

Your CESBA Literacy Committee

**Chair, Irene Blayney,
Ottawa-Carleton
DSB**

**Past Chair, Mary
Adamson, Waterloo
Region DSB**

**Vice-Chair, Trudy
Lothian, Ottawa-
Carleton Catholic
DSB**

**Secretary, Pat
Whyte, Halton DSB**

**Barbara Crawley,
Upper Grand DSB**

**Trish Daubs,
Lambton-Kent DSB**

**Sandra Mlekuz,
Hamilton Wentworth
Catholic DSB**

**Mary Anne Myers,
Simcoe County DSB**

**Member, Tod Swan,
Algoma DSB**

**Executive Liaison:
Donna Ellis, Thames
Valley DSB**

**Executive Director:
Dave Neumann
(CESBA Office)**

Big Changes on the CESBA Literacy Committee

by Chair Irene Blayney

There have been many changes in the CESBA Literacy Committee this past year. Between spring and fall 2004 we lost a great deal of experience and expertise as a result of the resignations of Liz D'Andrea (Toronto DSB), Bob Baldin (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic DSB) and Linda DiPiero (Lakehead DSB). All three left due to reassignment in their boards and we wish to thank them for their contribution to adult literacy both as literacy administrators and committee chairs. We also wish to thank Susan Lefebvre (Toronto DSB) and Dalia Taylor (Peel DSB) for their contribution as committee members. Susan graciously stepped in temporarily as Co-chair during the summer of 2004. Dalia has been a contributing committee member for a number of years.

At the CESBA LBS Managers' Meeting in December we were very pleased at the tremendous

response to our call for new members. Seven out of ten are brand new to service on this committee. Joining myself Mary Adamson, and Trudy Lothian are Secretary, Patricia Whyte (Halton DSB), Barb Crawley (Upper Grand DSB), Trish Daubs (Lambton-Kent DSB), Sandra Mlekuz (Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic DSB), Mary Anne Myers (Simcoe County DSB), and Tod Swan (Algoma DSB).

Despite these changes, the Literacy Committee has been quite active. In September 2004, Dave Neumann attended the semi-annual Advisory Roundtable Discussions hosted by the Ontario Literacy Coalition. The Advisory Roundtable is made up of one representative from each of the 16 regional networks and four sectoral networks, and two representatives from the Adult Learners Network of Ontario (ALNO). The

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Irene Blayney, Chair of the CESBA Literacy Committee, reviews CESBA's Literacy and Basic Skills Business Plan with Réjeanne Lavallée of the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities.

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Advisory Roundtable provides informed advice to the OLC. It gives a voice to the literacy community by sharing and exchanging information between like organizations and between the field, learners, and the OLC.

The Ontario Literacy Coalition (OLC) meets regularly with the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Unit of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) to identify and discuss initiatives that have an impact on the literacy field as a whole. On December 7, 2004 Dave Neumann and Irene Blayney attended the OLC/MTCU Liaison meeting. The issues brought forward by the OLC to MTCU were canvassed with the Advisory Roundtable at the meeting in September and included Technology Issues, Ontario Works, Programming in Community-based Programs, OBS Academic Upgrading, Dissemination of Information and OLC and MTCU Updates. A summary of the discussions at this meeting were provided in the winter 2005 Field Briefing of the Ontario Literacy Coalition.

Dave Neumann also attended the two-day Advisory Roundtable Discussion on January 20-21, 2005. Irene joined Dave and participated in the discussions on January 21st.

Last fall the CESBA Literacy Committee conducted a survey of all school board literacy programs. This was a follow-up to the CESBA LBS Managers' Meeting in May, 2004 at which time a number

of issues facing school board LBS programs were identified. The issues included static funding, the amount of administrative work required to demonstrate accountability, and inconsistent messages from MTCU Field Consultants particularly regarding Training Plans.

The responses overwhelmingly confirmed that funding was a major issue and that the current funding level did not cover the increased costs incurred over the past few years. The findings were communicated to Anne Rachlis, Senior Manager, Literacy and Basic Skills, MTCU who addressed the issues at the December CESBA LBS Managers' Meeting. For the time being, we are all waiting to learn what will be the impact of the Adult Education Funding and Networking Reviews. Regarding accountability issues, Anne suggested that CESBA bring recommenda-

tions of changes to accountability procedures to MTCU. Consequently, we are requesting that program managers bring concrete examples of how school boards are dealing with funding and accountability issues and that there be a roundtable discussion on these issues at the LBS Managers' Meeting in Ottawa in April.

Effective last fall, a new MTCU liaison representative was assigned to work with the CESBA Literacy Committee. We welcome Réjeanne Lavallée and look forward to working with her and sharing the challenges and successes of school board adult literacy programs.



Leaders on the CESBA Literacy Committee are (left to right) Vice-Chair Trudy Lothian, Secretary Patricia Whyte, Chair Irene Blayney and CESBA Executive Liaison Donna Ellis

Reason to Celebrate: Success in the Child Care Assistant Program at the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

by Julie Newlands

In January 2004, the Literacy and Basic Skills program offered through the Continuing Education Department of the Ottawa Carleton District School Board began its Child Care Assistants' training program. Dianne Bertrand, LBS instructor and former kindergarten teacher, began to develop a curriculum suited to students at LBS Level 2. This development occurred through consultation with Charlyn Monahan, the LINC/OW Childcare Supervisor for the OCDSB and Christine Pinsent-Johnson, the LBS Curriculum Instructor. Certification in food handling and First Aid were included as was a weekly placement in an OCDSB LINC child care setting.

As is always the case with new initiatives, the early days were uncertain and discouraging. Although students had indicated a strong interest in working in the child care field, we had yet to connect with potential learners outside our program. That first semester resulted in some well trained graduates and provided great insight into how to further refine the program. Over the summer word of the program spread and we began in September with five strong candidates and a waiting list.

On February 3, 2005, four Literacy and Basic Skills students completed their Child Care Assistants' training. Students, family members and LBS staff gathered to hear Continuing Education Principal, Anna

Bowles, and Continuing Education Officer, Irene Blayney, speak to the graduates. They congratulated them on their hard work and outstanding participation (one student had perfect attendance over the five month program). A student spokeswoman thanked the teacher, Dianne Bertrand for her outstanding support and guidance.

After speeches and pictures, and the presentation of certificates and roses to the graduates, the Steps to Community students (adults with developmental disabilities) served to the group coffee and cake that they had prepared as part of their classroom instruction.

The graduating students were placed on the Continuing Education LINC Child Care

supply list and were working within days of their graduation. The Child Care supervisors have been unanimous in their praise of these graduates and their preparedness for their new positions.

NOTICE



For the first time ever, CESBA will hold a Conference in Ottawa April 27 – 29 at the Ottawa Marriott.

The CESBA LBS Managers day will be held on Wednesday April 27th.

The full CESBA Spring Conference will be held April 28 & 29. For details on these events and access to registration forms, go to the CESBA website at www.cesba.com.



Irene Blayney, Chair of the CESBA Literacy Committee discusses plans for welcoming LBS Managers and CESBA delegates to Ottawa at the end of April with Constantine Ioannou and Dave Neumann, CESBA Executive Director

Bringing it Home

The St. Charles Adult Education Centre's celebration of Family Literacy Day was epitomized by the theme, Bringing it Home.

As a result of the enthusiasm and cooperation of instructors, learners, volunteers and community speakers, our event showcased peer evaluated presentations to an audience of learners, their families and community members.

One of Hamilton's radio personalities, Sunni Genesco, welcomed all, and spoke of the importance of literacy in Hamilton. She praised the learners for all their hard work and for their courage in improving their lives and in "bringing home" literacy to their families and friends.

The attendees were also treated to encouraging words and readings by published author, Cathy Vassas-Brown. Cathy motivated the audience by telling stories, reading excerpts of humorous poetry and encouraging learners to be life long learners and good examples to their friends and families

Community sponsors graciously contributed to our event by donating door prizes, food and refreshments in support of the journey undertaken by our learners.

It was truly a worthy celebration!

Sandi Mlekuz

Manager, St. Charles Adult Education, Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board

Project update: "Measuring Quality Service in Practitioner Mentoring Online"

Jane Barber, Project Developer

Our website, www.LBSpractitionertraining.com, continues to attract a healthy interest at an average rate of about 400 visits from 200 unique visitors per month. New requests to work online with a mentor appear on a weekly basis and, to date, 179 practitioners have registered as regular website users or people who are taking training. Interest continues to grow as more and more practitioners discover how practical and useful the resources are and how easy it is to locate what they need.

The project's objective is to provide online mentoring services to a minimum of fifteen school board LBS practitioners, the purpose being to research essential skills in online mentoring and determine a reliable method for measuring quality in mentorship services. Online mentoring augments other approaches to professional development that programs currently use. More than seventy LBS practitioners have indicated an interest in accessing the mentoring service, and of those about half have entered into online dialogue with a personal mentor. This activity has generated more than enough information to allow the project developers to move ahead in drafting a next step project proposal.

As with every new resource that emerges, it's the front-line manager who is key to making sure that practitioners hear about what is available and receive the support they need. Managers who have promoted the website and encouraged their practitioners in working with a mentor are reporting positive effects. As we look forward, we are optimistic that online mentoring will provide a valuable service, and in future could possibly be extended beyond the school board sector emphasized in this current project.

Website and project statistics to date:

# of Website Visits	
October	48 / 76
November	170 / 353
December	49 / 62
January	227 / 447
February	179 / 354
20-Mar	108 / 167

Registered for Training	
Total	179
School Board	136
Community-Based	41
College	2

Being Mentored	
Total	72
School Board	65
Community-Based	7
College	0

CESBA – Ontario Association of Adult and Continuing Education School Board Administrators. www.cesba.com

CESBA Office

P.O. Box 22073,
RPO Brantford East, Brantford Ontario N3S 7V1
Phone: (519) 754-4550 Fax: (519) 750-1333

Serving you from this office:

Dave Neumann, Executive Director, dneumann@cesba.com

Betty Stephan, Admin. Assistant, bstephan@cesba.com