



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, July 16, 2013

COMMUNITY LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS HOPEFUL CABINET SHUFFLE WILL IMPACT PROPOSED CANADA JOB GRANT

(Dartmouth, NS) Ironically after weeks of trying to connect with those involved in the development of the Proposed Canada Job Grants, and finally participating in a conference call with representatives from Minister Diane Finley's office, two key players are no longer actively engaged in the proposed program.

Last Friday the Dartmouth Learning Network received a call from Minister Finley's office, and on Monday they, and the Association of Nova Scotia Community Learning Organizations were startled to learn that both Minister Finley and Parliamentary Secretary for HRSDC Kelly Leitch had been removed from the Canada Job Grants portfolio.

"Our conversations with Alyson Queen, Director of Communications and Adria Minsky, Director of Policy were succinct. We were provided an opportunity to share our views on the proposed Canada Job Grants but were not able to ascertain what criteria led to the development of this new program. We were interested to hear that the Canada Job Grants would be phased in over a 4-year period which was information that neither we, nor our partners were aware of. We are pleased to welcome The Honourable Jason Kenny to his new position of Minister of Employment and Social Development. During his time as Minister for Citizenship and Immigration Mr. Kenney continually demonstrated that he was in tune with the thoughts of Canadians and we hope he brings the same approach to his new portfolio," says Lesley Dunn, Executive Director of the Dartmouth Learning Network.

Initial findings from the Business Awareness Survey on the proposed Canada Job Grants currently being undertaken by the Association of Nova Scotia Community Learning Organizations reveals that most companies are not familiar with the Canada Job Grants program and are either unsure or unwilling to provide matching funds to train existing employees. Also, most companies do not believe or are unsure that the Canada Job Grants program will benefit them, and 80% of the companies are either unsure or unwilling to hire individuals who do not have the required skills even if government funds for training are available.

"Our survey is still in its very early stages. We are partnering with the Rotary Clubs of Canada, and the Canadian Literacy and Learning Network, as well as members of the Association of Nova Scotia Community Learning Organizations to ensure a broad reach. We are a small registered charity and we rely heavily on our community partners to assist us in any research we undertake," says Dana Atwell, Chair of the Board of the Dartmouth Learning Network.

The Dartmouth Learning Network has recently released a summary of findings from their 2013 Literacy in the Workplace Survey. A snapshot of their findings include:

- 146 responses received from all provinces and territories
- Most from small business (2-10) employees
- <2% cite literacy as a reason they can't find qualified employees
- >75% believe literacy is a major issue for the workforce but not their company
- >50% believe literacy is not their responsibility
- >75% believe more government funding is required for essential skills
- >60% will not hire someone without a high school diploma or their General Education Development (GED)
- ~75% do not understand the magnitude of low literacy in Canada

Full report can be viewed at:

<http://dartmouthlearning.net/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/2013-May-Summary-of-Finding-Dartmouth-Learning-Network-Understanding-Literacy-in-the-Workplace-Survey.pdf>

-30-

For more information, please contact:

Lesley Dunn, Executive Director

Dartmouth Learning Network

(902) 463-9179 ext. 222

executivedirector@dartmouthlearning.net www.dartmouthlearning.net

ABOUT DARTMOUTH LEARNING NETWORK: Originally founded in 1985 by the former Premier of Nova Scotia Dr. John Savage, The Dartmouth Learning Network offers free literacy and essential skills programming in classroom/small group and one-on-one environments; daytime and evening programs are held on site, and at community partner locations throughout Dartmouth. We offer basic adult literacy programs, math upgrading, computer basics, and employment readiness program in addition to a General Education Development (GED) program.

ABOUT ANSCLO: The Association of Nova Scotia Community Learning Organization (ANSCLO) is an umbrella organization representing 27 Community Learning Organizations (CLO) in Nova Scotia. CLOs across Nova Scotia use Federal/Provincial Labour Management Agreement (LMA) funds to provide programs that address literacy and other essential skills to help their learners obtain new or better jobs. Many learners attending CLO programs funded under the LMA are either unemployed or under-employed.