



# Evaluation of Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program Status Update

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Program Standards and Evaluation  
October 2011

# Purpose of Presentation

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- ❑ To provide a status update on the Evaluation of Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program
- ❑ To provide a status update on the Evaluation of Workplace and Community Workforce Literacy and Essential Skills (WLES) Initiative – Phase III of the LBS Evaluation
- ❑ To provide a status update on the e-Channel/Distance Learning Survey

# LBS Evaluation Status Update

## Phases I and II



- ❑ The evaluation of the LBS Program is completed and the evaluation report has been submitted to the Ministry.
- ❑ At this time, the Ministry is not in a position to share evaluation findings, as the Ministry is reviewing the evaluation findings and recommendations.
- ❑ While the evaluation findings cannot be shared publicly at this time, the overview of the key categories of the findings will be provided on the following slides.
- ❑ This evaluation was conducted in the context and concurrently with significant new developments and changes in the literacy field, including the development and implementation of the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF), development of the information management system, and further development of distance literacy learning.
- ❑ The evaluation responded to various information needs, including both supporting the ongoing initiatives and providing insight into the longer-term vision of the program.

## Evaluation Focus and Consultations to Date Phases I and II

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The evaluation consultations have been focused on the following objectives:

- ❑ Assessing the current capacity and readiness of the LBS agencies and MTCU to implement the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum (OALC);
- ❑ Examining the current practices in service coordination;
- ❑ Examining the current service standards, learner assessment approaches, and reporting practices;
- ❑ Determining whether sufficient data is being collected to inform evidence-based decisions by MTCU program managers and policy makers;
- ❑ Assessing the demand for LBS services in different regions;
- ❑ Assessing the implementation and effectiveness of distance learning projects; and,
- ❑ Assessing effective service delivery model(s) adopted across regions and identifying lessons learned to inform improvements to the LBS Program.

# LBS Evaluation - Phase III – Evaluation of Workplace and Community Workforce Literacy and Essential Skills (WLES) Initiative

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The evaluation field work commenced in July 2011.

The purpose of the evaluation is to identify innovative and effective practices, models, and approaches to workplace and community workforce literacy and essential skills training and to inform its full rollout in a systematic way.

The objectives of the WLES program evaluation include:

- ❑ Examining objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes of the individual pilot projects and their alignment with the objectives and expected outcomes of the pilot initiative;
- ❑ Assessing outcomes of the pilot project initiative based on performance indicators and measures, including learner progress as a key consideration;
- ❑ Identifying effective approaches to integrating the delivery of literacy and essential skills services into broader community services and supports, as well as workplace and technical training;
- ❑ Identifying effective community responses that consider cultural and linguistic needs and identify specific wraparound supports that lead to greater success in achieving the upgrading goals of learners; and
- ❑ Assessing effectiveness and value-added of workplace and community workforce literacy and essential skills training.

# LBS Evaluation - Phase III – Evaluation of Workplace and Community Workforce Literacy and Essential Skills (WLES)



- ❑ The Ministry has hired *Cathexis Consulting Inc.*, an independent evaluation firm, to conduct evaluation consultations.
- ❑ The WLES evaluation employs a multiple-lines-of-evidence approach that includes the following quantitative and qualitative methods:

Evaluation Consultations	Current Status
Document and literature review	Completed
Administrative data analysis	In progress
Key Informant Interviews with MTCU staff and WLES Project Proponents	Interviews completed; consultant is collecting follow-up information from the WLES Project Proponents.
Interviews and surveys of WLES Partner Organizations	Scheduled to be completed by November 28, 2011
Survey and discussion groups with WLES learners	Scheduled to be completed by December 16, 2011

# E-Channel/Distance Learning Survey

- ❑ The LBS learner survey was conducted with a representative sample of LBS learners, including learners who took “blended” literacy training (i.e., both the in-person/classroom training and e-Channel/distance training).
- ❑ The evaluation did not include consultations with the pure distance learners. To complete evaluation consultations and assess the benefits of distance training for pure distance learners, MTCU is conducting an **online survey of distance learners** in the LBS Program.
- ❑ This survey is intended for learners who took only e-Channel/distance learning training, and have not accessed in-person and/or classroom training through the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program.
- ❑ The survey is intended for distance learners of three e-Channel delivery agencies:
  - ❑ Avon-Maitland District School Board (AMDSB) (Anglophone stream) 'The Learning Hub';
  - ❑ Sioux Hudson Literacy Council (SHLC) (Aboriginal stream) 'Good Learning Anywhere'; and
  - ❑ Colleges Ontario (Academic Upgrading) 'Academic & Career Entrance Program / ACE Distance'.

Note: The fourth e-Channel delivery agency, Coalition ontarienne de formation des adultes (COFA) (Francophone stream), is not included in this survey, as this organization has become a Francophone e-Channel delivery agency very recently. The survey of distance learners served by this agency is planned for spring 2012.

# E-Channel/Distance Learning Survey



- ❑ During the survey piloting phase, MTCU received valuable feedback from e-Channel agencies and learners on the format and clarity of the survey.
- ❑ We have studied the feedback carefully and revised the survey to ensure it is usable for all distance learners.
- ❑ **The survey is now open.**
- ❑ A letter has been sent to e-Channel agencies requesting them to post the survey link on their websites and to distribute the link to distance learners, both past and present, for whom contact information is available.
- ❑ The survey will be open for at least three weeks from October 14, 2011 until November 4, 2011.
- ❑ MTCU will closely monitor the survey response progress and may seek agencies' assistance in conducting further outreach (e.g., e-mail reminders, extension of survey deadline) if the response rate is insufficient.
- ❑ Upon survey completion, MTCU will provide e-Channel agencies with the survey responses of their learners (i.e., learners who access e-Channel training through their respective agency).