

August 25, 2017

Dear Employment Ontario partners,

We are writing to invite you to an upcoming symposium the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD) will be hosting for the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) network. This event will take place on **October 5, 2017** in Toronto. One representative from each of the 210 organizations in the LBS network are invited to attend. **We ask all LBS organizations to please save this date.**

On **October 6, 2017**, the ministry will also be hosting a follow-up session for the LBS network's Indigenous organizations. One representative from each of the network's 23 Indigenous organizations are invited to also attend this second session. **We ask all Indigenous organizations in the LBS network to save this date as well.**

This symposium follows the government's new announcement on June 16, 2017, of its plans to invest \$185 million over four years, above base funding, in literacy and essential skills programming for adults. This investment affirms the government's commitment to investing in Literacy and Essential Skills programming, and a priority to serve more Ontarians with needed skills upgrading. This includes expanding literacy and essential skills training so more Ontarians can find meaningful work, adapt to changing technologies and build occupational skills to grow their careers and contribute to their communities.

The aim of the symposium is to enable strengthened communication and collaboration between the ministry and the network as we discuss scope, process and program priorities; gather ideas; and develop ways to approach challenges and respond to the evaluation report's recommendations. With your feedback, we will determine the most effective way to ensure ongoing engagement with the network throughout the program improvement process.

Both sessions will build on the program evaluation conducted by Cathexis Consulting Inc. This independent, third-party evaluation aimed to provide a better understanding of the effects that changes to LBS have had on program delivery and learners' experiences and outcomes. The views and recommendations reported and developed through consultation with the sector provide valuable information for the ministry and LBS network as we work together to set the priorities and next steps for LBS program improvement as well as the increased investment over the coming years.

While we anticipate that recommendations from the LBS evaluation will be foundational to the symposium agenda and discussions, we want to include other topics of importance. The

survey linked below provides an opportunity for you to share your ideas and help to shape the day.

[Survey Link](#)

An email invitation with **on-line registration** information will be sent shortly to the signing authority for your organization. Travel, meal and accommodation expenses directly associated with the symposium will be reimbursed by the ministry according to the Ontario government guidelines and rates set out in the Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive.

We look forward to your responses to the survey and to meeting with all of you in October.

Original signed by

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Original signed by

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