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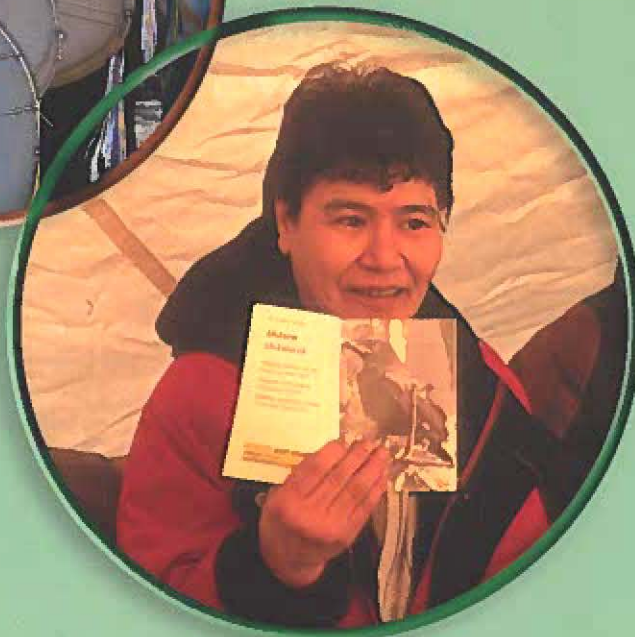


Goal 3

Education of Adults

Adult and Postsecondary Education

One of Five Goal Summaries of
Building on Our Success – Strategic Plan 2005-2015



Minister's Message



I am very pleased to introduce *Building on Our Success*, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment's third Strategic Plan. This plan provides a framework for our activities over the next decade until 2015, and sets out a series of goals that reflect the concerns of the people of the Northwest Territories.

Our Territory is changing quickly. More than ever, it is clear that a solid education is essential for all Northerners. Effective early learning and school programs are needed to give children opportunities to grow and develop. Further education and training must be a priority for adults, so all Northerners can take advantage of employment opportunities.

At the same time, it is critical to nurture and protect our cultural heritage so that we do not lose the knowledge, skills and history that make us unique. Given the rate of change in the North, our languages and traditions are under considerable pressure. We must work together to celebrate and strengthen the cultures that have served generations of Northerners.

The goals in this Strategic Plan are the result of extensive consultation with Northerners. Over the past few years, you have told us what you want and need through survey responses, focus groups, public meetings and other correspondence. I appreciate your response. You will see in this plan that we have heard what you had to say.

This plan builds on two previous plans. The recommendations of our first plan in 1984, *Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories*, led to the creation of our divisional boards of education and Aurora College, both essential parts of our education system today. Our second plan, *People: Our Focus for the Future*, was developed in 1994 when the Department of Education had expanded to become the Department of Education, Culture and Employment. Goals set out in that plan led to extension of culture, education and career development services in Northern communities.

This 2005 Plan recognizes both the strengths and weaknesses of our past actions. It celebrates the success enjoyed by many who have accessed our programs and services, and proposes ways to build on that success.

We are looking forward to working with our partners and the citizens of the Northwest Territories to address the challenges and celebrate the successes that the next decade will bring.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles Dent".

Charles Dent

Minister of Education, Culture and Employment

2005



Education of Adults

Introduction

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment recently released a strategic plan titled, *Building on Our Success*. The plan describes the goals and actions that the Department plans to undertake during the period 2005 through 2015. To support the release of the Plan a series of five booklets have been prepared – one on each of the key areas of Departmental responsibility.

This booklet, *Education of Adults – Adult and Postsecondary Education*, lays out the Department of Education, Culture, and Employment's goal, objectives, priorities and actions related to Adult and Postsecondary Education.

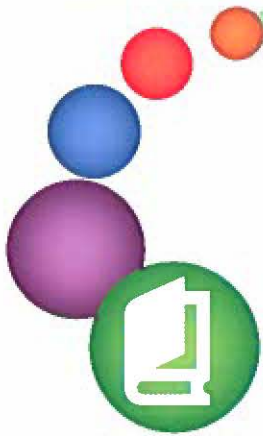
A summary of the goals and objectives for the complete plan is provided on the following page. This summary illustrates how the activities of the Department are linked together.

For further detail, please refer to the complete document *Building on Our Success – Strategic Plan 2005-2015* which can be requested from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment or found on our website at <http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/>.

Goals	Pride in Our Culture	Education of Children and Youth	Education of Adults	A Skilled and Productive Work Environment	People Participating Fully in Society
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preservation and knowledge of our heritage 2. Promotion of the arts 3. Support and promote our official languages 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A strong foundation for learning 2. Students achieving their potential 3. A results-based education system 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access and choice for adult learners 2. A responsive college 3. An integrated adult learning network 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Northerners making informed career choices 2. A skilled workforce 3. A productive work environment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An integrated system of program supports 2. A comprehensive system of financial supports 3. A responsive income security system
Cross-Goal Strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong and Effective Partnerships ECE is committed to strengthening local, territorial and federal partnerships, and working collaboratively to address problems and achieve results. 2. High Quality Human Resources ECE is committed to developing a skilled, productive civil service that represents the people it serves. 3. Responsive Information Systems ECE is committed to the collection, analysis and provision of information about its programs and services through systems that are responsive, reliable, available, and serviceable. 4. Facilities that Match Program Delivery Requirements ECE is committed to defining and addressing additional facility requirements. 5. Effective Performance Planning, Monitoring and Measurement ECE is committed to managing itself effectively, ensuring that it spends responsibly, develops transparent decision-making processes, monitors and reports on its progress, and is accountable for results. 				



Education of Adult and Postsecondary Education



Adult and postsecondary education includes a wide range of programs and services intended to ensure that the NWT adult population has the skill, knowledge and ability to be self-reliant and able to take full advantage of social and economic opportunities.

Programs and services in support of this goal are offered by a number of GNWT departments, boards and agencies. Aboriginal governments, industry, other levels of government and other organizations are also directly involved.

Postsecondary education, research and innovation are increasingly important to the NWT's future economic growth and prosperity. It is important that the postsecondary education and industry training systems continue to strengthen ties with local, community and regional groups to ensure that training and education address the needs of the people in the communities.



Adults

Objectives

- 1. Access and Choice for Adult Learners*
- 2. A Responsive College*
- 2. An Integrated Adult Learning Network*

Vision

Northern adults continuing to learn and grow to meet the requirements of daily living.



21st Century Environment

Education Levels

Education levels continue to be the greatest determinant of employment. Over 70% of all new jobs require postsecondary education.

While increasing success in high school programs is a positive sign, there remains a significant number of adults, particularly in our smaller communities and amongst Aboriginal Northerners, who do not have the education levels to successfully compete for and hold emerging jobs. In our smaller communities, only 36.8% of the population has a high school education, compared to 67.5% NWT-wide. Information from 2001 shows that 44% of Aboriginal persons had at least a high school diploma, compared to 82% of non-Aboriginal residents.

Improving the education levels of adults in the NWT, particularly those who do not have the required education levels to access postsecondary education, training or employment opportunities, remains a key challenge. As we meet this challenge, the demand for postsecondary education and training is expected to increase.

Literacy

Residents in the NWT are influenced by the information age that requires us to absorb, understand and process information in more forms than ever before. Not only has literacy become increasingly important for managing our daily lives, it has become a fundamental requirement for entry into the labour force, regardless of occupation. Literacy rates in the NWT are among the lowest in Canada. Based, in part, on the following statistics, there is a demonstrated need to deliver adult literacy and basic education programs through a wide range of delivery agencies:

- 66% of Aboriginal adults and 31% of non-Aboriginal adults do not have the literacy skills needed for daily living.
- The annual income of people without literacy skills is 46% less than the income of high school graduates.
- People with low literacy skills are more likely to use income support for basic needs.

- Fewer than 30% of those with a Grade 9 education or less are employed. This rate rises to over 75% for those with a High School Diploma and over 90% for those with a university degree.

To effectively participate in the dynamic change that is being experienced in the NWT, Northerners with limited literacy must strengthen their skills and abilities.

Skills

Skill Shortages

Canada-wide skill shortages are particularly evident in the NWT where there is a need for skilled and professional workers in a wide variety of occupations. This has become more pronounced in recent years with the developments in the non-renewable resource sector. It is imperative for the NWT to develop these workers in order to meet labour market demands. Provision of appropriate postsecondary and industry-based training is key to the development of available workers.

Skill Trends

Further complicating the skill shortage is the growing demand for continuing education of skilled workers. The rate of change in many professions, including those in trades and technologies, continues to increase. For workers to keep pace, many must regularly study new subjects and learn about new methodologies and techniques. In other words, they must be committed to lifelong learning.

Current and future job growth will be of little benefit to residents unless they have the necessary supports and develop a commitment to strengthen the skills and abilities required for jobs in the NWT.



Objective 3 cont' ...

education and training priorities as well as supports for students and trainees.

- Share results of education and training outcomes with partners.
- Examine the potential for increased linkages between College Community Learning Centres and the school system.
- Establish pilot projects to test resource sharing and systems integration between senior secondary education, adult literacy and basic education, and trades and technology.
- Strengthen collaboration between Aurora College and school governance bodies.

Priority: Accreditation of learning across the system

- Actions:**
- Establish formal mechanisms for assessing prior learning.
 - Increase understanding of prior learning by staff members working within the NWT learning system.
 - Examine opportunity for a broad system of certification of training activities offered by public and private sector training institutions.
 - Determine requirements for record keeping to document learner achievements.
 - Make functional grade level assessment results available to the College.

Priority: Regularly evaluate program effectiveness

- Actions:**
- Develop schedule, process, and criteria for program and service reviews.
 - Involve College, departmental and private sector representatives in evaluative activities.
 - Implement Private Training Directive to ensure the quality of private sector training delivery.
 - Report publicly on evaluation activities.



Training

Delivery in the Northern environment

There are a number of challenges that will continue to face the GNWT in delivering responsive, cost-effective postsecondary education and training. Small populations, low education levels, competing opportunities such as low skill employment, large distances, cultural differences and cost all exacerbate the adult development challenge. Historically, Northerners prefer to have education and training opportunities made available as close to home as possible, particularly those adults who have children and require supports from family and their communities. ECE now has considerable experience in developing program models and identifying the required costs for postsecondary education and training. The Department is also in a position to determine whether there is cost benefit in offering specific programs and services.

Increasing demands to invest in training

While it is true that ECE, and the GNWT as a whole, must be strategic in its investments, there is constant pressure to increase commitment to adult education and training. This is particularly true in relation to the resource sectors where the demand for skilled workers in the oil and gas fields and diamond mines has had a significant impact on priorities and expenditures. Partnerships with industry, Aboriginal governments, and other agencies have increased to meet the demand, but they often have cost-sharing implications involving long-term commitments for government.

Student Supports

Youth and adults participating in adult and postsecondary education and training require supports to meet a variety of needs, many of which may be unique to their individual circumstances. These include personal and academic counselling, financial support, and housing assistance. The GNWT shares responsibility in the provision of these supports with families, communities, Aboriginal governments, businesses and industry.

As the cost of education and training continues to increase, supporting students through its programs and services such as the Student Financial Assistance program, training on the job subsidy programs and Aurora College student services will become more challenging.

Measuring Success

We will measure our success by increasing the number of Northerners who complete higher levels of education, the number of adults accessing education and training opportunities, by the way we respond to emerging education and training needs in communities, and by our ability to work cooperatively with other adult learning delivery partners.





Objectives, Priorities and Actions

Objective 1:

Access and Choice for Adult Learners

Priority: Establish high school certification of adult learners

- Actions:
- Identify students who did not complete high school and offer them opportunities to complete basic education courses.
 - Define requirements for adult high school certification.
 - Further develop the existing partnership with Alberta Distance Learning to increase course offerings for adults.
 - Develop adult learning needs model to ensure adult access to accreditation.

Priority: Increase student services

- Actions:
- Provide additional funding for student accommodation and supports, and create additional residence spaces at Aurora College campuses in Yellowknife and Inuvik.
 - Provide ongoing funding support for student success centres at each of the three Aurora College campuses.
 - Expand linkage between career development centres and College campuses so that College graduates have ready access to information regarding careers and jobs and can begin planning their careers prior to leaving school.
 - Adjust Student Financial Assistance funding to reflect inflation and the cost of postsecondary education.
 - Establish mechanism to provide financial assistance for students enrolled in upper level adult basic education courses offered by Aurora College.

“We need to figure out what we want Aurora College to do and then fully fund them to do it”

– Focus Group Participant

Objective 1 cont ...

Priority: Regulate private sector provision of programs

- Actions:
- Implement *Private Vocational Training Directive* to regulate the quality and stability of private training.
 - Monitor private sector compliance with the directive.
 - Measure the success of students enrolling in private sector training programs.
 - Identify additional opportunities for collaboration between private sector trainers and Aurora College.
 - Identify opportunities for effective private sector training and support the development of appropriate programming.

Objective 2:

A Responsive College

Priority: Define College mandate and priorities

- Actions:
- Establish planning framework to guide Aurora College strategic planning that is linked to the ECE Strategic Plan.
 - In cooperation with Aurora College, develop a business-planning model to guide program and service planning for College activities.
 - Update the *Public Colleges Act* to reflect the evolution of the NWT College system.

Priority: Provide high quality programs

- Actions:
- Develop a results-based accountability framework for the College.
 - In cooperation with Aurora College, establish a schedule for the regular external evaluation of programming.





Objective 2 con't ...

- Support College actions to maintain and expand current credit and program transfers with other postsecondary institutions.
- Seek student and employer feedback on College programs and graduate skill levels.
- Integrate workplace essential skills into adult programming

Priority: Provide pre-employment and in-service staff development for College personnel

- Actions:
- Ensure that cultural awareness orientation training is provided for College staff.
 - Provide mentorship supports for community adult educators.
 - Share professional development activities between College and Education Authority staff.
 - Support the College to fully implement a growth and development assessment model for instructional staff.
 - Support the College's establishment of a comprehensive human resource development plan which focuses on technical and instructional excellence.
 - Maintain adult learning certificate program to encourage those training adult learners to build their skills and knowledge.

"Has anyone done a study to truly see whether the program is succeeding? ...ECE and the College seem to measure activities, but long-term outcomes are harder to track and measure."

– Survey Respondent

Objective 3:

An Integrated Adult Learning Network

Priority: Encourage partnerships in program delivery

- Actions:
- Work with Aboriginal governments and other training parties to establish regional and community training coordinating committees.
 - Establish a regular consultation process for engaging communities, Aboriginal governments, employers and industry in identifying



Education of Adults

Conclusion

This booklet summarizes the Department of Education, Culture and Employment's planned activities related to Adult and Postsecondary Education. It is one of a series of booklets that have been developed to illustrate the goals, objectives and priorities of the Department during the next ten years. There are similar guides available that review planned actions related to the four other Departmental goals: Education of Children and Youth, Culture, Heritage and Languages, A Skilled and Productive Workforce, and People Participating Fully in Society.

The Departmental Strategic Plan was prepared based on broad consultation with the public and various stakeholders. It outlines a framework for Departmental activities that builds upon the successes of the past decade. Within the scope of the Plan, the Department will continue to work closely with a wide range of organizations and individuals to develop detailed actions that will strengthen current programs and services and improve overall results. The Department is committed to reporting on a regular basis to the public on achievements and advances related to the Plan.

The complete document *Building on Our Success – Strategic Plan 2005-2015* also includes five cross-goal strategies. For those interested, the complete Plan can be requested from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment or found on our website at <http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/>.

