

# Literacies

Special Bulletin

January 2009

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## Quoting our readers:

“Having an outlet for publication is SO important. The academic journals are NOT accessible or practical. We need a place for literacy folks to aspire to, to want to write and share their work. *Literacies* is perfect for that. and needed.”

“I think that it creates a 'field'. It helps me feel part of a professional group. Also, I love that it is Canadian. It is about 'us'. The magazine relates to literacy in a Canadian context.”

In November 2008, we asked you what you thought about the journal, whether to continue publication unfunded and, if so, how. In this bulletin, we share some of the results of the survey and some of our ideas about the future of *Literacies*.

## Some of what you said in the survey...

Most of the respondents worked in community-based programs and 15% have experience as practitioner- researchers.

Almost 80% of the respondents are subscribers and all read the hardcopy version if the journal. About 25% read both the online and the hardcopy version. No-one reads the online version alone. Almost all share their copy and recommend *Literacies* to others.

Most respondents chose *thought-provoking*, *affirming*, and *useful to my work* to describe *Literacies* and almost 80% agree that *Literacies* helps them meet their professional development goals. The most popular issue is “Fall 2007 - Focus on Working in Adult Literacy.”

Almost 95% of you said that *Literacies* helps to move the field forward by, for example:

- presenting research in innovative ways;
- documenting promising practices;
- expanding our research;
- recording our successes; and
- being a catalyst, a focal point for discussion, a place where those involved in literacy work can connect and communicate, even though they may be separated by great geographical distances.



**Some of the goals of *Literacies* as stated in the proposal to the National Literacy Secretariat:**

To be the national forum where a diverse group of literacy practitioners, researchers and policy-makers talk to each other about research, practice and policy on adult literacy in order to advance a collective understanding of adult literacy research and practice.

To promote writing about research and practice in Canada and to cultivate and develop writership among literacy and adult education workers in order to increase the range of experiences and knowledge disseminated nationally.

To present new information, knowledge, experience, reflection and understanding about the research and the innovative approaches that raise literacy and essential skills levels in a format that is accessible to people from a variety of backgrounds and experience with research and with literacy work.

To strengthen the literacy community and unite the range of fields and disciplines that touch literacy by working with partners and networks that play a vital role in building the capacity of the adult learning, literacy and essential skills community.

**Thanks to all who took part in the survey.** We appreciate your thoughtful comments, your commitment and your generosity. As we work to determine the future of *Literacies* in the current context, your input is invaluable.

The survey affirmed that *Literacies* has fulfilled the goals we set in 2007 and our founding vision. We learned that *Literacies* is an ESSENTIAL part of a conversation that is ESSENTIAL to the development of the field.

**The current context**

Funding for the ESSENTIAL is much diminished. Funders are supporting less research & development and more tool development. This means three things for *Literacies*:

1) **It is unlikely *Literacies* will receive public funding in the near future.** The survey results tell us the print version is ESSENTIAL; without funds, the print version is impossible.

2) The survey tells us **it is ESSENTIAL that *Literacies* focus on Canadian research;** as less research that generates the ESSENTIAL dialogue is funded, that focus becomes less possible.

3) The spaces for the ESSENTIAL conversations are receiving little funding. **Conferences are ESSENTIAL** for *Literacies* to learn about new research and to support practitioner writing.

In this context, it difficult to see how *Literacies* can continue in a meaningful way. We will keep working to create places for the ESSENTIAL reflective, research-based dialogue but, for now, Issue # 10 will be our last. It has been the best ride EVER and we thank all who joined us.

