlier attempt by the previous federal Liberal government led to the announcement of three Labour Market Partnership Agreements (LMPAs). These 2005 agreements were signed with Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. Using the example of Ontario, these agreements included the goal: to set out the joint priorities and level of investment by priority area for new labour market investments by Canada in Ontario.<sup>7</sup>

Under the Partnership Agreements, the provinces committed to spend the new federal dollars on:

- Expand and enhance apprenticeship
- Labour market integration of recent immigrants
- Literacy and essential skills
- Workplace skills development (such as incentives for upgrading skills of new and existing workers)
- Aboriginal peoples

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<sup>5</sup> Toronto Economic Development. *A Labour Force Development Agreement for Ontario?* 2003. This paper, written by Ursule Critoph, provides an excellent overview and analysis of LMDAs.

<sup>6</sup> Presentation to the Canadian Labour Congress, Training and Technology Committee by John Fox, Director General HRSDC, December 10, 2007.

<sup>7</sup> *Canada-Ontario Labour Market Partnership Agreement*. November 2005.

- Assistance to others facing labour market barriers (such as older workers and others who are displaced, persons with disabilities).<sup>8</sup>

The LMPAs called for mechanisms to provide all of the workplace partners with input to the planning and decision-making process.

These agreements were not implemented due to the January 2006 election of a Conservative government. The March 2007 budget announcement re-introduced elements of the Partnership Agreements, now called the Labour Market Agreements, without the requirement for input of the workplace partners. The funds available are significantly less than provided in the previous agreements. For example, Ontario would have received \$228 million a year under the LMPA. Under the LMA, Ontario will receive \$194 million a year.

Negotiations are being carried out bilaterally with each province and territory and information is difficult to obtain. To date, agreements had been signed with Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, PEI, and Saskatchewan. We will update the information as other agreements are signed.

**CUPE activists in all provinces and territories have an opportunity to influence the implementation of the Labour Market Agreements.** We need to focus on the provinces to ensure that the LMA dollars are spent on programs that meet workers' needs and that workplace literacy is on the agenda. The information provided in this package and the *Literacy in the Workplace* fact sheet series will help toward that end. You can download the fact sheets from <http://cupe.ca/literacy>.

The following pages provide government information on the Labour Market Agreements for each province.

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<sup>8</sup> Note that while each province had a similar list of priorities there were some differences in terminology used by each province as well as a different allocation of funds across the various priority areas.

<b>LMA: Alberta</b>	
<b>Amount</b>	\$316 million (6 years)
<b>Focus for the Unemployed</b>	<p>The new investments will focus on supporting skills development for unemployed individuals who are not eligible for training assistance under the Employment Insurance program, including groups who are under-represented in the labour market, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women.</li> </ul>
<b>Focus for the Employed</b>	Employed individuals who are low skilled.
<b>Provincial Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment and training programs - \$28.2 million. Funding will increase and expand training opportunities and enhance career information and counselling services. It will see more training options and supports available to improve the labour force participation of women, Aboriginals and low-skilled Albertans, as well as expanded workplace supports for persons with disabilities.</li> <li>• Immigration programs - \$10.2 million. The agreement will expand training opportunities to help newcomers integrate into the workforce.</li> <li>• Partnership with industry and employers - \$10 million. The investment will be used in partnership with industry to improve the literacy and essential skills of low-skilled workers. Increased access to training in areas of critical skills of low-skilled workers. Increased access to training in areas of critical skill shortages will help address labour market demand for skilled workers.</li> <li>• Program administration - \$4.1 million.</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<p>The Labour Market Agreements contain a robust accountability framework that includes commitments related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development of annual plans and the engagement of stakeholders;</li> <li>• the management of financial resources</li> </ul>

	<p>provided under the agreement;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the measurement of the outcomes and benefits of investments in three areas-participants, service delivery and results;</li><li>• regular public reporting of results achieved; and</li><li>• regular review and evaluation of activities.</li></ul>
<b>Displacement</b>	
<b>Official Languages</b>	<p>In developing and delivering its eligible programs and services, Alberta agrees to take into account the needs of the official language minority communities within the province.</p>

<b>LMA: British Columbia</b>	
<b>Amount</b>	\$396 million (6 years)
<b>Focus for the Unemployed</b>	<p>For those not in the labour market and therefore not eligible for Employment Insurance (EI), as well as under-represented groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women, older workers and other under-represented groups within the labour market</li> <li>• Individuals entering and re-entering the workforce</li> </ul>
<b>Focus for the Employed</b>	<p>Training for employed individuals who are low-skilled and do not have a high school diploma or a recognized credential, or have low levels of literacy and lack essential skills.</p>
<b>Provincial Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• skills training, ranging from training in basic skills to advanced skills training</li> <li>• on-the-job training and workplace-based skills upgrading</li> <li>• group interventions and job readiness assistance</li> <li>• financial supports and benefits such as loans, grants and living allowances</li> <li>• employment counselling and services</li> <li>• labour market connections that promote and enhance labour market efficiency</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<p>The LMAs contain a robust accountability framework that includes commitments related to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development of annual plans and the engagement of stakeholders</li> <li>• the stewardship of financial resources provided under the agreement</li> <li>• the measurement of the outcomes and benefits of investments in three areas: participants, service delivery and participant impacts</li> <li>• regular public reporting of results achieved</li> <li>• and regular review and evaluation of activities</li> </ul>

<b>Displacement</b>	Commitment to ensure that the new federal investments do not displace normal provincial expenditures within the labour market.
<b>Official Languages</b>	B.C. agrees to take into account the needs of the official language minority communities within the province and to deliver, where there is significant demand, services in either official language

<b>LMA: Manitoba</b>	
<b>Amount</b>	\$110 million (6 years)
<b>Focus for the Unemployed</b>	<p>For unemployed individuals who are not eligible for training assistance under the Employment Insurance program, including groups who are under-represented in the labour market, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women, and older workers</li> <li>• Individuals entering and re-entering the workforce</li> </ul>
<b>Focus for the Employed</b>	<p>Training for employed individuals who are low-skilled and do not have a high school diploma or a recognized credential, or have low levels of literacy and lack essential skills.</p>
<b>Provincial Priorities</b>	<p><i>Skills Development</i> - to ensure that Manitobans have the skills required to be successful in the labour market</p> <p><i>Employer Human Resources Capacity</i> - to help employers improve their capacity to effectively manage and develop their human resources</p> <p><i>Community Capacity</i> - to make certain that communities are able to support and benefit from labour market growth</p> <p><i>Labour Supply</i> - to ensure that Manitoba has an adequate supply of labour to support economic growth</p> <p><i>Skills Utilization</i> - to ensure that labour force participants are fully utilizing their skills</p>

<b>Accountability Measures</b>	The Labour Market Agreements contain a robust accountability framework that includes commitments related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the development of annual plans and the engagement of stakeholders</li><li>• the management of financial resources provided under the agreement</li><li>• the measurement of the outcomes and benefits of investments in three areas: participants, service delivery and results</li><li>• regular public reporting of results achieved</li><li>• and regular review and evaluation of activities</li></ul>
<b>Displacement</b>	Commitment to ensure that the new federal investments do not displace normal provincial expenditures within the labour market.
<b>Official Languages</b>	Manitoba agrees to take into account the needs of the official language minority communities within the province, and to deliver, where there is significant demand, services in either official language.

<b>LMA: New Brunswick</b>	
<b>Amount</b>	\$68 million (6 years)
<b>Focus for the Unemployed</b>	<p>For unemployed individuals who are not eligible for training assistance under the EI program, including groups who are under-represented in the labour market, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women, and older workers</li> <li>• Individuals entering and re-entering the workforce</li> </ul>
<b>Focus for the Employed</b>	<p>Training for employed individuals who are low-skilled and do not have a high school diploma or a recognized credential, or have low levels of literacy and lack essential skills.</p>
<b>Provincial Priorities</b>	<p>Unemployed individuals who are not eligible for Employment Insurance, including: social assistance recipients; immigrants; persons with disabilities; older workers; youth; Aboriginal peoples; new entrants and re-entrants to the labour market; and unemployed individuals previously self-employed</p> <p>Employed individuals who are low skilled, in particular, employed individuals who do not have a high school diploma or a recognized certification or who have low levels of literacy and essential skills.</p>
<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<p>The Labour Market Agreements contain a robust accountability framework that includes commitments related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development of annual plans and the engagement of stakeholders</li> <li>• the stewardship of financial resources provided under the agreement</li> <li>• the measurement of the outcomes and benefits of investments in three areas-participants, service delivery and participant impacts</li> <li>• regular public reporting of results achieved</li> <li>• and regular review and evaluation of activities</li> </ul>
<b>Displacement</b>	<p>Commitment to ensure that the new federal investments do not displace normal provincial expenditures within the labour market.</p>

	<b>LMA: Newfoundland &amp; Labrador</b>
<b>Amount</b>	\$46 million (6 years)
<b>Focus for the Unemployed</b>	<p>The new investments will focus on supporting skills development for unemployed who are not eligible for training assistance under the Employment Insurance (EI) program, including groups who are under-represented in the labour market, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women and older workers; and</li> <li>• Individuals entering and re-entering the workforce</li> </ul>
<b>Focus for the Employed</b>	<p>The new investments will focus on supporting skills development for low skilled employed individuals who are not eligible for training assistance under the Employment Insurance (EI) program, including groups who are under-represented in the labour market, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women, and older workers; and</li> <li>• Individuals entering and re-entering the work force</li> </ul>
<b>Provincial Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a variety of supports to individuals and employers by assisting skills training tailored to specific occupations leading to higher skill levels;</li> <li>• Increase industry investment relating to human resource planning to train employees, improve competitiveness, and support economic growth and job creation; and</li> <li>• Improve access to literacy and essential skills training providing an essential linkage to the labour market and additional education</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<p>The Labour Market Agreements contain commitments to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop annual plans and engage stakeholders;</li> <li>• Manage financial resources provided under the agreement;</li> <li>• Measure the outcomes and benefits of investments in three areas-participants, service</li> </ul>

	delivery and results; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular public reporting of results;</li><li>• Review and evaluate activities regularly.</li></ul>
<b>Displacement</b>	These new arrangements also contain a commitment to ensure that federal investments do not displace normal provincial expenditures within the labour market.
<b>Official Languages</b>	In developing and delivering its eligible programs and services, the Province will take into account the needs of the official language minority communities within the province, and to deliver, where there is significant demand, services in either official language.

<b>LMA: Nova Scotia</b>	
<b>Amount</b>	\$85 million (6 years)
<b>Focus for the Unemployed</b>	<p>For unemployed individuals who are not eligible for training assistance under the Employment Insurance (EI) program, including groups who are under-represented in the labour market, such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women, and older workers; and</li> <li>• Individuals entering and re-entering the work force.</li> </ul>
<b>Focus for the Employed</b>	<p>for low-skilled employed individuals who are not eligible for training assistance under the Employment Insurance (EI) program, including groups who are under-represented in the labour market, such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women, and older workers</li> </ul>
<b>Provincial Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to increase the participation of Nova Scotians in the work force to meet current and future labour requirements;</li> <li>• to enhance the quality of skills development; and</li> <li>• to facilitate work force mobility and provide clients with the information necessary to make informed labour market choices.</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<p>The Labour Market Agreements contain a robust accountability framework that includes commitments related to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development of annual plans and the engagement of stakeholders;</li> <li>• the management of financial resources provided under the agreement;</li> <li>• the measurement of the outcomes and benefits of investments in three areas—participants, service delivery and results;</li> <li>• regular public reporting of results achieved; and</li> <li>• regular review and evaluation of activities.</li> </ul>

<b>Displacement</b>	These new arrangements also contain a commitment to ensure that the new federal investments do not displace normal provincial expenditures within the labour market.
<b>Official Languages</b>	In developing and delivering its eligible programs and services, Nova Scotia agrees to take into account the needs of the official language minority communities within the province, and to deliver, where there is significant demand, services in either official language.

<b>LMA: Ontario</b>	
<b>Amount</b>	\$1.2 billion (6 years)
<b>Focus for the Unemployed</b>	<p>For unemployed individuals who are not eligible for training assistance under the Employment Insurance (EI) program, including groups who are under-represented in the labour market:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal peoples, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women, older workers and other under-represented groups</li> <li>• Individuals entering and re-entering into the workforce</li> </ul>
<b>Focus for the Employed</b>	<p>Training for employed individuals who are low-skilled, in particular, those who do not have a high school diploma or a credential recognized in Ontario, or have low levels of literacy and essential skills.</p>
<b>Provincial Priorities</b>	<p><i>Technical skills training</i> - occupationally specific training that supports labour market attachment, bridges skills gaps, addresses cost as a barrier to skills training for non-EI eligible, and helps meet the demand for skilled tradespersons</p> <p><i>Labour market integration of immigrants</i> - focused bridge training projects, financial support, and credential assessment, and increase opportunities to obtain Canadian work experience through mentoring, coaching and other supports for work experience</p> <p><i>Foundation skills training and supports</i> - Improve access to literacy and essential skills training, ensure availability of foundation skills training tailored to specific trades and occupations, and create new opportunities for foundation skills training in the workplace</p> <p><i>Labour market supports for persons with disabilities</i> - Remove barriers to participation in training and employment services, by providing sign language interpreters, alternate formats, and attendant care, and increase availability of employer incentives to train on the job, including accommodations and enhancements in the workplace.</p>

<b>Accountability Measures</b>	Both governments are committed to a focus on results and strong accountability measures. Specific elements include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ development of annual plans and the engagement of stakeholders</li><li>▪ stewardship of financial resources provided under the agreement</li><li>▪ measuring the outcomes and benefits of investments</li><li>▪ regular public reporting of results achieved</li><li>▪ and regular review and evaluation of activities</li></ul>
<b>Displacement</b>	Ensuring that new federal resources are additional to normal provincial spending
<b>Official Languages</b>	Ontario agrees to continue taking into account the needs of the official language minority communities within the province and to deliver, where there is significant demand, services in either official language.

	<b>LMA: PEI</b>
<b>Amount</b>	\$12 million (6 years)
<b>Focus for the Unemployed</b>	<p>For unemployed individuals who are not eligible for training assistance under the Employment Insurance (EI) program, including groups who are under-represented in the labour market, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women, older workers; and</li> <li>• Individuals entering and re-entering the workforce</li> </ul>
<b>Focus for the Employed</b>	<p>For low skilled employed individuals who are not eligible for training assistance under the Employment Insurance (EI) program, including groups who are under-represented in the labour market, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women and older workers; and</li> <li>• Individuals entering and re-entering the workforce</li> </ul>
<b>Provincial Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a variety of supports to individuals and employers by assisting skills training tailored to specific occupations leading to higher skill levels;</li> <li>• Increase industry investment relating to human resource planning to train employees, improve competitiveness, and support economic growth and job creation; and</li> <li>• Improve access to literacy and essential skills training providing an essential linkage to the labour market and additional education.</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<p>The Labour Market Agreements contain commitments to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop annual plans and engage stakeholders;</li> <li>• Manage financial resources provided under the agreement;</li> <li>• Measure the outcomes and benefits of investments in three areas-participants service</li> </ul>

	delivery and results; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular public reporting of results;</li><li>• Review and evaluate activities, regularly.</li></ul>
<b>Displacement</b>	There new arrangements also contain a commitment to ensure that federal investments do not displace normal provincial expenditures within the labour market.
<b>Official Languages</b>	In developing and delivering its eligible programs and services, the Province will take into account the needs of the official language minority communities within the province, and to deliver, where there is significant demand, services in either official language.

<b>LMA: Saskatchewan</b>	
<b>Amount</b>	\$90 million (6 years)
<b>Focus for the Unemployed</b>	<p>For unemployed individuals who are not eligible for training assistance under the EI program, including under-represented groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal people, immigrants, persons with disabilities, youth, women, older workers and other under-represented groups within the labour market</li> <li>• Individuals entering and re-entering the workforce</li> </ul>
<b>Focus for the Employed</b>	<p>Training for employed individuals who are low-skilled and do not have a high school diploma or a recognized credential, or have low levels of literacy and lack essential skills.</p>
<b>Provincial Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing Foundational Skills</li> <li>• increasing Access to Skills Training</li> </ul> <p>responding to Labour Market Needs</p>
<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<p>The Labour Market Agreements contain a robust accountability framework that includes commitments related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development of annual plans and the engagement of stakeholders</li> <li>• the stewardship of financial resources provided under the agreement</li> <li>• the measurement of the outcomes and benefits of investments in three areas: participants, service delivery and participant impacts</li> <li>• regular public reporting of results achieved</li> <li>• and regular review and evaluation of activities</li> </ul>
<b>Displacement</b>	<p>Commitment to ensure that the new federal investments do not displace normal provincial expenditures within the labour market.</p>
<b>Official Languages</b>	<p>Saskatchewan agrees to take into account the needs of the official language minority communities within the province and to deliver, where there is significant demand, services in either official language.</p>

<b>Other</b>	Supports key provincial labour market initiatives such as Enterprise Saskatchewan
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**Summary Table – Provincial and Territorial Literacy Activities**

	AB	BC	MB	NB	NL	NT	NS	NU	ON	PEI	QC	SK	YT
Adult Literacy Policy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Workplace Literacy Policy	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓
Workplace literacy & essential skills focus	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓
PLAR strategy with worker focus	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Role for labour:</i> Business/labour/ government partnership	x	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	x
Role for labour in delivery	x	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	x
<i>Funding:</i> Community-based	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Workforce (for unemployed workers)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Workplace	x	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	✓

**Alberta**

Adult literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy and essential skills focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PLAR strategy with a focus on workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Role for labour:</i>	
Business/labour/government partnership <sup>9</sup>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Role for labour in delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Government Funding:</i>	
Community-based programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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<sup>9</sup> The Alberta Workplace Essential Skills Committee (AWES) does have seats for business, labour and government. However this is not a government of Alberta initiative.

**British Columbia**

Adult literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy and essential skills focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PLAR strategy with a focus on workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Role for labour:</i>	
Business/labour/government partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Role for labour in delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Government Funding:</i>	
Community-based programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Manitoba**

- Adult literacy policy
- Workplace literacy policy
- Workplace literacy and essential skills focus
- PLAR strategy with a focus on workers
- Role for labour:*
  - Business/labour/government partnership
  - Role for labour in delivery
- Government Funding:*
  - Community-based programs?
  - Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?
  - Workplace literacy programs?

**New Brunswick**

Adult literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy and essential skills focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PLAR strategy with a focus on workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Role for labour:</i>	
Business/labour/government partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Role for labour in delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Government Funding:</i>	
Community-based programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## **Newfoundland and Labrador**

Adult literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy and essential skills focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PLAR strategy with a focus on workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Role for labour:</i>	
Business/labour/government partnership <sup>10</sup>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Role for labour in delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Government Funding:</i>	
Community-based programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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<sup>10</sup> The NL Workplace/Workforce Learning Committee is a multi-stakeholder group, but is outside of government. The Strategic Partnership Initiative is a tripartite government mechanism, but it does not specifically address literacy.

**Northwest Territories**

Adult literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy and essential skills focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PLAR strategy with a focus on workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Role for labour:</i>	
Business/labour/government partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Role for labour in delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Government Funding:</i>	
Community-based programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Nova Scotia**

- Adult literacy policy
- Workplace literacy policy
- Workplace literacy and essential skills focus
- PLAR strategy with a focus on workers
- Role for labour:*
  - Business/labour/government partnership
  - Role for labour in delivery
- Government Funding:*
  - Community-based programs?
  - Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?
  - Workplace literacy programs?

**Nunavut**

Adult literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy and essential skills focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PLAR strategy with a focus on workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Role for labour:</i>	
Business/labour/government partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Role for labour in delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Government Funding:</i>	
Community-based programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Ontario**

Adult literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy and essential skills focus	<input type="checkbox"/>
PLAR strategy with a focus on workers	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Role for labour:</i>	
Business/labour/government partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role for labour in delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Government Funding:</i>	
Community-based programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy programs?	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Prince Edward Island**

Adult literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy policy <sup>11</sup>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy and essential skills focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PLAR strategy with a focus on workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Role for labour:</i>	
Business/labour/government partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Role for labour in delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Government Funding:</i>	
Community-based programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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<sup>11</sup> While no specific policy was found, the existence of Workplace Education PEI since the mid-1990s indicates provincial commitment to workplace literacy.

**Quebec**

Adult literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy and essential skills focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PLAR strategy with a focus on workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Role for labour:</i>	
Business/labour/government partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Role for labour in delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Government Funding:</i>	
Community-based programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**Saskatchewan**

Adult literacy policy <sup>12</sup>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy and essential skills focus	<input type="checkbox"/>
PLAR strategy with a focus on workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Role for labour:</i>	
Business/labour/government partnership <sup>13</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Role for labour in delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Government Funding:</i>	
Community-based programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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<sup>12</sup> While there is no specific policy, the Act that formed the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission is evidence of a policy direction.

<sup>13</sup> The Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board had been active in promoting workplace literacy partnership projects. The Saskatchewan Labour Market Commission created in 2007 has taken on most of the SLFDB's functions including a mandate for essential skills. It is too early to see what role there may be for labour in the delivery of programs.

**Yukon**

Adult literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy and essential skills focus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PLAR strategy with a focus on workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Role for labour:</i>	
Business/labour/government partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Role for labour in delivery	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<i>Government Funding:</i>	
Community-based programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workforce (unemployed) literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Workplace literacy programs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## **Alberta**

### **Name of responsible ministry**

Alberta Ministry of Advanced Education and Technology: community-based literacy

Employment and Immigration: skills development

### **Minister's name**

Doug Horner, Advanced Education and Technology

Hector Goudreau, Employment and Immigration

### **Key staff**

Donna Weitz, Community Literacy, Advanced Education and Technology

Donna Ballard, Project and Policy Coordination, Employment and Immigration

Alisa Neuman, Project and Policy Coordination, Employment and Immigration

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

Adult Basic Education is described as grades 1 to 3, while Academic Upgrading is described as grades 4 to 12.

### **Adult Literacy Policy**

There does not appear to be an adult literacy policy. However, the policy statement *Skills Investment Strategy* sets the direction for Alberta's adult training and employment programs. The strategy provides a range of programs and services aimed to better respond to client need; better respond to the needs of the labour market; and ensure accountability among the government and key stakeholders.

## **How are literacy programs provided?**

Alberta Advanced Education and Technology works with Alberta's 83 [Community Adult Learning Councils](#) to provide a range of programs across the province. Councils offer [community-based, non-credit learning](#) opportunities in adult literacy, adult English as a second language (ESL), employability enhancement, addressing community issues, as well as other lifelong learning opportunities.

Alberta Advanced Education and Technology supports 72 Volunteer Tutor Adult Literacy Programs. These programs recruit and train volunteer literacy tutors, and match them with adult learners. Tutors and learners meet once or twice a week, at home, in a library or in the literacy program's office.

Alberta Advanced Education and Technology's Parent-Child Literacy Strategy funds family literacy programs for economically and socially disadvantaged families. These programs integrate adult literacy instruction and early oral language development for children from birth to age six.

## **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

A focus on basic skills training in the workplace or as a strategy to promote employability was first announced in October 2003. The government released a policy framework entitled, *Skills Investment Strategy: Supporting the Development of a Skilled Workforce in Alberta*. The Strategy has four components: Career Information, Work Foundations, Training for Work, and Workplace Partnerships. These programs are intended to support human resource development in the workplace and labour market adjustment strategies through community partnerships. A new essential skills strategy was to be launched in the winter of 2007.

## **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

"Alberta Learning encourages the recognition of learning not only when it leads to credentials (formal) but also when it does not (informal). While Alberta has no official policy on the recognition of prior learning, this approach to lifelong learning is solidified in the Campus Alberta Policy

Framework, which identifies key factors that underlie the importance of the recognition of prior learning. In addition, Alberta Learning encourages PLAR through Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training, the International Qualifications Assessment Service (IQAS), the Alberta Council on Admissions and Transfer (ACAT), and inclusion of portfolio development in high school curriculum. Provincial policy allows challenges for credit (no maximum limit) for senior high school courses.”<sup>14</sup>

### **What is labour’s role?**

The Alberta Workplace Essential Skills Committee (AWES) is an informal group, with business, labour, government, and practitioners’ representatives. The Labourers Union and the Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco and Grain Workers Union currently represent labour. In the past, AWES received project funding from the federal government enabling it to have a coordinator, hold practitioner training sessions, and do pilot projects.

### **What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

The Labour Market Partnerships (LMP) program supports workplace human resource development and labour market adjustment strategies through community partnerships. The LMP Program is designed to develop and support projects with groups, organizations, industry sectors, and communities with common labour market needs.

Activities that may be considered include:

- Research and analysis of labour market trends.
- Developing strategic plans to prepare for future skill requirements and/or prevent skills shortages.
- Promoting current labour market needs or heightening awareness of labour market issues such as skills shortages.

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<sup>14</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada’s Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.

- Sharing best practices in human resource development and career/employment training.

The Work Foundations Program is primarily for low income Albertans who lack the basic skills to get a job and become “self-sufficient.” It involves a classroom-based training program, which includes English as a Second Language, Adult Basic Education, and academic upgrading or high school equivalency training.

Training for Work provides full and part-time occupationally focused training opportunities to enable clients to get a job, substantially improve their employment situation, or adapt to changing labour conditions and skill requirements in order to sustain employment. It incorporates essential skills training and has components aimed at Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities.

## **British Columbia**

### **Name of responsible ministry**

[Ministry of Advanced Education](#)

### **Minister's name**

Murray Coell

### **Key staff**

Moura Quayle, Deputy Minister

Wendy Magahay, Special Advisor, Workplace Skills Initiative, Ministry of Advanced Education

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

The ability to understand and use printed information in daily activities at home, at work and in the community – to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential. (International Adult Literacy Survey, 1995)

### **Adult Literacy Policy**

The Ministry of Advanced Education's adult literacy strategy is called the [Adult Opportunities Action Plan](#). The plan's goals are to:

- Reduce barriers and increase participation in adult literacy programs and courses.
- Improve literacy rates for key populations, including Aboriginal people and immigrants.
- Coordinate quality programs that produce results.

Part of the plan is to make all adult basic education tuition free in BC, which was [announced September 7, 2007](#). This is taking place in three stages:

1. Effective immediately, all students can take adult basic education courses free of charge through the Province's virtual school, [LearnNow BC](#).
2. Starting in January 2008, all students will have access to tuition-free adult basic education courses at 18 public post-secondary institutions around BC.
3. And effective September 2008, all students can take free adult basic education courses through school district continuing education centres.

The Adult Opportunities Action Plan is also connected with ReadNow BC. ReadNow BC focuses on improving literacy skills by increasing:

- The number of children entering school ready to learn;
- The number of children who read successfully;
- The number of adults who have the literacy and essential skills necessary to compete in today's labour market and to function in everyday life;
- The number of Aboriginal students who read successfully.

In the Service Plan of the Ministry of Advanced Education for 2006/07-2008/09, five "Great Goals" to be achieved by 2015 are noted. Under the first goal – "Make British Columbia the most educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent" – there are some references to literacy and a reference to workplace literacy:

- Expand programs designed to improve adult literacy and basic skills, including English as a second language, adult basic education and adult special education
- Explore options for building regional innovation capacity to support partnerships between post-secondary institutions and local industry

### **How are literacy programs provided?**

One of the main focal points of BC's literacy initiative is the "Community Adult Literacy Program of BC." The program is designed to:

- Enhance adult literacy activities in British Columbia.
- Encourage and improve partnerships between community groups, school districts, and public post-secondary institutions.

- Encourage active involvement of all sectors of society – governments, voluntary groups, educational institutions, business, and labour – in improving adult literacy education in British Columbia.

The program provides support by funding community-based program delivery, regional literacy coordination, and province-wide services provided by Literacy BC (the provincial literacy organization). All projects must be done in partnership with a public post-secondary institution (college, university, institute, or Thompson Rivers University). Although a commitment to encourage the involvement of business and labour is a key priority, there are few references in the *Directory of Projects Funded* to examples of initiatives where business and/or labour have been engaged.

### **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

Many of the projects funded are family-based literacy initiatives or programs targeted to specific populations. Based on past reports, only a few could be considered as workplace literacy initiatives. Recently the government initiated the Workplace Essential Skills Initiative. In Phase I, community colleges in partnership with business/industry and in some cases unions, are conducting sectoral profiles and identifying essential skills training needs. Based on the Phase I recommendations, the ministry will fund workplace literacy pilot projects.

### **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

“Many colleges and universities in British Columbia have embedded prior learning assessment and recognition options directly into their program offerings.”<sup>15</sup>

### **What is labour’s role?**

No formal role was identified.

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<sup>15</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada’s Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.

**What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

In 2005, the provincial government announced more than \$40 million in literacy spending, including \$5 million for literacy innovation grants, \$1.4 million for adult literacy, \$10 million for textbooks, \$3 million for Ready, Set, Learn (a program for preschoolers), and \$5 million for Literacy Now.

For 2007-08, the provincial government increased funding for community adult literacy programs by more than 70 per cent to \$2.4 million. This is up from \$700,000 in 2001 and \$1.4 million in 2006-07. Sixty-two programs, including 23 that were funded for the first time, received grants of up to \$40,000 each to provide training in everything from basic literacy to high school completion. They are expected to serve more than 7,500 people.

The Workplace Essential Skills Initiative provides funding to community colleges to conduct essential skills needs assessments on a sectoral basis. Phase I is to be completed by the end of June 2008. Phase II will provide funding for related workplace literacy pilot projects.

## **Manitoba**

### **Name of responsible ministry**

[Ministry of Advanced Education and Literacy](#): GED (high school equivalent), adult learning centres, literacy programs

[Manitoba Competitiveness, Training and Trade](#): delivery of essential skills training programs and coordination for Workplace Education Manitoba Steering Committee (WEMSC)

### **Minister's name**

[Diane McGifford, Advanced Education and Literacy](#)

[Jim Rondeau, Competitiveness, Training and Trade](#)

### **Key staff**

Lynette Plett, Executive Director, Adult Learning and Literacy, [Advanced Education and Literacy](#)

Paul Holden, Director, Competitiveness, Training and Trade

Sandi Howell, Provincial Coordinator, Essential Skills and PLAR, [Competitiveness, Training and Trade](#)

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

#### ***Manitoba Stages of Literacy***

Programs funded by the province are expected to assess learners using a system based on the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) levels<sup>16</sup>. The programs are encouraged to help learners get certificates for each stage corresponding to an IALS level.

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<sup>16</sup> The IALS survey rated people's ability to deal with everyday literacy demands. Participants' literacy "scores" were grouped into five levels: Level 1 is the lowest skill level and level 5 is the highest. Level 3 is the minimum skill level considered necessary to meet the challenges of today's world (Statistics Canada).

*Stage I - Feeling Literate*

The goal of Stage I literacy is to help learners *feel* like readers and writers. This is a process of developing confidence with the written language. It involves encouraging learners to make connections between oral and written language.

*Stage II - Developing Literacy*

The goal of Stage II literacy is to help learners become readers and writers. This is a process of consolidating skills. It involves encouraging learners to focus on the visual characteristics of print while continuing to use their world knowledge.

*Stage III - Becoming Literate*

The goal of Stage III literacy is to help new learners move from learning to read, to reading to learn. It involves helping learners refine their skills.

The Ministry of Competitiveness, Training and Trade defines essential skills as: the ability to read documents to find information, write clearly, measure correctly, communicate effectively, think through problems, and make sound decisions.

**Adult Literacy Policy**

The Minister of Advanced Education and Literacy introduced the *Adult Literacy Act* in October 2007. The Act was the first of its kind in Canada. It formalizes the Manitoba Adult Literacy Program by establishing which providers are eligible for funding and the conditions for delivery of adult literacy. The Act does not apply to workplace literacy.

The Adult Learning Centres were established by an act of the legislature. They are the key providers of adult literacy, although other community-based groups are recognized and funded. Their programs enable learners to obtain recognized educational credentials or other necessary prerequisites to pursue further education and employment opportunities.

The programs are for adults who have not completed secondary schooling, or who are not eligible to pursue post-secondary studies or other recognized educational opportunities.

A four-year training strategy introduced in 2001 included reference to essential skills. No information was found regarding a renewal of that strategy.

### **How are literacy programs provided?**

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Literacy directs general adult learning and literacy programs in Manitoba. It provides grants to Adult Learning Centres (ALC) and part-time community-based literacy programs. In addition, the Ministry provides ongoing support in the development and delivery of adult-focused programming.

The Ministry of Competitiveness, Training and Trade provides support to workplace literacy and essential skills programs.

### **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

The Ministry of Competitiveness, Training and Trade's Industry Training Partnerships program works with employers and labour to develop "human resource solutions." A core service is essential skills training. The Partnerships program can help organizations identify their essential skills needs and implement appropriate training plans. This is accomplished through the support of direct delivery programs and the coordination of activities through the Workplace Education Manitoba Steering Committee (WEMSC).

The WEMSC model uses contracted instructors. A small cadre of instructors work with WEMSC, the UFCW training centre, and the building trades training centres. This experience makes them well-equipped to work with union members.

Another program includes "wage incentives," which are available to employers and businesses when they provide career-related employment experiences, create new jobs, and/or improve the skills and literacy levels of their employees.

## **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

“In November 2001, the Manitoba government released *A New Policy Framework for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR)*. Its comprehensive objective is to increase the expertise in and use of PLAR across the province. As part of that, the implementation strategy is to link PLAR with other key provincial labour market strategies for effective training, college expansion, Aboriginal training and education, and immigration. The strategy has three cornerstone areas of activity: to increase capacity in postsecondary institutions; to expand PLAR advisory services throughout the community through the broad network of Adult Learning Centres and Employment Centres; and to increase PLAR activities in industry through business and labour regulatory bodies, sector councils, and apprenticeship. The strategy is based on integrating the work being done in these three areas of PLAR activity.”<sup>17</sup>

## **What is labour’s role?**

The Workplace Education Manitoba Steering Committee (WEMSC) is the oldest workplace literacy consortium. Founded in 1990, the committee consists of two business and two labour representatives, with a provincial government employee acting as coordinator. The Manitoba Federation of Labour (MFL) appoints the two labour representatives who report to the MFL through the federation coordinator. The labour representatives are guided by the labour principles for workplace literacy, which the MFL publicly promotes. Both labour representatives work for their respective unions, whose jobs permit them to participate without release time.

The WEMSC is not involved in individual programs at worksites, which are financed by the government of Manitoba. The labour representatives assist with the initial contact with the union to obtain support and ensure that the principle of “joint” is understood. Occasionally, the labour representatives are asked to assist if a problem arises.

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<sup>17</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada’s Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.

The MFL describes the partnership as one of the best. Its success is attributable to who is at the table, their commitment and connections, the commitment to a bipartite forum, the funding from the federal government, and the talent of the people occupying the provincial coordinator position. A hallmark of its success is that WEMSC is clearly embedded in the provincial infrastructure having survived several changes of government.

Manitoba Federation of Labour Members of WEMSC:

- Ann Robins, Education Representative, Canadian Union of Public Employees
- Heather Grant-Jury, Director, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Training Centre

### **What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

Support for program delivery is available from the Ministry of Competitiveness, Training and Trade. Labour's involvement is expected at the workplace level and there is an oversight role played by the WEMSC to ensure that programs meet workers' needs.

## **New Brunswick**

### **Name of responsible ministry**

Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour

### **Minister's name**

Ed Doherty

### **Key staff**

Pauline Pelletier, Director, Adult Literacy Services Branch

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

Literacy has been linked to grade levels (grades 1 – 9), although recent policy statements have used the levels of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS).

### **Adult Literacy Policy**

In 2002, New Brunswick released the *Quality Learning Agenda*, a 10-year plan. One of the four pillars of the plan involved lifelong learning. The government indicated it was working toward improving adult literacy levels in the province by providing accessible, free, adult literacy training opportunities in both official languages.

In 2005, *Lifelong Learning: Quality Adult Learning Opportunities* was released. It outlines such long-term initiatives as adding a workplace-essential-skills component to the curriculum, collaborating with literacy groups to increase participation, ensuring quality standards and higher take-home pay for instructors, and facilitating learners' transition from community-based literacy programs to other education, training – and most important – stable employment. However, no information was uncovered on progress made on the plan and many of the documents are no longer on the government of New Brunswick website (although they still exist on the National Adult Literacy Database, [nald.ca](http://nald.ca)).

## **How are literacy programs provided?**

The Adult Literacy Services Branch coordinates the delivery of community-based adult literacy services. A range of free adult literacy training opportunities in both official languages is provided in partnership with the private sector, communities, and the non-profit organization Literacy New Brunswick Inc. Nine regional literacy coordinators assist regional literacy committees to set up Community Adult Learning Programs and provide professional support for these programs.

This program provides free pre-GED training in community-based centres (GED is equivalent to high school.) Students may access this service after testing. The program accepts adults who are 18 and over and test from a grade three reading level and up. This program can also help many persons who test lower than a grade three level. The goal is to prepare persons to enter a GED program either at the community-based location or at the Community College in a 12-week GED program.

In this program, adult learners can obtain instruction in English or French. Academic services for grade levels 1 through 9 and GED preparation is accessible in 70 communities throughout the province. Programs are customized for individual learners' needs. The program offers standardized curriculum and testing providing accreditation for further study. Learners, who complete GED preparation, go on to take the GED exam.

## **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

The 2005 policy statement on adult learning announced improvements to adult literacy training, the development of workplace essential skills training and certification, and the testing of community-based adult learning centres. A central goal was to raise the number of workplace essential skills certificates that were issued to equal the number of GED certificates granted.

The report reiterates the province's support for increased training and learning initiatives with small and medium-sized businesses. It acknowledges that the majority of New Brunswickers work for small employers and that many employers lack the resources to support a

workplace training or learning program. Specific actions pledged by the province in the area of workplace training include:

- Explore funding for the delivery of workplace skills development initiatives with the federal government;
- Encourage learning partnerships between employers, employer groups, learning institutions and other stakeholders;
- Promote employer-sponsored skills upgrading and encourage small business owners and managers to champion this;
- Recognize new training initiatives of small and medium-sized businesses;
- Work with partners to promote best practices to small and medium-sized businesses.

The report also sets out a plan to provide learning and training support services to small and medium-sized business. The action plan includes the following items:

- Identify best practices from the workplace learning pilot project;
- Explore ways to assist small and medium-sized businesses with workplace training assessments, and training resources for literacy and workplace essential skills;
- Support innovative, value-added partnerships to assist small and medium-sized businesses;
- Collaborate with partners to develop customized learning assessment tools and approaches to help small and medium-sized businesses identify their training needs;
- Compile training resource information;
- Encourage partners to expand training resources;
- Promote learning assessment services and customized training resources;
- Collaborate with partners to launch an information and learning portal to assist New Brunswick businesses.

The status of this plan is not clear.

## **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

“In New Brunswick, the Université de Moncton, University of New Brunswick, and the New Brunswick Community College have had policies on prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) for quite some time. It is possible, depending on the institution, to obtain between 25% and 100% credit toward a degree through PLAR. Business and industry are looking at PLAR to identify the skills and competencies that their employees need in the workforce and as a means of enhancing the training of their employees. The University of New Brunswick is in the process of preparing to extend its PLAR services to include workplace training assessments.”<sup>18</sup>

## **What is labour’s role?**

No information was found.

## **What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

The only financial support appears to be through the Community Adult Learning Programs.

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<sup>18</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada’s Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.

## **Newfoundland and Labrador**

### **Name of responsible ministry**

[Department of Education](#)

### **Minister's name**

Joan Burke

### **Key staff**

Cindy Christopher, Manager, Adult Literacy

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

Adult Basic Education (ABE) is a provincial program for adult learners and is made up of three levels: Level I refers to basic literacy and roughly equates to Kindergarten to grade 6; Level II is considered equivalent to grades 7-9; Level III corresponds to grades 10-12 and requires the completion of a minimum of 36 credits in order to graduate.

### **Adult Literacy Policy**

In 2000, the government released a *Strategic Literacy Plan* for the province. The plan covers literacy for all ages and outlines strategic directions for literacy initiatives including adult education and workplace literacy. One of the plan's objectives is to support workplace literacy programming by sharing best practices with employers and unions and by "encouraging" workplace literacy initiatives.

### **How are literacy programs provided?**

Two funding programs are available for non-profit community-based organizations. In addition, the College of the North Atlantic provides some Level I programming.

*1. Delivery of Full-Time Adult Basic Education Level I Programs in Newfoundland and Labrador*

Offered to students aged 18 and over with literacy skills below grade 7 and not enrolled in elementary or secondary school for a minimum of 1 year. Programs offer 40 weeks of instruction (September – June); 25 hours of instruction with 10 paid hours for instructor preparation per week, and a 12:1 student/teacher ratio. Assessment tools must be approved by the Department of Education. Instructors must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in education. Volunteers are screened using standard screening tools. Programs must be delivered in buildings and classrooms that have received approval from the Department of Education. The department funds to a maximum of \$41,000 for ABE Level 1 programs serving 12 students.

*2. Coordination of Volunteer Literacy Tutoring Programs in Newfoundland and Labrador*

Volunteer tutoring programs are offered for 40 weeks, with a minimum of 3 to 4 hours of instruction each week. Students are aged 18 and over. A minimum of 25 students are assessed and enrolled using a tool authorized by the Department of Education. The paid coordinator must have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in education with experience or course work in adult education. Volunteer literacy tutoring programs receive a maximum grant of \$38,500.

Currently, workers receiving Employment Insurance (EI) may receive support for tuition and such things as childcare and transportation. They must be served through [Human Resources Skills Development Canada](#) (HRSDC) and have identified their need for basic education as part of their return-to-work action plan. A number of such workers have been supported by HRSDC and the [Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment](#), in partnership with the Department of Education, [College of the North Atlantic](#), and community-based groups.

### **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

While the Strategic Literacy Plan refers to workplace literacy, no specific initiative was found.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Skills Task Force released its report in March 2007. Several of its recommendations relate to workplace literacy and essential skills.

- Government should establish a matching fund to assist small and medium employers in providing incremental essential skills and literacy training.
- Government should continue to pursue discussions with the federal government concerning the use of EI funds to support workplace training and paid training leave.
- Employers should encourage greater employer investments in workplace education, profiling the increased economic returns of workplace education.
- Labour should work with employers in implementing workplace training initiatives.
- Government should improve the success of the Trades Qualifiers Program by providing better literacy and skills assessment tools, enhancing credits available for prior learning and offering pre-examination supports.
- Government should negotiate a funding agreement with the Federal Government to provide financial support for skills training to non-EI eligible individuals; and increase opportunities for non-EI eligible individuals to acquire training at the workplace, including workplace literacy and employment skills training.

No information was available on the status of these recommendations.

### **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

Newfoundland and Labrador officially supports PLAR but its implementation is in the hands of the institutions. The Apprenticeship and Certification Board permits “prior learning assessment to be conducted with individuals seeking certification in a designated occupation where learning has been acquired through previous experiences.” The Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board of Newfoundland and Labrador conducted a major PLAR effort in the early 2000’s which saw “some fish harvesters moving from one certification

level to the next while others achieved credits toward their future certification levels.”<sup>19</sup>

### **What is labour’s role?**

The Newfoundland and Labrador Workplace/Workforce Learning Committee is the latest attempt to deal with the lack of support for workplace literacy. The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour is an active member of this group. The committee includes representatives from community-based groups, individual advocates, business, labour, government, and the college.

The Strategic Partnership Initiative (SPI) is a mechanism to improve communications and identify opportunities for collaboration among business, labour, and government on the strategic economic challenges facing the province. A tripartite steering committee directs the overall work of the SPI. This committee includes the Deputy Ministers of the Provincial Development Plan (Chair), Innovation, Trade and Rural Development, Human Resource Labour and Employment, and the Labour Relations Agency, as well as representatives of the [Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour](#) and the Newfoundland and Labrador Business Caucus.

### **What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

The Department of Education recently approved the Voisey’s Bay Nickel Company to offer Adult Basic Education Level I at its mining site in Labrador. It is the first time the ABE Level I program has been offered in the mining industry in the province.

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<sup>19</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada’s Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.

## **Northwest Territories**

### **Name of responsible ministry**

Department of Education, Culture and Employment

### **Minister's name**

Jackson Lafferty

### **Key staff**

Barbara Miron, Coordinator, Literacy and Adult Basic Education

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

The Government of the Northwest Territories accepts the Statistics Canada and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development definition of literacy in the International Adult Literacy Survey: “the ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities, at home, at work and in the community to achieve one’s goals, and to develop one’s knowledge and potential.”

### **Adult Literacy Policy**

The Adult Literacy and Basic Education Directive sets out a framework for planning, developing, providing, and evaluating literacy and basic education programs and services for adult learners.

### **How are literacy programs provided?**

The NWT government provides two community-based literacy programs – the Community Literacy Projects Program and the Community Skills for Work Program.

The Community Literacy Projects Fund, managed by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment, provides programming for the Adult Basic Education 110 level. Contributions are also provided to community-based, non-governmental organizations for the delivery of basic literacy projects.

Aurora College receives funding from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment for the delivery of Adult Literacy and Basic Education programs and services. Program funding for adult basic education is the first priority. This includes Basic Literacy, Academic Development, and Employment Readiness. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment may also fund programs through other service providers. This funding provides programming primarily at the Adult Basic Education 120 to Adult Basic Education 150 levels (Grades 4-12).

The Community Skills for Work Program assists clients receiving income support to achieve self-sufficiency through education, work experience and support services. Projects are delivered by Aurora College or through community-based organizations, and can include adult literacy and basic education, skills-based training, personal development courses, and work activity projects.

### **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

In 2001, the NWT launched a four-year literacy strategy to incorporate the existing programs and fill in some of the gaps in services to reach identified adult target groups. One of the programs established was the Workplace Literacy Fund. The fund is designed to build on literacy partnerships with large and small businesses, unions, and community-based employers and provide employees with opportunities for basic skills development. Eligible projects or activities can include training for workers in workplace-related reading, writing, mathematics, oral communications, problem-solving and critical thinking skills. Basic skills as a component of training are integrated alongside technical skill development and workplace needs assessments.

The NWT government provides needs assessments of workplace education and wage subsidy programs to which employers contribute wages and employees contribute time outside of work. The territorial government also runs essential skills and training programs for youth and adults. The Building Essential Skills Program provides short-term training opportunities for unemployed workers who are eligible for EI. The Training on the Job Program provides subsidies to employers to train northern residents in the relevant work skills.

The NWT Literacy Council works with the Nunavut Literacy Council on a workplace and workforce literacy project. The project has found a real need for workplace literacy among employers, but also a need for assistance in assessment, and the design and delivery of programs. Employees see workplace literacy as a way to build confidence, succeed at other workplace training and take on new tasks at work. Challenges include the lack of policy, people who can help in the design, funding (especially for small business), and a good understanding of the benefits.

### **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

The Government of the Northwest Territories currently does not have a policy on prior learning assessment and recognition.<sup>20</sup>

### **What is labour's role?**

The Northwest Territories has a Minister's Literacy Council which began with funding of \$20 million, recently increased to \$40 million. There is a funding envelope for workplace literacy activities. The council does not approve each project specifically but sets general directions, for example determining that an Excel computer course was not workplace literacy. A representative from the Northern Territories Federation of Labour co-chairs the council and reports monthly to the Federation executive. The council meets twice a year and representatives are reimbursed for expenses. This experience has been good for labour, and others have appreciated labour's participation on the council since labour is able to go directly to workplaces.

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<sup>20</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada's Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.

**What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

The purpose of the Workplace Literacy Fund is to broaden the literacy partnership with large and small businesses, unions and community-based employers to provide the opportunity for employees to develop further their basic skills. Eligible projects or activities may include training for workers in workplace-related reading, writing, mathematics, oral communications, problem solving and critical thinking skills; basic skills portion of training when integrated with technical skill development; workplace needs assessments and reports, etc.

## **Nova Scotia**

### **Name of responsible ministry**

[Department of Labour and Workforce Development](#)

### **Minister's name**

Mark Parent

### **Key staff**

Roberta T. Boudreau, Director, Adult Education Division

Marjorie Davison, Director, Apprenticeship Training and Skills Development (workplace)

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

The Adult Learning Program (ALP) consists of four levels of courses, which range from basic literacy to high school graduation. Levels I and II have been designed for adults who need to develop a broad range of literacy skills. Level III has been designed for adults who need to improve a variety of skills before entering into Level IV and/or who need to improve their literacy and essential skills to assist in their life/work transitions. Level IV consists of courses that can be used toward the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults.

### **Adult Literacy Policy**

In 2002, the Nova Scotia government announced a new framework and action plan, Skills Nova Scotia.

The plan has three goals:

- Meet the skill needs of Nova Scotia's labour market
- Provide better labour market access and supports to Nova Scotians
- Strengthen Nova Scotia's system of lifelong learning opportunities

The Canada-Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework is a partnership arrangement between the Government of Canada and the Province of

Nova Scotia to support skills and learning initiatives for Nova Scotians. It provides a forum for relevant federal and provincial departments to work together to identify common priorities and to carry out joint planning and joint work in these mutual areas of interest.

### **How are literacy programs provided?**

The Adult Education division of the Skills and Learning Branch is responsible for adult literacy and basic education. It is also responsible for high school completion for adults through the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults and for the GED certificate (high school equivalent).

The Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning provides the Adult Learning Program. The program is delivered through adult high schools, the Nova Scotia Community College and community-based learning organizations (Levels I and II, occasionally Level III) that provide classes to improve reading, writing, and math skills. The programs are free to all adults who have not completed their high school diploma, are over 19, and have been out of school for one year.

### **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

The Skills and Learning Branch is responsible for the Workplace Education and the Apprenticeship Essential Skill programs. Workplace Education promotes and delivers basic skills programs at work. The program is run in partnership with business, industry, and labour organizations.

### **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

“The Department of Education, in its working paper *Skills Nova Scotia: Strong Workforce, Bright Future* issued in June 2002, set the following as a key objective: ‘to develop and implement prior learning assessment and recognition processes and tools.’

“The Department of Education’s Apprenticeship Program has incorporated PLAR for many years. Recently, they have developed a new

policy that provides credit for prior learning for up to 70% of the completion of the required technical training.”<sup>21</sup>

## **What is labour’s role?**

Nova Scotia Partners for Workplace Education is a multi-stakeholder committee that advises the NS Department of Education on its workplace education program, including approving funding for workplace programs. The committee is co-chaired by business and labour, and includes equal numbers of business, labour, and government representatives. Recently, workplace education instructors have been added to the committee. There are presently four labour representatives, appointed by the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour.

The provincial coalition Literacy Nova Scotia has reserved positions on its board for labour (NS Federation of Labour) and business.

## **What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

Apprenticeship Essential Skills: support includes the learning development plan process, informal assessment tools, free access to learning supports and training, math refresher and document use refresher courses (offered free of charge for apprentices) and an additional review course pre-certification exam.

Workplace Education is available to businesses and labour organizations across Nova Scotia. Skill Development Coordinators:

- assess the organization's learning needs
- recommend programming that will benefit workers
- help the organization apply for funding to cover the cost of an instructor
- help the organization select the right instructor for the program
- offer support while the program is ongoing

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<sup>21</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada’s Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.

Each Workplace Education program brings together representatives from management, union, and employees to form a Project Team to initiate, coordinate, and monitor the program. Project Team members share the costs, which may include:

- time release so employees can attend programs during the work day
- the provision of program space, materials/resources, study supplies, child care/transportation allowances
- contributions to the cost of instruction.

## **Nunavut**

### **Name of responsible ministry**

[Department of Education](#)

### **Minister's name**

[Ed Picco](#)

### **Key staff**

Alexis Utatnaq, Literacy/Adult Learning Consultant, Adult Learning and Post Secondary Services

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

Adult Basic Education includes six levels of study ranging from basic literacy to coursework at the Grade 12 level. Courses in this program enable participants to learn or re-learn skills needed to meet employment, personal or educational goals.

### **Adult Literacy Policy**

In November 2004, the government of Nunavut and the Nunavut Tunngavik Inc (NTI) announced that they would work together to produce an Adult Learning Strategy. (NTI is an incorporated organization representing Inuit under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.) In October 2005, a working draft of the Strategy was released, with the final report to be tabled late in 2006.

The working draft sets out a number of visions for Nunavut by 2020. References to workplace or workforce literacy include creating a culture of learning at home and in the workplace. The draft also outlines proposed actions to support the development of workplace and workforce literacy, including basic education programs and financial incentives and programming supports for employers. The draft strategy also outlines plans to introduce workplace labour-market programs and provide incentives such as “buy-out” time that would allow participants to take training during working hours.

## **How are literacy programs provided?**

Participants in Adult Basic Education take a program of study according to their personal needs and academic levels. Because of this, time spent in the program varies for each individual. Due to the range of courses available, the course offerings vary at each program location (Community Learning Centres and campuses). Participants often enrol in the program as a first step to entering a Certificate or Diploma Program. Strong emphasis is placed on the development of Inuktitut language and Inuit cultural literacy.

Nunavut Arctic College provides literacy and adult basic education up to grade 12 at its campuses and various community learning centres. It also provides Inuktitut literacy. The Customized Training Department provides training for employers including a customized certificate for municipal employees.

## **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

The NWT Literacy Council works with the Nunavut Literacy Council on a workplace and workforce literacy project. The project has found a real need for workplace literacy among employers, but also a need for assistance in assessment, and the design and delivery of programs. Employees see workplace literacy as a way to build confidence, succeed at other workplace training and take on new tasks at work. Challenges include the lack of policy, people who can help in the design, funding (especially for small business), and a good understanding of the benefits.

## **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

“Currently the Department of Education does not have a policy on PLAR. However, the department is working toward developing a policy as a part of a broader strategy for adult education and learning.”<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada's Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.

**What is labour's role?**

No information found.

**What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

No information found.

## **Ontario**

### **Name of responsible ministry**

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU)

### **Minister's name**

John Milloy

### **Key staff**

Kevin French, Assistant Deputy Minister, Employment and Training

#### *Regional Directors*

Barb Simmons, Central

Robert Dupuis, Eastern

Peter Armstrong, Northern

Sharee Mahood, Western

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

Ontario uses five levels for Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS). Learners show they have attained each level by 'demonstrating' skills (there is no standardized testing). The Learner Skills Attainment project is working towards linking the LBS levels to the measurement scale used by Human Resources Skill Development Essential Skills/International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey.

### **Adult Literacy Policy**

No specific policy was found.

### **How are literacy programs provided?**

The Labour Market Development Agreement came into force on January 1, 2007. Ontario has begun to amalgamate the former federal programs with its provincial programs under Employment Ontario. As this process is still underway, changes in the way literacy services are provided can be anticipated.

The Ontario government currently funds a system of literacy and basic skills services as well as various training and skills programs for employers in the province. Responsibility for literacy and training programs currently falls to the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Employment Ontario administers the Literacy and Basic Skills Program. The Ministry of Education has responsibility for literacy and numeracy education of children and youth.

The Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program provides literacy, numeracy, and essential skills services. LBS services help people achieve their education, training, and employment goals, as well as enjoy increased independence. Literacy and Basic Skills services are provided at no cost to learners to improve reading, writing, numeracy, and essential skills below the Grade 9 level. The LBS program also provides academic upgrading services to help learners get the skills they need for entry into post-secondary education and apprenticeship training.

The LBS program has two functions: the first is to deliver LBS services and the second is to aid in the development of LBS services. LBS services include literacy assessment, information and referral assistance, training plan development, and training and program follow-up. Developing LBS services includes funding support to assist literacy agencies to improve their delivery of LBS to learners and to conduct some research and development initiatives.

There are 205 agencies funded to deliver the LBS program at 290 sites. These agencies fall under one of three sectors – college, community-based and school board, and four streams – Anglophone, Deaf, Francophone, and Native. Most of the community-based programs provide small group instruction focused at LBS Levels 1 to 3. The school boards provide large group and individual support in a classroom setting for LBS levels 2 to 5, with the higher level learners often going on to complete their grade 12. The college sector provides large group and individual support in a classroom setting for LBS levels 3 to 5, with the higher level learners often going on to higher level academic upgrading.

### **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

In 2000, the Ontario government released the Workforce Literacy Strategy. Its mandate was to assist with “building the capacity of the LBS system to respond to workforce and workplace literacy needs, promoting

literacy to workforce stakeholders, encouraging investment in literacy and basic skills development, supporting partnerships, and evaluating the impact of the initiative.” This strategy does not fund the direct delivery of workplace literacy services.

There has been some small workplace literacy projects funded recently. This represents an ‘operational’ change rather than a program or policy change.

### **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

“In January 1993, PLA was formally introduced to the college system when 25 colleges received funds to subsidize one position for a three-year period to develop policies and processes and to build systems for PLA services.”<sup>23</sup>

### **What is labour’s role?**

There is no formal role for labour.

### **What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

Ontario supports direct delivery of literacy programs through the LBS program. However, this program does not provide support to programs taking place in the workplace, but rather is aimed at “workforce” literacy. Employers still have responsibility for direct training, as do other training providers (e.g. colleges, school boards, and community agencies).

Community-based agencies, school boards, and community colleges deliver workforce literacy programming. These agencies and institutions can also help employers design essential skills training to meet the changing needs of their employees and their workplace, and can provide training on a fee-for-service basis.

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<sup>23</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada’s Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.

The Sector Initiatives Fund helps industry sectors and organizations develop training programs, standards, and materials for their workforces. This approach encourages the sector-wide research and planning needed to address skills gaps. Sectoral collaboration enables many firms to contribute to and benefit from training that is beyond the capacity of an individual company. It also provides a foundation for accreditation for skills training and for the development of provincial and national training standards.

Ontario Labour Market Partnerships provides funding to help employers, employee and employer associations, and communities improve their ability to plan for their human resource needs and implement labour force adjustment plans.

Learning, Earning and Parenting is a program of Ontario Works aimed at parents under the age of 22 who have not graduated from high school and who are eligible for Ontario Works (the province's social assistance program). It provides support for completing education, school supplies, school clothing, educational trips, and counselling and transportation costs. Children are given priority status for childcare.

## Prince Edward Island

### Name of responsible ministry

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

### Minister's name

Gerard Greenan

### Key staff

Barbara Macnutt, Manager, Literacy Initiatives Secretariat/GED Chief Examiner, Continuing Education and Training Division

### How is literacy described or defined?

#### *Literacy*

Skills needed to read and respond to printed material commonly found at work, at home and in the community. Basic literacy is described as grades 1 to 6; functional literacy is grades 7 to 12.

#### *Adult Education*

Learning opportunities provided to adult learners to achieve up to and including a grade 12 level.

#### *Adult Learner*

Any person 18 years of age or older, or out of public school for a minimum of two years.

### Adult Literacy Policy

In 1996, the province released a literacy strategy entitled, *Tough Challenges, Great Rewards: A Literacy and Adult Education Strategy*. The mission statement of the strategy is: "Equal access to adult education is a basic right of all adult learners." The report committed the Department of Education to developing an integrated adult literacy system with a funding model to support it. Programs are to be developed respecting a series of guiding principles including connecting literacy to lifelong learning, the province's economic and social development, and strong partnership development.

While the report refers to the challenges faced by workers and employers, it does not make a specific recommendation regarding workplace education.

## **How are literacy programs provided?**

In PEI, the Literacy Initiatives Secretariat is responsible for all literacy projects. These include the Literacy/Adult Basic Education Initiative, Family Literacy, the management of Workplace Education PEI Literacy Initiative, the development of policy and standards for adult literacy, the certification process for adult educators, and the Provincial Literacy Initiatives Committee.

Adults who are 18 years of age and out of school for at least a year may attend literacy and adult basic education programs. The program is available Island-wide and is delivered in Community Learning Centres and Holland College Campuses. Learners in the program have the opportunity to complete the requirements for the PEI High School Graduation Certificate for Mature Students, enrol in GED preparation programs (GED is equal to high school) or participate in literacy and numeracy classes to strengthen their skills.

## **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

[Workplace Education PEI](#) (WEPEI) is a multi-stakeholder group, with one labour representative on the committee. The committee meets infrequently – typically, two to three times a year. The committee makes suggestions to the WEPEI field staff but is not responsible for approving workplace education programs. However, the funds available have meant that all projects have been accepted.

The Workplace Education model involves having a field officer doing a workplace assessment at no cost to the organization. The field officer will recommend programs and work with an on-site project team to set up customized programs. These are not limited to, but include:

- Preparation for Certification in the company's field
- Preparation for Grade 12 Equivalency (GED)
- Writing for Work
- Workplace Communications

- Skills for Supervisors
- Basic Computer Skills
- Other custom-designed programs

The field officers also assist in securing funding for instructional costs.

The employer and/or the union may cover the cost of the instructor, materials and supplies. The workplace may provide classroom space and other in-kind services, and may provide release time for employees to attend classes.

### **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

“The P.E.I. Department of Education supports in principle and encourages the building of interconnected learning communities through the formal recognition of prior learning. Workplace Education PEI officially launched ‘Prior Learning Assessment Services’ in 1999.”<sup>24</sup>

### **What is labour’s role?**

There is one labour representative on the WEPEI committee. Overall, the labour experience with the committee has been positive.

### **What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

Workplace Education PEI provides financial support for workplace-based programs, as described above in the section on “focus on workplace literacy and essential skills.”

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<sup>24</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada’s Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.

## Quebec

### **Name of responsible ministry**

[Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport: literacy](#)

[Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale: workplace literacy](#)

### **Minister's name**

Michelle Courchesne, Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport

Sam Hamad, Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale

### **Key staff**

Lino Mastriani, Coordinateur, Direction de la formation générale des adultes

Andrée Racine, Federal-Provincial Literacy Initiatives Program, Direction de la formation générale des adultes

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

A 2002 policy redefines literacy to account for the current context of a knowledge-based society, globalization, technological change, and the increased complexity of social and working life. Basic education, according to the ministries, should enable people to:

- understand and use written information in a range of contexts to meet their goals and broaden their knowledge and abilities
- communicate effectively with varied audiences
- use information and communications technologies for many purposes
- participate actively in their roles as citizens

### **Adult Literacy Policy**

In 2002, the Minister of State for Education and Employment and the Minister of Employment collaborated on a policy for adult education, continuing education, and training. The policy places a priority on four areas for action:

- to provide basic education for adults
- to maintain and continually upgrade adults' competencies
- to acknowledge prior learning and competencies through official recognition
- to remove obstacles to access and retention

### **How are literacy programs provided?**

Quebec's 72 school boards (60 French-language, 9 English-language and 3 with special status) offer adult education to employers and the community in 170 locations across the province. They generally respond promptly to employer needs. The funding comes from the *Fonds national de formation de la main-d'œuvre* and is tied to strict rules and reporting regulations.

Community-based literacy groups also offer adult education. They focus primarily on adults who have decided not to return to school or who wish to pursue their education without necessarily obtaining official certification from the Ministry of Education.

### **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

The *Government Policy on Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training* states, "the implementation of the *Act to foster the development of manpower training* is one of the most notable advances in the development of a culture of lifelong learning in Quebec."

The Act is commonly referred to as the 1% law (see section on financial support for more information). It aims to raise the qualifications of the Quebec labour force. The policy maintains that employer-sponsored training is "one of the cornerstones of lifelong learning in Quebec." The ministries suggest that although the Act makes tools available to employers to support the development of a culture of lifelong learning, "there should be more concern for ensuring equal access to this employment-related education and training, because some categories of workers do not receive the training they need."

In June 2007 the Act was amended and renamed the *Act to promote workforce skills development and recognition*, often referred to as the "skills legislation." While employers are still required to spend 1% of their

payroll on training, the Act offers more means and tools for skills development in the workplace.

## **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

In 2002, the Government of Quebec adopted its Action Plan for Adult Education and Continuing Education and Training, which mandates a number of measures in the area of prior learning/skills recognition (PLR), with the overall objective of creating mechanisms to ensure access to PLR services in every region of Quebec.

Some specific elements related to the workplace include:

- “Consolidate a workplace professional certification system that will henceforth include PLR with a view to valuing and formally recognizing skills acquired on the job.
- “Develop a school- and workplace-based approach to recognizing skills acquired by categories of workers, in order to meet efficiently the PLR needs of a number of individuals in similar situations.
- “Emphasize credentialed, portable training in labour force training development programs (under the Development of Manpower Training Act) to facilitate PLR.”<sup>25</sup>

## **What is labour’s role?**

In Quebec, the *Commission de partenaires du marché du travail* (Labour Market Partners Commission) is involved in support to workplace literacy, although not exclusively. Labour is a key participant in the Commission. The Quebec Federation of Labour (FTQ) works through the commission to ensure that workers have access to training.

The Commission is actively involved in determining and managing employment measures and services offered by *Emploi-Québec*. It is responsible for administering the skills legislation (the new 1% law) and establishing funding programs of the labour force training fund (*Fonds*

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*nationale de formation de la main d'oeuvre*) now renamed the Workforce Skills Development and Recognition Fund.

## **What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

Quebec's skills or 1% law mandates a minimum corporate expenditure on workplace training. Employers with payrolls of \$1 million or more are required to spend 1% of payroll on training to develop transferable skills. Those who do not spend the 1% on training have to pay the equivalent to the Workforce Skills Development and Recognition Fund. The Fund in turn supports training programs, such as the *Programme de développement des compétences en entreprises* (workplace skills development program).

Literacy, basic skills and French as a second language (*Alphabétisation, formation de base et francisation*) is a program priority. Funding is available for training designed to upgrade literacy and basic skills up to a level that corresponds with a secondary school diploma or a qualification recognized by *Emploi-Québec*. Employees targeted by *francisation* training are those who do not speak French and who need to improve their French language skills in order to keep their job or improve their job mobility.

Funding is made available through a call for proposals process. Employers and unions can apply, although most public sector employers are excluded.

## **Saskatchewan**

### **Name of responsible ministry**

Ministry of Education: Saskatchewan Literacy Commission

Advanced Education, Employment and Labour

### **Minister's name**

Ken Krawetz, Minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission

Rob Norris, Minister, Advanced Education, Employment and Labour – Minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Labour Market Commission

### **Key staff**

Dr. Margaret Lipp, Literacy Commissioner

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

#### **Literacy Benchmarks: Levels 1 and 2**

Levels 1 and 2 Literacy Benchmarks reflect the roles adult learners fill in their everyday lives – as family members, community members, and workers. The Benchmarks, therefore, are those general skills, abilities, and attitudes adults need to function in their world. *The Circle of Learning* is the physical representation of the Benchmarks.

#### **Adult Basic Education Level Three (Adult 10)**

Adults may register in Adult Basic Education Level Three (Adult 10) if they are not ready to prepare for the GED tests (for high school equivalency) or if they are not ready to enter an Adult 12 program.

#### **Adult Secondary Completion (Adult 12)**

Under Adult 12 Policy, an adult may attain a Grade 12 standing by successfully completing 7 credit classes.

## **Adult Literacy Policy**

No information found.

## **How are literacy programs provided?**

The Saskatchewan Literacy Commission has been established to raise public awareness of the importance of literacy and provide a strong, coordinated approach to basic literacy and essential skills for learners throughout life. The Commission directs SaskSmart – Literacy for Life. This initiative provides basic literacy and essential skills in English, mathematics, and science and technology. The aim of SaskSmart is to provide a strong coordinated approach to improving literacy levels in the province.

## **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

The Saskatchewan Literacy Commission does not directly deal with workplace literacy.

The newly formed Saskatchewan Labour Market Commission may continue the work of the former Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board in the area of workplace essential skills. However, the delays in appointing a CEO and the 2007 provincial election may alter this scenario.

## **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

“In the fall of 2003, the Saskatchewan Labour Force Development Board (SLFDB) submitted the *Provincial Framework for RPL in Saskatchewan* to Saskatchewan Learning with the recommendation that government adopt the Framework as official policy. Many of the actions listed in the Framework have already been undertaken to varying degrees.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada's Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.

## **What is labour's role?**

There are several employers on the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission's advisory committee but no labour representation.

The Saskatchewan Labour Market Commission has equal representation from employers and labour with two co-chairs reflecting that balance.

## **What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

Through the Department of Advanced Education and Employment, the province provides funding for workplace-based training for the employed. The province provides support and funding to Saskatchewan employers in the manufacturing, processing and agri-value sectors to help retrain existing permanent employees to maintain or increase the competitive position of the sector. There is no specific mention of workplace literacy or basic skills training. Program objectives include the following:

- Increase training opportunities for current employees of Saskatchewan businesses who need retraining as a result of technological and workplace change
- Increase industry investment in training to improve competitiveness and support economic growth and job creation
- Support the portability of skills and the mobility of workers
- Support worker adjustment through retraining
- Improve the collaboration and partnership between employers, employees and training deliverers in addressing skills training needs

The Innovation Fund is the funding mechanism for SaskSmart and the Commission. The Fund provides financial assistance to develop or implement a community literacy plan. Two types of funding are available to communities – an Expression of Interest, and Community Literacy Plan. The Expression of Interest provides funding for communities to develop a coordinated literacy plan. The community's plan incorporates the design of a funding proposal under the Community Literacy Plan.

In terms of workplace literacy projects, the Innovation Fund will support strategies to assist businesses in addressing the literacy needs of their workforce, in part by making literacy resources available to the businesses in a more cost-effective way than if they had to develop the materials independently.

## **Yukon**

### **Name of responsible ministry**

Department of Education

### **Minister's name**

Patrick Rouble

### **Key staff**

Shawn Kitchen, Director of Labour Market Programs and Services,  
Advanced Education Branch

### **How is literacy described or defined?**

The Yukon Government has adopted the following definition of literacy, as stated by ABC CANADA:

Literacy is a person's ability to understand and use information and basic technology in daily activities at home, school, work and in the community in an attempt to reach personal goals and develop individual potential.

### **Adult Literacy Policy**

In 2001, the government released the Yukon Literacy Strategy with the following objectives:

- To promote the advantages of having effective literacy skills
- To develop and expand opportunities that allow Yukon people to build on their existing strengths through the development of effective literacy skills
- To provide creative and appropriate literacy programming that is accessible to all Yukon people
- To develop partnerships with First Nation Governments

- To develop partnerships with educators, corporations, labour organizations, communities and other appropriate stakeholders
- To cooperate with national and regional partners throughout Canada to reflect better technological advancement and the changing role of literacy in education and work
- To be consistent with, and benefit from, the current literacy initiatives developed by our federal and provincial partners
- To address more effectively the global needs as identified in the latest literacy research produced in Canada and elsewhere
- To understand and address the literacy-based challenges of self-government and land claims both for First Nations and Yukon people
- To ensure that literacy programs are developed to address workplace literacy needs

The 2006 Literacy Strategy Review was an opportunity for literacy stakeholders to provide input into current and future Government of Yukon literacy programs and services. The government saw the Literacy Strategy Review as the driving force behind its efforts to prepare Yukon people for current and future training and employment opportunities.

### **How are literacy programs provided?**

The Advanced Education Branch provides adult education, training and employment programs and services to Yukon people by:

- Supporting Yukon College programs
- Developing and delivering labour force initiatives including labour market research and planning and information
- Promoting partnerships with business, labour organizations, Yukon College, First Nations, equity groups, federal government and other jurisdictions in the development and implementation of programs
- Promoting apprenticeship, skill training, and inter-provincial trades standards
- Promoting literacy initiatives through workplace and community-based programs

## **Is there a focus on workplace literacy and essential skills?**

In 2006, nearly \$130,000 in funding for a workplace literacy project was made available to staff of Yukon First Nation governments. Yukon Learn received \$100,000 in Community Training Funds from the Department of Education and \$28,500 in Community Development Funds from the Department of Economic Development in order to deliver the workplace literacy program. The workplace literacy project will focus on the development of both basic and high-level literacy skills that some First Nation government staff may need in order to reach their personal and professional goals. Current and past employees of First Nation governments will be eligible to participate in the program.

## **What are the policies for Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition?**

“The Yukon Government’s Advanced Education Branch supports the training and development of PLAR at Yukon College.”<sup>27</sup>

## **What is labour’s role?**

No information found.

## **What financial support is available for workers, for labour?**

The Community Training Fund is designed for skills development programs and includes seven community-training funds and eight industry-specific funds.

The Yukon Literacy Fund provides funding for projects that provide an opportunity for all Yukon people to acquire the necessary literacy skills to be successful in their community, work, and personal life.

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<sup>27</sup> Kennedy, Bonnie. *A Spring 2003 Snapshot: The Current Status of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) in Canada’s Public Postsecondary Institutions: Part One*. Prepared for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). May 2003.