

DECEMBER MID-POINT REVIEW

It is with pleasure that I am submitting to funders of the Adult Learning Network (ALN) a mid-point review of the activities undertaken since August 17, 2009. Special appreciation goes to volunteers working on our committees who believe strongly that a permanent pan-Canadian lifelong learning organization is needed.



Danielle Charron
December 18, 2009

Background

In July 2009, the Faculty of Education of the University of New Brunswick signed an agreement with the New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour (PETL) and the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) to establish the Adult Learning Network. PETL provided an amount of \$25,000 that was matched by CCL. The Faculty of Education provides in-kind support. The initiative pursues the vision of the Adult Learning Knowledge Centre (AdLKC) which closed after a four-year funding agreement with CCL that ended due to financial constraints.

Organizational Overview

The Director, Danielle Charron, began work on August 17, 2009. The first task was to develop a governance structure for the initiative. The structure is composed of a Network Committee (25 members), an Executive Committee (7 members) and ad hoc committees created as required. A website was launched in October (www.aln-raa.ca) to present the structure, membership, activities and news related to the network. Special attention is given to ensure that the work and activities are presented in the two official languages. Since September, monthly meetings using teleconferencing have taken place with members of the Network Committee while the Executive Committee meets weekly as needed. The meeting notes, in English and French, are posted on the website keeping all stakeholders informed of the progress.

Because of the shoestring budget, the expenses are minimal and partners' assistance is sought whenever possible. The teleconferences are organized by the Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français (FCAF) under a special Ontario program and the Société nationale de l'Acadie (SNA) has paid for transportation. The face-to-face strategic planning session of the Executive Committee was linked to other meetings thus greatly reducing ALN cost.

Sustaining the Network

The knowledge exchange activities of the Adult Learning Knowledge Centre have been maintained with adult learning partners. For example, the report on *The Roundtable on Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia May 12, 2009*, has been shared with a First Nations group of Quebec wanting to produce an overall picture of the situation inside and outside Quebec. The St. Thomas University posting of a new Director of Aboriginal Education Initiatives position is one of the outcomes of the roundtable. Discussions took place in November, 2009, with Barb Martin, Aboriginal consultant hired to develop the New Brunswick Action Plan to Increase Aboriginal Participation in PSE for March, 2010.

Another example is the work with the Société nationale de l'Acadie (SNA). Danielle Charron participated to the organization of the September 2008 Moncton Literacy Forum and is now a member of the new Literacy Commission (Commission acadienne et francophone pour l'alphabétisation en Atlantique – CAFAA) launched last October. The CAFAA has received the Council of Atlantic Ministers of Education and Training (CAMET) five-year literacy action plan dated September 25 and will submit a working plan to the provincial authorities. A first meeting with Rhéal Poirier, CAMET General Secretary, is being organized for January, 2010.

Expansion of the network also took place reaching out to groups interested in implementing a culture of lifelong learning. The 2010 Legacy Now organization, created in June 2000 by the British Columbia Government and the Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation, is a new network member who is also part of the ALN Network Committee. Committed to achieve long term change in the areas of literacy, lifelong learning, sport and healthy living, 2010 Legacy Now is able to share its tremendous experience in finding innovative ways to work with individuals, groups and other organizations.

The ALN was able to continue its role as a “go-to place”. For example, the Collège communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick - CCNB Innovation and Communication Branch was seeking help for the organization of Proposal Writing Workshops in French and English. Through former contacts, Danielle Charron was able to establish communications with three potential instructors. An agreement with one of the instructors from Ottawa will be signed in the near future.

CONSULTATION PAPER: Long term initiative

The Executive Committee has submitted to the Network Committee members a consultation paper seeking partners' reaction and endorsement for the creation of a pan-Canadian lifelong learning network. A draft document has also been submitted to participants at the AdLKC June 2009 Symposium who supported the establishment of a network and to provincial and territorial partners for their reaction to the project. Being an evolving document, changes have been made all through the consultation phase as suggestions and comments were received. It was also important that the Francophone, Anglophone and Aboriginal groups took ownership of the project. To achieve that,

conversations and meetings took place with individuals, elders, group's representatives, etc. A dialogue was initiated with First Nations, Inuit and Métis groups. Individual e-mails were sent to over 25 Aboriginal, 12 Francophone and 15 Anglophone organizations and individuals.

Most members of the Executive Committee will meet in Montreal on January 13, 2009, for a strategic planning session. Now that the consultation phase is over, specific issues will be addressed and actions will be identified to present the proposal to funders in a timely manner. The strategy currently being considered is to present a proposal to provincial and territorial governmental officials and then seek the participation of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC).

Timeframe

Four months are left in the present financial agreement. Because the ALN is counting on volunteers, the schedule of events has to be adjusted on a daily basis according to the status of undertaken and finalized tasks. Very definite progress is being made towards the creation of a network endorsed by stakeholders from all parts of Canada. The next step is to engage funders.

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