



The What & Why of Integrated Programming: A review of the literature

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Introduction

The *Sur mesure pour l'emploi/Designed to Work* project offers Le Réseau pour le développement de l'alphabétisme et des compétences (RESDAC) the opportunity to support the field in implementing innovative programming for adults with limited literacy skills¹. The community-centred approach advocated by RESDAC brings together local agencies, service providers and employers to design effective, efficient and meaningful programs that prepare learners for employment.

Traditionally, adults with limited literacy skills have been served in basic skills programs that focus on developing generic literacy and numeracy abilities. Learners with employment goals may be required to attend several programs in succession in order to gain the skills they need for work. While some programs and regions have made forays into contextualized literacy programming, incorporated employability skills into their offerings and even linked up with employers and sectors to identify and address job-related skills, these efforts have been sporadic. More often than not, funding for integrated programs flows from projects, and once funding runs out, the program ceases to exist.

RESDAC believes it is time to improve adult learning opportunities. RESDAC is the national association representing organizations dedicated to serving the needs of francophone adults with limited literacy skills. Its interests include the provision of meaningful skills development opportunities for francophone adults living in linguistic majority and minority contexts. In recent years, RESDAC has taken up the cause of integrated programming in a desire to make literacy more relevant and effective for adult learners.

Through the *Sur mesure pour l'emploi/Designed to Work* project, RESDAC will support eight sites as they set up integrated programs. The experiences of those involved will be gathered and analyzed to better understand the conditions that support these efforts. The project will operate in both Canada's official languages, with each of four provinces hosting one French and one English intervention. So while this review of the literature begins to answer the question of what integrated programming is and why it is worth considering, the *Sur mesure pour l'emploi/Designed to Work* project will investigate the how: how to set up such a program, how to implement and deliver it, and how to make it sustainable.

¹ The two-year project is funded through Employment and Social Development Canada's Office of Literacy and Essential Skills.

Objectives

The purpose of this literature review is to better understand what is known about integrated programming for low-skilled adults. Specifically, the literature review examines:

- Definitions and characteristics of integrated programming
- Ways of integrating basic skills with other skills
- Evidence that supports the claim that integration is an effective approach for adult learners with limited literacy skills
- Success factors and barriers to implementation, delivery and sustainability
- Policies that support its implementation, delivery and sustainability

Methods

Literature Retrieval

The goal of the initial search was to locate empirical studies and reports about integrated programming. Initial searches involved combining terms that describe:

- The type of programming (integrated, embedded)
- The population (adult)
- The context (adult literacy, adult basic education, literacy education, adult vocational education, labour force development)

Follow-up searches were conducted to locate recent publications that cited pivotal studies found during the initial search. Key concepts uncovered during the initial review were also researched in the follow-up stage.

Literature Selection

Publications selected for review were those that offered different ways of looking at integrated programming. Literature was included if its target population was adults or young adults, if integration included what is broadly understood as literacy and/or numeracy, and technical or vocational skills. The literature review avoided programs targeted to English as a second language for immigrant populations. It focussed on English-language articles and reports published in Australia, Canada, Europe, New Zealand, United Kingdom and United States. The

review also included RESDAC's publications on integrated programming originally published in French, which were read in translation².

Findings

The findings presented here are assembled from research studies, reports, program reviews and case studies.

A. Definitions and characteristics

Generally, it was possible to extract definitions and characteristics of integrated programming, and identify patterns in the way programs were described. The term integrated can take on different meanings when used to describe basic skills programs and models. And while aspects of the programming can vary, the starting point and intent are often strikingly similar from one program to the next. Integrated programming aims to bring together what are often separate spheres of skills development, most typically academic or literacy skills development with vocational or workplace training. Pearson et al. (2010) report that interest in integrated programs reaches back to John Dewey, whose belief was that “students should be educated *through* the occupations rather than *for* the occupations” (p. 2, italics in original).

Integrated programs combine basic skills with functionally meaningful content (Martin, 1999) with the goal of making programming more relevant for participants. Integration is defined as the concurrent development of language, literacy and numeracy skills alongside vocational competencies (e.g., Courtenay & Mawer, 1995 as cited in Black & Yasukawa, 2011). In these programs, literacy skills development is built into the broader skills development framework, placing literacy learning within authentic and real-life settings (McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005). Lurette (2013) explains that “[i]ntegrated services combine the training steps usually offered separately and in a linear way, thereby enabling learners with low literacy skills to start developing multiple skills at the same time (essential, soft, language and technical skills)” (p. 27).

Integrated programs are typically developed to be responsive to needs in a particular context. They reinterpret literacy and numeracy skills requirements to fit with the employment or skills training outcome (Roberts et al., 2005) and include explicit instruction in the occupational area and literacy skills (McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005). Integrated programs often include employability and job readiness skills training (Bragg et al., 2007; NIACE, 2005) and draw on partnerships with employers and other service providers (Bragg et al., 2007; Lurette, n.d.).

² A subsequent review of French-language publications revealed no references to integrated programming as defined here.

Leander (2009 as cited in Reder, 2012) uses the term “busy intersection”, which shifts attention to the direction learners take when they leave a program. Adult education programs can improve their capacity to help adult learners achieve their goals (Reder, 2012) by demanding the interplay of many community services and supports and building efficient and effective interventions. Integrated programs tend to offer an efficient learning and accreditation model for participants; some integrated programs are designed to result in certificates and degrees (Bragg et al., 2007).

Embedded Instruction

Black and Yasukawa (2011) view integrated language, literacy and numeracy as similar to the concept of embedded instruction employed in the United Kingdom. Although the terms are not interchangeable, the following quote from the UK Department for Education and Skills defines both what embedded programming is, as well as the reason why it is beneficial. This conception of embedded provision is consistent with the ways in which many authors describe integrated programming.

Embedded teaching and learning combines the development of literacy, language and numeracy with vocational and other skills. The skills acquired provide learners with the confidence, competence and motivation necessary for them to succeed in qualifications, in life and at work (DfES as cited in NIACE, 2005, p. 1).

Ways of Integrating

Integrated programs can take a number of forms:

- Language, literacy and numeracy instruction is incorporated into existing vocational education programs (Black & Yasukawa, 2011; McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005)
- Academic upgrading or literacy programming is combined with occupation-specific training (Folinsbee, 2011; Lurette, n.d.; Martin, 1999; Moore & Oppenheim, 2010)
- Literacy is integrated into workplace education programs to meet the needs of particular employees (D’Amico, 2003; McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005; Moore & Oppenheim, 2010)
- Literacy is integrated with soft skills and life skills training (Martin, 1999)
- Bridge programs that allow participants to earn college credits while upgrading their basic skills (Moore & Oppenheim, 2010; Myers, Smith Fowler, Leonard & Gyarmati, 2011; Wiltshire, n.d.)
- Sectoral approaches that bring together the interests of employers and other stakeholders in a region to develop responsive training programs. These programs address technical, soft skills and basic skills while finding ways to encourage employers to hire and compensate more skilled individuals (Myers et al., 2011)

- Integrated career pathways programs that provide modularized, occupation-specific training combined with basic skills or language training responsive to changing industry needs. These programs allow learners to enter and exit at various points, with each progressive exit point resulting in a higher-level credential (Bragg et al., 2007; Moore & Oppenheim, 2010; Myers et al., 2011).

Degrees of Integration

A variety of integration models are described in the literature. Some authors, including Pearson et al. (2010), refer to a continuum of integration along which different models of programming are situated. NIACE (2005) makes a distinction between programs that offer a 50-50 split between literacy and numeracy and other training delivered by one or two teachers, and programs that treat the two as separate subject areas with some overlap. Folinsbee (2011) makes a different distinction. She contrasts fully integrated programs that teach literacy and basic skills at the same time as trades training through two separate but connected courses, with those that integrate instruction by using one or two instructors to teach both sets of skills.

Integrated models that exhibit a lesser degree of integration include:

- Contextualized literacy upgrading (Pearson et al., 2010) which precedes occupation-specific training (D’Amico, 2003; Folinsbee, 2011; Moore & Oppenheim, 2010; NIACE, 2005)
- Literacy support offered to learners in vocational or occupation-specific programs in order to help them learn vocational content (Black & Yasukawa, 2011) or pass exams (D’Amico, 2003). This support might take the form of remedial help outside the vocational classroom or having a literacy or numeracy instructor available during vocational classes to work alongside learners with literacy and numeracy needs.

Pearson et al. (2010) contrast *context-based* integration which “provides a structure for academic instruction taught within a context that is relevant to the student” (p. 9) with more integrated *contextualized* programs which situate academic skills within authentic applications of vocational or skills training. In their exploration of embedded literacy, language and numeracy instruction in vocational programs, Casey et al. (2006) identify a scale of embedding based on 30 features of embedded provision. They describe fully embedded programs as those in which “learners experience their literacy, language and numeracy development as an integral part of their vocational studies” (p. 14). Wickert and McGuirk (2005) find that successful integration builds in literacy, numeracy and vocational skills rather than adding these skills to an already developed vocational program, referring to the preferred model as “built-in” as opposed to “bolted on” (p. 8). McKenna and Fitzpatrick (2005), in their study of such programs, observed that, “facilitators tended not to distinguish in importance between technical skills and those relating to language, literacy and numeracy. Because they recognized the importance of the language, literacy and numeracy skills in the work roles, they integrated those into their

delivery” (p. 38). In some Australian vocational programs, literacy and numeracy instructors share teaching responsibilities with vocational instructors either by co-teaching classes or by jointly planning instruction subsequently taught in separate sessions (Black & Yasukawa, 2011). D’Amico (2003) describes a similar model used in a workplace-based nursing assistant training program with workers in the United States.

B. Evidence

Authors such as Folinsbee (2011), Lurette (n.d.) and Moore and Oppenheim (2010) view integrated basic skills instruction as a promising way to prepare adults with low skills for employment. Martin (1999) argues that “education for welfare recipients should be situated in context-specific environments” (p. 49) and concludes that integrated approaches are a good option for low-literate welfare recipients. Integrated literacy is seen as a tool to take advantage of the powerful connection between work and learning (D’Amico, 2003) that results in better-prepared workers (Black & Yasukawa, 2011).

Benefits for Learners

In Australia, the embedding of language, literacy and numeracy into vocational education and training is considered a strategy for addressing the needs of those who might be disadvantaged by the national training system. The National VET Equity Advisory Council, an organization established to improve training and employment outcomes for those potentially disadvantaged by the system, contends that embedding and contextualizing foundation skills within vocational education improves outcomes (Black & Yasukawa, 2011). Career Pathways, an American example of integrated programming, is recognized as the “leading approach to occupational training for adults across the US” (Myers et al., 2011, p. 11). In the United Kingdom, studies of embedded learning courses show higher success rates than traditional vocational courses, in the form of better learner retention and higher achievement rates on vocational and literacy and numeracy qualifications (Casey et al., 2006). There also appears to be a relationship between the degree of integration and successful learner outcomes. In examining a variety of integrated workplace programs, D’Amico (2003) found that most participants succeeded in fully integrated programs, with fewer participants succeeding when programs were not fully integrated.

Other benefits to learners ascribed to integrated programming include:

- Improved persistence and increased likelihood of completing the program successfully (Black & Yasukawa, 2011; D’Amico, 2003; Industry Training Federation, 2009 as cited in Folinsbee, 2011; Jenkins, 2009 as cited in Myers et al., 2011; Moore & Oppenheim, 2010)
- Increased access to and retention of stable employment for participants (D’Amico, 2003; Murphy & Johnson, 1998 as cited in Martin, 1999)

- Increased earnings (Moore & Oppenheim, 2010; Spruck Wrigley, Richer, Martinson, Kubo & Strawn, 2003 as cited in D’Amico, 2003). A rigorous random assignment evaluation identified that integrated training participants achieved significantly better employment and earnings outcomes than the control group (Aspen Institute, 2003 as cited in Myers et al., 2011).
- Improved literacy and numeracy outcomes (Black & Yasukawa, 2011; Industry Training Federation, 2009 as cited in Folinsbee, 2011; Jenkins, 2009 as cited in Myers et al., 2011); basic skills are learned faster and retained longer (Moore & Oppenheim, 2010)
- Improved learner confidence and self-efficacy (Black & Yasukawa, 2011; Industry Training Federation, 2009 as cited in Folinsbee, 2011); sense of new “professional” identity (Roberts et al., 2005 p. 7)
- Increased motivation through use of meaningful contexts (Lurette, n.d; NIACE, 2005; Roberts et al., 2005). Participants are able to see direct connections between learning and application (Black & Yasukawa, 2011; Scribner, 1997 as cited in Roberts et al., 2005).
- Enhanced access to higher education (Spruck Wrigley et al., 2003 as cited in D’Amico, 2003)

Other Benefits

The benefits of integrating language, literacy and numeracy in vocational education extend beyond those experienced by its participants alone. These include benefits at the programming level, where integration offers the potential to attract a much wider participant base, particularly those adults who would not be attracted to stand-alone literacy programs (Roberts et al., 2005). Lurette (n.d.) states that “the emergence of integrated programs for people with low literacy skills is a particularly powerful way for organizations that deliver literacy programs to develop new expertise with partners, to receive the recognition needed to fulfill their mandate, and to strengthen their place in their community” (p. 18). Integration is also seen to improve the quality of literacy and vocational instruction (Black & Yasukawa, 2011; Industry Training Federation, 2009 as cited in Folinsbee, 2011).

D’Amico (2003) reports that employers see improvements in engagement, attitudes, and performance as a result of participation in workplace-based integrated programs. At the community level, program integration fosters relationships amongst community partners. Wickert and McGuirk (2005) contend that these partnerships can contribute to a common language and shared understanding about how to build new ways of developing literacy abilities in adults. The authors maintain that integration introduces the notion of community capacity, which emphasizes the contribution of both human and social capital in building community.

C. Success factors

A variety of factors are identified in the literature as contributing to the successful design, development and delivery of integrated programming.

At the instructional level, collaboration amongst teaching staff is identified as a fundamental element of successful integrated programs. Vocational instructors need to work with literacy and numeracy instructors as equal partners (Black & Yasukawa, 2011; Moore & Oppenheim, 2010; Park, Ernst & Kim, 2007). For this to happen, time needs to be available for joint planning (Black & Yasukawa, 2011; NIACE, 2005). Cooperative, collaborative instructional models, often structured as team teaching, appear to have a significant impact on the quality and durability of programs (Casey et al., 2006; Pearson et al. 2010), with efforts to clarify roles and expectations amongst instructors seen to be worthwhile ways of achieving this outcome (Wickert & McGuirk, 2005).

Other instructional factors contributing to successful integrated programs:

- Opportunities for learners to work in groups (Park et al., 2007)
- Training on the cues that signal the relevance of job-related skills to encourage transfer from the learning context to a work context (Martin, 1999)
- Instructional innovations such as team teaching, project-based assignments, problem-based learning (Bragg et al., 2007; Wickert & McGuirk, 2005)
- Recognition that literacy is a social practice. Black and Yasukawa (2011) argue that most literacy provision is based on a deficit model where instruction is designed to fix the problems learners face with literacy and numeracy. They contend this can lead to literacy skills being taught in isolation from the meaningful contexts in which they are used. Teaching literacy as a social practice offers a way to examine whether the academic literacies that are part of a program accurately reflect job demands.
- Constructivist pedagogy in which the facilitator builds on learners' personal experience to teach practices they will engage in at work (Black & Yasukawa, 2011; McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005; Cooper & Baynham, 2005);
- Consideration of learners' needs and motivations (Lurette, n.d.; McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005; NIACE, 2005)
- Environments that foster mutual support amongst learners (D'Amico, 2003; Park et al., 2007)

Factors at the program planning level that contribute to success include:

- Tying programs to high-demand occupations (Park et al., 2007)
- Focussing on employment outcomes rather than on exam and course completion outcomes (Black & Yasukawa, 2011)

- Combining hard and soft skills development into program outcomes (Lurette, n.d.; OECD, 2012)
- Devoting time to the identification of critical workplace language, literacy and numeracy practices and program planning (Casey et al., 2006; McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005, OECD, 2012)

At the organizational level, the following elements contribute to successful integrated programs:

- Organization-wide commitment (Black & Yasukawa, 2011; NIACE, 2005)
- Partnerships with other education providers, community organizations and employers (Bragg et al., 2007; D'Amico, 2003; Lurette, n.d.; Moore & Oppenheim, 2010; OECD, 2012; Park et al., 2007)
- Staff at all levels that are flexible, motivated and committed to the approach (Bragg et al., 2007; Casey et al., 2006; Lurette, 2013; Roberts, 2005)
- Instructors who collectively have industry knowledge and language, literacy and numeracy expertise (McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005)
- Professional development opportunities for managers, designers and instructors (Lurette, 2013; McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005; NIACE, 2005; Wickert & McGuirk, 2005); opportunities for instructors to visit and observe workplace practices (Black & Yasukawa, 2011)
- Comprehensive supports for learners such as such as childcare, assistance with transportation, job referrals, career counselling and referrals to other services (Bragg et al., 2007; Moore & Oppenheim, 2010; Park et al., 2007)
- Flexible scheduling that allows learners to continue to work (Bragg et al., 2007)
- Multiple entry and exit points (Bragg et al., 2007)

Success factors may well extend beyond those that programs typically have control over. D'Amico (2003) points out that better outcomes are achieved when learners have adequate medical and dental care, clothing, food and housing. Supportive institutional strategies and government policies (Wickert & McGuirk, 2005) are critical to the success and sustainability of integrated programs, with longer-term funding viewed as key to enabling integrated programs the time they require to establish effective partnerships and to plan and deliver meaningful programs. Policies that enable these partnerships to develop and continue are also at the heart of sustainable programs; without these, even the most innovative programs struggle. When jurisdictions recognize the importance of basic skills by explicitly describing them in vocational standards (McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005), this signals the correspondence between language, literacy and numeracy and success on the job.

D. Barriers

The literature on integrated programming, regardless of the jurisdiction in which programs are established, identifies barriers that impede their design and delivery. In some cases, the barriers identified are the inverse of success factors identified in the previous section. Examples of such barriers include inadequate resources and training to enable collaboration amongst instructional staff (Black & Yasukawa, 2011) and lack of wrap-around supports for learners (Moore & Oppenheim, 2010).

Other barriers to integration stem from the realities inherent in delivering innovative programs, including:

- Inadequate funding (Black & Yasukawa, 2011; McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005). Bragg et al. (2007) point out that the reality for many integrated programs is that they have to assemble funding from different sources.
- Institutional systems, practices and policies that hinder the development of integrated programs (Bragg et al., 2007; Pearson et al., 2010). These may include institutional requirements to use preset curricula (Wickert & McGuirk, 2005).
- Higher staffing costs associated with literacy and vocational instructors co-facilitating (Moore & Oppenheim, 2010; Myers et al., 2011)
- Dedicated time and resources for ongoing partnership development and maintenance activities (Bragg et al., 2007; Lurette, n.d.; Moore & Oppenheim, 2010)
- Instructor resistance (Pearson et al., 2010); conflicting values, views and expectations amongst instructional team members (Casey et al., 2006; Cooper & Baynham, 2005; Wickert & McGuirk, 2005); perception amongst vocational instructors that language, literacy and numeracy teachers are evaluating them (Black & Yasukawa, 2011)
- Perceived lack of legitimacy associated with literacy skills development, where primary legitimacy is accorded to vocational or employment skills development (Roberts et al., 2005)
- Inability of community program partners to grant credentials (Moore & Oppenheim, 2010)
- Short-term funding models (Wickert & McGuirk, 2005) when time is required to establish the instructional team, foster collegiality and plan effective programs (Cooper & Baynham, 2005)

E. Policies

In her summary of Canadian provinces and territories' adult literacy definitions and policies, Hayes (2013) reveals that only a few jurisdictions interpret literacy in a way that opens the door to non-traditional delivery methods, including integrated models. Of the four provinces identified as collaborators for *Sur mesure pour l'emploi/Designed to Work*, three indicate partnerships as a feature of the province's literacy model. Ontario is alone in not publishing its

definition of literacy, thus it is difficult to say whether a form of integrated programming that relies on multiple partners is a fundable model in that province. Saskatchewan's Basic Education Program Review in 1999 identifies increasing adult basic education's connections to employment as one of its three recommendations. New Brunswick identifies four strategic priorities in its literacy policy, including reducing barriers and increasing participation, increasing the number and range of effective adult literacy learning opportunities, ensuring the effectiveness of adult literacy programs and strengthening partnerships. Nova Scotia defines literacy as adult learning that is "learner-centred, multi-faceted, holistic" and considers it to be a "shared responsibility amongst learners, their families, educators, employers and employees, communities and government" (p. 17).

Internationally, some governments have supported the shift from traditional literacy to a more expanded version of skills upgrading. Some have achieved this through attempts to situate literacy within more task-based, real-world applications, as several Canadian provinces have done by adopting an Essential Skills approach, while others require that literacy and numeracy be embedded in other forms of training. Examples include New Zealand's Tertiary Education Strategy 2010-2015, which encourages "embedding literacy in a context relevant to learners so that they may understand the literacy requirements of a particular industry or area of study" (TEC 2009b as cited in Zepke, 2011, p. 173), and promotes embedded literacy as "the most effective and efficient way to provide direct, purposeful instruction" (p. 173). In the United States, the vocational and technical education legislation "requires the integration of coherent and rigorous academic content standards and career and technical education curricula" (Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act as cited in Pearson et al., 2010, p. 2).

Australia made a commitment to incorporating language, literacy and numeracy into vocational training by making it explicit in training standards and training packages (McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005). This long-standing policy focus has encouraged the development of resources and infrastructures that improve the delivery of integrated programming (McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2005; Wickert & McGuirk, 2005). In England, the Skills for Life initiative supports embedding basic skills into vocational training, and providing occupation-specific basic skills training to supplement vocational training (Myers et al., 2011). In an international review of adult literacy policies prepared for the National Adult Literacy Agency in Ireland, NRDC (2011) points out that policy and associated funding contributed to the outcomes achieved through Skills for Life.

Policy Recommendations

The NRDC review (2011) asserts that countries without ongoing policy development experience program stagnation. Canada is presented as a prime example of this phenomenon, where "an impressive attention to producing adult literacy research has not been matched by policy efforts to produce sustainable, high-quality adult literacy programmes. Canada is therefore

characterised by isolated, often short-term initiatives, leading to inefficiency, waste, and a lack of progress in tackling poor adult literacy” (p. 5).

The following policy recommendations are identified in the literature.

Support targeted programs that respond to labour market and broader societal needs

The OECD, in *Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives: A strategic approach to skills policies* (2012), calls for an expanded view of skills strategies, one that “exploits linkages across policy fields”, including “education, science and technology...employment, industrial and economic development...social welfare...to help identify policy trade-offs and synergies while ensuring efficiency and avoiding duplication of effort” (p.3). The skills strategy document calls on countries to encourage and enable their populations to learn throughout their lives by viewing the investment in skills as a joint responsibility. To this end, the strategy calls for targeted education programs that respond to labour market needs as well as society’s broader needs and goals. In their review of promising employment-focussed programs for low-skilled adults in the US, Moore and Oppenheim (2010) argue that there is a need to “[i]nvest in the development and implementation of programs embedded and fundable within federal funding streams that address work and learning needs simultaneously” (p. 24).

Incorporate language, literacy and numeracy in vocational education policy

Black and Yasukawa (2011) recommend that language, literacy and numeracy be addressed in national vocational education policy renewal in Australia because it is a significant element of the vocational education system and requires a specific pedagogical expertise that is distinct from traditional literacy instruction. They also recommend that these skills be incorporated at all levels, not just for learners with identified deficits.

Encourage greater collaboration amongst partners

In their examination of integrated literacy programming models in Australia, Wickert and McGuirk (2005) focus on partnerships as a key way to build more effective skills development opportunities for adults. The authors present several policy and practice implications arising from their research, including the assertion that government policy must allow literacy to expand beyond its traditional borders and must allow for “greater collaboration on building literacy improvement possibilities in social policy areas such as health, youth, housing, welfare, crime prevention and community development” (p. 9). The authors underscore the importance of infrastructure support that enables collaboration and alliance building among partners, and conclude, “it should be easier for local agencies to employ different funding sources to support linked initiatives” (p. 42). This is echoed in the OECD (2012) report that recommends “[c]ollaboration among education bodies, employers and economic development officials...to ensure that the training provided meets the needs of the economy as a whole and of different local labour markets in particular” (p. 24).

Evaluate policies to ensure they achieve intended outcomes

When Australian policy was examined, findings showed that social capital-related outcomes were neglected, insufficient time was available for proper implementation, variation was evident in the amount and quality of literacy offered, there was a need for ongoing professional development and not all financial costs were accounted for (NRDC, 2011). More significantly, the way in which adult literacy was subsumed within vocational education “contributed to the loss of identity and policy leverage for adult literacy provision” (p. 20). Their findings from the state of Massachusetts show that improvement requires 1) long-term leadership and advocacy; 2) focus on quality before quantity; 3) support from front-line practitioners and staff development; 4) expanded range of providers and resources outside of education for learner support; 5) time.

Take a longer-term view

NRDC (2011) cautions against what they call short term-ism, a phenomenon whereby “policies are sometimes evaluated and assessed earlier than they can reasonably prove their true worth, or lack thereof” (p. 8). This same review points to Canadian policy that “has traditionally made it much easier to fund new projects than to continue funding currently existing ones. This has had the unfortunate outcome of meaning that successful projects have not been eligible for refunding” (p. 22). The short-term nature of innovative programs in Canada may be at least partly explained by the disjuncture between project funding and core funding for programming at both provincial/territorial and federal levels.

Conclusion

Education offerings for adults with limited literacy skills too often resemble parking lots, where learners attend a series of programs, often over an extended period, in an effort to develop the combination of skills required for their goals. Integrated programming gives providers the opportunity to rethink traditional conceptions of literacy. Instead of stand-alone programs tied to specific funding objectives, integration offers an interpretation of skills upgrading that is both expansive and inclusive. In contrast to the parking lot approach, integration can set the conditions for what has been characterized by Leander (2009 as cited in Reder, 2012) as busy intersections. In the busy intersection model, programs and services intersect in effective and meaningful ways to meet the needs of learners, not institutions. Busy intersections require the efforts of many, including local community service providers and employers, and provincial and territorial policy makers and funders.

The potential of program integration is clearly documented in the literature. It has the capacity to attract adults with low-level literacy skills who would not otherwise be attracted to stand-alone literacy programs. Participants are more motivated when programs are targeted, time-

efficient and clearly articulated to their goals; as a result, integrated programs have higher retention and success rates than traditional programs. The literature also underscores the key role of partnerships and team efforts in building responsive, effective and sustainable programming. The need to invest time and resources in program design, and to support instructor collaboration in the planning and delivery of such programming is well documented. Finally, the literature reveals supportive policies that can make the difference in facilitating integrated program development, delivery and sustainability. In Canada, where education and training are the purview of provinces and territories, policy development must happen at this level in order for real change to occur.

This literature review has used a select body of evidence to identify and summarize the characteristics of integrated programming and the factors that contribute to its success and sustainability. Combined with what RESDAC has learned through its own investigations and reports on relevant program models, this literature review serves as a base upon which to support the development and implementation of the busy intersection approach through the *Sur mesure pour l'emploi/Designed to Work* project.

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