

## ***Program Coordination and Management Issue in Ontario***

### **Overview**

- Fourteen community-based programs responded to the survey in March and April 1999.
- Programs needed more support and training in managing the five Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) services.
- Programs reported difficulty using the Learning Outcomes Matrix.
- Programs required clearer definitions and more background information to implement the guidelines successfully.
- Programs wanted more support and concrete direction from the Ministry of Education & Training (MET), with common forms, a database, and more in-service training available for administrative staff.
- Programs reported that more time was being taken up with record keeping and monitoring and that they were in the process of developing new management tools.
- Staff found time was being redirected from serving students to the increased management of information.

## ***The Volunteer Role, Issues and Training***

### **Overview**

- The role of volunteers and their training were under review.
- All programs saw an increased need for more training, ongoing support and monitoring of volunteers but were having difficulty finding the time for this.
- Most programs were in the process of modifying their volunteer training programs.
- More volunteers were being asked to provide individual support in a group setting.
- Programs needed more information from their volunteers, but were reluctant to increase the paperwork required of volunteers.
- Programs were having difficulty finding time for volunteer recruitment and support.
- Volunteer training remained locally developed and delivered.

## ***Small Group Instruction in England in 1999***

### **Overview**

- Two-hour weekly sessions, (small groups 6-8 or classes 10-12 or more, depending on the level of the student), were the predominant delivery system for Further Education Colleges, Local Education Authorities and Voluntary Agencies.
- Most learners were receiving 2- 4 hours of guided learning per week for 30-36 weeks per year.
- The funding model and the Quality Mark led to similar programs across sectors and regions.
- The program coordinators conducted a confidential interview before the learner entered the program.
- No referrals were made to other programs unless the learner needs were beyond the scope of the program.
- A training plan was completed by the paid tutor during the first two to six weeks the student was in the program.
- The role of the volunteer within the group contributed to efficiency and reduced the time required by the paid tutor for completing training plans and tracking outside of the classroom.
- Many effective strategies were evident in forms used to outline schemes of work, prepare lesson plans, record work and to review progress.
- Further Education Funding Council Inspectors looked for a training plan for each learner.
- Programs assessed learner progress at intervals of 20 to 40 hours, usually at the end of a course or a term.

## ***Removing Barriers to Progress and Encouraging Regular Attendance***

### **Overview**

- Personal factors were the main reasons for leaving programs.
- In 38 percent of the cases the instructors were unaware of the reasons why students left programs.
- Tutor qualifications showed a significant negative correlation with learner drop-out.
- 19-20 percent of those counted as absent had already dropped out.
- Instructors underestimated the importance of dissatisfaction with progress and provision as reasons for leaving a program.

- Meeting the needs of the individual was the basis for good attendance in basic skill programs.
- One half of the students surveyed who had experience with different types of provision preferred individual tutoring.
- Students identified their tutors (instructors) and class activities as the major factors contributing to their success.
- Short courses may be one way to engage new learners and to improve attendance.

## ***Demonstrating Success: The Impact of Accreditation***

### **Overview**

**Limited funding and emphasis on achievement were the main issues.**

- A significant proportion of the funding came from demonstrating that learners had acquired a recognized qualification.
- The funding for obtaining a qualification was for a limited time period.
- The Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) guidelines recognized several accreditation schemes including Word Power, Number Power and those from other accrediting agency.
- The variety of accredited qualifications was seen as having limited credibility in the real world as practitioners sought out one that were useful for learner.
- The Open College Network provided literacy practitioners in the UK with the opportunity to become involved in developing accredited courses.
- There were concerns about the effective of the funding formula on learners who made slow progress.
- Practitioners in the UK felt there had been too much emphasis on basic skills accreditation.
- There was little training or support for instructors at the implementation stage.
- A decrease in creativity and an increase in record-keeping resulted from the emphasis on accreditation.
- Improvement was anticipated in response to the Moser Report.

## ***The Role of Volunteers in Literacy Delivery***

### **Overview**

- In the 1970s, most volunteers worked in the home of the students.
- In the 1980s tutoring in the home moved to tutoring in centres supervised by paid staff.
- In the mid-1980s volunteers were working more in small groups.
- A paid group tutor monitored and supported the volunteer.

- Program organizers viewed this changing role as positive for the learners.
- Some frontline workers expressed concern over the loss of one-to-one support.
- The number of volunteer's tutors was decreasing.
- The changes made in 1992 contributed to this decline.
- By 1999, usually only one or two volunteers worked in a group.
- The volunteer's main role was to support the small group instructor by working with individuals within the group.
- Volunteers had a limited role in record keeping.
- Volunteers were often used to support groups while paid tutors were assessing individual progress.

## ***A National Approach to Volunteer Training***

### **Overview**

- The City and Guilds' Initial Certificate 9282 was offered in 1992 as the basic national qualification for paid staff and volunteers.
- The volunteer committed 32-40 hours to the training program in order to qualify for the City and Guilds' Initial Certificate.
- The Initial Certificate was well regarded by literacy coordinators.
- The national volunteer training was monitored by City and Guilds to ensure quality.
- Volunteers often started volunteering before they began training.
- Volunteer training was funded separately from the general basic skills program.
- The training was delivered by qualified local practitioner.
- In rural areas, volunteers from several centres might move to different locations for different sessions.
- There were issues regarding the optimal time period to offer the volunteer training within a three to six month range.
- An estimated 85 percent of paid tutors began as volunteers and the volunteer training was viewed, by some, as a first step to paid employment.
- Literacy practitioner expected that the training to be updated.
- The more demanding portfolio-based qualification for staff was not well received.
- In-service training available to volunteers and staff depended on local organizations.

## ***Working Conditions of Literacy Practitioners***

### **Overview**

- English programs had similar expectations to Ontario in terms of assessment, training plan development, supervising volunteers and recording student progress.
- There was more similarity in the type of record keeping from program to program in England than one would have found in Ontario in 1999.
- Literacy instructors are expected to develop both program and lesson plans.
- Most of the paid literacy instructor/tutors worked part-time; only 9 percent were full-time.
- Pay across the three delivery sectors, (Further Education Colleges, Local Education Authorities, and Voluntary Agencies) were similar, varying more from region to region than from sector to sector.
- Part-time paid tutors often worked for more than one program or sector.
- Most literacy practitioners in England felt they needed more time for preparation and administration.
- Voluntary agency staff visited worked out of aging facilities in need of repair.
- Program administrators were expected to closely monitor teaching staff.
- A program self-assessment was a tool used by program inspectors in their evaluation of programs.
- Inspectors could spend several days assessing programs and wanted to see programs using their analysis in their programs planning.
- The support programs received was primarily through their own organizations.

## **Postscript: The Implementation of the National Strategy —Literacy and Numeracy in England in 2004**

### **Summary**

- There is a wealth of information available on the English websites about adult literacy and numeracy in England.
- Key features of the National Strategy emerging from the recommendation of the Moser Report have been fully implemented and others are in the process of being implemented.
- The government is investing a great deal of resources into reaching literacy targets set for 2007, although international adult literacy consultant Thomas Sticht is critical of the way the government is measuring success in reaching its targets.
- A government White Paper has outlined its key strategy for widening participation, which includes taking programs to learners.

- The key aim of the Learning and Skills Council strategy for working more effectively with the Voluntary and Community Sector is to open up mainstream funding blocks for more of these organizations.
- Degree-level specialist qualifications have been implemented for literacy and numeracy teachers.
- All new literacy and numeracy teachers must now have a professional qualification.
- Recent inspectors' reports state that most literacy and numeracy teaching staff are poorly trained and unskilled and that much of the programming has been of poor quality.
- More funding is required by community-focused programs to do the outreach and community development so important to reaching marginalized people.
- Based on the experience in the United Kingdom, the proposed new provincial Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat may lead to a renewed focus on adult literacy and basic skills in the future.