



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PROPOSED CANADA JOB GRANT WILL HURT LITERACY AND ESSENTIAL SKILLS PROGRAMS IN NOVA SCOTIA

(Dartmouth, NS) 48 days and counting trying to secure an invitation to a Canada Job Grant Roundtable has led to deadends

The current federal Labour Management Agreement (LMA) ends in March 2014 and will be replaced by the Canada Job Grant program as announced in the 2013 federal budget. The goal of this "short duration training" is to "ensure that skills training funds are being used to help Canadians obtain qualifications they need to get jobs in high-demand fields." Canadians accessing the new Canada Job Grant will now be identified by businesses, and the training will be offered by "eligible training institutions, including community colleges, career colleges, and trade union training centres."

"This is a significant change in focus from the original intent of the LMA which was to provide training opportunities for Canadians who had not been able to access skills training opportunities offered through the Employment Insurance Fund, either because they were working, or they had no recent attachment to the labour market," says Dana Atwell, Chair of the Board of the Dartmouth Learning Network.

Community Learning Organizations (CLOs) across Nova Scotia use LMA funds to provide programs that address literacy and 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. The likely result of the changes to the LMA will be that CLO programs will be forced to end, further lessening the prospect of meaningful employment for hundreds of adult learners in Nova Scotia.

"We have been attempting to secure an invitation to attend a Canada Job Grant Roundtable since May 27, 2013 with no success. A session was held in Halifax on May 23, 2013, questions as to who was invited, the agenda, and availability of minutes from the session have remained unanswered. We have been reaching out daily to the Human Resources Skills Development Canada through a variety of mediums including Twitter, LinkedIn, email, regular mail, and phone calls in an attempt to understand how to become a part of the consultation process," says Lesley Dunn, Executive Director of the Dartmouth Learning Network.

Based on a significant body of research that national and international agencies along with all levels of governments have recognized, key essential skills are used in nearly every job. These skills include reading, writing, document use, numeracy, computer use, thinking, oral communication, working with others, and continuous learning. Our programs incorporate these key essential skills which will lead to new or better jobs for unemployed or underemployed Nova Scotians. Programs are delivered through a combination of classroom and/or individual tutors and are tailored to the learners' needs. The funds for these programs come from the current federal LMA which is scheduled to end March 31, 2014. The proposed Canada Job Grant program will force the closure of three (3) basic adult literacy programs, all computer basics programs, all math classes, the employment readiness program and the General Educational Development (GED) program impacting 159 unemployed or under employed learners and may more across Nova Scotia.

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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.

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.