

Community Literacy of Ontario's APRIL 2009 E-COMMUNIQUE

Dear CLO members,

Community Literacy of Ontario is pleased to present its **APRIL 2009** Members' E-Communiqué.

Topics covered in this E-Communiqué are:

1. CLO's Online Training in Performance Management
2. CLO's CIPMS Online Classroom Caption Contest
3. Literacy Budget Increase
4. Ten Key Facts About Ontario's Community Literacy Agencies
5. MTCU's Common Assessment Tool Feasibility Study
6. Laubach Literacy Ontario's Conference 2009
7. Bridging the Employment Gap for Learners with Low Level Literacy Skills
8. ELMO Reviews: Exemplary Literacy Materials Online
9. MTCU's Service Delivery Advisory Group – Updated Information
10. Understanding Income Tax: Learning Materials for Literacy and Basic Skills
11. "Just One More Book" Website



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CLO's Online Training in Performance Management

CLO is pleased to present Performance Management Online Training. This training is designed to help you to:

- Increase your understanding of CIPMS (Continuous Improvement Performance Management)
- Discover performance management in action
- Network with your peers and share successes and challenges
- Develop your organizational capacity
- Explore agency assessment
- Encourage you to look to the future and determine where to go from here

Literacy practitioners from all sectors are invited to join their colleagues from May 4-29, 2009 to participate in CLO's facilitated and interactive performance management training. CLO's new CIPMS training will be offered online using Moodle technology. Join us starting on May 4, 2009 for CIPMS training that is practical, convenient, user-friendly and free!

To access our CIPMS online classroom, please go to <http://clo.alphaplus.ca>

Please note that while you can go to this site and register for CLO's performance management training at any time, the classroom will not be open until May 4th.

This classroom will be available after May as well, but in a self-study format.

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CLO's CIPMS Online Classroom Caption Contest

Here is your chance to be creative and have some fun. Please visit <http://clo.alphaplus.ca> to participate in CLO's CIPMS Online Classroom Caption Contest.

In this contest, you will find six pictures. Choose three pictures and write a caption for each of them relating to CIPMS or performance management. Your captions can be serious or funny, but remember to keep it PG-13!

Please submit your completed contest entry between May 4 and May 15, 2009 at Community Literacy of Ontario's *Performance Management Training* website (<http://clo.alphaplus.ca>). To submit your entry, you will first need to register (you can find instructions on the main page). Once you have registered, look for the box called "Activities" on the top left side of the site.

Click on the link to "Forums", then click on "Introduction to Performance Management". There you will see a discussion thread for contest entries. Simply upload your completed entry as a Word document attachment.

We will draw three prizes from those submissions posted by the specified deadline and some of the photos and captions will be featured on the site by the end of May.

Have fun and please remember that the classroom does not open until May 4th!

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Literacy Budget Increase

In the March 26, 2009 Ontario budget additional funding of \$90 million to expand literacy and basic skills training was announced. This \$90 million in funding will come from Labour Market Agreement money and will be for two years. While the specifics are currently unknown, this is indeed great news!

Community Literacy of Ontario would like to congratulate all of the literacy organizations, networks and agencies that participated in the letter writing campaign and other activities to encourage the Ontario government to allocate additional funding to literacy programs. CLO was proud to be a part of the campaign to raise awareness about the need for a funding increase for literacy programs.

Along with other organizations, Community Literacy of Ontario will be involved in consultations with MTCU as the allocation details of this funding are determined. So that we could share your input with MTCU, in early April we asked our member programs to fill out an online survey about the most effective ways to allocate the new funding in light of the current economic and social challenges.

We are delighted to let you know that **70 community literacy agencies** responded to our survey. Practitioners put great effort and insight into filling out the survey despite their busy schedules. In fact, we currently are transcribing and analysing over 15 pages of input received! We will share out the summarized results at a later date when we've had time to analyse and summarize the data. You sent in such amazing input and ideas. **Thank you so much!**

On April 22nd, CLO, along the Ontario Literacy Coalition, College Sector Committee, CESBA, Ontario Native Literacy Coalition and La Coalition Francophone, attended a literacy budget consultation with MTCU. At this meeting, MTCU did not present any new information but instead wanted to hear from the literacy field about our priorities for the new money. This meeting brought forward many common issues and needs.

CLO was able to share with MTCU the top needs for the new literacy funding as expressed by our members in the survey, which were as follows:

Overwhelmingly, the top two needs expressed in our survey were for:

1. Funds to increase core agency funding for current services
2. Funds to increase program capacity to enhance existing services or to offer new services

The following needs were also identified by many practitioners:

3. Funds for innovative initiatives and partnerships
4. Funds for resources to meet the needs of adult students
5. Funds for technology for adult students and practitioners

We will also share a more detail report with MTCU once it is available. While allocation details are still not decided, MTCU has promised to share out more information in the coming weeks and months.

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Ten Key Facts About Ontario's Community Literacy Agencies

In Community Literacy of Ontario's April 2009 newsletter we wrote an article called "*Ten Key Facts About Ontario's Community Literacy Agencies.*" CLO has had an extremely positive response to this resource and so we posted it on our website for broader access and to more fully showcase the many strengths of community based literacy agencies. Please feel free to share this information with board members, community partners, funders, and other friends of literacy in your communities.

To access this resource online please see: www.nald.ca/clo/keyfacts.htm.

Please also email the office if you would like a copy of this document in a Word or PDF file to tailor for use by your own agency.

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MTCU's Common Assessment Tool Feasibility Study

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities has recently engaged Bow Valley College, the developer of the Test of Workplace Essential Skills (TOWES), to conduct a study on the feasibility of creating an assessment tool, or suite of tools, based on Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's Essential Skills and common to all LBS streams and transition pathways.

The feasibility study will take into account the complexity of the assessment issues posed in Ontario, including: the four delivery streams; the focus on five different transition pathways

identified as part of the Adult Literacy Curriculum; and the movement of E/FSL learners into LBS programming.

The development of a new assessment tool is being considered:

- Because no single tool currently exists that meets the assessment needs of all streams and transition pathways;
- To provide a means that is compatible with the Adult Literacy Curriculum of assessing learner skill attainment as part of the Continuous Improvement Performance Management System (CIPMS);
- To advance the work of the Learning Ministries in developing a common assessment environment based on the Essential Skills between MTCU, Ministry of Education (EDU) and Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI); and
- To provide Ontario with the capability of measuring literacy gains across LBS streams and sectors in a way that is compatible with other jurisdictions in Canada and worldwide, building on the 500-point scale common to both the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) and the Essential Skills.

This feasibility study will primarily involve consultations with key government and field stakeholders to:

- Evaluate the requirements of the Learner Skill Attainment assessment framework that will form part of the Adult Literacy Curriculum;
- Analyze MTCU, EDU and MCI assessment needs and requirements;
- Identify the range of assessment needs that could be met through a tool or suite of tools;
- Determine stakeholder assessment requirements, considering factors such as ease of use and length of time for test administration; and
- Gauge the capacity of stakeholders to deliver assessment services, their training requirements, and ongoing support needs.

The study is currently in progress and will be completed in June 2009.



Laubach Literacy Ontario’s Conference 2009: Sharing Pearls of Wisdom

Sharing Pearls of Wisdom is the theme of this year's Laubach Literacy Ontario conference, being held at Georgian College in Barrie, Ontario on June 12-14, 2009. This event features 32 workshops, including pre-conference workshops on June 11th. In celebration of their 30th Anniversary, the conference is being co-hosted by the Barrie Literacy Council.

This three-day networking and professional development conference will provide opportunities for people from the literacy field and other Employment Ontario services to network and share knowledge, best practices, projects, research and initiatives.

Check the LLO website at www.laubach-on.ca on April 28th for the Conference Brochure and registration forms. Deadline for registration is May 27th.



Bridging the Employment Gap for Learners with Low Level Literacy Skills

The Simcoe/Muskoka Literacy Network has developed a series of workforce curricula for use by practitioners with learners functioning at Essential Skills Level 1. The series was designed to help learners upgrade their literacy, numeracy and other essential skills in an entry-level, occupational context.

Included in the series are five occupational sector manuals – Clerical, Grounds Maintenance, Janitorial, Kitchen Help, and Retail – along with a sixth manual Ready for Work which focuses on the soft skills that are needed by all employees. The manuals include instructor notes, learning activities and demonstrations. Though best suited for use at beginner levels, including students with special needs, the manuals can also be adapted for use at somewhat higher levels.

The Simcoe/Muskoka Literacy Network is grateful to the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills at HRSDC for funding provided to complete this project. “We hope you will find the resources useful in preparing your students for employment or to access some of the higher-level workforce curricula that are already available,” said Stephanie Hobbs, executive director.

To view the series in the NALD@Work library go to:
<http://library.naldatwork.ca/browse/series?name=Bridging+the+Employment+Gap>



ELMO Reviews: Exemplary Literacy Materials Online

Literacy BC has created ELMO Reviews or Exemplary Literacy Materials Online. ELMO is a free, interactive, online database of adult and family literacy resources and reviews. It was developed to meet the ongoing need adult literacy providers and learners have for appropriate and high quality instructional and learning resources.

ELMO Reviews brings together literacy resources and best practice in all in one easily accessible place. ELMO Reviews is designed for adult and family literacy practitioners, volunteers, adult learners, and others interested in literacy issues and resources.

You can access ELMO Reviews at: www.elmoreviews.ca/



MTCU's Service Delivery Advisory Group – Updated Information

Information from the most recent meeting (March 2009) of MTCU's Service Delivery Advisory Group (SDAG) now appears on the EOPG (Employment Ontario Partners Gateway) website. Just click on this link: www.eopg.ca/eng/sdag.html.

The current focus of SDAG is Employment Services and updates are included on:

- Update from the Assistant Deputy Minister Kevin French on Employment Ontario, Employment Services
- The implementation of Employment Services
- Employment Services for people with disabilities
- Transition Support for Delivery Employment Services
- Employment Ontario and French Language Services

The main EOPG site also contains helpful information about Employment Ontario. Please see: www.eopg.ca/eng/.

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Understanding Income Tax: Learning Materials for Literacy and Basic Skills

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board has prepared an excellent resource called: Understanding Income Tax: Learning Materials for Literacy and Basic Skills. The resource manual includes information on:

- Introduction to income tax
- Where does the money go?
- Where to get help
- Things you may need to know to do your income tax
- The GST
- Child Tax Credits
- And much, much more.

You can access this information at: www.nald.ca/library/learning/incomtax/incomtax.PDF

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“Just One More Book” Website

“Just One More Book” is an innovative website that hosts a thrice-weekly podcast which promotes and celebrates literacy and great children’s books. The goal of “Just One More Book” is to link children with great books and help create happy memories for children and the adults that read to them...and to have fun!

The “Just One More Book” podcast and website is building a lively, interactive community linking children’s book authors, illustrators, readers (children, parents, educators and librarians) and publishers. Episodes range in length from 5 to 30 minutes and can be played directly from their website or downloaded to an iPod for listening on the go.

See: www.justonemorebook.com/

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