he 2012 Summer Institute will consolidate what we know about effective models and measures of workplace literacy and essential skills by weaving strands from our Institutes since 2009 with findings from recent studies in Canada, the United States and abroad. While policy attention has concentrated on models, tools and assessment instruments, recent longer term studies indicate the significance of context and culture for WLES policy and practice. These factors seem to play roles at the level of country, province/state, region and organization. Just how important are they? How can we influence or change them?

Enduring WLES models have been developed and implemented in specific geographic locations, such as Nova Scotia and Manitoba, in defined job sectors, such as the construction industry in British Columbia, and in organizational milieus, such as hospitals, in the UK. Why have some models endured? Why have they not been directly transferrable to other settings? What lessons can be learned from models that have endured, as well as from others that have not? Is it primarily the design of models that accounts for longevity, or do other factors play a role?

Recent studies suggest that we must move beyond simple questions such as "What works?" to "What works, for which populations or groups, and in what circumstances?"

The UK offers valuable insights and lessons. Following a decade of large-scale government investment in their Skills for Life strategy, including a workplace component, researchers have been assessing the outcomes. Results have been mixed.

A report in 2009 on a six-year study by Alison Wolf, Karen Evans and John Bynner suggested that most programs were too short to improve the literacy skills of workers or the economic performance of companies. A 2011 study on whether

workplace Skills for Life provision is sustainable suggested that the complex and shifting funding landscape with its bureaucracy and emphasis on credentials has not supported sustainable provision. They suggested that organizations that have managed to sustain the work have an "ecology of learning" that allowed the integration of workplace basic skills. A paper from the 2011 Summer Institute about embedding workplace LES into training reached similar conclusions.

In the US, Steve Reder's Longitudinal Study of Adult Learning (LSAL) tracked a cohort of high school drop-outs over a decade as they went in and out of adult basic education programs and work. LSAL found that program participation did not result in immediate measurable proficiency gain, but that over time participation in programs affected literacy practices, and that engagement in these practices led to eventual improvements in proficiency.

In Canada, the Measures of Success project has developed a multi-faceted evaluation framework to track impacts, 3 and 6 months after WLES programs end, at almost 20 work sites in Nova Scotia and Manitoba. The measures include many factors that have rarely been examined systematically. By June the analysis of the baseline data will be complete and shared.

These and other studies raise questions about whether we have reasonable expectations about the impact of short-term interventions in workplace literacy and essential skills, and about what outcomes we measure and how we measure them. If culture and context matter, how should we account for them in setting expectations and measuring results? What kinds of policies and what kinds of organizations can support sustained provision?

At the Institute, invitees and registrants will address these and related questions.

Alison Wolf, Professor of Public Sector Management, and specialist in the relationship between education and the labour market at King's College, will participate from London by video-link to talk about her study and to answer questions.

Steve Reder, Professor, Portland State University, will be present to explore the possible implications of the LSAL study for workplace LES interventions which while often short, have built-in opportunities for immediate application and practice.

Juliet Merrifield, an adult educator and researcher, who has worked in the US and UK and has recently moved to Canada, will draw on her experience in contributing to the acclaimed Equipped for the Future framework in the 1990s. She is currently exploring the concept of skills for a changing and more sustainable world.

Jay Derrick, an adult educator and Adjunct Lecturer at the Institute of Education, University of London, will bring perspectives from his 20-year experience in workplace LES in England.

David Gyarmati and Karen Myers, Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), will share and discuss baseline findings from the Measures of Success

We are pleased to have as partners for 2012 organizations that have collaborated with us on previous institutes: ABC Life Literacy Canada, Canadian Literacy and Learning Network (CLLN), the National Adult Literacy Database (NALD), Workplace Education Manitoba (WEM), Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education, Workbase NZ, NIACE (UK), and NRDC (UK).

We welcome two new partners, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) and SkillPlan BC.























A UNIQUE FORMAT

The Institute offers a unique opportunity to share and create knowledge in a collaborative environment with a limited number of participants (100). We build the program around the experience and expertise of those who register. If you register, you may become a presenter. Participants stay together for three days from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. After hours, there are optional sessions with demonstrations, and small group discussions for those who want to explore a specific issue or study a model in greater depth.

If you simply want to listen but not present, we still ask you to identify relevant topics or themes from your own experience to weave into our discussions. Time is allotted each day to talk, reflect and debate with colleagues. You can share information and post displays on free tables, and use the breakfast, lunch, breaks and after-hours sessions to network.

You will leave with a new understanding of the issues, access to new resources, people and practices, and ideas for adaptations and new collaborations in your own milieu.

ACCOMMODATIONS

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Hotel du Fort within easy access of Dawson College where the Institute will take place and close to downtown shopping and attractions. The hotel is offering a special rate of \$135/single or \$145/double occupancy. They will hold the rooms until May 26, 2012. After that, reservations will be based on availability. For those who may want to add on holiday time after the Institute, The Montreal International Jazz Fest runs from June 28 to July 7, 2012.

For reservations, contact the hotel directly:

Hotel du Fort 1390 rue du Fort

Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H3H 2R7 Tel.: 514-938-8333 or 1-800-565-6333

Fax: 514-938-2078

E-mail: reserve@hoteldufort.com

Ask for The Centre for Literacy Summer Institute

SCHEDULE

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

June 27, 28 and 29, 2012 • 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday and Thursday after 3:00 p.m.: Optional demonstrations, discussions, poster sessions and networking

Daily schedule will be finalized two weeks before the Institute.

FEE

Includes materials, continental breakfasts, lunches and refreshments

Early-bird registration (until May 1, 2012)\$595

All amounts must be paid in Canadian dollars.

REFUND POLICY:

Until June 10 we will give a refund, minus a 15% administrative fee. After June 10, refunds will be issued only with valid documentation, e.g. medical certificate.



The **Centre** for **Literacy**

2100 Marlowe Avenue, Suite 236 Montreal, Quebec, Canada H4A 3L5 Telephone: 514-798-5601 Fax: 514-798-5602

E-mail: info@centreforliteracy.qc.ca Web site: www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca

Literacy for the 21st century: A guiding definition Literacy involves a complex set of abilities to understand and use the

Literacy involves a complex set of abilities to understand and use the dominant symbol systems of a culture for personal and community development. The need and demand for these abilities vary in different societies. In a technological society, the concept is expanding to include the media and electronic text in addition to alphabets and numbers. Individuals must be given life-long learning opportunities to move along a continuum that includes reading, writing, and the critical understanding and decision-making abilities they need in their communities.

Source: The Centre for Literacy

Online registration is available from our website:

www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca

The Centre for Literacy of Quebec is a

national centre of expertise that supports best practices and informed policy development in literacy and essential skills, by creating bridges between research, policy and practice. The Centre, in partnership with Manitoba and Nova Scotia, currently manages Measures of Success, a project to develop a new evaluation model to measure and track longer-term impacts of workplace literacy and essential skills initiatives. www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca

Workplace Education Manitoba (WEM) has

been enhancing Essential Skills awareness, application and enhanced functioning in response to workplace requests for solutions since 1991. Through original research, WEM supports business, labour and practitioners by offering Workplace Essential Skills assessments and developing and delivering training and human resource solutions.

www.wem.mb.ca

Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education works to provide fairness, safety and prosperity for all Nova Scotians by helping them live, learn and work to their highest potential. The department works to protect the public and maintain and develop a safe and prosperous workforce in Nova Scotia with a strong focus on safety, skill development, regulation, education and building partnerships. gov.ns.ca/lae/

ABC Life Literacy Canada is a non-profit organization that inspires Canadians to increase their literacy skills. It connects and mobilizes business, unions, government, communities and individuals to support lifelong learning and achieve their goals through leadership in programs, communications and partnerships. ABC Life Literacy Canada envisions a Canada where everyone has the skills they need to live a fully engaged life. abclifeliteracy.ca/

Canadian Literacy and Learning Network is

the national hub for research, information and knowledge exchange, increasing literacy and essential skills across Canada. By building partnerships and linkages CLLN creates networks that strengthen capacity and develop innovative approaches to establish lifelong learning nationwide. www.literacy.ca

National Adult Literacy Database (NALD) is

Canada's literacy and essential skills network. NALD provides internet-based literacy and essential skills information and resources in both official languages, including a state-of-the-art digital library. NALD emphasizes the development of workplace essential skills as the foundation for success in today's knowledge economy. www.nald.ca

The Association of Canadian Community

Colleges (ACCC) is the voice of Canada's 150 publicly-funded colleges and institutes located in 1,000 urban, rural and remote communities. ACCC strengthens the capacity of colleges to develop advanced skills for employment. ACCC has led several national essential skills projects including a current applied research project, Development of a National Framework for Essential Skills. This project aims to upgrade the document use, prose literacy and numeracy skills of college learners and workers; to codify exemplary practices in LES; and to provide evidence of learning gains, impacts on learner success and return on investment. www.accc.ca

SkillPlan is dedicated to providing strategies and services that address the Essential Skills needs of industry through support to workers, technical trainers, employers and educators. Together they collaborate to build a stronger workforce. **www.skillplan.ca**/

National Research and Development Centre

(NRDC) is the UK's national independent centre for adult literacy, numeracy and ESOL. Its aim is to improve professional practice and inform policy. Widely recognized for its expertise, the centre has an international reputation and works across the UK and worldwide. NRDC recently published an international review of evidence on improving adult literacy. www.nrdc.org.uk

The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) is the national organization for adult learning in England and Wales. Through its research, development, publications, events and outreach activity, NIACE supports the education sector to improve the quality and breadth of opportunities available for all adults so they can benefit from learning throughout their lives. www.niace.org.uk

Workbase The New Zealand Centre for Workforce Literacy Development, is a not-for-profit organization established in 1991 to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of adult New Zealanders. Workbase tailors literacy solutions for business, unions, industry training, the education sector and government. It is using its experience to support new initiatives in health and financial literacy.

www.workbase.org.nz

Dawson College is the largest English-language CEGEP in Quebec with more than 11,000 students enrolled full- and part-time in over 25 academic programs that prepare them for university studies or for the workforce. A diversity of cultures and languages is represented at the College among its students, faculty and staff, a diversity that enriches both the learning and the life experience. Dawson College housed The Centre for Literacy from 1989 to 2009. www.dawsoncollege.qc.ca