



80 Bradford Street, Suite 508, Barrie, Ontario L4N 6S7

EMAIL info@communityliteracyofontario.ca

TEL 705-733-2312 | **WEBSITE** www.communityliteracyofontario.ca

TWITTER @Love4Literacy | **FACEBOOK** www.facebook.com/CommunityLiteracyOntario



SURVEY SAYS

The Results of CLO's Survey
of Community-Based
Literacy Agencies in Ontario



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Community Literacy of Ontario conducted a survey of Ontario's community-based literacy agencies in June 2016. The survey was sent to the 95 community-based literacy agencies that deliver English-language literacy instruction as part of Ontario's Literacy and Basic Skills Program. Survey results were collected online via SurveyMonkey. The response rate to our survey was high, with 50 community-based literacy agencies responding to some or all of the questions (45 agencies and five sites responded).



The survey results have been compiled in this report.

Thank you to our members who took the time to fill out this important survey!

1. Responding literacy agencies were located in the following regions (50 responses)

- Central Region: 30% of agencies
- Eastern Region: 18% of agencies
- Northern Region: 28% of agencies
- Western Region: 24% of agencies

2. Responding literacy agencies served the following types of geographic areas (50 responses)

- Rural: 34% of agencies
- Mixed rural / urban: 32% of agencies
- Large urban (over 250,000 residents): 18% of agencies
- Small urban (50,000-250,000 residents): 16% of agencies



3. What amount of core funding did your community-based agency receive from the Ministry of Training, College and Universities (MTCU) in 2015-2016? (48 responses)

- Range of reported funding per agency: \$90,000 to \$351,370
- Average amount of funding per agency: \$145,648

The average amount of funding received from MTCU breaks down as follows:

- Funding under \$100,000: 16% of agencies
- Funding between \$100,000-\$150,000: 42% of agencies
- Funding between \$150,000-\$175,000: 16% of agencies
- Funding between \$175,000-\$200,000: 11% of agencies
- Funding between \$200,000-\$250,000: 11% of agencies
- Funding over \$250,000: 4% of agencies

4. What amount of funding did you receive in total from all OTHER sources (other than MTCU) in 2015-16? (47 responses)

- Range of funding from other sources: \$0 to \$500,000 per agency
- Average amount of funding from other sources: \$79,801 per agency

The average amount of funding received from other sources breaks down as follows:

- No additional funding: 15% of agencies
- Additional funding between \$1-\$25,000: 34% of agencies
- Additional funding between \$25,001-\$50,000: 21% of agencies
- Additional funding between \$50,001-\$99,000: 2% of agencies
- Additional funding between \$100,000-\$150,000: 11% of agencies
- Additional funding of over \$150,000: 17% of agencies

- **Note: The Ministry of Training, College and Universities (MTCU) recently changed its name to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development or MAESD.**





5. What were your other sources of funding? (41 responses) *(Note: respondents could give multiple responses)*

Agencies received additional support primarily from local, non-governmental sources such as private and corporate donations, the local United Way, and local service clubs. They also engaged in substantial fundraising and fee-for service activities to earn additional income to operate their literacy programs.

- Private donations (59% of agencies)
- Fundraising events (56% of agencies)
- Fee-for-service activities (44% of agencies)
- United Way (41% of agencies)
- Corporate donations (27% of agencies)
- Service clubs (20% of agencies)
- Foundations (17% of agencies)
- Other Ontario Ministries (12% of agencies)
- Municipal (12% of agencies)
- Social enterprise (7% of agencies)
- Federal government (7% of agencies)
- Ontario Trillium Foundation (5% of agencies)
- Unions (5% of agencies)
- Other (29% of agencies). The other category included sources of income such as Community Housing Corporations, memberships, and rental income



6. How many MTCU-funded learners did your literacy agency serve (entered in EOIS-CaMS) in 2015-2016? (46 responses)

- On average, 91 MTCU-funded learners were served per agency
- Responding agencies and sites served a range of 14 to 250 learners

7. In 2015-2016, please estimate the percentage of your students who had learning disabilities. (44 responses)

- On average, in 2015-2016, 46.7% of learners in community-based literacy agencies are estimated to have learning disabilities
- The range of estimated learners with learning disabilities was 10% to 100%



8. How many staff members did your agency employ in 2015-2016? (47 responses)

- Average number of full-time staff per agency: 3.1 staff members
- Range of the number of full-time staff: .5 to 8 staff members

9. In 2015-2016, what percentage of your staff was female or male? (47 responses)

- On average, 85% of staff in community-based agencies were female
- On average, 15% of staff in community-based agencies were male

10. As of March 2016, these were the average hourly rates of pay for various positions in community-based literacy organizations.

- Executive Director/Manager (29 responses)
 - Average: \$28.38 per hour
 - Range: \$20.00 - \$37.89 per hour
- Program Coordinator (28 responses)
 - Average: \$23.27 per hour
 - Range: \$15.00 - \$36.00 per hour
- Instructor (32 responses)
 - Average: \$20.11 per hour
 - Range: \$13.75 - \$26.75 per hour
- Administrative Assistant / Office Coordinator (19 responses)
 - Average: \$15.48 per hour
 - Range: \$11.50 - \$22.78 per hour





11. How many volunteers were involved in your agency in 2015-2016? (46 responses)

Volunteers are an important and dynamic part of community-based literacy agencies.

- There was an average of 32 volunteers per agency
- The range was 6 to 250 volunteers per agency

12. In 2015-2016, please estimate the total amount of hours that volunteers contributed to your literacy agency. (42 responses)

Volunteers also bring substantial economic value to community-based literacy agencies.

- Average number of volunteer hours per agency: 2,894 hours
- Range of volunteer hours per agency: 36 hours to 12,500 hours

TD Economics pegged the average hourly wage rate for volunteers at \$24 in 2012 (Source: [TD Economics](#)).

Using this wage rate, it can be determined that, on average, the economic value that volunteers bring to each community-based literacy agency in Ontario is an astounding \$69,456!

13. What roles are your volunteers engaged in? (46 responses)

Literacy volunteers are engaged in a variety of diverse and important roles.

- Board members – 78%
- One-to-one tutoring – 76%
- Supporting small group instruction – 46%
- Fundraising – 39%
- Community events – 39%
- Office support – 39%
- Computer labs – 37%
- Skills training – 20%
- Mentoring – 20%
- Tech support – 15%





14. What are your agency's top strengths? (44 responses)

Top strengths identified by Ontario's community-based literacy agencies included:

- High quality customer service
- High levels of customer satisfaction
- Excellence in service coordination
- High quality staff
- Innovative programming
- Excellent at community networking, partnerships, outreach and awareness

15. What are the main threats facing your agency? (42 responses)

Community-based literacy agencies **overwhelmingly** identified insufficient levels of funding as the top threat facing them (81% of respondents).

Other key issues identified included:

- Staff turnover and difficulty hiring due to low rates of pay, lack of raises, lack of benefits and funding insecurity
- Meeting mandated learner numbers
- Competition for learners
- Time pressures for paperwork and documentation deadlines

16. What are your top support needs? (42 responses)

Community-based literacy agencies again **overwhelmingly** identified the need for increased government funding as their top support need.

Other key support needs included:

- Support for marketing and outreach
- Support for working with EOIS-CaMS
- Increased MTCU awareness of sector differences and the resulting impact on LBS programming
- Sector specific professional development for staff

