



***Waterloo-Wellington
Literacy Service Plan for 2011-2012***



Prepared by:
**Project READ Literacy Network Waterloo-Wellington
in collaboration with the Waterloo and Wellington
Literacy Service Planning Committees**

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Project READ is responsible for the writing, printing and distribution. Please contact the network for additional copies or for more information about literacy services in Waterloo and Wellington.

This document is available for download on our website:
www.projectread.ca

Please feel free to complete and return the LSP Report Evaluation survey at the end of this document.

Literacy Service Plan - Table of Contents

A. Introduction	p. 5
• Executive Summary	p. 5
• Key Highlights and Issues Facing LBS Agencies	p. 6
• What is the LSP (document & process)?	p. 8
• What are Regional Literacy Networks?	p. 11
B. LBS in Waterloo and Wellington	p. 13
• Local environmental scan	p. 13
• 2009-10 Highlights and Results	p. 15
• Trends, Opportunities, Gaps, Priorities & Research	p. 16
• Distribution of Services	p. 20
C. What is Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) in Ontario?	p. 23
• Assessment strategy (skills based, goal directed)	p. 24
• Information & Referral (LBS, EO, non-EO)	p. 25
• Range of Services	p. 26
• Client profiles	p. 28
• Outcomes / Pathways	p. 30
• Learner Supports – Training Support Allowances	p. 31
D. What is Literacy?	p. 32
• Literacy Timeline – Important Milestones in Ontario	p. 33
• Essential Skills & Employability Skills	p. 37
• Key Statistics	p. 39
• Economic and Social Implications	p. 40
• Community Development	p. 41
• Success stories	p. 42
E. LBS Accountability	p. 45
• Documentation of Learning Progress	p. 45
• Performance Management System	p. 45
• Learner Skill Attainment & Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework	p. 46
F. Project READ Literacy Network - Our Services	p. 48
• Information & Referral and Educational Assessments	p. 48

- Literacy Service Support and Coordination p. 49

G. Appendices p. 51

- Appendix 1 Definition of Terms on the Literacy Service Charts
- Appendix 2 Literacy FAQs
- Appendix 3 Literacy Service Charts for 2011-2012 – Proposed Program Locations & Details for Waterloo Region*
- Appendix 4 Literacy Service Charts for 2011-2012 – Proposed Program Locations and Details for Guelph-Wellington*
- Appendix 5 2011-2012 Workplan for Waterloo and Wellington Literacy Service Planning Committees
- Appendix 6 LSP Report Evaluation Form – Please print, complete & return to Project READ Literacy Network

***Please Note:** Printed copies of the 2011-2012 Literacy Service Planning Report include Appendices 3 and 4. Electronic copies of the document do not. The Literacy Service Delivery Charts for Waterloo and Wellington are available as separate PDF documents. Please send a request to Anne Ramsay at Project READ to receive the documents electronically – anne@projectread.ca

A. INTRODUCTION

• Executive Summary

Each year, the regional literacy network and the local literacy agencies funded by the Ontario government to deliver Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) training prepare a system service plan for the upcoming year. This Report is the result of that annual planning cycle. It contains information that supports the proposed programming that LBS agencies project to occur from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012. Those proposed plans are found in the Appendices 3 and 4 at the end of this report.



Each LBS Agency submits their individual agency's Business Plan to MTCU for the same funding period. The proposed level of service of the individual agency business plans must articulate with the proposed service information stated in this LSP Report. This process makes for a **coordinated plan of services** based on community needs, strategic priorities and current economic conditions.

This 2009-2010 LSP Report is the product of an ongoing planning cycle by the literacy agencies in Waterloo and Wellington through the Literacy Service Planning Committees for each county. Project READ Literacy Network facilitates this planning and reporting process, which takes into account environmental factors in the community (labour market, economic, social, demographic) and the literacy needs of adults (16 years +) in order to develop the services required to meet those identified needs. The Literacy Service Planning process seeks to engage the community in a dialogue about existing and emerging literacy needs. In turn, the literacy agencies analyze this information in order to plan literacy programming (level, location, and model) that is responsive to local needs and priorities.

This report contains details of all literacy training to be delivered throughout Wellington and Waterloo including student* numbers, contact hours, locations, literacy levels to be addressed and targeted populations either demographic or geographic, e.g. Ontario Works recipients, women, or seniors. The report also includes several other sections that outline the impacts of literacy levels on the community, highlights of service from the previous year, and steps taken towards performance management and accountability.

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs are part of the “**Employment Ontario**” system of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. Employment Ontario includes existing services delivered under Employment Services, Employment Assistance Services (formerly federally-funded employment training programs), Apprenticeship and Higher Skills Training. LBS agencies frequently collaborate with employment and training agencies to support individual adult students to meet their long-term goals. For example: LBS agencies regularly invite Employment Services agencies to their classes to present information about available employment supports or they connect individual students with Employment Services services. Through Project READ, LBS Agencies in both Waterloo and Wellington have participated in employment coordination initiatives being facilitated by Community Employment Linkages Committee (Waterloo) and Guelph-Wellington Education and Training Committee.

We hope that you, as a community member, find this document helpful in a variety of ways. It may provide information for your own service planning. It may assist you to refer individuals to upgrading and to learn about the range of literacy services available. While others may find it helpful as a way to more fully understand the impact of low literacy on our community.

Project READ is always interested in any environmental or community information that could impact on our delivery system. Please feel free to contact any of the literacy delivery agencies listed in the front of the report or to contact Project READ directly about this document.

*Please Note: “Learner” and “Student” are used interchangeably in this document both refer to an adult enrolled in a Literacy and Basic Skills program.

• **Key Highlights and Issues Facing LBS Agencies**

“If it had not been for [the LBS program], I would never have believed I could have had the skills necessary to go to college. Now I have the hope of graduating and entering into a career instead of just having a job.” – LBS student

During the last two funding years (2009-2010 and 2010-2011), the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) generously increased the investment into the LBS budget by \$90 million. It was the first investment into LBS services in over a decade. It came as a result of the Canada-Ontario Labour Market Agreement (2008 – 2014) and Federal Stimulus Funding supported it. It was a timely response to the Recession that began in October 2008. Beginning that fall, LBS Agencies experienced a huge surge in demand from laid off workers seeking to upgrade their skills for future

employment and further education and training. At the same time, MTCU launched “Second Career” a program to assist laid off workers to access skills training for future employment. The positive advertising surrounding Second Career helped to focus public attention on upgrading and training at all levels. As a result of the investment and to meet the increased demand, LBS Agencies provided more programs and services than ever before.

Please find below some highlights of 2009-2010.

- LBS Agencies in Waterloo-Wellington provided 372,302 contact hours (assessment, training and evaluation) to 3,476 students
- 29% increase in hours over the previous year
- LBS agencies served 27% more adults in Waterloo and 17% more in Wellington over the previous year
- On average in 2009, 176 adults waited each month to access assessment and/or training within LBS programs
- On average in 2010, 189 adults waited each month to access LBS programs
- Most LBS students were displaced workers who enrolled to improve their skills for further education, training (post-secondary) or employment
- 68% of LBS students in Wellington and 64% of students in Waterloo went on to further education, training and employment (status at exit)
- A significant minority of students were workers who chose to upgrade because they feared being laid off due to the recession (29% of students in Wellington and 24% in Waterloo were employed upon enrollment)
- Most adults in LBS programs were 19 – 44 years old (69% average across Wellington-Waterloo)
- 25% of adults were 45 – 64 years old and looking for a second career
- LBS agencies expanded the range of programs they offered and the number of seats in most programs, for example: upgrading for specific jobs, math for apprentices, GED preparation, career exploration and job-focused upgrading
- LBS Agencies exceeded their annual targets for learner numbers and contact hours

LBS agencies have some serious concerns for providing programming in 2011- 2012. The investment is due to end March 31, 2011, but the demand for LBS programs remains steady, as does the unemployment rate for Waterloo-Wellington. (7.2% in November 2010) Concurrently, welfare caseloads are increasing in both counties. LBS Agencies are projecting to serve fewer students, close some classes and locations as well as reducing staff. The Agencies cannot provide the same level of programming without the investment. Specifically, agencies project the following:

- On average, 250 adults per month will be waiting 2- 5 weeks+ to enter LBS programs
- 1,794 learners will be served (1,682 less than last year) if funding levels return to 2008 levels
- Approximately 3,000 students will receive service if LBS Agencies receive funding at same level as provided in 2010-2011
- 1,189 students will not be served in 2011-2012
- 92,519 hours of training will be lost in the same year
- At Mid-Year (April to September) 2010, LBS Agencies had already achieved 50 – 75% of their learner targets for the year (normal mid-year achievements are approximately 30% of their annual targets)

LBS Agencies provided upgrading to many Second Career clients before they entered skills training. According to an Employment Ontario survey of Second Career clients, 54% had high school or less. Literacy and Basic Skills must have adequate funding to continue to help displaced workers prepare for success in skills training as the province moves to economic recovery. Looking to the future, LBS Agencies support the government’s goal of 70% of all adults having post-secondary education for a highly skilled workforce and a strong economy. “The vast majority of those who will make up Ontario’s labour force in 2030 have already been born and are now in living in our midst.” (*People Without Jobs, Jobs Without People*, Dr. R. Miner, January 2010) Agencies are poised to support those adults who need to upgrade and maintain their skills to remain in the workforce.

• What are Literacy Service Planning (LSP) and the LSP Report?

Literacy Service Planning is a process of system coordination resulting in more effective and efficient provision of services to the community. Since 1993, the provincial government (currently through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities) has funded regional literacy networks to coordinate literacy service planning. In the early days, the focus of literacy service planning was on understanding local demographics and examining local literacy programs within each community to see if there were gaps or duplication in services. Literacy networks helped agencies to become more responsive to changing community needs. Over the years, the focus of planning has shifted slightly. With new developments in adult education and the advent of a centralized information management system (IMS) to tract service statistics, networks now engage agencies to examine their collective effectiveness in meeting the literacy training needs of adults in our community.

We bring community partners to the planning table as well as labour market information and community development trends. Literacy is an issue that touches aspects of all the

key goal pathways including employment, independence, and further education/training. It is important to talk to community partners about the skills that individuals will need in order to succeed in the next steps of their pathways. **Literacy is the foundation for life-long development and economic success.**

Representatives of the local literacy agencies (community-based, school boards and college) meet monthly to participate in the local planning and co-ordination of literacy services. This group is called the Literacy Service Planning Committee or the LSP Committee. Project READ Literacy Network coordinates and facilitates the meetings in Waterloo and Wellington.

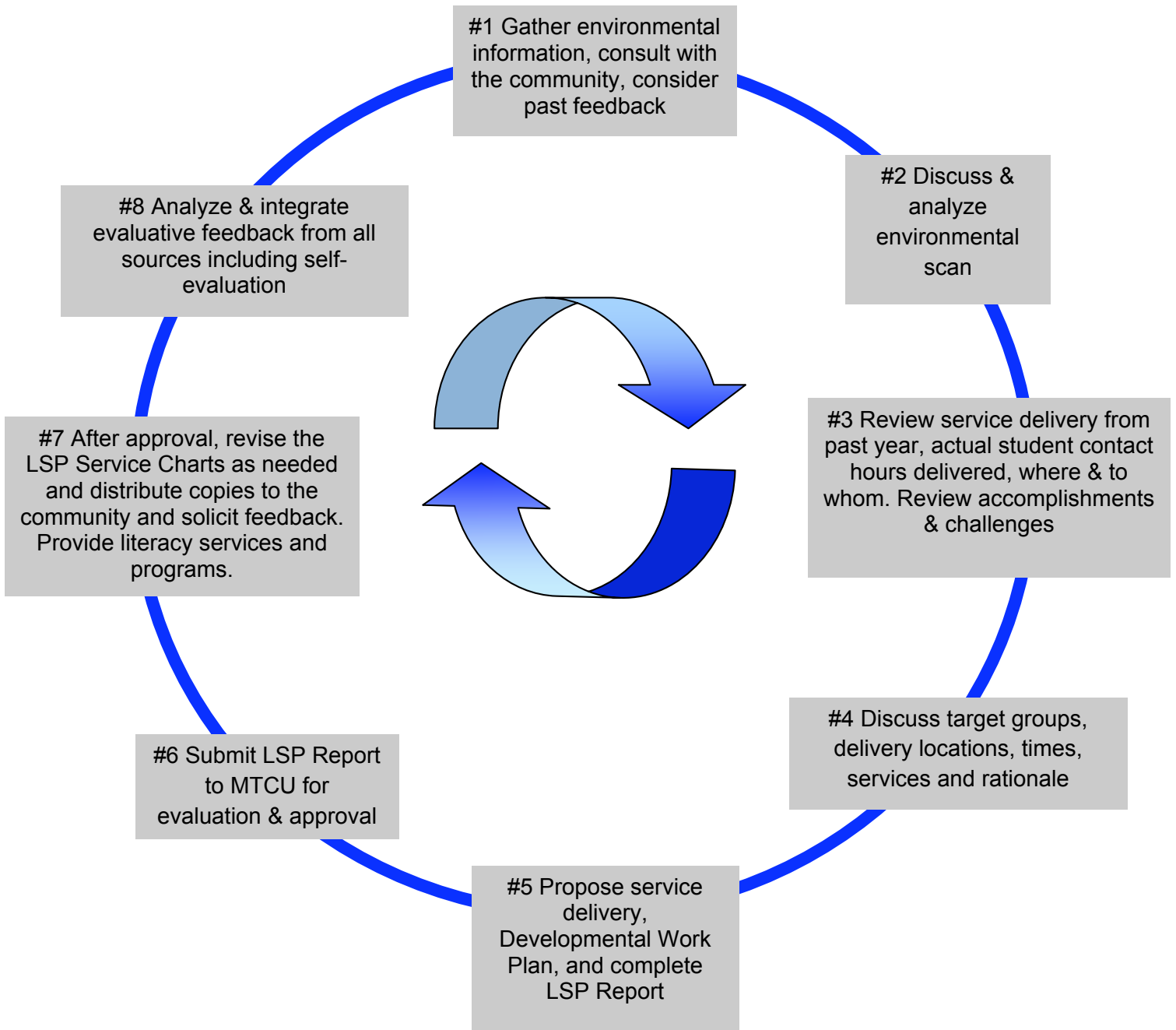
The Literacy Services Plan (LSP) is a product of the LSP Committee. It identifies the mix of literacy services available in the community and the services that will be provided. It is an agreement among delivery agencies about how they will plan together and which organizations will deliver specific literacy services. But, it is much more than simply an agreement. This document represents our collective effort towards meeting the goal of providing a comprehensive and accountable system of delivery. The LSP Report is a living document that is adapted and revised as required throughout the year in response to emerging community needs.

We strive to assess literacy needs in the community and to provide services within funding restrictions. Almost all LBS funded agencies have been operating with the same budget for the past ten years. Based on the rising demand by displaced workers for literacy upgrading, we hope that more investment will be available to support the system. Waiting lists for services are already beginning to grow from two weeks at some agencies to twelve weeks at others.

This document is our plan for literacy service delivery throughout the community for April 2011- March 2012. It is the basis upon which each agency will develop its annual business plan and submit it to the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU). Literacy agencies plan collectively, but develop individual business plans to receive funding.

Please refer to Diagram 1, our 8 Step Planning Cycle on the next page for more information on our local planning process.

Diagram 1: 8-Step Annual Planning Cycle



• What Are Regional Literacy Networks?

Regional literacy networks are supportive hubs of literacy information and service coordination for specific geographic areas across Ontario. There are sixteen regional literacy networks covering Ontario. Project READ Literacy Network provides services in Waterloo Region and Wellington County. We have 25 member agencies including LBS agencies, employment support agencies (Employment Services and Employment Assistance Services), ESL programs, libraries and community agencies. Currently, regional literacy networks work with the approximately 250 agencies funded to deliver Literacy and Basic Skills by MTCU. These agencies include programs in community-based organizations, school boards and colleges. Literacy networks provide a doorway to the education and training system while supporting its development and improvement. Each network functions independently with their own board of directors and non-profit status, while they are funded to provide similar services ensuring consistent access and coordination throughout the province.



Literacy networks play an important role in documenting and guiding the development of literacy services within their region. We bring literacy programs and stakeholders together to discuss literacy services and to create pathways to long-term goals such as a job, apprenticeship, GED certificate, Grade 12 diploma, or post-secondary program. These pathways help people who have developed their literacy skills to take the next step towards work, further education and training and/or personal independence.

Regional literacy networks coordinate information and referral by helping agencies to promote literacy service and by promoting a systematic approach to tracking, reporting and analyzing information and referral activity.

Key network services:

- Dissemination of program information and centralized referral of adults to agencies
- Enhance communication amongst literacy programs and between literacy programs and the government (MTCU) and/or provincial and national literacy organizations
- Assist literacy programs to understand and implement government initiatives

- Apply for and manage literacy development projects to build the capacity of literacy agencies in the province
- Raise awareness of literacy, its effects, and literacy programs
- Plan and provide professional development opportunities for literacy practitioners and other community partners (e.g. Employment Ontario agencies)
- Coordinate literacy service planning and the development of an annual literacy services plan
- Other services as deemed necessary by the community, e.g. family literacy, workplace literacy, educational assessment services, etc.

B. LITERACY AND BASIC SKILLS IN WATERLOO/WELLINGTON

• Local Environmental Scan

The list below, while not exhaustive, represents the trends observed and documented by the LSP Committee that influenced service delivery decisions.

- Slow Economic Recovery - Ontario is still being significantly impacted by the Recession with the unemployment rate remaining steady (7.2% November 2010) in Waterloo-Wellington and many workers still unemployed after exhausting their severance, Employment Insurance benefits and moving on to Ontario Works (welfare)
- High Demand for Service - At mid-year (April to September 2010), LBS agencies already had 50% to 75% of their total number of students for the 2010-2011 year. Normally, LBS agencies would have already served 30% of their targeted students since summer is a traditionally slow enrollment time. Continuing high demand for service has been the case since the Recession began in October 2008. Most LBS agencies have maintained steady wait lists over 2009 and 2010. (Please refer to the Capacity Update in the Appendix for more information on waiting lists.)
- High Needs - In Waterloo-Wellington, 42% of adults 25 – 64 years have either a high school diploma (26%) or less than a Grade 12 (16%); this compares to the 42% of adults who are in the lowest two levels of literacy in the region
- Older Workers - 24% of adults 55 – 64 years have less than Grade 12 compared to 11% of adults 25 – 34 years indicating that more older workers may need Essential Skills upgrading to reach their next job (35 – 44 yrs – 12% and 45 – 55 yrs – 17%)
- Math Demands at Work - Increased demand for math upgrading by incoming LBS students due to a higher math demands on the job, for workplace entry tests, need for financial literacy, and to receive a Grade 12 diploma (it requires a Grade 11 math credit versus a Grade 10 math credit)
- Increase in Ontario Works Clients – There as been significant increases in the caseloads in Waterloo-Wellington due to workers and other not being able to find work; the Region of Waterloo identified 40% of OW clients as having literacy issues and 50% have less than Grade 12 education
- 19.8% of the employed workforce have not completed high school; in the ages 25 to 44, 15.7% have not graduated high school
- LBS agencies continue to experience a rise in part-time students due to those adults working 1 – 3 jobs in order to survive (working poor)
- LBS – ESL continuum: 1) Former ESL students who are Canadian citizens (10 + years in Canada) and have been laid off and are seeking literacy and language training, but caught in between the two systems; and 2) a minority of New Canadians who are low literate in their first language trying to learn English that need specialized instruction

- Demand for basic computer skills by all LBS students especially displaced workers because it is an Essential Skill in all workplaces and in daily life
- Growing population – Waterloo-Wellington is still a fast growing region due to population movement and immigrant settlement
- Aging population – demand for Literacy programming stay employable, functional and healthy
- Switch to information & technology based economy and all industries integrating more technology into their business and shop floors thus increasing the literacy demands on workers
- Half of all jobs in the next 15 years will require the ability to use technology not yet invented
- “Upskilling” (demand for certification or post-secondary education) of many jobs that have traditionally been entry level or not requiring any certifications – 27 occupations showed a strong or significant shift to college graduate skills; 13 occupations show a strong or significant shift to university graduates
- 56.8% of Ontario business leaders polled report that their growth is hampered by labour shortages
- Over the past 25 years, the Canadian labour force grew by 48%, it will only grow by 16% in the next 25 years
- 319,000 adults in Ontario aged 25 – 64 work part time and can’t find full time work = “involuntary part-timers”
- TD Bank Financial Group estimated that raising the literacy level of Canadians from weak to adequate would have a payoff of close to \$80 billion; even a 1% improvement in literacy rates would boost the national economy by \$32 billion

Sources:

- Waterloo and Wellington Literacy Service Planning Committees – November and December 2010 meeting notes
- Waterloo Region’s Vital Signs Report 2010
- People Without Jobs, Jobs Without People, report by Dr. Rick Miner, Miner Management Consultants, February 2010
- Slide Presentation at Spotlight on Change conference by Craig Alexander, Chief Economist, TD Bank, October 2010
- Rising Skills Levels in Selected Occupations in Waterloo Wellington by W-W Training and Adjustment Board (WWTAB) March 2007
- TOP Report and website of the Workforce Training Board of Waterloo, Wellington Dufferin, April 2010
- Statistics Canada (statscan.gc.ca) – Adult Literacy & Life Skills Survey and Labour Force Characteristics
- The Atlas of Canada (online)

- Websites of the City of Guelph, County of Wellington and Region of Waterloo – Census data

• 2009-2010 Highlights and Results of LBS Services in Waterloo-Wellington

- 3,476 adults (16+ yrs) participated in literacy training
- 583 more students than the previous year (2008-2009)
- 46% were male and 54% were female
- 69% were 19 to 44 years old and 25% were 45 to 64 year
- Literacy agencies provided 372,302 hours (29% increase over the previous year) of student contact including skills assessments, training plan development, literacy training and evaluation of learning
- 69% of students began at LBS levels 1 - 3 and 29% were in LBS levels 4 & 5 or AU (Academic Upgrading = secondary credit course equivalencies)
- A significant minority of student were workers who chose to upgrade for fear of losing their jobs -- 29% in Wellington and 24% in Waterloo were already employed upon entry
- 68% of students in Wellington and 64% of students in Waterloo went on to further education, training or employment after leaving LBS programs
- Increased demand for upgrading - between 2006 and 2010, attendance in LBS programs has risen almost 40% across Waterloo-Wellington
- Coordination of literacy services based on labour market research and community consultations with key stakeholders – Employment Ontario, Employment Services, Ontario Works, Service Canada, Apprenticeship, Workforce Planning Board of Waterloo Wellington Dufferin, among others
- Partnered in employment planning with Employment Ontario agencies via Community Employment Linkages Committee (Waterloo Region) and Guelph-Wellington Employment & Training Committee
- Approximately 400 Volunteers provided over 23,000 hours of literacy tutoring annually in Waterloo and Wellington
- Ongoing referrals provided to adults over the phone or email to member agencies and other community services
- Project READ assessed 210 Ontario Works participants and placed them into literacy and upgrading programs in Waterloo Region and 20 Second Career participants (displaced workers) received an EESA (Educational Essential Skills Assessment) to identify the skills in need of upgrading for entry into post-secondary training



- Project READ conducted Educational Interviews with 223 laid off workers at Action Centres to help those individuals plan their retraining pathways to employment as part of a Rapid Re-Employment & Training Services pilot project coordinated by our partner, Literacy Link South Central Network
- Over 78,000 copies of the booklet, “*Essential Skills and Employment Programs in Waterloo-Wellington*”, were printed & distributed by The Record & Guelph Mercury newspapers to homes and community agencies in the network region

• Trends, Opportunities, Gaps and Priorities

The LSP Committees use many methods to identify opportunities and gaps in service delivery within Waterloo and Wellington. These methods include gathering planning reports from other organizations such as the K-W and Cambridge and North Dumfries Social Planning Councils, the Region of Waterloo Social Services Department, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, the City of Guelph and County of Wellington. As well, we speak to key stakeholders and community agencies in regard to their clients’ needs and demographics. We access labour market data and economic development information to stay informed about local industry trends and declines. This information provides the LSP Committees with an accurate picture of both existing and emerging needs and gaps in our community.

LSP and the Local Training Board’s TOP Process

The annual Trends, Opportunities and Priorities (TOP) process is led by Local Boards in Ontario to: engage communities in a locally-driven process to identify and respond to the key Trends, Opportunities and Priorities that prevail in their local labour markets; facilitate a local planning process where community organizations and institutions agree to initiate and/or implement joint actions to address local labour market issues of common interest; create opportunities for partnership development activities and projects; and to organize events and activities that promote the importance of education, training and skills upgrading to youth, parents, employers, employed and unemployed workers, and the public in general. The TOP process culminates in the publication of annual TOP reports for each Local Board area.

LSP and the Rapid Re-Employment and Training System (RRTS)

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities in collaboration with other provincial government ministries leads the development of a RRTS Service Action Plan within communities that are experiencing labour market adjustment situations such as layoffs and plant closures. One goal of a Service Action Plan is to identify services that will assist in displaced workers to access employment supports, training programs and adjustment services.



The Plan lists the names, contact information and services offered by employment and training agencies within the geographic area affected. The Plan is updated each time a company announces a plant closure or layoff. This provides current information about the capacity of local agencies to support the workers experiencing job loss.

Project READ Literacy Network works with the LBS agencies in our region to update the Service Action Plan as requested by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. We collate the information in response to MTCU's call for updating. As well, the Network provides literacy and upgrading information directly to Labour Adjustment Committees operating at within Action Centres at local companies experiencing a layoff or shutdown. We provided information to various Action Centres including the Cambridge Action Centre, the Kitchener Community Action Centre, W. C. Woods, Linamar and Kitchener Frame.

LSP and Research & Development Projects

Just as in business and technology, innovation and research is vital to building capacity, enhancing program quality and expanding the expertise of the field. Therefore, another activity that the LSP and Project READ engage in is the identification, prioritization and coordination of research and development projects that enhance the capacity of agencies to provide literacy services. LSP Committees identify possible project goals as a result of both the environmental scan and the internal review of literacy services. As well, we take into account trends and developments in the broader adult education system and literacy developments from other provinces and countries. We want to have high quality services that reflect the most current theories in effective adult education. For the coming year, we have identified the following priority areas for project proposals and/or development initiatives – Supporting Displaced Workers with a Workplace Numeracy Curriculum, Capacity Building with Employment Services of Employment Ontario, and Coordination among LBS, ESL and LINC programs.

Project READ and local LBS agencies have engaged in project coordination for the past fifteen years. Some of the projects that we have completed focused on supporting welfare clients in literacy programs, development of assessment and referral tools and procedures, professional training program for literacy practitioners, curriculum development and planning guidelines. Local projects have touched on family literacy, workplace literacy, health literacy and Essential Skills. Project funding has been accessed through both MTCU and the federal government, Office of Literacy and Essential Skills of Human Resources Social Development Canada (Service Canada).

Local LBS agencies have also coordinated projects. Action Read in Guelph developed workbooks and learning materials for literacy students and investigated the effectiveness of adaptive technologies for students with learning disabilities. Wellington County Learning Centre has developed units of its online learning site – “The Learning Edge”, which is visited by literacy programs all over the world. St. Louis’s LBS Program developed curriculum packages on developing Essential Skills for volunteering and technology based literacy, example: learning to use bank machines, etc.

It is important to develop and investigate new, innovative approaches, materials and methods in order to maintain and enhance program quality. Adult education is an evolving field and local agencies need to keep up or be left behind.

Research and Development Highlights of 2009 – 2010:

2 Research & Development projects funded by the federal Office of Literacy & Essential Skills, HRSDC:

- * *Getting Back to Work: Essential Skills for Low-skilled Older Women Experiencing Job Loss*, a 2.5 year project that developed *Spotlight on Change: An Essential Skills Program for Women over 40*.
- * *Family Ties* – a 2-year family literacy project to develop a multi-generational, inter-cultural curriculum for families to develop literacy among at all ages – preschool, school aged and adults being field-tested in Manitoba, New Brunswick and Ontario.
- * 2 R & D projects and 1 Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills project funded by the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities:
- * *Building a Performance Framework for LBS Support Organizations in Ontario Phase 2*: building on our success in Phase 1, we developed performance measures and tools for literacy support organizations across Ontario and provided 1.5 days of professional development on performance management.

- * *Enhancing Pathways: The Literacy and Language Continuum*: This project was in initial step to bring together the agencies that deliver Literacy & Basic Skills, English as a Second Language and Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada to discuss the evolving demands for service from adults in our community and how we can begin to work more closely to meet these needs.
- * *Adding To My Skills*: A workplace literacy project to develop and field-test math curriculum (learning activities) based on real-life or leisure activities and how they compare to math skills needed in occupations in the classification levels C and D.
- * *Ontario Skills Passport Website* development, funded by Ontario Ministry of Education, two projects: Facilitated Check-Up Phase 2 that added more activities based on occupations in the classification levels B and D; and the development of online tools for employment, literacy, and ESL programs to more easily navigate and use the website including the development of two more Essential Skills Self-Assessment tools.
- * Partnership Project with QUILL Network – Recognizing Life’s Work: the development of a guide on how to discover the Essential Skills used in leisure activities and how those compare to skills used on the job including: how to market those skills to employers; skills comparisons of thirteen leisure activities; learning activities, and training provided to practitioners and educators across Ontario and Canada.
- * Coordination of 10+ days of Professional Development reaching over 500+ educators and trainers on the following topics: Workplace Materials Activity Development, Language Development & Executive Functioning, Assessment & Accountability, Clear Language, Performance Management, Recognizing Life’s Work, Spotlight on Change: Essential Skills Program for Women Over 40, and Family Literacy. Presenters from both the literacy field and academics including: Dr. Stuart Shanker, York University and Dr. Ralf St. Clair, University of Glasgow.

- Distribution of Services

Table 3: Projected Literacy Services for 2011-2012 by LBS Agency

Type of Service	Action Read Guelph	Con College Guelph	WCCE Guelph & Well.	WCLC Well.	Con College Camb. & Wloo.	TLG of Wloo Region	St.Louis WCDSB Camb. & Kit.	WRDSB Camb. & Wloo.
One-to-one tutoring	*			*		*		
Group & Classroom	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Computer-based learning & online learning	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Essential Skills/ Employability	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
GED Preparation		*	*	*	*			*
Preparation for adult credit courses			*				*	*
Preparation for Post Secondary & Apprenticeship		*	*	*	*			*
LBS Level 1	*		*	*		*	*	*
LBS Level 2	*		*	*		*	*	*
LBS Level 3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
LBS Level 4 & 5	*	*	*	*	*		*	*
Ontario Basic Skills (OBS)		*			*			
Employment Pathway	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Type of Service	Action Read Guelph	Con College Guelph	WCCE Guelph & Well.	WCLC Well.	Con College Camb. & Wloo.	TLG of Wloo Region	St.Louis WCDSB Camb. & Kit.	WRDSB Camb. & Wloo.
Education & Training Pathway	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Independence Pathway	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Special Needs - intellectual disabilities	*		*			*		
Older Workers (45+ years)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Adaptive Technologies for Learning Disabilities	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Day time	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Evening	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
Weekend	*			*		*		

WCCE – Wellington Centre for Continuing Education, Upper Grand District School Board

WCLC – Wellington County Learning Centre

TLG – The Literacy Group of Waterloo Region

WCDSB – Waterloo Catholic District School Board

WRDSB – Waterloo Region District School Board

Table 4: Projected Literacy Services for 2011-2012 by Geographic Area

Type of Service	Cambridge	Kitchener Waterloo	Rural Waterloo Region	Guelph	Rural Wellington County
One-to-one tutoring	*	*	*	*	*
Group & Classroom	*	*	*	*	*
Computer-based learning & online learning	*	*	*	*	*
Essential Skills/ Employability	*	*	*	*	*
GED Preparation	*	*		*	*
Preparation for adult credit courses	*	*		*	*
Preparation for Post Secondary & Apprenticeship	*	*		*	*
LBS Level 1	*	*	*	*	*
LBS Level 2	*	*	*	*	*
LBS Level 3	*	*	*	*	*
LBS Level 4 & 5	*	*	*	*	*
Academic Upgrading (AU)	*	*		*	*
Employment Pathway	*	*	*	*	*
Education & Training Pathway	*	*	*	*	*
Independence Pathway	*	*	*	*	*
Special Needs - intellectual challenges	*			*	*
Seniors	*	*		*	*
Day time	*	*	*	*	*
Evening	*	*	*	*	*
Weekend	*	*	*	*	*

C. WHAT IS THE LITERACY & BASIC SKILLS SYSTEM IN ONTARIO?

The Literacy and Basic Skills Section of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) recognizes five levels of Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Learning Outcomes for use by literacy agencies across the province. These levels are a result of years of development and consultation with learners and the literacy field across Ontario. The LBS levels have been correlated to the Ontario curriculum for grades one to nine and Human Resources Social Development Canada's Essential Skills List. The five levels are divided into five domains – reading, writing, numeracy (math), speaking & listening, and self-direction & self-management. The last two domains recognize that language is not just the reading and writing of the printed word, but an ability to manipulate, understand, and communicate verbally, on computer, and various situations in life – work, home, community.

In addition to the five LBS levels, MTCU funds colleges to provide Ontario Basic Skills, which provides upgrading at the high school equivalency level (grades nine to twelve). This higher level of upgrading provides LBS students with more access to attaining the skills they need to enter post-secondary programs and apprenticeship training.

Every learner in Ontario who participates in training through a delivery agency funded by the Literacy and Basic Skills of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has access to the same five services designed to help the adult identify and reach his or her goals. The literacy delivery agencies of Wellington County deliver each of these services functions for their individual programs.

The Five LBS Services include:

- Information and referral - direction to and placement in the most appropriate program for their individual literacy needs
- Literacy assessment - accurate assessment of their reading, writing, numeracy or math, speaking & listening and self-direction & self-management skills
- Training Plan development - Creation of an individualized training plan that will support the learner to meet their long and short term goals
- Training - instruction or tutorials that assist the individual student to improve their skills
- Evaluation and Follow-up - evaluation and documentation (exit assessment) of their learning progress as well as follow-up after their exit from the literacy program

Training Models:

LBS Training is offered in a variety of settings to accommodate the various needs of learners and their communities. In Wellington and Waterloo, all of the models listed below are available.

1-1 Tutoring

- One tutor and one learner matches
- Tutor is responsible for one learner (not a group of learners at the same time)
- Individualized programming
- Often suited for learners with basic literacy levels and requiring high-need support

Small Group

- 2-8 learners work in a group
- One instructor/tutor responsible to all of the learners in the group
- Peer, cooperative, and self-directed learning is included
- Individualized programming and instruction, as well as group learning
- Often suited for learners who enjoy working with other people
- Can act as a bridge of transition to classroom training (whether literacy or other)

Large Group or Classroom

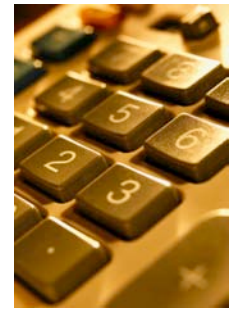
- 9 - 20 learners
- One instructor or teacher responsible to many students
- Individualized programming and instruction, as well as group learning
- May include many strategies: working in small groups, self-directed learning, etc.
- Often suited for students with intermediate and advanced skills who require individualized instruction, and who wish to continue to further education or training, such as entrance to a College program or high school credits

• Assessment Strategy (skills-based and goal-directed)

Assessment conducted in literacy programs can be broken down into three categories: initial, ongoing and exit. All are key to planning and monitoring an individual training plan.

An initial assessment is conducted upon enrollment for the development of an individualized Training Plan for each adult learner. This highly detailed plan includes documentation of present skill levels in the five domains. As well, it includes short and long term learning goals, an employment or training goal, and a clear pathway to these goals.

Ongoing assessments are conducted periodically to identify skill improvements and to demonstrate application of learning. Each aspect of learning progress is equally important. Learning is about improving one's knowledge and skills and being able to apply those as needed to real life situations at work, home and in the community. Adult students must be able to take their learning from the classroom into their life.



Exit assessments are conducted to identify the level of skills and knowledge attained before the student leaves and to measure their progress against their plan. Did they achieve their goals? As well, exit assessments indicate whether the student has the skills and knowledge to successfully participate in the next step of their pathway. For example: Does the learner have adequate skills to enroll in an apprenticeship and be successful? Does the student have the skills required to enter a post-secondary program? Does the student have the skills to be successful in their chosen job?

Assessments and the documentation of learning is also important piece of accountability. It demonstrates one aspect of customer service and effectiveness.

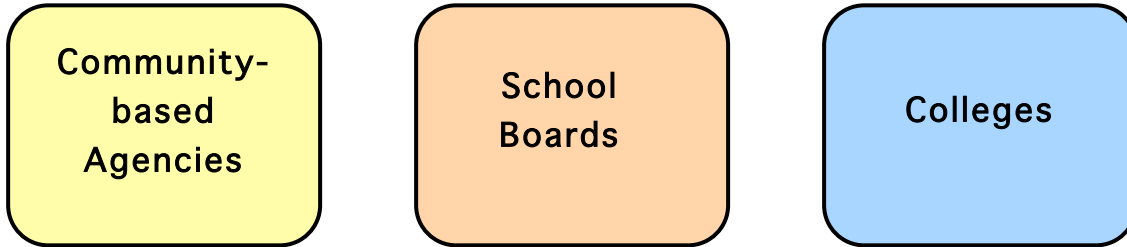
• Information and Referral (LBS, Employment Ontario and Other Stakeholders)



Literacy and Basic Skills funded agencies operate within the adult education and employment training system, also known as “Employment Ontario”. Literacy agencies are one key, foundational piece of the broader range of services. LBS agencies have both a responsibility and a mandate to refer adults to the most appropriate program for their needs. Any agency is a doorway into the system. The system is customer-focused therefore it is not based on putting people in seats but on identifying which services need to be brought together to support an individual's pathway. For example: A literacy student might have need for employment counseling, housing services, childcare services and income support. The LBS agencies will help the student access those services. They will also ensure that the student is directed to the literacy program most suited to their needs. Literacy agencies do inter-agency referrals as well as referring to other services in the broader community such as Ontario Works, Employment Services, Apprenticeship, Early Years, etc.

- **Range of Services**

There are three types of agencies or sectors that offer literacy services in Ontario:



Community-based agencies are independent, non-profit organizations that train volunteer tutors to work with students. These agencies have program coordinators that conduct assessments (initial, ongoing and exit), train tutors, support learning, and may facilitate small group learning. They often focus on the lowest levels of literacy.

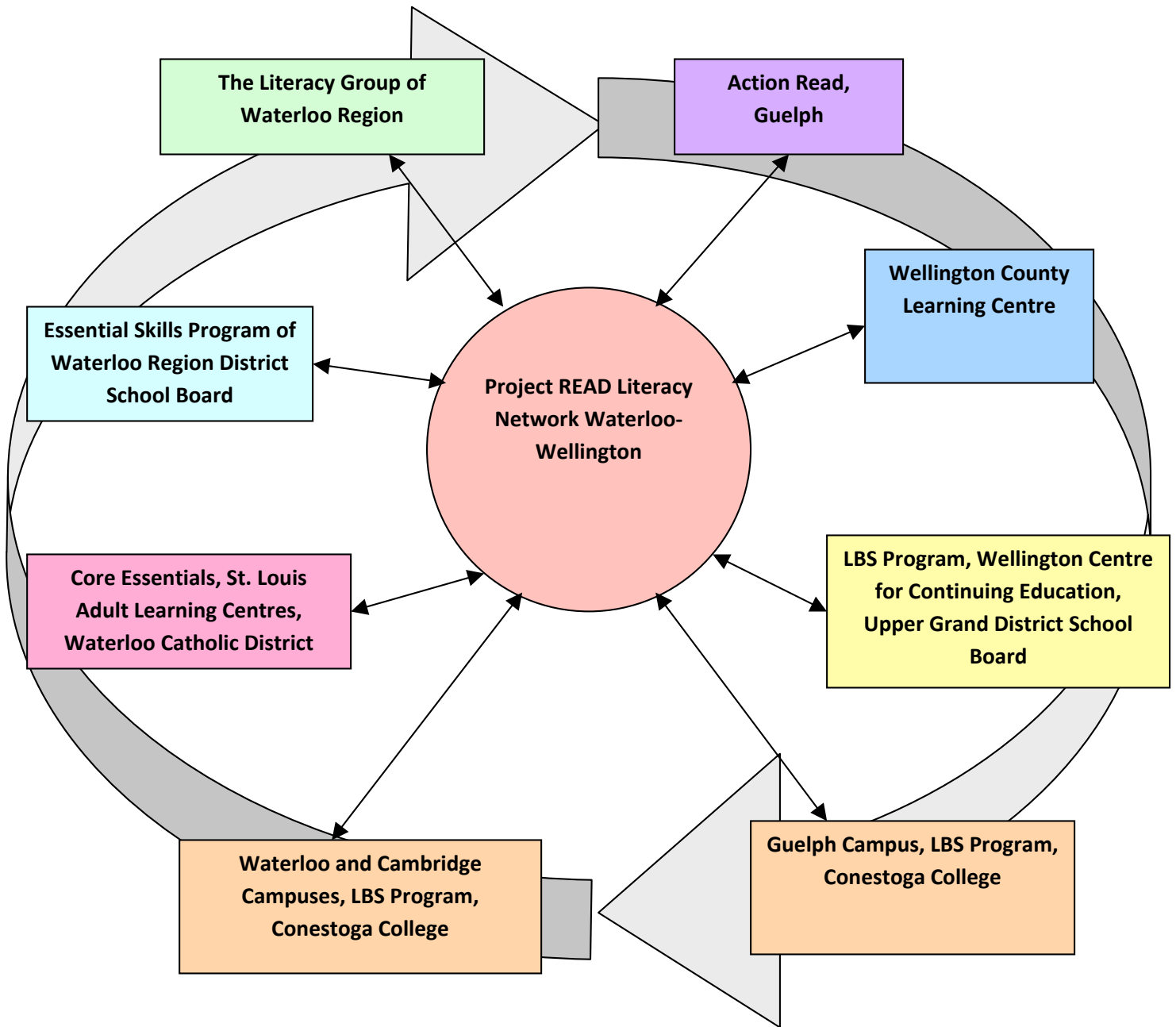
School board literacy programs are usually part of the continuing education department and utilize instructors to teach literacy in class and group situations. They often focus on the middle levels of literacy with a view to preparing students for high school credits.

College literacy programs are often part of the preparatory studies department, employ instructors and provide services in classroom situations. They focus on the higher levels of literacy with a view to preparing learners to enter post-secondary and apprenticeship programs.

Each of these providers has specific niches forming a network of services. In Waterloo and Wellington, the LBS agencies work very closely to provide the range of services best suited to our community and local economy. One type of literacy program does not fit all learners. The strength of literacy services in Ontario is the variety of providers in place to respond to the variety of needs and goals.

Please refer to the next page for Diagram 2 illustrating of the range of literacy agencies available in Waterloo and Wellington. The agencies work both interactively with one another and collectively through the regional literacy network, Project READ.

Diagram 2: Literacy Agencies in Waterloo and Wellington:

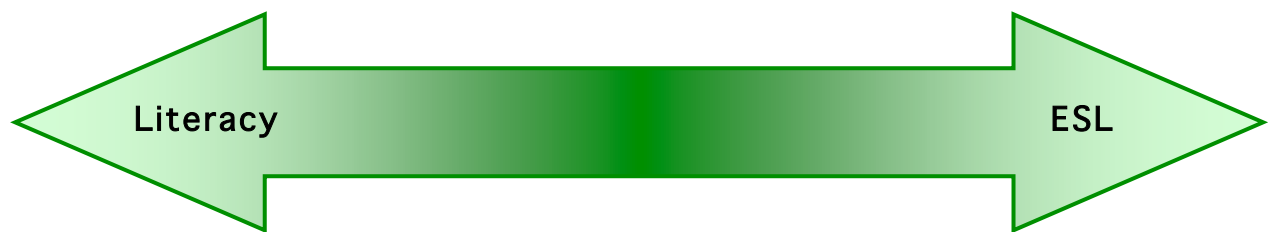


- **Client Profiles**

Learners come from all walks of life and backgrounds bringing with them strengths, life experiences, barriers, challenges and various learning styles. A well-serviced community is one that provides various settings, delivery styles and delivery models to meet the variety of learning needs. One size does not fit all and we must offer diverse services to meet the diverse needs.

As well, adults enter our training programs with varying degrees of literacy skill (starting literacy levels). Some need high-support levels and intense individual attention from a tutor or instructor. Others need little support, and can work in a self-directed environment or with less individual attention. To be the most effective, literacy agencies must be responsive to the varying levels of needs and backgrounds.

Literacy programs provide service to adults (16 years +). In 2006-2007 in Waterloo-Wellington, the adults participating in LBS programs were 38.5% male and 61.5% female while 42% were between 25 and 44 years old. (Please refer to Section B - LBS in Waterloo-Wellington for more statistics.)

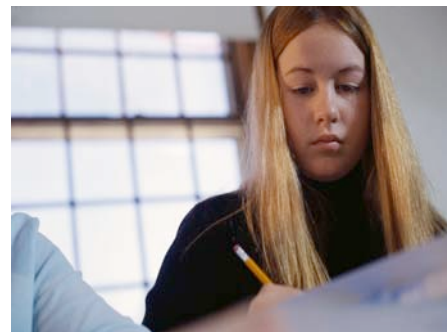


Literacy programs and English as a Second Language (ESL) training are at opposite ends of the same continuum. Literacy programs serve individuals who are English as a first language or who speak English reasonably well since they have resided in Canada for many years. Newcomers (5 years or less in the country) to Canada enroll in ESL programs to gain verbal communication skills, reading and writing to understand Canadian culture. Literacy programs focus on assisting adults with specific needs and goals often related to work, home and independence. There are a growing number of adults, former ESL clients and Canadian citizens, who have been laid off and wish to access LBS programs. They are in the “grey” area between the two ends of the continuum. Locally, we have developed draft guidelines for staff in LBS programs to use as criteria for either accepting a “former ESL” adult or referring them to an appropriate ESL program. More needs to be done to clarify how the two systems, LBS and ESL will work together to address this growing group of students.

Students often exit literacy programs in order to pursue their long-term goals that take them on to other Employment Ontario programs. Literacy programs leverage the relationships they have nurtured with other Employment Ontario stakeholders to create a seamless pathway towards the learner's goal. These pathways are maintained through a common referral protocol that encourages all stakeholders to engage clients in the most appropriate combination of services.

Two of the key Employment Ontario stakeholders that literacy works closely with are Employment Services agencies and the Apprenticeship Training (College-based trades training programs and the Apprenticeship Office of MTCU).

Employment Services (ES) offers various employment programs and supports to both employers and job seekers (youth and adult). ES and literacy staff cross-refer clients to ensure that those experiencing low literacy as a barrier to employment receive the basic skills training and employment supports that they need to be successful. In addition to information and resource services, ES agencies offer employment planning and preparation as well as job development and placement.

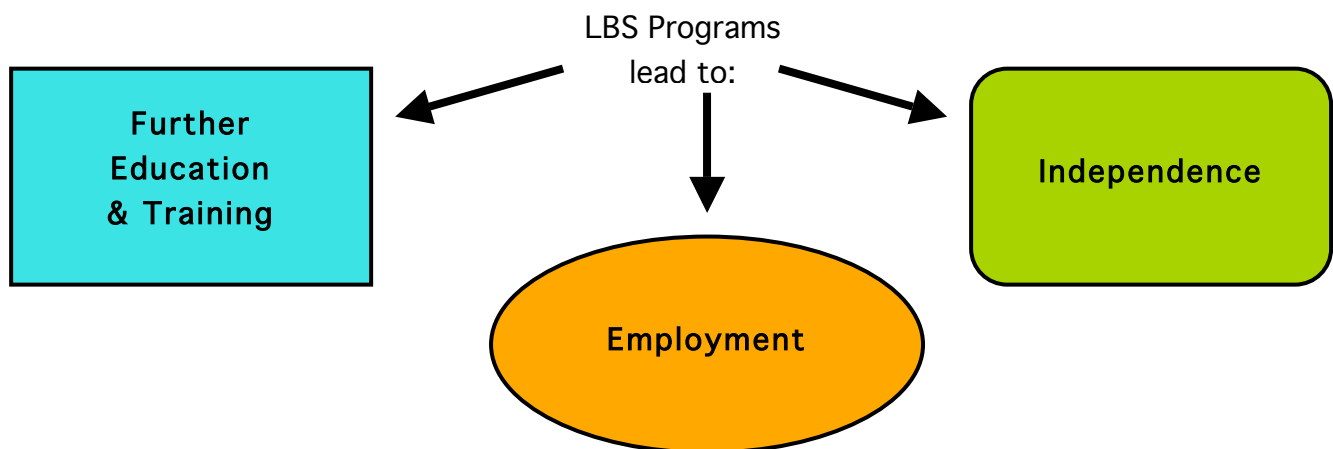


Apprenticeship offers a pathway for literacy students who have upgraded in order to access trades training. Many times, literacy students have worked hands-on in a particular industry or trade but they lack the academic or essential skills to be successful in the trades training (in school portion). LBS programs assist learners to explore trades careers and help them prepare to enter trades training. Agencies liaise with the Apprenticeship Office to identify Apprenticeship candidates that need additional upgrading.

• Outcomes and Pathways

Literacy students want to improve their communications for a variety of reasons. Agencies are keen to ensure that learners receive the type of instruction they need to achieve their goals. This is “needs-driven”, customized approach is referred to as “outcomes-based” learning. The learning is based on the individual’s desired outcomes not on the curriculum’s outcomes. This approach is supported by a comprehensive framework of individual training plans, individualized instruction, demonstrations (application of skills) and benchmarking.

The goal of any literacy program in all three sectors, whether it is community-based, school board or college, is to help learners identify the relevance of literacy learning to their lives and create a curricular approach that is responsive to those needs. While individual goals both short and long term may vary widely, most fall into the following three categories or pathways – further education and training, employment-related, and independence.



Further Education and Training

- Enables learners to obtain literacy skills they require to continue in future studies
- Preparation for future transitions to high school credits, equivalency courses, skills training, apprenticeship or postsecondary programs
- Literacy programs may partner with a variety of Employment Ontario agencies to ensure a smooth transition to further education & training
- Any sector may offer this goal path with the predominant service providers are colleges and school boards

Employment

- Takes a learner from literacy upgrading to the workforce
- In some cases learners are already employed but wish to improve their literacy skills for their current job or to advance in their workplace
- Literacy program often partner with Employment Services agencies to promote the movement from literacy learning to employment
- Any sector may offer this type of literacy training as part of the Employment Ontario system

Independence

- Literacy programming based on achieving outcomes related to daily life and personal roles, e.g. budgeting, parenting, civic participation, leisure, health, volunteering, etc.
- Often independence goals lead to the other two goal pathways – employment and education & training
- Most often community-based agencies offer this type of training
- Literacy agencies may partner with community agencies to the independence outcomes, e.g. community living, mental health, Early Years centres, etc.

• **Learner Supports – Training Support Allowances**

Literacy programs funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) do not charge fees for their services. In some cases, learners may pay a refundable book deposit and provide their own supplies such as pens, pencils, calculators, notebooks, paper, etc.

Literacy agencies can access a pool of funding for Training Support Allowances (TSA) offered by MTCU. Training Support Allowances provide funding for childcare and transportation (bus tickets, mileage, etc.) subsidies. These subsidies are made available to learners living on low incomes who cannot access subsidies from other sources, e.g. Ontario Works (welfare). The subsidies are a key part to supporting these adults to access programs. For example: a single parent needs childcare and bus tickets in order to attend classes.

TSA allowances are carefully tracked and accounted for by agencies. Where possible, literacy agencies coordinate these training supports with those offered by other agencies to eliminate duplication and realize efficiencies. In Waterloo-Wellington, LBS agencies use a common TSA Policy to guide the eligibility and distribution of supports.

D. WHAT IS LITERACY?

Literacy is an ever-expanding term and the definition of literacy tends to change to reflect the context in which the literacy skills are used. The literacy skills required to be successful in 2008 are quite different from the skills that were needed twenty or even ten years ago.

The International Adult Literacy Survey defines literacy as “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.” Literacy has clearly moved from a skill set that is nice to have to one that is absolutely necessary for people to have if they are to meet their personal and economic goals.

Project READ Literacy Network Waterloo-Wellington’s definition:

Literacy is more than knowing how to read and write.

People who are literate can use reading, writing, speaking, and numerical skills effectively to understand and participate in the world around them.

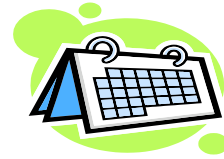
Literacy is not a fixed skill. It needs to be exercised and challenged. Otherwise, the skill will not strengthen and may weaken.



The link between literacy and economic success is being closely examined. With a global economy, an ageing workforce and an increasing reliance upon immigration to address skills shortages, the literacy level of Ontarians is a growing issue. The goal of Employment Ontario is for Ontario to “have the most education people and highly skilled workforce in North America in order to build the province’s competitive advantage”. This goal is echoed in the federal government’s “Knowledge Advantage” to “build the best-educated, most-skilled and most flexible workforce in the world”. Literacy is now being recognized as the foundation upon which such a workforce will rest.

Through the development and promotion of the federal Essential Skills, literacy is acknowledged as more than the ability to read, write and do math. Literacy is also about the ability to think, to communicate, to problem solve, to continually learn and to use technology. (see below for more information on Essential Skills)

With a literate population, Ontario will not only be able to meet its labour demands, it will also be a province in which its citizens can effectively contribute to their families and to their communities. Literacy is the foundation for democracy and participation in society.



• **Literacy Timeline – Important Milestones**

Adult literacy is a relatively young field within adult education. Adult literacy funding began in the in the early 1980’s spurred by the landmark national literacy survey conducted by Southam News in 1986. The survey, entitled, Broken Words found that a significant portion of Canadians were low literate. As governments, both federal and provincial, have realized the importance of literacy as the foundation for economic and societal success, policy has developed and funding has slowly been allocated. Please refer to the timeline below to understand the historic development of adult literacy policy in Ontario and Canada.

Table 1: Adult Literacy Timeline:

Year	Event
1867	The Constitution Act gives exclusive authority to each province in Canada to make laws in relation to education.
1899	Frontier College is founded and it provides worker-teachers to northern mining and lumber camps. Teachers work along side labourers during the day and teach them to read and write at night.
1986	The Government of Ontario identifies literacy as a priority with the release of its government Plan for Adult Basic Literacy.
1987	<p>Southam Inc. releases the landmark survey of literacy levels among Canadians. The study, Broken Words, is the first of a number of national surveys that help galvanize public awareness and support for literacy.</p> <p>Founding of the Ontario Literacy Coalition, a non-profit, umbrella organization for literacy service providers across Ontario.</p> <p>Ontario Basic Skills (OBS) in the Workplace, an adult literacy & numeracy skills upgrading program is formed & funded by the Ontario Ministry of Skills Development.</p>
1988	<p>The National Literacy Secretariat is established by the federal government to bring a national leadership and perspective on literacy issues across Canada.</p> <p>Three types of organizations receive funding for literacy training and services in Ontario – community-based agencies, school boards (continuing education departments) and community colleges (preparatory studies departments).</p> <p>Ontario Ministry of Labour, Occupational Health & Safety Division made Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training mandatory thereby placing new demands on literacy skills in the workplace.</p>

Year	Event
	Local history: Waterloo Region Literacy Coalition is founded on Sept 7, 1988, which becomes known as Project READ Literacy Network Waterloo-Wellington in 1995.
1990	<p>Funding for Language Instruction for New Canadians (LINC) is established nation-wide by the federal government.</p> <p>Statistics Canada releases its survey of Literacy Skills Used in Daily Activities (LSUDA).</p> <p>The United Nations declares 1990 the International Year of Literacy.</p> <p>ABC Canada is officially launched on September 8, 1990 with a national board comprised primarily of business and labour leaders to focus on workplace literacy issues.</p>
1992	<p>Ontario Ministry of Education publishes a survey of Adult Literacy In Ontario.</p> <p>NOC – National Occupational Classification codes are created for all types and levels of jobs from unskilled labourer to manager as a result of the Pay Equity initiative.</p>
1993	<p>The Ontario Training and Adjustment Board (OTAB) is formed. OTAB's Literacy Section becomes responsible for setting adult literacy policy and for funding literacy programming in Ontario.</p> <p>Introduction of formal Literacy Community Planning (LCP) Process, which later became known as Literacy Service Planning (LSP).</p>
1994	<p>The first International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) is conducted in seven OECD (Organization of Economic and Community Development) countries in Europe and North America including Canada under Statistics Canada's leadership and management.</p> <p>The federal government launches its Essential Skills Research Project based on the NOC codes.</p> <p>The Conference Board of Canada releases its report: "Employability Skills Profile: The Critical Skills required of the Canadian Workforce". The report highlights the connection between academic, personal management, and teamwork skills and that literacy is more than just reading and writing.</p> <p>OTAB releases its Accountability Framework for the Adult Literacy Education System and Core Quality Standards for literacy agencies.</p>
1995	Workplace/Workforce Employment Basic Skills (WWEBS) is formed by OTAB to integrate three previous, funding programs in Ontario – the Multicultural Workplace Program, Labour Adjustment Preparatory Program and employer-initiated Ontario Basic Skills in the Workplace.
1996	The results of the IALS report are released. IALS divides literacy and numeracy skills into five different levels and three domains – prose, document and quantitative (math). It finds that over 40% of Canadians do not have the reading skill requirements for the modern workplace. IALS also reports a strong link between income level, employment

Year	Event
	<p>status and literacy level among Canadians.</p> <p>OTAB's responsibilities are transferred to the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training including workplace literacy.</p>
1998	<p>Ontario introduces the five level matrix of learning outcomes for Literacy and Basic Skills, which forms a framework for literacy training across all literacy agencies in the province. It is significant step towards outcomes-based training versus curriculum-based education. (Please refer to Table 2 for more details of the domains or skill areas of Literacy & Basic Skills).</p>
1999	<p>The Ministry of Education and Training separates into two separate ministries –the Ministry of Education (EDU) and the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU).</p>
2001	<p>Mandatory literacy screening and training for Ontario Works (welfare) participants, whose low literacy skills may be a barrier to employment, is introduced on October 1, 2001 and implemented across the province in spring 2002.</p>
2002	<p>Action of Family Literacy Ontario (AFLO) comes into existence as a response to the Family Literacy Matters symposium hosted by the Ontario Literacy Coalition in October.</p>
2005	<p>In November, Canada and Ontario sign the Labour Market Development and Labour Market Partnership Agreements transferring funding and responsibility for employment training to the province.</p>
2006	<p>In September, the Government of Canada announces \$17.7 million in spending cuts otherwise available to literacy organizations through the National Literacy Secretariat of Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC).</p> <p>On November 6, MTCU launches “Employment Ontario”, its new integrated gateway to training and employment services for adults in Ontario.</p>
2007	<p>January 1, the Canada-Ontario Labour Market Development Agreement comes into effect resulting in a transfer of approx. 600 federal employees to the province along with the responsibility for previously, federally-funded employment assistance services.</p> <p>OLES – Office of Literacy and Essential Skills is formed to take the place of the National Literacy Secretariat within HRSDC.</p>
2008	<p>Provincial government funds research and development within adult literacy in three key areas – Learner Skills Attainment, Common Assessment (piloting of four assessment tools/resources) and the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework.</p> <p>The countries in the Developed World, including Canada, are faced with a huge Economic Recession, which is officially declared in October 2008. Thousands of workers are laid off across Canada and particularly in Ontario’s manufacturing and automotive sectors.</p>

Year	Event
2009	<p>Ontario's Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) commits \$90 million over two years (2009-2010 and 2010-2011) to the Literacy and Basic Skills budget. It is a commitment based on the federal-provincial Labour Market Agreement.</p> <p>Demand for literacy services in Ontario hits record highs in communities experiencing high unemployment rates and slow economic recovery.</p>
2010	<p>MTCU implements a major transformation of the employment services system funded by the Ministry.</p> <p>Launched in 2008 as a program to help laid-off workers access long-term post-secondary training opportunities, Second Career serves 21,000 adults by October 2009 and continues to be offered in 2010. Second Career offers the opportunity for clients to participate in LBS training up to 12 months, if it is a vital part of their long-term training plan.</p>

- **Essential Skills and Employability Skills**



The federal government (Human Resource Skills Development Canada) developed a set of nine Essential Skills (nine domains or skill areas) based on analysis of a wide variety of occupations and interviews with workers across Canada. The government wanted to define the skills common to any job regardless of industry or sector. Essential Skills are the skills people need for work, learning and life. They include literacy and numeracy, and are the basis for learning all other skills. Essential Skills are often called the “Velcro” skills.

They are the skills that all other workplace-specific skills “stick to”. Essential Skills underlie the performance of all workplace tasks. There are five levels of Essential Skills. The five levels of Ontario’s LBS generally fit into the two lowest levels of the federal Essential Skills with some higher LBS skills falling into the lower part of Essential Skills Level 3.

PLEASE NOTE: The Table 2 on the next page compares the domains (areas of skill) of Ontario’s Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) to the domains of the federal Essential Skills.

The Conference Board of Canada (TCBC) developed a list of skills, Employability Skills, which parallel the Essential Skills. Employability Skills were skills identified by employers as being “essential to making and keeping oneself employable and progressing on a job”. (Source: The Conference Board of Canada) TCBC and the federal government are working together to show the connection between Essential Skills and Employability Skills. Employability Skills include attitudes and behaviours that employers look for in employees.

The Conference Board of Canada’s list includes the following Employability Skills: Communication, Manage Information, Use Numbers, Think and Solve Problems, Work with Others, Participate in Projects and Tasks, Demonstrate Positive Attitudes and Behaviours, Work Safely, Be Adaptable, and Learn Continuously.

As you review the table on the following page, you will notice the obvious concordance between Employability Skills, Essential Skills and the Literacy and Basic Skills domains. The only exception is “Solve Geometric Problems”. It is included in the LBS Domains, but Essential Skills considers it a job-specific skill not a skill common to all jobs.

Table 2: How Literacy and Basic Skills Training includes Essential Skills

Essential Skills Listed below	LBS - Communications Skills			LBS - Numeracy Skills					LBS
	Read with Understanding for various purposes	Write clearly to express ideas	Speak and Listen effectively	Perform Basic Operations with numbers	Use Measurement for various purposes	Solve Geometric problems*	Manage Data & Probability	Use Patterning & Algebra	Self-Direction & Self-Management
Reading Text	✓								
Document Use	✓								
Writing		✓							
Oral Communication			✓						✓
Numeracy				✓	✓		✓	✓	
Computer Use	✓	✓					✓		
Working with Others			✓						✓
Continuous Learning	✓		✓						✓
Problem Solving				✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Decision Making	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓
Critical Thinking									✓
Job Task Planning & Organizing							✓		✓
Significant Use of Memory	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Finding Information	✓		✓						✓

• Key Statistics

Statistics Canada measures five levels of literacy in three domains (prose, document, and quantitative or math). In both Waterloo and Wellington, 24% of adults (16 years+) are found in the lowest level of literacy (International Adult Literacy Survey, 1994). When looking at the lowest two levels of literacy, 42% of adults in the two-county area fall into those levels (Statistics Canada, Adult Literacy and Life Skills, 2005). Many adults in the lowest levels of literacy are English as a first language while others have a different mother tongue language. Our area has a particular challenge in addressing a higher percentage of low literate citizens when compared to overall Canadian results.

The Canadian Literacy Picture - Results from the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey 2005:



- 20% of Canadians were at the lowest level of literacy in the “prose” and “document use” domains (skills areas)
- 12 million Canadians 16 years + or 48% performed below Level 3 on the prose and document literacy scales putting them at risk to face the skill challenges of our emerging knowledge-based economy
- At least two-thirds of seniors (65 years +) are in the lowest two levels of literacy in each province and territory
- Across Canada, one-third of youth (16 – 25 years) are at literacy levels 1 and 2
- One-third of the population (16 years +) with a university degree is at the highest levels of proficiency compared to 4% of the population without a high school diploma – high levels of educational attainment lead to higher levels of literacy and numeracy proficiency
- 60% of recent and established immigrants, compared to 37% of the Canadian-born population, are at the Levels 1 and 2 in prose literacy
- Over half of unemployed Canadians have document literacy scores below Level 3, the desired threshold for coping with the rapidly changing skill demands of a knowledge-based economy and society

• Economic and Social Implications**

Low literacy affects the economy, the justice system, the health care system and society as a whole not just the individual who is struggling with low skills.

- 42% of Canadians, ages 16 – 65, do not have the minimum skills for coping with everyday work and life
- Among that percentage, 15% score in the lowest level of literacy and have serious difficulty dealing with any printed materials, e.g. medicine labels, phone messages, application forms, newspaper articles.
- Offenders experience literacy problems at a rate 3 times that of the general population
- The average education level of newly admitted offenders serving two years or more is Grade 7
- Canadians classified among the most healthy have higher average literacy and numeracy skills, while those among the least healthy have the lowest average skills
- Some direct effects of living with low literacy include increased hospitalization and misinterpreted medication instructions
- People with low literacy skills are about twice as likely to be unemployed for 6 or more months than those with higher skills
- 50% of Canadian adults score low numeracy levels and are 2.5 times more likely to receive social assistance compared with those scoring higher levels
- Between 22% and 50% of adult with lower levels of literacy live in low-income households compared with only 8% of those with high level literacy skills



**Source: Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, Statistics Canada and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2005.

• Community Development

Literacy agencies make every effort to be as responsive as possible to the needs of their individual communities. The agencies partner with a wide variety of community stakeholders depending upon community needs and the composition and availability of local social services. These partners may include Employment Ontario agencies such as Employment Services programs, Apprenticeship and local training boards. They might also include mental health agencies, local community development councils, public health departments, Ontario Works and associations for community living. It is recognized that literacy intersects with most areas of community development and as such it plays a significant role in meeting the essential skills needs of any community.

In Waterloo Region and Wellington County, LBS agencies partner with Ontario Works to provide specialized programs for welfare clients. These clients have particularly low literacy rates and many challenges to increasing their employability. As well, Employment Services agencies regularly provide information about employment preparation services to LBS students who are on an employment pathway. Another initiative to support access to the employment pathway are partnerships between literacy agencies and economic development offices and chambers of commerce. This business-nonprofit trainer relationship such as between Wellington County Learning Centre and the North Wellington Economic Development in Arthur assist the development of workforce specific training.

As mentioned earlier, the relationship between literacy and employment is very strong. Strong essential skills lead to more successful and long-term employment opportunities for individuals. In turn, individual gains lead to collective strength in the whole workforce and the economy. In both Waterloo and Wellington, Project READ is working to promote the importance of workplace literacy and essential skills to employers and workers. While working in partnership with the Waterloo-Wellington Training and Adjustment Board, Project READ has held employer events and disseminated key information packages such as “Making Sense of Literacy” and “Hire Value”. Individual literacy agencies have also partnered with business to develop and deliver customized workforce literacy programs resulting in skills gains amongst local workers.

The government has over the past few years invested in early literacy recognizing that importance of skills development at an early age. With this investment comes the realization that children need parents who have literacy skills and function well within the essential skills. Partnerships have been established in many communities including Wellington and Waterloo between adult literacy and early literacy to work on a holistic approach to life long literacy development and to support both parents and children to develop their skills. These partnerships include family literacy programming, tutoring of young children, Family Literacy Day events and information and referral agreements. Local United Ways such as the Guelph-Wellington UW have supported family literacy initiatives as have local service clubs.

• Success Stories – From the Student’s Point of View

We wanted to share some profiles of actual students in our programs. We have changed their names when asked to protect their confidentiality but all profiles were submitted by literacy agencies in the region.



LBS and OBS Program, Conestoga College (Guelph, Kitchener & Waterloo Campuses):

Sarah Skye, an Academic Upgrading student at the Guelph Campus, was accepted into the postsecondary Social Services Program this fall. Sarah enrolled in the Employment/Training Readiness Program in the Spring of 2006. She continued her academic upgrading by completing Preparatory Communications and Mathematics achieving “A” level marks. Her excellent interpersonal and organization skills were quickly noted, and she was hired to provide office support. She was indispensable in putting together a major project for our office. In Sarah’s words, “The ETR program helped me to determine the steps I would need to take in order to achieve my educational goals. Through the Academic Upgrading program I developed the knowledge base and skills necessary to begin my college education. Through the support and encouragement I received, I have developed confidence in my ability to achieve my dreams.”

Core Essentials Program, St. Louis Adult Learning Centres (Kitchener & Cambridge), Waterloo Catholic District School Board:

“Bob” was a “Core Essentials” student at St. Louis. The company that he worked for distributed an annual questionnaire to all employees for feedback on working conditions and employees’ ideas. In the 8 years he has been working for this company, he had never filled out the questionnaire. He had difficulty understanding some of the questions and expressing his ideas on paper. This year, after working on his reading and writing skills in program, he sat down, read it right at his workplace, chose his answers from multiple choice questions, and wrote down his own ideas at the end. His boss was so delighted that he came back to personally thank him.

Essential Skills Program, Waterloo Region District School Board (Kitchener & Cambridge):

“Ramona” was a student referred to the program by Cambridge Career Counselling Services in order to get her high school diploma for work. Ramona was making a change in career. While upgrading her math and communications skills, she continued with employment counseling and identified a new career goal of chef. To ensure that she had

the foundational skills to be successful in the chef program, her instructors connected with Liaison College's Chef Training program. Liaison lent a copy of the classroom textbook. This text provided examples of numeracy tasks Ramona would need to do in the context of cooking. Ramona practiced the numeracy skills needed for the chef-training program. She also practiced the reading skills that would be required to comfortably work with the textbook. Throughout this time, Ramona experienced gains in her self-esteem. She began to celebrate her success when she reached a learning goal she had set. She enjoyed the satisfaction of mastering skills and demonstrating that mastery. She became a role model of hard work and dedication for others in the class. Ramona was accepted into the Chef training program at Liaison, and, during a visit to Liaison in October of this year, she was doing very well.

The Literacy Group of Waterloo Region (Kitchener & Cambridge offices):

Last year, "Andrew" came to the agency to ask for help. He had tried before, but he said this time it was different. He was determined to do whatever it took to read and write, so that his baby daughter would be proud of him. It was clear that Andrew had potential, but lacked the skills he needed to move forward. Andrew and a volunteer tutor worked hard, step-by-step, to write the alphabet, put alphabet sounds together to make words, and to string words together to make sentences. At first, it didn't go smoothly. He was afraid of learning and avoided school, but learned to overcome that fear by achieving things and by believing in himself. Once he began to succeed, Andrew became a faithful student. Today, Andrew has improved relationships, better transferable skills, and is marketable in the workforce. He has volunteered at St. Vincent de Paul, to help others. He has applied for a pardon so that he can join the workforce comfortably. Soon, he will move on to another program and begin working on that dream that sustained him. Andrew will tell you his biggest achievement was writing his first note to his daughter, to tell her how important she is, and to say he loves her. "I think it's important to believe in your dreams." Andrew says his new skills have had a profound effect on him. He knows that the quality of his language affects the quality of his everyday life. He understands that language shapes his thoughts, and knows these thoughts will shape who he will become.

Action Read Learning Centre in Guelph:

"Fred" had been working as a heavy machinery operator since his teenage years. Over four years in the program, Fred has worked with various tutors to learn the reading, writing, numeracy and computer skills required to set up a business. Even during his busy summer months, when he would leave for work before sunrise and return after dark, Fred tried to pop in to Action Read to review all that he had learned. Fred was

proud to announce that he started his own excavating and heavy equipment operating business.

LBS Program, Wellington Centre for Continuing Education, Upper Grand District School Board:

“Barb” a woman in her mid-forties entered the program at LBS Numeracy Level 2. She started numeracy (math) training during her plant’s shutdown period of three months. At that time, she was a CNC mill/gauging operator for a local manufacturer. Her supervisor recommended she upgrade her math skills, especially fractions, decimals, and conversions so that she could run other CNC machines in the plant. It was clear from the beginning that she had a bit of math phobia. She had little or no confidence and she was very hesitant and afraid to make mistakes. The program started her numeracy training with multiplication and division of whole numbers. The program helped her set very small short-term goals so that she could achieve small, but significant successes. After experiencing these initial successes, her confidence improved so that she was ready to confront fractions, which she originally told us that she would never be able to learn, with more enthusiasm and less trepidation. She ultimately overcame her fear of math. Rather than giving up or becoming frustrated when she didn’t grasp a new skill or concept, she requested extra practice. Indeed, this perseverance and determination throughout her training to master new skills was the key to her success. At the end of her 3-month training, she learned the essential skills required for her goal and developed the courage and confidence to pursue a Grade 11 senior math credit. Most importantly when she returned to work, she started operating a new machine and has started training others workers.

Wellington County Learning Centre:

“Paula” is a woman in her late twenties who participated in special education during her years in elementary and secondary school. An early school leaver, Paula decided to go back to school at the Centre to improve her employability. She had many jobs in the past but none lasted very long. Paula is working on her math skills especially fractions in order to be able to pass workplace entrance tests. Paula works weekly with a tutor sometimes meeting twice a week. She hopes to get her GED in the future. Paula sees upgrading as a way to escape the cycle of short-term employment. She is typical of many rural learners who have limited job prospects due to lack of transportation but want to keep the local jobs that they are accessible.

E. LBS ACCOUNTABILITY

• Documentation of Learning Progress

All agencies conduct ongoing assessments to document the progress achieved in relation to the learning goals (short and long term outcomes) stated in the individual student's training plan. Often done at three-month intervals or as needed and appropriate, these ongoing assessments provide important documentation of accomplishment and practical application of new skills and knowledge, as well as identifying future needs and goals. Once a learner achieves their goals and wishes to move to their next step on their training pathway, agencies conduct an exit assessment. This assessment documents their current skills and knowledge while assuring the student that they are adequately prepared for their next step. Attainment within key categories of outcomes or "status at exit" is entered monthly into the "Information Management System" (IMS), a statistical database, which provides ongoing statistics to MTCU. The key categories include employed (received OW or EI on entry or other), further education and training, other LBS training, not currently employed, volunteer work and lost contact.

Both types of assessment, ongoing and exit provide accountability to the learner and to the funder (MTCU). Learners want to be assured of progress and the government wants to be assured of effective service delivery. These are key pieces of customer service and effectiveness (see next section).



Once a student exits a program, regardless of the reason, LBS programs are expected to follow-up with the individual at the three and six month marks. Once again the status of the individual is recorded in the key categories. This after-exit tracking helps LBS programs to realize the longer-term impacts of LBS training on their students.

• Performance Management System

Performance Management has three key areas of focus – Effectiveness, Customer Service and Efficiency.

Literacy programs in Ontario have been working with a statistical collection database called the "Information Management System" (IMS). Agencies electronically submit a variety of program statistics including learner attendance, age range, income source, literacy level, training goals, contact hours and exit outcomes on a monthly basis. The IMS has helped literacy agencies to track information that is important to the ongoing

evaluation of literacy programming. The IMS will give way in 2011 to the new Employment Ontario Information System (EIOS), which will be used by all Employment Ontario delivery agencies. For the past few years LBS agencies have been moving towards performance management in order to:

- Support a results-based agenda and public commitment to efficient and effective use of tax dollars
- Allow delivery sites to consistently provide high quality service across Ontario
- Translate strategic directions into detailed activities and performance indicators
- Measure the results of practice, to continuously improve practice and support innovation in education
- Integrate performance management into daily operations of LBS-funded agencies

One way of increasing effectiveness and efficiency is to develop better ways to document student progress or learning. Formalized assessment is being looked at as part of the OALC Framework initiative (see below) to document student progress. Agencies have been using a provincial “Learner Satisfaction Survey” to document customer satisfaction. This information is submitted through the IMS.

• **Learner Skill Attainment (LSA) and Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF)**

For the past several years, the literacy field has been working to improve its system of documenting the skills and abilities that adults acquire within adult literacy training. Currently, the Learner Skill Attainment Initiative funded by MTCU examined how to communicate learner gains in a reliable, valid and more transparent way. There were five projects in the Initiative that looked at five distinctive goal pathways. Collectively they developed a framework of assessment.

The Initiative as a whole focused on:

- Describing learning outcomes in terms of what a learner will be able to do or where a learner will be able to go (next step options) upon the completion of their literacy training
- Describing gains in skills and knowledge in a meaningful way to key stakeholders such as Apprenticeship, Employment Services, Ontario Works and employers

The framework of assessment includes the critical skills and competencies needed in reading text, document use and numeracy (all part of the Essential Skills) for the following goal pathways:

- Secondary school credit studies

- Postsecondary education
- Apprenticeship
- Employment
- Foundations for independence

Currently, each sector (community-based, school board and college) that provides literacy training in Ontario is conducting an orientation of the OALC Framework to its member organizations. This initial training will part of a longer-term initiative to implement the OALC including competency tasks for students, formalized assessment to document learning progress and a new database to track students, the Employment Ontario Information System (EOIS), which is also used by Employment Services in EO.



F. PROJECT READ LITERACY NETWORK - OUR SERVICES

• Information and Referral and Educational Assessments

Project READ is a doorway to education and training in the two-county area. We refer adults, who are seeking to return to school or enter training, via phone, email and in-person. We conduct a brief interview to identify which program(s) would be most suitable for the caller's needs and goals. We refer individuals to the full range of Employment Ontario services including LBS programs, adult credit courses, academic upgrading, employment preparation and training and to all our member agencies. Staff in other Employment Ontario agencies and community services, such as Lutherwood, private vocational rehabilitation agencies and municipal governments, also uses this referral service extensively. Employers use our referral service to support their employees to access training.

Project READ in partnership with The Record newspaper prints and distributes an annual directory of "Essential Skills Training in Waterloo-Wellington". This listing of LBS and Employment Services agencies is distributed to approximately one hundred community agencies and over 75,000 homes.



Project READ also provides formal Educational Assessments through our partnership with the Region of Waterloo Social Individuals in receipt of income support (welfare) can access a free assessment that will identify their skill levels and provide a supported transition to the first step of their training pathway. We help those adults, who have the most challenges to gaining long-term employment, to enter the upgrading or training program best suited to their needs and goals. Other individuals from the community can access an Educational Assessment on a fee-for-service basis. The service is not supported by LBS funding.

Centralized referrals and assessments ensure that when an adult enters the door of a particular program, they are in the right place for their needs. It also assures the agency staff that the person coming in their door is appropriate for their programs and services. Efficient and effective system coordination places the consumer's (client/learner/student) needs first and "wraps" programming around the individual.

• Literacy Service Support and Coordination

Enhance Communication - Project READ actively supports communication amongst literacy programs and between literacy programs and the government (MTCU) and/or provincial and national literacy organizations. Effective communication is important to a responsive system of programming.



We accomplish this through three key channels including face-to-face opportunities such as monthly Literacy Service Planning meetings and professional development events. Through electronic means such as email, website and electronic listserv. We also use printed materials to communicate such as our annual directory of services and distribution of new resources and reports. Project READ is a conduit of information.

Implementation of Government Initiatives – We help local LBS agencies stay informed about current government initiatives and policy developments as well as exchanging information with other sectors (Employment Services, ESL, LINC and Apprenticeship) regarding initiatives and policy changes in their areas.

Research and Development Projects – Innovation is important for improved services and more effective educational approaches. Project READ has a long history of proposal development and project management. Project ideas always come from needs identified by our LBS agencies and their students. We also consider emerging needs in the literacy field. Project READ has developed tools that are used by instructors in literacy programs in Waterloo-Wellington and across the province. For example: Strategies to recruit and retain Ontario Works clients in upgrading, literacy service planning tools, assessment tools for hairstyling and electrical apprenticeships, teamwork activities and a professional training program for literacy educators delivered via OntarioLearn (the web-based delivery system used by colleges in Ontario). We have managed and participated in provincial and national projects funded by MTCU, Ministry of Education, the federal Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (HRSDC) and the Trillium Foundation.

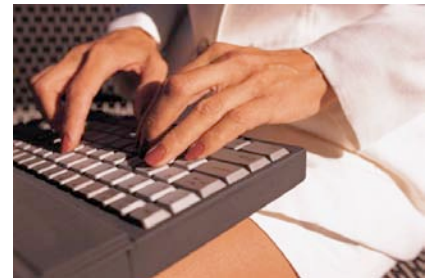
Raise Awareness – Project READ keeps current statistics and information regarding low literacy rates and annual participation in LBS programs. Helping the community to understand the depth of literacy issues and how they effect all aspects of our society is a key function for our network. We provide presentations and information packages to many groups and committees in the community.

Professional Development Opportunities – Our mandate is to support the growth of literacy services in Waterloo-Wellington. An important part of quality programming is having professionally trained staff to deliver it. Project READ has provided professional

development workshops and events for many years. These events have supported not only literacy practitioners, but staff at other community partners (e.g. Employment Ontario agencies) Many topics are universal to all adult educators and trainers such as assessment practices and tools, Essential Skills, Problem Solving techniques, Learning Disabilities, Volunteer management and dealing with reluctant clients, to name a few. Project READ has literacy resource library for educators containing workbooks, tools, reports, research and learning activities on a broad range of topics.

Family Literacy – Through a partnership with the Region of Waterloo Social Services department, Project READ provides an innovative and highly successful program, called “Get Set Learn”, for single parents living on Ontario Works. Unique in the province, it provides an 8-week, part-time program for low literate women and their young, preschool children to not only learn together but to improve the parent’s skills to access further education and training leading to employment. The parents are pre-screened for their literacy level and childcare is provided for one half of each class. Intergenerational learning takes place in the other half of the class.

Workplace Education – We actively support employers to identify literacy needs in their workforce through organizational needs assessments and information packages. We try to demystify literacy issues and how they affect health and safety, productivity, and employer-worker relations. Project READ can facilitate the referral of workers to literacy programs in the community or help the employer to choose a trainer to provide a workplace literacy/education program on-site.



Clear Language – This service provides consultation and training to business, public institutions (e.g. Region of Waterloo) and non-profits on the principles of clear language or plain language design and writing of documents (online or printed). Clear language helps all readers to access information more effectively and more quickly. It avoids jargon while providing pertinent content from the reader’s perspective not the writer’s. Clear language is provided on a fee-for-service basis.

G. APPENDICES

- **Appendix 1** Definition of Terms on the Literacy Service Charts
- **Appendix 2** Literacy FAQs
- **Appendix 3** Literacy Service Charts for 2011-2012 – Proposed Program Locations & Details for Waterloo Region – [Separate PDF document available upon request. Send email request to: \[anne@projectread.ca\]\(mailto:anne@projectread.ca\).](#)
- **Appendix 4** Literacy Service Charts for 2011-2012 – Proposed Program Locations & Details for Guelph-Wellington – [Separate PDF document available upon request. Send email request to: \[anne@projectread.ca\]\(mailto:anne@projectread.ca\).](#)
- **Appendix 5** 2011-2012 Workplan for Waterloo and Wellington Literacy Service Planning Committees
- **Appendix 6** LSP Report Evaluation Form – Please print, complete & return to Project READ Literacy Network

Appendix 1 - Definitions of Terms on Literacy Service Charts

The Literacy Service Charts have specific columns that organize the information on the charts. Please find below explanations of the column titles.

Explanation of short forms used:

Client Focus - specific profile of students for which the program was designed

Program Outcomes - the general goal pathway of the learners who attend a particular literacy program. It describes what they hope to achieve upon leaving the program, or where they will continue their learning. There are three types of outcomes:

- **Employment** – training to maintain present or prepare for future employment
- **Further Education & Training** – training to prepare for further literacy training (higher levels) or entry to secondary school credits, academic upgrading (credit equivalencies) GED classes, postsecondary programs, skills training, certified training programs, and apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship.
- **Independence** - goals related to personal roles or needs such as parenting, budgeting, civic participation, volunteer duties, maintaining independence or accessing information in print or on computer, among others

Training Delivery Model and Level - the model of delivery (one-to-one, small group or classroom) and identification of which of the five LBS Levels and/or OBS level that are to be offered by the program

Delivery Agents - the name of literacy agency delivering the program

Address - the address of the program location, which may or may not be different from the agency's main location or office

Continued, Revised or NEW - whether the program listed is a continued service from the last year, a revised program (adapted to meet current needs) or a new initiative

Activity: Contact Hours & Learners - the number of projected Student Contact Hours and total number of learners to be served within the program. (SCH refers to the program hours delivered to students including all services – info & referral, training plan development, training, evaluation and follow-up)

Maximum Capacity – the maximum number of learners that could be served at one time at any point in the year and the maximum number of learners that could be served over the entire year

Advantage/Rationale – an explanation of how the specific program relates to the needs and gaps identified in the planning process and/or the particular focus or benefits of the program – both Waterloo and Wellington Literacy Service Planning Committee’s have developed a list of rationale statements to clearly state the unique properties of any program. (available upon request)



Appendix 2: FAQs – Frequently Asked Questions about Adult Literacy Programs and Project READ

What is LBS?

LBS stands for Literacy & Basic Skills.

LBS is:

- basic education for adults in the area of reading, writing and numeracy.
- it also includes basic education in speaking/listening, computer and self-management/self-direction skills

LBS has:

- 5 levels for each of these above areas
- 4 streams: Anglophone (English), Francophone, Native, and Deaf

How long does LBS take?

Once you have reached Level 5 you are considered to be ready for Grade 10-12 level credit studies or equivalencies such as GED preparation or academic upgrading at community colleges. The timing depends on the individual – their pace of learning and the level they are starting at.

Who can attend LBS classes?

Anyone over the age of 18 can attend an LBS program. Some programs may allow students over the age of 16 to attend. You should have some identification to prove your residency status in Ontario.

How do I know if LBS programs are right for me?

LBS programs are right for anyone who needs to improve their reading, writing or math skills. Even if you finished Grade 12 but you feel that you have difficulty with basic skills, you can still participate in a LBS classes.

Where can I find LBS classes?

LBS classes are available in every region of Ontario. Within each region there are often multiple providers. Go to the [Alphaplus](#) site for a complete list.

Who offers LBS programs?

There are many different providers for LBS. In your area LBS may be provided by a school board, community college or community based program such as a literacy council or pre-employment program.

Who funds LBS?

The Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU), which is a part of the Ontario provincial government. LBS is a part of the Employment Ontario umbrella of MTCU services.

How much does it cost to be a student in an LBS program?

Most LBS program are free. Some programs may charge a small fee to register (less than \$25).

How many students are in an LBS class?

Class sizes vary (2 to 20+); some programs provide tutors who work 1 to 1 with students.

When can I take LBS classes?

Most LBS classes are continuous intake – you can start anytime. Note that some program may close during the summer. Most LBS classes are offered during the day, but many locations also offer evening classes.

Are LBS programs full-time or part-time? Can I study at home?

Most LBS programs are offered on a full-time basis; some are offered on a part-time basis. Programs with tutors may be flexible in terms of when and where they can meet with students. There are no home study or independent study LBS programs.

What is the difference between LBS and adult high school credit programs?

There are 2 major differences:

- 1 LBS programs help you achieve specific goals and acquire specific educational skills, whether related to employment, training or independence; high school credit programs are curriculum-directed (-everybody studies the same thing).
- 2 LBS programs studies go up to Grade 9-10 level equivalency - you do not complete LBS with a Grade 12 equivalent diploma; high school credit programs work towards achieving a Grade 12 diploma or providing pre-requisite credits for college or university studies

Can I take LBS classes to a Grade 12 level?

Community colleges in Ontario that offer LBS classes also have programs that bridge between LBS Level 5 and college-level studies. These programs are only considered as a Grade 12 equivalency by community colleges and apprenticeship. You do not receive a Grade 12 diploma. These programs are generally referred to as OBS (Ontario Basic Skills) or C&CP (Career & College Preparation) programs.

Community-based or School Board-based LBS programs do not offer OBS programs.

What is the difference between LBS and ESL?

LBS is for students who have English as a first language. If English is not your first language but you have a high level of English speaking & listening skills you may be eligible to attend LBS classes.

Can I take LBS in French?

Yes, most regions in Ontario have LBS classes available in French.

Can LBS help me with learning disabilities?

Most LBS programs do not have specific classes for students with diagnosed with learning disabilities, however, many instructors can help you increase your functional skills in literacy/numeracy and inform you of strategies and accommodations to help you manage learning disabilities.

Can I study LBS on the Internet?

Yes, there are a few options - [Alpharoute](#) offers online LBS studies as does “The Learning Hub” however, you must be attending an LBS program to full access to this resource.

If I am on Ontario Works (welfare), can I attend an LBS program?

Yes, and in most cases attending LBS classes can help you meet your participation agreement requirements.

If I am on EI (Employment Insurance), can I attend an LBS program?

Yes, but check to see how many hours you are approved by EI to attend. Some EI offices will only approve academic upgrading for less than 10 hours per week and other offices will approve Essential Skills training for more hours per week.

I am thinking about applying to the “Second Career” program offered by the government. Can an LBS program help me?

Second Career is a program that supports laid off workers to train to enter another career or trade. As part of your preparation to enter skills training, you may need to do some upgrading. LBS programs can help you with the upgrading.

What commitment do I have to make when I attend an LBS class?

Whether you attend on a part-time or full-time basis, instructors are looking for you to make and commit to a schedule and specific goals.

What can I do after LBS?

Once you complete LBS you will be ready for employment, training or higher level academic upgrading.

What is Employment Ontario?

[Employment Ontario](#) is a network for all of the employment, training and education services offered or funded through MTCU. This includes LBS programs.

What does a Literacy Network do?

The main role of Literacy Networks is to facilitate Literacy Service Planning (LSP) process. They function as a liaison between Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU) and local literacy providers as a group. Literacy Networks also function to build partnerships and collaboration in the community between literacy providers and other community stakeholders. Literacy Networks may also undertake a variety of other activities related to literacy, such as research, training or assessment services.

Do Literacy Networks have classes?

No. However, every literacy network can provide referral to all of the LBS programs in its region.

Who funds Literacy Networks?

The Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities. Literacy Networks are part of Employment Ontario umbrella of MTCU services.

What does LSP mean?

LSP stands for Literacy Service Planning. This is a process by which all of the literacy service providers in a region co-ordinate and plan services. This co-ordination culminates in an annual Literacy Service Plan (LSP). It is also known as Literacy Community Planning (LCP).

Literacy Issues:

What is literacy?

An international definition of literacy was established from the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS-1994) study: "Literacy is 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."

How does Project READ define literacy?

Literacy is more than knowing how to read and write.

People who are literate can use reading, writing, speaking, and numerical skills effectively to understand and participate in the world around them.

Literacy is not a fixed skill. It needs to be exercised and challenged. Otherwise, the skill will not strengthen and may weaken.

Is literacy an issue?

Both the IALS (1994) and the follow-up Adult Learning & Lifeskills Survey (ALLS-2003), found that 42% of all Canadians have difficulty with everyday literacy tasks.

What are Essential Skills?

The term Essential Skills, in Canada, is generally used to refer to the system developed by Human Resources & Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) as a comprehensive description of the range of skills which are “essential” for work, learning and life. This includes: Reading Text, Document Use, Numeracy, Writing, Oral Communication, Working with Others, Continuous Learning, Thinking Skills, and Computer Use. Go to the [Essentials Skills homepage](#) for further information.

What is a Learning Disability?

An official definition of Learning Disabilities can be found at Learning Disability Association of Ontario

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Appendix 5: 2011-2012 Workplan For Waterloo And Wellington Literacy Service Planning Committees

Goals	Activity	Results Desired & Outcomes	Evaluation & Evidence
Enhance the capacity and quality of the LBS system and support practitioners	Common Understanding of Assessment meetings – discussion of leveled demonstration samples, approval of assessment agreements, identification of assessment tools	Enhanced understanding among LBS staff of key assessment elements, protocols and tools	Meeting and Workshop Evaluation surveys – 60% of participants are satisfied with the workshops/meetings; 50% indicate they are more knowledgeable and prepared
Knowledge of and support for Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF)	Preparation for OALCF - practitioner training and review of delivery niches by LBS agencies	Increased awareness and knowledge among practitioners and administrators regarding the OALC and the supporting topics (e.g. Essential Skills, Assessment Theories & Practices, Complexity Levels, etc.)	60% of Practitioners participating in local OALCF workshops or meetings report satisfaction with the content Clear identification of delivery rationale and niches by all LBS agencies on the LSP Service Delivery

Goals	Activity	Results Desired & Outcomes	Evaluation & Evidence
			Charts
Development of relationships and referral protocols among adult education agencies	Continued participation in “Enhancing Pathways” Project Phase 2 involving ESL, LBS, LINC, Adult Credit, Employment Services and other stakeholders	Increased awareness among educators in all systems of respective programs and services for adults in the community	Enhancing Pathways Project Evaluation results

Appendix 6: Literacy Services Plan (LSP) Report Evaluation Form

We are asking your help to evaluate our Literacy Services Plan report. Your feedback is key to planning the report for the next year. We submit a Literacy Services Plan (LSP) to the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities (MTCU) each fall for the upcoming year.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR IMPORTANT FEEDBACK!

Please Fax, mail or email your responses back to us.

Name & Agency (optional):

QUESTION	RATING 1 - poor 2- ok 3 - good 4 - excellent	COMMENTS
1. Please rate the usefulness of the information on literacy services to your agency and programs.		
2. Which sections of the LSP Report were of most value or interest to you or your agency?	No Rating required	
3. The LSP Report is a product of our local literacy services planning process. Please rate how effective the LSP report is as a planning tool.		
4. How will you use this report in your agency and with whom will you share it?	No Rating required	

QUESTION	RATING 1 - poor 2- ok 3 - good 4 - excellent	COMMENTS
5. Please rate how clearly laid-out or "user friendly" the report is.		
6. How could we make the report more valuable or useful? e.g. add information on . . .	No Rating required	
7. Please rate our planning process (page 8) for clarity and community involvement.		
8. How can we improve our planning process?	No Rating required	
9. Please rate your overall satisfaction with the LSP report as a source of Literacy & Basic Skills information.		
10. Any other comments?	No Rating required	

Return this form to:

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