



The Learning Centre
LITERACY ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT

2023



LEARNINGFOR CHANGE!
p r e s e n t s



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF TLCLA



In 2023, the Learning Centre Literacy Association continued to work diligently toward fulfilling our commitment to engage adult learners in community-based learning and literacy development. Our efforts in 2022 to develop a task force to help engage and recruit more adult students into the Centre's programs laid the foundation for the Centre's accomplishments in 2023. Specifically, the Centre increased enrolment in Franco-phone and English programs and continued to develop Indigenous programs.

The evolution of Indigenous programming that is Indigenous developed and Indigenous led was a deliberate and intentional direction the board has taken to further the work of equity, diversity, inclusion, and indigenization. There were many highlights this year including the in-person Journey of Reconciliation workshop where staff and

board members came together and shared stories, reflections, and different ways of thinking about our unique relationships to the land where we live and the First People of this land.

A key component of the Centre's success is the community of students, volunteers and staff. As we continue to navigate and adjust to the realities of our post pandemic world, including economic uncertainty, I would like to recognize their resilience, commitment and drive. The focus on quality, accessible, community-based education regardless of the obstacles is truly admirable and does not go unnoticed.

On behalf of the board at the Learning Centre Literacy Association, I would like to deeply thank all of our funders in 2023. We are grateful for your willingness to champion our mission and we look forward to continued collaboration in the years to come.

Your leadership to support preserving funding for adult literacy and education programs is greatly appreciated.

Elen L. Bereket
Board Chair

MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



I am delighted to present to you our annual report for the year 2023. As we reflect on the past year, I am immensely proud of the strides we have made together in advancing our mission and serving our community.

Financial stewardship is a cornerstone of our organization, and I am pleased to report that in 2023, we maintained a strong financial position due to the foresight of the Board in managing reserves to meet the anticipated financial needs of recovering from the pandemic. The generous support of our many funders and donors and the diligent management of our resources, has allowed us to allocate funds to support unprecedented growth.

Program Highlights

In Edmonton, I have observed a growing need to provide accessible quality learning opportunities to an increasing number of minority Franco-phone, English language learning, foundational

skills, and Indigenous adult learners.

This reality, exacerbated by reduced capacity within the language learning sector has systematically served to further marginalize a growing number of citizens.

Our programs are at the heart of our organization, and I am thrilled to share this reporting from the past year and the Learning Centre's response to the conditions in which we find ourselves. I am grateful for the continued ability of this organization to attract highly skilled and dedicated instructors and to engage staff who continue to believe in, and live the mission of the Association.

Community Engagement: Open house

Community is at the heart of our work. In 2023, we deepened our engagement efforts, connecting with our communities through various channels such as social media, community events and presentations, and the Edmonton Literacy Coalition.

The Centre has also become a Hub for a number of community groups, sharing the Association's vision, to provide a space to support their work and enhance opportunities for all. This report highlights these growing connections with the acknowledgement of TLCLA Friends in Solidarity.

We have continued with Learning For Change as we embark on an initiative to develop programming that better serves the English language learners in our community. With support from the Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy,

we are currently planning a process of co-learning with students, instructors, and community with the end goal of creating curricular resources for instructors that are relevant and of high interest and relevance to our students.

However and perhaps the most exciting is a student-led movement of creating opportunities to develop meaningful connections and a sense of belonging by enthusiastically organizing activities and events that are passion driven and yes, often have sharing a meal as an integral *raison d'être*.

Mission Impact

And this leads me to our core mission which drives every decision we make. We have made significant progress in fulfilling our commitment to engage people in community-based learning

and literacy development. This past year, I have seen not only this positive impact but also a strong reemergence of a connected engaged learning community more diverse and inclusive than I have experienced before.

In closing, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you who has contributed to our success in 2023. Looking ahead, the challenges continue to be daunting. We are, however, filled with optimism and determination, steadfast in our resolve to continue making a difference in the lives of those we serve. Together, we are creating meaningful change and building a brighter future for our communities. With your ongoing support, we can achieve even greater impact in the years to come.

Denis Lapierre

Executive Director/Directeur General





English Programs

expanded its reach to serve more individuals than the previous year
provided essential literacy, numeracy and digital skills classes to underrepresented adult learners
increased access to quality adult educational programs

Indigenous Programs

continued to provide Nēhiyawēwin language classes, Indigenous Digital Storytelling and other Indigenous cultural events and activities
able to assist other Indigenous led organizations by providing classroom space
participation in other Indigenous events in Edmonton

Francophone Programs

began to scale up our Francophone courses,
witnessed a threefold % increase in the number of Francophone participants served
collaborated with over ten (10) Francophone national organizations in the delivery of Francophone literacy, numeracy and digital skills programs

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	1
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF TLCLA	2
MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	6
STUDENT VOICE	7
PROGRAMING REPORTS	9
ENGLISH PROGRAM	10
PROGRAMMES FRANCOPHONES	13
INDIGENOUS PROGRAM	15
FINANCIAL REPORT	16
LEARNER STORIES	17
TLCLA PROGRAM FUNDERS	19
TLCLA PROGRAM PARTNERS	19
TLCLA FRIENDS IN SOLIDARITY	20

“
The pursuit of full humanity, however, cannot be carried out in isolation or individualism, but only in fellowship and solidarity”

Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed

Student Voice



This past fall session has been one of excitement and expansion. With this growth has come an engaged and community building cohort of learners. The desire to create connection spurred on a number of student led activities and events.

The first initiative was a student organized free Zumba class for all. Lack of space, curtailed this effort, yet there was great excitement in experiencing Zumba for the first time. A core number of these students have continued together, attending French and Gaelic classes.

Saturday, November 18th, we had a potluck that a small group of women. Planners determined that for more engagement, community activities need to be organized Monday to Friday. We had a pancake breakfast on December 21, to celebrate the end of term. It was so well attended there was standing room only.

These successes inspired planning for ongoing opportunities for community outreach and in-house events; meeting the need and igniting the desire to organize, lead, and participate.

Programming Report

In 2023

679 participants

registered for all programs

receiving a total of

2818 instructional hours

85 volunteers provided

1,745 hours of service

“

All programming is learner-centered, with differentiated foci for developing skills for employment, academic or life goals.

”

English Program

In 2023 The Learning Centre continued to offer a hybrid model for all classes creating increasing challenges for our instructors as the number of students in the classroom continued to increase. By the end of the year students attending virtually had lessened. While we have begun to encourage in person learning, at this time, the Learning Centre continues to offer synchronous online learning to remove barriers.

We also saw the momentum of the previous year's re-engagement with learning at the Centre. Deliberately focusing specific classes to address the needs of students also learning English, created learning environments that were more accessible. We introduced a new class: "The Mechanics of Writing"

Beginning in September, the number of

English language learners (ELL) has grown at a pace that is hard to keep up with. We learned that traditional ELL programs had up to a two year waiting list. There were times when we had upwards of 40 students in a class with an additional 4 or 5 online.

In their desire to speed up their learning of the English language, newcomers, immigrants and refugees are attending any and every class offered by the Centre. This has led to the creation of targeted ELL classes facilitated by an additional grant from ECALA. There has been a continued daily increase in registrations and attendance numbers.

Inspired by the students' engagement in their learning there are plans for 2024 to take the learners into the community through field trips, enhancing the high quality, high relevant and high interest learning opportunities we offer them.



General Educational Development (GED)

The GED program has seen some great successes. As an accredited testing site we are excited to offer free tests for students who are working on a high school equivalency certificate, to move on to further education or work. The testing has begun with 8 exams taken in late 2023. Canada is moving away from the American developed GED and is creating the new Canadian Adult Education Credential (CAEC), which will be rolled out in May of 2024. The Learning Centre has begun negotiations with Alberta Education to continue to be a test site. The CAEC is made up of five subject tests: reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies.

CAEC Quick Facts

Tests will be computer-based

All tests will be available in English and French.

Albertans who did not complete their GED tests can apply to have the results count towards CAEC tests in the same subjects for up to three years, until May 2027.

The GED will continue to be recognized as a valid credential.



428 participants
registered for **English Program**
receiving a total of
1537 instructional hours

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Apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other

”

Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed

Programmes Francophones

Avec le soutien continu de partenaires clés tels que la COFA, ECALA, RESDAC, l'Association du Portail des Immigrants (PIA), Pluri-elles au Manitoba, Collège Educacentre à la Colombie Britannique et Collège Mathieu au Saskatchewan ainsi que grâce à nos programmes tels que la Plateforme Canadienne d'Apprentissage à Distance (PCFAD), Compétence pour la Vie (CPLV), Compétence pour la Réussite en Emploi (CPRE), Littératie Familiale Notre Avenir (AFNA), notre Centre a connu une année de développement et d'expansion significative dans les programmes de français. Ces programmes visaient à :

- Améliorer les compétences linguistiques en français pour divers niveaux de maîtrise, Intégrer des compétences numériques et mathématiques essentielles,
- Soutenir l'employabilité grâce à des modules de formation axés sur les compétences,
- Adapter les offres de cours aux besoins des francophones et des apprenants non natifs à travers des formats de cours hybrides.
- Grâce à ces initiatives, nous avons non seulement vu une augmentation du nombre de participants à 134, mais aussi réussi à atteindre des résultats impressionnants avec 87% des apprenants réalisant leurs objectifs à court terme. Nous avons également renforcé nos partenariats existants et noué de nouvelles collaborations, contribuant à créer un écosystème d'apprentissage favorable.

2023 a été une année de progrès posant les bases pour de futurs développements dans la promotion de l'alphabétisation et l'autonomisation socio-économique par l'éducation pour nos apprenante/s adultes non seulement ici à Edmonton mais aussi à travers la province.

172 participants se sont inscrits aux Programmes Francophones recevant un total de 960 heures de formation for instructional hours



Indigenous Program

With continued support from Edmonton Community Foundation, and Edmonton Community Adult Learning Association, TLCLA has been in year two of developing the organizational capacity through Indigenous-led coordination and programming that:

- Provides culturally authentic Indigenous learning opportunities that support adult Indigenous learners,
- Embeds Indigenous ways of knowing in our work,
- Honours First Peoples principles of learning, and
- Delivers Indigenous Languages Learning through Indigenous-led coordination and programming.

79 participants
registered for
Indigenous Program
receiving a total of
319 instructional hours

Highlights

Through learner engagement and participation Cree language learning has evolved, to include learner referred resources and conversational opportunities with more fluent Cree speakers.

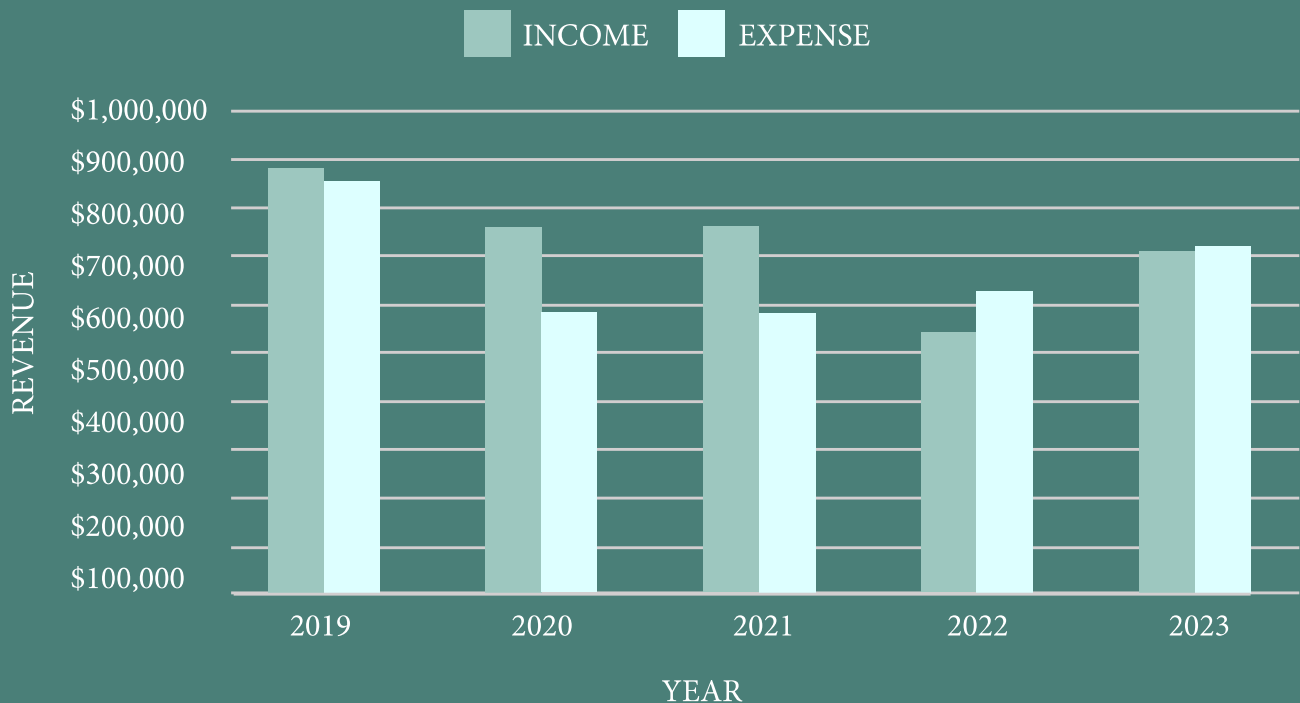
The Indigenous Digital Storytelling program was gifted with a creative and sustainable curriculum, developed by facilitator Trevor Duplessis with input from and feedback from students. It includes learning different ways of storytelling, how to build a story and take it from paper to screen, and exploring different types of digital media.

Developing connections in the community and engaging in learning opportunities for Board and staff has been the focus for this past year. Working closely with Red Road Healing Society, the Centre has been providing classroom space and technology support for the Stony Language classes taught by Mu Cizhan.



The Learning Centre Literacy Association has maintained its stable financial position throughout the pandemic. Vigilant oversight, diligent management, the continued support from our funders, and federal pandemic support initiatives have positioned the Association to finance the expenses of reconnecting and address increasing costs of operating.

TLCLA FINANCES 2019-2023



“

The core mandate of TLCLA is the delivery of high relevance and interest educational opportunities for marginalized adults in the Edmonton community to pursue their right to life-long education. ”

Learner Stories

Since being in Canada as a single mother, with two small children, I couldn't attend school full time.

But I was determined to find the opportunity to study and learn in Canada. I thought a place like the Learning Centre could only exist in my dreams. Until I found out about the Learning Center through a good friend.

I wasted no time in getting myself registered.

Since then, I am amazed by how much my skills have improved as I continue learn more and more.

I would like to send a big thank you to the organization that gives people, such as myself, this opportunity to learn and to build our community, and our country, towards a better future.



Soheila Rajbi

I first came here because I had been told “no” too many times. I first came, not because I cared, but because I needed to get a job done, get my GED so I can get a job; but because of the hospitality of the teachers, I stay for that, and I continue to stay for that. Especially after one teacher in particular made everything come together. She made a difference because I was struggling. I am here for me!



Amanda Chapman

I'm at the centre to improve my English and my writing skills. So far, I'm doing well. I have a good teacher. The Centre provides everything we need. I have also improved my Math in the GED classes! The teacher explains everything very well.



Jay Coonjobeecharry

TLCLA Program Funders / Bailleurs de fonds



TLCLA Program Partners/partenaires de programme



TLCLA Friends in Solidarity

Being an ally means being willing to act with and for others in pursuit of ending oppression and creating equality. Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, said, “It is not enough to be compassionate. You must act.”

https://opseu.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/what_does_it_mean_to_be_an_ally.pdf



Canadian Academic Athletic Development Academy Foundation (CAADAF) meets weekly at the Learning Centre to provide young disadvantaged student athletes with academic support.



Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP). This volunteer group provides free CRA approved income tax filing services on Saturdays in the months of March and April



Filipino Women's Association of Alberta (FWAA) meets weekly at the Learning Centre for dance lessons, teaching & meetings.



Philippine Students Alumni Association (PSAA) meets weekly at the Learning Centre to provide support services for post-secondary Filipino students in the Edmonton area.



Royal Stuart Foundation meets weekly at the Learning Centre to provide free Gaelic classes to interested Edmonton citizens.



Red Road Healing Society and the Learning Centre work together for transformative reconciliation through shared events, space and learning opportunities.



Migrante gathers weekly at the Centre and also delivers the CELPIP preparation classes.

ABOUT US

Vision

The Learning Centre engages people in community-based learning and literacy development that further enables them to make positive changes for themselves and their communities.

Mission

The Learning Centre Literacy Association is a vibrant, diverse community confidently exploring and using literacy.

Our Core

The core purpose of The Learning Centre Literacy Association (TLCLA) is to help adults with the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Most TLCLA participants are either seeking work or hoping to improve their work prospects through attending programs at the Association.

Programs include one-on-one tutoring, literacy and numeracy classes, and independent learning with tutor or instructor support. The Association is dedicated to offering programming that corresponds directly to learners' needs and interests.

The areas served by the Association include neighbourhoods with higher-than-average percentages of adult residents who are functionally illiterate and unable to afford education due to economic hardships.

Given that the large majority of the Association's adult students are poor and typically restricted from participating in many of society's educational and economic opportunities, the Association is constantly finding new methods and strategies to engage learners. Programs and services operate on a continuous intake basis.

THE ORANGE HUB



The Learning Centre
LITERACY ASSOCIATION

**ADULT
LEARNING
FOR ALL**

www.tlcla.org

