

Literacy and Basic Skills Symposium

Draft Feedback Summary received on October 5, 2017



About this Report

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) hosted a symposium on October 5th and 6th, 2017 to continue discussions with the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) network on strengthening the program and improving and increasing support and services to Ontarians.

This draft summary report reflects feedback received from the October 5th Symposium held in Toronto. It was written by Swerhun Inc., a third-party facilitation firm hired by MAESD to provide independent facilitation services to the October 5th meeting. This draft summary will be shared with participants from the October 5th meeting for review before being finalized.



The intent of this summary report is to capture the range of perspectives that were shared on October 5th. It does not assess the merit or accuracy of any of these perspectives nor does it indicate an endorsement of any of these perspectives on the part of MAESD or the Province of Ontario.

Overview of the Day

Over 250 people representing 193 Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) program organizations, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) and other Government of Ontario representatives came together on Thursday, October 5, 2017, in Toronto to discuss strengthening the LBS program to improve and increase supports and services to Ontarians. This includes working together with the LBS network to set priorities and next steps for improving and expanding the LBS program; developing solutions and ideas to challenges and recommendations raised in the evaluation report and/or the pre-Symposium survey; and strengthening communication and collaboration among the Ministry and the network to determine the most effective way for ongoing engagement with the network throughout the program improvement process.

October 5, 2017 was the first day of a two-day multi-stakeholder symposium hosted by the MAESD. It was well attended by all sectors (school boards, colleges of applied arts and technology, and community-based organizations), streams (Anglophone, Deaf, Francophone, and Indigenous), in-person, e-Channel, and support organizations.

This summary reflects the feedback received on October 5th, including a synthesis of feedback received:

- During the breakout sessions;
- During the plenary discussions;
- From the 119 completed worksheets; and
- Feedback from 10 emails shared after the meeting.

This report is organized into seven parts:

- I. High Level Synthesis of Feedback;
- II. Feedback on Discussion Part 1 – Community Needs;
- III. Feedback on Discussion Part 2 – Leadership and Vision;
- IV. Feedback on Discussion Part 3 – Funding;
- V. Feedback on Discussion Part 4 – Other Ideas;
- VI. Feedback on Discussion Part 5 – Proposed Approach to Working Together; and
- VII. Next steps

Attachments include: the Agenda from October 5, 2017 (Attachment A), the Participant List (Attachment B), the lives notes from the plenary discussion (Attachment C), the transcribed worksheet feedback (Attachment D), the feedback emails (Attachment E), and the abbreviations glossary (Attachment F).

This report was written by Khly Lamparero, Casey Craig, and Nicole Swerhun from the Swerhun facilitation team (www.swerhun.com).

I. High Level Synthesis of Feedback

The following points reflect an overall synthesis of feedback shared by participants in discussion and in writing during the October 5th symposium. These points are intended to be read along with the remainder of this draft summary report which provides additional details regarding these points, as well as many others, shared by participants.

Participants said that the LBS program can be strengthened, and support and services to learners can be increased by:

1. Providing continuous communication and regular engagement opportunities with the LBS network in order to hear from the people who know the program best. The Ministry also needs to create opportunities for everyone involved in the LBS program to come together to strengthen the support system within the LBS network.
2. Improving perception of LBS and literacy by developing a marketing strategy that increases public awareness and understanding of the range of services LBS offers and the benefits individuals can gain from participating in the program.
3. Enhancing the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework (OALCF), particularly the learner Milestones and Culminating Tasks, to create a curriculum that is more responsive to the goals, progress, and lives of learners.
4. Addressing participation barriers by updating the program's Eligibility and Suitability Criteria to make the program accessible for anyone who needs the service.
5. Allocating more funds for the resource and support needs of learners, including social support, mental health and learning disability resource, and digital literacy needs.
6. Providing more resources, support and professional development training for service providers that are responsive to the regional needs of every sector and stream in the LBS network.
7. Enhancing collaboration between other provincial service programs and LBS to improve the referral and connection to people who could benefit in participating in the program.
8. Providing sufficient, equitable, and stable funding that is allocated with transparency to the LBS network to increase and strengthen the services provided to learners and support needs of service providers.

II. Feedback on Discussion Part 1 – Community Needs

1. What are you seeing as the greatest needs in your communities?

Participants talked about needs in terms of who is served, support needs for learners, and needs of service providers. The feedback is organized according to these areas below. Note that the lettering of the points with a, b, c, d, etc. is intended for ease of reference only and not intended to imply any type of priority.

The greatest needs in our communities in terms of WHO to serve include:

a. Need to widen eligibility and suitability requirements to be able to serve:

- **Youth under 19.** There is an increased number of younger learners who graduate or leave early from high school that need to improve their literacy skills, but are not allowed to enter the program because they do not fit the eligibility criteria.
- **Seniors.** Seniors who need to continue to work need skills upgrading, particularly with digital literacy.
- **Newcomers.** Newcomers, especially in smaller communities, need skills upgrading but may not be able to get into the program because they lack proficiency in English or French.

b. Need to provide more resources and supports to be better able to serve:

- **Learners with learning disabilities.** There is a need for proper assessment of learning disabilities, staff training and program flexibility to appropriately support learning of learners with learning disability.
- **Learners who need mental health supports.** Support for learners with mental health issues, like counselling and diagnosis, is needed, especially in small and rural communities.
- **Learners who need stronger digital literacy skills.** The lack of proficiency with computers make it difficult for learners to use the online LBS program. Digital training for both learners and instructors is needed.
- **Participants in the deaf stream.** A better understanding of deaf learners and their needs could help better suit the curriculum to their needs, and improve resources provided.

c. Additional learner levels.

The current learner levels do not always match learners' needs and pace of learning. Participants said that additional learning levels are needed at lower and higher levels.

d. Additional time for learners.

This is required to support those learners who need more time to meet the Milestones.

- e. **Regional flexibility.** Services need to be tailored based on regional differences and needs. The North and rural areas experience different challenges compared to urban areas, including lack of: transportation to get people to the program, high speed or reliable access to the internet; one-on-one support; mental health supports; and English as a Second Language (ESL) services due to limited service providers in the area.
- f. **Supportive learning.** There are more learners who need supportive learning than learners who can learn independently.

Support needs for learners

- a. **Need for social support.** Some learners are living in poverty and are in need of social support like childcare, food, affordable access to internet, and other supports to help address financial difficulties and barriers they experience.
- b. **Need for transportation to access service providers.** Some people face difficulty accessing LBS services due to lack of public transportation, particularly in the north.

Needs of service providers

- a. **Need for seamless continuum of services and connections to other service providers.** The poor coordination between the LBS network and Employment Services (ES) leads to a competition for clients, resulting in a lack of both referrals to LBS and transition of learners to ES. Improved collaboration between the LBS network and other provincial programs (like the Ministry of Community and Social Services' (MCSS) Ontario Works (OW) and Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), and MAESD's Employment Ontario (EO) programs, specifically those for Apprenticeship) is needed to reduce duplication of services provided, make referrals between programs easier, and increase the pool of resources.
- b. **Need for flexibility to use training supports.** Some service providers want to have the flexibility to use training support to address issues of learners like hunger.
- c. **Need for community outreach to increase awareness of the program.** There is a lack of public awareness of the LBS program, what it provides, its benefits in addition to employment, and the importance of, and understanding of what literacy means.
- d. **Timely access to information and data.** Information about community needs and Labour Market Information (LMI) are needed to improve service coordination among the network and the services provided to learners. Monthly access to Employment Ontario Information System – Case Management System (EOIS-CaMS) data could also help.
- e. **Increased funding.** This would help address learner needs and operational needs of service providers to improve program delivery.

2. What gaps exist in the current program and footprint of services?

Gaps in learner support

- a. **Lack of transportation.** The lack of public transportation is a big challenge that makes accessing LBS services difficult for people.
- b. **Lack of resources and services for learners with mental health issues or learning disability.** This makes it difficult to appropriately serve the needs of these learners.
- c. **Lack of connection to employment pathways.** The current program lacks services that help learners become job ready and connected with employers which limits employment opportunities for unemployed or underemployed learners.

Gaps in service programming

- a. **Gap in ability to accurately measure learner progress.** The current OALCF and Milestones are placing unrealistic expectations for some learners, like learners with a learning disability, people in rural areas and low level learners. EOIS-CaMS also creates barriers in identifying the actual skill level of a learner. Addressing this would require a greater range and number of progress levels.
- b. **Emphasis on employment.** The focus on employment is limiting for potential learners who could benefit from the program. For some people, improving their independence goals are critical to their daily living (e.g. learning skills to support the education of their children, navigating services, etc.).
- c. **Gap in funding for online learning.** Some learners experience challenges accessing a computer and/or internet, or cannot afford the cost of distance learning, particularly in the north. Increasing funding could support learners' access and online learning platforms.
- d. **Gap in digital literacy skills.** There is no clear framework for digital literacy training and its alignment to the needs of particular populations, like seniors.
- e. **Gap in conducting experiential learning for Indigenous programming.** Indigenous learners thrive in experiential learning environments. The lack of teaching through experiential learning limits some Indigenous peoples' ability to succeed in the program.
- f. **Gap in language services.** The lack of language services within LBS results in limited participation of people who are not fluent in English or French but who may not have other options to upgrade their skills.

Gaps in program delivery

- a. **Gap in providing service to people in need due to eligibility/suitability criteria.** The current eligibility/suitability criteria result to declining services to people who need LBS services. This include: youth age 16-18 years old,

newcomers, low-level learners and people who are not proficient in English or French.

- b. Gap in province-wide suitability criteria.** The suitability criteria does not adequately reflect the regional differences and needs of learners.
- c. Gap in appropriate program hours.** The 9-5 program hours do not match the needs of learners with precarious work and multiple jobs who need evening and weekend services.
- d. Gap in support and resources provided in rural areas.** Some rural areas are under-sourced in providing services on site or nearby due to big geographical gaps. This includes having limited staff which impacts the ability to do one-on-one tutoring.
- e. Gap in Francophone services.** The need for Francophone-focused services in some areas is not being addressed due to lack of funding.
- f. Gap in flexible funding.** The rigidity of funding use makes it difficult to meet new and emerging needs of learners in the program.

Gaps in service provider support and resources

- a. Gap in communication between organizations providing services.** The lack of information sharing and referral between organizations limits the opportunities to provide LBS to individuals who could benefit from it. Examples include OW offices not referring their clients to the program, and the LBS network being restricted from providing support to young people in the Youth Job Connection (YJC). Also, the lack of communication and follow-up commitment from OW offices on their clients' attendance impacts LBS organizations' ability to meet their numbers as there are no consequences when people do not show up.
- b. Gap in resources for instructors' professional development.** Training and resources for instructors to better serve learners with mental health and learning disabilities are needed. Participants said this is compromised due to limited funds and union rules.
- c. Inconsistency from ETC to ETC.** The lack of consistency in messaging and approach between Employment and Training Consultants (ETCs) affects the delivery of services provided by LBS organizations. For example, some ETCs allow service to be provided to clients with a high school credit, some do not.
- d. Provincial systems navigation training.** Develop and implement a training service like a concierge portal to orient all new instructors to EOIS-CaMS.

3. Who are we not reaching through the current program, and what needs to change in order to support these people?

- a. **Unawareness of who we are not reaching.** Some participants said that they do not know who the program is not reaching because there are people who hide their needs or do not want to participate in the program due to stigma attached with having low literacy.
 - Participants suggested improving the provincial marketing strategy to help address awareness of the program, and what it encompasses. Developing a marketing toolkit can help support local outreach.
- b. **People who access other Provincial government programs and who could benefit from LBS.** The lack of coordination and referrals between ministries loses the opportunity to provide LBS services to clients of other programs who could benefit from it. There are underemployed, OW recipients who need or would benefit from LBS program but are not getting the service because referrals by OW to LBS are voluntary and infrequent.
 - Participants suggested a Ministry directed mandate to promote LBS as part of a suite of Employment Solutions offered by the Province. They suggested integrating with EO to help connect clients to LBS to do a mandatory literacy assessment and address competition for acquiring clients. “Project Read” on Wellington has shown success in integrating different programs to share learners and Milestones for learners.

People not reached due to the eligibility/suitability criteria

There are people excluded from the program based on the eligibility and suitability criteria set out by the Ministry for LBS service providers. Participants commonly identified them as:

- a. **People who have difficulty completing the Milestones.** This includes people with mental health issues who may also have behavioural issues, people with learning disabilities, and lower level learners.
 - Participants suggested having more flexibility in measuring their progress, as well as funding for services like one-on-one sessions to provide support to these learners.
- b. **ESL learners.** Some people whose English and French language skills are not strong enough to support them in literacy are not being reached by the program.
 - Participants suggested updating the eligibility criteria to help reach these people.
- c. **Youth under 19.** More youth are graduating earlier from high school and need skills upgrading however, they are too young to participate in LBS.

- Participants suggested updating the eligibility criteria to allow more youth to participate in LBS which could help youth transition to post-secondary.
- d. Seniors.** Seniors who need to go back to work and upgrade their skills, particularly digital literacy skills, are not reached by the program.
- Participants suggested updating the suitability criteria to include seniors in the program.

People with social support issues

- a. People who lack access to transportation services.** Some learners are geographically isolated due to a lack of access to transportation and face difficulty participating in the program.
- Participants suggested providing financial supports to address transportation issues could help reduce the difficulty for learners of getting to the program.
- b. People who lack childcare support.** Some parents cannot attend the program because no one can look after their children.
- Participants suggested connecting early childhood learning centres with those who need childcare so parents can attend classes.
- c. People living in poverty.** Learning becomes a luxury when basic needs are not met. Poverty poses difficulties like access to a computer and hesitation to pursue learning over working which creates barriers to participating in the program.
- Participants suggested creating flexibility with training supports to allow service providers to help learners with their financial difficulties.

4. What barriers to inclusion are there and how could these be addressed?

Acknowledging that learners experience multiple barriers to inclusion is important in order to improve program participation. Participants identified the following barriers to inclusion and possible solutions in addressing those barriers:

Public perception barriers

- a. Lack of awareness and stigma attached to the name of the program.** A lot of people are not aware of the LBS program and others associate the name of the program with not being able to read or write.
- Participants suggested improving the marketing strategies, including rebranding and renaming the LBS program to reduce stigma, increase awareness, and provide a better understanding of the program and the services it provides.

- b. Emphasis on employment.** Some people do not have employment as their main goal for upgrading their skills, and the program's focus on employment limits people from participating in the program.
- Participants suggested educating the public on the program benefits beyond employment to reach out to more people who could benefit from it.

Program barriers

- a. Lack of service integration with other related agencies.** The lack of partnerships with social assistance, ES (Employment Service) providers and Apprenticeship are limiting the opportunities for OW and ES clients and apprentices to benefit from skills upgrading.
- Participants suggested the development of a regional network resource to improve collaboration between these programs; strengthen local referral relationships between service providers; and reach out to more people who could benefit from the program.
- b. Rigidity of OALCF and program metrics.** OALCF creates barriers for people who cannot achieve progress and transition to their goals.
- Participants suggested updating the Milestones to make them a more effective measure of success. They also suggested developing regional suitability criteria to address regional differences in learner needs or developing literacy standards appropriate to the context of the communities learners live in.
- c. Inflexible eligibility/suitability criteria.** Youth, seniors, lower level learners, people with low English or French language proficiency, mental health issues, and learning disabilities are excluded from the program due to the eligibility/suitability criteria for participation.
- Participants suggested extending the age range to include more youth and seniors in the program and creating more levels to include lower level learners and learners with learning disabilities.
- d. Rigid use of learner and training support funding.** The inability to use funding to help support learners' basic needs, like food for learners who are living in poverty, or computer software for learners with learning disabilities, makes it difficult to help learners living through hardship progress.
- Participants suggested providing more training for service providers to help learners in crisis and providing increased and more flexible funding to address the basic needs of learners.
- e. Administrative burden on staff.** This impacts the capacity and resources used to reach out to learners and develop partnerships with other programs.
- Participants suggested reducing the administrative load so staff can focus more of their time on developing programs and teaching

learners. Some participants also suggested creating Learning Specialist positions to assist instructors in developing, maintaining, and updating their teaching skills in teaching adult learners.

- f. **Inconsistency among ETCs and their role.** The high turnover in ETCs and the different approaches they communicate to the LBS organizations they work with, make it challenging to accurately identify what is allowed and what is not.
- Participants suggested creating an ETC dedicated to the LBS network to ensure the program and learner needs are met.

Social support barriers

- a. **Lack of transportation.** Getting to the LBS service providers is challenging, especially for those living in rural areas due to lack of public transportation.
- Participants suggested creating flexibility within policies to allow LBS providers to use funding to address transportation issues.
- b. **Lack of support and resources.** The lack of support for housing, childcare, access to internet, mental health support, and long distance service limits learners' ability to participate in the program.
- Participants suggested providing distance learning tools so learners can continue with existing programs outside of operating hours. They also suggested partnering with Early Learning Centres so parents and children can learn together.
- c. **Lack of mechanisms to engage people living in poverty.** People experiencing homelessness and those living below the poverty line could benefit from skills upgrading, however, outreach and delivering services to them is difficult.
- Participants suggested increasing funding to provide services to help these learners. Partnering with libraries could also help to improve access to technology.

III. Feedback on Discussion Part 2 – Leadership and Vision

1. Who should the program serve, and why?

- a. **It should serve anyone who needs the service.** Most participants agreed that the program should serve everyone who would like to access the services and learn the skills they need to contribute to their own, and the community's social, economic, and community development.
- b. **It should serve people who need to enhance their skills.** People who are underemployed, under-skilled, need to refresh their skills or people who want to gain independence should be able to participate in the program.
- c. **It should serve people with learning disabilities.** Learners with learning disabilities or people who do not fit in the current education framework need to have services that will help them improve their skills.
- d. **It should also serve youth between 16-18 years old.** Youth who aren't served elsewhere and needs help managing independent self-study should have access to the program's services.
- e. **It should serve seniors.** Seniors could benefit from the program, especially for learning or updating their digital literacy skills, as well as learning to conduct daily tasks like managing medication.
- f. **It should serve newcomers.** The LBS program could help with newcomer integration and basic life skills.
- g. **It should serve people pursuing an apprenticeship.** Apprentices and pre-apprentices can also benefit from the program by helping them improve their progress in their apprenticeship.

Additional feedback

- Some participants said that the suitability factors should be updated or removed to better serve the regional and sectoral differences to provide the service to more people.

5. What should the LBS strive to achieve, and why?

Learner-centred service delivery

- a. **It should meet the needs of the community and not the targets.** Allow flexibility in designing the program to appropriately reflect learners' needs and goals, and to have a realistic measurement of learners' progress.
- b. **It should strive to improve the quality of life of the learners.** LBS should aim to upgrade learners' essential skills to allow them to prosper in their community, improve their engagement in civic duty, and lead a fulfilling life.

- c. **It should focus more on teaching learners and less on administration.** Instructors should have the ability spend more time developing their learners' literacy skills and not be limited by administrative paperwork.
- d. **It should be about more than employment.** LBS should build literate, skilled, and confident communities; LBS should not only be focused on employment. For some learners, enhancing their independence and self-esteem is an important first step before gaining employment.

Organizational improvement in the LBS network

- a. **It should work more collaboratively with different ministries and programs.** LBS needs to be embedded into other provincial programs like EO, MCSS, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration (MCI), Ministry of Education (EDU), Seniors Secretariat, and others who provide the necessary wrap around supports to improve the pool of resources and services for learners.
- b. **It should create a consistent public messaging.** LBS should strive for a consistent province-wide messaging, branding, promotion of literacy to better educate the public about literacy and the program.
- c. **It should be more inclusive and diverse.** LBS should revisit the eligibility and suitability criteria to be more inclusive to everyone who would like to participate and would benefit from the program. Other participants said that there should be a good representation of diversity among learners in the marketing strategy.

6. How would you re-envision the LBS program to address the number of adults in Ontario needing literacy and other essential skills?

Address public perception of LBS

- a. **Rebrand LBS to improve perception of the program and people who access its services.** There is stigma attached with the current name of the program. Provincial marketing can address the stigma and improve the public's awareness and understanding of the program and its benefits beyond employability which could encourage people to participate in the program.
- b. **Recognize literacy as a basic right.** People should have access to literacy. Literacy results in improving the health and economic development of the individual and the community at large.

Expand service outreach

- a. **Embed LBS into other provincial service programs.** Embedding LBS in MCSS funded programs like OW and ODSP, or MAESD' EO programs like ES and YJC is needed to improve outreach and provision of LBS services to people who might need it. There should also be a referral system that allows service providers to cooperate with other programs to reduce competition for referrals.

- b. Expand LBS delivery in correctional facilities, subsidized housing, and libraries.**

Improve program delivery

- a. Improve the OALCF to reflect the needs of learners.** The OALCF is currently not a realistic framework that is aligned with the lives of learners. Updating the Milestones to allow more flexibility may make them more relevant to the different learners' needs. LBS should emphasize the qualitative progress to ensure learners are not being fast-tracked to completion to fulfill targets, especially for learners who take longer to achieve their goals.
- b. Adopt a grassroots approach to identifying needs and servicing those needs.** The program needs to be learner-centered and take a holistic approach to service provision to adequately support the needs of learners.
- c. Tailor program delivery based on streams.** Every stream caters to different learners and the Performance Management Framework (PMF) needs to reflect this difference by creating a stream-based assessment of learners' goals and progress.
- d. Recognize regional differences.** Recognize that the rural areas and the north do not have the same resources as urban areas.

Improve support to service providers

- a. Provide more support for practitioners.** On-going professional development training for practitioners and other staff could help improve the service provided to learners.
- b. Improve support to community-based programs.** Community-based programs serve the most marginalized learners, but are not seen as equal players with colleges and schoolboards. Providing more resource supports to the community-based programs could help improve service to vulnerable learners.
- c. Need consistent direction from ETCs.** Consistency in messaging from ETCs could be achieved by reducing staff turnovers.
- d. Allow service providers to propose work plans to MAESD.** Service providers would like to work with the Ministry to develop a universal training program that is professionally recognized by EO.

IV. Feedback on Discussion 3 – Funding, Efficiency and Sustainability

1. What funding principles should be considered as we re-envision the LBS program to address the number of adults in Ontario needing literacy and other essential skills?

- a. **Fair and transparent funding.** The funding formula should be consistent province wide and transparent by sharing the model of how funding is distributed across the LBS network. Historical funding levels and targets should not be used to inform the new model.
- b. **Stable funding.** Provide long-term agreements that are stable and independent from the governing political party in order to create consistency and predictability for program operation.
- c. **Sufficient funding.** LBS services should be able to deliver services without having to rely on other sources such as fundraising activities for financial support.
- d. **Flexible funding.** There should be enough room for the flexible use of funding to mitigate the different barriers to participation learners face. Allow flexible use of program training supports to address learner barriers, including but not limited to poverty, hunger, childcare and transportation.
- e. **Reflective of operation costs.** Funding for program operation, including: staffing, rent, hydro, etc., should be reflected and separate from funding for learner programming.
- f. **Livable wage for staff.** Staff should be paid a reasonable wage for the work they are doing and wages should rise with cost of living.
- g. **Reflective of geographic needs.** Funding principles should be developed in line with the geographical needs of learners and communities which is particularly important for rural areas that need more training supports to address issues like transportation.
- h. **Equity amongst schoolboard, community-based programs and colleges.** Funding should reflect the clients each organization is serving. Participants said that community-based programs do not have the same support services as colleges and schoolboards but are serving learners who experience multiple barriers to participating in the program and in their daily life.

7. What suggestions would you like MAESD to consider as the government works to update the funding formula for LBS?

Funding distribution suggestions

- a. **Develop a multi-year funding strategy.** Multi-year funding would secure the funding service providers receive and would allow program planning for more than one year at a time.
- b. **Distribute funding in a timely manner.** The schedule of funding distribution should appropriately meet the needs of service providers like receiving more funding up front to pay for service location lease, materials, etc., instead of twelve equal payments.
- c. **Funding should reflect the uniqueness of each stream and sector.** Funding should reflect the unique needs of learners in each stream or sector. For example, the Indigenous stream embeds cultural learning in the program but does not have the resources for it.
- d. **Create a two-part funding strategy for learners and operation costs.** Funding for learners should be separate from the organization's operation costs which would account for things like the transportation costs for delivering the program in different locations, rent, cost of living differences in different regions, etc. Conducting a true cost analysis could help the Ministry understand the funding deficit that currently exists in running the program and how service providers rely on fundraising to cover the difference.

Other suggestions

- a. **The baseline funding for learners should not be based on learner outcomes.** Funding should be reflective of the needs and progress of learners and not tied to learner outcomes because some learners progress slower, and may not be able to meet targets right away.
- b. **Allow organizations to carry over funding surplus to the next year's operation.** Left over funding at the end of the year should be allowed to be used towards operation funds, instead of returning back to the Ministry.

8. What would you recommend for the 2018/2019 fiscal year with regard to funding increases that could facilitate expansion of LBS services?

General recommendations

- a. **Stabilize funding for the current system before expanding.** Fix the funding needs of the current system before expanding the LBS program.

- b. **Distribute funding early.** Funding for the 2018-2019 contract should be signed off earlier so service providers can strategically plan ahead for the next fiscal year.
- c. **Fund a provincial marketing strategy.** There should be funding for LBS promotion to increase program awareness and outreach activities, particularly for promotion in small towns.

Recommendations regarding funding increase

- a. **Increase funding without increasing targets.** The program should not struggle to support people who are struggling. Recognize the network is serving the hardest to serve clients which is also costly to serve. Participants said that a 15% funding increase for the programs without increasing targets is needed to better serve learners. This includes increased funding for:
 - **Administrative costs.** Funding should reflect the administrative tasks service providers are required to do. Streamlining the program administrative requirements would help ease administrative burden and allocate funds back to teaching.
 - **Technology budget.** This should include funding for computers, learning software, and staff costs to maintain and operate the network.
 - **Staff salaries.** Staff should be paid a reasonable and livable wage for the work they do.
 - **Emergency expenses.** Increase funding to have a pool of money for emerging service demand and other needs that were not planned for.
 - **Pilot programs.** Fund for more projects or pilot programs to support innovative literacy programming.

Allocate funding to support learner needs

- **Fund resources for people with learning disabilities.** This should include funding for proper learning disability assessments, and resources that adequately serve their needs.
- **Fund social support for learners.** There should be funding allocated to support needs of learners to address barriers to participation like poverty, childcare needs, and lack of transportation.
- **Provide for WSIB insurance for work placements.** The Ministry needs to provide funding for learner Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) insurance for learners so they can get practical employment experience.

Provide funding for service provider needs

- a. **Fund instructors' professional development.** There should be funding for the continuous training of instructors to improve their skills in providing service to learners.
- b. **Fund Francophone and ASL materials.** Create funding for Francophone and ASL streams materials, specifically for translating and adapting Anglophone materials for their stream. Also address the limited resources in these streams.
- c. **Reinstate funding for research and development for support organizations.** Reinstating the Service Delivery Network Development Fund (SDNDF) for regional networks and other support organizations would help support partnership development and create resources to respond to changing community needs.
- d. **Fund instructor outreach.** Provide travel funding for instructors travelling to other areas in Ontario, particularly remote locations, to learn from other practitioners and build their networks.

Additional feedback

- Participants would like to have an opportunity to provide feedback on emerging needs and offer ways to respond to them.

V. Feedback on Discussion Part 4 – Other Ideas

1. Are there other themes, recommendations or ideas that would you like to see MAESD and the LBS network consider as this work moves forward?

Improve program awareness and participation

- a. **Create a new program name to address public misconception.** The Ministry needs to address misconception and social stigma attached to the word 'literacy'. Some participants said this could be done by investing in marketing campaigns to promote a more accurate understanding of literacy and what the LBS program encompasses. Participants also said a new name for the program might be necessary to eliminate misconceptions. They suggested the following new names:
 - Adult Lifelong Learning (ALL)
 - Essential Skills Development Program (EDSP)
 - Adult Training and Learning Centre (Adult TLC)
 - Adult Lifelong Learning & Training (ALLT)
- b. **Provide sector partnership grants to attract employer participation.** The Ministry could provide additional sector partnership grants to encourage employer participation in the program and improve understanding of its potential benefits to employers.

Enhance programming to improve support to learners

- a. **Update the Milestones and Culminating Tasks.** The current Milestones tasks are not responsive to the progress of learners, particularly learners who take longer to progress. More Milestones are needed, particularly around Level 1. Level 1 could be broken down into at least three levels to create realistic measurements of progress for learners in the beginner level. Culminating Tasks should also be updated to make them more relevant to learners' goals and lives.
- b. **Create an ASL department.** Participants suggested creating a department devoted to ASL within school boards, EDU and MAESD to adequately serve the needs of ASL/LSQ (Langue des signes du Québec) learners.

Improve staff resource and support

- a. **Provide EOIS-CaMS training for new and current staff.** Create more learning tools, like webinars, for new and current staff to improve their use and navigation of EOIS-CaMS.

- b. Create an online resource library for service providers.** Service providers need to have a resource network to support literacy service organizations. Participants suggested funding for an online resource network like the Copian resource library.
- c. Hold an annual literacy conference.** The annual literacy conference could serve as a networking opportunity for the LBS network.
- d. Conduct more discussions on performance management.** Participants would like to have more discussions with the Ministry regarding performance management.

VI. Feedback on Discussion Part 5 – Proposed Approach to Working Together

1. What do you think about the draft approach to working together that MAESD has proposed? Do you have any suggested edits or refinements to the approach?

- **Conduct regular, multi-service meetings.** Participants would like to have more engagement opportunities like this symposium. It could be an annual or bi-annual meeting where all stakeholders (which in addition to the LBS network could include employment services and training boards) share information and improve support for the LBS network.
- **Include more stakeholders in the working tables.** Involving more stakeholders in the working tables would create a good representation of the LBS network and ensure a range of perspectives are captured. This includes involving: ETCs, previous and current learners, Local Employment Planning Council (LEPC), support organizations, and representatives from each stream and sector.
- **Ensure clear and consistent language and messaging in communications.** Create a communications strategy with a clear and consistent language and message that is available to everyone in the LBS network, not just to administrators who have access to the Employment Ontario Partners Gateway (EOPG).
- **Create engagement roadmaps.** Creating a roadmap with timelines and dates of engagement opportunities could help create transparency in the process.

2. What other ways should we consider working together in the future?

- **Commit to funding a strengthened marketing and branding campaign.** Participants would like the Ministry to invest on marketing the literacy program, like creating commercials, to improve awareness of the program.
- **Improve ETC training to better advise and support service providers.** Participants said that not all ETCs are knowledgeable about the program which poses challenges on how ETCs supervise service providers.
- **Conduct surveys.** Consider conducting more surveys as the previous survey was a useful tool in engaging the LBS network.
- **Conduct a separate discussion with each sector.** This could help understand and address needs of each sector.
- **Consider creating an application process for working tables.** Participants suggested creating an application process for the working tables which would

state an applicant's interest in involvement and what applicants could bring to the discussion.

VII. Next Steps

Erin McGinn wrapped up the meeting by expressing appreciation for the valuable insights shared and advice received. The Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) will review the feedback received in detail and stay in touch with all participants regarding next steps in improving and expanding the Literacy and Basic Skills program.

ATTACHMENT A: Agenda



Literacy and Basic Skills Symposium

October 5 – 6, 2017

Chestnut Residence and Conference Centre
89 Chestnut Street, Toronto

Symposium Purpose

To continue discussions with the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) network focused on strengthening the program and improving and increasing support and services to learners.

Agenda – Day 1

Time	Item	Location
8:00 am	Registration and Light Breakfast	
8:30	Smudging and Opening Blessing Laureen Blu Waters, Elder and Traditional Counselor	Colony Ballroom
8:45	Welcome Remarks from Deputy Minister Orencsak	
8:55	Agenda Review Nicole Swerhun, Independent Facilitator, Swerhun Facilitation	
9:05	Presentation: Setting the Context Erin McGinn, Assistant Deputy Minister, Highly Skilled Workforce Division	
9:30	DISCUSSION PART 1 – Community Needs	Breakout Rooms
10:30	Break	
10:45	DISCUSSION PART 2 – Leadership and Vision	
11:35	Plenary De-brief on Breakroom Discussions	Colony Ballroom
12:30 pm	Lunch	
1:15	Remarks from Minister Matthews	
1:30	DISCUSSION PART 3 – Funding, Efficiency & Sustainability	
2:30	Break	
2:45	DISCUSSION PART 4 – Other Ideas?	
3:00	DISCUSSION PART 5 – Working Together	
3:50	Wrap-Up and Next Steps Nicole Swerhun, Swerhun Facilitation Erin McGinn, Assistant Deputy Minister	
4:00	Adjourn	

ATTACHMENT B: Participant List

Below is a full list of stakeholder organizations that attended the Literacy and Basic Skills Symposium on October 5, 2017. Note that some stakeholder groups had more than one representative in attendance.

AAMJIWNAANG FIRST NATION CHIPPEWAS OF SARNIA
ABC COMMUNAUTAIRE/PENINSULE DU NIAGARA
ACTION READ COMMUNITY LITERACY CENTRE OF GUELPH
ADULT BASIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH
ADULT LANGUAGE AND LEARNING
ALEXANDRA PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD LEARNING CENTRE
ALGOMA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
ALGONQUIN AND LAKESHORE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
ALGONQUIN COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
ALMAGUIN ADULT LEARNING CENTRE
ALPHA-EN-PARTAGE DE SUDBURY EST
ALPHAPLUS CENTRE/CENTRE ALPHAPLUS
ALTERNATIVE LEARNING STYLES AND OUTLOOKS (ALSO)
ATIKOKAN LITERACY INC.
AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
BRANT SKILLS CENTRE
CAMBRIAN COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
CANADIAN HEARING SOCIETY – LA SOCIETE CANADIENNE DE L'OUIE
CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND (CNIB)
CANADORE COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
CARREFOUR DE FORMATION POUR ADULTES INC
CENTENNIAL COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
CENTRE D' EDUCATION ET DE FORMATION POUR ADULTES
CENTRE D'ALPHA LA ROUTE DU SAVOIR
CENTRE DE FORMATION DES ADULTES INC
CENTRE DE FORMATION ET DE PERFECTIONNEMENT DU GRAND SUDBURY
CENTRE DE FORMATION MANITOUWADGE LEARNING CENTRE
CENTRE DE FORMATION POUR ADULTES DE GREENSTONE
CENTRE DE FORMATION POUR ADULTES FRANCOPHONES A TIMMINS
CENTRE FRANCO-ONTARIEN DES RESSOURCES EN ALPHABÉTISATION
(SUDBURY) INC
COALITION ONTARIENNE DE FORMATION DES ADULTES
COLLEGE BOREAL D'ARTS APPLIQUES ET DE TECHNOLOGIE
COLLEGE SECTOR COMMITTEE FOR ADULT UPGRADING
COMMUNITY LEARNING ALTERNATIVES (HASTINGS COUNTY AND DISTRICT)
COMMUNITY LITERACY OF ONTARIO INC
CONESTOGA COLLEGE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY & ADVANCED LEARNING
CONFEDERATION COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
CONSEIL D'ALPHA DE TORONTO INC
CONTACT NORTH

CSCD DES GRANDES RIVIÈRES
CULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS GROUP INC (O/A NIAGARA REGIONAL NATIVE CENTRE)
DAVENPORT-PERTH NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE
DEAF LITERACY INITIATIVE
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA
DRYDEN LITERACY ASSOCIATION
DURHAM CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
DURHAM COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
DURHAM DEAF SERVICES INC
DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
EAST YORK LEARNING EXPERIENCE
FANSHAWE COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
FAST TRACK COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR SKILLS DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING
FORT ERIE NATIVE CULTURAL CENTRE INC
FRONTIER COLLEGE
GATEWAY CENTRE FOR LEARNING
GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
GEORGIAN COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY
GRAND ERIE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
GREATER ESSEX COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
HALDIMAND NORFOLK LITERACY COUNCIL
HALTON CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
HAMILTON & DISTRICT LITERACY COUNCIL
HAMILTON REGIONAL INDIAN CENTRE
HAMILTON-WENTWORTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
HUMBER COLLEGE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY & ADVANCED LEARNING
INDIAN FRIENDSHIP CENTRE OF SAULT STE MARIE
INDIAN YOUTH FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY
IROQUOIS FALLS ADULT LEARNING CENTRE INC
JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF DURHAM REGION
JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF KAWARTHA LAKES & HALIBURTON
JOHN HOWARD SOCIETY OF OTTAWA
KAWARTHA PINE RIDGE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
KENAMATEWIN NATIVE LEARNING CENTRE (KNLC)
KENJGEWIN TEG EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE
KINGSTON LITERACY & SKILLS
KTAAMGWEDAAGWAD GINDAASWIN
LA BOITE A LETTRES DE HEARST
LA CITE COLLEGIALE
LA CLE D'LA BAIE EN HURONIE- ASSOC CULTURELLE FRANCOPHONE
LAKESHORE AREA MULTI-SERVICES PROJECT INC (LAMP)
LAMBTON COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY
LAMBTON KENT DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
LAUBACH LITERACY ONTARIO

LE CENTRE DE FORMATION DU NIPISSING
LE CENTRE MOI J'APPRENDS INC
LE COLLEGE DU SAVOIR
LEARNING CENTRE FOR GEORGINA
LEARNING PLACE
LIMESTONE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
LITERACY ALLIANCE OF WEST NIPISSING
LITERACY COUNCIL OF DURHAM REGION
LITERACY COUNCIL OF NIAGARA WEST
LITERACY COUNCIL OF NORTH TIMISKAMING
LITERACY COUNCIL OF SOUTH SIMCOE
LITERACY COUNCIL OF SOUTH TIMISKAMING
LITERACY COUNCIL OF YORK SOUTH
LITERACY COUNCIL OF YORK-SIMCOE
LITERACY GROUP OF WATERLOO REGION
LITERACY LINK EASTERN ONTARIO INC
LITERACY LINK NIAGARA INC
LITERACY LINK SOUTH CENTRAL
LITERACY NETWORK NORTHEAST
LITERACY NETWORK OF DURHAM REGION
LITERACY NORTH HALTON
LITERACY ONTARIO CENTRAL SOUTH REGION LITERACY NETWORK (LOCS)
LITERACY SOCIETY OF SOUTH MUSKOKA INC
LITERACY SOUTH HALTON
LONDON DISTRICT CATHOLIC SCHOOL BOARD
LOYALIST COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
METRO LABOUR EDUCATION CENTRE
METRO TORONTO MOVEMENT FOR LITERACY/LE RASSEMBLEMENT POUR
L'ALPHABÉTISATION DELA COMMUNAUTE URBAINE DE TORONTO
MID NORTH NETWORK FOR THE COORDINATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF
ADULT LEARNING
MISSISSAUGA FIRST NATION
MOHAWK COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE
NATIVE WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE OF TORONTO
NEAR NORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
NIAGARA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
NIAGARA COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
NIAGARA REGIONAL LITERACY COUNCIL
NIPISSING-PARRY SOUND CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
NOKEE KWE
NORTH ALGOMA LITERACY COALITION
NORTH BAY LITERACY COUNCIL INC
NORTH CHANNEL LITERACY COUNCIL
NORTHERN COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO LITERACY NETWORK

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOOL BOARD ADMINISTRATORS (CESBA)
ONTARIO NATIVE LITERACY COALITION
ORILLIA & DISTRICT LITERACY COUNCIL INCORPORATED
OTTAWA CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
OTTAWA COMMUNITY COALITION FOR LITERACY
OTTAWA-CARLETON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
OWEN SOUND & NORTH GREY UNION PUBLIC LIBRARY
PARKDALE PROJECT READ
PEEL ADULT LEARNING CENTRE
PEEL DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
PEEL-HALTON-DUFFERIN ADULT LEARNING NETWORK
PEOPLE WORDS & CHANGE
PETERBOROUGH NATIVE LEARNING PROGRAM
PORT CARES
PRINCE EDWARD LEARNING CENTRE
PROGRAM READ (SAULT STE MARIE)
PROJECT 25-44 (SUDBURY) VOCATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRE INC
PROJECT READ LITERACY NETWORK WATERLOO-WELLINGTON INC
PTP-ADULT LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS
QUALITY IN LIFELONG LEARNING NETWORK INC
RED LAKE DISTRICT ADULT LEARNING CENTRE INC
RENFREW COUNTY COMMUNITY UPGRADING PROGRAM
RENFREW COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SAUGEEN FIRST NATION (29)
SAULT COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
SENECA COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
SHERIDAN COLLEGE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY & ADVANCED LEARNING
SIMCOE COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
SIMCOE/MUSKOKA LITERACY NETWORK
SIOUX-HUDSON LITERACY COUNCIL
SIOUX-HUDSON LITERACY COUNCIL
SIR SANDFORD FLEMING OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
SIX NATIONS POLYTECHNIC INC
SOUTH ESSEX COMMUNITY COUNCIL
ST CLAIR COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY
ST LAWRENCE COLLEGE OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY
ST MARYS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
STREET HAVEN AT THE CROSSROADS
SUDBURY CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
THAMES VALLEY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
THE ONTARIO COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR THE DEAF INC
THE ST CHRISTOPHER HOUSE
THUNDER BAY LITERACY GROUP
TIMMINS LEARNING CENTRE
TORONTO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

TORONTO CENTRE FOR COMMUNITY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT
TORONTO COUNCIL FIRE NATIVE CULTURAL CENTRE
TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY
TRENT VALLEY LITERACY ASSOCIATION
TRI-COUNTY LITERACY COUNCIL
TRI-COUNTY LITERACY NETWORK
UNEMPLOYED HELP CENTRE OF WINDSOR
UPPER CANADA DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
UPPER GRAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
VALLEY ADULT LEARNING ASSOCIATION
VALLEY ADULT LEARNING ASSOCIATION
WATERLOO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
WATERLOO REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD
WELLINGTON COUNTY LEARNING CENTRE
YMCA OF GREATER TORONTO
YMCA OF HAMILTON/BURLINGTON/BRANTFORD
YMCA OF SIMCOE/MUSKOKA
YWCA OF ST. THOMAS-ELGIN
YORK REGION DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

ATTACHMENT C: Plenary Live Notes

The notes below were typed live and projected on a screen at the meeting when all participants were in the main plenary room discussing Part 3, 4, and 5 on the agenda. The content of these notes has not been modified and appears as projected, with the exception of minor formatting and spelling mistakes. Please note that these notes are not a verbatim transcript of what was shared in the room, as some of the words may have been inadvertently changed or missed during the live typing at the meeting.

1. Discussion 3 – Funding, Efficiency and Sustainability

1. What funding principles should be considered as we re-envision the LBS program to address the number of adults in Ontario needing literacy and other essential skills?

- Program consistency and integrity.
- There should be a certain logic in the funding plan. Some school boards receive funding not for the services they offer. Equitable funding model.
- Consider that we have the hardest to serve clients and are therefore more costly to serve.
- Ensure staff are paid a livable wage.
- Close the gap – if we are contracted to deliver LBS services, that they are paying for everything we are doing, not having to rely on other sources of funding.
- Funding principles should be developed in line with geographic needs of learners. Funding should reflect who can realistically bring to the programs by region.
- Community based programs should be funded under a different model /under different performance commitments because we have the hardest to serve learners.
- Multiyear funding/contracts to secure and protect what we get (lots of agreement).
- Index the money given every year to cost of living.
- Outreach and promotion strategy – ensure funding strategy incorporates this.
- Analyze capacity needs before setting targets.
- Use a 2 part funding strategy that recognizes a base amount per learner and more of a facilities or regional allocation that accounts for transportation, rent, cost of living differences in different regions.
- Equity amongst school boards, community agencies, and colleges.
- Recognize complexity of the learners and the communities.
- Funding formula should recognize the intensity of service, shouldn't be equal if they were only there for a couple of weeks.
- Be cautious in using historical funding levels and targets to inform a new model.
- Incentive in the funding formula for surpassing or exceeding targets.
- Funding should not be dependent upon the change in governing party.
- Clear and transparent.
- Tier funding – blended learners vs distance learners.

2. What suggestions would you like MAESD to consider as the government works to update the funding formula for LBS?

- Echo funding related to cost of living depending on regions.
- Would like to see a technology budget – tech changes fast
- This is important for visual learners in particular
- Community base needs to be funded fairly so they don't have to fundraise anymore to deliver ministry's program
- Customized based on sector you are serving e.g. indigenous community partner embeds cultural learning experiences but don't 'have resources
- Take into consideration all activities service providers are doing, even marking assessments
- Training supports – take into account that things preventing learners from attending might be more than childcare and travel (allow a more broad application). Take into account how we use these and what we are able to use them for – be more flexible
- 15% increase for the programs without increasing targets.
- Funding should not be based on outcomes or creaming will occur
- Centralized, transparent, open process that is equal for all, not done at the regional or ETC level – there are no discrepancies on how funding is rolled out to each program (consistent, fair, applied province wide, notwithstanding unique regional differences)
- Length of time a learner can be served should not matter. Their goals should remain relevant to program, and they are making some level of progress. Particularly applies to lower level learners whose progress takes longer.
- Targets should be negotiated and based on actual costs
- Equitable
- If the ministry wants a point of departure, it can be to look at the study concerning status of cost for francophone centres to have an idea of real costs. (submitted to ministry last year)
- Payment schedule to be adjusted – instead of 12 equal payments, some need more \$ up front for leases, etc. A payment schedule that meets needs
- Consider admin heavy process current data base is not user friendly – funding should reflect the amount of admin we have to do
- Do a true cost analysis of what it costs us to do now and why – if we have different needs across Ontario, more funding is required. Takes into consideration what the ministry is not paying for now, as well. (fee for service, fundraising covers these extra things)
- Cost of living – general increase per year
- Pay equity between colleges, community programs and school boards
- Tech: tech costs should also include staff costs to maintain and operate the network – we don't have the expertise to trouble shoot in all cases.
- (statement of revenue and expenditure report) ER/SRER to include our costs – give us a line that says what else did you pay, how much fundraising dollars went into building the program
- Annual cost of living increase – not tied to performance

- Don't forget to continue funding the networks – if we continue to make community based decisions we can't forget those who bring us together on a regular basis
- Longer term contracts so we can plan for more than one year at a time.

3. What would you recommend for the 2018/2019 fiscal year with regard to funding increases that could facilitate expansion of LBS services?

- Ministry to create pool of community funds to respond to emerging demand for services – either on the support front or if there is spontaneous need for services that weren't planned for
- Increase salaries
- Consider another year of stabilization before we expand services
- Vastly streamline the admin requirements so we can allocate those funds back to the classroom
- *Grassroots: for those that are ready, let us propose our work plans back to the ministry with provable results (i.e. quarterly reports) let us provide input as to what it is we can do
- Stabilize the funding we have now before expanding because we all need sufficient funding to do what we do now
- Ask us what we would like to do in our community and what it would cost, how many people we think we might serve
- Earlier distribution of 2018-2019 contract to be signed off earlier so they can strategically plan ahead for the next fiscal year
- *Pocket of money to do assessments with other agencies that we are currently not funded to do
- *Some organizations don't have the facilities to do certain tasks that are done in school boards for e.g. Funding to ...ns
- Q2: consider looking at 3 different streams that are funded, recognizing that each stream and sector has its own needs
- Regionally we should be able to look at how we can expand. Use regional networks to look at how to expand.
- Funding of regions – about 10 years ago ministry decided to allocate funds by regions. Sometimes this works against the regions because one may have money and another doesn't but it's impossible to transfer the funds over
- *Opportunity y for some kind of concept paper, some way to provide feedback on emerging needs and ways to respond to them
- For the francophone stream, we have limited resources. We cannot borrow from Quebec – would like specific funding for translating and adapting materials that we steal from our Anglophone colleagues. Specific funding for this task. Same for ASL.
- If there was money left over at the end of the year it would be good to put it towards operating funds, esp. if we already have a deficit (do not claw back)
- Ensure that instructors or those who travel to remote locations have some sort of budget line
- To have funding set aside that is not taken from ... good at translating but also good at developing but it takes time .set aside funds for curriculum development that is not currently funded

- Would like to opportunity to travel to other areas in Ontario to talk to other practitioners and managers. Would like to see funding where we can be more involved in the programs. For example, if the practitioner has an issue promoting their program, the manager says that funding is for purchasing resources, I'd like to be able to go and seek out/support those needs myself and be present for those programs. Might be similar for francophone and Indigenous programs as well. The ability to reach outside of your current group to learn and share more effectively. (for support organizations – not currently funded to do that right now)
- It would be great if ETCs had more time to work with service providers as partners
- It would be great to work with ministry counterparts to recognize and develop a universal training program – have it recognized by EO, to have professional recognition
- The role of the regional networks is to respond to changing community needs and facilitate resources to respond to those needs. It would be great to reinstate the annual research and development funding for regional network supports and support organizations too.

3. Discussion Part 4 – Other Ideas

1. Are there other themes, recommendations or ideas that would you like to see MAESD and the LBS network consider as this work moves forward?

- Adult Lifelong Learning (ALL)
- OALCF Level 1 – 225 points and Level 2 and 3 are 50. Level 1 needs to be broken down in to at least 3 levels. More development of milestones, as well.
- Name: Essential Skills Development Program
- Succession planning – CAMS training for new staff (different than reading about it on the website) like webinars, for example.
- Performance management only got 9% of votes for what to talk about – we haven't talked about this, hoping it comes up at some point in discussions with ministry.
- Dollars for projects (networks, actual programs) there hasn't been funding for good projects. Sharing and accessibility of those projects once they're completed. Resource library for all across Canada was closed down – would like to see something like this come back
- E-Channel – include e-channel on the ground floor when changes are made
- Essential skills program development. At federal level this is used.
- Name: Employment and Training Ontario
- Focus on destigmatizing the word literacy. People who come to our programs know what it is, but if we're going to invest in a marketing and advertising campaign perhaps we could work on destigmatizing instead of changing the word.
- Milestone tasks: revisit how they are actually created. Add more milestones, too. How they are created now limits trainers, esp. with learners in centres for a long period of time, and with blended learners. Sometimes have to duplicate milestones.

- Stigma: every one of us is on a literacy spectrum. Interesting marketing strategy in terms of eliminating stigma
- Employment and Training Ontario – error – don't want LBS replaced by this, we would like EO to be replaced by this
- ASL language is still not fully respected as a language (recognized in 1990) LSQ department within the MOE , time to have our own department for ASL and language instruction
- Literacy: does have stigma – people think it means you don't know how to read. Name was Literacy Plus, and people stopped coming to us. We are now training and learning centre (TLC). People think if they know how to read they don't need literacy skills. (Renfrew county)
- Grateful that MAESD is asking for feedback. Providing funding to participate is good
- If LBS program is still going to exist in its current form, there may not be one name that will capture all of the services, and streams, goals, needs – really broad scope of what we do.
- For the future, ministry could consider additional sector partnership grants. A way to bring employers to the table, which has been and will always be difficult. With these grants we've been able to bring multiple employers to the table, by understanding 'what's in it for me'
- Literacy: if the ministry would spend some money on promotion of literacy, they could also spend money on the education of what literacy actually is. There is a misconception on what the word actually means. If public was properly educated on it there wouldn't be the issue.

4. Discussion Part 5 – Proposed Approach to Working Together

1. What do you think about the draft approach to working together that MAESD has proposed? Do you have any suggested edits or refinements to the approach? What other ways should we consider working together in the future?

- Multi service meeting scenarios / Western Regional Implementation team – employment services, literacy, training boards etc. came together and learned information about each other. An opportunity to do this once or twice a year would help learn from each other and how to support one another
- Same old story – need bolder approach. Haven't seen the ETCs perspective and I'm sure they have some issues they'd like to tell us. We should brainstorm with our ETCS
- Add rebranding and marketing. Needs to be stronger to show we've got the passion and vision to provide this kind of program
- There should be a deaf department within MAESD
- Support organizations and program managers can give input but need commitment and dollars from ministry to help do marketing and branding support. for e.g. We could have tv commercials about our learners

- Working tables – what about sending out call for EOI so people from all levels from all orgs are heard and have the opportunity to come forward, helps make sure we capture diverse experiences. Funding provided from the ministry for the teachers/supply/replacement teachers to participate. This is a good start, but input from people in this room could build on this.
- A call requires that we have a communication plan going forward that we are all familiar with and on board with. Communications to the field have to be clear, compelling, and brief. Make sure we hear what we need to and respond in a timely fashion.
- Make sure all sectors and all streams are represented at all working tables
- If there are regional ETCs or people with extensive knowledge of literacy or LBS would be helpful. Facilitators / neutral party at these sessions would be helpful to ensure all voices are heard and all feedback is taken in
- Project based funding – reinstate – to allow support orgs and agencies to undertake activities to support tools required to support expansion of LBS outside of their core activities. Ministry needs to allow adequate time for cash flow and project completion.
- Translation of the word consultant – misleading in French – people thought it meant ETC – reinforces that ETCs are not present in this diagram. Would like to have them more involved which would help with discrepancies around interpretation of the program. If they were more involved and learning with the agencies it would be better for everyone
- Working groups - make sure the right people are at the table. Let the orgs set the right people.
- Change the role of the ETCs - they can be valuable in these discussion but limited in what they can do
- Consultation process – working tables a good idea – suggest seconding individuals from LBS field to dedicate themselves to planning of curriculum etc.
- Addressing capacity of ETCs to participate is to initiate and implement a LBS lead consultant from the ETCs.
- Employment Training Consultant as a name doesn't really do it. Field consultant might be more appropriate.
- Support for being able to second people from the field to participate. there are people with unique contributions to make based on experience who could help make sure we don't repeat mistakes from the past
- Tomorrow's consultation with Indigenous groups – ensure other streams and each of the sectors has a similar opportunity as we have today and tomorrow
- Would like to see the Venn diagram completed – should show intersections of commonality – find the common ground, complete the Venn diagram with goals we should all be working towards
- Pilot project where organizations are provided funding to create their own program, set their own milestones, and agree with funder on mutual goals. Supported with a business analyst so it is not admin heavy. Develop grassroots up, empowering us to create our own program in consultation with MAESD to make sure there are mutual goals. Business analyst would help figure it out to tell the ministry

- To keep moving forward, would be nice to see some timelines to this so it comes to completion at some point
- A key word is 'working tables'. There should be tangible results. As a 'dinosaur' of 32 years I have seen many part 1's – would like to see part 2, 3, 4 progress.
- Consultation with various sectors, would be worth reviewing what they come up with to see if there is something we can apply in our model
- Might want to involve the learners, who aren't on here. Solicit feedback, suggestions from learners and involve them in the process. Difficult, but their input is valid.
- Before we proceed to working tables, needs to be training with MAESD staff so they understand what it is we do. ETCs don't all understand the programs they are supporting so how will they make a valuable contribution to this process
- Commercials for learners – is there any possibility to have access to the video shared today? (yes) with translation please and captioning
- 4 steams and support orgs: when they were conceived the lines were pretty clear. Now some support orgs (e.g. college) are funded as Anglo but support both francophone and deaf within the college. Awareness that some of the definitions/designation are outdated and could be revisited to better reflect the kinds of programs we deliver and support
- Pleased to see commitment to transparency. Important to explain why you cannot be transparent. 4th quarter technology funding process happening at the regional level – explain why it's unfolding this way
- Streams: assumptions that school boards only ... they are sometimes the only place in the community
- Might be useful to have roadmap of engagement or partnership opportunities available with timelines/time commitments attached. If there is more than one working group you could make a good decision about which to participate in.
- Use an application process for the working tables where people have to apply and state their case for why they would like to be involved and what they would bring to the table
- School boards – you never know in a small community, there is not only one identified area that we work with
- Communication: when we get reports / bulletins, clear language editor could go through them before they are sent out.

ATTACHMENT D: Transcribed Worksheet Feedback

The attachment below is the transcribed feedback shared by participants through the individual and group worksheets. Please note that the content of the transcribed worksheets has not been altered or changed in any way, except general formatting and spelling mistakes.

1. Discussion Part 1 – Community Needs

1. What are you seeing as the greatest needs in your communities?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- Learners accessing services in rural areas; awareness building for program, especially for hard to reach people; serving the underemployed – limited time; supports for mental health; make referrals in to programs easier.
- Breaking down silos between different resources in communities. Should be relying on one another. E.g. entrepreneurship, financial literacy. Wasting resources by not knowing what else is going on. Need a formalized way to communicate/share info. Networks and support organizations need to come together regularly; mental health supports; job readiness/soft skills.
- Retraining for a new job, to get into college, prep for GED; getting people to recognize their upgrading needs and motivate them to improve their lot in life. E.g. the “working poor”; Link with Ministry of Education to improve support for people going back for high school credits. In some places there is no face-to-face support for them and they end up coming to LBS but may not be suitable as learners; promotion on a broad base of LBS options, provincially by MAESD; marketing and awareness of LBS; public transportation; seeing more younger learners; programming/staff PD to address needs of learners with mental health issues and special needs; ability to adapt LBS including OALCF for learners with challenges; need counselling and other support to help these learners get into programs. Need counselling linked with LBS agencies; more funding to help people get formally assessed for learning disabilities. It’s very expensive especially for people in community-based organizations. Difficult for many learners to articulate what their needs are; learners with mental health issues sometimes have little access to counselling, especially in small and rural communities. MAESD needs to step up coordination with MCSS (Ministry of Community and Social Services) to encourage MCSS-funded agencies to work with LBS agencies.
- Rural, poor – lack of transportation; having access to timely information about their communities. I.e. report from the labour board, could use a full time person gathering data. How to know what we don’t know. Partially rural. We don’t know enough about them. What flexibility do we have to drift start a new program; need to tap into a pot of \$ to experiment; needs very different rural vs urban; can’t predict needs when writing plans. i.e. a plant closes; need to be more nimble; communication problems between Ministry and the field. Can’t interchange programs; LMI – it’s important for

the literacy networks to help provide. They need to be more timely; networks should be able to see EOIS-CaMS data monthly; LEPCs (Local Employment Planning Council) – it's helpful, but some are doing much better than other. They are not required to share with SPs; SPs/networks meet every other month in some cases; high turnover of staff due to pay; huge disparity in needs among clients MCI needs to help support these programs; turning clients away because they are not well-suited to our programs. Legal concerns – discrimination they don't have the resources; we need to work more closely with employers. Pilot projects and union, employers to provide training on-site. Workers were paid for half the time spent in training.

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- Challenge is to a) have proper info and data to identify and address needs and b) have resources to resolve or address needs/ need funding and performing flexibility to address needs.
- Child care supports; Mental health support; Lower level learners being pushed out or not given the time to complete that they actually need; Not enough marketing from MAESD; transportation.
- Consistent internet; lack of transition pathways; greater collaboration amongst EO and Non-EO service providers/programs to better serve learners.
- Limited people in F.N. (First Nations) community; employment; motivation; esteem – cultural education/ Ojibwa; experiential learning (partner); employment sustainability within a company; learning disabilities; mental health; addictions; ADD, ADHD (Network Level: Anglophone, Francophone, Deaf/blind, F.N. → provide instructors to provide service).
- Acknowledging poverty of learners; rural transportation/access; resources for learning disabilities → flexibility with learning supports/training supports; “Grade 12 certificate, not OSSD (Ontario Secondary School Diploma, 14 credits)”]; such a complex program, people being [unintelligible] have such complex issues/needs. ES (Employment Services) /LBS – lack of coordination; “LBS/ES relationship a constant battle” – competition for client #s, ES unaware that client can be in LBS & ES. “Apathy for frontline” – systemic issues too; no referrals from ES to LBS; need for assessments – at least everyone who has no Grade 12 should be assessed. “ES should have a clear LBS target – e.g. ES has OW client targets. Why not LBS too. Youth – 90% of clients need LBS, but LBS not allowed “ministry thinks of it [as] double dipping”.
- There needs to be regional flexibility; working poor.
- Access to better jobs, knowledge and industry; Client needs – arrange and interval. External barriers need to be removed; ESL/literacy/workforce programs; flexible program models.
- We saw “community” in 2 different ways: community of LBS instructors and community of LBS learners; Needs – Learners with mental health issues. Complex issues: diagnosed/undiagnosed, treated/untreated; Multi-barrier learners; undiagnosed learning disabilities; rural learners; ESL learners when no ESL services exist in community.

- Build connections with ODSP, OW → make these connections easier to make in different areas; SAMS (Social Assistance Management System) has stopped sharing between these organizations. Leaving it to individual organizations to cold call. Outreach has become constant; ODSP, OW pulled back into silos. Important to get OW clients into the school they're located near the school. They're not mandated to network. Mandate need to be top-down. Staff at local level make it challenging. Duplicating services between OW & LBS organizations; Need to assess clients. "Contact North" silo (not assessing for literacy); Organizations don't know where to refer clients because operating in a silo; Grouping similar needs; Support for learning disabilities; MAESD working more closely with MCSS; access to timely information (labour market)
- Many people own that data; many communities are not like what's happening in Toronto. Not fair to compare needs of rural areas to city. Tailor approaches to community needs; REGIONAL FLEXIBILITY.
- Poverty. Access to internet, ability to afford (e.g. \$50 per month cheapest in Toronto); regional differences, stream differences→deaf residential schools; marketing and awareness to communities, to employment services, to Ministry staff; may not be about significant change to LBS but understanding it, incorporating into the EO system in a real way; promotion of the issue; expansion: more ministries could refer clients ES could refer clients; *create recognized certification of learners to use in next steps; *LBS as "training" – problematic, it is about learning and education!; how to distinguish between sector-strengths; need for local, distance learning. Different from E-channel.

2. What gaps exist in the current program and footprint of services?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- ESL in communities where service is limited. Occupational training so LBS can be a direct to workforce pathway; LBS needs to change to catch up with how the population and labour market has changed.
- Lack of low-level literacy programs. Turning people away → lowest program is higher than some clients need. How do we serve this group? Milestones don't work → different circumstances for different clients (e.g. domestic abuse); Ministry isn't always asking the right Questions to measure progress. E.g. anger management, self-confidence. Not all adult learning is measured in employment terms.
- Some rural areas are under-sourced; More difficult to get volunteers for 1-1 tutoring; ability to serve immigrants who have been in Canada for a number of years, have done ESL but are still not proficient in English or more MCI (Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration) program, especially in small and rural areas; very low-level learning program; not enough ESL program; lack of consistency in messaging etc. from region to region and lack of consistency from ETC to ETC within a region and even within a local office.
- Need more/better distance learning tools; funding model should really take into consideration rural vs urban; no community-based program in a particular area,

causes a large gap; demographics have changed SIGNIFICANTLY in 20 years (footprint hasn't changed).

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- Need better access to labour market information (LMI). Networking need more staff and money to analyze this data. *need networks to have access to CAMS (Case Management System) data.
- Newcomers. ESL for smaller communities and LBS not equipped financial or capacity to service people. Alignment with OW (Have their own employment short training programs and since they started this, we went from 95% of our referrals from OW to the last 2 years [to] 0%. People working for 3-6 months and then back on OW because they do not have the skills to “keep” a job!) & OSDP – people not being given education and training.
- Lack of ESL/LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers) services; lack of LD resources; lack of awareness of the LBS program publicly and within the EO system; lack of consistent messaging among ETCs; lack of support for access to online; suitability needs to be changed/more flexible.
- Disjointed/unrealistic expectations for First Nations site and DD (Developmental Disability) learners; 16-18 year olds; funding for psychological/disability assessment.
- “Communication and Ministry support” – marketing – YJC (Youth Job Connection) YJS (Youth Jobs Strategy) → they are looking externally for trainers rather than turning to LBS for expertise “LBS has so much experience dealing with multiple barrier people, like the YJC client, 19-29 never had job before”. YOUTH.
- We identify all community services gaps in annual Literacy Service Plans. These should be used/shared to inform the community.
- Measure lower levels differently. Milestones didn't necessarily measure their progress; not all adult learning is measured in employment terms. In some cultural groups, for e.g. women do not work outside the home but their independence goals are critical to supporting the learning success of their children, navigating other services, etc.
- Professional development especially for CaMS; Support orgs should have access to CaMS data rollups more frequently than once per year; ESL services; where no public transportation exists a gap for the learners in rural areas; mental health supports E.g. SWAC (Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre?).
- ESL; talk to employers about their needs; employment pathways are underdeveloped in LBS; poor relationship with OW. OW is not referring clients to LBS and communities. Could benefit from referrals to basic skills program. High turnover in case worker field. Systemic issues. Their scorecard drives their work. They don't return calls, etc. need ↑ [increased] alignment; where there is collaboration with OW including info sharing. People won't give up a job that puts food on the table in order to pursue education – How can we support this group (under-employed)? Those unsuccessful in finding work – How can we change to support this group better?
- Program hours – currently limited to 9-5; *lack of consistency from ETC to ETC (room applauds); supports for working with people with undiagnosed learning

disabilities; need for LBS to be used in partnerships working with highly barriered clients – specifically YJC; consensus in room that Ministry has forbidden LBS to support YJC (seen as “double dipping”); Over-emphasized employment – scared potential clients from coming through doors; recognize digital literacy/digital skills as a priority – “the computer is the new pencil”; Ministry support in marketing LBS; inconsistency with ETCs, another example – high school credit. Some allow LBS to support learners, others do not; need to be able to support people whose work is precarious. Shifts change last minute; EOIS-CaMS creates a barrier to identify actual levels clients are functioning at – i.e. people come in with Grade 21 certificate or diploma but they are functioning at Grade 4 or 5. Nowhere to document. Even people with Grade 12 OSSD from years ago, functioning at a much lower level; need flexibility to support newcomers too. E.g. what if you have a PhD 20 years ago but never used computer, LBS could assist.

3. Who are we not reaching through the current program, and what needs to change in order to support these people?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- Underemployed (people who are workers); people who are not connected to a referral partner; people who need to come and go (in and out of a program); employers.
- Big challenge, especially rural → suitability factors/indicators (E.g. French, deaf, indigenous, out of employment/education for many years). Be fair to those who are “closer” to employment. “Two drawers” → those closer/further from employment. Require less investment to support this group. Turning this group away because they don’t fit the suitability factors → maybe allow more regional flexibility. Allow ETCs to make the call.
- Needs to be provincial marketing; how do we serve refugees?; in some way, we don’t know who we’re not reaching because we don’t have the capacity to do the specialized research. For example more research with employees. Re: needs of employers; need better relationships with OW; not referring clients to LBS and difficult to reach OW clients directly; need to align mandates of other programs, such as OW with LBS; how to reach the “working poor” to show them how LBS can help them advance.
- Seniors – digital literacy for baby boomers; too much emphasis on sending people to employment; we used to have programs for development disabilities. No more. It needs to be funded by someone if not MAESD.

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- Employed learners, employers, mental health, cognitive disability, development challenge who need maintenance literacy and make slow progress.
- 99% → we do not know who we are missing! Lower level learners and people with LD (learning disability), all who cannot do a milestone. LD – testing and funding issues name “Literacy”.

- People living in poverty/shelter house; outreach – targeted i.e. OW/ODSP, EI; enhanced stakeholder awareness of LBS to support appropriate referrals.
- DD/Community living people; employed; OW clients to be referred to LBS (their new mandate does NOT require increased education.)
- Flexibility of low literacy learners; older workers laid off and haven't skills; homeless/poverty (Timmins event→only 2 LBS people attending who could explain how literacy leads to poverty/homelessness); Rural
- Employers. We need their buy-in. They need to understand the significance of LBS. LBS programs in businesses, factories, etc.
- Rural learners; ESL learners; people working; people requiring expensive accommodations; people with mental health issues (on the couch); provincial marketing strategy - more awareness of literacy and what it means.
- Simple thing to change. Expand the factors/lower performance target. E.g. 30% need to meet targets. Rural communities have different needs; not meeting needs of OW clients. Know those folks are there but a silo has emerged due to SAMS. These are systemic barriers; Rural→ supports to get to classes (child support, transportation).
- Different measures of progress are needed because people's needs and experience are ↑ [highly] different. E.g. turning people away because they can't complete a milestone but that doesn't mean they can't make progress.
- "Invisibles" those who hide their needs; not enough programs with childcare; some organizations have pair up students with families who can support them (childcare) so they can attend class; connect learning centres (ECE) with those who need childcare; not reaching those who don't fit into linear framework. E.g. experiential learners; those who don't fit the program. E.g. behavioural/mental health/developmental disability; Newcomers → restrictions in LBS program. Need more ESL program. Can't provide ESL training through LBS funding; need to link programs E.g. minorities too
- seniors; youth under 10 – kids graduating from high school younger age and actually don't have skills at Grade 12 level; LBS could help youth to transition to post-secondary; one agency thinks they have to turn away no literacy learners; *use of term "literacy" puts people off. They don't want to admit they are going to a "literacy program". Change name; need to work with employers. HR people need training; generally people don't know what LBS is about, people don't know what ACE is, how does it connect to LBS.

4. What barriers to inclusion are there and how could these be addressed?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- More clarity about what LBS programs do; distance learning tools so learners can continue with existing program outside of operating hours; travel times, distance, difficulty; childcare, especially in non-traditional working hours (outside of 9-5).
- Homelessness and poverty. Transience makes it impossible to follow up with people; people who need to take a leave of absence but still want to participate in

program. Need more accessible and distance learning tools; extend the range. E.g. lower level learners. More levels are needed; more funding without strings attached; SPs (Service Provider) who can't make those numbers under the current framework → framework and target numbers need to be reviewed.

- Many still do not know about LBS programs; Agencies need the capacity and resources to staff to work with different client groups who need different adaptations to programming; too much emphasis on employment; some aren't looking for work but need to be better in their community; getting to on-site programs to lack of transportation; the name of the program – stigma attached to literacy and basic skills terms needs more relevant name and branding; * more funding without strings attached; more training for service providers to help learners in crisis, either formal PD or local meetings among service providers more funding/capacity to do this on a regional or regional network basis; rework the system and determine targets based on reality; work more with OW & ES to train their staff to sell the benefits of upgrading to their clients, to lead to a job; homelessness and poverty – system of Milestones and follow-up doesn't work for these folks. They need upgrading to help with poverty but system also has to recognize they need to deal with these issues as well. Need some different ways to deliver services that are more relevant; CaMS and Performance Management System is too restrictive and doesn't work for many learners.
- Need low-anxiety environments; opportunities to work with unions i.e. Unifor; need to extend range of measures of progress, more intermediate steps; there is a Rapid Re-employment Strategy that support literacy; transportation; awareness in the community; Ministry rules hinder-based on age brackets; life-long learning – need to be able to serve seniors; high schools are turning students away. Letters of learnings; mental health challenge; lack of ESL; homelessness, poverty; need different milestone, more ability to acknowledge “progress”; some Mennonites don't have a written language.

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- Need special training on dealing with people's additional needs – train instructors. Ministry needs to realize community partnerships like with social assistance are based on relationships. Very difficult sometimes to work with certain agencies due to people and personalities. Ministry has used framework to define what progress. This keeps certain people out of programs who could use the service. If MAESD doesn't want to fund for example develop challenge learners, then they (MAESD) need to find alternative. Ministry to fund these citizens.
- Transportation; housing; childcare; LD services and supports; MH (mental health) services and counselling supports; more funding for LBS without strings attached.
- Lack of internet, transportation and mental health awareness; greater recognition of regional/community difference to support better SQS (Service Quality Standard); partnerships; PMF (Performance Management Framework) creates barriers; rigid use of learner/training support; administrative burden = barriers to outreach/partnership development + service coordination.

- Missing a competency. Competencies (soft skills, self-esteem) outside of manage learning. Working with others?
- Need to have more flexibility to serve people with need. LSP (Literacy Service Planning) should be able to adjust numbers based on need. E.g. If it becomes apparent that there are large numbers of seniors with need; LBS Seniors! People have to keep working past 64 (LBS ends at 64) because they haven't enough money. They haven't got digital skills. Example of Cornwall-Hospital. Change of parking to automated system. Seniors couldn't get into the lot! LBS put together a training program to help seniors deal with automation everywhere; Need more outreach \$ -- Ministry needs to support with campaign but agencies also have to do the outreach to meet poor, homeless people who wouldn't be reached by print or TV ads.
- Framework is inflexible; transportation and childcare. I know there is a stipend for this but it seems it could be more fulsome. Can we partner with Early Learning Centres so that parents and children are learning at the same time? Further way to help parents support their children's learning. Extending the importance of life-long learning from one generation to the next.
- The outreach required is costly and poses a risk which is cost and potential loss of services at main site; PMF (Performance Management Framework).
- Name of program is a barrier – stigma attached.
- LBS label; suitability criteria!! (room agrees); inconsistency and hostility from ETCs; ministry is rigid; adversarial approach of Ministry!; since into of OALCF and EOIS-CaMS, shift in Ministry support. High turnover of ETCs. Networks/programs have tried to initiate communication. Sense that there is not genuine interest in making LBS an equal program in EO; LBS working with people highly marginalized people but we are so underfunded and disrespected; ETC might have LBS program a roster but are of many. Some are overloaded, they ignore LBS. Sending out emails 5pm on a Friday! No chance to; disappointed that LBS not included in apprenticeship event. One ETC said "well you really don't do much with apprentices" (dismay in crowd); red tape!; need for acknowledgement of the multiple barriers many learners have and funding to support them.
- Awareness/marketing. The commercial/video showed this morning would be awesome if MAESD would launch as a media campaign.
- Rebranding to remove word literacy. What about Adult Basic Education. Raising awareness of what LBS is. What services and expertise do LBS agencies/staff have that could support communities. LBS is a misunderstood program.
- Clarification in communities of which organizations serve which kind of learner
- Mental health supports
- Lack of service coordination between LBS/ES, establish a target for ES of LBS learners.
- Flexibility of use of training supports, to support learner basic needs. E.g. food for learners who are poor and hungry, or software for learner with learning disabilities.
- Ministry staff needs to understand the connection between learning and hunger. Ministry staff insistent that learning supports are for child-care transportation. Systemic issue at Ministry. Ministry staff to understand who the clients are that LBS tries to serve.

- Thunder Bay rep said in 2012, the Ministry Regional Director said “we could do without 30% of agencies”!! Feeling that Ministry is targeting more and more rural agencies to close.

2. Discussion Part 2 – Leadership and Vision

1. Who should the program serve, and why?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- Adults (ages).
- Other Ministries need to focus on lower level, high needs; need to focus on those ready for the next stage. Need to have some independence; folks in mental health issues need to have coping skills already in place; apprentices, pre-apprentices – need to serve more of them. Need to serve people outside the classroom. Go to employers; difficulty with putting wide-range of ages, abilities in one room.
- Poverty and homelessness; “working poor”; apprentices → not all sites can give access to apprentices; independence goals; independent school path → being able to move into stable housing, etc.; focus on need to support children at home, language support; serving those who are coming into program → this include those who may not have status; anyone – social aspect of literacy. Potential for social inclusion by participating in LBS class, women in isolated rural areas; * issue is funding according to outcome of employment → if that wasn’t true funding; * would come from MCSS, Culture, MCI → always looking for new funding; bi-ministerial funding.
- People who need to improve their skills and life; everyone, anyone who needs help; people the education system has failed.
- Seniors; people who need upgrading for personal growth and independence (many people need to work on personal and community needs first) → this is often the first reason people want upgrading; we need a LITERATE Ontario, not just better employment; apprentices currently in the apprenticeship system; people who want/need employment and further education and training; people who “fall through the cracks” of the regular systems; people who don’t currently fit in the current framework → these people need the skills but don’t progress the same way as less-challenged learners or work more closely with MCSS to provide programming in collaboration or coordinating with LBS. this may mean additional funding for and changes to some MCSS-funded programs, such as Community Living; family literacy – to break the cycle of literacy and poverty issues.
- Recognized differentiated system; social economy community development; coordinate services with other experts; even other agencies i.e. addiction, mental health; OSSD grads that need mastery; suitability criteria? About do we serve other programs: without literacy, apprenticeship, EO. Other goals are not sustainable; learner landscape have change exponential so measures need to change. Anyone interest in furthering their skills to meet their. I.e. OSSD grade wants to be carpenter.

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- Apprenticeship employment bound further Ed bound, however, if MAESD doesn't want to support low level slow progress clients, i.e. developmentally challenged, then they need to find another ministry to pay for it.
- Seniors in need! Basic human right. Anyone who needs to improve their skills and lives. People going into apprenticeship; people the education system has failed because they don't fit into the linear box; ACE – needs and assess people before college pre-courses.
- Anyone who wants/needs literacy/numeracy skills for any reasons. Remove suitability factors – all regions are different; tools need at a specific group. They must be able to make progress towards their goal path. They can't and therefore they are not in LBS. (No more suitability factor; all regions are different.)
- Service Providers are serving the network and MAESD instead of servicing the learners. Network→serves the Service Providers. Ministry→citizens through the service provider and listen to the S.P.
- Services geared to identified local community needs. Not necessarily all levels and goal paths. Not the needs of program staff and/or funders. (practitioners need to be better served/recognized)
- LBS is a bridge for marginalized. 24% of people who have literacy and essential skills needs don't even recognize that they are lacking skills. People whose circumstance change. E.g. job loss, have children and they realize they are lacking skills, WSIB – injured and now need to retrain; people who have lost connection with the standardized education system. (self-esteem a huge issue).
- Adults needing to upgrade/refresh skills before training, education.
- Under-skilled. Make no assumptions as who needs what. Anyone who has a 'gap' in skills – knowledge/need credential and job.
- People who have lost connection with the standardized education system; everyone has a right to literacy. We should be able to serve anyone who walks through our doors; adults in Ontario who are unable to meet their daily literacy tasks in order to function in their community, their workplace; people who lack foundational skills to meet their goals; should we define specialties of each sector. Be explicit about the learners each sector serves. Need to understand “completion for learners” between sectors. Someone said “we can't be the [unintelligible] be all for everyone”; disappointment that ministry is now name Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development”; all adults have the ability to prosper in the community and lead a fulfilling life”; “learner-centered” – every adults has the right to define what “fulfilling” means; * need to collect learners stories. ES does this and is asked for them all the time.
- Older adults- most in need but only 1% of funding goes to them because they're not going to get jobs, citizenship, health, poverty, justice.
- LBS should be able to serve everyone, to metrics, criteria government establishes are barriers to service (and therefore expansion).

2. What should the LBS strive to achieve, and why?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- Meaningful, desirable transitions, increase skills.
- Literacy should be available to everyone who wants it, when and how they want it. But other ministries should be contributing. I.e. MCSS, Health, MCI, Education (parents), Seniors Secretariat; the definition of literacy has changed; need to focus on highly employable people that can progress and upgrade/retrain; need something to fill the gaps between LBS and community living.
- Fill the gap that education system did not help; tear down silos build by different programs; growing and sharing programs; take clients to the services they need. Walk them to services.
- A Literate Ontario, a highly skilled population, but not just for employment; people who are better prepared to assess their strengths and envision a more fulfilling future, based on their good skills achieved through LBS; progress to getting financial independence.
- To meet the training and education needs of the individuals in the community; skill acquisitions to assist all individuals to; our learners are over assessed → respect the learning curve.

Written feedback on group worksheets

- Basically it should be open to anyone regardless of goal or level. Literacy is a basic human right and determinant of health.
- Tear down silos that exist and limit the assistance that people can access and not aware of. MAESD could assist by partnering with other ministries to improve communication and services.
- Flexibility in program based on what the client need; achieve individual success according to what the individual wants, not the Ministry; transition (E points). Why are some weighed more, not realistic to have someone so. From LBS to employment; next step should be high school diploma.
- Become an anchor [unintelligible] program across EO and other services.
- Better quality of life/progress in economic outcomes; consistent province-wide messaging, branding, promotion.
- Service promise is to increase “employability” of learners. Independence can be a first step for someone to try to “re-enter” other elements of society.
- Bigger, broader than (RWN) Vision; both social and economic impact; Invest; Optics: fund Ed, training, work/working, other, depend to community need; Employment Training Ontario recognized as ‘Professional’.
- LBS needs to be embedded into various different provincial programs. Direction to other programs to refer to and work with LBS expansion; statistics not meeting the needs of clients. Can learners at level 1 really be expected to articulate learning plans?

3. How would you re-envision the LBS program to address the number of adults in Ontario needing literacy and other essential skills?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- Be a true adult alternative education program; create dynamic learning environment.
- Ensuring we are addressing why folks didn't succeed in K-12; resources to address digital skills. Cost-prohibitive. Some regions/local offices place restrictions on ability to help digital skills; it needs to much better reflect our citizens needs and realities; more flexibility with more funding; fewer loops/more open eligibility; need to better reflect that people want different goals (more than one); also need to account for other benefits program is providing (I.e. better health outcomes); goals can change overtime; need to provide more "guidance counselling"; Ministries need to work closer together – LBS are told they need to work with OW but OW isn't told to work with LBS.
- Curriculum framework → more flexibility needed for individual organizations. Communities and clients have different needs (framework not a box); does ACE fit in the LBS program?; diagnosing learning disabilities → increase \$ (approximately \$1k) → more PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment Recognition) centres → build self-esteem; better communication throughout network to share lessons learned; *ER is having a conference to gather front line trainers Oct. 23-24 "connecting excellence". Could work well in all regions. Ministry support would help; what are other jurisdictions doing and is it working and why? E.g. family literacy out west, in the US; many organizations use volunteers → would be great to have more resources. Training for these people. Standard handbook e.g. Alberta. Online training for volunteers e.g. Community Literacy Ontario. Tutor-to-tutor interface to ask questions and share best practices.
- Scrap-framework; look at re-design of system; needs to be created by teachers/LBS providers; relationship building with clients; word of mouth is most valuable.
- Re-assess the place of ACE. Where does it fit? A credit equivalent program like ACE may not fit within the LBS framework → higher level than OALCF level 3?; need to be able to select more than one goal path concurrently; change the name and branding of the LBS program to get rid of the stigma the prevents people from coming to programs. Provincial and regional marketing; better milestones that are more relevant; essential skills needs and upgrading touches all aspects of living and funding should be spread across several ministries to support citizens. Ind. MCSS, MCI, EDU, Health, Seniors, etc. if LBS can't serve everyone than other ministries need to fund services for the other needs; address the fact that many high school graduates still need upgrading; on-going PD (professional development) for practitioners and other staff that is funded or subsidized; embed upgrading into other ministries.
- Differentiated delivery: sector, individualized; it's not pedagogical assessment it's administrative assessment doesn't relate to learners actual goal; don't evaluate vulnerable client outcomes based on the parameters of fiscal year. High-risk, high-need vulnerable people take longer to achieve their goals. I.e. someone who comes in living in poverty may not have a clear idea beyond independence. This may be the first step → employment and post-secondary. This may not happen in 12 months.

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- Treat literacy as a human right and determinant of health. Let communities design what they need and fund it fairly. Stop using OALCF as a way of keeping people out of our programs. We also need more money if we serve, but don't [unintelligible] enough money to do that, this should tell MAESD about what we actually need in \$. Also it seems bizarre that an Ed program that has a high population of learning disabled clients has no access to funds to pay for psycho-educational testing. We are frequently asked for it and have no way to fund it; take literacy back to our grassroots days. Lay off on the "cult of accountability" stuff. Let us help people.
- Scrap or greatly improve the OALCF and this time ask the providers. [OALCF is] not realistic with the lives of people. Allow word of mouth referrals and count as a referral; services for aboriginal people.
- (MAESD) It's in the Ministry's hands; mandatory training→for criteria→YJC→letter of agreement (layer hours); mandatory assessments; LBS should be rebranded. New name, stigma with current name; branding/marketing with EO not forgotten; Ministry of Education component; Ministry need to re-envision to serve everyone. Ministries setting the lines for training (ex. 9 weeks). There should be no fine lines for training; E-learning is not user-friendly; in small communities there are no opportunities to refer the clients to other services (due to transportation/distance)
- Reorganize the streams→community based; school board; college/post→in all communities with great #s; restructure expectations [for community based] native, francophone, blind/deaf.
- More flexible and/or clear guidelines and expected outcomes. Less focus on goal/ more focus on need; more inter-ministerial collaboration; promotion of LBS program to reach more potential learners and entrance awareness of LBS.
- Community based programs have to be seen as equal players. Current system is fast-tracking people through to exit. Need more qualitative outcomes; leadership→how to rate [unintelligible] out adults learning program that are meaningful; no-community based; community-based programs have always served the most marginalized learner; colleges and schoolboards can teach all levels of learners, so they are not referring people to community based programs. But other sectors cannot identify barriers to learning (i.e. hunger, poverty).
- Name change; provincial marketing; financially reward programs that meet/exceed.
- Underpin/overlap/integrate with work partners and industry (Ontario, training division, upskilling); longitudinal study/impact of upskilling_flexibility; know our clients well, we don't know 'industry'; we've been neglected.; vision flexible; monitoring ETCs; messaging; streams; the vulnerable sector: marginalized, with barriers; poverty/poor not being seen just as that; educators optics of 'client'; perception of our clients/ often negotiable; individuals with barriers/vulnerable i.e. housing, childcare, health, wellness; we need to partner, don't we on all, expertise in workforce; study impact of [unintelligible] skills.

- Expand program to: prisons/correctional, subsidized housing, libraries, mobile and itinerant services; funding, funding, funding – organizations will look [for more] funding; ensure that PMF recognizes different components of learning; * key is that LBS wants/needs to be recognized for what it is. Services it provides. Recognized value of community-based programs. Holistic approach to working with learners; “I imagine an LBS program that is not struggling for resources or respect while trying to serve people who are struggling”; sector-partnership grants. Denied because they didn’t have “enough partnerships” – yet no time to develop those partnerships; more grants
- Pre-literacy skills → LBS; EOIS-CaMS doesn’t and OALCF needs more emphasis on “qualitative outcomes”; “LBS is the poor cousin”.
- Guidance and counselling; 64% of LBS clients already have a high school diploma; does the province know where it is OK where it wants to go; user-friendly database; change the milestones; province and regional marketing campaign; literacy needs are much larger than funding allows for. Program 13 housed in wrong ministry; recommend Ministry staff receive training by attending an actual LBS class; ETCs responsible for variety of programs. LBS seems to be a lower priority with ETCs and the Ministry. Needs a way to be higher profile; LBS should be part of Ministry orientation; link to apprenticeship. Apprentices registered who need literacy training; lack of communication between organizations so they can share successful pilots/curriculum. E.g. apprentice Curriculum for LBS clients.
- LBS a Bridge. Bridging Program; support for practitioners. Let them focus on teaching/learning, site visits, meet learners, hear their stories; less focus on goals and more focus on needs; Ottawa program → teaches “cooking on a dime” → involving local chefs; help people “learn to learn”; stigma around “literacy”, “basic skills”; independence – targeted audience → people who don’t go out of their homes but still need literacy skills to help children etc.; pre-literacy? Learn how to learn; ultimately, most people likely hope to find meaningful employment but they may not believe they have that ability, they need to have self-esteem built so that they can learn and eventually see themselves as employable and re-employable; set an LBS target for ES providers; suitability criteria need to be changed.

3. Discussion Part 3 – Funding, Efficiency and Sustainability

1. What funding principles should be considered as we re-envision the LBS program to address the number of adults in Ontario needing literacy and other essential skills?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- Measure funding for work done; establish minimum viability; recognize actual cost increases; recognize geographic differences/actual market rates; respond to emerging demand for services needs in a thoughtful manners; use real business planning model.

- Core funding: reflective of real cost of business, flexible, equitable; fund things that are required; accommodate learner supports; account for relationship building/partnerships; accountability without unnecessary restrictions; resource and recognize resources needed for admin burden. Funding needs to be learner- centred stable (e.g. 3-5 years). (i.e. it needs to resource organizations sufficiently so that instructors can be with learners!); reflective of geographic/local context.
- EERs (Estimate of Expenditure Report) don't align with QSAR (Quarterly Status and Adjustment Report) – make them align; consider # of learners served; geographical considerations; transparency; some alignment with costs of the SPs; stability; fairness/equity; less focus on outcomes so creaming doesn't occur.
- Consider the community needs. Intensity of service needed for learner. One-on-one instruction is higher than classroom; economy of scales depending of the geography; stream and sector; support expense for learners (training support).
- Consistency among programs and across programming (not historical); consideration for uniqueness of streams/sectors.
- Labour market information; cost of living in region; mechanism to increase funding if over target, but ministry has no problem clawing back funds if under target which don't take into account rental agreement or labour market contractual agreements; geographic mechanism to support remote regions to reflect community size and transportation issues.
- Annual increases i.e. cost of living, inflation, etc.; be considered as the educational professionals that we are. Many agencies do not have health benefits/pension plans. Consider that we work with the marginalized and vulnerable sector; should be paid on par with other educators; funding should not be dependent on politics i.e. next election funding could be lost. Program consistency and integrity.
- Multi-year business planning (eg.3 years) agreement; funding not based on performance management; organizations turning down some funding because it's tied to more learners. Recent funding tied to more learners and it's not effective → learners shouldn't be attached to all \$; different needs for different regions; funding needs to support self-sustaining organizations; funding for administrative care→over-burdened admin staff; EOIS-CaMS needs to be revised → student DB (database?) better; funding needs to pay for the whole package – location, admin; needs to be equity across the province; people learn at different rates, therefore, basing on learner targets ineffective basing on past figures don't work for determining funding.
- *consider the costs of opening the agency's doors: staffing, rent, hydro, travel, then adjust as per targets; cost of living should be addressed annually; geographic and demographic descriptions of communities potential and actual demand; targets should reflect geographic demographic; every program (LBS) regardless of sector should be able to fully support learners by being able to access support services; different sectors have different considerations i.e. cb (community-based) agencies don't have the same support services; if and when determining costs/learners, do not take fundraising into account; consider learners who take longer to achieve goals. Don't fund them all the same.
- Equity amongst schoolboard, community based and college: funding for supplies, rent, etc., small business, most expensive form; consistency between ministries;

more money literally to record training supports than the money given for training supports; staffing → not comparable to other programming in community-based; flexible budget, training supports should go into operations instead of giving back to MAESD; cost per learner → should be considered; inverse was inequitable because based [unintelligible]; funding allowance available when needed.

- Tier funding blended learners vs strictly distance; base funding should be tied to cost of living index or inflation index; separate funding for target; transparency of funding/funding breakdown; geography should be taken into consideration.
- Transparency; equitable; sector funding may look different; realistic cost per learner worth.
- Learner-centred; cost of living change linked; core funding not wholly linked to learner targets; equitable access sectors programs recognizes the reality that many LBS programs fund raise large proportions of their budget to make ends meet, but these funds must be acknowledge in cost/learner, longer term agreements allowing flexibility in budgeting. Allow the organizations to build capacity before building #s of learners.
- Equal contributor in multi-funding contexts. That we are able to pay for our own program and not rely on others; Regional considerations and contexts should be consistent and sector; more transparency around how funding; funding reflecting how program is running on the ground. E.g. returning LBS learners; LBS always the poor cousin; real professional credentialing; professional equity pay; cost of living and contract ongoing recognition in the funding formula about ongoing; attracting and keeping good staff pay and benefits.
- Annual funding increase/review; funding reflects community need (similar to SDNDF); base on existing reality vs historical (e.g. cost/learner); geography/transportation barriers (technology); simplify agreement # of learners, etc. Supports not increased!
- Cost of living; funding should not be tied to goal paths; cost effective; new funds should not have claw-back in first year if 3s not missed – differently told in each region. Consistent messages are important; not based on outcomes as “creaming” would occur; level 1 programs require more funds to support learners; location and demographics should be considered annually.
- Size of location (area) you serve; Consistency in targets; targets should also reflect the population of your community; subsidies for learners; suitability opened up.
- Regional disparities (rural ...); equity in salaries, equity between sectors, between Minister program; multi-year funding to secure and protect and contract. Hold them to their “promise”. Accountability.
- Rural discrepancy – Northern Ontario (transparency) and rural need more training support funding for learner participation and network participation; formula needs to address sectors and city vs college rates. For example, city instructors go to college programs to earn more; funding has to allow for standard of facility that is professional across the board.
- Transparency; predictability and equity; overhead costs such as staffing costs of the respective entities should be considered. The benefit or disadvantage that come with differing economies of scale; cost per learner (and the fact that this cost can defer at

the same site due to 'length of stay' of learners); flexibility to shift funding among sites by a single provider.

- Equity of funding. Why are some getting more; transparency; funding formula; rural vs urban funding i.e. like ES; funding model is learning centred; consistency within communities and across the province; sector cost are different i.e. college sector higher funds and targets. How is this decided? Some service provider has to fund raise in order to allow program to run; program integrity.
- Recognize the cost of doing business → cost of living; should look at the stream and sector you are serving; more transparency in funding; consistent message.
- *funding for HR (like in ES); consider the true costs of instructional resources needed to deliver training; consider costs re: paying staff adequately and other overhead → wages comparable to similar occupation; the recent increase should have been no strings attached to bring agencies up to a level where they can operate properly and pay staff a decent wage. In some agencies, staff are very poorly paid and we lose good people to higher-paying occupations. The learner targets being used now are historic and not based in reality. The definition of "learner" is not the same as before → previously it included "learners" who never actually received service but left after assessments; some kind of bonus for success of the more difficult to serve learners in whatever sector recognize that they take longer to progress and the agency can't run so many learners through in a year; logic, fairness, equity. Build in technology upgrades; consider regional and local difference → different needs and challenges.
- Multi-level agreement; cost per learner (cover many hats we wear): manage volunteers, admin, meeting stakeholders; *cost/learner depending on: community base/school boards/college. Level of learning/multi-barrier; outreach strategy – promotion; livable wage; cost for isolate learners/supporting online learning.

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- COL (cost of living) – increases and annual increases; pay equity with college and school board LBS; funding not dependent upon the election winners (CORE); clients in LBS harder to serve. Funding should reflect.
- Funding should be community managed; differences in geography, demographic make-up; take in to account full cost of LBS. Many are subsidized; need flexible funding for new programs.
- Base→cultural streams, furthest from the labour force, learners→learner supports e.g. childcare; need to address apprenticeship completion (how to help people who are employed); low hanging fruit people needing one last course in order to get into the program they want in the colleges; transparency. Suitability must be differentiated. 1) furthest from the labour force, 2) barriers to literacy, 3) moving learners to transition/goals; PAY FOR TRUE COSTS.
- Tiered funding for blended vs strictly e-channel learners. Strictly e-channel needs more support.
- Cost per learner across the streams is an issue. Have a baseline then add funding according to region and stream; clients get services that are not funded by the

Ministry because the LBS Network feels that clients should not be delayed their services because of funding.

- Equitable across streams/sectors; transparency; flexibility; equity; hardest to serve/lowest funding; a livable wage paying for everything we are doing; ask as to do true cost analysis.
- Flexibility; larger [unintelligible] →e.g. 5 years at a time. Stability. Indexed to cost of living; sustainability – realistic cost funding; includes recognition of transportation needs; flexibility with training supports allowed to use fund for [unintelligible]. Food (but everybody is hungry, how do you handle it). Deaf (consistency of ETC; internets, only 1 program); differentiation; recognize difference between parameters and accountability.
- Look at study on real cost of learners. Last year submitted to Ministry; reflect cost of administrative representative; Ministry could ask all organizations to do a cost-analysis of clients served; Ministry needs clear sense of what is being delivered but not funded; fund technical costs; longer-term contracts.
- COL (cost of living), cost effective, not outcomes based.
- Share the model with how money/funding is being shared. Numbers are harder to reach when your community size is limited, or small communities have approximate 1 hours distance from the only centre in a 150 mile radius. (Northern or remotes funds).
- Based on the principle of adult learners andragogy; regional based; get rid of the streams; program consistency and integrity.
- Cost per learner; understanding [unintelligible], admin components; comprehensive outreach strategy (updated metrics); program consistency and integrity; equitable funding (funding should reflect region); clear the gap.

2. What suggestions would you like MAESD to consider as the government works to update the funding formula for LBS?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- Expand definition of eligible training supports; funding for service providers and funding for pooled community funds to respond to emergent needs.
- Larger-term contracts; funding should be responsive to the needs of the learners.
- Reduce # of EERs required if SP haven't has problems with slippage; outcome measures need to align with the needs of our clients; simplifying the evaluation process/make Milestones more aligned/streamlined.
- Administrative support; payment schedule to be adjusted (not 12 equal), (service providers to provide breakdown through business plan); 3 to years contract.
- Not amount per learner → reflect uniqueness according to stream/sector (extra costs); break down to include what it cost per learner, administration, resources, human resources, digital resources; look to other ministries, can we do something similar (e.g. EDU has a per student cost. Build budget according to agency needs. Apply for funding and have it approved).

- Should be funding factors for specific categories i.e. special education, remote areas, transportation. What exactly is the funding factor? Is there money linked to referrals out?
- A transparent funding formula; formula should be different for community based, college and B of Ed with room for flexibility; appropriate staffing for agency (funding); annual cost of living increase not tied to performance; broader allowance for spending training support... more than transportation and childcare (more flexible).
- Not everyone goes into CaMS right away (new clients).
- Cost of living should be addressed and not attached to additional targets; consider regional differences; consider funding/agency for development of partnerships, learning materials, etc.; connect some funding to performance.
- Taking account service delivery; equity comes in cost of delivery; cost of each method of delivery and fund based or; strong foundational staff/policies based; 1 year business play model does not work; we need a 5 year plan so we can build program; deficit issues are not being addressed; cost of living.
- Transparency of funding formula/funding breakdown; geographic consideration; program capacity → fund those that can accommodate the additional target; train those who can't until they can build capacity.
- Recognition of equitable compensation packages; recognition of brick and mortar, then plus cost per learner; funding local projects; ongoing digital tech top ups; community based - removal of need to fundraise.
- Take input from the LBS support organizations on updating the funding formula. Allow LBS organizations to count (receive credit for) learners served that currently they get no credit for because the learner didn't stay long enough to complete systemic requirements. Recognize that training supports to assist learner transitions may be required beyond transportation and childcare. examples are exam fees formal learning disability assessments.
- WSIB funding – can't afford the insurance for insurance for work placements; length of time for learner served shouldn't not matter. Relevant goals and needs and same a flexible measure of programs shared matter. Per learner costs.
- Takes into account differences between sectors/streams; centralized, transparent process; not one-size fits all. Funding announcements and flow through takes into account timing and ability to deliver, e.g. more lead time!; reduce # of EER, some programs closed during the summer!
- Cost of living; funding should not be tied to goal paths; cost effective; new funds should not have claw-back in first year if 3s not missed – differently told in each region. Consistent messages are important; not based on outcomes as “creaming” would occur; level 1 programs require more funds to support learners; location and demographics should be considered annually; union vs non-union is troubling for funding; transparent and clear; multi-year contract.
- Complex; recognize the cost of running business; accessible spaces are costly; remember that it takes time to build new programs and/or locations; recognize the diversity and complexity of programs; 15% increase for programs without target number increase which goes to improve quality service.
- Régional disparités: 1) fonds de base pour couvrir opérations, 2) fonds pour apprenants & inflation, 3) technologie; multi-year funding.

- Allow training supports to be flexible. For example, CAAT Test. Childcare no one wants to give receipts; transfer payment – do not fund monthly, give 50% up front. “I’m glad they don’t sign up for training supports because I don’t have it”.
- More specific or efficient ways to count learners; the formula should take into consideration all the activities that service providers engage in (e.g. marking assessments) that may or may not lead to a learner being engaged in a program but still consume time; the differing costs attached to serving learner groups of different sizes.
- How will the site compliance/monitor results affect funding?; analysis of actual program cost; look at the different stream actual costs; attract/retain staff when can’t pay benefits; consistency within communities and across the province.
- Customize the funding formula based in the sector you are serving.
- Allow training supports to be used as needed. For examples, to pay an instructor to travel to meet with a group of learners in a rural area → less expensive than bringing all the learners into the agency; streamline administration and reporting. Too much is spent on this, both in time and money. Is all that really needed? E.g. link registration form and learn plan so you don’t have to re-enter the same information multiple times. Do not use goal path projection estimates as targets. They are not meant to be targets. There is too much micromanagement by MAESD staff. Allow agencies to carry over money from one year to the next costs/expenses can differ from year to year.
- # of learners/site or daily enrolment. Credit for # of people assessed and screened; every organization get a base rate to cover core (e.g.) 1 FTE (full-time equivalent) staff member; disparity in funding → precarious work. Funded so community based not fundraising; technology.

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- No known “transparent” formula; need separate funding formula for sectors & streams; look at each agency’s position and fund appropriately; separate money to update yearly separate from yearly budget.
- Need a baseline for “minimum program viability”. Base funds needed to run a program; * need to consider difference between streams and sectors.
- Articulate and add flexibility to funding lines, specially to the training supports.
- Suitability criteria creates a barrier to those clients that are “low hanging fruit”.
- Consider what we’re doing now and why; “true cost analysis” of what we are doing now; analyze capacity needs; what we would include to do.
- Partnerships require resources, time; admin is capped at 15%. Doesn’t allow funding for Executive Director or organization; based on old notion that charities were spending too much on admin; “cost per-learner” – not a good way to fund; need funding incentives to incent service to multiply barriered; leads to creamy; learner-centered funding.
- Improve funding for admin which doesn’t take away from the learners or reduce admin to work with learners. QSAR, EER – repetitive.

- WSIB coverage for programs; length of time shouldn't matter; per learner plus admin cost of living.
- Multi-year funding; should reflect fair and decent work; indexed to cost of living; tech budget.

3. What would you recommend for the 2018/2019 fiscal year with regard to funding increases that could facilitate expansion of LBS services?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- Allow SPs to expand responsibly with regard to new learner targets.
- Reinstate SDNDF (research and development funding); one line in the report back that asks about organizations are operating beyond Ministry funding. (True cost analysis would be helpful); consider additional year of stabilization before expanding; *let the network tell the Ministry what they can do for 2018-19. Proposal based; incent collaboration/partnership through pot of funding/additional staff to support this; funding differentiation (by sector and stream) on-going opportunities to provide proposals/feedback on funding.
- Funding increases need to be sufficient to overcome deficits from previous years; tell us how much money we can expect over the next few years i.e. upcoming tech \$; need to vastly streamline the administrative requirements. Balance accountability with focus on doing the work. Reallocate funding back to classroom; reinstate R&D (Research and Development) projects; multi-year business planning agreements – 2-3 year contracts.
- Additional funding not completely attached to targets; increase of cost of living annually; earlier distribution of contract to permit service providers to plan.
- Salary increases; increase staffing; longer hours; concern: question is being asked only 6 weeks from decision. Ask SPs what we feel we need – negotiate; marketing/branding (suggestion: show video in theatres); increase amount of math/science (hire a math/science specialist); local specific examples for which we may want more \$; shared space or more space (standards around space/size for program delivery); rebranding suggestion: Drop LBS. Call our program “Essential Skills”. Problem: It's ES.
- Remove administration of follow ups and have someone from the Ministry do the incentive to do assessment with EO that leads to LBS training (not just we do the assessment and EO does the training); funding increases attached to digital technology and IT support; open up Vendor of Record to help service providers get access to cheaper supplies.
- No strings; we don't have adequate funding to deliver our current services and a lot of time is spent fundraising and we rely heavily on volunteers. Consider having the fundraising burden reduced and stabilize first, before expansion discussion. (Stabilize in order to make the expansion discussion possible); funding for “new” learners should be higher than carry-over learners; community-based.
- Professional development; percentage increase year over year; transportation, child care supports; computer design skills; funding that supports co-agency integration

for those things that cross ministries such as LBS (MAESD)/Credit (EDU)/ESL. May mean guidance [unintelligible].

- Talk to networks re: who has more capacity to serve learners. Target communities in need; increase funding (core) for agencies that are still underfunded; adjust targets where required.
- Pool community funds to; increased salaries; expansion of services \$'s.
- Grassroots level for those that are ready. Let us (SPs) propose our work plans with provable outcomes. Let SP provide input of who it is they can meet. Proposal format "with provable result"; core funding not attach to targets; special funding for learner cost of living for those with hardship so the learner can focus on learning.
- Core then tied to additional learners; marketing – separate from program funding.
- Program capacity has not been adequately addressed with the 2017-18 infusion for the core so that is an ongoing priority. Add professional development funds.
- Around PMF consider semester vs continuous intake or individual 1-to-1 delivery modes. Providers delivering in a semestered system cannot demonstrate achievements mid-year; stabilization of funding before expansion to service; pay equity (sector-based); provincial marketing strategy; more \$: serve more learners. Funding that accounts.
- Provincial marketing campaign; transportation funding; no more learner numbers tick to funding.
- OW outcomes need to be tied to LBS (as should other related ministries); utilize regional networks to plan for expansion; apprentice fails CofQ once immediate referral to LBS; CaMS & EO should match (ES has lower referral expectation to LBS than vice versa).
- *multi-year funding agreements; negotiated; no new targets (added # learners).
- Take into consideration areas where there are no LBS service → \$ to fund new centers; do not tie extra funding to an increase in targets; have a 3 year contract to protect and secure the funding.
- Free up training supports; count clients vs students 2018/2019; allow for program increases rather than student increases (client is someone who is assessed and starts but may not complete a milestone); we do not always know when funding will arrive. Needs to have a schedule, before 1st of month; per learning funding? Could it be based on population with adjustment for rural, population, etc. – funding would go to community vs learner; rents are huge. What about base funding amount for per students then an additional amount for things that are specific to area. E.g. rent, transportation. Can we have funding for mentors for employers like EO has; Network funding note: consider agencies being supported and allocate budget accordingly (geographically) as well as consider allocating certain networks with a bilingual mandate and provide extra funding accordingly (Northern Ontario).
- Ministry considering projects: distribution of free resource, resource department i.e. COPIAN (New Brunswick), available at reasonable cost or extra funding.
- Don't tie \$ increases to additional learners until funding levels are adequate.
- Funding should reflect fair/decent work parity. Living wage; LBS not the poor cousin; multi-year agreement; stabilize then expand; 15% increase without targets.

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- “No strings!”; have not had enough funds to operate efficiently for past 20 years; first help us reach what we have lost, then let’s talk about expansion and money to facilitate this. Stabilize to make expansion feasible first.
- Flexible funding specifically for new and innovative program development and pilots; more project/pilot funding for innovative literacy programming.
- Cost of living without additional targets; adult education certificate → loves to go college.
- What would the increase look like in your community?
- Start with snapshot/footprint; give funding increase; let us tell you what the additional project # of learners and why; ask us what we would like to do in our community; \$\$\$ to go into WP itinerant; 2 part funding
- Another way of looking at it could be staff time per learner; before expanding, make sure current system is adequately funding; need funding for staff-benefits, maintain stability to reduce turn-over; anxiety every year over on-funding!; organizations have to dip into reserve funds; Ministry is currently supporting precarious employment; professionalization.
- Create pool; increase salaries; *another year of stabilization funding before be asked to increase targets; * vastly streamline to admin requirements so we can allocated those funds back to the classrooms (for those ready); *let us propose our work plans to the Ministry, with identified results, quarterly reports; earlier distribution of 2018-19 contract funds, so organizations can plan ahead for next fiscal; funding to support partnership development; funding formula by stream and sector; use regional networks to look at how we can expand; fund available to address emerging needs, so you don’t have to wait until new year slippage; * if there is money left over at end of year in training supports, don’t claw back, let organization roll into operating costs; money for DLI (Deaf Literacy Initiative) to allow ED to travel across province to support deaf stream programs. Deaf stream agencies so spread out; Ministry used to fund annual meetings of managers of deaf stream programs, now any fund a workshop that is really focused on practitioner; ETCs no longer have time to work with programs as partners, any accountability, monitoring; * universal training program for literacy practitioners; loss of SDN (Service Delivery Network) funding a big challenge.
- Multi-year funding. What we need is a technology fund, separate from our operating fund. An annual fund would allow for the maintenance and continued improvement of or technology to better serve our increase in operating costs (rent, taxes, take \$ away from the learners and the opportunity to succeed. E.g. to meet or target we are having to reach other smaller communities. Town population 3000, more funding (outreach to 2 other communities). Population 1000 (White River), population 1000 (francophone community, Dubreuilville). Learners ex: our technology is 10 yrs old. We have to resort to fund-raising in a community of 3000 people to the purchase of this technology. We can’t follow e-learning and blended without updated technology.
- Quarterly funding for community based; provincial marketing strategy just like all the other EO program already have.

- Funding should reflect principle of Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act: to pay staff appropriately.
- Network → stream/goal path percentages, network see percentages stats.
- What we would like to do in our community to meet needs; why the cost; # served.
- Community agencies – mostly urban; *colleges and school boards in very different circumstances from community-based, staff and business established collective agreement and not in community; create separate funding model for community-based. Principles→ living wages, don't make programs rely on in kind contributions, fundraising. Fund everything programs have to do; make sure funding is considered in terms of geography and demographics; logic, fairness, equity; fund to ensure that it incorporates outreach and promotion; analyze organization's capacity needs before setting targets; * per-learner model favours school boards and colleges because they largely deliver programs in classroom model and can therefore serve more learners; community agencies more often serve harder to serve clients who do not do well in a classroom setting; principle – clear and transparent; community based needs to be funded fairly so that organization don't have to do fundraising "20-30% gap";* include assessments/making assessment →currently if an assessment is done and marked (could take hours) but person doesn't stay, organization gets no credit; need 15% increase in funding with no increase in targets.

4. Discussion Part 4 – Other ideas?

1. Are there other themes, recommendations or ideas that would you like to see MAESD and the LBS network consider as this work moves forward?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- Break level one of OALCF into 3 parts; Essential Skills Development Program; need proper CaMS training, maybe a webinar; we need to talk more about PMFs; \$ for projects and sharing out results; need more support for ASL/LSQ (Quebec Sign Language) in MAESD; additional sector grants to bring employers to the table. They need to know what the benefits are to them.
- Reinstate "project-based" funding to allow support organizations and LBS agencies to undertake activities/produce tools, etc. that support the expansion of the LBS program; allow adequate time for cash flow and project completion.
- OALCF Level 1 – 225 pts and Level 2 & 3 50pts. Level 1 needs to be broken down in at least 3 levels; succession planning – CaMS training for new and existing staff that isn't just reading i.e. webinars; \$ for projects and sharing of those projects.
- Change EO to Employment and Training Ontario; Adult Lifelong Learner (high positive feedback); people don't know what literacy means. Don't know all it encompasses.
- Include e-channel in ground floor of everything! Was an afterthought for OALCF and EOIS – implemented after and difficult to "fit" in after; fund e-channel to complement

onsite and make it easier for onsite and e-channel to collaborate registration and learner CaMS.

- OACLF; Essential Skill Development Program; true CaMS training; performance management; \$ for projects: networks programming.
- Communications to the LBS field must be compelling, clear, brief and directed to those who will participate in the ongoing discussions and partnership efforts.
- SDNDF/R&D Funding; OALCF Level 1- break into 3 levels; more development of milestones; have regional networks gather the information on needed milestones; consistency on in-year funding. Some ETCs ask for wish list others say it must be in BP.
- Don't change ETC's regularly; pre-req for OW/ODSP; each ETCs should spend time (possibly a week) in each of the LBS centres; consistent messaging from each ETC.
- A new name for LBS?
- Provide current labour market information at a local level – perhaps by Regional Network catchment.
- Adult Lifelong Learning (ALL).
- Adult Lifelong Learning; Essential Skills Development (feds use this terminology).
- Adult Lifelong Learning & Training (ALT).
- “Skills for Life” (English name for their programs)

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- Get rid of Culminating Tasks, they are not applicable to people's lives or goals. Create Milestones for 0-1 Level learners if you “must” have them.
- To me, the discussion today did not capture a lot of what happens in LBS. We barely heard about all the people who go on to credit or take courses at the college. It sounded a lot like social service agencies wanting to “be all things to all people”. I would hope that the direction setting would not be based solely on today's notes.
- Recognize need for on-going stable funding and reasonable performance management framework; do an annual or bi-annual literacy conference 2 days. Lots of networking; *bring back Service Delivery Network Development Fund projects (SDNDF).
- Ministry should have a department devoted to ASL → 1990 recognized officially as a language; Ministry should consider more sector partnership grants. Grants have allowed us to bring more/multiple employers to the table; misconception about meaning of word “literacy” → Ministry should try to clarify and market meaning.
- Slogans liked: developing advancing skills: unlocking potential; building skilled and confident communities.
- Name: Adult Lifelong Learning; Adult Learning Centre.
- Adult Training and Learning Centre – Adult TLC; Live Long and Prosper; Sioux Lookout Adult Learning and Training Centre (SALTC); Adult Training (Lifelong) Learning Centre- ATLC; Adult Education Centre Lifelong Learning. Livelong and Prosper.
- Adult Lifelong Learning (ALL).
- Adult Lifelong Learning (ALL); Essential Development Skills Program (EDSP).

- Basic Adult Lifelong Learning Services (BALLS); The Adult Lifelong Learning (TALL); Leave it alone at LBS. Starting over at this point with a new name is costly and not effective.

5. Discussion Part 5 – Proposed Approach to Working Together

1. What do you think about the draft approach to working together that MAESD has proposed? Do you have any suggested edits or refinements to the approach?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- YJC Programs – was there consultation with LBS network?; ETC should have a voice. Be able to provide more info; keep ETC update on new changes example, share information on results of working groups; knowledge gap when Ministry people retired. Succession planning.
- (MUCH SMALLER CIRCLE); limited role for consultants – we want to use that money for our learners. The work is valued, but could we get there faster; leverage regional networks to do some of this work; potentially work [unintelligible] regions, at least for some of the work; perhaps second some people from the SPs; use of videoconferencing/teleconferencing online options.
- Define the Network; Venn diagram doesn't reflect the reality of how it should work → consultant are ad hoc, small role, Ministry has larger role but Network is huge → why is there no learner in this diagram?; principles → iterative is not good; need to hear from the client.
- ETC need to be more consistent; you are only as strong as your weakest link. Help each other; online forum; service quality removed from QSAR. Why?; performance measure are look at as a [unintelligible] model.
- Deeper; ETCs and consultant going to programs to assist changes; get information from program participants; how do we get involved → do we have a forum etc., ALPHA root. Is money better spend in programming; 3 scenarios and we choose what would work best (not so rigid). Where do they come from?; targets have to be fluid and negotiable; economy change; not be penalized by this year's [unintelligible]; ETC's need to be included.
- Leverage the networks and support organizations to develop the LBS program to reflect all LBS organizations.
- Ministry tend to be receiving the support of long time staff; WALK THE TALK. Re: Accessibility and clear language; clear language MAESD to model apply standard clear language and accessibility; programs and their admin to be leaders in this area.
- Independent re-branding process in consultation with networks; consultants – equitable rep [of] region, stream and sector (how do we ensure)' cant silo issues e.g. PMF and funding are tied to each other; need to get together to learn collectively about plan prior to implementation.

- Working tables but application process (even like OCWI process). Have equal representation from sectors and supports and from each region. Themes for tables need to be identified (use cathexis areas); continue to fund networks and support organizations to support programs; clear responsibility of ETCs and what they can and cannot do for programs.
- LSP- support should set up partnership; inter-ministerial cooperation to trickle down to the LBS programs; such as OW being under Ministry of Community of Social Development; the not so new venture into corrections and MAESD – Employment/LBS/Post-secondary training etc.
- No divide and conquer. Need another opportunity to respond in a forum like this. Room for regional/sector and breakouts.
- Will the network accurately represent the views of the different constituents? Maybe the model should be expanded to the different/specific sectors and streams; working groups may also benefit from the views and expertise of SP level staff but this may cause logistical challenges and incur costs relating to substituting staff; using the existing structure of networks may reinforce the silo effect that is current status quo.

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- Work with networks and support organizations. Regional/Sector to bring both sides together, no need for consultants. Integrate LBS with all EO programs & OW & ODSP programs of ESL with LBS.
- It isn't much in the way of substance; please give ETC's more info to share locally. Stop directing us to EOPG (Employment Ontario Partners Gateway).
- Need for communications and marketing cite; "evidence-based" → doesn't support innovation/risk-taking; speak clearly about what is being done in LBS → that is evidence; get Literacy field to meet with other ministries. Take some responsibility for aspects of literacy – hospitals, medical fields = independence – safety/health.
- Clear language and consistent throughout all communication.
- Get more input from stakeholders to expand list; documenting new/improved program; address inconsistent direction, lack of support; gap between standards and funding; make sure to include some online opportunities to participate so more people feel included; need all stream and sectors at tables, regional representation, need neutral facilitators at all table; tangible results; send out a call for expressions of interest. Ensure we have diverse representation of skills and knowledge from field. Ministry would supply resources (\$) to support organizations to release staff.
- Marketing and branding from Ministry.

2. What other ways should we consider working together in the future?

Written feedback on group worksheets

- Regular communication i.e.: regional manager. Update on Ministry staff updates; Ministry staff not attending all LSP meetings in each region. Ministry staff should be present at each LSP (Literacy Service Planning) meeting; work with LBS/ES

differently. Ministry supported – working together; Local Boards/LEPC – should be included.

- Online forum from contact North open to all practitioners; tag onto existing conferences; survey was useful – could be useful again; continue to filter through the information and prioritizing and seeking feedback; make sure consultation doesn't take too much away from our ability to do the work/compensate; don't just write the high performers to engage. Make sure there is good/accurate representation of the network; provincial organizations/streams to be involved; leverage expertise, keepers – harness energy.
- MAESD status updates with the field via webinar/conference call etc.
- Common resource library; destigmatize the word “literacy”; milestones tasks – add more milestones and how they're created could benefit from practitioner input. “Everyone is on the Literacy spectrum”.
- Bring SPs to the table. More of today's type of engagement; engagement should depend on what the problem is (i.e. regional vs whole network) (subset sector and stream); ETCs and Network should come together to brainstorm and problem solve; representation at all working tables with facilitators.
- Use the web conferencing system that MAESD already funds through e-channels so draft documents can be viewed and edited collectively in an efficient manner.
- MAESD e.g. 1) the word “iterative” render principles is vague and not clear; 2) learner CaMS acknowledgement needs to translate into clear language by LBS staff!
- Ensure consultation process adds value; provide rationale for policy adoption and implementation; learner feedback outside of \$ in addition to existing satisfaction.
- Learning Ministry management planning could support organizations and regional networks.
- The symposium like today should be yearly! 2 days: day 1 all streams, day 2 each stream discuss their own issues; each stream (Indigenous/Francophone/deaf/blind/Anglophone) should have their own department within MAESD; proper and consistent training for new service providers and practitioners.
- Include apprenticeship as a working group.
- There should be a change in the role of ETCs (they are essentially ‘paper pushers’) in general and they should be include in the Working Tables; the Ministry does not have the capacity to pull off implementation and should consider handing it off to another entity (possibly a consultant).

Written feedback on individual worksheets

- Consistent training for “all” ETCs on CaMS & LBS; Mandate all to work/partner not just LBS.
- Give LBS own branch, own ETCs etc. go back to old days of LBS skills branch government experts in literacy; we are not employment “lite”.
- Separate discussion with each sector.
- Establish a cite to go to other ministries and talk about literacy, what LBS does, who it serves; need a communications plan/strategy going forward to make sure everyone in LBS gets the information. Not just posted on EOPG for administrators;

need deaf department inside MAESD; reinstate project-based funding to allow agencies and support organizations to undertake activities outside; make sure right people are at table: let organizations send the right people. E.g. people who could speak to curriculum not those to speak to assessment or budget; Second LBS field!; identify LBS lead ETC; Employment and Training doesn't really reflect adult literacy and learning; If secondary people consider bringing in "dinosaurs" who have knowledge and experience; proposal to host more meetings. Subsets of sectors and streams to understand common values, needs and distinct needs; pilot projects to let organizations create their own programs. How would Ministry be involved?; to keep moving forward timelines necessary. Need to see results before we move to working tables need to be training of MAESD staff – ETCs!; Ministry make roadmaps with timelines, dates; use application process such as used by; use clear language editor; Ministry needs to layout plan: timelines, subjects. Give people opportunity to participate. Involve adult learners too.

- Literacy spectrum. Stigma "literacy"; EO – Employment Training Ontario (ETO); project funding → e.g. Copian; e-channels → embedded in the beginning; MS – add, revisit how they are created.

ATTACHMENT E: Feedback Received Post-Symposium

Participants had the opportunity to share feedback after the symposium via email until October 12, 2017. The facilitation team received a total of 10 feedback emails. Please note that only the feedback content of the emails has been included. The content below has not been altered in any way, except for general formatting and the removal of personal information, personal notes, and detailed transcription of the meeting activities, as these were captured through various other tools (facilitator notes, worksheets, live plenary discussions).

1. Emailed feedback #1

Hi

Here are the notes I took for my supervisor and though they may be of use to you. I also included some extra highlighted thoughts at the end which I didn't share with the large group but were talked about in my smaller group.

As a side note this was the best facilitated session I have ever been to in 20 years of attending workshops and conferences. You guys are very good at what you do!

- Missed opportunities with LEPC(Local employment Planning Council). A LARGE amount of money is being funnelled into LEPC but the service coordination is not translating into reality and the on the ground program. Learners are NOT benefiting in anyway to this HUGE amount of money being put into LEPC. This is a missed opportunity and a waste. I worked with LEPC for a year before moving into the roll as an instructor in LBS and I have seen this first hand.
- WSIB funding from Ministry. There is a HUGE push for workforce and employment but getting some on the ground practical experience with their LBS skills requires WSIB and this needs to be paid for by MAESD. Success video created by OCCL shows how great the custodial program was for our learners and now we can't offer that program as we can't have the WSIB insurance. Irony that this video shows how great the program is and the ministry uses it but now because of funding we can't do that work
- Need small committee that includes ministry decision makers with coordinators and instructors and successful students and current students. Same conversation has happened a lot but where does this all go as translating this into reality. This has not historically happened and feedback from lots of coordinators I talked to are frustrated by this. While it's great to have this symposium needs now to be really heard and implemented by Ministry

6. Email feedback #2

Hi Casey,

We would like to add the following to the discussion surrounding the new funding formula:

Community-based organizations are a vital partner in local communities offering adult education by working hand-in-hand with school boards and colleges. It is imperative that funding is equitable to provide necessary support to serve a wide client base over large geographic areas which results in a fair amount of cost. A new funding model should recognize the scalability and niche programming to serve adult learners with diverse needs and others who may “fall between the cracks”. Community-based groups respond directly to our local communities and offer innovative programming such as Soft Skills Solutions and Getting Ahead (Bridges Out of Poverty) curriculum to serve multi-barriered adults. Our school board and college partners should continue to recognize the value in these types of programs.

Thank you so much and thank you for the great day yesterday!!

7. Emailed feedback #3

Hi there

Another point that has come to mind since leaving the symposium is the matter of goal path projections.

Each year we are required to predict the goal path percentages of clients/students for whom we will provide help. (The five goal paths are employment, Secondary school credit, Post-secondary school credit, Independence and Apprenticeship.)

These predictions are a total crap shoot. We have tried basing these projections on past history, or current community trends. Having worked in Community-Based Literacy for over 9 years, the only accurate prediction I can make is that our predictions will be wrong. We are then required to file reports throughout the year explaining why our predictions do not meet our actual numbers. (The primary reason is that we cannot control the goal paths of those who decide to come in the door in a given year.)

This is an enormous waste of time. Doing away with this practice, or replacing it with something more meaningful, such as simply reporting what our percentages ARE each quarter, without the requirement for justification, would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for gathering this information.

8. Emailed feedback #4

Hi Casey, Nicole had asked that I send my notes your way. Thanks for all of your work on this - everyone I spoke with at the symposium was very positive about the day - all felt engaged, and appreciated the opportunity to meet with and share their thoughts with the ministry, and everyone commented on the excellent facilitation of the meeting. Please let me know if you have any questions about these notes, thanks

9. Emailed feedback #5

Good morning,

I would like to offer some feedback regarding the LBS symposium last Thursday. First of all, congratulations on a well-run event.

My feedback will centre on 2 points:

1. Who should the program serve?
2. funding responses

1) I know that you were looking for the grassroots response. In my opinion, it seemed that the main sense of who should LBS serve was focused on community based programs. We heard very little from the college sector and school boards. We heard a lot about "serving everyone". I believe that, when individuals are preparing for credit or going on to post-sec education, there are requirements and criteria to pass courses. At our program, which primarily serves individuals with some type of special needs, we have a criteria. Included in this criteria are items such as: must be able to show measurable progress, must be able to demonstrate appropriate behavior in the classroom, must be able to take care of personal needs. We have all registered learners sign a social policy which outlines acceptable standards of behavior. Even though we do provide services other than direct literacy training (counseling, referrals, assistance with transportation), we are not social service agencies. It would have been great to have had a better-rounded discussion.

2) With regards to funding, it seemed that many comments made were in regards to "living wages", etc. It seemed to show a lack of understanding of how the budgets work. It is clear that we are not Ministry employees in our contracts. Not all agencies have total control over their budgets either. I know that I must work within the constraints of the school board which offers our program.

All the best in putting together the results of the symposium.

10. Emailed feedback #6

Hi Casey,

Thanks for the reply. We had a chance to discuss the following points at our discussion table (#4) but did not have the chance to present to the larger group. I am not sure if these comments were included in the notes from my table or not.

- There is a perception that e-Channel as a blended learning model has a lower cost per learner than traditional classroom instruction. This does not apply as our programs still absorb the cost of office space/utilities and other operating expenses that classroom programs incur. e-Channel service providers also provide the same level of assessment services and resources for recording service plan data in CaMS as classroom programs.
- Work to implement a "blended learning model for e-Channel" is needed. There is still a lot of confusion about how to "share a blended learner between classroom and e-Channel programming. While a purely online option for skills upgrading is needed, the blended learning approach would benefit from streamlining registration, reporting, assessment and exit/follow-up functions. If blended learners between classroom and e-Channel could be referred back and forth without the requirement of having a separate registration/service plan in CaMS, a great deal of duplication in service delivery could be avoided resulting in a better learning experience for the learner and more classroom programs getting on board with e-Channel delivery. The e-Channel providers offer some excellent programming that could be utilized in more brief interventions if the amount of paperwork could be reduced. There would certainly be challenges on the EOIS-CaMS side to work out, however, service providers are spending a lot of time duplicating intake/exit paperwork and assessments to satisfy data reporting requirements.

Please let me know if you require any clarification.

11. Emailed feedback #7

Please allow me to elaborate on my statement at the end of the day, in the "Working Together, Moving Forward" session.

MAESD will make a significant amount of new funding available for the refresh of hardware and software in all LBS programs in Q4. The funding distribution process, selected by MAESD, perpetuates many of the problems mentioned repeatedly throughout the Symposium sessions and in the Cathexis Evaluation Report.

The funding distribution process will be determined and controlled individually by each of the MAESD Regional Offices and the ETCs will have autonomy and process each individual funding request.

In requesting applications from all Service Providers, MAESD will not provide any range of possible funding. The evaluation scale or rationale used to assess each application will not be shared before or after. Each application will be an individual submitting a "guess" and an individual result will be spat out of the ETC black box.

This results in a process (supposedly “working together”) where there can be Regional discrepancies, inequitable allocations, and no transparency or accountability. Even if I assume the division is based on some fair logic and rationale, the lack of any sharing and communication directly causes doubt. Confidence in the process will be further eroded when agencies compare notes and fail to understand why program A got \$4,000 and program B got \$56,000.

I understand the rush to spend the money smoothly within a rigid contract system, but then, given all the demands for -- and "newfound" commitments to -- transparency, this first post-symposium opportunity fails in the gate and is counterproductive. Please, at the very least, explain publicly why it must be this way this time and promise to do better next time.

A starting point for a published formula (reasonable allocations per delivery agencies) could be based on a tech refresh budget per learner. This rate should be enhanced for the Deaf (hardware and software) and for Francophone (software). Higher requests/allocations could be made/approved for programs with a rationale for serving more learners.

On a different topic, I must reiterate the complaint I made to the breakout session facilitator about the inappropriate and defensive behaviour of the MAESD staff present in my room. Community participants spoke up about the learner-by-goal-path targets being a problem. Laura Hamilton, one of the MAESD staff present, spoke up and pointed out the “fact” that targets are not a contractual obligation. This completely misses a big problem with the program and funder relationship – a significant point made many times in the sessions and in the Cathexis Evaluation Report – which does not yet appear to be understood by MAESD. The LBS programs are powerless against the whims, attitude, and ignorance of their individual ETC. The fact that something is not in the contract will not prevent an ETC from abusing an entire program over the issue.

On a final note with regard to the partnership Venn diagram. I am probably not the only person with no confidence in MAESD’s ability to lead any implementation or change. I have been through the failed implementation of the LBS-IMS, e-Channel, Continuous Improvement, PMF, OALCF, and EOIS-CaMS. The Cathexis recommendation A.4 points to the long-standing leadership and capacity challenges at MAESD, and little improvement can be gained unless this recommendation is genuinely taken up by MAESD.

A.4 The process of building strong mutual relationships of collaboration and trust will represent a deep systems change, and is therefore a complex and lengthy process that must occur at multiple levels (systems, policies, and measures; norms, behaviours and practices; and beliefs and assumptions). To facilitate this process, engage an expert who specializes in supporting change within organizations and systems.

Thank you for allowing additional post-symposium input.

12. Emailed feedback #8

Discussion 1: Besoins communautaires

Question 1 – Selon vous, quels sont les besoins prioritaires dans vos communautés ?

Pour la communauté francophone de l'Ontario, il est essentiel d'avoir accès à du financement supplémentaire pour développer du matériel andragogique de qualité et d'en faire la diffusion de façon adéquate.

Question 2 – Le nombre de points de service à offrir le Programme actuel est-il suffisant ?

Selon nos connaissances, le nombre de points de service est probablement suffisant. Toutefois, l'accessibilité pour les membres des communautés éloignées et rurales dans les petits centres est quelque peu limitée. Il faut donc accroître les ressources pour celles-ci. Il faudrait aussi accroître l'accès aux services de large bande pour permettre aux gens d'accéder mieux aux ressources en ligne.

Question 3 — Quelles personnes n'arrivons-nous pas à rejoindre par le programme actuel, et que devons-nous faire pour aider ces personnes ?

Question 4 — Quels sont les obstacles à l'inclusion et comment pouvons-nous les surmonter ?

Nous n'arrivons pas à rejoindre les personnes sans emploi au sein de la communauté francophone. Le plus important défi serait sans doute d'arriver à rejoindre les personnes qui croient qu'elles n'ont pas besoin d'aide ou qu'elles ne sont pas en mesure d'apprendre. De plus, nous avons besoin de trouver le moyen de rejoindre les clients francophones d'Emploi Ontario ; il est important que les centres d'Emploi recommandent les clients aux centres qui offrent des services en français.

Discussion 2 : Leadership et vision

Question 1 – Ce programme doit être au service de quelles personnes et pourquoi ?

Ce programme doit être au service de toutes les personnes qui veulent améliorer leurs compétences essentielles génériques, langagières et technologiques (numériques) afin de leur permettre d'acquérir les outils nécessaires et ainsi assurer leur succès personnel et leur capacité de contribuer à l'économie régionale, provinciale et nationale.

Question 2 – Quels objectifs le Programme AFB doit-il tenter d'atteindre et pourquoi ?

Tous les objectifs de formation en compétences essentielles devraient être atteints. Il est important de s'assurer que les gens ont accès à toutes les options, par l'entremise de services d'aiguillage des apprenants francophones vers les services appropriés, c'est-à-dire qui offrent des services de formation en français.

Question 3 — Comment pensez-vous que le Programme AFB pourrait relever les défis en matière d’alphabétisation et de compétences essentielles de bon nombre d’adultes en Ontario ?

D’abord, le Programme AFB doit reposer sur les principes de base propres à l’éducation des adultes. Il doit aussi travailler en collaboration avec les autres ministères et ainsi, avoir accès à des fonds additionnels et des expertises plus diversifiées. Il est aussi important d’assurer une meilleure collaboration entre les différents partenaires ainsi qu’un meilleur partage des ressources. En particulier, il faudrait tisser de meilleurs liens de collaboration avec Emploi Ontario afin d’assurer une transition sans embuche entre les différentes instances et assurer une meilleur partenariat avec le fédéral, Skills — Compétences Canada, et Emploi Ontario et les agences de formation afin de mieux travailler ensemble et partager équitablement les ressources financières.

Enfin, il serait important de procéder à une réévaluation du CLAO ainsi que des tâches jalons et des tâches cumulatives.

Discussion 3 : Financement, efficacité et viabilité

Question 1 — Quels principes de base devraient être pris en compte dans notre recherche de moyens pour que le Programme AFB puisse relever les défis en matière d’alphabétisation et de compétences essentielles de bon nombre d’adultes en Ontario ?

Voici quelques principes de base à prendre en compte :

1. Équité pour les francophones
2. La qualité des services
3. La qualité des ressources produites
4. Le travail en collaboration et le partage équitable et justifié des ressources
5. Les attentes réalistes en fonction du temps accordé pour faire le travail.
6. Le soutien approprié aux langues et aux cultures concernées.
7. L’accès à du financement multiannuel pour des projets sur plusieurs années.

Question 2 — Quelles suggestions le MESFP devrait-il retenir dans le cadre des travaux entrepris par le gouvernement pour améliorer la formule de financement du Programme AFB.

Il faudrait s’assurer que la formule prenne en considération les augmentations au coût de la vie. De plus, ce serait important que les argents soient distribués de façon plus équitable. En outre, il serait important que la COFA travaille davantage en collaboration avec le Centre FORA. Cet organisme devrait pouvoir pleinement jouer son rôle comme producteur de matériel en français et recevoir le financement adéquat pour ce faire. Il faudrait que le financement comprenne des argents pour assurer que les outils soient à la fine pointe de la technologie ; le financement devrait aussi être fourni pour assurer la mise à jour des systèmes et le soutien technique nécessaire pour assurer son optimisation. Bref, il faudrait assurer une distribution adéquate du financement en formation pour les adultes en fonction des compétences des joueurs.

Question 3 — Quelles seraient vos recommandations pour l'exercice 2018-2019 concernant l'augmentation du financement dans le but de faciliter l'augmentation de la portée des services d'AFB ?

Voici nos recommandations :

1. Développement d'outils de marketing, de visibilité et de diffusion des ressources disponibles.
2. Production, traduction et adaptation de ressources pour les francophones.

Discussion 4 : Autres idées ?

Question 1 – D'autres thèmes, recommandations ou idées devraient-ils être pris en compte par le MESFP et le réseau AFB pour les travaux à venir ?

Quelques thèmes supplémentaires à considérer :

1. Employabilité et partenariat avec les employeurs.
2. Compétences génériques et essentielles
3. Écriture simple.

Discussion 5 : Approche proposée de collaboration

Question 1 – Que pensez-vous de l'approche provisoire de collaboration proposée par le MESFP ? Avez-vous des modifications ou des améliorations à suggérer concernant cette approche ?

Nous ne connaissons pas cette approche.

Question 2 — Quelles autres manières de collaborer sont envisageables à l'avenir ?

Nos recommandations sont les suivantes :

1. Davantage de collaboration entre les ministères — provinciaux et fédéral.
2. Collaboration entre les organismes provinciaux
3. Traitement équitable de toutes les parties concernées.

13. Emailed feedback #9

Discussion Part 1: Community Needs

2. Gaps in current program and footprint services?

Lack of understanding how to use Framework; I have been successful administering Milestones, as appropriate, (although they could do with a freshening up) many programs are struggling with this still.

Lack of understanding around Goal Paths, and a sense that Independence path is not taken as seriously- particularly with language such as "highly skilled workforce". Does this mean that only folks who are working or can look for work are to have access to education, or skills upgrading? Why do we not value this service in our society? There

are significant social returns for supporting individuals who are living with multiple barriers, to allow them an opportunity to engage and be part of society, and return to the work force at some point, or volunteer in their communities, or any number of ways to participate in a healthy and productive manner. There is also the economic benefit to our health system to consider as a direct dividend. Education plays a central role as a social indicator of health.

3. Who we are not reaching...

We cannot fully know who we are not reaching. Capacity on part of Service Providers to do adequate Outreach is part of this. Clarity as to what we are delivering is another.

We are no longer reaching adults who are “emergent learners” or pre-level 1. (See gaps in program) Milestones are not fully understood, and could be administered, but programs are not sure they can meet targets serving these participants. Adults living with multiple barriers are also considered “hard to serve” with current Framework. (I do not completely agree with this perception, I understand that it is a challenge for Service Providers. This is tied directly to staff capacity and training as well as adequate funding needed to provide service)

4. Barriers to inclusion are connected to who we are not reaching and why. I find it ironic, that adults with developmental/intellectual disabilities are no longer being served, because of reporting demands and capacity challenges. TDSB once ran classes with Community Living. These adults meet all the needed suitability criteria, currently in place, yet are considered too hard to serve and those classrooms have been closed.

Discussion Part 2: Leadership and Vision

2. What should the LBS strive to achieve...

Having clarity of purpose, that is responsive to regional and specific community needs is a place to start. Having some understanding of why this service is being delivered. One initial step might be to consider what the **value if LBS is?**

After naming, or identifying those values, the next question could be, how are those values being reflected, in policy, implementation and practice? What guiding principles would support aligning values, aims and delivery?

Discussion Part 3: Funding, Efficiency and Sustainability

1. Funding principles...

Equity (we talked all around it Oct 5th. I do not recall this word being listed)

14. Emailed feedback #10

Discussion Part 1 – Community Needs

1. What are you seeing as the greatest needs in your communities?

We see a need for more sustained academic upgrading programming for adult learners with developmental disabilities. Limits on program length currently do not accurately reflect the amount of time learners from this population generally need to enhance their skills. These learners start at a low level and take several weeks/months to prepare for even the most basic milestone assessments.

2. What gaps exist in the current program and footprint of services?

Per above, learners with developmental and intellectual disabilities are asked to transition from LBS programs in approximately 2 years and this does not allow for enough time to reach learning goals. There is also a need for pre-level one milestone assessments that can be used when working with low level and entry level literacy learners.

3. Who are we not reaching through the current program, and what needs to change in order to support these people?

See above RE: low level learners.

4. What barriers to inclusion are there and how could these be addressed?

Currently, LBS programs are challenged by the lack of inclusive milestone assessments for lower level participants. Low level learners are often excluded from the LBS programming they need because either a) time is spent attempting milestone assessments that are at a level too advanced for their current skills and b) Practitioners are concerned that an inability to complete multiple milestone assessments may risk program funding due to current MAESD standards.

Discussion Part 2 – Leadership and Vision

1. Who should the program serve, and why?

MAESD's LBS programming should serve learners of varied literacy levels and should provide assessment opportunities for skill development at more varied levels. Over time, low level and pre-level one learners often can and will develop skills that allow them to complete more advanced assessments, but current expectations on program completion/ duration make this growth difficult to assess with certain learner populations.

2. What should the LBS strive to achieve, and why?

This a big question...

MAESD's LBS programming should strive to serve a diverse range of learners with a varied range of skills, goals and needs. The current LBS program structure does have a variety of options for goals, but it doesn't always reflect the needs and skills of low-level individuals. Changing assessment practices and guidelines around program duration would help these learners succeed and would most likely help them transition to higher level LBS or other goals.

3. How would you re-envision the LBS program to address the number of adults in Ontario needing literacy and other essential skills?

This is also a big question... I think our other points largely answer this.

Discussion Part 3 – Funding, Efficiency and Sustainability

1. What funding principles should be considered as we re-envision the LBS program to address the number of adults in Ontario needing literacy and other essential skills?

Whenever possible, funding should not be strictly linked to either a standardized completion of assessments and/or any standardized assumptions of progress. While measuring progress is important, over-standardizing this process benefits programs that work with higher level learners. It may be possible to measure learner progress quantitatively IF more varied assessments were applicable to LBS programming OR more qualitative measures were applicable.

2. What suggestions would you like MAESD to consider as the government works to update the funding formula for LBS?

See above

ATTACHMENT F: Abbreviations Glossary

Abbreviation	Meaning
ASL	American Sign Language
EDU	Ministry of Education
EO	Employment Ontario
EOIS-CaMS	Employment Ontario Information System – Case Management System
EOPG	Employment Ontario Partners Gateway
ES	Employment Service
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETC	Employment and Training Consultant
LBS	Literacy and Basic Skills
LEPC	Local Employment Planning Council
LMI	Labour Market Information
LSQ	Langue des signes du Québec
MAESD	Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development
MCI	Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
MCSS	Ministry of Community and Social Services
OALCF	Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework
ODSP	Ontario Disability Support Program
OW	Ontario Works
PMF	Performance Management Framework
SDNDF	Service Delivery Network Development Fund
WSIB	Workplace Safety and Insurance Board
YJC	Youth Job Connection