



Report To:	Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board
From:	Donna Moroso, Director of Integrated Social Services and Gilles Plouffe, Ontario Works Program Supervisor
Date:	March 28th, 2013
Re:	Chapleau Learning Centre - Issue Report

Recommendations:

That the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board calls on the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU) to step in and ensure that Northern College is meeting its obligations to MTCU and the residents of Sudbury North.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB staff is recommending to the Board that the DSB provide the Chapleau Learning Centre with \$12,000 to replace the loss in funding in order to support Academic & Career Entrance (ACE) courses. While this will keep the services for the residents in the Sudbury North Region for the next year, a long term permanent solution is required.

Purpose:

Chapleau Learning Centre, a non-profit organization, has been operating in the community of Chapleau offering vital services and programs to our adult citizens assisting them to obtain basic literacy skills. These are opportunities that are not offered elsewhere in the education system in Chapleau. The programs have proven to be very successful and beneficial to all the Sudbury North communities it has served for over 10 years.

The ACE program is delivered by the Chapleau Learning Centre. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities funds Northern College who in turns subcontracts to Algoma District School Board run by the Chapleau Learning Centre for the ACE program in the Sudbury North Region.

Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) is funded by the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities and is directly delivered by the Algoma District School Board, Chapleau Learning Centre in Chapleau.

Background:

The adult program has been in existence for a very long time and has served the community well. The Chapleau Learning Centre teaches literacy, a reading program, computer upgrading, and some business courses only to name a few. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has been referring their clients who require these services as it is the only site available in the Sudbury North Region that offers Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS), the Academic and Career Entrance Programs (ACE) as well as the courses mentioned above.

For over 10 years, the Chapleau Learning Centre has been funded by the Ministry of Training of Colleges and Universities (MTCU) to service clients who required literacy skills.

Current Issue:

For over 10 years, the Algoma District School Board has had a partnership with Northern College to deliver the Academic & Career Entrance (ACE) program and Literacy Basic Skills (LBS) program. Last year, Northern College reduced Algoma District School Board's funding in half; the funding was \$25,000 per year and it was reduced to \$12,000. On February 25th, 2013, Northern College advised the Algoma District School Board that it will no longer fund the education levels that allow adult learners to complete the program, which means a loss of \$12,000 in funding. The reduction in funding will mean a reduction in office hours for the Chapleau Learning Centre. Northern College suggested that current and future students could start and/or complete their courses through on-line learning or by attending Northern College's main campus in Timmins. DSB Staff did speak with Northern College staff to try and come up with creative solutions but no avail.

The only option that remains is for students to participate through on-line learning for the ACE program. It is unrealistic to expect that clients on social assistance travel to the main campus in Timmins to obtain these services when most of them do not have a method of transportation and it is two (2) hours away from Chapleau. Students can currently walk to the Chapleau Learning Centre for the services as it is located in the heart of the Chapleau.

As far as participating through on-line learning, this is an option however many low income individuals cannot afford internet services at home and rely on libraries and non-profits such as the Chapleau Learning Centre to obtain these services. In addition the on-line services do not provide the in person individual attention and coaching available through the Chapleau Learning Centre.

Chapleau Learning Centre offers a very friendly and comfortable atmosphere. Students feel welcome and feel motivated by their in-class teacher to learn the skills required to graduate. Motivation is also another key factor for students on social assistance.

Currently, the Chapleau Learning Centre has an enrolment of 101 in the LBS program, 3 in the ACE program and 3 working on their diploma through the MPLAR (Mature Prior

Learning and Assessment Review) programs. MPLAR is for adults 19 years of age or older who have been out of school for more than one year. They can have their transcripts and work experience reviewed to see if they can apply for MPLAR. Persons who are eligible can write a series of assignments and get their 9/10 English granted to them. The same applies for Math, Social Science (there 5 are MPLARS in total) with additional equivalency credits awarded to a total of 16 credits granted (all of the nine and ten credits). It helps older learners get to their senior courses / diploma a little quicker.

Outcome statistics:

46% go directly into employment;

33% go to some post-secondary training;

17% are listed as education for independence (education for personal growth);

4% go on to apprenticeship training.

Related Issues:

Cambrian College – Little Current Campus

In April 2004, the Cambrian College and Basic Skills and Literacy (Upgrading) Program in Little Current was at risk of being lost until the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB intervened and provided Cambrian with the supports and funding required to stay open for another year. The \$35,000 that was flowed to them was money that came from the 'levels of service' funding that the DSB qualified for at the time. This reprieve, while temporary, bought time for designated members of the Cambrian Campus Advisory Committee to develop a sustainable model of delivery for future years. The \$35,000 investment equals to having six clients on social assistance for a 12 month period. As it turned out Cambrian College signed a 10 year lease for a new location on the main street in Little Current and the DSB investment was easily repaid by six clients leaving Social Assistance for post-secondary education.

Also, at that time, the upgrading program as a part of Cambrian College's satellite campus on Manitoulin only directly affected a handful of students; but for these students, the program is a very important part of enabling them to enter a college or a university program.

Today, the attendance for the upgrading program has tremendously increased; in fact there is a waiting list for almost every session.

In May 2012, Cambrian College advised Alpha that it will no longer fund the ACE program that allow adult learners to complete the adult upgrading program, which meant a loss of \$35,000 in funding. Cambrian College suggested that current and future students could start and/or complete their courses through on-line learning or by attending Cambrian's main campus in the City of Greater Sudbury. As a result of the decision made by MTCU for the Sudbury East Alpha location, the Board approved [Resolution 12-96](#) on October 25th, 2012 recommending that the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board call on the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU) to step in and ensure that Cambrian College is meeting its obligations to MTCU and the

residents of Sudbury East. The DSB also approved the [Alpha en Partage de Sudbury Est - Issue Report](#) which provided Alpha En Partage funding of \$35,000 as a short term solution.

These programs play a critical role in fulfilling the Ontario Works mandate.

Conclusion:

Over the years we have seen the erosion of basic literacy in our remote communities. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities is removing the funding in the Sudbury North Region as they state that the numbers don't support the required services. However, the DSB was never notified that attendance was an issue; otherwise the staff could have intervened.

Without the academic upgrading program that was offered by the Chapleau Learning Centre through Northern College's partnership with the Algoma District School Board, the Sudbury North residents will not have access to the local upgrading that makes it possible for them to obtain a high school diploma. This is critically important to ensure their ability to move onto post-secondary education and securing employment.

The residents of Sudbury North depend on the Chapleau Learning Centre for their educational needs. Without proper education, social assistance recipients could be on social assistance for many years without opportunity for upgrading and self-sufficiency.

Staff is recommending that the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board call on the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU) to step in and ensure that Northern College is meeting its obligations to MTCU and the residents of Sudbury North.

Staff is also recommending that the DSB provide the Chapleau Learning Centre with \$12,000 to replace the loss in funding in order to support ACE courses.