



Newsletter

Winter 2015 Edition

Tri-County Literacy Council is a community-based, non-profit organization that enriches both community and individuals by addressing literacy needs

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Planning, Planning and More Planning

Dina McGowan, Executive Director

It's that time of year again when everything is due at the same time. Although the dates are different they are close enough they appear to blend into one. The Literacy Service Plan (LSP) is first to demand attention. This plan is created by Literacy Link Eastern Ontario (LLEO) with input from all local literacy deliverers. As a deliverer, Tri-County Literacy Council (TCLC) must establish the number of learners it will serve throughout 2016- 2017 as well as the percentage of learners travelling along Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' (MTCU) defined goal paths. These goal paths are employment, secondary education, post secondary education, independence and/or apprenticeship. The narrative includes information about the community in terms of economics and workforce/workplace demands. Soon after the completion of this plan, the agency must develop its own Business Plan.

Like the LSP the Business Plan looks forward into the 2016-2017 fiscal year. This plan is specific to TCLC and it includes statistical information focused on learner numbers and goal paths. What differentiates this plan is its uniqueness to TCLC. At this point, one must examine the agency's performance and based on quantitative and qualitative results it must write about its strengths and areas in need of further development. Equally important, the agency must provide realistic strategies for overcoming any deficits. This way, the agency is set up for continuous

improvement, and we all know, this is always possible. To ensure ongoing growth and development, MTCU monitors it agencies.

The monitoring of literacy agencies took on a different format this year. In the past, Ministry personnel called Employment and Training Consultants (ETC) visited the agency. An agenda was set ahead of the scheduled visit and a multitude of questions answered by the agency was emailed to the representative. During the visit the ETC would select random learner files to examine for eligibility and completeness, speak with a pre-determined number of learners, peruse administrative policies and procedures and seek the proof needed to satisfy MTCU program and service guidelines. Recently introduced, is a three tier site compliance monitoring system that includes a paper/pen assessment (if no major difficulties are present throughout the year), a targeted assessment if needed (monitoring a specific area(s) requiring further development) and/or a complete monitoring visit (requiring a more in-depth approach to resolving issues and/or difficulties within a program). This year TCLC was selected by its ETC, Ms. Pina Gilmour to complete the paper/pen questionnaire and the agency now awaits feedback on its performance. Given the team working at the agency there is an expectation the organization continues to function at a very high level of performance. To do so, requires the ongoing maintenance of all systems and procedures.

Tri-County Literacy Council offers FREE training programs (from Literacy Basic Skills to Occupational courses) in the environment that best suits your learning style and goals. We provide:

- One-on-One Tutoring
- Small Group Classroom

Courses are offered at various times of the year, depending on labour conditions and learner needs.

Visit our website regularly; to learn about the latest FREE courses being offered, or call 613-932-7161.

(Continued) As part of continuous improvement the agency recently created a document called Learner/Teacher Standards of Performance. This document outlines agency expectations around administrative and teaching requirements. As well, it expands on MTCU's "learner eligibility" criteria (age 19+, resident of Ontario, ability to demonstrate progress) by including attendance/behavioural requirements. This add-on limits graduation to individuals who have the hard and soft skills necessary for their chosen next step(s). It means that persons possessing an agency certificate of completion have "earned" the certificate by demonstrating all the requirements for completing a program of study. Further, it shows TCLC's commitment to providing quality programs and services.

Creating quality programs and services is a #1 priority for the agency. By examining the agency's levels of performance against commitments made in the LSP and business plans the agency can determine its strengths while identifying any weakness. In order to overcome any performance gaps the agency team meets to create a strategic plan. This year the plan includes commitments around training, tutor development, follow-up, EOIS-CaMS (MTCU database), networking, marketing and administration. Each team member is responsible for a section of the plan. Targets/proposed activities are specified

and checks to ensure commitment to the plan are made at Continuous Improvement Performance Management System (CIPMS) meetings. Creating benchmarks that are often time-specific can cause much stress, and therefore, it is important the team have opportunity for professional development combined with time for rest and fun. Literacy Link Eastern Ontario (LLEO) provides such an opportunity.

This year the regional network, LLEO, held a conference at The Glen House Resort in Gananoque. The conference was called Connecting Excellence and participants from across the region representing college, school board and community-based programs attended. All of TCLC's staff working in the MTCU program participated in a variety of worthwhile workshops. The conference concluded with an evening dedicated to an 80's theme followed by presentations to many outstanding leaders in literacy. Seldom does the staff at TCLC have time to talk among themselves about anything except literacy. They are just too busy. This conference provided the time, and in turn, staff returned to work feeling refreshed and ready to begin anew. Now, we head into December where we can enjoy "Everything Sweet". Hope to see you there.

Learn the Lingo - Match the Acronym to its Meaning

CIPMS	Employment and Training Consultant
LSP	Tri-County Literacy Council
LLEO	Word formed from initial letters of words
MTCU	Continuous Improvement Performance Management System
TCLC	Literacy Link Eastern Ontario
ETC	Literacy Service Plan
Acronym	Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities



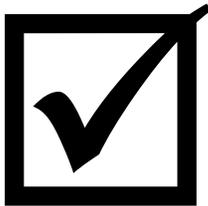
Name the ETC connected with Tri-County Literacy Council: _____

Score any less than perfect - return to the Executive Director's article and reread!

Show Your Progress - Do a Milestone!

Carolyn Eva, Educational Assessor

Milestone activities are important to our agency. If you are a learner at Tri-County Literacy Council and you have not completed a milestone in the last few months, now is a great time to come in and complete one.



A milestone is an opportunity for you to show what you have learned. Most milestones only take between 5 and 20 minutes to complete.

Milestones are goal-related assessment activities that learners complete to demonstrate their abilities in a certain area. They are intended to reflect the types of tasks learners will need to perform once they reach their goals. Milestones use:

- documents;
- texts;
- situations; and
- interactions drawn from employment, further education, and everyday life contexts as their starting point.

As such, learners show that they can perform tasks using material in ways they would outside literacy programs.

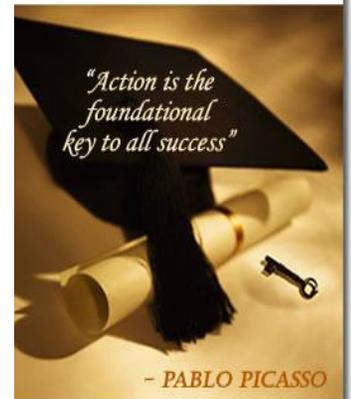
Since their introduction in 2012, milestones have been used in the Literacy and Basic Skills Program to monitor learner progress and to report this progress to the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU). Tri-County Literacy Council receives marks based on how many learners are completing milestones regularly; these marks impact our progress as an agency. As such, milestones are one of MTCU's indicators for the effectiveness of a literacy agency.

If the agency is not showing effectiveness this could impact funding, which in turn will impact the programs offered by Tri-County Literacy Council.

In order to maintain our high effectiveness rating we need all of our learners to complete milestones regularly. Doing so will ensure that we can track the progress you are making in our literacy programs and continue to offer high-interest quality programs at no cost to our learners.

Returning to school?

Call 613-932-7161 for a
FREE Educational Assessment



Our Mandate

Tri-County (Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry) Literacy Council is a community-based, non-profit organization. Our mandate is to enrich both our community and individuals by addressing literacy needs. To do this, we assess learners, help them set goals and provide necessary help in reading, writing, basic math, and computer skills. We recruit volunteers from the community to assist learners in meeting their personal, employment and social goals. This method of instruction can be one-on-one with a tutor, or in a small group. Our services are easily accessible and designed for ongoing growth and expansion. Documenting learning outcomes monitors progress.

Volunteering Update

Carol Anne Maloney, Coordinator of Volunteers

I am happy to be back. Sometimes life requires resolve not to give up, determination to reach a goal, a positive attitude, and especially patience. In our fast pace world, we often mistakenly think everything should be instant. Much in life still requires much time. This is also true for many adults choosing to upgrade their basic literacy skills.

Volunteering can be a rewarding experience, but we realize it also has its challenges. According to a report by Volunteer Canada and Manual Life Financial titled "Bridging the Gap", volunteers' needs are changing. They discovered:

- Today's volunteers have goals;
- They are driven by results. They want to know their efforts are making a difference;
- They are mobile;
- They are self-directed;
- They have multiple interests; and
- They are often seeking short-term opportunities that use their skills.

Tri-County Literacy Council is very fortunate to have so many wonderful volunteers. They truly make a meaningful difference to our community, whether they are working with an adult to help them upgrade basic literacy skills, assisting children with homework, or in an administrative capacity.

We hope you will join us on Tuesday, December 15th.

Tri-County Literacy Council will be holding its annual Christmas Open House titled Everything Sweet from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. "Bring a dessert, enjoy a dessert" and have the opportunity to meet other students and tutors.

Mrs. Claus will also be in attendance.

*Thank
You*

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program

Nancy Pilote, Literacy Instructor

The Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program is an exciting and interesting program for adults who want to gain skills to enhance:

- employability;
- independence, or
- go on to further training.

Tri-County Literacy Council provides a program which focuses on

improving essential or academic skills including:

- reading;
- writing; and
- math skills for daily life applications.

The students in this particular class are primarily focusing on their math skills, while reading and writing are secondary focal points.

These students have completed their portfolio updates, milestones, and reviews. The strategies used during these reviews help them progress and set them on track for the next stage of their learning.

They continue to enjoy reading in class, by utilizing free books from the external Trading Post Library (located in front of the agency).

“If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets as Michelangelo painted, Beethoven composed music, and Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause and say, ‘Here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.’”

Martin Luther King Jr.

Warehouse Worker/Material Handler Training

Nancy Pilote, Literacy Instructor

Tri-County Literacy Council is presently offering its 12th session of Warehouse Worker / Material Handler training. This course prepares learners for entry-level positions.

As warehouse workers play a vital role in day-to-day operations, they perform an array of functions which may include:

- accepting and processing incoming stock;

- picking and filling orders;
- packing and shipping orders; as well as
- managing and organizing.

Larger warehouses are more fast-paced. Workers are required to lift up to 50 pounds, walk or stand for most of the shift, wear protective equipment and steel-toed shoes.

The knowledge gained in this training course is based on the 9 Essential

Skills identified by the Government of Canada as necessary base skills for work, home or play. Classroom activities are based on the responsibilities of a Material Handler. Many of these include authentic workplace documents. This program also develops workplace literacy and numeracy skills, as well as transferable skills.

C.H.A.P. 2015-2016

Sayqa Akhtar, CHAP Coordinator
Shawna Brassard, CHAP Facilitator

Tri-County Literacy Council Board of Directors

Carol Potts,
Chairperson

Shirley Fraser,
Treasurer

Catherine Levac,
Secretary

Angus Kelly,
Property Manager

Barbara Petepiece,
Member at Large

Dina McGowan,
Executive Director

Tri-County Literacy Council's (TCLC) Community Homework & After-School Program (CHAP) has embarked on a new year of learning, growth and fun, thanks to the funding of the Royal Bank of Canada's RBC After School Project). Currently 18 children are registered in this program - from kindergarten to grade 7.

This year CHAP will be exploring the theme of Community Citizenship. This entails working with a variety of agencies and schools in the SD&G area and learning about the importance of being active and involved.

TCLC has partnered with Holiday Cheer Mission, a local non-profit initiative aimed at bringing joy to the elderly. The children from CHAP are spending time making holiday cards which will be added to the Christmas baskets put together by the volunteers from Holiday Cheer.



These carefully prepared baskets will be delivered to various Cornwall seniors during the holiday season. This outreach project will not only allow CHAP to become involved with the community, it will also give students the opportunity to see for themselves

how the smallest act of kindness can make a difference.

This year, CHAP has also been taking advantage of the beautiful fall weather by promoting outdoor physical activity.



The children have been enjoying skipping rope, playing ball, and jumping in the leaves. This has also allowed them to explore and understand weather and seasonal changes by focusing on weather themed concepts and learning activities. Some of these include making leaf art, exploring questions such as why leaves change colors, and predicting the week's weather forecast. As the winter months approach, CHAP will continue taking advantage of any learning opportunities and activities that the colder weather provides.

Retail Associate Training

Danielle Bray, Business Development Coordinator & Literacy Instructor

On November 12, 2015, participants of Tri-County Literacy Council's 8-week Retail Associate program received their well-earned certification based on Essential Skills. As part of this job readiness training, participants also earned a Worker Health & Safety Awareness certificate of completion. The importance of creating positive client experiences in order to establish repeat business crucial to a company's success was also learned. In addition, learners performed a 4-step sales program fundamental for meeting sales goals, as part of a group project designed for team playing. Course topics included:

- The World of Retail
- Customer Service
- Professionalism
- Dealing with Difficult Clients
- Tools of the Trade
- Store Procedures

- Retail Math
- Volunteering
- Hidden Job Market
- Practice Interview

A site visit to Value Village enabled learners to experience a different kind of retail operation in action, as manager Tracy Juneau explained the operational flow, as well as the culture of the company. Guest speakers Josh Primeau of Gamestop (Cornwall Square) and Amanda Cooper of Wireless Wave (Cornwall Square) generously gave of their time to share their knowledge and expertise, as well as extend learners' networking efforts. Job links with local retailers Giant Tiger, Wine Rack, and Foot Locker were also made, as these course partners accepted qualified graduates' resumes.

It was a pleasure to teach this very dedicated and social group - well-suited to the world of retail. Congratulations!



Pictured (back row): Shirley Plumadore, Susan Thibedeau, Tracey Jesso
Pictured (front row): Danielle Bray (instructor), Marguerite MacKay, Sherynn Chrysler

Tri-County Literacy Council



WE HELP
ADULTS

1. Our literacy agency fosters a culture of Customer Service
2. Our literacy agency provides a learner-centered, quality learning environment
3. Our literacy agency provides initial and ongoing support to learners
4. Our literacy agency honours the privacy of its customers
5. Our literacy agency values respect, inclusion and accessibility
6. Our literacy agency knows who its key customers are and actively solicits their feedback
7. Our literacy agency seeks to regularly improve its Customer Service practices
8. Our literacy agency has a formal customer complaint and resolution process and encourages customers' compliments
9. Our literacy agency is actively involved in the community to ensure effective referrals and service coordination
10. Our literacy agency has effective communication practices that reflect its commitment to excellent Customer Service

G.E.D. Preparation

Eric Heward

Information Management Systems Coordinator & Literacy Instructor

Essential Skills are the skills people need for work, learning, and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and are the cornerstone of lifelong learning.

There are 9 Essential Skills:

1. Reading
2. Document Use
3. Numeracy
4. Writing
5. Oral Communication
6. Working with Others
7. Thinking
8. Computer Use
9. Continuous Learning

Tri-County Literacy Council is pleased to announce that it is now offering a General Educational Development (GED) Preparation course. The purpose of the course is to offer our learners the opportunity to upgrade their academic skills in order to prepare for the GED test and attain their grade 12 equivalency certificate. Learners receive assistance in all the subjects covered in the GED test (math, writing, reading, science, and social studies), as well as instruction on the rules, policies, and effective strategies involved in taking the test.



G.E.D. Preparation learners pictured left to right: John Susko, Mary Beth Cowan, Roxanne Peters, and Greg Mooney

Although the GED test is not as well-known an option as it is in the United States, the GED test offers learners a

unique opportunity to receive their grade 12 diploma at their own pace in an environment of their choosing. Learners can take as much time as they need to build their academic skills and confidence to take the test. However, even with these benefits, learners can feel overwhelmed by the amount of academic content and the different rules and policies regarding the test. How the test is graded can also overwhelm unprepared test takers.

Tri-County Literacy Council aims to address such issues surrounding the test by offering learners an environment in which to study the GED content and develop effective test-taking strategies. Discussions on the different rules, policies, and procedures also help learners manage all other stressors involved with taking the GED test. Studying for the GED test involves a significant amount of time to build the knowledge and confidence necessary to take the test. The GED Preparation course will provide the right environment to facilitate success in the GED test.

If you are interested in participating in this course, please contact Tri-County Literacy Council to register.

G.E.D.

Beautiful Handmade Wreathes - Just in time for Christmas!

Community Homework & After-School Program (CHAP)

The Community Homework & After-School Program is selling handmade paper wreathes. This fundraiser is to help offset expenses not covered by the program's grant. Large wreathes (2 feet/61 cm round) are \$15 and small wreathes (1.5 feet/46 cm round) are \$10. Requests for colour preferences may also be made. **The deadline to order these wreathes is December 14th, 2015.** Please contact the CHAP staff at 613-932-7161 for more information.



Learner Website Testimonials

Danielle Bray, Business Development Coordinator & Literacy Instructor

As Tri-County Literacy Council (TCLC) enhances its website, at this time we are seeking past students willing to share their learning experience in the form of a written or audio testimonial. This validation greatly encourages those hesitant to contact the agency and take advantage of the free basic literacy skills upgrading and occupational training offered. As such, TCLC's website now includes past learner testimonials on each occupational training Web page. Potential future learners can read about past learners' real experiences regarding training, instructors or the agency itself.

If you are a past TCLC learner, you can make a difference by promoting literacy within our community and encouraging those in need to reach for a better life by taking that first step and contacting us. Send us your testimonial by filling out our online [Testimonial Form](#) (under the Contact tab of our website at www.tricountyliteracycouncil.ca) or calling 613-932-7161 to schedule an audio testimonial recording session.

Tri-County Literacy Council Staff Members

Dina McGowan,
Executive Director

Carolyn Eva,
Literacy Assessor

Eric Heward,
Information
Management
Systems

Carol Anne Maloney,
Coordinator of
Volunteers

Danielle Bray,
Business Development
Coordinator

Nancy Pilote,
Literacy Trainer

Ruth Laplante,
Bookkeeper

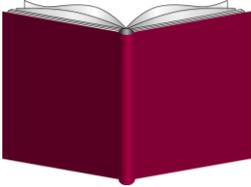
Sayqa Akhtar,
CHAP Coordinator

Shawna Brassard,
CHAP Facilitator

Learner Follow-Ups

Eric Heward

Information Management Systems Coordinator & Literacy Instructor



Sponsor a Book

If you would like us to purchase a book or a resource in memory of someone, or as a special gift like a birthday or retirement, we will place a nameplate in the book. It will read that you donated it and include the name of your chosen person.

The book will be placed in our Lending Library.

As well as, giving a gift to your friend, you will be giving the gift of literacy to a learner.

Winter is a season that normally signals change. We start every New Year making a resolution to change some aspect of our life. These resolutions often take the form of a new job, plan, or even an address. Change is often a great thing, and it rarely happens overnight. That is one of the primary reasons Tri-County Literacy Council (TCLC) conducts follow-ups on its learners at the 3-, 6-, and 12-month period after they leave the agency. We at TCLC are always interested in how things change for our learners once they exit our programs.

It is always great to hear of the positive changes our learners made after leaving our agency. The follow-ups we conduct often highlight these changes. They might have found a job related to their goal, entered into a training program in their desired field, or simply feel more confident in working with new technologies. It is important that we track these changes, not only to fulfill the requirements to receive funding, but to better assist our learners in meeting their goals.

If any of our learners, past or present, would like to report any changes that

have occurred after leaving our agency, please feel free to contact us to conduct a follow-up. Completing follow-ups with us allows the agency to see the positive changes in your life or to help make new resolutions as we move into the New Year. Made any changes to your address or contact information? Please contact us of any of these changes, as we enjoy keeping in touch with our former learners.

Tri-County Literacy Council is also happy to report a new change to our follow-up tracking systems. We have updated our systems to track follow-up outcomes based on the courses offered in the agency. Tracking the outcomes by course allows the agency to track the progress of learners from specific courses and to observe outcome patterns to stay ahead of current occupational trends.

Have a safe and happy
Holiday Season and a
happy **New Year!**

 Looking for a gift idea? Give the Gift of Literacy in someone's name. All gifts are tax deductible.

**Tri-County
Literacy Council**

101 Second St. West
Cornwall, Ontario
K6J 1G4

PHONE:
613-932-7161

FAX:
613-932-5121

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.tricountyliteracycouncil.ca

Visit our website regularly; to learn about the latest FREE courses being offered.

MacMillan's Convenience Supports Literacy

Dina McGowan, Executive Director

I want to introduce you to a proud sponsor of Tri-County Literacy Council (TCLC). MacMillan's Convenience store, located at 35 Marlborough Street North, has sold Nevada tickets on behalf of TCLC for approximately 12 years. The sale of these tickets is instrumental in bringing many programs and services to the people of our community. The money earned from the sale of these tickets is used for learner resources and helps with costs connected with tutor training. MacMillan's Convenience store is owned and operated by Cyndi MacMillan and her husband David St. Pierre. The store is open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. MacMillan's carries just about everything you need. Indeed, it is convenient!

Located beside the store is the Loose Caboose, open Monday to Thursday 11 a.m. to midnight and Friday/Saturday 11 a.m. to 2 a.m.



Few people realize the little red train is an actual caboose and it was the last wooden caboose in use in Canada. Drop by the Loose Caboose to find out more about its interesting history. From French fries to multiple types of poutine, hamburgers, hot dogs and many other delicious treats can be purchased on site. The food is so good there is almost always a line-up of hungry people. Friendly staff serves it up quickly. MacMillan's offers its customers options. You can enjoy your meal comfortably, on site under a large canopy, at home, or your own vehicle. When finished your meal, dessert can be purchased just a few feet away. MacMillan's Convenience store also serves up very tasty ice cream. You will have to visit often to sample the large flavour profile. It's yummy!

A big thank you goes out to MacMillan's Convenience store. **This is a local business that cares about the citizens of this community. Their support of literacy over many years has made meaningful differences in the lives of the many persons we serve.** MacMillan's is more than a store ---it is our community partner.

