



**Community
Learning Network**
Annual Report

July 2022 – June 2023



CLN Annual Report

The CLN Board and Staff are pleased to share our accomplishments over the past year with our members and our partners in the adult learning system.

2022–23 has been a year of growth and exploration, as CLN, along with the rest of the CALP system, adapts to a “new normal”. This year has allowed us to branch out and try new things, and to bring back some of the initiatives we paused or modified over the last few years.

We are excited to keep moving forward together, as a system that supports adult foundational learners in Alberta for many years to come.

Who We Are

The Community Learning Network (CLN) is a registered nonprofit organization in Alberta and federally registered as a charity with Revenue Canada. We value and practice respect, integrity, transparency, diversity and ethical leadership and are committed to governance and operational excellence.

The CLN Board of Directors regularly reviews and affirms its purpose as part of our mandate to be transparent in our work and communication:

We strengthen the Community Adult Learning System in Alberta, so:

- CALPs have access to responsive professional learning
- CALPs deliver quality community-based adult learning
- Funds allocated to the CALP system provide the greatest return on investment
- Collaboration, alignment and connectivity exists throughout the system

Our Members

Community Adult Learning Programs (CALPs) are grassroots community-based organizations funded by the Government of Alberta to provide, promote and increase access to adult foundational learning opportunities in areas including:

- Adult Literacy
- Numeracy
- Skills for Learning
- Basic Digital Skills
- English Language Learning
- Community Capacity Building

The CLN is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, who are also Community Adult Learning Program staff and board members. We have a team of 13 staff members, located in communities throughout Alberta.

To meet our Board of Directors, go to:

<https://calp.ca/cln-provincial-staff.html>

You can get to know the CLN staff at:

<https://calp.ca/about-us.html>



facebook.com/communitylearning.info

Find us online at calp.ca

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New Initiatives from CLN in 2022–23

This year, CLN revised or developed three key resources to support CALPs in providing high quality and relevant programming to adult foundational learners.

Designing the Online Learning Experience

This new training was developed to address an emerging gap for CALP instructors, volunteers, and staff. Learner-centred online instruction is an expanding area for CALP programming following the pandemic. CALPs are looking to improve how they deliver online learning, specifically, for foundational learners.

“The training gave me a lot to think about in terms of making sure whatever I do online is accessible to all of my [learners].”

Teaching Reading: Strategies and Resources

CLN staff created a new interactive resource that gathers common instructional strategies in one place for instructors and tutors to access on the CALP Portal. As instructors are looking for strategies to teach reading to adult foundational learners, they have access to their own just-in-time learning that they can customize to their own needs.

Opening Doors: A Literacy Audit Tool Kit (2022)

Originally developed by Literacy Alberta in 2008, the *Opening Doors: A Literacy Audit Tool Kit for Customer Service Excellence (2008)* was designed for literacy organizations. The main focus of the tool kit was to create a literacy friendly space by increasing literacy awareness, conducting an audit, and creating an action plan. CLN updated the statistics, community connections, links, and checklists to ensure this resource remains current and relevant.

2500 hits to the Teaching Reading Resource on the CALP Portal

Celebrating the Impact of Community Adult Literacy Program:

Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal Recipients

The Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Medal was created to mark the 70th anniversary of Her Majesty's Accession to the Throne as Queen of Canada. The Community Learning Network was selected as a trusted partner to carry out the nomination process and recognize three deserving individuals from Alberta's literacy and learning communities.

CLN was proud to recognize these amazing individuals at a ceremony in Edmonton on November 3, 2022.

Congratulations to these leaders in adult literacy and learning!



Berniece Gowan **Calgary Learns**

"For over two decades Berniece has dedicated her career to adult literacy and has been supporting adults with literacy gaps to help them participate more fully in their lives. Adult learners and their needs have been the centre of her work. Always a lifelong learner, Berniece stays on top of emerging learner and practitioner needs across Canada, curating relevant research."



Colleen Pierce **Community Learning Lac La Biche**

"(Colleen is) tirelessly creating barrier free access to education for learners in her rural community. She is a mentor who not just teaches, but shows learners how to build on essential skills to become successful. She focuses on the fundamentals, helping everyone learn and meeting them where they are at."



Roberta Rogers

Brooks Community Adult Learning Council

“Roberta has served as the Board Chair of the Brooks Community Adult Learning Program for 20 years, but has been on this board since its inception in 1975. She has a deep sense of duty and commitment in the area of adult education, and understands that mental health can limit learning. She became the chairperson of the Rural Mental Health Conference Committee (2018) which held the first mental health conference in Canada focusing on mental health challenges in rural communities.”

In a separate ceremony on February 16, 2023, CLN’s Executive Director, was also awarded this prestigious medal, having been nominated by Alberta’s Minister of Advanced Education.



Lisa Dickner

Community Learning Network

“As you have demonstrated exceptional qualities and outstanding service to our province in the field of adult education, I am pleased to let you know that our organization, Advanced Education, nominated you to receive this honor as a lasting recognition of your dedication and service.”

Training and Professional Development

CLN conducts ongoing needs assessments throughout the year to determine the immediate and longer-term training and coaching needs of CALP staff.

This year, we have seen many CALPs requesting more in-person training, while other CALPs have grown to really appreciate the easy access and flexibility of online training options. CLN responded to these differing preferences by providing training using a range of delivery modes: in-person workshops, online training, and self-directed learning.

“I appreciate the adaptability of the training offered – it is always being refreshed to match the current situation and challenges. I also feel very comfortable asking for what I need in terms of training and support.”

456 participants took part in **41 training events** hosted by CLN

CALP Required Training

To support staff and volunteers in the CALP system to deliver effective adult foundational learning programs, there are two trainings required by Advanced Education that are stewarded and delivered by CLN:

Introduction to Adult Foundational Learning (IAFL) is a 13-hour training offered in-person or online to equip CALP staff with an understanding, tools, and a network for providing quality learning for adult foundational learners.

CALP Essentials for Family Literacy Programs is a 6.5-hour training for CALPs who choose a family literacy program mode of delivery to prioritize the building of adults’ skills as part of an intergenerational approach to promoting literacy for the whole family.

102 people attended **8 offerings** of Required Trainings – **91 hours**

100% of Participants in Required Trainings positively rated the quality of these trainings.

CLN Delivered and Supported Training

CLN delivered **144 hours** of training at **26 events** to **264 participants**.

Some of the themes explored in CLN's training program this year included:

- Literacy Instruction and Assessment
- Basic Digital Skills Instruction
- Plain Language Marketing

Strengthening Literacy Practices

Strengthening Literacy Practices is an intensive 8-month training which uses a long-term cohort approach to equip literacy practitioners with the knowledge, tools and strategies needed to work directly with literacy learners and create learner-centred literacy programs.

"This program has provided me with so many foundational pieces that I have been missing and has given me the confidence to begin to plan for new programs to try in our area. It has also sparked my curiosity to want to learn more and dig deeper into the concepts we have covered."

CLN coordinated and hosted **7 training events**, providing **42 hours** of training from experts to **90 participants**.

The most popular additional trainings we coordinated and supported in 2022-23 were:

- Stepping into Writing
- Indigenous Literacy Assessment
- Trauma-informed Care for Adult Educators

Self-Directed Learning

The CALP Portal is host to 15 e-learningings which are customized to the unique nature of adult foundational learning in the CALP system. CALP staff can access the e-learningings on-demand, spend as much or as little time as they need, and choose the specific topics most relevant to their immediate PD Needs.

Here are the top 10 e-learningings this year:

e-learning	Views
Building Literacy: A Learner-Centred Guide for Teachers, Tutors and Practitioners of Adult Literacy	3,952
CALP Basics	3,354
Assessment for Learning	1,225
CALP-funded Family Literacy Program Operations	808
Outcomes-based Measurement and Evaluation for the Community Adult Learning Program	733
Creating Safer Spaces: Indigenous Learning in the CALP Model	556
Essentials Skills	514
Volunteer Tutor Program Operations	512
CALP Financial Management	471
Creating Instructional Materials using Plain Language	187

Coaching, Mentoring and Regional Support

Coaching and mentorship is a core piece of the work CLN does with CALP staff. Through ongoing relationship building with new and seasoned CALP staff, CLN's staff customizes coaching topics and discussions to the needs and requests of staff themselves. Coaching allows CALP staff to access the PD supports and resources they need in a timely manner, outside of formalized training events.

The top 2022–2023 coaching and mentoring topics were:

1. PD / Training Request
2. CALP Programming
3. CALP Database
4. Annual Report, Human Resources, Staffing
5. CALP Guidelines

Our team had over 1000 direct points of connection with CALPs over the year, including in-person conversations, using online meeting platforms, and via phone and email.

Some of the trends that we are hearing in our conversations include:

- **Newcomer Supports:** high volume of English Language Learners who also need assistance to find settlement supports; rural CALPs are often the only connection in their communities who can help find and access these supports
- **Staffing and instructional capacity issues:** retaining staff, recruiting tutors and instructors, finding volunteers
- **Staff mental health:** this is an on-going area for informal PD support and training to CALP staff, including how to minimize burnout and compassion fatigue

93% of respondents of the CALP PD Annual Survey implemented the learning they received from coaching and mentoring from CLN staff.

“The CLN staff have been great at being available, open, honest and supportive of our work.”

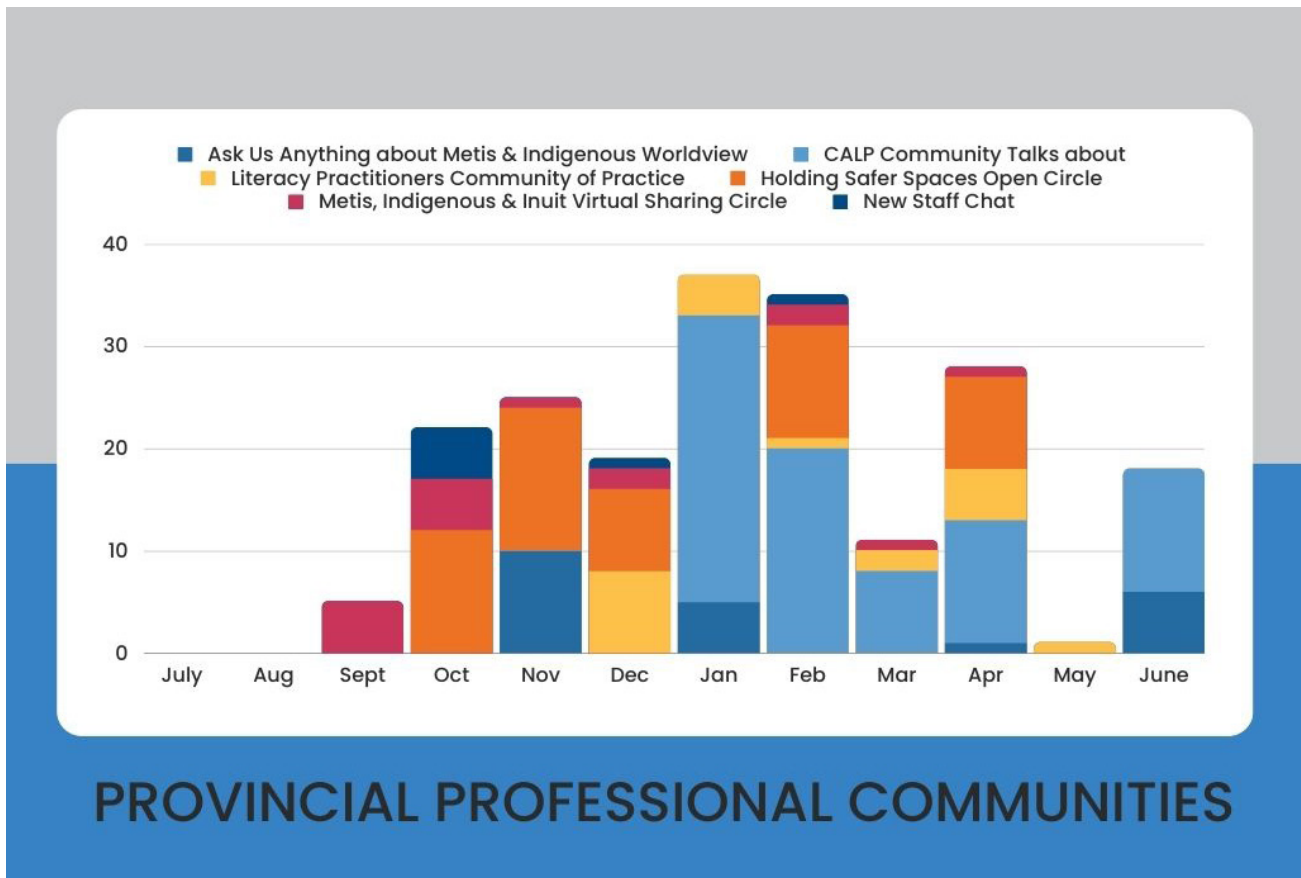
This year we also continued to offer more formalized mentorship opportunities, by supporting CALPS to connect to a long time CALP staff, with great expertise in fund development and diversification. This opportunity was welcomed and well-received by all who accessed it.

“Mentorship training continues to be the most effective, timely and relevant PD. Thank you!”

Professional Communities

In 2022–2023, CLN endeavoured to expand our professional communities to include ongoing provincial communities of practice that were responsive, meaningful, and authentic to CALP staff. In addition to regional Connections Cafes and the Ask Us Anything about Métis and Indigenous Worldview several new opportunities to gather with like-minded peers about a topic were introduced. They included:

- CALP Community Talks about...
- Holding Safer Spaces Open Circles
- New Staff Chat



Each professional community is guided by the same principles regardless of the size of the group, mode of delivery or host. CALP staff know that each opportunity will contribute to their continuous learning, explore and integrate new ideas, reinforce existing knowledge or shift perspectives.

- Over the past year, did you actively share ideas with your peers in a professional community? **Of 143 respondents, 89% said YES**
- Are you using ideas you have learned or heard about from your peers? **Of 143 responses, 87% said YES**

“The Connection Café is a great way to network and share information/ ideas as well as to learn from others.”

The CALP Communication Hub

www.calp.ca

As the CALP system’s main communication hub, the CALP Portal continues to play a vital role in connecting CALP staff, volunteers, and system partners across the province. We continue to see increases year after year in online engagement on the CALP Portal.

Active users	588
Unique logins	33,000
Discussions threads	462
Replies/comments	2070
Hits on our Blog	9901

2x This year, the number of active discussion threads on the CALP Portal doubled since last year!

2023 Literacy and Learning Symposium



Learning • Connections • Inspiration • Curiosity • Innovation

CLN Staff and Board successfully designed a 2-part hybrid Symposium in 2023. The first part was held virtually (online) from May 9th to 10th and the second part was held in-person at the DoubleTree Hilton West Edmonton from May 11th to 12th.

The 2023 Symposium included four days of extensive and relevant professional development and networking for CALPs and adult foundational learning partners including:

- Opening & Closing Ceremonies
- Keynote Sessions
- 60-minute and 2-part Breakout Sessions
- Adult Learner Speakers
- Engagement Sessions
- Meet-the-Expert Sessions
- Spark and Share Conversations
- Energizer Session
- Facilitated Reflection
- *NEW Inspiration Playground

By The Numbers



4
Days

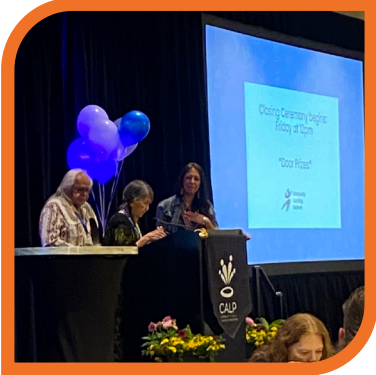
289
Attendees

3
Keynotes

51
Presenters



2 Adult
Learner
Speakers



82 CALPs
Represented

1
Energizer

257 Attendees
logged into
Chime Live

The attendees who submitted the overall evaluation provided the following feedback:

Rated as very good or good by respondents:

- Day, time, and length of event: **91%**
- Valuable opportunity to share information and network: **100%**
- Quality of training/session delivery: **100%**
- Relevance of training/session content: **100%**
- Symposium Program/Presenters: **100%**
- Keynote speakers: **99%**
- Overall organization of the event: **99%**

“It was so valuable to reconnect and meet with so many in our CALP community. I have so many sparks to follow up on now. It was such a worthwhile experience, thank you CLN for all that you do to help us show up as our best selves for our Learners.”

Métis and Indigenous Connections and Support

The CALP system wants to actively contribute to reconciliation. CLN’s Métis and Indigenous Liaison plays a leading role by bringing an Indigenous lens to the work we do as a system. Through thoughtful and safe coaching conversations, CALP staff have been able to learn more. Some of the ideas we explored together this year were:

- finding, attracting, engaging, and retaining Indigenous learners
- connecting with Elders/knowledge keepers
- protocol
- acknowledging the land
- Indigenous-related curriculum
- Indigenous literacy/storytelling/oral literacy

Métis Minute Video Series

This year, a series of videos titled “Métis Minute” addressed questions from the CALP system about Métis and Indigenous ways of knowing.

Some of the topics included:

- land acknowledgements
- connecting to the land in an urban area
- smudging

“I always look forward to your Métis Minute videos. I love how inclusive you are with your knowledge and culture.”

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

On September 30th, CLN hosted a special event to honour the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

The virtual event featured honoured Elders who shared their stories, wisdom and prayers, drummers, and a powerful video called “What does truth and reconciliation mean to me?” The video was created by the members of the Métis, First Nations, Inuit Sharing Circle which is hosted by CLN throughout the year. They contributed to a powerful video for the event.

Connecting Adult Learners to Online Learning: www.AdultLearningAlberta.ca

www.AdultLearningAlberta.ca is a website where CALPs can share online learning opportunities for learners anywhere in the province. The goal of this site is to extend the reach of CALPs and increase access to relevant CALP learning opportunities for adult learners, while creating further collaboration and connectivity within the CALP community.

“I was motivated to use the site because I saw it gave us the ability to provide more learning opportunities to our learners, especially if we were not offering that specific programming...The Adult Learning Alberta website is one of the most user-friendly sites I have ever navigated.”

“I think it is fantastic that our learners have access to the entire CALP system...This is just one more tool in the tool kit to help the learners!”

The CLN Board and Staff are proud to continue serving the CALP system through our role providing customized professional development and training opportunities for adult foundational learning and literacy practitioners.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with the Government of Alberta, provincial PD providers, and other system partners to advance the CALP PD vision, where,

“CALP staff strive for excellence in priority areas, to change the lives of adult foundational learners.”



Funded by:

