

**Second Year Activities of
Towards Literacy:
A Strategy Framework 2001-2005**

Prepared by:
Northern Research and Evaluation

Prepared for:
College and Career Development Division
Department of Education, Culture & Employment
Government of the Northwest Territories

November 2003

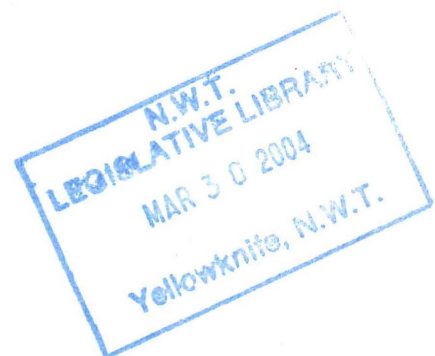


ANNUAL REPORT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY2
INTRODUCTION9
THE NWT LITERACY STRATEGY9
 Origins9
 Goals11
 Funding.....11
 The Definition of Literacy12
SECOND YEAR ACTIVITIES13
 Goal 1: Increase the number of people in the NWT who are literate13
 1.1: *Early Childhood*.....13
 1.2: *K-12*17
 1.3: *Working Age Youth and Adults*25
 1.4: *Seniors*.....34
 1.5: *Community Literacy Services*.....36
 Goal 2: Increase awareness of the importance of literacy in the official languages39
 of the NWT39
 Goal 3: Ensure government departments work together to increase literacy43
 levels in the NWT43
 Goal 4: Develop literacy partnerships across society.....47
PROGRESS TO DATE51
NEXT STEPS52
APPENDIX I: SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION – ADDITIONAL FUNDING53



SUMMARY

The activities for 2002-03 are reported in relation to each of the four goals of the NWT Literacy Strategy.

Goal 1: Increase the number of people in the NWT who are literate

1.1: Early Childhood

- The importance of early literacy development was one of the key messages in the Early Childhood Development Initiatives (including the Healthy Family-Home Visitation Program and the Language Nest Program for Early Learning and Child Care Centres).
- Age-appropriate children's books were included in each of the universally distributed Healthy Family Kit Series: Newborn, Six-Month, Twelve-Month and Four-Year-Old Kit (Family Learning Kit).
- The Northern Parenting and Literacy Program was funded by the ECDI; this is a training program for community workers in the delivery of literacy activities and workshops.

1.2: K-12

DEC/DEA Literacy Committees

- most regions have literacy committees in place (with individual/community representation);
- most regions have literacy plans in place (and some have detailed action plans in place);
- some schools have literacy plans in place;
- all schools have initiatives to support the vision of improving literacy levels; and
- DEC/DEAs are currently analyzing data to find out why students are struggling with literacy.

NWT English Language Arts K-9

- outcomes were developed, writing samples were chosen, and a pilot program was finalized for grades K-3;
- 36 teachers piloted the ELA Curriculum; and
- outcomes were developed for grades 4-6.

Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting (SAER) Directive

- implementation of the SAER Directive proceeded at the DEC/DEA level;
- ECE provided funding to the DEC/DEAs, who hired consultants to assist with the implementation of the directive at the regional levels;
- sessions were facilitated by consultants in the South Slave (in the fall of 2002) and in the Beaufort-Delta (in early 2003); and
- plans are in place for the Sahtu and Deh Cho DEC/DEAs and Yellowknife #1 board to hire consultants during fiscal 2003-04.

NWT Student Success Initiative

- each of the DECs/DEAs received \$20,000 to implement special initiatives that were designed to improve student achievement in the area of reading, comprehension or numeracy;
- the initiatives ranged from professional development activities for teachers to learn new strategies for teaching reading to reading recovery programming that provided one-on-one interventions to help students learn the fundamentals of reading; and
- each initiative was designed by the individual school division to address the unique needs in a school, community or division.

Career and Program Plans (CPP)

- the credits allotted to CPP and Career and Life Management (CALM) were changed;
- CALM was revised, and is now worth three credits;
- CPP (now one credit) was separated from the CALM course; and
- CPP was made available as an electronic template on the ECE website.

NWT Career Development Strategy

- particular attention and resources have been allocated to the areas of "relevant curriculum" and "professional development";
- two resources have been developed to support teachers in infusing career development into school programming: an NWT Grade 4 - 6 Career Awareness Resource; and the NWT Career Development Teacher Resource Manual for Grades K - 9.
- a three-day in-service for regional career development facilitators was held in January 2003.

Schools North Apprenticeship Program (SNAP)

- four SNAP apprentices were registered in the NWT (one from Yellowknife and three from Hay River); and
- new SNAP promotional materials have recently been developed for distribution in the fall of 2003.

Pathways Initiative

- the committee identified and undertook the following: the structure and format of each pathway; overall course offerings; the scope of the project and developmental timelines; Ministerial considerations for diplomas and certificates; the courses to be developed; research on vocational numeracy and literacy skills; proposed implementation timelines; and proposed a business plan for the development of the pathways structure.

1:3: Working Age Youth and Adults

Community Literacy Projects

- 14 community literacy projects were undertaken in 11 communities;
- the projects included: literacy programs run by Band councils; Books in the Home programs; Reading Circle programs; a Bush Cree dictionary; Cree and Slavey classes; and the development of Chipewyan language kits.

Community Skills For Work

- 20 projects were undertaken in 14 communities;
- the projects included: a guide training course; Adult Literacy and Basic Education courses for women at risk; pre-trades programs; work experience programs; cooking classes; reading and writing programs; and computer skills programs.

Adult Literacy and Basic Education (ALBE) – Community

- Aurora College provided 46 literacy-related programs throughout the NWT;
- programs were run in 30 of the 33 communities in the NWT (up from 26 communities the previous year); and
- 568 students attended these courses (up from 525 students in 2001-02).

ALBE – Distance Education

- 260 students from 17 NWT communities (as well as the BHP and Diavik mine-sites) enrolled in online distance education courses;
- 90 students completed their courses (while 108 were still completing their courses as of March 31, 2003); and
- 22 staff were trained as facilitators.

ALBE – Correctional Institutes

- funding was spent on providing supplies for literacy libraries and instructional programs at the three correctional facilities and the four young offender facilities;
- supplies included: books and videos; computers, printers, and computer programs; science equipment; classroom textbooks; and self-help videos and books on tape;
- staff from the College and Career Development Division of ECE toured all of the facilities (except the North Slave Young Offender Facility, which was visited in fiscal 2003-04), and consulted with correctional centre and young offender facility staff and inmates. The purpose of these visits was to find out what ECE can do to assist the Department of Justice in the provision of literacy and career development programs to inmates.

Learning Support for Persons With Disabilities

- 17 projects were undertaken in seven communities;
- the projects included: tutoring; tutor/practitioner training; assessment and counselling services; the purchase of assistive devices, aids and access technology; the purchase of books, tools and equipment (including computers and software); sign language instruction; tuition and travel; and transportation for clients to and from an educational institute.
- One of the highlights of the year was a three-day Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) training event for educators, coordinated by the NWT Literacy Council. The main objective of the training event was to provide educators with practical and hands-on strategies that work and can be implemented in the classroom.

Literacy Outreach Services

- 75 students received services from the Literacy Outreach Centre (20 students were enrolled in the day-program, 18 students attended the evening drop-in sessions, 29 students were matched with tutors, and 11 students attended the YWCA program);
- 33 tutors participated in the program (six tutors returned from the previous year, and 27 new tutors were recruited); and

- two tutor workshops were held, one in October 2002 (with 13 tutors participating) and one in February 2003 (with 10 tutors participating).

Policy, Resources, and Training

- the ALBE Standardized Curricula was distributed to new ALBE instructors and other communities/organizations that requested copies;
- planning work was undertaken to develop community literacy committees throughout the NWT (a planning committee was established, met four times, and identified literacy advocates/representatives at the local level);
- work on a Best Practices Framework for ALBE programming was undertaken;
- Another highlight in this area is the Certificate in Adult Education (CAED) program. The CAED program is a part-time program that gives participants a foundation in the theory and practice of adult education. In 2002-03, two core courses and two electives were delivered; 47 participants registered for the courses (23 of the students were Aurora College staff, and 24 were other registrants); and three students completed the full CAED program.

Workplace Education

- 60 projects were carried out in 19 communities;
- 573 participants received workplace education;
- 50 employers participated in the program;
- the projects included: interpersonal communications skills; computer training; tutorial support for the pre-trades exam; basic office skills; and staff leadership skills.
- One of the highlights of the WPE Program was the Test of Workplace Essential Skills (TOWES) workshop organized by Aurora College. TOWES is an initiative designed to test three skills essential for safe and productive employment: reading text, document use, and numeracy. In 2002-03: a one-week TOWES workshop was held at the Yellowknife Campus in February 2003; participants included Aurora College adult educators from the Yellowknife Campus and the Community Learning Centres of Dettah, N'dilo, Rae-Edzo, Gameti, Wekweti, and Wha Ti, as well as representatives from the Aurora and Thebacha Campuses, Aurora College head office, ECE, and employees from Diavik. The workshop was a success, and Aurora College will be proceeding with the joint venture pilot project with Diavik.

1.4: Seniors

Literacy Programs and Supports for Seniors

- nine projects were undertaken in eight communities;
- the projects included: a seniors reading circle; a weekly seniors learning group; assisting seniors with accessing government services; and various literacy projects aimed at: increasing seniors' awareness of the importance of healthy living; increasing awareness of technology; and increasing seniors' literacy levels in English and math.

1.5: Community Literacy Services

Virtual Libraries Project

- virtual library sites were set up in 10 NWT communities, plus the Diavik mine-site;
- promotional materials were distributed throughout those communities (i.e. signage and additional materials were left in the community for use as prizes by the sponsoring organizations);
- grand openings were held to introduce the sites;
- some communities are providing ongoing instruction in computing basics; and
- some communities have held special games nights and challenge nights to promote the virtual library sites.

Electronic Infrastructure, Resource Sharing and Online Learning

- building the electronic infrastructure through the ongoing maintenance and development of the NWT Literacy Council website (www.nwt.literacy.ca);
- providing access to literacy resources through the Literacy Resource Centre and online material;
- expanding and enhancing electronic conferencing capabilities through North of 60;
- conducting a needs assessment of the online learning needs of literacy learners and practitioners;
- piloting an online learning environment called *AlphaRoute* to raise awareness of online literacy learning;
- developing a pilot of *The Northern Edge*, an online literacy newspaper with learning activities to assess the interest and technology limitations/requirements of literacy learners and practitioners in the NWT; and
- developing online and print resources to accompany *Lessons From the Land: A Virtual Map of the NWT*.

Goal 2: Increase awareness of the importance of literacy in the official languages of the NWT

Promotion of Official Languages

- the Language Promotions Working Group was established to improve the coordination and promotion of literacy activities in the official languages;
- the group is developing a communications plan (which will increase the promotional messages relating to literacy in the official languages);
- Community Language Leader awards were presented; and
- Culture-based education is being promoted within educational programs.

The Aboriginal Languages Literacy Program

- 27 projects were undertaken;
- all of the Aboriginal language communities in the NWT participated;
- some of the projects included: Aboriginal language immersion camps; dictionary projects; language/literacy workshops; Animal Unit Booklet with CDs; oral history projects; teaching materials including resource manuals; and pilot project for the creation of a Dene as a second language curriculum.

The School of Community Government Aboriginal Languages Project

- the goals of the project were to build community capacity in governance and to provide training in the Aboriginal first language for community councils;
- two workshops were carried out in two Dogrib communities (Rae-Edzo and Gameti), with 28 people participating;
- close to 90% of the participants felt that the workshop was valuable.

Goal 3: Ensure government departments work together to increase literacy levels in the NWT

Interdepartmental Literacy Committee

- GNWT departments worked on departmental literacy action plans, including the Executive, Finance, Justice, Health and Social Services, Education, Culture and Employment, Public Works and services, and the NWT Housing Corporation.

Plain Language Initiative

- eight introductory plain language workshops were held for 101 employees of five GNWT departments;
- two advanced plain language workshops were held for 16 employees of two GNWT departments;
- the NWT Literacy Council used an informal survey to assess the impact of the workshops and to make improvements for future workshop delivery; and
- funding under this initiative was used by the Department of Health and Social Services to support an Editing, Grammar and Writing Skills Development Workshop for staff from various GNWT Departments, the Legislative Assembly and the NWT Literacy Council.

Literacy Strategy Reporting

- the first annual report on the activities of the NWT Literacy Strategy was released in the fall of 2002;
- work on an evaluation framework began in 2002-03 (a first draft was prepared and revised with input from the Ministerial Council on Literacy and other stakeholders; a revised *Results-based Management and Accountability Framework* (RMAF) was completed in 2003);
- the completed RMAF will be used to undertake the interim evaluation of the NWT Literacy Strategy (scheduled for the winter of 2003).

Goal 4: Develop literacy partnerships across society.

Ministerial Council on Literacy (MCL)

- the MCL met twice (October 2002 and January 2003);
- developed 22 recommendations for implementation of the NWT Literacy Strategy; and
- selected winners and presented literacy awards to recipients (see highlight at the end of this section).

Workplace Education (WPE) Partnerships

- regional WPE committees were established for the Beaufort-Delta, Sahtu, North Slave and South Slave; and
- these committees met (as needed) during the past year to review WPE proposals for their regions.

Other Partnerships

- In addition to the Workplace Education Program, many other partnership groups have been formed to assist with the implementation of the NWT Literacy Strategy. These partnerships have allowed community groups and individuals throughout the NWT to share and pool resources which promote and support literacy activities.
- Some of the partnerships include: the Best Practices Working Group; the Literacy Programs and Services for Seniors Committee; The Learning Support for Persons With Disabilities Committee; and Aurora College and various Band Councils (in the provision of ALBE community programs).

Baseline and Other Research on Literacy in the NWT

- the Northwest Territories is participating in the next International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS), the world's first large-scale comparative assessment of adult literacy;
- Regional supervisors for the IALSS were trained; and
- data collection took place over the summer of 2003.

INTRODUCTION

On January 12, 2001, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) approved the NWT Literacy Strategy. This included the allocation of an additional \$2.4 million annually for literacy initiatives in the NWT. The strategy – entitled *Towards Literacy: A Strategy Framework 2001-2005* – was developed in consultation with the Social Envelope departments and other GNWT departments and agencies.

One of the commitments made within the Literacy Strategy was the preparation of an annual report to record progress on strategy activities. This is the second such annual report. For more details on measuring progress towards overall strategy goals and objectives, please see the *Results-based Management and Accountability Framework (RMAF): Towards Literacy – A Strategy Framework 2001-05*.

This report covers Literacy Strategy activities during the 2002-03 fiscal year. The major sections of the report include:

- the context (background) within which the Literacy Strategy was developed;
- the main Literacy Strategy activities for the period April 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003;
- an overall summary of progress to date on the Literacy Strategy; and
- next steps.

This report was prepared through interviews with the people responsible for implementation of the various components of the strategy, as well as through a review of key strategy documents, and program and budget data from the various Literacy Strategy initiatives.

THE NWT LITERACY STRATEGY

This section of the report outlines the origins of the strategy, strategy goals, strategy funding, and the definition of literacy used here and within the strategy.

Origins

The need to further improve education levels among NWT residents has been recognized for some time. However, it is important to first look at literacy in the broadest NWT context. Literacy affects all areas of life from early childhood to seniors, and it also impacts on society as a whole (*Towards Literacy: A Strategy Framework 2001-05* p. 7).

Literacy is one of the critical components of human development, especially during a child's formative pre-school years. It becomes the foundation upon which all learning throughout life is based. Literacy skills enable people to expand their quality of life in terms of self-satisfaction, increased opportunities and ability to participate fully in modern society. Improved literacy leads to reduced poverty, unemployment and income assistance and helps to improve individual and

family health. Improved levels of literacy also contribute to a society's economic, political, social and cultural life (*Towards Literacy: A Strategy Framework 2001-05* p. 7).

In recognition of this evidence, much of which was contained in the *Making A Case For Literacy* report prepared for the NWT Literacy Council, the Legislative Assembly of the GNWT passed Motion 6-14(3) on July 7, 2000. The motion called for the development of a comprehensive literacy strategy for the NWT, and reads (in part) as follows:

WHEREAS evidence points to an indisputable link between higher literacy rates and social development in terms of reduced poverty, unemployment, crime, reliance on income support, and improved health and child-rearing practices;

AND WHEREAS literacy is of critical importance in achieving a healthy lifestyle and contributing productively to one's community;

AND WHEREAS the average annual income for persons in the Northwest Territories with less than a grade 9 education is \$14,000 and the average annual income for a person with a university degree is \$50,000;

AND WHEREAS more than 60 percent of all new jobs in the Northwest Territories require some post-secondary education;

AND WHEREAS 15 percent of adult residents have less than a grade 9 education;

AND WHEREAS 11 percent of adult residents in regional centres and 32 percent of adult residents in remaining communities have less than a grade 9 education and 44 percent of Aboriginal adults with less than a grade 9 education are unemployed;

AND WHEREAS the average educational level of Yellowknife Correctional Centre inmates is grade 6;

AND WHEREAS there is a clear linkage between low literacy skills and health risk behaviours;

AND WHEREAS a large percentage of northern residents will be unable to take full advantage of increasing employment opportunities without a long-term commitment to literacy skill development as part of an overall economic and social development strategy;

AND WHEREAS there is a critical need for the Government of the Northwest Territories to commit to a long-term investment in literacy;

NOW THEREFORE I MOVE, seconded by the Honourable Member for Deh Cho, that the government immediately undertake the development of a comprehensive literacy strategy for the Northwest Territories.

(Source: *Northwest Territories Hansard, July 7, 2000 p. 615*)

Goals

The NWT Literacy Strategy was designed to provide a framework for a broad range of activities that will occur over the five-year period from 2001/02 - 2005/06. It was based on public consultations carried out over the past few years, and on research into actions taken by other provinces and territories in regards to literacy.

The following four goals form the foundation of the NWT Literacy Strategy:

1. to increase the number of people in the NWT who are literate;
2. to increase awareness of the importance of literacy in the official languages of the NWT;
3. to ensure government departments work together to increase literacy levels in the NWT; and
4. to develop literacy partnerships across society.

During consultations it was emphasized that support for actions associated with these goals should be carefully described. Overall, a total of 27 objectives were developed to address the four goals. The objectives provided a framework within which progress could be measured over time. Additionally, it should be noted that some goals targeted specific populations – early childhood, school-age children, working-age youth and adults, and seniors – so as to ensure that the entire spectrum of lifelong learning was addressed.

More detail on which objectives support which goal can be found in the *Results-based Management and Accountability Framework (RMAF): Towards Literacy – A Strategy Framework 2001-05*.

Funding

Three types of resources have been allocated to the NWT Literacy Strategy:

- additional funding to fill gaps in the adult literacy programs (primarily English-language programs and some programming in the official languages) in the amount of \$2.4 million per year;
- funding for literacy activities from complementary strategies (*The Early Childhood Development Initiative* and the NWT Aboriginal Languages Strategy -- *Revitalizing, Enhancing, and Promoting Aboriginal Languages*); and
- existing program resources.

Appendix I provides a breakdown of the \$2.4 million in additional funding for the 2002-03 fiscal year.

The Definition of Literacy

There are a wide variety of definitions of literacy available in today's world. While many of these definitions focus narrowly on the ability to read and write, literacy needs to have a much broader focus. In addition to listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing, there is also the concept of numeracy. Numeracy involves using mathematics to solve problems, communicate and reason mathematically, and to apply a variety of mathematical processes.

When defining literacy we must also acknowledge the fact that the literacy standard will continue to be raised as our society becomes more and more complex. What is deemed to be a functional standard of literacy today is likely to be found wanting ten years from now.

For the purpose of the Literacy Strategy and this report:

Literacy is an individual's ability to listen, speak, read, write, view, represent, compute and solve problems in one or more of the NWT official languages at levels of proficiency necessary to function in the family, in the community and on the job.

(Source: *Towards Literacy: A Strategy Framework 2001-05 p. 5*)

SECOND YEAR ACTIVITIES

The activities undertaken in fiscal 2002-03 are reported in relation to each of the four goals of the Literacy Strategy (outlined above). This will provide consistency between the NWT Literacy Strategy Action Plan, the annual reports, and strategy evaluation reports.

Goal 1: Increase the number of people in the NWT who are literate

This goal is aimed at five sub-groups: early childhood; school-age children; working-age youth and adults; seniors; and community literacy services.

1.1: Early Childhood

The importance of early literacy development is a key message within all of the nine Early Childhood Development initiatives. These initiatives within the *Early Childhood Development Action Plan* focus on:

- Health and wellness and risk prevention;
- Parenting and family supports;
- Child development; and
- Community supports and community building.

General early literacy skill development is strategically supported by:

- the inclusion of developmentally appropriate children's books within each of the universally distributed Healthy Family Kit Series (Birth, 6-month, and 12-month kits);
- universal developmental screening for early identification of developmental delays using the Nipissing District Developmental Screen;
- the inclusion of specific books and learning activities within the Child Development Resource Kit;
- the development of a universal hearing screening program for all newborns;
- comprehensive child development training for the Healthy Family (Home Visitation) Program; and
- public awareness messaging.

Literacy-specific activities funded by the Early Childhood Development Initiative include the Northern Parenting and Literacy Program, the Language Nest Program and the Family Learning Kit.

Northern Parenting and Literacy Program

The NWT Literacy Council is delivering the Northern Parenting and Literacy Program through a contract with ECE. As part of the Northern Parenting and Literacy Program, the Literacy Council has developed and conducted training sessions for community members who will deliver literacy and parenting programs in their communities. This training has enhanced skills and capacity building of community members who in turn have established a variety of family literacy programs, projects and resources in each of their home communities.

In 2002-03:

- six training workshops were conducted;
- 151 facilitators were trained (from all communities in the NWT);
- nine different types of literacy programs were offered throughout the NWT (including Books in the Home, Reading Circles, storytelling, book sharing, Parents as Literacy Supporters (PALS), etc.);
- 126 adults and 134 children attended those literacy programs; and
- all but one community in the NWT offered literacy programs.
- See the program highlight at the end of this section for more details on the Northern Parenting and Literacy Program.

Language Nests

Language nests, an important component of the *Early Childhood Development Action Plan*, are early childhood immersion programs designed to restore the use of Aboriginal languages among the youngest generation. Situated in childcare centres or other early childhood programs, the grandparent and parent generation of speakers facilitate learning. A recent research study prepared for Education, Culture and Employment suggests that bilingualism contributes significantly to intellectual development and achievement. These studies have shown that students with longterm Aboriginal language exposure performed better academically and socially than their peers who had no such involvement. These students demonstrated higher self-esteem and tended to have improved literacy skills. Examples of successful language nests for national indigenous languages and Aboriginal languages exist in New Zealand (Maori), Europe (Welsh, Gaelic), the United States (Arapaho, Hawaiian) and Canada (Mohawk, Shuswap, Cree).

In 2002-03:

- a research report was produced on successful models of language nests and adult language acquisition;
- a research report was produced on Aboriginal language acquisition and resources for NWT communities;
- funding was provided for 14 language nest projects in the NWT (which covered all of the Aboriginal language groups);
- communities determined the approach they would take and submitted proposals to promote the development of language nests;

- projects focused on:
 - hiring language instructors for early childhood programs;
 - involving elders in language and culture development; and
 - developing language nest resources.

Family Learning Kits

The Family Learning Kit is the fifth kit in the Healthy Family Kit series. The kit was developed and distributed in collaboration with the NWT Literacy Council. It includes a number of age-appropriate books in English, French and/or the Aboriginal language of the family. Other resources within the kit support school readiness skill development. The kit is packaged in a child-sized backpack.

The kit is distributed to all four-year-old children by the community-based family literacy coordinators or by Kindergarten programs. In 2002-2003, 1,600 Family Learning Kits were distributed throughout the NWT.

Highlight: The Northern Parenting and Literacy Program

The Northern Parenting and Literacy Program supports the development and implementation of training sessions for community members who in turn deliver literacy and parenting programs in their communities. Under the direction of the NWT Literacy Council, this training has enhanced skills and capacity building of community members to establish a variety of family literacy programs, projects and resources in each of their home communities.

Based on reports submitted from the NWT Literacy Council, the *Early Childhood Development Action Plan* is well on its way to achieving the expected process outcomes of initiating, training and implementing Northern Parenting and Literacy programs in all communities. To date, 151 people from every community in the NWT have received the training, and every community but one has received funding for programs and projects.

Training Session in the Beaufort-Delta



Photo courtesy of the NWT Literacy Council

Training was provided for Books in the Home, Families First, and 1-2-3 Rhyme With Me. As well, participants in the training workshops spent time:

- defining literacy;
- learning how children develop early literacy skills;
- identifying literacy issues and resources in their communities; and

- exploring the difference between home literacy and school literacy.

These discussions helped orient the participants to the strengths in their communities and the different ways people learn. Proposal writing including budget preparation was also included in the training.

Part of the training was dedicated to showing participants how to fill out the application forms for project funding. This involved walking participants through a real application form and the template for preparing a budget.

At the May 2002 family literacy meeting, the community literacy coordinators stated that the training sessions and the training manuals were helpful in preparing them to develop and implement family literacy programs. Highlights of the training included:

- increased awareness of relevant literacy tools and resources;
- increased knowledge and skill in group facilitation;
- meeting, interacting and networking with others from a variety of communities;
- a non-threatening and respectful atmosphere;
- the mixing of trained and untrained personnel; and
- the opportunity to see the possibilities for success of the project.

The community literacy coordinators indicated that their skills and resources have been enhanced through this initiative. Community members of all ages were becoming more aware of the importance of culture and language, building positive relationships with each other and organizations, and increasing their own literacy levels.

1.2: K-12

Activities within the Kindergarten to grade 12 (K-12) area were undertaken with funding from ongoing programming at Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), the Divisional Education Councils/District Education Authorities (DECs/DEAs), and NWT schools. The sub-goal of this area is to ensure that all students will acquire the literacy skills that prepare them for productive work, responsible citizenship, creative lives, and lifelong learning. Activities include the following:

DEC/DEA Literacy Committees

One of the objectives of the NWT Literacy Strategy is to increase the opportunities for literacy development within the K-12 school system. One way to achieve this is to promote and support the formation of DEC/DEA literacy committees. One of the primary goals of these committees is to develop literacy plans for the DECs/DEAs, as well as assist with the development of literacy plans for individual schools within their regions.

In order to bring about the greatest improvements in literacy, these literacy plans address issues such as: 1) building partnerships and promoting literacy with students, families, territorial literacy initiatives, media, pre-school initiatives and Aboriginal language groups; 2) providing support to schools through the development and delivery of literacy-specific resources and teacher in-services (these initiatives are intended to enhance approved curriculum and existing programming); and 3) promoting parent awareness and involvement in student literacy development (as these are essential for the creation of lifelong learners, and they provide enhanced connections between home and school).

In 2002-03:

- most regions have literacy committees in place (with individual/community representation);
- most regions have literacy plans in place (and some have detailed action plans in place);
- some schools have literacy plans in place;
- all schools have initiatives to support the vision of improving literacy levels; and
- DEC/DEAs are currently analyzing data to find out why students are struggling with literacy.

NWT English Language Arts K-9

The goal of the NWT English Language Arts (ELA) Curriculum for Kindergarten to Grade 9 (K-9) is to provide common educational standards for all NWT students. In January 2002, the NWT Subject Advisory Committee began the process of developing clear measurable learning outcomes for each specific outcome of the Western and Northern Curriculum Process ELA Curriculum Framework. The team included teachers, administrators, and curriculum coordinators representative of District Education Authorities, Divisional Education Councils, and ECE.

In 2002-03:

- outcomes were developed, writing samples were chosen, and a pilot program was finalized for grades K-3;
- 36 teachers piloted the ELA curriculum; and
- outcomes were developed for grades 4-6.

Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting (SAER) Directive

The *Student Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting (SAER) Directive* is an ECE directive that focuses on the need for accountability at all levels of the education system. The directive outlines, for classroom teachers, how individual student growth in knowledge and skills will be measured in relation to specific learning outcomes for each grade.

Results of individual assessments will determine how well students in the class are learning a specific lesson or unit, what they need to learn next, and when remediation or support is required. The combined results of a variety of assessments, administered throughout the year, will be used to improve programming and instruction, as well as to determine student promotion and school completion.

The directive also outlines for education leaders how system growth will be measured in relation to standards and expectations. Achievement must be measured taking into account the vision, values and goals of the people of the Northwest Territories as articulated in *People: Our Focus For the Future* (1999 Strategic Plan Update). Results of systemic assessments answer key questions about education: are students at various stages of schooling performing at a satisfactory level; are students leaving school with the skills necessary to succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce; and is the education system improving over time? Ultimately, information gained from standardized tests will inform education decisions and policy development.

In 2002-03:

- implementation of the SAER Directive proceeded at the DEC/DEA level;
- ECE provided funding to the DEC/DEAs, who hired consultants to assist with the implementation of the directive at the regional levels;
- sessions were facilitated by consultants in the South Slave (in the fall of 2002) and in the Beaufort-Delta (in early 2003); and
- plans are in place for the Sahtu and Deh Cho DEC/DEAs and Yellowknife #1 board to hire consultants during fiscal 2003-04.

NWT Student Success Initiative

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment has created the NWT Student Success Initiative to provide extra funding to each of the eight DEC/DEAs in the Northwest Territories.

The NWT Student Success Initiative has been so successful, it has been expanded for the 2003-2004 school year. Additional funding has been allocated for different projects and professional development funds have been set aside to assist with teacher in-servicing, the creation of collaborative teaching teams, and assessment teams to examine student work. Research shows that embedded, ongoing professional development is the key to improving classroom instruction. The NWT Student Success Initiative is a very progressive initiative that will have a positive impact on academic achievement.

In 2002-03:

- each of the DEC/DEAs received \$20,000 to implement special initiatives that were designed to improve student achievement in the area of reading, comprehension or numeracy;

- the initiatives ranged from professional development activities for teachers to learn new strategies for teaching reading to reading recovery programming that provided one-on-one interventions to help students learn the fundamentals of reading; and
- each initiative was designed by the individual school division to address the unique needs in a school, community or division.

Career and Program Plans

Grade 9 students have been required to complete a Career and Program Plan (CPP) since 1996. Completing the plan requires students to plan high school course selections based on their academic and career goals, personal profile, and experiences. The CPP is done in grade 9 and is worth one credit, which until this year was banked until students completed the Career and Life Management Course (CALM), now worth three credits. (The CPP and a completed CALM course combined used to be worth three credits). Although initially completed in grade 9, it was the intention that the CPP be revisited/revised at least once annually throughout the high school years.

In 2002-03:

- the credits allotted to CPP and CALM were changed;
- CALM was revised, and is now worth three credits;
- CPP (now one credit) was separated from the CALM course; and
- CPP was made available as an electronic template on the ECE website (students can work within the downloaded template and save it electronically, making the revisiting/revising process easier).

NWT Career Development Strategy

The NWT Career Development Strategy was developed in response to a career development review that was conducted in 2000. It outlines 10 areas of emphasis to support career development in the K-12 school system. Areas of emphasis include: strategic action; career planning; family involvement; career information; work experience; relevant curriculum; professional development; community partnerships; beyond school transitions; and monitoring and evaluation. It has been reviewed by ECE regional program personnel and superintendents.

In 2002-03:

- particular attention and resources have been allocated to the areas of "relevant curriculum" and "professional development";

- two resources have been developed to support teachers in infusing career development into school programming:
 - an NWT Grade 4-6 Career Awareness Resource; and
 - the NWT Career Development Teacher Resource Manual for Grades K-9.

- a three-day in-service for regional career development facilitators was held in January 2003.

Schools North Apprenticeship Program

The Schools North Apprenticeship Program (SNAP) is a program for high school students in the Northwest Territories who are interested in a career in trades. SNAP allows students to stay in high school and be registered under the apprenticeship system. In the past, students who were interested in becoming a registered apprentice either dropped out of school or had to wait until after graduation to pursue their goal. Apprenticeship Training Officers and Career Development Officers handle promotion of SNAP at the regional level.

Full implementation of SNAP occurred in September 1996. Since that time 18 NWT students have enrolled in the program. Students who qualify for SNAP typically possess the academic ability to pursue a higher level of education.
In 2002-03:

- four SNAP apprentices were registered in the NWT (one from Yellowknife and three from Hay River); and

- new SNAP promotional materials have recently been developed and will be distributed in the fall of 2003.

Pathways Initiative

The Senior Secondary Schools Committee identified a greater need for more diversified programming to meet the needs of students in the NWT. The Pathways Initiative focuses on broadening the diversity of academic and vocational programs. The fundamental concept behind the development of additional secondary school pathways is to provide students with additional choices, programming alternatives and opportunities for success in acquiring numeracy and literacy skills, which appeal to the various learning styles of students. This includes giving students the flexibility to move between pathways as their needs, goals and interests change.

The proposed pathways necessitate the identification and or development of core courses that do not currently exist in the areas of science, English and mathematics. Course sequences, grades 10 through 12 are needed in the areas of Applied Science, Experiential Science and Professional/Communications English. These new courses would target students whose interests are trades, occupations or direct entry to the workforce.

In 2002-03:

- the committee identified and undertook the following: the structure and format of each pathway; overall course offerings; the scope of the project and developmental timelines; Ministerial considerations for diplomas and certificates; the courses to be developed; research on vocational numeracy and literacy skills; proposed implementation timelines; and proposed a business plan for the development of the Pathways structure;
- full committee meetings were held in November 2002 and March 2003; and intra-departmental meetings were held throughout the year to address the action plan;
- in the area of curriculum development:
 - Applications of Science (AS) 10-20-30: curriculum development has reached the consultation phase and further development is required; final vetting is scheduled for November 2003;
 - Experiential Science (ES) 10-20-30: curriculum development is ongoing; ES 20 Oceans curriculum and draft resource development are in the final stages; framework outlines for ES10 Terrestrial Ecology and ES30 Freshwater Ecology are complete;
 - Communications English 10-20-30: initial research on current high school English programs offered in Canada was completed; and
 - Essentials of Mathematics 10-20-30: curriculum development for EM10-20-30 was completed and implemented in schools; student and teacher resources development for EM10-20 was completed and implemented in schools; and student and teacher resources development for EM30 was completed and implemented in schools.

Highlight: The South Slave Divisional Education Council (SSDEC) Literacy Project

The South Slave Divisional Education Council (SSDEC) Literacy Project Committee consists of a regional coordinator and at least one representative from each school in the South Slave region. The committee developed and is currently implementing a multi-year literacy plan, which consists of agreed-upon strategies that are likely to bring about the greatest improvements to student literacy across the region. The Literacy Project is a comprehensive and integrated partnership initiative involving the regional SSDEC, all South Slave schools, Aboriginal language groups, and the NWT Literacy Council.

The key components of the multi-year plan are:

- building partnerships (between the SSDEC, schools, students, families, territorial literacy initiatives, media, pre-school initiatives and Aboriginal language groups);
- literacy programming and resource development;
- family literacy programming; and
- best practices research.

Some of the highlights of the project include:

- the development of *Baby Bags* and *Kindergarten Bags* for newborns and Kindergarten-age youngsters (these bags contain age-appropriate literacy resources: “chewable books” and literacy activities for parents with newborn babies; books, crayons, paper, etc. for future Kindergarten students, so they are ready to start school each fall);
- *Rufus' Reading Club*: for students in Kindergarten to grade 3, where incentives are given to students who read 25, 50, 75 and 100 books;
- *Aboriginal Resources*: books are being translated into Cree, Chipewyan and South Slavey to be used with Aboriginal language programs in South Slave schools;
- *Computer Literacy*: software that complements the curricula in the areas of literacy and numeracy were critiqued, reviewed, and ordered (a workshop was held in the spring of 2003 for one educator from each school to learn how to best use these resources to promote literacy); and
- *Home Reading Programs*: Home reading programs have been established in Kindergarten to grade 3 classrooms in the South Slave; manuals for teachers have been developed and books appropriate for these grade levels have been distributed to schools.

Rufus the Reading Rascal



Photo courtesy of SSDEC Literacy Project

Rufus the Reading Rascal has been the official mascot of the SSDEC Literacy Project since 2001. Rufus was created through a regional contest where South Slave students drew what they thought Rufus should look like. The overall winner was Larissa Korol from JBT School in Fort Smith. A student from each school was chosen as a winner, and teachers won books for their class libraries. Rufus the Reading Rascal has become the most recognized symbol of the South Slave education system. Virtually all students and most parents of young children in the communities of the South Slave region know who Rufus is and what he stands for.

The project is being extended in the 2003-04 school year to include student numeracy development. The SSDEC is convinced that this Literacy Project initiative is having a significantly positive impact on student success in all subject areas, and on public perception of the efforts and accomplishments of the SSDEC.

Copies of the South Slave Literacy Plan have been requested by several schools and jurisdictions both within the NWT and across Canada. The SSDEC Literacy Project presented at the International Reading Association (IRA) conference on October 26, 2002 in Vancouver to an audience of participants from across Canada. Additionally, the SSDEC Literacy Project won one of the Ministerial Council on Literacy awards for 2002-03.

1:3: Working-Age Youth and Adults

Activities for working-age youth and adults were undertaken with part of the funding from the \$2.4 million directed at filling gaps in current literacy program activity for the adult population, as well as with funding from existing programs. The sub-goal for this area was to ensure that all working-age youth and adults will develop and maintain the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values necessary for the workplace, to acquire or upgrade basic skills, and to more effectively play roles as citizens, parents, community members, consumers and learners. Activities include the following:

Community Literacy Projects

The Community Literacy Projects fund provides financial assistance to community organizations to develop and deliver local projects that will help people increase their reading and writing skills and raise awareness of the importance of literacy in all official languages.

The purpose and goals of the Community Literacy Projects fund are to: enhance literacy activities in the Northwest Territories; encourage the active involvement of community organizations in the development and support of local literacy education; and improve access and outreach, develop relevant learning materials, promote information sharing and coordination, increase public awareness and develop innovative approaches to literacy services at the community level.

In 2002-03:

- 14 community literacy projects were undertaken in 11 communities;
- the projects included:
 - literacy programs run by Band Councils;
 - Books in the Home programs;
 - Reading Circle programs;
 - a Bush Cree dictionary;
 - Cree and Slavey classes; and
 - the development of Chipewyan language kits.

Community Skills For Work (CSW)

The Community Skills for Work program is designed to assist people, particularly Income Support clients, develop marketable skills and experience. Projects do this using a combination of work experience, basic education, life skills and career development. Employment or skills focused projects are delivered by community-based organizations. Aurora College delivers education-focused projects.

As part of the Income Support productive choices model, Income Support clients who are considered employable must participate in wellness and career-related activities in order to receive financial assistance. Community Skills for Work supports communities in initiating community projects to offer productive choices for Income Support clients and deal with issues like unemployment and job creation. It encourages active use of income

support payments and promotes community development through education, training and work experience. CSW also promotes interagency cooperation as project sponsors, Career Development Officers, Income Support Workers, and others work together to support the involvement of Income Support clients in projects.

In 2002-03:

- 20 projects were undertaken in 14 communities;
- the projects included:
 - a guide training course;
 - adult literacy and basic education courses for “women at risk”;
 - Pre-trades programs;
 - work experience programs;
 - cooking classes;
 - reading and writing programs; and
 - computer skills programs.

Adult Literacy and Basic Education - Community

One of the major goals of Aurora College is to address the need for adult literacy and basic education (ALBE) training in communities. To meet this need the curriculum ranges from a basic literacy level to the advanced high school graduation level. A few trades programs accept apprentices with a grade 10 level of literacy and numeracy; most occupations require higher levels. The need to be “sufficiently proficient to function on the job”, thus, by definition, implies that many people must acquire more advanced literacy skills. The chart on the following page summarizes the range of instruction in literacy offered at Aurora College.

Aurora College offers the majority of the courses listed at each of the three major campuses: Thebacha Campus in Fort Smith, Yellowknife Campus in Yellowknife and Aurora Campus in Inuvik. Community Learning Centres (CLCs) are located in most of the smaller communities in the NWT and generally offer courses up to the 130 level, but may extend their service to higher levels, depending on need), using either in-class or distance learning technologies and delivery.

In 2002-03:

- the College provided 46 literacy-related programs;
- the programs were run in 30 of the 33 NWT communities (up from 26 communities the previous year); and
- a total of 568 students attended these courses (up from 525 students in 2001-02).

Literacy Levels, College Courses and Grade Equivalents

Literacy Level	Aurora College Course Designation	Approximate Grade Equivalent
Introductory	English 110, Math 110, Science 110, Social Studies 110	Grades 1 to 3
	English 120, Math 120, Science 120, Social Studies 120	Grades 4 to 6
Intermediate	English 130, Math 130, Science 130, Social Studies 130	Grades 7 and 8
	English 140, Math 140, Science 140, Social Studies 140	Grade 9 and Grade 10 General
Advanced	English 150, Math 150, Science 150, Social Studies 150	Grade 11 and Grade 12 General
	English 160, Math 160, Science 160, Social Studies 160	Grade 12 Advanced
	UCEP	Grade 12 Advanced
Entry Level College Programs	Nursing Access, Social Work Access, Teacher Education Access and Pre-Technology	Grade 12 General

ALBE – Distance Education

Aurora College also provides an alternative to classroom learning through its partnership with Calgary Board of Education's CBE Learn. CBE Learn is a recognized leader in the development and provision of quality educational programs outside the traditional classroom. With CBE Learn's alternatives to the classroom programs, students can complete high school courses anytime, anywhere through their online web-based courses.

The online learning program features: 1) demonstrated standards of excellence in delivery, instruction, student support and teacher professional development; 2) recognized excellence in instructional design; and 3) teachers specializing in online and self-directed program instruction. Learners enjoy developing learning schedules around family, work, and community commitments; and taking responsibility for designing the most effective learning strategies for personal success.

In 2002-03:

- 260 students from 17 NWT communities (as well as the BHP and Diavik mine-sites) enrolled in online distance education courses;
- 90 students completed their courses (while 108 were still completing their courses as of March 31, 2003); and
- 22 staff were trained as facilitators.

ALBE – Correctional Institutes

There are three adult correctional centres in the NWT (the Yellowknife Correctional Centre (YCC); the South Mackenzie Correctional Centre (SMCC) in Hay River; and the Territorial Women's Correctional Centre (TWCC) in Fort Smith.), as well as four young offender facilities (the River Ridge Young Offender Facility (RRYOF) in Fort Smith; the Arctic Tern Female Young Offender Facility (ATFYOF) in Inuvik; the Dene Konia Young Offender Facility (DKYOF) in Hay River; and the North Slave Young Offender Facility (NSYOF) in Yellowknife).

All of these institutions house inmates from diverse backgrounds: inmates of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal descent; inmates who have university degrees and those who have low literacy levels; inmates raised in the city; and those raised in smaller communities and on the land. A large percentage of inmates are functionally illiterate: they cannot read legal papers, cooking recipes, a drivers handbook, a job application, medical instructions for their child, or a letter from a friend. Additionally, very few inmates have computer skills.

In 2002-03:

- funding was spent on providing supplies for literacy libraries and instructional programs at the three correctional facilities and the four young offender facilities;
- supplies included: books and videos; computers, printers, and computer programs; science equipment; classroom textbooks; and self-help videos and books on tape;
- staff from the College and Career Development Division of ECE toured all of the facilities (except the North Slave Young Offender Facility, which was visited in fiscal 2003-04), and consulted with correctional centre and young offender facility staff and inmates. The purpose of these visits was to find out what ECE can do to assist the Department of Justice in the provision of literacy and career development programs to inmates.

Learning Support for Persons With Disabilities

The Learning Support for Persons with Disabilities fund helps NWT adult residents with disabilities improve their literacy skills. Individuals or organizations may apply for funding. Proposals must show that the funding requested will help to overcome barriers to literacy.

The Literacy Support for Persons With Disabilities Committee was established to oversee the implementation of Literacy Strategy activities for the disabled. The committee includes representatives from government and non-governmental organizations, including: the NWT Association For Learning Disabilities; the Yellowknife Association for Community Living; the NWT Literacy Council; the NWT Council of Persons with Disabilities; the Canadian National Institute for the Blind; the Department of Education, Culture and Employment; and the Department of Health and Social Services.

In 2002-03:

- 17 projects were undertaken in seven communities;
- the projects included:
 - tutoring;
 - tutor/practitioner training;
 - assessment and counselling services;
 - the purchase of assistive devices, aids and access technology;
 - the purchase of books, tools and equipment (including computers and software);
 - sign language instruction;
 - tuition and travel; and
 - transportation for clients to and from an educational institute.

One of the highlights of the year in this area was a three-day Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) training event for educators, coordinated by the NWT Literacy Council. The main objective of the training event was to provide educators with the practical and hands-on strategies that work and can be implemented in the classroom:

- the event was held September 12-14, 2002 with 36 people registered;
- a public event was held on September 11 with a turnout of approximately 65 people;
- feedback on the workshop was positive; and
- the training was one step in removing the barriers that prevent adult learners with FASD from participating in literacy programs and acquiring or increasing their literacy skills.

Literacy Outreach Services

The Literacy Outreach Centre in Yellowknife is a partnership between Aurora College and the Yellowknife Association for Community Living that provides literacy drop-in services to clients. The centre provides: specialized resources for all literacy programs offered in the community; space for individualized tutoring initiatives; services for a large and diverse group of people who require literacy programming; and training for literacy tutors and the matching of tutors with learners.

In 2002-03:

- 75 students received services from the Literacy Outreach Centre (20 students were enrolled in the day-program, 18 students attended the evening drop-in sessions, 29 students were matched with tutors, and 11 students attended the YWCA program);

- 33 tutors participated in the program (six tutors returned from the previous year, and 27 new tutors were recruited); and
- two tutor workshops were held, one in October 2002 (with 13 tutors participating) and one in February 2003 (with 10 tutors participating).

Policy, Resources, and Training

A variety of activities have been undertaken by ECE and the various NWT Literacy Strategy partners to provide the policies, resources and training necessary to increase the number of working-age youth and adults who are literate. Specifically, this has included: 1) ensuring consistent delivery of quality adult literacy and basic education programs in all NWT communities; 2) ensuring that appropriate and achievable standards for the assessment of adult literacy development are set, progress measured, and results reported; and 3) ensuring that adults who complete adult literacy and basic education programs have the skills, knowledge and attitudes for postsecondary education or the workforce.

In 2002-03:

- the ALBE Standardized Curricula was distributed to new ALBE instructors and other communities/organizations that requested copies;
- planning work was undertaken to develop community literacy committees throughout the NWT (a planning committee was established, met four times, and identified literacy advocates/representatives at the local level); and
- work on a Best Practices Framework for ALBE programming was undertaken (see highlight at the end of this section).

Another highlight in this area is the Certificate in Adult Education (CAED) program. The CAED program is a part-time program that gives participants a foundation in the theory and practice of adult education. The program is intended for community adult educators and college instructors working in a campus or community setting, Career Development Officers, and other service providers and program administrators whose duties require a knowledge of adult learning. Students are required to complete six of seven core courses and four of six elective courses.

In 2002-03:

- two core courses and two electives were delivered;
- 47 participants registered for the courses (23 of the students were Aurora College staff, and 24 were other registrants);
- three students completed the full CAED program in 2002/2003.

Workplace Education

Workplace Education (WPE) refers to the development of work-specific basic skills in the areas of reading, writing, math, problem solving, critical thinking and communication. These skills are essential to today's northern workforce to meet the demands of more complex information and technology-based workplaces. Workplace education is an investment in people which helps bridge the gap between job requirements and employees' basic skills. It is a partnership between employers and employees that benefits both.

In 2002-03:

- 60 projects were carried out in 19 communities;
- 573 participants received workplace education;
- 50 employers participated in the program;
- the projects included:
 - interpersonal communications skills;
 - computer training;
 - tutorial support for the pre-trades exam;
 - basic office skills; and
 - staff leadership skills.

One of the highlights of the WPE Program was the Test of Workplace Essential Skills (TOWES) workshop organized by Aurora College. TOWES is an initiative designed to test three skills essential for safe and productive employment: reading text, document use, and numeracy. The TOWES program is administered through Bow Valley College in partnership with SkillPlan, a British Columbia based firm. It has met with considerable national success and is recognized by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). A number of colleges across Canada have already adopted this form of testing.

In 2002-03:

- a one-week TOWES workshop was held at the Yellowknife Campus in February 2003;
- participants included Aurora College adult educators from the Yellowknife Campus and the Community Learning Centres of Dettah, N'dilo, Rae-Edzo, Gameti, Wekweti, and Wha Ti, as well as representatives from the Aurora and Thebacha Campuses, Aurora College head office, ECE and employees from Diavik;
- the workshop was a success, and Aurora College will be proceeding with the joint venture pilot project with Diavik.

Aurora College Student Success Centres

Student Success Centres were established in each of the three Aurora College campuses to enable students to access academic supports such as tutoring, career development, study skills, time management, internet research, assistance with prior learning applications and applications to other learning.

In 2002-03:

- 480 students accessed tutoring and individual study sessions; and
- 199 students participated in 31 career development workshops, job search workshops, and resume writing sessions.

Career Development Workshops and Information Sessions

Career centres in six regional centres provide career and employment services for out-of-school youth and adults. Career centres provide individual and group counselling; workshops; access to online job banks; resource libraries; career information products; and access to employment and training programs. Career centre staff collaborate with schools, college campuses, adult educators and community organizations to deliver career fairs and Canada Career Week activities.

In 2002-03:

- Career fairs were held in Inuvik, Norman Wells, Fort Simpson, Hay River, Fort Smith, Yellowknife;
- Canada Career Week (November 3-9) activities included career expositions at schools, workshops for businesses and the public, open houses at career centres, scavenger hunts and radio contests;
- Career Development Officers visited every community to provide outreach services.

Labour Market Information

The College and Career Development Division produces a variety of plain language career and labour market information products to ensure that northerners have the necessary information to make key career and employment decisions.

In 2002-03 the division produced:

- Jobs In Booklet Series;
- Career Tracker;
- Oil and Gas Update;
- Career Scapes;
- Career LINX.
- Jobsnorth.ca, an electronic labour exchange, is another example of a source of northern labour market information. It is a website where employers can post job openings and job seekers can search available positions and apply online for employment.

Highlight: ALBE Best Practices Project

In 1998-1999, ECE began the process of developing quality standards statements for adult literacy and basic education programs, in partnership with adult literacy and basic education providers. The working group developed a draft document consisting of 13 quality standard statements, program features and evidence. The project was not completed at the time, and in 2002-2003, ECE reactivated it with a focus on best practices instead of quality standards. The NWT Literacy Council, in partnership with ECE and Aurora College, is taking the lead to coordinate this initiative. The project will help support the development and continued improvement of effective ALBE programs.

Best practices are useful to both new and experienced adult educators, to policy makers and to service providers in a variety of ways. They can:

- be a goal to work towards;
- form a framework for effective practice;
- be a guide to promote good practice in program planning and development;
- be a guide to inform and improve practice;
- encourage reflection on critical issues by those developing, implementing and evaluating adult literacy and basic education programs; and
- transform practice.

Best practice statements are *not* meant to:

- be mandatory or definitive;
- force all programs to be the same; or
- be a means of formally monitoring or evaluating programs.

The project has four components: the development of statements of best practice; a self-assessment tool; a collection of case studies of best practice in action in northern communities; and a resource of practical ideas that will help educators apply best practices in their programs.

In 2002-03, a draft best practices framework that articulates 14 statements of best practice was completed, along with key elements and indicators. Additionally, a working group to oversee this project was established and met three times. Work began on collecting examples of best practices from adult literacy and basic education practitioners. These examples will be compiled in a resource manual that will be distributed along with the framework tool. Also, a literature review of best practices in the field of adult literacy and basic education was completed. This review examines the development of best practices in Canada, Britain, and the United States.

1:4: Seniors

Activities for senior citizens were undertaken with part of the \$2.4 million in new funding. The sub-goal for this area was to ensure that all seniors will build upon their skills and knowledge necessary to enrich their lives for independent and meaningful living and to more effectively play roles as citizens, family and community members, consumers, learners and mentors. Activities include the following:

Literacy Programs and Supports for Seniors

The Literacy Programs and Support for Seniors fund provides financial assistance to community organizations to develop and deliver local literacy projects that support active independent living for seniors. Funding supports projects such as peer tutoring, community learning groups, public awareness, literacy and health and computer literacy.

The purpose and goals of the program are to: 1) enhance literacy activities among seniors in the Northwest Territories; 2) encourage the active involvement of community organizations in the development and support of local literacy education for seniors; and 3) improve access and outreach, develop relevant learning materials, promote information sharing and coordination, increase public awareness and develop innovative approaches to literacy services at the community level.

Funding is allocated to projects through the Literacy Programs and Supports for Seniors Committee, comprised of representatives from government and non-governmental organizations, including: the NWT Seniors Society; the NWT Literacy Council; the Department of Education, Culture and Employment; and the Department of Health and Social Services.

In 2002-03:

- nine projects were undertaken in eight communities;
- the projects included:
 - a seniors reading circle;
 - a weekly seniors learning group;
 - assisting seniors with accessing government services; and
 - various literacy projects aimed at: increasing seniors' awareness of the importance of healthy living; increasing awareness of technology; and increasing seniors' literacy levels in English and math.

Highlight: The Fort Resolution Elders Literacy Program

The Fort Resolution Elders Literacy Program is breaking new ground as there has been virtually no literacy instruction for elders in the community. The objectives of the program were to:

- assess the literacy needs of Fort Resolution elders;
- provide a full range of literacy services to Fort Resolution elders; and
- publish Fort Resolution elders' stories in booklets, which can be used in other northern literacy programs.

On October 21, 2002, work began on a comprehensive needs assessment to determine the literacy needs of Fort Resolution elders. There was keen interest in elders' computer classes. As well, the elders expressed an interest in learning how to use calculators. The needs assessment identified only a couple of Fort Resolution elders who were unable to write their signatures. There were, however, many local elders with low literacy skills who welcomed one-on-one tutoring in their homes.

Fort Resolution Elders



Photo courtesy Fort Resolution Elders Literacy Program

After the completion of the needs assessment, the Elders Literacy Tutor began compiling instructional material and tried to set up a schedule of tutoring appointments. There was some initial reluctance on the part of the elders to jump right into regularly scheduled tutoring classes. Thus, the tutor adopted a novel approach and put her efforts into planning an elders' Christmas party as a way of introducing the program in the community.

The tutor invented her own Word Bingo game, which she called "Lingo." She made up game cards and purchased prizes. "Lingo" requires the game participants to write words on their cards instead of cover numbers like the regular Bingo game. She had a flipchart, on which she wrote the words for the game. The elders then had to copy the words on to their game cards. Like the regular Bingo game, they win prizes when their word entries cover certain patterns.

The elders' Christmas party was held on December 16, 2002. The tutor prepared a full turkey dinner, and there were about 25 elders in attendance. At first, there was some reluctance to participate in the "Lingo" game. Some elders wanted to go home when they discovered that it wasn't "real" Bingo. Many of them were afraid to play the game because they couldn't write very well. However, after the first game, the elders became quite enthusiastic and didn't want to quit playing even after all the prizes were gone and the party was over. With each game, they became more confident in writing out letters for the words, which was the exact point of the game. The elders with better writing skills began helping the others. Soon, everyone was laughing, and the experimental game was a huge success.

After Christmas, the tutor began offering tutoring sessions in the elders' homes. Elders evening computer classes ran from January to March, 2003. Additionally, elders' stories were collected and published in two booklets. These booklets can now be used in other adult literacy programs.

1.5: Community Literacy Services

Community literacy services were undertaken with part of the \$2.4 million in new funding. The sub-goal for this area was to increase access to and use of information systems, including information technology, libraries, traditional information, etc. Activities include:

Virtual Libraries Project

The NWT Virtual Libraries Project has been ongoing since 1999, and is designed to enhance library services in communities not served by a public library. Virtual libraries, consisting of computers and software, were installed in communities to provide equitable public access to reliable, up-to-date information for all community members. This included access to the World Wide Web and e-mail, as well as word-processing software, children's learning programs, and reference software. Community members were also provided access to the "Borrow By Mail" resources available through the NWT public library system.

In 2002-03:

- virtual library sites were set up in 10 NWT communities, plus the Diavik mine-site;

- promotional materials were distributed throughout those communities (i.e. signage and additional materials were left in the community for use as prizes by the sponsoring organizations);
- grand openings were held to introduce the sites;
- some communities are providing ongoing instruction in computing basics; and
- some communities have held special games nights and challenge nights to promote the virtual library sites.

Electronic Infrastructure, Resource Sharing and Online Learning

The NWT Literacy Council received funding from ECE to build its capacity to support adult literacy development and to respond to the information and electronic needs of literacy learners, practitioners, and communities. The principal goal of the project was to build the information-sharing infrastructure to better support the distribution of information, and act as a point of access for literacy practitioners and programs for resources and materials.

In 2002-03, activities included:

- building the electronic infrastructure through the ongoing maintenance and development of the NWT Literacy Council website (www.nwt.literacy.ca);
- providing access to literacy resources through the Literacy Resource Centre and online material;
- expanding and enhancing electronic conferencing capabilities through North of 60;
- conducting a needs assessment of the online learning needs of the literacy learners and practitioners;
- piloting an online learning environment called *AlphaRoute* to raise awareness of online literacy learning;
- developing a pilot of *The Northern Edge*, an online literacy newspaper with learning activities to assess the interest and technology limitations/requirements of literacy learners and practitioners in the NWT; and
- developing online and print resources to accompany *Lessons From the Land: A Virtual Map of the NWT*.

Highlight: New Virtual Library Sites

Two of the newest virtual library sites are Wha Ti and Holman.

In Wha Ti:

- the site is located in the Band office;
- it is open to the public six days a week, including evening hours;
- two community youths have been hired to provide direct supervision for the site; and
- community members, school children, and Band employees took part in the training.

In Holman:

- the site is located in the Helen Kalvak Elihakvik Library;
- it is open to the public six days a week during the day, plus two evenings per week;
- the librarian has been trained to provide library services and supervise the virtual library site; and
- community members, school staff, and children took part in the training.

Both of these virtual library sites provide e-mail, on-line education, news, research and resources, and games.

The key elements to a successful virtual library site are:

- the number of hours the site is open to the public;
- the location of the site within the community; and
- the willingness of the community to supervise and maintain the site.

Supervising organizations with broad community support have the best chance of developing an active virtual library.

Goal 2: Increase awareness of the importance of literacy in the official languages of the NWT

Official languages literacy activities were undertaken with part of the \$2.4 million in new funding, as well as with funding from existing programs. The sub-goal for this area was to ensure that everyone is aware of and supportive of the importance of literacy in the official languages of the NWT. Activities include the following:

Promotion of Official Languages

The language profile of the North is an important factor affecting literacy levels. The official languages of the Northwest Territories include: Chipewyan; Cree; Dogrib; Gwich'in; Slavey (South and North); Inuktitut (Inuvialuktun and Innuinaqtun); English; and French.

In 2002-03:

- the Language Promotions Working Group was established to improve the coordination and promotion of literacy activities in the official languages;
- the group is developing a communications plan (which will increase the promotional messages relating to literacy in the official languages);
- Community Language Leader awards were presented; and
- Culture-based education is being promoted within educational programs.

The Aboriginal Languages Literacy Program

The Aboriginal Languages Literacy Program provides financial assistance to community organizations to develop and deliver local projects that will help people increase their reading and writing skills, and raise awareness of the importance of literacy in the Aboriginal languages of the NWT.

In 2002-03:

- 27 projects were undertaken;
- all of the aboriginal language communities within the NWT participated;
- the projects included:
 - Aboriginal language immersion camps;
 - Dictionary projects;
 - Language/literacy workshops;
 - Animal unit booklet with CD's;
 - Oral history projects;
 - Teaching materials including resource manuals; and
 - Pilot project for the creation of a Dene as a second language curriculum.

The School of Community Government Aboriginal Languages Project

The School of Community Government at the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA) undertook a Governance in the Aboriginal Languages project. The goals of the project were to build community capacity in governance and to provide training in the Aboriginal first language for community councils.

In 2002-03:

- two workshops were carried out in two Dogrib communities (Rae-Edzo and Gameti), with 28 people participating;
- training was conducted on the following topics:
 - Roles and Responsibilities;
 - Leadership;
 - Running Effective Meetings;
 - Teamwork;
 - Exercising Our Authority;
 - the Senior Administrator;
 - Planning;
 - Programs and Services;
 - Financial Awareness;
 - Governance and the Law;
 - Community Constitutions; and
 - Emerging Governance.
- close to 90% of the participants felt that the workshop was valuable.

Highlight: The Gwich'in Language Immersion Camp

The purpose of the language immersion camp was to place children into an atmosphere where the Gwich'in language is spoken. The Gwich'in language has declined dramatically. The Gwich'in elders are the only people speaking the language on a daily basis. In the past, community members have reminded people continuously that something needs to be done now to help save the Gwich'in language from extinction. More and more we are seeing elders passing on and fewer children learning the language from parents and elders. According to the *Gwich'in Language Five-Year Plan*, one of the main goals is to have children in total immersion in the Gwich'in language by way of immersion camps on the land. The immersion camps are equipped to teach the children traditional and modern skills integrated with the Gwich'in language on a daily basis.

The Gwich'in language immersion camp was set up to be as relaxed as possible. This was done so that the students could learn at their own pace and the teachers could continue to work with the students who understood the language. Upon waking in the morning, they washed and then said prayers. This instilled in the students the importance of keeping their spiritual awareness of the world around them and considering the needs of others. After breakfast, each student visited the fishnets with the camp attendants. This practice was done again in the early evening. After the fishnets were checked the students selected a fish, cleaned it and began to make fish for drying. After the students completed this lesson, they then began to gather wood for the afternoon and evening. All this was done utilizing the Gwich'in language.

The Gwich'in Language Immersion Camp



Photo courtesy ECE

The girls and boys were sometimes separated to allow the girls to learn sewing and the boys to visit rabbit snares. During this time, the art of creating jump snares was taught. Boys were taught how to make bows and arrows as an alternative to sewing. Bannock making was taught for both boys and girls, as learning to make bannock is a necessity in a cultural camp. In some cases, the gathering of the flooring for the tent was the lesson of the day. Spruce boughs were gathered. The students learned that they had to be a certain type and colour for the flooring of the tent. During this time, the students were taught about the different types of plants that are used when on the land. The teachings encompassed plants such as the spruce gum for medicinal purposes, willow and its bark for fishing and making fishnets, the birch and its bark for baskets and the smoke that it gives to the moose hides. In teaching of the animals and plant life, the spiritual aspect of the camp was kept in balance.

The evenings were spent telling stories and going over lessons of the day in the Gwich'in language. Teaching the Gwich'in language to students that are not familiar with the sounds is difficult. Many times, the students would shy away from repeating words and phrases. The Gwich'in believe that there needs to be more work in the Gwich'in language done at home and in the classroom. Students were usually in bed at 11:00 pm after evening prayers. The instructors, coordinator and camp attendant would then meet to evaluate the day and plan the next day's activities.

Goal 3: Ensure government departments work together to increase literacy levels in the NWT

Activities for government departments were undertaken with part of the \$2.4 million in new funding, as well as with funding from existing programs. The sub-goal for this area was to ensure that GNWT departments identified common links, practices, and processes that work to increase literacy levels in the NWT. Activities include the following:

Interdepartmental Literacy Committee

The GNWT Interdepartmental Literacy Committee has been set up with representation from all GNWT departments. The committee meets four times per year to: share information and report on progress and developments respecting departmental literacy initiatives; provide advice and/or recommendations to ECE regarding the implementation of the Literacy Strategy; work with the GNWT Communications Working Group, as appropriate, regarding the implementation of GNWT plain language initiatives; and communicate literacy information to departmental boards and agencies.

In 2002-03, GNWT departments developing departmental literacy action plans included the Executive; Finance; Justice; Health and Social Services; Education, Culture and Employment; Public Works and Services; and the NWT Housing Corporation.

Plain Language Initiative

Since 2001-02, the NWT Literacy Council has delivered introductory plain language workshops to GNWT employees. The Interdepartmental Literacy Committee identified a need to continue to offer workshops and develop more advanced training for those who have already taken the introductory level.

The introductory workshops provide GNWT employees with the skills to start applying plain language techniques to their public information and internal documents. They also help to raise awareness about plain language communication and the public's right to be adequately informed. As well, the workshops provide an opportunity to promote the tools developed to assist GNWT employees in plain language writing (including *Write For Your Reader: A Plain Language Guidebook* and *A Plain Language Audit Tool*, which were developed as part of the NWT Literacy Strategy in 2001-02).

The advanced workshops are customized and focus on specific documents identified by departments. The workshops are designed so that participants work collaboratively with the facilitator to edit and rewrite their documents in plain language.

In 2002-03:

- eight introductory plain language workshops were held for 101 employees of five GNWT departments;
- two advanced plain language workshops were held for 16 employees of two GNWT departments; and

- the NWT Literacy Council used an informal survey to assess the impact of the workshops and to make improvements for future workshop delivery.

Funding under this initiative was also used to support an Editing, Grammar and Writing Skills Development workshop for staff from the Departments of Health and Social Services; Resources, Wildlife and Economic Development; and Transportation. Staff from the Legislative Assembly and the NWT Literacy Council also participated.

- the workshop was held January 16-17, 2003;
- 15 individuals participated;
- the objective of the workshop was to provide the participants with:
 - opportunities to develop and advance their plain language writing and editing skills;
 - an increased awareness of the techniques of plain language and the various forms of communications, such as brochures, newsletters, press releases, etc. that use plain language; and
 - opportunities to simplify public information materials by using plain language.

Literacy Strategy Reporting

Two of the commitments made within the NWT Literacy Strategy were the preparation of annual reports and the development of an evaluation/accountability framework. The annual reports outline the literacy activities under the strategy that have taken place in the previous fiscal year. The evaluation and accountability framework is designed to measure overall progress on achieving the strategy's goals and objectives.

In 2002-03:

- the first annual report on the activities of the NWT Literacy Strategy was released in the fall of 2002;
- work on an evaluation framework began in 2002-03 (a first draft was prepared and then revised with input from the Ministerial Council on Literacy and other stakeholders; a revised RMAF was completed in 2003);
- the completed RMAF will be used to undertake the interim evaluation of the NWT Literacy Strategy (scheduled for the winter of 2003).

Highlight: The GNWT Plain Language Initiative

Introductory Workshop

Feedback received from the introductory plain language workshops offered last year was evaluated and revisions were made to the format and resources used. The introductory workshop was revised to include new content including more in-depth audience analysis activities and more examples of GNWT writing to be used in writing activities. Workshop writing activities were also revised to include more varied opportunities for participants to practice their skills.

The introductory workshop focused on raising awareness about plain language, understanding basic principles and techniques and providing opportunities for practice. This is the second year that this workshop has been delivered and there have been several changes made over that period of time. New activities have been added to increase the interactive nature of the workshop and new examples added as well. Also the workshop was converted from an overhead to a Power Point presentation this year.

Plain language is focused on the needs of the reader. The workshop had always focused on that concept but changes were needed to emphasize that concept even more. The last activity in the workshop was changed from a more general plain language writing exercise to one focused on using the same material but writing it for three different audiences.

The current format and activities seem to work well. The content appears to cover the basic information needed and participants have indicated that there is a good balance between listening and doing.

The workshop format itself is flexible to allow for time constraints. Often participants will want to discuss certain concepts, principles or examples and the workshop has to be able to adjust to those discussions.

Eight introductory workshops were delivered to the departments of: Transportation; Public Works and Services; Education, Culture & Employment (4); the NWT Housing Corporation; and the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

Advanced Workshop

The advanced workshop provided an opportunity to apply plain language principles and techniques in a detailed way to documents the participants are currently developing or revising. These in-depth workshops gave participants the opportunity to develop and practice their existing plain language skills by working on their own documents. Participants brought documents to the workshop.

Workshop content included a review of plain language principles; document assessment techniques; audience analysis; application of plain language techniques; and testing documents.

Advanced workshops were delivered for Public Works and Services and the Housing Corporation.

Most of the Housing Corporation workshop participants had taken the introductory workshop. A brief overview of plain language principles and techniques was provided at the beginning of the workshop. Because the workshop required editing and writing skills participants did some general editing and writing activities to “warm up”.

The most effective activity during the workshop was the document analysis. The whole group did this and participants were asked to provide their assessment of the documents. This activity is based on the plain language editing questions used by the Literacy Council --purpose, audience, response etc.

The least effective activity was the attempt to rewrite the documents in plain language. This was challenging because the group made many good suggestions. The facilitator suggested that these suggestions be listed and assessed at a later date by the authors of the documents. In this workshop, as in all others, concerns were raised about whether or not management would accept a document written in plain language.

The Public Works and Services workshop functioned much like the workshop put on for the Housing Corporation. Again the group document analysis was extremely effective and the group edit activity less effective.

Feedback on Workshop Content

Evaluation feedback indicates that the introductory workshop provides a good overview of plain language principles and techniques. An important addition to this workshop would be an introduction to the *Plain Language Audit Tool*.

The advanced workshop is much more hands-on than the introductory workshop. The facilitator worked with staff attending the workshop to identify a document that they could then use in the editing process. This approach had some challenges. Instead of using one document for the group, each participant would bring a document they wanted to edit.

Goal 4: Develop literacy partnerships across society.

Activities to develop partnerships were undertaken with part of the \$2.4 million in new funding, as well as with funding from existing programs. The sub-goal for this area acknowledges that literacy partnerships among individuals, early intervention agencies, the school system, Aurora College and other delivery agencies, and the governments are parts of a total learning network that maximizes the use of existing resources. Activities include the following:

Ministerial Council on Literacy

The Ministerial Council on Literacy (MCL) was established as an advisory body to the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment. As well as advising on the implementation of the Literacy Strategy, the MCL: provides a forum for public input into literacy matters; reviews literacy issues; through the Minister of ECE, provides recommendations to the GNWT on literacy issues; and ensures that information on the various activities of the Literacy Strategy are shared with all stakeholders on a regular basis.

The MCL is comprised of representatives from: the Aurora College Board of Governors; the NWT public library system; an Aboriginal organization; a non-ECE GNWT department; NWT adult literacy and basic education student; Education, Culture and Employment; NWT employers; NWT official languages; the NWT Literacy Council; the Divisional Education Councils; and the NWT Federation of Labour.

In 2002-03 the MCL:

- met twice (October 2002 and January 2003);
- developed 22 recommendations for implementation of the NWT Literacy Strategy; and
- selected winners and presented literacy awards to recipients (see highlight at the end of this section).

Workplace Education Partnerships

One area where literacy partnerships have been actively cultivated is in the area of Workplace Education (WPE). Regional workplace education committees have been set up to administer regional funding under the WPE program (discussed previously).

In 2002-03:

- regional WPE committees were established for the Beaufort-Delta, Sahtu, North Slave and South Slave; and
- these committees met (as needed) during the past year to review WPE proposals for their regions.

Other Partnerships

In addition to the Workplace Education Program, many other partnership groups have been formed to assist with the implementation of the NWT Literacy Strategy. These partnerships have allowed community groups and individuals throughout the NWT to share and pool resources which promote and support literacy activities.

Some of the partnerships include:

- the Best Practices Working Group (the NWT Literacy Council, Aurora College, and ECE);
- the Literacy Programs and Supports for Seniors Committee (the NWT Seniors Society, the NWT Literacy Council, the Department of Health and Social Services, and ECE);
- The Literacy Support for Persons With Disabilities Committee (the NWT Association For Learning Disabilities, the Yellowknife Association for Community Living, the NWT Literacy Council, the NWT Council of Persons with Disabilities, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the Department of Health and Social Services, and ECE); and
- Aurora College and various Band Councils (in the provision of ALBE community programs).

Baseline and Other Research on Literacy in the NWT

The Northwest Territories is participating in the next International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS), the world's first large-scale comparative assessment of adult literacy. The survey data will generate baseline data on adult literacy in the NWT. Statistics Canada is the lead agency responsible for the IALSS in Canada.

The people who will benefit from this project are researchers, policy analysts and program coordinators who will have solid data on which to make decisions and try new initiatives for NWT literacy programs. Literacy practitioners and other stakeholders will also benefit by having improved literacy statistics available for the territory. The information will benefit territorial, federal and various community organizations.

In 2002-03:

- regional supervisors for the IALSS were trained; and
- data were collected over the summer of 2003.

Highlight: The Ministerial Council on Literacy Awards

The Honourable Jake Ootes, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, announced the winners of the 2002-2003 Ministerial Literacy Awards in April. The annual Ministerial Literacy Award honours individuals who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to improving their personal level of literacy or an organization that has worked to promote and foster literacy within their community. One learner, one tutor and one organization were honoured with this award and two learners, one tutor and one organization were given honourable mention.

The recipients were Henry Mandeville of Fort Resolution, Jaime Little of Yellowknife and the South Slave Divisional Education Council Literacy Project Committee of Fort Smith.

**MCL Literacy Award Winner: Henry Mandeville,
With Earl Jacobson, Board Chair, Aurora College and Chair of the Ministerial
Council on Literacy (left), and the Hon. Jake Ootes (right)**



Photo courtesy ECE

Henry Mandeville is a student at the Deninu Kue Adult Learning Centre who made tremendous improvements in his literacy program. Henry not only participates in the literacy program, he also gives freely of his time. Henry, a talented artist, did all the illustrations for a booklet produced by the Learning Centre. Henry also started a Junior Rangers program in his community and is a positive role model for others.

Jaime Little (not pictured) has been a dedicated and committed volunteer tutor at the Literacy Outreach Centre in Yellowknife, NT. Jaime spends a lot of her free time helping others improve

their reading and writing skills. She is an innovative tutor who works hard to make her tutoring sessions interesting and fun for learners.

**Ministerial Council on Literacy Award Winner: The South Slave Divisional Education Council Literacy Project Committee
with Earl Jacobson (left), and the Hon. Jake Ootes (second from right)**



Photo courtesy ECE

The South Slave Divisional Education Council (SSDEC) Literacy Project Committee has made valuable contributions to improving literacy in every community in the South Slave region. The committee consists of a regional coordinator and at least one representative from each school in the South Slave region. Working with many partners, the committee is currently implementing a three-year plan, consisting of strategies that are likely to improve student literacy across the South Slave region.

Honourable mentions were awarded to: Margaret Sayine, student of Fort Resolution Community Learning Centre; Garry Elemie, student of Deline Community Learning Centre; Deanne Gatto, teacher of Mackenzie Mountain School in Norman Wells; and Aurora College, Aurora Campus of Inuvik.

PROGRESS TO DATE

Considerable progress was made towards achieving the four goals of the Literacy Strategy during the 2002-03 fiscal year. This progress was most notable in four areas:

- an increase in the amount of the actual funding spent on literacy activities;
- the undertaking of a great deal of work on the evaluation and accountability frameworks for the strategy;
- an increase in the overall number of activities carried out; and
- improvements to the administration of the strategy.

Funding

In the first year of the strategy, \$2.1 million of the \$2.4 million in additional funding was spent on literacy activities, as six of the 11 strategic initiatives carried out that year lapsed funds. In 2002-03, the full \$2.4 million was spent.

Evaluation and Accountability

The evaluation and accountability framework (the *Results-based Management and Accountability Framework: Towards Literacy – A Strategy Framework 2001-05*) has been drafted. This framework will be used by the consultants that ECE will hire to undertake the interim evaluation of the NWT Literacy Strategy over the winter of 2003. One of the important results from the development of the framework was the updating of the original Literacy Strategy Action Plan to reflect actual activity roll-out.

Overall Activity

As with many large and complex strategies, progress tends to improve as activities unfold. Due to time and resource constraints, not all of the activities outlined in the original strategy action plan could be completed within the first full year of activity. However, as partnerships and resources have been developed, more and more of the activities have been completed. All but a few of the 65 strategy activities are now in full swing; and those that have not yet been completed are being developed. The interim evaluation of the Literacy Strategy will provide more details about both the overall level of activity and the outcomes of those activities.

Administration

The administration of the strategy has also improved during the second year of activity. The resources needed to effectively run strategy activities were developed during the first year, and many were revamped and streamlined in 2002-03 as a result of input and feedback from project participants.

NEXT STEPS

Several next steps have been identified which will further improve progress towards the overall goals of the Literacy Strategy. These next steps include:

- continuing to produce annual reports for the Literacy Strategy at the conclusion of each fiscal year;
- conducting an interim evaluation of the Literacy Strategy over the winter of 2003 to provide an update on progress towards achieving the strategy's goals and objectives; and
- conducting a final evaluation after Year 4 to determine whether the strategy has been successful and whether it should continue.

Overall, implementation of the NWT Literacy Strategy has been positive to date. Progress is being made – especially in the areas of spending the funding allocated for literacy activities, developing resources to measure progress, increasing the overall level of activity under the strategy, and improving the administration of the strategy. The results of the interim evaluation of the strategy will provide further details on the achievements to date, and assist with the plans to improve on this foundation for the coming years.

APPENDIX I: SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION – ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Initiative	2002/03 Budget	2002/03 Committed	2002/03 Actual Expenditures	Surplus/<Deficit>
1. ALBE – Aurora College	700,000	700,000	ALBE funding for 30 communities 700,000	0
2. ALBE – Corrections	100,000	100,000	TWCC 22,928 YCC 7,772 SMCC 17,990 ATFYOF 11,081 NSYOF 18,258 RRYOF 21,969 Sub-total 100,000	0
3. Workplace Education Program	400,000	400,000	Inuvik Region 85,355 Sahtu 11,260 North Slave Region 144,061 South Slave Region 129,490 HQ 1,000 TOWES 10,000 Staff training 250 Sub-total 381,416	18,584
4. Literacy Support for Persons With Disabilities	100,000	98,922	Ft. Resolution 4,554 NWTLC 25,828 NWTCPWD 68,540 Sub-total 98,922	1,078
5. Official Languages Literacy	300,000	299,890	Inuvialuit 34,000 Gwich'in 45,000 Dogrib 30,000 North Slavey 30,000 South Slavey 42,680 Chipewyan 45,000 Cree 49,000 DCI 14,210 Sub-total 289,890	10,110
6. Literacy Support For Seniors	100,000	79,558	Inuvik Region 43,305 Sahtu 4,160 North Slave Region 12,760 South Slave Region 19,333 Sub-total 79,558	20,442
7. Literacy Outreach	50,000	50,000	YK Literacy Outreach Centre 50,000	0

Second Year Activities of Towards Literacy – A Strategy Framework 2001-05

Initiative	2002/03 Budget	2002/03 Committed	200203Actual Expenditures	Surplus/<Deficit>	
8. NWT Virtual Libraries Project	300,000	300,000	Virtual Libraries in 11 Communities	276,077	(Deficit amount paid with funding from Information Networks Division)
			Electronic Infrastructure	59,086	
			Sub-total	335,163	
9. GNWT Plain Language Initiative	100,000	46,534	NWTLC	43,700	53,466
			HSS	2,834	
			Sub-total	46,534	
10. Baseline and Other Literacy Research	100,000	106,414	MACA	57,299	<6,414>
			Best Practices	49,115	
			Sub-total	106,414	
11. Promotions, Communications & Reporting	150,000	150,000	Annual Report	10,000	<110,125>
			Framework	30,000	
			ECE Promotion	60,000	
			NWTLC Promotion	17,625	
			Program Support	87,500	
			Support Staff	25,000	
			MCL	30,000	
Sub-total	260,125				
TOTAL	2,400,000	2,312,734		2,448,022	<12,859>

