

## Your CESBA Literacy Committee

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## Building Ontario's Literacy Skills for the Future!

By Wendy Oliver

This year's CESBA/LBS Day took place on May 7 at the Fallsview Sheraton Hotel in Niagara Falls. Over fifty people were in attendance to hear the final projects reports, an update from Anne Rachlis, and participate in a discussion regarding Secondary School Reform and how it will impact adult learners.

Adele Woolfe presented the final results from our field development project entitled "Impact Study: Ontario Works Participants in School Board LBS Programs" which was completed by Dr. Sharon Rich and Adele. Over 85% of school boards participated in the survey and so the results are very accurate. This was due in large part to the innovative design of the survey and the commitment of LBS Program Managers.

What we were able to discover from the results is a validation for smaller classes, targeted materials and professional development support. A



Tim Nicholls-Harrison presented a workshop at the Spring Conference entitled FOCUS. This is an innovative literacy program for OW clients.

survey like this doesn't necessarily give us the solutions to our current challenges but points out patterns, ideas and areas on which to focus future energies.

Jane Barber and Donna Zener presented highlights of their project "Learning Disabilities Initiative." This document will be available at CESBA's website in September.

The CD-ROM that is designed for LBS instructors (to give them support in addressing the needs of learning disabilities in the

classroom) will be included in the Practitioner Training Strategy package. This package will also be available in the fall. It is obvious that the final project will be an extremely useful document and not one that will "sit on the shelf."

Anne Rachlis gave us an update from MTCU. She stated that approximately 46,000 learners are served in LBS programs in Ontario and 35% of them are in school board programs. The Learner Satisfaction Survey has

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## Update on CESBA's Practitioner Training Strategy Phase III project.

By Jane Barber

Even as you read this update, the third module, *Working with Adult Learners with Learning Disabilities* is in the hands of four reviewers for the purposes of field-testing.

Personally, at moments like these, I feel like I do when I'm waiting for someone to open a present. I don't know what is uppermost in my mind - anxiety that maybe they won't like it, or excitement that maybe they will! I am very confident, however in the knowledge and expertise of these people, and look forward to their feedback.

The reviewers are:

- Donna Zener, who completed the Learning Disabilities Initiative report for CESBA in April 2003. Her report contributed a considerable amount of

valuable information for this training. Donna's role is to look for any gaps in information or training.

- Pat Hatt, widely known author and consultant for learning disabilities, and Past President of the Board of Directors for the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario. Pat will be looking at the training to see that the information is accurate, and that recommendations are consistent with the current understanding in the field.
- Cindy Sartor, an experienced teacher who has worked for many years with LBS learners in school board classrooms. She is focussing on the relevance and usefulness of this training for in-

structors who are new to LBS as well as for instructors who are more experienced.

- James Barnard, a retired educator and former principal in the city of Toronto. He currently tutors basic literacy learners, and ESL students at a university level. James will edit the mechanics of the writing.

Next Steps have begun and I continue to gather and order material for what is currently titled: *Module 4: Planning the Program with LBS Learners*. The target date for Module 4 is July 31, 2003.



Patti Redmond, Skills Investment Branch participates in a panel discussion for the delegates attending CESBA's Spring Conference in Niagara Falls.

## Field Development Projects

### Projects for 2002-2003

During this past year, CESBA was funded by MTCU and NLS to complete three field development projects. They are:

- Practitioner Training Strategy Part 3
- Learning Disabilities Initiative
- Impact Study: Ontario Works Participants in School Board LBS Programs

The Practitioner Training Strategy Part 3 will be completed in the fall. Some additional support from MTCU was received in order to provide training for LBS Managers in the use of this material. CESBA is grateful for the initiative, creativity and commitment of Jane Barber who has been responsible for this project. You can look forward to more information in the fall.

The Learning Disabilities Initiative project has been completed and the final document will be available on CESBA's website ([www.cesba.com](http://www.cesba.com)) in the fall.

The Impact Study: Ontario Works Participants in School Board LBS Programs has also been finished and will also be available on the website in September.

We hope that by posting these documents on our website, you will have

greater accessibility to the information and greater flexibility in its use.

### Projects for 2003-2004

CESBA submitted four proposals for Field Development Projects for funding in 2003-2004. They were:

- **Strategic Skills Partnerships:** an examination of successful partnerships that school boards through their LBS programs have developed with colleagues in programs such as Job Connect, Apprenticeship Training and Cooperative Education
- **Preparation for the Workforce:** support for LBS instructors to deliver effective workforce education to LBS learners. Curriculum materials will be developed that will have an employment focus in two areas: Employment Literacy, and Self-Management and Self-Direction for the Workplace Culture
- **On-Line Professional Development Using a Mentoring Approach:** the development of a website to host professional development training for LBS instructors, including a mentoring/coaching component

- **Secondary School Reform: What Ontario's LBS Learners Need to Know:** an examination of the potential impact of the changes in Secondary School on adult LBS learners, including the development of strategies to address the emerging needs.

CESBA will be informed as to which of these projects is chosen for full funding in late May.

### Appreciation

This newsletter is made possible by funding received from the Workplace Preparation Branch of MTCU.

## CESBA Conference: LBS Networking Session

CESBA held its spring conference in Niagara Falls on May 8 and 9. Part of the conference agenda included a Networking Session for Literacy and Basic Skills Programs. This was an opportunity to share news, provide updates and strategize future directions.



Newly elected President Brenda King welcomes Minister Dianne Cunningham, Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities, as she prepares to deliver the keynote address at CESBA's Spring Conference.

Liz D'Andrea-Moore, the chair of the CESBA

Literacy Committee chaired the session.

One of the areas of discussion was the need that some boards have for clarification of the different levels that are referenced in our programs, as they compare to the IALS levels. There was also a discussion about the concern that many programs have regarding the timing of the Learner Satisfaction Survey. Many programs feel that it will be very difficult to administer this survey when the learner exits the program. This is due to the fact that often they don't know when they will exit, and it is difficult to track them down.

Information was shared regarding WSIB and the fact that they may not be aware of the programs that school boards provide or could provide to serve their clients. CESBA will attempt to have someone from the Ministry of Labour at our next conference so that a dialogue can begin between us.

The CESBA Literacy Committee will follow up on several action items and encourages communication from all LBS Managers at any time.

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been field tested by a number of providers, including two school boards. It was implemented on April 1 and is to be administered when the learner exits the program. However, she indicated that the process will continue to be monitored and evaluated.

There has been a 40 % increase in Ontario Works learners in LBS programs and 31% of learners registered in LBS identify Ontario Works as their source of income. Anne fielded questions from the floor.

During the afternoon, a presentation regarding Secondary School Reform was held. Brenda King, Ward Levine, and Murray McDonald shared with us the recent developments with PLAR. The discussion and question and answer period helped to clarify the issues, concerns, and next steps regarding the issue of Secondary School Reform and its impact on Ontario's LBS learners.

The evaluation forms revealed that the one-day conference was successful on several levels. The next conference will be held in Toronto during the first week of December.

### CESBA — Ontario Association of Adult & Continuing Education School Board Administrators

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