Community Literacy of Ontario's
OCTOBER 2008 E-COMMUNIQUE

Dear CLO members,

Community Literacy of Ontario is pleased to present its OCTOBER 2008 Members' E-Communiqué.

Topics covered in this E-Communiqué are:

1. CLO Board Development Questionnaire
2. Input to MTCU on Field Priorities
3. New Electronic Discussion System
4. Barrie Literacy Council Students Profiled in NALD's "Story of the Week"
5. Ontario Literacy Coalition's "Spotlight on Learning" Conference Proceedings
6. Ottawa Community Coalition for Literacy's "*Community Works: Learners Achieving Goals Through Volunteering*"
7. Changes to MTCU's Second Career Strategy
8. Laubach Literacy Ontario's October Expressions E-Magazine
9. Niagara Pathways Project
10. Workshop on Preparing for the Shortage of ED's in Not-for-Profits

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CLO Board Development Questionnaire

Community Literacy of Ontario's Board Development Committee (Cheryl Reid and Bert Providence) have been hard at work on various issues relating to board governance, training and orientation. One tool they have worked on is a Board Development Questionnaire. CLO board members were so impressed with this tool that they wanted it to be share with their fellow community literacy agencies.

Please see the Attachments to this E-Communiqué at the very end to access a copy of this wonderful resource.

Thank you, Cheryl and Bert!

Input to MTCU on Field Priorities

MTCU has asked networks such as CLO to give input from agencies on the following key questions in order to assist MTCU with the 2009-2010 business planning cycle.

CLO will be sharing information gathered in its 2008 membership survey, plus information gathered from the CLO board of directors at their November meeting. However, if you have additional information you'd like to share, please answer the following questions and return them to CLO by **November 7, 2008**. Thank you.

- What trends are you seeing in the LBS field?

- What are your practitioner training needs?

- What resources and tools do you need to support your work?

- What supports do you require from MTCU?

- What priorities do you see as being most important to the literacy field?

New Electronic Discussion System

As we reported in a previous E-Communiqué, the AlphaCom discussion system was closed effective August 31, 2008. Community Literacy of Ontario and its members had been active users of AlphaCom and we regretted losing this valuable method of communication.

Luckily, AlphaPlus has developed a replacement electronic discussion system and they have been helping CLO to set up a new area for community based programs within this new system.

We will circulate more information in late November on how to access this new system. We look forward to being online together again soon. Thank you AlphaPlus!

Barrie Literacy Council Students Profiled in NALD's "Story of the Week"

NALD's (the National Adult Literacy Database) "Story of the Week" features three adult students from the Barrie Literacy Council.

Please click here to read (or listen to the audio version) of their very inspiring stories: www.nald.ca/story/archive/2008/08oct27/mary.htm.

Ontario Literacy Coalition's "Spotlight on Learning" Conference Proceedings

Several CLO board and staff members attended the October 2008 OLC conference called "Spotlight on Learning: Literacy Takes Centre Stage". Thanks to OLC for an excellent, informative, and well-organized event.

CLO wants to congratulate Isobel Bisby from ALSO (a community based program in Ottawa) on winning the Frances Lever Memorial Award. Way to go, Isobel!

To view the conference proceedings from OLC's conference, please visit:
www.on.literacy.ca/whatwedo/initiatives/pd/current

Ottawa Community Coalition for Literacy's "*Community Works: Learners Achieving Goals Through Volunteering"*

The Ottawa Community Coalition for Literacy has developed an exciting new resource from their recent project, Community Works: Learners Achieving Goals Through Volunteering. The *Community Works Handbook* and the accompanying *Community Works: Implementation and Process Guide* are available to download, at no cost, on the OCCL website at: www.occl.ca/comworks.htm.

OCCL worked with two partners, **ALSO** (Alternative Learning Styles and Outlooks, a Literacy and Basic Skills agency) and **Heartwood House** (a community of 15 non-profit organizations). Together they developed an innovative model of supported volunteering that provides training in transferable essential skills for learners who are marginalized and/or disadvantaged by a variety of barriers and challenges. This effective model was then used by ten learners from ALSO and People, Words & Change (another LBS agency in Ottawa).

Changes to MTCU's Second Career Strategy

Second Career was launched in June 2008 to help laid-off Ontarians identify and train for new careers in growing sectors. Each participant can receive up to $28,000 to help pay for tuition, travel, books and other training costs.

MTCU has just announced that it is expanding access to Second Career. As of November 10, 2008, the guidelines for Second Career will be expanded to include:

- Workers laid off as far back as January 1, 2005
- Laid-off workers who have taken an interim job to make ends meet
- Short term training options (less than six months) for laid-off workers who are not eligible for Employment Insurance
- Potential additional financial assistance to cover expenses for the cost of academic upgrading, living away from home while participating in training, and dependent care

For more information on Second Career please visit:
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/secondcareer/index.html and
www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/tcu/secondcareer/factsheet.html

Laubach Literacy Ontario's October Expressions E-Magazine

LLO's October *"Expressions"* E-Magazine for literacy students and practitioners is available online at: www.laubach-on.ca/Trainingpost/emag.html.

Articles include:

- Deaf Literacy Initiative
- Four Directions Teaching
- E-Books
- LLO's conference
- Essential skills
- Curriculum corner
- Family math fun

Niagara Pathways Project

The Niagara Pathways Project has created a website about partnerships. On their website you will find information about:

- Partnership practices
- Tools to help you build better partnerships
- A presentation on understanding effective partnerships for adult learning
- Other partnership resources

Please see www.partnershippathwaysniagara.ca/ for more information.

Workshop on Preparing for the Shortage of ED's in Not-for-Profits

What happens when an executive leaves your company? Who will replace that person? Will you have to hire from the outside? And how long will it take that person to get up to speed? Twenty-five percent of senior executives are eligible for retirement right now, and half of the companies recently surveyed expect to lose 50% or more of their senior management by the year 2010. For the not-for-profit sector this scenario is made more problematic by dwindling financial support, economic instability, and the ability to recruit and retain potential management candidates.

The Wellesley Institute is pleased to announce **Preparing for the Shortage of ED's in Not-for-Profits**, a workshop aimed at addressing all of the key issues regarding succession planning. The workshop will address:

- **Succession Planning**: identifying an effective succession planning process, differentiating between succession planning and replacement planning, promoting from within vs hiring outside
- **Framing the succession planning process**: the role of the ED and Board, the sponsorship of candidates, and how to successfully integrate governance principles in the creation of a succession plan
- **Implementing the process**: providing hands on experience in formulating recommendations and making decisions about succession planning options

When: Tuesday, November 18, 2008, from 8:45 to 12:30.
Where: Wellesley Institute, 45 Charles St E, Toronto

For more information, please visit: www.wellesleyinstitute.com/preparing-shortage-eds-not-profits

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ATTACHMENTS

Community Literacy of Ontario Board Evaluation
Date Completed: _____
What does a high performance board look like?
Please e-mail this evaluation and any other feedback to the Board Development Committee:

Scale:
1 - Not happening, development needed   DK - Don't Know
3 - OK, development may be needed   NA - Not Applicable
5 - Excellent, no development needed at this time

- **Please put a star beside the indicators(s) you would like to see improved/developed in the near future**

Rating	Performance Indicator
	the board has the minimum number of members according to their bylaws
	majority of board completes at least a two year term
	competent board and staff leadership
	the roles of the board members are clearly defined and respected
	the roles of the staff members are clearly defined and respected
	board members provide support for staff to carry out their roles
	staff provide support for board members to carry out their roles
	majority of board attends two face-to-face meetings and four online meetings annually

	board members actively participate in at least one committee
	committees complete tasks in an effective and timely way
	committees report to the board at least twice per year
	board's nominating process ensures that the board remains appropriately diverse with respect to region
	board's nominating process ensures that the board remains appropriately diverse with respect to gender, ethnicity, culture, economic status and disabilities
	board's nominating process ensures that the board remains appropriately diverse with respect to skills and/or expertise
	each board member has a board manual and can locate information within it
	new board members are oriented to the organization, including the mission, bylaws, policies, roles and responsibilities – including duty of care, loyalty and obedience to CLO
	new policies are discussed and approved before they are implemented
	policies are reviewed at least annually and updated, as needed
	agenda and materials are given to board members with time for review before meetings
	board prepares for meetings by reading background material
	board engages in strategic planning at least every two years
	board is CLO member and results focused
	high degree of agreement and support on values and mission
	process for monitoring achievement of objectives in place

	good financial stewardship, budgets & reports are reviewed, understood & approved by board
	familiarity with business plan
	effective and efficient use of resources
	clear lines of accountability
	sufficient board independence from management to make objective decisions
	good meeting management
	commitment to board self-evaluation and development
	constructive dispute resolution process in place
	an organizational culture that encourages good teamwork
	an organizational culture that encourages excellence
	low levels of internal conflict
	good balance between stability and flexibility, innovative and adaptive responses to environmental changes
	process for handling urgent matters between meetings in place
	conflict of interest policy is in place and complied with by board and staff
	perceived legitimacy and credibility in the field of literacy and education
	positive relationships with key stakeholders

	board members are clear about who is the official spokesperson for the organization
	the effectiveness of the board and committees is evaluated annually
	the effectiveness of the board meetings is evaluated after each session

Comments / Concerns /Suggestions for improving the CLO Board:

Ideas from: CLO's Board Member Job Descriptions, as well as from
Mel Gill, <u>Governing for Results: A Director's Guide to Good Governance</u>
from Charity Village website, http://www.thecorporatefund.org/_pdf/bsak_04/Questionnaire.pdf
and
Greater Twin Cities United Way Checklist at
http://www.managementhelp.org/org_eval/uw_brd.htm

Community Literacy of Ontario – Board Meeting Evaluation

Meeting Date: _____

Please e-mail this evaluation and other feedback to the Board Development Committee:
Scale:
1 - Not happening, development needed   DK - Don't Know
3 - OK, development may be needed   NA - Not Applicable
5 - Excellent, no development needed at this time

* Please put a star beside any indicators(s) you would like to see improved/developed in the near future.

Rating	Criteria to Evaluate
	Meeting scheduled at a convenient time and location.
	At least 75% of board members were in attendance.
	Agenda and supporting documents circulated prior to meeting with enough time for review.
	Meeting began on time.
	Agenda items relevant to mission, goals and objectives of the organization.
	Agenda items related to board work (including reports of staff or committee issues).
	Agenda items were clearly identified as 'for information', 'discussion' or 'decision'.
	Motions from last meeting were accurately recorded in minutes.
	Structure and leadership of meeting encouraged thoughtful discussion by all board members.
	Reports were tabled, and only questions and/or discussion related to them were considered.
	Staff and board members presenting information were prepared and effective.
	Decision-making method being used, such as simple majority, was identified before decisions were made.
	As appropriate, new ideas were welcomed & addressed or added to a future agenda for lengthier discussion.
	Atmosphere was relaxed and friendly.
	As appropriate, all present board members participated.
	Meeting duration was appropriate to needs of the group and the issues to be addressed.

Strengths of the meeting included:
Suggestions for future improvement: