

support every child
reach every student

**Report Back to the Provincial Advisory
Committee on the Status of the EDU
Adult Education Strategy**

March 1, 2016

The EDU Adult Education Strategy

Improving access and opportunities for adult learners

Key Goal:

- *To support the commitment made in “Achieving Excellence” to “ensure that the adult education system better supports adult learners in their efforts to finish high school and successfully transition to postsecondary education, training or the workplace.”*

Objectives:

- To improve adult learner outcomes by promoting system innovation and accessibility through collaboration / coordination and partnerships among school boards at the regional level.
- To better support the provision of Ministry of Education (EDU) Adult and Continuing Education programs and services that are flexible and responsive to learner needs.
- To improve the transitions for learners between EDU adult credit programs and programs funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and the Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and International Trade (MCIIT).

What do we want to achieve?

We want to ensure that all adult learners in all regions of the province have access to consistent, high quality EDU Adult Education programs and services.

Regional School Board Partnerships action to achieve progress in 4 key EDU areas:	EDU Action	Tri-Ministry Action
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regionally coordinated access to flexible delivery of EDU Adult and Continuing Education programs and/or services (e.g., e-learning or hybrid delivery programs) that best meet adult learner needs. 2. Coordinated information, intake, assessment, and referral, provided at school boards to ensure learners are directed to the program or service that best meets their needs. 3. Regionally available and consistently applied Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) for Mature Students working towards a high school diploma. 4. Regionally available guidance, career counselling and pathway planning for mature students working towards a high school diploma or seeking prerequisites for postsecondary education. 	<p>Review and renewal of key EDU policies that will support school boards in achieving progress in the four key areas.</p>	<p>Foster a shared responsibility for adult learners through improved coordination to improve learner transitions between EDU adult credit programs and MCIIT and MTCU adult education programs, in alignment with respective ministry priorities and initiatives.</p>



Plan of Action

Three-year, phased approach for ongoing dialogue and province-wide innovation, supported by concurrent EDU policy renewal.

Phase	Timeframe	Milestone
One	Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regional consultations with school boards.
Two	Year 1 In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of regional school board partnerships and regional strategic plans to achieve coordination in the four key areas.
Three	Years 2–3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementation of regional strategic plans.• Assessment of outcomes and recommendations.

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Status of Phase 1

Consultations

- Regional consultations were held during February and March, 2015, in London, Richmond Hill, Toronto, Ottawa and Thunder Bay, and one consultation for Francophone school boards.
- Approximately 144 individuals participated from 64 school boards across the province. Participants included key Adult and Continuing Education school board administrators (Superintendents, Principals, Vice-principals, Managers) who have responsibility for EDU adult credit programs.
- Discussion centered on exploring a regional, collaborative approach to the delivery of Adult and Continuing Education programs and services by school boards, within the context of the four key areas identified in the strategy.
- A consultation meeting with representatives of the TVO Independent Learning Centre (ILC) was held on May 15, 2015 to discuss the role of distance education in the Adult Education Strategy.

Highlights of Consultation Report

Regional Consultations with School Boards

- Validated key objectives outlined in EDU Adult Education Strategy.
- Affirmed the need to build on promising practices in order to make improvements in key areas of EDU adult education program and service delivery.

Common Themes Identified by Participants

- Existing funding model does not accommodate the flexible delivery modes required to address the complex needs and schedules of adult learners, and incents competition rather than collaboration among school boards. Funding issues also have further consequences for human resources and a board`s ability to deliver flexible and comprehensive adult education programs and services.
- Variation in issues facing urban versus rural / remote school boards was identified. Examples include access to transportation and sufficient internet bandwidth.
- Need for increased professionalization of Adult Education, with professional development opportunities for administrators / instructors.
- Need for support and engagement from all three ministries to improve transitions for learners between tri-ministry programs.

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Status of Phase 2

- **June 22, 2015:** Deputy Minister's memo to School Board Directors of Education, inviting nominations of representatives to act as contact persons to participate in discussions on regional partnership formation with third-party facilitator.
- Nominations were received from 69 out of 72 school boards.
- 85 representatives were nominated from those 69 school boards.
- Representatives include:
 - 4 Directors of Education.
 - 39 Superintendents.
 - 39 Principals, Coordinating Principals, VPs, Managers.
 - 3 SSLs.
- Following a competitive procurement process, a contract was signed with Deloitte Inc. in late June 2015 to retain them as the third-party facilitator to support school boards in implementation of the strategy.

Work of Deloitte on Regional Partnership Development

English-Language School Board Workshops

- Deloitte Inc. contacted all representatives and held 6 initial regional teleconference workshops in late July and early August.
- A second face-to-face workshop was held with representatives in each region from mid-August to late-September.

French-Language Workshop

- A teleconference followed by a face-to-face workshop with French-language school boards, colleges and literacy agencies were held in late September and early October.

Purpose

- Provide an overview of approach to partnership development process.
- Obtain input on criteria to be used for partnership formation and partnership groupings.
- Develop regional partnership agreements and discuss roles and responsibilities of school boards.
- Share draft documentation and collect feedback from school boards.

Next Steps

- A third (and potentially fourth) face-to-face workshop will be held with representatives in each regional grouping where needed.

Feedback: Opportunities

Theme	Opportunity
System level potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciation for regional approach to address duplication and gaps. • Topical working groups at provincial level.
Potential for innovative pilot projects to improve adult learner success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot regional PLAR centre / clearinghouse discussed in Toronto and region area. • Pilot regional referral centre that allocates students to regional schools based on specific needs discussed in Central region.
Build on existing work and expertise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work of Partenariats en éducation et en formation des adultes francophones (PEFAs) for French-language school boards. • Previous environmental scan and Northwest Education and Training Access Network (NETAN) project discussed in Northwest region. • Existing e-learning consortium discussed in Central region. • Leveraging CESBA expertise and connections discussed in Eastern and Southwestern regions.
Identification of potential alignment with four key areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referrals and guidance are seen as key development areas for Northwest region.

Feedback: Issues and Mitigation

Issue	Feedback	Mitigation
Timing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timelines for initial process are “rushed.” • More time requested to process the approach, partnership requirements, and other implications and to consult with their internal school board leadership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional workshops to be scheduled for each region to ensure all concerns are addressed and allow additional time for partnership development. • Revised timelines of contingency plan adopted.
Intent of Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More clarity requested on intent of strategy. • Concern with potential direction towards shared services or other perceived negative impacts on current service delivery models. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boards are willing to commit to a “low risk” Year 1 for environmental scan and strategic planning. • Provide clarified communications on strategy intent, benefits, government commitment.
Scope of Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four key areas of strategy are too high level to anticipate the direction which the partnerships may take. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion has focused on ability of regions to influence these directions and on strategy being a “bottom up” approach, which has created a level of comfort in some regions. • Provide additional communications.
Banker Board Burden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential workload associated with this activity has made it difficult to secure senior management commitment to this role. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support development of TOR that clearly outlines roles and responsibilities of partner school boards, and how funds can be allocated.
Regional Co-ordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to secure a competent regional coordinator in a timely manner is a concern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopted contingency plan for revised timelines to allow more time for this process.

Impact of Ministry Pause on Implementation

- On October 9, 2015, a pause in Ministry of Education activities was initiated.
- As a result, all regional partnership development discussions and work led by Deloitte has been on pause since October 2015. The momentum and progress developed through this work has been interrupted and will require additional regional meetings to re-ignite.
- The delays due to the pause limit the ability to meet the original timelines of the strategy and work is underway to modify and extend them.

Next Steps

- Feedback from the PAC
- Other business
- Next meeting