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Provincial Adult Literacy Profile
Funders, Providers and Accountability

Saskatchewan

Total population (2007)	996,900
First Nations (2006)	141,890
Immigrant (2006) [Visible minority, 2001]	48,160 [27,580]
Francophone (2006)	16,060
Urban (2001)	64%
Rural (2001)	36%
Senior/65 yrs and older (2007)	148,300

http://www.statcan.gc.ca/start-debut-eng.html?gaw=08001
[Saskatchewan Summary Tables:
http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/l01/pro01/pro108-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

1. Government of Saskatchewan, Department of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour/**AEEL**

AAEL promotes and funds **Adult Basic Education/ABE**, consisting of "a wide range of services, credit, and non-credit programs designed to help adult learners achieve their goals" in terms of furthering their education, acquiring or enhancing training to improve employability or improving life skills.

Key Recent Statements and Directions

ABE in Saskatchewan is divided into four levels — Levels 1 and 2 make up the **Literacy Benchmarks** (LB) category, which addresses those general skills, abilities, and attitudes adults need to function on a daily basis in their world as family members, community members, and workers. The category was developed "by taking into consideration the identified needs of adult learners and practitioners, the objectives and values of the various stakeholders, and the national, international, and Aboriginal resources currently available on literacy models".

A Basic Education Program Review was conducted in 1999, which suggested the need for change in the way ABE was delivered in Saskatchewan. Among the primary recommendations of the review were:

*   the need to increase ABE's connections to employment
*   the need to increase the retention and success of Aboriginal learners

In response to the review, AEEL set up the Basic Education Redesign Task Team in March 2001 to begin a multi-phase overhaul project aimed at articulating/developing:

*   a definition of a framework for basic education in Saskatchewan
*   an integrated vision for basic education
*   goals and objectives for basic education
*   implementation of curricula for adult learners
*   a sustainable renewal and evaluation strategy for the new curricula

Also in response to the 1999 Review, AEEL's 2007-8 Annual Report indicates that, "an overarching policy framework for the integration of Workplace Essential Skills was undertaken", providing "a clear linkage between education and training opportunities and the labour market".

2. Government of Saskatchewan, Ministry of Education: Saskatchewan Literacy Office or **SaskSmart**

Recently established to "develop and coordinate a new literacy strategy" for Saskatchewan and help raise awareness of "the importance of high-level literacy development for all

Saskatchewan citizens".

In pursuing its objectives, SaskSmart works and liaises with a broad range of individuals, institutions, organizations and communities, including:

- Saskatchewan Literacy Network
- Educational institutions
- First Nations and Métis peoples
- Libraries
- KidsFirst
- Business and industry
- Community-based organizations (CBOs)
- ABE
- Volunteer organizations
- Research community

Recipients of funding from AEEL
1. regional colleges and institutes
2. community-based organizations (CBOs)

Recipients of funding from SaskSmart — local communities

AEEL funding streams — Besides direct funding of ABE, AEEL supports programs that provide, to varying degrees, basic skills training and upgrading (that might include literacy). These include:
1. Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD)
2. General Educational Development (GED)
3. Institutional Quick Response Training (Quick Skills)
4. JobStart/Future Skills
5. Targeted Initiative for Older Workers (TIOW)
6. Workbased Training for the Unemployed

Funding amounts provided by AEEL:
- 2006-7: regional colleges received $18,942,420 — the 2007-8 budget provided an 11% increase
- 2006-7: institutes received $85,347,884 — the 2007-8 budget provided a 15-250% increase (the large 250% increase went to the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies in support of aboriginal training)

The amount of this funding went specifically towards the LB category could not be ascertained.

SaskSmart Funding Streams —
1. SaskSmart Innovations Fund Expressions of Interest (EOI) grants ($10,000 each, to help communities begin engaging in new literacy planning — most recent grants in October 2008 focussed on aboriginal literacy)
2. SaskSmart Innovations Fund (to support the implementation of Community Literacy Plans providing literacy programs, services and supports in areas of family literacy and

workplace literacy — most recent grants in October 2008 include a component to support the needs of First Nations and Métis communities)
3. Family Literacy Initiative Fund

Funding amounts provided by SaskSmart: The 2008-9 Budget of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education provides $2.1 million for community-based literacy funding to maintain SaskSmart's Literacy Innovations Fund and other grants for the network of thirty organizations that deliver adult and family literacy services with the support of SaskSmart.

Populations served by AEEL and SaskSmart:
1. aboriginal
2. workers, job-seekers, employers
3. special needs
4. families
5. youth
6. seniors
7. visible minorities
8. social assistance recipients

Learner profile
The Post-Secondary Education and Skills Training Database, 1998-1999 provides the following **demographic profile** of Basic Education Learners in Saskatchewan:
- 61% female, 39% male
- 52% Aboriginal (62% Treaty/Status; 31% Métis)
- 66% single, divorced or widowed; 34% married or common-law
- average age is 30.5 years (with a range of 15 to 73 years)
- 45% of learners have dependents with, on average, 2.36 children
- on average, the last grade completed was Grade 9
- on average, 11 years since last attended school (with a range of 1 to 20 years)
- about 40% attend adult 12/GED and 60% attend Adult 10 and related programs.

Volunteers: statistics not located

Number of learners supported by AEEL
2006-7: 5,709 students enrolled in ABE (and 5,680 in JobStart/Future Skills)

Public — Other Funding
1. other provincial ministries/departments (Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture & Sport)
2. federal government (Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, Human Resources and Social Development Canada)
3. municipalities (school divisions)
4. Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority

Private and Non-Profit Funding
Additional support is provided by the private sector, from church organizations, corporations, foundations and individuals.

Sources Section 1
http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/abe (2007)
http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/adx/aspx/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=164,185,173,169,94,88,Documents&MediaID=108&Filename=abe_benchmarks.pdf (Oct. 2006)
http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/adx/aspx/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=486,185,173,169,94,88,Documents&MediaID=256&Filename=abe_phase1.pdf (March 2002)
http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/programs (2007)
http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/annual-report0708
http://www.sk.literacy.ca/skfunding/Funding%20Sources%20July%202008.pdf
http://www.gov.sk.ca/news?newsId=21f489c0-487d-4bec-a66e-173850259fca
http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/sasksmart/fund/family.htm
http://www.finance.gov.sk.ca/adx/aspx/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=3230,3204,2000,1974,1973,204,Documents&MediaID=2387&Filename=2008-09BudgetSummary.pdf

2. Providers

According to AEEL's 2007-8 Annual Report, literacy programs are offered in a variety of formal and non-formal settings, including post-secondary institutions (regional colleges and institutes), community organizations (CBOs), tutorial settings and the workplace.
1. post-secondary institutions — eight regional colleges and three institutes
2. CBOs
3. public libraries

Types of Adult Literacy Programs Offered
A wide range of programs is offered tailored to the needs of communities, demographic groups and individuals and responding to their specific "academic, employment and functional needs".

Provincial Organizations
1. **Saskatchewan Literacy Network** (SLN) — a non-profit, charitable organization that promotes and supports literacy in Saskatchewan through communication (with learners, practitioners, policy-makers, the media and funders), field development and learner involvement strategies. SLN has a comprehensive web page with extensive links for learners, practitioners and communities.
2. Another province-wide literacy umbrella organization is the **Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network** (SALN). Its mission is to "promote Aboriginal literacy as a learner-centered approach to lifelong learning… [honouring] the inter-connectedness of all aspects of creation resulting in personal growth, empowerment, community development, and self-determination". As defined by SALN, Aboriginal literacy refers to languages, Elder and community involvement, culture, creating a holistic approach unifying mind, heart, body and spirit.

Organizations Promoting/Providing Practitioner Training and PD
1. AEEL
2. provincial literacy networks
3. CBOs involved in literacy delivery, public libraries

Sources Section 2
http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/abe/benchmarks (2007)

http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/abe/redesign (2007)
http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=6c19933c-b598-49eb-a764-9273b10d27c9 (2007)
http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/abe/contacts (2007)
http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/annual-report0708 (2008)
http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/sasksmart/organizations/provincial.htm
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http://www.sk.literacy.ca/

3. Accountability/Reporting

Reporting to AEEL

According to AEEL's 2007-8 Annual Report, funded institutions and organizations "have varying accountability to government through legislation specific to their institution, organization or by contracts and agreements".

Post-secondary institutions (regional colleges and institutes) complete an annual **ABE Follow-Up Survey** (providing statistics, for example, on enrolment and program completion that are reproduced in the Annual Reports)

Basic Education Redesign Report/Phase 1 (2002)
One of several objectives outlined in the report is improved measuring of the effectiveness of Basic Education programs and services. The Report recommends "ongoing monitoring and evaluation of programs and services to establish benchmarks and best practices…"

A Sustainability Plan released by AEEL in April 2008 as part of the ABE redesign process outlined an evaluation framework for curriculum renewal. The framework calls for:
1. **Formative processes**, including —
    a. a first year implementation survey
    b. an interim review workshop (in-person meetings with representatives from delivery organizations four years after implementation of a new curriculum)
2. **Summative processes** — a summative evaluation every eight years with respect to curriculum foundations and content

Reporting to SaskSmart
Communities applying for grants must provide details of their proposed Evaluation Plan, indicating how they will:
- demonstrate that their objectives have been reached
- determine and measure success (success indicators)
- collect and report the evaluation data

Saskatchewan Adult Literacy Benchmarks
SLN and AEEL have been collaborating on the development of the **Saskatchewan Adult Literacy Benchmarks, Levels 1 and 2**. The Benchmarks provide learning outcomes for literacy that include communications, numeracy, lifelong learning, and interpersonal skills. They have been established to help "document and recognize learner accomplishment and achievements, to enhance learner transitions between literacy levels and across programs, and to facilitate delivery organizations in the development of program courses".

Sources Section 3

http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/adx/aspx/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=486,185,173,169,94,88,Documents&MediaID=256&Filename=abe_phase1.pdf (March 2002)
http://www.aeel.gov.sk.ca/adx/aspx/adxGetMedia.aspx?DocID=1135,185,173,169,94,88,Documents&MediaID=1284&Filename=Sustainability+Plan+April+2008.pdf (April 2008)
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