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Research in Progress

Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills (WLES)

Yukon Workforce/Workplace Research Project (March 2011 – Sept. 2012)

The Yukon Literacy Coalition (YLC) is conducting research on workforce and workplace literacy and essential skills (WLES) in Aboriginal and rural communities in the Yukon, to assess the needs for improving WLES among the Yukon workforce.

Information from OLES Project Database <http://www7.hrsdc.gc.ca/pr.4j.2ctdet.1.3ls@-eng.jsp?prjid=010475184>

Keywords: Aboriginal peoples; Canada; Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES); OLES-Funded Research; Needs evaluation; Rural areas; Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills (WLES); Yukon Literacy Coalition (YLC); Yukon Territory

Adult Literacy Instruction

In January 2012, the UK's Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) commissioned 30 practitioner-led action research projects to develop innovative and creative approaches to instruction leading to increased learner motivation, achievement and progression in life and work. Projects focus on six priority themes in response to recent thematic reviews and policy documents, such as the [Ofsted numeracy thematic review](#) (reviewed in our October 2011 scan), the [Boswell inquiry into adult literacy](#) (report reviewed in our September 2011 scan) and the [New Challenges, New Chances reform plan](#) of December, 2011.

See (2012). *New practioner-led action research projects. Update 35 (Spring 2012), p.6*
<http://repository.excellencegateway.org.uk/fedora/objects/eq:1228/datastreams/DOC/content>

Keywords: Action research; Adult instruction; Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS); Policy; Practitioner research; United Kingdom

Funding Policy

Getting the Right Outcomes: Performance-based Funding Research (Dec. 2011 - June 2012)

Workplace Education Manitoba has been funded by the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES) to conduct research into socially innovative ways of funding literacy and essential skills (LES) initiatives. This project brings together subject matter experts and research capacity to determine the impact of social innovation initiatives. The research will also evaluate the feasibility and considerations for applying the various performance-based funding (PBF) delivery and measurement models in Canada's adult LES systems. Based on results from this research, OLES plans to put together a performance-based pilot over the next three to four years. A report is expected in late summer 2012.

Information from OLES Project Database: <http://www7.hrsdc.gc.ca/pr.4j.2ctdet.1.3ls@-eng.jsp?prjid=010916187>

Keywords: Canada; Funding policy; Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES); OLES-Funded Research; Performance-based funding (PBF); Program evaluation; Social innovation; Workplace Education Manitoba

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LES Workforce

CLLN Announces Survey of LES Workforce

The Canadian Literacy and Learning Network (CLLN) has received funding from the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES) to conduct an in-depth labour market survey of the literacy and essential Skills (LES) workforce. The project starts in April 2012 and will run for 17 months (results expected in August 2013). They will collect data through a pan-Canadian survey to create a picture of practitioners working in the LES field. The project will examine the size, types and geographical locations of organizations that employ LES practitioners, the types of programs being delivered and the employment status of practitioners.

See Enhancing our Knowledge of the Literacy and Essential Skills Workforce: A profile of l/eS Practitioners. Literacy Express (Spring 2012), 2-3.

<http://www.literacy.ca/content/uploads/2012/04/literacy+express+practitioners+issue.pdf>

Keywords: Adult Educators; Canada; Canadian Literacy and Learning Network (CLLN); LES workforce; OLES-Funded Research; Surveys

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Official Language Minorities

Literacy Needs of the Francophone Population in Newfoundland and Labrador: A Study (RCLD) (Nov. 2011 – Jan. 2013) Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et Labrador (FFTNL)

The FFTNL is carrying out a study of literacy needs in the three regions of Newfoundland and Labrador with francophone concentrations (Labrador, Port au Port and St. John's). The goal is to identify the reasons for a low level of literacy and essential skills in the Francophone communities of Newfoundland and Labrador, in order to better direct future family literacy initiatives. The FFTNL will also do research on family literacy models, identify relevant models and adapt them to the needs of the targeted regions.

Information from OLES Project Database: <http://www7.hrsdc.gc.ca/pr.4j.2ctdet.1.3ls@-eng.jsp?prjid=010939114>

Keywords: Canada; Family Literacy; Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et Labrador (FFTNL); Francophones; Needs evaluation; Newfoundland and Labrador; Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES); Official Language Minorities; OLES-Funded Research

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Reports and Articles

Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills (WLES)

Parker, James T. (2011). *Doing Business Together: Adult Education and Business Partnering to Build a Qualified Workforce*. Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL).
<http://www.caalusa.org/Doing.pdf>

This paper is the result of a CAAL project designed to stimulate more and effective business involvement in planning and providing basic and workforce skills to current and potential workers. The project used two surveys and an invitational round table involving adult education and business leaders to get insight into elements of successful partnerships between adult educators and businesses. The report focuses on what works in states where excellent models already exist in adult education and business collaboration. It discussed elements of successful partnerships, outlines exemplary models in 16 states, and provides suggestions for future action by adult education and business leaders. Among other recommendations is research on Return on Investment (ROI) from investments in workplace education.

Keywords: Adult education; Business-adult educator partnerships; Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL); Employers; Return on Investment (ROI); Round-table discussions; Surveys; United States; Workforce education

Sum, Andrew. (2011). *ROI from Investing in Workforce Development: Findings on the Effectiveness of Past Workforce Development Programs for Low-Income Adults and Dislocated Workers in the U.S.* Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL). <http://www.caalusa.org/WorkforceROI.pdf>

This five-page policy brief was prepared for the Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL) by the Director of the Center for Labor Market Studies, Northeastern University. It reviews the "findings on the effectiveness of past workforce development programs for low-income adults and dislocated workers in the U.S." Data is summarized from three federal workforce development programs: the National JTPJA Evaluation of Programs for Low-Income Adults (1990), the ADARE Evaluation of WIA (2005), and the IMPAQ International Evaluation of WIA (2008). According to Sum, the evidence consistently shows that employment and training programs are effective at raising the employment and earnings of low-income participants, but results for dislocated workers is more limited and mixed.

Keywords: Center for Labor Market Studies; Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL); Low-income adults; Policy; Program evaluation; Return on investment (ROI); Round-table discussions; Surveys; United States; Workforce education

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Family Literacy

Beauregard, France; Carignan, Isabelle. (2012). Reading with Junior: A Project in Family Literacy. *Education Canada*(52) 2: 15-17.

In 2007 the researchers proposed a project to motivate male pupils with reading difficulties by taking their interests into account. *Reading with Junior* was a program in the Estrie region of Quebec that teamed up a Grade 3 male elementary school pupil who is having difficulty reading or little motivation to do so, with a parent (preferably a father) and a male university student in a preschool and elementary school teaching program. The university student's role was to present different types of readings to the pupil and to read with him and his parent. The parent's role was to participate in the reading activity and guide the university student to a better understanding of the child's interests. Teachers noted that participating pupils' developed more positive attitudes towards reading and that, in some instances, behaviour problems were reduced. Some parents commented that relationships within the home also improved.

Keywords: Boys and reading; Canada; Elementary education; Program evaluation; Quebec

Professionalization

Hess, Marcia, et. al. (2012) *Improving Adult Education Teacher Effectiveness: A Call to Action for a New Credential*. McGraw-Hill Research Foundation. http://mcgraw-hillresearchfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Adult_Education_wp.pdf

This document calls for a U.S. national credentialing system, including standards, recommendations for adult educator preparation and a mechanism for earning and awarding credentials. The report makes a primarily economic argument: the need for stronger literacy and essential skills in the workplace will increase in coming years, but the adult education sector is not able to respond effectively since its own workforce is poorly compensated and prepared. The teaching of numeracy skills particularly needs strengthening. The Commission for Adult Basic Education (COABE) and the National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC) are collaborating to create a national credentialing system for adult education instructional staff based on research, best practices and industry-wide input.

See also, Smith, C. with Gomez, R. (2011). *Certifying Adult Education Staff and Faculty*. New York: Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy, www.caalusa.org/certteach.pdf, reviewed in the Dec. 2011 edition of our research scan.

Keywords: Adult Education; Adult Educators; Credentialing; Instruction; LES Practitioners; Professionalization; United States; Workplace Literacy and Essential Skills (WLES)

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Keywords

Aboriginal peoples
Action Research
Adult Education
Adult Educators
Boys and reading
Business-adult educator partnerships
Credentialing
Employers
Family Literacy
Francophones
Funding policy
Instruction
LES workforce
Needs evaluation
Official Language Minorities
OLES-Funded Research
Performance-based funding (PBF)
Policy
Professionalization
Program evaluation
Return on investment (ROI)
Round-table discussions
Rural areas
Social innovation
Surveys
Workforce education

Name keywords

Canada
Center for Labor Market Studies
Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL)
Fédération des francophones de Terre-Neuve et Labrador (FFTNL)
Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)
Newfoundland and Labrador
Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES)
Quebec
United Kingdom
United States
Workplace Education Manitoba
Yukon Literacy Coalition (YLC)
Yukon Territory