

## Provincial Adult Literacy Profile Funders, Providers and Accountability

### Nova Scotia

Total population (2007)	934,100
First Nations (2006)	24,170
Immigrant (2006) [Visible minority, 2001]	45,195 [34,525]
Francophone (2006)	32,540
Urban (2001)	56%
Rural (2001)	44%
Senior/65 yrs and older (2007)	138,400

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/start-debut-eng.html?gaw=08001>

[Nova Scotia Summary Tables:

<http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/101/pro01/pro103-eng.htm>]

### Methodology

One objective of Connecting the Dots is to provide the first pan-Canadian overview of funding, delivery, and accountability practices in adult literacy services. The Provincial/Territorial Adult Literacy Profiles is one of the deliverables that helps meet that objective. Each profile offers a “snapshot” of adult literacy funding, services and accountability practices for a specific province or territory. It was constructed exclusively on the basis of online research using a variety of web sites. No interviews with literacy funders, providers or practitioners were conducted in this process. Online research for this profile was conducted between December 3 and 19, 2008, and represents the information that was publicly available at that point in time. It should not be used for further research purposes without validation. The date when web pages were last modified is noted when such information was indicated.

## 1. Funders

### Public — Provincial Government

Government of Nova Scotia, Department of Labour and Workforce Development/LWD, Adult Education Division/AED, **Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning/NSSAL**

- NSSAL is an administrative body within the Adult Education Division of the Department of Labour and Workforce Development (the Department was formed in April 2008, but NSSAL was established in 2000 as part of the Department of Education). It supports the delivery of a range of adult education programs, from basic literacy to high school, offered as part of the **Adult Learning Program/ALP**.

NSSAL was established in 2000 as part of a major adult learning initiative “in response to the recognized need for a continuum of programming to meet the needs of adult students” that had been inadequately served until then by a “fragmented” delivery system characterized by a lack of collaboration and cooperation. NSSAL represents a more coordinated system for adults seeking to upgrade their numeracy and literacy skills and/or complete their secondary school education. It coordinates educational programs, policies, and services enabling adults over 19 years of age to acquire needed literacy and essential skills, knowledge, and secondary school credentials.

ALP is an “outcomes-based education program” for adults without high school diploma, delivered in English and French and designed “to help adults develop a variety of essential skills needed to learn, live, and work in their communities”.

### Key Recent Statements and Directions

In 2007–08, the Nova Scotia government outlined its vision for the future in **The New Nova Scotia: A Path to 2020**. Guided by this long-term economic and social agenda, the government listed five priorities for 2008–09, including “educating to compete”. This plan builds on the 2002 framework document, **Skills Nova Scotia: Strong Workplace, Bright Future**, which lists as primary goals for the province’s future:

- meet the skills needs of Nova Scotia’s growing labour market
- provide better labour market access and support to Nova Scotians
- strengthen the province’s system of lifelong learning opportunities

Beginning in 2007, discussions have been underway between Nova Scotia and the federal government to enter into a new federal-provincial **Labour Market Agreement**. The initiative is designed to help fill in gaps in the labour market by helping adults who are not eligible for training under EI or employed workers with low skills. At the provincial level, departments will jointly design and deliver programs, which could include skills training (including literacy), workplace-based training, job readiness assistance, wage subsidies and employment services (assessment, counselling, planning).

**Regional support** to Nova Scotia Government Literacy Initiatives is provided by the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training/**CAMET**

CAMET is composed of the Atlantic ministers of education and training (replaced the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation/APEF). It works “to provide the framework for joint undertakings of the four provinces in the needs of public and post-secondary education”.

According to CAMET:

“Limitations and reductions in federal funding have a negative impact on the direct delivery of adult literacy training in Atlantic Canada. Project funding from the National Literacy Secretariat is not generally targeted to direct service delivery of adult literacy programming. Direct service delivery is a priority because of the severity of the literacy problem in Atlantic Canada”.

CAMET would like to see more support for the Atlantic provinces from the federal government, in the form of “increased, sustainable funding for direct service delivery of adult literacy programming, including workplace based literacy/learning programs... better access to training for adults with low literacy skills, regardless of employment status”.

### **Recipients of funding**

- community-based organizations/CBOs
- regional Schools Boards/RSBs
- Nova Scotia Community College/NSCC
- Collège de l'Acadie

### **Funding Streams**

- Adult Literacy
- Seniors Literacy and Learning Initiative
- Health Literacy Initiative
- Family Literacy Initiative
- Aboriginal programming

**Funding amounts:** statistics not located

**Populations** served — a range of individuals, families, communities and demographic groups, including:

- Acadians
- Mi'Kmaq
- African-Canadians
- immigrants
- persons with special needs
- incarcerated persons
- unemployed/job-seekers, employers

### **Profile** of ALP Learners

- *Gender:* 60% women, 40% men
- *Age:* 68% under age 40

- *Financial Assistance:* 68% receiving some form of assistance — 39% receiving Income Assistance and 19% receiving Employment Insurance benefits
- *Educational Level:* 68% with Grade 10 or less
- *Reasons for Enrolling:* 44% to earn the secondary school equivalency diploma, 30% to attend community college, 29% to enter or re-enter the workforce
- *Population Groups:* 36% identified as African-Canadian, 27% as Acadian, 20% as Aboriginal and 3% Deaf

**Volunteers:** statistics not located

### **Number of learners**

According to LWD's 2008-8 Business Plan, the number of adult learners enrolled in literacy and upgrading programs through the NSSAL: 4,561

### **Public — Other Funding**

1. other provincial ministries/departments (Department of Community Services)
2. federal government (Human Resources Development Canada)

### **Private and Non-Profit Funding**

Additional support is provided by the private sector, from corporations, foundations and individuals, as well as from Literacy Nova Scotia.

### **Sources Section 1**

<http://www.gonssal.ca/index.shtml>

<http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/CASAE/CONFINTEA%20VI/CANADA%20FINAL%20CONFINTEA%20VI%20EN.pdf> (Oct. 2008)

<http://www.ns.literacy.ca/> (last modified 1 Dec. 2008)

<http://deafliteracynovascotia.ca/>

<http://www.ns.literacy.ca/whoweare/report06/report06.pdf> (2006)

<http://www.gonssal.ca/General-Public/Literacy-Programs/index.shtml?id=1>

<http://www.gonssal.ca/General-Public/Documents-Resources/alp.shtml?id=1>

<http://www.gonssal.ca/General-Public/Documents-Resources/ProgramGuide2007.pdf> (2007)

<http://gov.ns.ca/lwd/pubs/docs/LWDBusinessPlan0809.pdf> (2008)

## **2. Providers**

The NSSAL offers ALP to adults over 19, free of charge, at more than 150 sites across the province. Adults enrolled in the program work toward a number of personal goals, which may include the following:

- improving literacy, math, problem-solving, critical-thinking and teamwork skills
- acquiring the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults/NSHSGDA (created in 2001, French equivalent is the Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires pour adultes de la Nouvelle-Écosse/DFESANÉ)
- preparing to write the GED test to further employment opportunities
- entering the workforce
- preparing to enter a post-secondary institution.

ALP is also tailored to aboriginal communities. In these settings, ALP is usually taught in a

multi-lingual environment and includes a transition process to help students move from ALP in their community into the ALP Level IV Program at the Nova Scotia Community College.

Learners can enroll in ALP classes at:

1. **Community Learning Networks/CLNs** — community-based organizations providing learning opportunities (30 in operation in 2008-9)
  - a. offer Levels I (=Skill Set Grade 6), II (=Skill Set Grade 8) and III (=Skill Set Grade 10)
2. **Nova Scotia Community College** (at 13 campuses)
  - a. offers Level III and Level IV (=Skill Set Grade 11-12)
  - b. offers Africentric ALP (through the African Canadian Transition Program)
  - c. full- or part-time classes

### **Types of Adult Literacy Programs Offered**

A range of programs is offered locally, tailored to the needs of communities, demographic groups individuals and families and responding to their specific functional, academic and vocational needs.

### **Provincial Organizations**

**Literacy Nova Scotia/LNS** — a not-for-profit organization supporting the literacy community in Nova Scotia. It works to ensure that every Nova Scotian has equal access to quality literacy education, advocates on behalf of adult learners and the literacy community, promotes research, information-sharing and professional development, provides financial support for learners and literacy organizations and informs governments and the public about literacy.

**L'Équipe d'alphabétisation - Nouvelle-Écosse** — provides Acadians and Francophones age 18 and over with basic French-language education through a community, client-centred approach. It offers literacy instruction (reading, writing and numeracy) at different levels free of charge in Acadian regions.

**Laubach Literacy Nova Scotia/LLNS** — a volunteer-based organization providing free, confidential tutoring in reading, writing, numeracy, and life skills, committed to improving the literacy skills of youth and adults through one-to-one tutoring.

**Deaf Literacy Nova Scotia/DLNS** — a partnership of community members and organizations involved in adult literacy programming, DLNS promotes and supports literacy and learning of Deaf adults through self-development, literacy, and American Sign Language/Maritime Sign Language (ASL/MSL) literacy. Its goals are to: respond to the literacy needs of Deaf adults in Nova Scotia, help Deaf adults improve reading, writing, math and life skills, deliver accessible community-based adult literacy programs throughout the province and promote ASL/MSL literacy and Deaf Culture.

**Literacy Nova Scotia eCampus** —a forum for discussion, training, and sharing, designed by LNS for adult literacy practitioners, learners and coordinators in adult learning programs.

All organizations have a comprehensive web site with useful links for learners and practitioners. LNS posts Annual Reports.

### **Organizations Promoting/Providing Practitioner Training and PD**

- NSSAL
- LNS
- L'Équipe d'alphabétisation - Nouvelle-Écosse
- LLNS
- DLNS
- Deliverers of literacy programs and services

### **Sources Section 2**

<http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/CASAE/CONFITEA%20VI/CANADA%20FINAL%20CONFITEA%20VI%20EN.pdf> (Oct. 2008)

<http://www.gonssal.ca/General-Public/index.shtml>

<http://www.gonssal.ca/General-Public/Documents-Resources/alp.shtml?id=1>

<http://www.gonssal.ca/Adult-Learner/High-School-Diploma/community-colleges.shtml>

<http://www.gonssal.ca/Adult-Learner/High-School-Diploma/community-based-organizations.shtml>

<http://www.ns.literacy.ca/> (last modified 1 Dec. 2008)

<http://deafliteracynovascotia.ca/>

<http://www.bdaa.ca/eane/propos/propos.htm>

<http://www.nald.ca/litweb/province/ns/lc-ns/index.htm>

<http://alt.ns.literacy.ca/>

<http://www.gonssal.ca/General-Public/Documents-Resources/documents/ProgramGuide2007.pdf> (2007)

## **3. Accountability/Reporting**

In the late 1990s, a Quality Standards Committee, made up of representatives of literacy programs across Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Department of Education and LNS, was organized to develop program evaluation standards. The work of the Committee was brought together in 1999 in the report **Enhancing Program Quality — Standards for Community-Based Adult Literacy Programs**. The document describes 14 quality standards, some or all of which might be used by programs in designing their evaluation process, depending on their particular features and needs:

- community support
- staff training, development and support
- accountability
- needs of the learner
- learner-centred instruction
- resources
- learner evaluation
- recognition for learning
- learner support
- learner empowerment
- mission
- cultural diversity
- lifelong learning

- funding

Sample surveys and discussion/interview questions are provided.

The accountability standard is defined as being “accountable to all... stakeholders: learners, practitioners, sponsors, and funders”, and consists of the following components:

- remaining within budget
- using generally accepted accounting principles that guide program budgeting and meet reporting requirements
- reporting to a board of directors or other democratic body
- the reporting organization has a written organizational document
- providing supports that retain learners
- assessing and documenting student progress
- providing participant follow-up
- conducting regular evaluation based on feedback from learners and other stakeholders
- assessing the effectiveness of the instruction provided
- communicating regularly with stakeholders

NSSAL currently directs organizations wishing to set up a Family Literacy Program to a document entitled Family Literacy Best Practises Guide, which it recommends as an aid in designing an evaluation process. The Guide provides quality standards similar to those described and recommended in the 1999 report.

### **Sources Section 3**

<http://www.gonssal.ca/General-Public/Literacy-Programs/documents/FL-bestpracticesguide-eng.pdf> (July 2003)

<http://www.gonssal.ca/General-Public/Documents-Resources/documents/Enhancingprogramquality--standardsforcommunity-basedadultliteracyprograms.pdf>