

ANNEX B

Program Providers - Interviewer Guide

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Introduction

The Department of Education and Literacy Development Council have initiated an evaluation of Basic Literacy and Level 1 ABE programs in the province. The evaluation is intended to identify best practices in literacy programming and improve service to learners. The results will assist government and organizations involved in literacy to strengthen program delivery and will also guide government expenditures. A letter was sent to your organization in late May outlining the purpose of this evaluation and the process that is being followed in the evaluation.

Our firm, Goss Gilroy Inc., has been engaged to carry out this study. We are conducting interviews with a number of organizations that provide literacy programs. This input will help us produce a profile of current programming and the experiences of organizations in delivering these programs.

Background to program

1. What type of literacy programming does your organization provide?

Type of literacy program	Check appropriate box
Basic literacy only	
ABE level 1 only	
Basic literacy and ABE level 1	
ABE levels I, II and III	
Family literacy	
Other	
Other	

If organization offers more than one type, please note that the following questions deal with the Basic Literacy and ABE level 1 programming only.

2. Could you provide some background on your basic literacy/ABE 1 program?(How long you have been in operation, how you began, the organization(s) involved in managing the program.)
3. What is the current annual funding for your basic literacy/ABE 1 program:

Cost item	Amount	Source(s)
Salaries		
Operating costs		
Other (please specify)		
Total		

4. What is your current staffing:

Type of staff	Number
Paid coordinator	
Paid instructor	
Volunteer instructor/tutor	
Other	

5. How is your programming delivered:

classroom instruction

one-on-one tutoring

mix of both

If full time (hours per week)

If part-time (usual hours per week for each learner)

6. Are there other organizations with which you have a significant linkage in delivery of your program? Could you give me an example of a linkage that helps a lot in the delivery of your program? Are there any aspects of these linkages you would like to see improved?

Program Description

7. Do you follow a specific curriculum?
8. To what extent do you develop your own curriculum? Your own materials?
9. How satisfied are you with the curriculum and materials available to you to meet learner needs? What improvements are needed?
10. Are you using computers in your program? How well does this aspect work? Are you connected to the Internet?

11. What proportion of program time (on average) is spent on:

Reading, writing and numeracy _____

Life skills _____

Personal counselling _____

12. What percentage of time do you spend on the following in your program:

Question:	Percentage:
(a) reading	
writing	
numeracy	
(b) <i>Within reading:</i>	
phonics and word skills	
comprehension	
vocabulary	
(c) <i>Within reading:</i>	

Question:	Percentage:
prose type reading (stories, articles, etc.)	
different types of forms (applications, time sheets, health insurance etc.)	
other word displays (signs/charts, spreadsheets, roadmaps)	
(d) <i>Within writing:</i>	
composition (getting ideas down)	
mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar)	

13. Is there anything about the location and physical space of the program that works particularly well for learners? Anything that needs improvement?

Learner profile

14. In the past year, what was the highest number of learners enrolled at any one time?
The lowest number enrolled?
15. Do you have a waiting list? What is the average length of time people are on your waiting list before being accepted?
16. What are the learners' backgrounds (are any groups more represented than others, any changes in the mix over the last few years):
- age range
 - gender mix
 - previous schooling
 - any New Canadians
 - any Aboriginal peoples
17. What proportion of learners are on;
- EI
 - social assistance

working

not in labour market

18. What kind of goals do learners usually have on joining your program?
19. What proportion have a goal of moving beyond basic literacy/level 1 ABE to ABE II or other studies?
20. Do agencies that refer learners to you have clear expectations of what they want the program to achieve with the learners?
21. Do you feel there are people in your area who need help with basic literacy skills that are not asking for the program? What are the reasons they are not coming forward? Do you have plans to do anything about this?

Process

22. How do you work with learners to help them get from where they are to where they want to be? Please describe your approach from acceptance through to completion. Do you create a plan for each learner? What would a typical plan include? Could you provide us with a sample plan?
23. What expectations are set for the learner's responsibilities in the program? How are these communicated to learners?
24. What are your criteria for progress?
25. How do you monitor learners' progress? (Process/tools used to assess progress)
26. How effective do you feel this monitoring process is in keeping track of and motivating learners to progress? (any examples of how this has helped learners progress, revise their approach to learning, any challenges to progress that are not met through this monitoring)
27. What help do you provide for those dealing with social or financial problems? Could you provide examples of this help.
28. What type of learners are you best able to serve?
29. Are there some learner needs that you are not well equipped to meet?
30. What do you do in these cases? How well does this work?

31. How well suited is your program to learners that need ongoing skill maintenance?
Are there better options to achieve this?

Outcomes

32. At what point is someone considered to have completed the program? What do you notice about the learner at that point?
33. What is the usual length of time in the program for the following groups:
- those who leave the program early
 - those who complete the program
 - those who stay on without completing
34. What are the characteristics of learners most likely to complete the program?
35. What would you estimate to be a realistic time period for learners in your program to complete level 1 ABE (where applicable)?
36. Do those who are functioning at a very low level stay a long time? How long is typical? What is their success rate in reaching their goals?
37. Did any of your learners go on to ABE II or III? How well did this transition work for them? Could anything have made the transition better?
38. Are there any aspects of your program that work particularly well?
39. Are there any gaps or weaknesses you would like to see changed?

Staffing

40. What qualifications do you require of your coordinator/instructors/tutors?
41. Are you able to attract the kinds of instructors/tutors needed? If not, what issues are involved? Do you have any plans to tackle this issue?
42. Are you able to retain instructors/tutors? If not, what issues are involved? Do you have any plans to tackle this issue?
43. What orientation/training do you give to instructors/tutors when they begin with your program?

44. What professional development activities are your instructors/tutors involved in?
45. Is there anything you do in orientation and ongoing professional development that works well? What improvements would you make in professional development? Do you have any thoughts on how this could be done broadly across the province?

Future directions

46. What do you see as the key issues facing your literacy program?
47. What could government do to help with these issues?
48. What could your organization do to help with these issues?
49. What could other organizations in your community/area do to help with these issues?

Thank you for your participation in this interview and for helping us with this evaluation.