



# Skills Nova Scotia

## Action Plan 2006–2007



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All activities highlighted have been successful due to partnerships between government, business, industry, labour, training and education institutions, and community. We have made every effort to reference all partners in this document. If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at <lefebrjm@gov.ns.ca>.

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# Message from the Premier



Office of  
the Premier



The Province of Nova Scotia has made great strides in creating a world-class workforce since the launch of the Skills Nova Scotia Framework and the first action plan in 2002. The *Skills Nova Scotia Action Plan 2006–2007* demonstrates our continuing plan for developing an adaptable, flexible, and responsive workforce to ensure a thriving economy for Nova Scotia today and into the future.

Several demographic and social trends continue to put pressure on Nova Scotia's workforce and our economy. Growth in global competition, the falling birthrate and the impending retirement of the baby boomer generation, out migration, and rapid changes in technology are just some of those trends. What we do today will impact the social and economic prosperity of our province tomorrow.

The Skills Nova Scotia Framework provides us with the tools, strategies and momentum we need to deal with these challenges in positive and innovative ways. By working in partnership with business, industry, labour, education and training providers, communities, and the federal government, we are not only meeting the challenges of an increasingly sophisticated labour market, we are also capitalizing on the opportunities they present.

The *Skills Nova Scotia Action Plan 2006–2007* builds on past successes and demonstrates our commitment to creating a strong workforce and a bright future for all Nova Scotians.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rodney MacDonald".

Rodney MacDonald  
Premier of Nova Scotia



# Message from the Minister of Education



Office of  
the Minister  
of Education



The Skills Nova Scotia Framework highlights provincial programs, services, and initiatives that are helping to build a world-class workforce—a workforce that is ready to meet the demands of the labour market. This framework is Nova Scotia's guide to ensuring we develop new programs, use existing programs more effectively, create strategic partnerships, and find innovative solutions to meet labour market demands.

The Department of Education, through the Skills and Learning Branch, provides leadership and support for the Skills Nova Scotia initiatives of all government departments. We also help our partners in their efforts to address the prevailing labour market challenges of our day.

Our success to date is a direct result of the collaborative efforts of our partners in government, business, industry, training and educational institutions, and the community. Significant advances have been made in attracting more Nova Scotians to skilled trades, providing a broader range of education and training options, and building a culture of lifelong learning.

The *Skills Nova Scotia Action Plan 2006–2007* highlights strategic initiatives for the coming year that will continue to ensure Nova Scotians have the skills they need for the jobs they want, and the jobs that have to be filled.

I look forward to leading the department in promoting and supporting the Skills Nova Scotia agenda in 2006–2007.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Karen Casey'.

Karen Casey  
Minister of Education



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# Goals and Objectives

## **Goal 1: Meet the skill needs of Nova Scotia's labour market**

### Objectives

1. Research, develop, and distribute high-quality labour market information
2. Co-ordinate targeted initiatives that satisfy emerging skill needs
3. Work to enhance and improve the apprenticeship system in Nova Scotia
4. Improve mobility of skilled workers within Canada
5. Improve Nova Scotia's competitive edge in attracting and retaining highly skilled international workers
6. Design and implement labour policy to promote safe and healthy work environments, fair employment standards, and stable labour-management relations
7. Improve opportunities for youth to develop the leadership skills required for successful labour market participation

## **Goal 2: Provide better labour market access and supports to Nova Scotians**

### Objectives

1. Provide career- and employment-related services to Nova Scotians to help them develop their skills and find sustainable jobs
2. Assist low-income Nova Scotians, including income assistance recipients, to access education and training
3. Promote equity, fairness, and diversity throughout labour market programs and services offered in Nova Scotia
4. Develop and implement prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) processes and tools

### **Goal 3: Strengthen Nova Scotia's system of lifelong learning opportunities**

#### Objectives

1. Increase the opportunities for Nova Scotia's children to develop a curiosity for learning and an ability to learn before entering Nova Scotia's education system
2. Improve the core skills of children in Nova Scotia's education system
3. Expand co-operative and work experience opportunities for students in Nova Scotia's secondary education system
4. Increase the opportunities for Nova Scotians to access adult basic education
5. Make education and training more relevant to the emerging skill needs of the learners and employers
6. Increase the post-secondary education and training system's capacity to respond to emerging labour market needs
7. Promote lifelong learning through the development of a learning culture

# Introduction

Globalization, rapid changes in technology, and the aging of the baby boomer generation are but several factors putting pressure on Nova Scotia's economic and social circumstances. Growing numbers of competitors, increasing certification requirements, and the impending departure of the baby boomers from the job market between now and 2025 are some of the factors that must be addressed to ensure a thriving economy for Nova Scotia, now and into the future. Nova Scotia's capacity to respond to these environmental pressures is critical—the more adaptive, responsive, and flexible our labour force and skills development practices become, the more productive and competitive our labour market will be.

The Skills Nova Scotia Framework guides the province's efforts in developing and implementing the policies, programs, and initiatives to ensure that Nova Scotia's labour force is equipped to respond to the challenges of this new age. It outlines a series of goals and objectives that the province strives towards, as it prepares for the social and economic changes of the future.

The *Skills Nova Scotia Action Plan 2006–2007* highlights the many activities of the various departments, offices, and agencies of the province that will be undertaken over the 2006–2007 fiscal year to build a strong workforce and a bright future for all Nova Scotians.

## Highlights in 2006–2007

Our capacity to identify and meet Nova Scotia's current and future skills needs, provide labour market supports and access, and enhance our system of lifelong learning is hinged on each of our skills partners playing their respective roles. Our ability to build on past successes is augmented by the collaborative efforts between skills partners to address common labour market challenges and opportunities and to advance Nova Scotia's collective skills agenda.

Highlights of the labour force skill development activities to be undertaken in 2006–2007 include the following:

### **Identifying and Meeting the Skill Needs of the Labour Market**

The availability of timely and reliable labour market information is crucial in identifying the immediate and long-term skill needs of the labour market and for developing strategic approaches to respond to these needs.

Concerted efforts to support existing strategies and develop new initiatives to identify the current and future skill requirements of the labour market will continue in 2006–2007. For example, an employer survey will be developed to assist employers in identifying the immediate and long-term workforce development needs. The development of tools and methodologies to support the human resource planning capacity of small- and medium-sized employers in Nova Scotia is also planned in 2006–2007.

Programs and initiatives to support Nova Scotia's labour market partners to respond to immediate and long-term workforce issues continue to be developed and implemented in 2006–2007. Examples of these include a comprehensive marketing strategy to promote careers in skilled trades and technologies; a strategy to recruit women in science, trades, and technology occupations; Youth-Engaged, an employment strategy to promote youth employment; and the Medical Laboratory Technology program, which will be offered at the Nova Scotia Community College, Dartmouth Campus, once the construction is complete and the school is open for business in 2007. The province also continues to promote the Nova Scotia Nominee Program as a way of filling immediate skills shortages and will continue in its work with business and industry partners to address workforce attraction, retention, and skill development issues.

### **Providing Better Labour Market Access and Supports**

Provision of well-balanced labour market access and supports is necessary to ensure the development of a skilled and knowledgeable workforce. In 2006–2007, the province will continue to expand and enhance policies and programs to support Nova Scotians in their education, training, and employment endeavours. The Older Worker Program, which is designed to integrate displaced and under-skilled workers into sustainable employment, the expansion of the Practical Nursing program, and the redesign of the Career Skills Development Level IV curriculum for the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) are just several of the many labour market support initiatives highlighted in the *Skills Nova Scotia Action Plan 2006–2007*.

## **Strengthening Nova Scotia's System of Lifelong Learning**

The development of a lifelong learning culture is integral to the success of Skills Nova Scotia and to ensuring that Nova Scotians have opportunities to acquire the skills and knowledge they need to achieve and maintain healthy lives and productive careers over their lifetime.

In 2006–2007, numerous initiatives will be carried out to continue to build on Nova Scotia's foundations of learning and to support lifelong learning. Programs such as the Pre-Primary program and the Language Literacy Assessment program continue to be supported. Newly developed programs such as the Mathematics and the Literacy Success strategies will be implemented this year, and an early mathematical literacy assessment model is slated for development. Co-operative employment placements for students will be expanded. New and existing youth apprenticeship initiatives will continue to create skills development opportunities. NSSAL curricula, which was redesigned in 2005–2006 to include career explorations, employability skills, and additional supports for struggling students, will be introduced in 2006–2007. The Workplace Education Initiative, which is designed to support employers, unions, and workers by offering essential skills education programs for staff, is also among the many initiatives that will be carried out in 2006–2007 to strength Nova Scotia's system of lifelong learning.

## **Working Together**

Government, employers, unions, education and training providers, non-profit organizations, communities, and individual Nova Scotians all have a role to play in the development of a skilled and knowledgeable workforce. The federal government continues to be an important partner in developing a strong labour force for Nova Scotia, and many activities highlighted in this action plan are developed and implemented through joint federal/provincial planning mechanisms and agreements.

By working together to address common skill priorities, we are succeeding in meeting today's labour force challenge, and we are rising to the opportunities they present.



# 2006–2007 Action Plan

## Goal 1: Meet the skill needs of Nova Scotia's labour market

The capacity to respond to emerging skills needs is a key component of Nova Scotia's competitiveness. The more adaptive, responsive, and flexible that our labour force and skills development practices become, the more competitive Nova Scotia's labour market will be.

### Objective 1.1: Research, develop, and distribute high-quality labour market information

#### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- preparing the 2005 Nova Scotia Business Climate Index for release in the fall of 2006 (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Federal and provincial government departments)
- participating on the Labour Market Information (LMI) Committee under the Canada/ Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework to develop projects such as LMI tools for partners and stakeholders, a methodology to identify key sectors where better supply-and-demand information is required, and LMI training for career practitioners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Service Canada, Office of Economic Development, Department of Finance, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Nova Scotia Community College)
- developing labour market and career information for parents through the Canadian Career Information Partnership (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Department of Community Services)
- disseminating the following three new publications:
  - *In the Picture ... A Future with Women in Trades, Science and Technology*
  - *Women with Disabilities in Nova Scotia: A Statistical Profile*
  - *Money Matters*, 2006 edition(**Leads:** Hypatia Association, Women for Economic Equality Society; **Partners:** Department of Education, Service Canada, Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- utilizing retirement forecast models and the Human Resources Quarterly Report Card to provide information for effective human resources planning in government (**Lead:** Public Service Commission—Information Management; **Partner:** Department of Finance)
- translating documents associated with the Atlantic Study for Health Human Resource Planning into French for posting on the Atlantic Health Human Resources Association website (**Leads:** Departments of Health and Education from all four Atlantic provinces)
- ensuring that health human resources data is current and available (**Leads:** Departments of Health and Education from all four Atlantic provinces)

## New Actions

- conduct a follow-up survey of 1998 high-school graduates to examine the Nova Scotia public school system's ability to prepare graduates for life after high school, as well as determine the educational and career directions taken by high school graduates (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia public education system high schools)
- build on data from the Atlantic Advisory Council on Health Human Resources to develop an Atlantic health human resources strategy (**Leads:** Departments of Health and Education from all four Atlantic provinces)
- develop new business climate measures through discussions with the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council to support the Opportunities for Sustainable Prosperity Strategy (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Federal and provincial government departments, Atlantic Provinces Economic Council)
- develop and publish more *Career Pathways* pamphlets for students and parents (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, sectoral partners, intergovernmental partners)
- develop and implement a strategy to provide parents in receipt of income assistance with user-friendly labour market information and tools (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** Department of Education)
- publish *Open to the World*, a publication that focusses on successful entrepreneurs and on labour market opportunities (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Communications Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Business Inc., other provincial and federal government departments)
- design and implement the SAP Business Warehouse/Business Intelligence program and human resource forecast models to support strategic human resource planning in government (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partner:** Department of Finance)
- distribute the *Career Information Handbook* and promote the Internet resource for parents (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Department of Education, Canada Career Information Partnership)
- distribute the first series of 13 *Career Pathways* pamphlets for students and parents (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, sectoral partners, intergovernmental partners)
- distribute sets of five *What's Your Favourite Subject?* brochures to secondary schools (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Service Canada)

## Objective 1.2: Co-ordinate targeted initiatives that satisfy emerging skill needs

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- working with the other provinces and territories through the Forum of Labour Market Ministers to advance labour market policy discussions with the federal government and to address priority labour market issues in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Department of Intergovernmental Affairs)
- collaborating with the federal government through the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework to develop targeted initiatives at the local level to advance the following common priorities: labour market attachment, labour market information, workplace skills and education, and youth employment (**Leads:** Department of Education, Human Resources and Social Development Canada; **Partners:** Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Office of Economic Development, Department of Community Services, Industry Canada, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Department of Environment and Labour, community organizations)
- working through the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework—Workplace Skills and Education Task Team to support activities that enhance the human resource planning capacity of small- and medium-sized employers (**Leads:** Office of Economic Development, Department of Education, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency; **Partners:** Human Resources and Social Development Canada)
- undertaking a review of recommendations from the June 2005 Workforce Skill Development Forum to complete an employer survey (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- supporting business and industry to identify and respond to specific labour market skill development challenges (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Office of Economic Development, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Office of Immigration, industry organizations)
- supporting workforce development initiatives to provide career counselling, employment support, and essential skills training (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia, sector councils, sector organizations, Nova Scotia Partners Committee, Nova Scotia workplaces, Department of Environment and Labour)
- partnering with the Aerospace and Defence Industries Association of Nova Scotia (ADIANS) to implement a sector-wide human resource strategy to address workforce attraction, retention, and skill development issues (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Aerospace and Defence Industries Association of Nova Scotia)
- supporting the implementation of the summer employment program for under-represented groups within the Maritime Forces Atlantic Civilian Workforce Renewal Strategy, which aims to attract, train, and replace members of the civilian workforce who will retire in the next decade (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Maritime Forces Atlantic)
- continuing to support older workers, in partnership with the federal government, through the Older Worker Pilot Project, which is designed to reintegrate displaced older workers into sustainable employment or maintain employment of older workers threatened with displacement (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Social Development Canada, career resource centres, Acadia Centre for Small Business and Entrepreneurship)

- leading a sector liaison program to improve communication with industry sector councils and sector-like organizations and to identify areas for collaboration and partnership around common workforce planning and labour market development objectives (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Industry organizations, industry sector councils, employers)
- supporting the Skills Canada—Nova Scotia Energy Youth Quest initiative (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Department of Energy)
- implementing the Nova Scotia Nursing Strategy by
  - supporting practicing nurses through orientation, continuing education, specialty education, and the Nursing Grants Program
  - supporting student nurses through the co-operative education program for third-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) students and bursaries for fourth-year BScN students
  - enhancing recruitment resources such as job fairs, relocation allowances, and the Nursing Re-entry Program
  - implementing workforce development and utilization strategies including leadership development for nurses and the Practice Environment Collaboration Program aimed at improving work life for nurses
 (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Provincial Nursing Network, employers)
- advising the Registered Nurse Professional Development Centre on ongoing specialty programs to meet the nursing workforce need, including
  - performance-based certification
  - Critical Care Program
  - Emergency Care Program
  - Perioperative Program
  - Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing Program
  - Suicide Risk Assessment and Intervention (Interdisciplinary)
  - orientation to the health-care system for internationally educated health professionals
 (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Provincial Nursing Network, employers)
- supporting the second cohort of students entering their second year of the joint Nova Scotia Community College/New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) Medical Laboratory Technology Program running out of NBCC (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Department of Education, New Brunswick Community College and Nova Scotia Community College)
- investing in skill development workshops and other professional development opportunities in various artistic disciplines and cultural activities (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing ongoing administrative support to the Nova Scotia Talent Trust, which provides financial assistance to Nova Scotians who demonstrate potential and commitment to become recognized artists in their chosen fields (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

- investing in export marketing skills development initiatives (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- offering skill development and enhancement courses through the Nova Scotia Centre for Craft and Design (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing investment, through the Anchor Organizations Program, to cultural organizations that actively help to develop Nova Scotia's cultural sector and offering training or support services to individuals in the cultural sector (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing investment to the Tourism Human Resource Council to facilitate activities to enhance the tourism industry's ability to develop a strong workforce and promote participation in programs such as national certifications, career awareness, and service excellence (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- implementing the Visitor Information Centre Quality Performance Program, which will provide funding assistance for training visitor information centre front-line staff (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing funding for skills and professional development to enhance the market-readiness of tourism-related businesses (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage; **Partners:** regional tourism industry associations)
- finalizing and presenting a proposal for a new export strategy and implementing the strategy if approved (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- supporting the implementation of CEO round tables to better understand and address workforce-related issues as identified by Nova Scotia businesses (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- developing and providing French language training for Nova Scotia government employees in order to meet service needs (**Leads:** Office of Acadian Affairs, Public Service Commission)
- developing training programs and provincial product knowledge tours for provincial and regional visitor information centre staff for the 2007 season (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing opportunities, tools, and resources for maintenance and growth of French language skills in the public service (**Lead:** Office of Acadian Affairs)
- collaborating with the Federal Council of Nova Scotia to provide French language training to Nova Scotia government employees as required (**Lead:** Office of Acadian Affairs)
- marketing public service career opportunities at high schools, post-secondary institutions, career fairs, and professional associations (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All departments)
- maintaining and updating careers with the Government of Nova Scotia website ([www.gov.ns.ca/careers](http://www.gov.ns.ca/careers)) (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All departments)

## New Actions

- conduct research to develop the *Nova Scotia Labour Market Review 2005 and 2006* and the *Industry Sector Profiles 2006* (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- integrate employability into the Adult Learning Program curricula by incorporating the Conference Board of Canada Employability Skills and including career explorations throughout the program (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- expand the Career Options website to include interactive components and information aimed at career coaches (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- implement recommendations of the report *Retirement and Retention of Late Career Nurses* in partnership with the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia, Provincial Nursing Network, employers)
- work with the Registered Nurses Professional Development Centre to develop and implement the following provincial programs:
  - the Adult Medical-Surgical Nursing Program
  - the Rural Nursing Program
  - the Psycho-Social Rehabilitation Program (Interdisciplinary)(**Lead:** Department of Health)
- support the Nova Scotia Community College in sending a team of high school students to compete in the international remote-operated vehicle (ROV) student competition, to be held in Houston Texas (**Lead:** Department of Energy; **Partner:** Dominion Diving)
- continue to deliver and add to the Pengrowth–Nova Scotia Energy Scholarship Program (**Lead:** Department of Energy; **Partner:** Pengrowth Corporation)
- support Women Unlimited, a co-ordinated strategy for the recruitment and retention of women in science, trades, and technology occupations (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Women Unlimited Working Group; Hypatia Association, Women for Economic Equality, Department of Education, Service Canada, Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia Community College, community groups, and businesses)
- support the relocation of the Nova Scotia Centre for Craft and Design and the Cape Breton Centre for Craft and Design to new facilities (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- identify common labour force skill development challenges and work with Skills Nova Scotia partners to create collaborative solutions (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Office of Economic Development, Department of Community Services, Department of Environment and Labour, industry organizations)

## Objective 1.3: Work to enhance and improve the apprenticeship system in Nova Scotia

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- assisting industries to respond to workforce development issues through trade designations or compulsory trade designations (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Ad hoc industry committees)
- reviewing and revising apprenticeship training standards (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Apprenticeship offices in Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island)
- optimizing the annual technical training capacity for active apprentices (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- partnering with education, business, labour, and sector councils, to implement Workit, the Nova Scotia Youth Apprenticeship initiative (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Sector councils, Nova Scotia Community College, boards of education, industry)
- undertaking a review of apprenticeship trade regulations (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Provincial Apprenticeship Board, industry representatives)
- developing opportunities for upgrading and enhancing training for trade practitioners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Industry and labour)
- implementing a comprehensive marketing strategy for the Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development Division and the Apprenticeship Board to promote careers in skilled trades and technologies (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Board, Skills Canada/Nova Scotia, Communications Nova Scotia)
- piloting a model for mentor/coach training for journeypersons (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Boatbuilders Association, Nova Scotia Community College)

### New Actions

- promote the Business Competencies for Journeypersons endorsement and implement a recognition process (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)

## Objective 1.4: Improve mobility of skilled workers within Canada

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- implementing the labour mobility chapter of the obligations in the Agreement on Internal Trade to reduce or remove barriers to the movement of workers within Canada, thereby making it easier for skilled workers to choose where they live and work (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Forum of Labour Market Ministers, professional associations)
- creating and implementing a strategic work plan to improve provincial labour mobility awareness and compliance (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- enhancing the National Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program for the trades, in partnership with business, industry, and labour (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Apprenticeship offices across Canada, industry, Department of Environment and Labour)
- creating and revising the Atlantic Apprenticeship Curriculum Standards to increase labour mobility for apprentices and trades practitioners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Apprenticeship offices in Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island)

## Objective 1.5: Improve Nova Scotia's competitive edge in attracting and retaining highly skilled international workers

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- developing qualifications for additional Nominee Program streams to allow international students who have studied and obtained their education credentials in Nova Scotia which will help immigrants to understand the process that must be undertaken to be licensed to practise their professions and will enable them to begin the process before their arrival (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partners:** Citizenship and Immigration Canada)
- continuing to partner with Prince Edward Island in a five-year (2005–2010) Health Canada-funded initiative to increase the capacity of internationally educated health professionals (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Department of Immigration, Department of Education, Nova Scotia Community College, Dalhousie University, Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association, Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia, College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia, Association of Licensed Practical Nurses of Nova Scotia, along with PEI's counterparts)
- working with an interdepartmental forum and external stakeholders to continue the policy development and approval process for the Multiculturalism Policy (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

### **New Actions**

- develop pathways to trade certification for new Nova Scotians (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- co-host the development of a federal/provincial/territorial initiative leading to the first meeting of Ministers Responsible for Tourism in June 2007 (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- implement a comprehensive marketing strategy for the Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development Division and the Apprenticeship Board to promote careers in skilled trades and technologies (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partners:** Department of Education, Office of Economic Development, chambers of commerce, business stakeholders, labour)
- hold CEO forums with Nova Scotia employers to explore how the Office of Immigration can assist in meeting the Nova Scotia workforce demands (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partners:** Department of Education, Office of Economic Development, chambers of commerce, business stakeholders, labour)
- develop resources and provide orientation to business, industry, and labour to better equip them to hire and retain immigrants (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partners:** Department of Education, Office of Economic Development, Chambers of Commerce, business stakeholders, labour)

## **Objective 1.6: Design and implement labour policy to promote safe and healthy work environments, fair employment standards, and stable labour-management relations**

### **Highlights of Activities Under Way**

- promoting safe and healthy workplaces and work practices and safe facilities and equipment, through the following activities:
  - consult with Department of Energy concerning liquified natural gas regulation
  - consult with Human Resources and Social Development Canada concerning underground mining regulation and how regulations affect the Donkin coal mine development
  - introduce the Occupational Health and Safety Activity Tracking System with electronic access to records for division clients
  - establish a Healthy Workplaces Committee and develop a plan  
(**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour; **Partners:** Department of Energy, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Health and Safety Canada)
- providing financial assistance to the Farm Family Stress Line and Support Centre to support the centre to meet the needs of its farm community clients and promote its services to farmers (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partners:** Canadian 4-H Council, Canadian Agricultural Safety Association, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, Department of Education, Department of Environment and Labour, Department of Transportation and Public Works, Nova Scotia 4-H Council, Nova Scotia Agriculture Awareness Committee, Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Atlantic universities, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, AgraPoint International Inc., Eastern Breeders Incorporated)

- implementing year two of the multi-year Competitiveness and Compliance Initiative designed to enhance the business climate in Nova Scotia and deliver effective protection for workplace and public safety, the environment, and consumers (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour)
- improving the overall safety of Nova Scotia's workers through an integrated workplace safety strategy that combines effective initiatives on accident prevention and education, improves compliance with existing laws and regulations, and encourages development and refinement of occupational health and safety regulatory and non-regulatory instruments; actions for 2006–2007 include the following:
  - align Occupation Health and Safety (OHS) Business Plan with Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) Strategic Plan
  - align OHS inspection and enforcement with WCB education and economic incentives
  - increase annual targeted inspections
  - continue to develop a targeted risk-based inspection system
 (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour; **Partner:** Workers' Compensation Board)
- promoting employment standards, fair processes for wage compensation, effective labour-management relations, and fairness for injured workers through the following:
  - maintaining service response times for conciliation
  - continuing to offer preventative mediation programs to promote harmonious labour-management relations
  - implementing amendments to the Trade Union Act related to expedited arbitration and the duty of fair representation, by unions to their members
  - establishing an advisory committee on arbitration to provide the Minister of Environment and Labour with advice concerning the selection of arbitrators and other issues relating to arbitration
  - continuing to compare lost time due to work stoppages with the national average
  - improving labour standards service delivery response time
  - implementing year two of the Compliance Strategy with a focus on awareness
  - implementing Deductions from Pay legislation
 (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour)
- implementing the strategy for co-operation on trade certification, certification renewal, and occupational licensing by transferring blaster certification and the Board of Examiners for the certification of blasters to the Department of Education (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour; **Partner:** Department of Education)
- supporting on-farm project activities that promote a safe and healthy working environment under the Regulatory Compliance Food and Farm Safety element of the Farm Investment Fund (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture)
- educating farmers, farm families, and farm employees on safe work procedures and providing information to reduce the number of injuries during day-to-day farm operations through the Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partner:** Canadian Agriculture Safety Association)

- promoting adaptation of farm health and safety best practices, through workshops and training courses, to ensure that the farm labour force is properly trained to complete their job tasks with the highest possible standards (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partners:** Canadian 4-H Council, Canadian Agricultural Safety Association, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, Department of Education, Department of Environment and Labour, Department of Transportation and Public Works, Nova Scotia 4-H Council, Nova Scotia Agriculture Awareness Committee, Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Atlantic universities, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, agri-business sector, AgraPoint International Inc., Eastern Breeders Incorporated)
- continuing to provide input on government policy through the Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee to ensure that the farming community is able to comply with government legislation that affects their workplace and the completion of their daily job tasks (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partners:** 4-H and rural organizations, Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Resource Stewardship Agriculture Resource Co-ordinators, Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Department of Environment and Labour, Department of Transportation and Public Works, Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)
- continuing to recommend and implement the Corporate Healthy Workplace Policy (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** National Quality Institute (NQI), Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee)

### **New Actions**

- consolidate public safety legislation to make it easier to adopt regulations that keep pace with changing technology (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour)
- update the Steam Boiler and Pressure Vessel Act and the Crane Operators and Power Engineers Act (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour)
- develop a tractor safety training program to improve access to training for farm operators and, in particular, young tractor operators (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Agricultural College, Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, Registry of Motor Vehicles, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Canadian Agriculture and Safety Association)
- achieve Progressive Excellence Program Level 1 Certification from the National Quality Institute for the Healthy Workplace Initiative (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** National Quality Institute, Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee)
- complete and communicate the Corporate Healthy Workplace Program Framework (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee, Occupational Health and Safety Forum)
- identify and implement the co-ordinated delivery of core and mandatory occupational health and safety training for all employees (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee, Occupational Health and Safety Forum)
- develop and communicate flexible work guidelines (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee, Occupational Health and Safety Forum)

## Objective 1.7: Improve opportunities for youth to develop the leadership skills required for successful labour market participation

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- promoting volunteering, service learning, and community service through the Options and Opportunities program (O<sub>2</sub>) (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- continuing partnership with the HeartWood Centre for Community Youth Development to enable more young Nova Scotians to gain the leadership skills required for labour market and community participation (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Department of Community Services)
- continuing the development of two YouthBuild projects to help out-of-school youth build the academic, employability, and workplace skills necessary to return to education and training or to pursue employment in the skilled trades (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Social Development Canada)
- providing investment to youth organizations involved in skill development such as the Halifax Dance Young Company and Nova Scotia Youth Orchestra (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- continuing to offer skills development opportunities to youth-in-care direct recipients of income assistance through the Youth Development Initiative (**Lead:** Department of Community Services)
- implementing the four strategic goals of the GoverNEXT Business Plan for 2006–2007 by
  - creating networks that encourage and support continuous learning, dialogue, and career avenues for mentorship and collaboration
  - providing opportunities for knowledge transfer for GoverNEXT members by creating avenues for mentorship and collaboration
  - advising and encouraging dialogue related to human resources policy decision making, including the attraction and retention of a workforce that is diverse, dynamic, and dedicated
  - promoting GoverNEXT within the Nova Scotia public service and to external audiences(**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour; **Partner:** Public Service Commission)
- enhancing entrepreneurship activities and courses in schools (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Department of Education, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, school boards, Centre for Entrepreneurship Education and Development)
- continuing to promote the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Program to increase student participation (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Department of Health Promotion and Protection)
- developing guidelines for credit credentials for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Duke of Edinburgh's Award)

### **New Actions**

- implement the Nova Scotia Youth Employment Strategy, entitled Employed Youth—Engaged Society (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Other government departments)
- expand support for the Youth Advisory Council and the Provincial Student Education Council to provide skill development to improve the councils' capacity to advise the Minister of Education on education, skills, training, and other issues of importance to youth and the province (**Lead:** Youth Secretariat; **Partners:** Department of Education, community and private agencies)
- work with partners to expand access to Fitness Leadership training, High Five training, and Coaching Certification for Youth (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Department of Health Promotion and Protection)

## **Goal 2: Provide better labour market access and supports to Nova Scotians**

### **Objective 2.1: Provide career- and employment-related services to Nova Scotians to help them develop their skills and find sustainable jobs**

#### **Highlights of Activities Under Way**

- offering career and job development services to eligible income assistance recipients to support their participation in employability-enhancing activities (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Work activity centres, services to persons with disabilities, services to African Nova Scotians and Aboriginal persons, Women's Employment, other advocacy groups)
- continuing to offer the Employment Development Program, a work-based training program designed to provide workplace learning opportunities and foundations for long-term employment to individuals who face significant barriers to obtaining sustainable employment (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Work Activity Centres, Services to Persons with Disabilities, Services to African Nova Scotians and Aboriginal Persons, Women's Employment, other advocacy groups)
- supporting the National Integrated Delivery Strategy (NIDS) project to ensure access to career information products for a number of audiences (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Skills Canada, Department of Community Service, sector councils)
- participating on the Employment Counselling and Career Development Committee under the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework to develop projects such as
  - the development of a framework for career development outcomes and deliverables
  - consultation with stakeholders on committee initiatives
  - development and piloting of professional development opportunities for career practitioners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Service Canada, Office of Economic Development, Department of Finance, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Nova Scotia Community College)

- continuing the review process for the recognition of additional post-secondary credits as elective credits towards the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- creating employment opportunities for Aboriginal students, racially visible students, students with disabilities, and female students pursuing studies in non-traditional areas through a summer employment diversity initiative and a summer female mentorship program (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- providing recent post-secondary graduates with an opportunity to gain valuable work experience for up to two years through the Province of Nova Scotia Post-Secondary Internship Program (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- implementing tools that support the succession management process as outlined in the Public Service Commission's, *A Guide to Succession Management* (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- providing government employees with opportunities to accelerate development and learning that focusses on portable skills and leadership competencies through the Leadership Continuity Program and the Career Assignment Program (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- improving policies and practices that help manage, recognize, and reward the performance of public servants who have contributed to government's goals and priorities (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- providing credit assessment for adults seeking to earn their Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults from the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- promoting public education to improve Nova Scotians' awareness of energy-related occupations and career opportunities (**Lead:** Department of Energy)
- disseminating *Untapped Resources: Women in Municipal Government in Nova Scotia* (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, the YWCA, Service Nova Scotia)

### **New Actions**

- pilot parent information workshops to help parents better support their children's career planning (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- develop and distribute Career Options products such as the *2006 Career Options Handbook*, *Grade 9 Career Guide*, and *Teachers Resource* (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- integrate employability into Adult Learning Program curricula by incorporating the Conference Board of Canada Employability Skills and including career explorations throughout the program (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- redesign the Career Skills Development Level IV curriculum for the Adult Learning Program (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- increase the number of positions, from 10 to 15, in the Summer Employment Diversity Program and the Summer Female Mentorship Program (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)

- pilot new Career Skills Development Level IV curriculum at six Nova Scotia Community College campuses (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- design a professional development strategy that will provide information and training to adult education instructors regarding employability, essential skills training, and emerging trends in the world of work (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Community-based literacy organizations)
- conduct research to develop the *Nova Scotia Labour Market Review 2005 and 2006* and *Industry Sector Profiles 2006* (**Lead:** Department of Education)

## Objective 2.2: Assist low-income Nova Scotians, including income assistance recipients, to access education and training

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- supporting income assistance recipients in accessing literacy and academic upgrading programs through the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Department of Community Services)
- providing free access to education materials that are at an appropriate readability level, through the Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, to ensure that materials are accessible by all Nova Scotians, regardless of income or level of education (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture)
- offering the Educate to Work program to provide opportunities for income assistance recipients to attend the Nova Scotia Community College and Université Sainte-Anne (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Department of Education, Human Resources and Social Development Canada)
- administering the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Program and the Canada Student Assistance Program to serve approximately 18,000 Nova Scotian post-secondary students each year (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- continuing to provide the Debt Reduction Program as part of the Nova Scotia Student Loan Program, which reduces debt levels for students who successfully complete their programs of study and provides further debt reduction for students who then work in Nova Scotia and/or repay their student loans in a responsible fashion (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- monitoring provincial initiatives to foster participation in post-secondary education by women on income assistance (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Federal/provincial/territorial colleagues)
- revising the parental contribution formulae for Nova Scotia student loans to provide a greater level of assistance to a greater number of students (**Lead:** Department of Education)

- providing access to education and training for income assistance and employment insurance recipients through the Canada/Nova Scotia Skill Development Agreement (**Lead:** Department of Education, Human Resources and Social Development Canada; **Partners:** Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia Community College, Université Sainte-Anne)
- implementing targeted skills development projects to assist income assistance recipients throughout Nova Scotia acquire essential and specific work skills (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Department of Education, Service Canada)

### **New Actions**

- partner with industry to expand One Journey–Work and Learn, a labour market attachment project that combines essential and specific industry skills training and that leads to guaranteed employment upon successful completion (**Lead:** Department of Education, Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Nova Scotia business and industry)
- pilot the Adult Learning Program Level II curricula, which focus on providing more support for income assistance students, at 10 pilot sites; specific changes include
  - focusing outcomes on literacy and numeracy
  - adding information, compensatory learning strategies, and resources to identify and respond to specific learning blocks
 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Community-based literacy organizations)

## **Objective 2.3: Promote equity, fairness, and diversity throughout labour market programs and services offered in Nova Scotia**

### **Highlights of Activities Under Way**

- working with businesses, labour unions, and professional associations to promote the benefits of hiring a diverse and multicultural workforce (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partners:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Office of African-Nova Scotian Affairs, Public Service Commission)
- increasing under-represented groups within Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development's client base (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Various organizations)
- providing training and start-up/growth assistance to African Nova Scotian businesses through the Black Business Initiative (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Service Canada)
- working with post-secondary education institutions to gather data on the participation of under-represented groups and to develop appropriate policies in response to the data (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Post-secondary institutions)

- working collaboratively with post-secondary institutions in the planning and implementation of targeted programs and services to support students with disabilities, such as
  - web information on programs, goods, and services available for students with disabilities
  - professional development for staff providing services to students with disabilities
  - investigating the feasibility of all post-secondary institutions collaboratively developing and sharing alternative formant materials for print-handicapped students
  - support a Saint Mary’s University conference concerning students with disabilities
  - support Mount Saint Vincent University in establishing a disability support and services model
  - support St. Francis Xavier University in developing a transition program for graduating students with disabilities

(**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- reviewing three-year accessibility plans for students with disabilities developed and implemented by Acadia University, St. Francis Xavier University, NSCAD University, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, Dalhousie University, Saint Mary’s University, Mount Saint Vincent University, Université Sainte-Anne, and Cape Breton University  
(**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- conducting ongoing discussions with disability services representatives from post-secondary institutions regarding the development and provincial implementation of service standards for goods and services provided to post-secondary students with disabilities (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- providing targeted funding to support adult literacy and essential skills training for the Acadian, African-Canadian, Mi’kmaq, and deaf communities (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Équipe d’alphabétisation-Nouvelle-Écosse, Deaf Literacy Nova Scotia, Literacy Network Unama’ki, Mi’kmaq Native Friendship Centre, Preston Area Learning Skills Society, Black Educators’ Association)
- continuing the implementation of the Adult Learning Program Level III at First Nations communities to support student transition to employment (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Eskasoni Literacy Network)
- ensuring fair, equitable, and diverse recruitment, development, and retention of provincial staff through the following human resource policy, programs, and services:
  - employment education and counselling services
  - the Affirmative Action Policy
  - the Fair Hiring Policy
  - the Sexual Harassment and No Discrimination Policy
  - the HIV/AIDS in the Workplace Policy
  - the Government Sign Language Interpreter Services Policy
  - the Diversity Talent Pool

(**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)

- providing support and employment-related services to disadvantaged groups, including single parents, persons with disabilities, and Aboriginal people (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Other government and community-based organizations, Native Council of Nova Scotia)
- advancing the Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative, which is designed to enhance the labour market participation of Aboriginal people through a collaborative and integrated approach such as the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Canada, the Mi'kmaq, and Michelin North America (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Service Canada, Michelin North America (Canada), Office of Economic Development, Mi'kmaw community)
- continuing to participate in the Diversity Round Table (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women); **Partners:** Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association, YMCA Newcomers' Centre, Atlantic Metropolis-Gender Domain)
- continuing to support the development of a strategy to recruit, prepare, support, and employ women in areas of science, trades, and technologies (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Hypatia Association, Women for Economic Equality Society, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Nova Scotia Community College)
- working with the Diversity Round Table to implement the Valuing Diversity Action Plan (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All departments)
- providing support and guidance to provincial government departments, agencies, boards, and commissions, to develop and review three-year affirmative action plans (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- working with the Mi'kmaq, the Government of Canada, and employers to identify opportunities to expand the Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Mi'kmaw Community)
- identifying opportunities for Aboriginal organizations, and provincial and federal governments to work collaboratively towards an Aboriginal economic strategic framework, which will include identifying and addressing gaps in labour market programs and services available to Aboriginal people (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Department of Education, Tri-Partite Forum)
- continuing to meet with a communications advisory committee consisting of rehabilitation programs and services staff, community services staff, disability support providers at post-secondary institutions, and students with disabilities to develop and implement a communications strategy for services offered to students with disabilities (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Department of Community Services, universities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- supporting Techsploration, a school-based career exploration initiative for grade 9 girls that provides exposure to non-traditional occupations in trades and technology (**Lead:** Department of Education, Nova Scotia Community College, Women in Trades and Technology **Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, various others)

## New Actions

- support community groups to link under-represented groups to trades and apprenticeship opportunities (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Organizations of under-represented groups)
- release and disseminate a summary report of the Round Table with Immigrant Women, which took place in February 2006 (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association, YMCA Newcomers' Centre, Atlantic Metropolis—Gender Domain)
- work with stakeholders to review and modify existing affirmative action policies (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- develop a brochure and survey to market and improve access to and use of the Diversity Talent Pool (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- redesign the workforce survey to support the Diversity Talent Pool voluntary self-identification process (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- identify and review policies falling under the Diversity Action Plan (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- develop a brochure on valuing diversity and a brochure for the implementation of the Affirmative Action Plan (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- prepare the lead chapter on social inclusion of immigrant women in a book on gender and immigration, which will be written in 2006 (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- follow-up on issues pertaining to women with disabilities within the Nova Scotia labour market as outlined in the report *Economic Integration of Women with Disabilities in Nova Scotia: Women Willing to Work*; release a summary report of recommendations and best practices (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partner:** Department of Community Services)
- conduct a series of round tables on women with disabilities (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partner:** Cumberland African Nova Scotian Association)
- negotiate new service agreements with the Nova Scotia Community College and the Society of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Nova Scotians that will detail roles and responsibilities of each party in the delivery of goods and services to students with disabilities in post-secondary studies (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Society of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Nova Scotians)
- research, catalogue, and test existing and new assistive technologies for the purpose of providing information to students and support personnel in post-secondary institutions (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Post-secondary institutions)
- engage post-secondary institutions and the federal government in the development of a longitudinal study of students with disabilities after they have completed post-secondary programs in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Post-secondary institutions, Human Resources and Social Development Canada)
- strengthen public library program capacity that supports early childhood learning and reading readiness (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Regional libraries, Read to Me!, parent resource centres)

- co-chair a new provincial initiative aimed at improving the success of struggling students in the Adult Learning Program; first-year plans include
  - the introduction of learning disabilities workshops at campuses
  - assistive technology workshops
  - a two-day teaching strategies conference
  - development of a handbook for Adult Learning Program students and staff
  - establishment of a Ready to Learn Transitions Committee
  - differentiated instruction support for faculty
 (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: Committee representation from Nova Scotia Community College, community-based literacy organizations)
- provide the services of a curriculum specialist to develop learning profiles and appropriate learning strategies for struggling students identified in the Adult Learning Program Level II revised curriculum that was piloted in 2005–2006 (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: Nova Scotia Community College, community-based literacy organizations)

## Objective 2.4: Develop and implement Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition processes and tools

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- providing advice and guidance in the areas of the practice and promotion of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) (Lead: Department of Education; Partner: Health Care Human Resource Sector Council)
- reviewing current PLAR programs, services, and practices in Nova Scotia to determine the current level of service and gaps to be addressed (Lead: Department of Education)
- developing training programs for Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) service providers to increase NSSAL's knowledge of the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition program (Lead: Department of Education)
- researching, with other jurisdictions, to identify joint projects for essential skills training for apprenticeable trades (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: Apprenticeship offices in Manitoba and British Columbia, Canadian Apprenticeship Forum)
- working with the PLAR Centre to provide career and life portfolio programming to recipients of income assistance (Lead: Department of Community Services; Partner: Prior Learning Assessment Centre)
- delivering PLAR training to Department of Community Services staff through a variety of professional development opportunities (Lead: Department of Community Services; Partner: Prior Learning Assessment Centre)
- developing a comprehensive PLAR program for apprentices, long-term trade practitioners, and newcomer skilled tradespersons (Lead: Department of Education)
- working with industry to produce a practice guide to help business and industry to incorporate PLAR approaches within their sectors (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: Industry sector councils, other partners)

- working with the post-secondary education institutions to promote and enhance the process of credit transfer as set down in the memorandum of understanding between the province and universities in December 2004 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

### **New Actions**

- establish a provincial PLAR advisory committee to share information and best practices and to inform the development of PLAR policy, programs, and services (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Department of Community Services, Public Service Commission, Department of Health, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, sector councils, Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association, community-based literacy organizations, labour, business)
- provide introductory PLAR training to counsellors working in the provision of career services in Career Resource Centres (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning delivery partners)
- complete a feasibility study regarding the creation of a publicly accessible electronic transfer credit guide (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Service Canada, Department of Community Services)
- design and deliver professional development opportunities that will increase the knowledge and understanding of the underlying principles of PLAR and the various assessment and recognition techniques (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- develop PLAR processes to further integrate the recognition of informal experiential learning into the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Various partners)
- document the history and impact of PLAR Portfolio completion on addressing employability barriers experienced by income assistance recipients (**Lead:** Department of Community Services **Partners:** Education, Prior Learning Assessment Centre)
- follow-up on Women, Work and Care: Policy at the Crossroads, a 2005 forum on the role of Nova Scotian women in the family and policies that affect them, such as maternity leave, child care, dependent care, and family friendly workplaces (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Members of the Round Table on Women's Economic Security)
- conduct research into the precarious nature of women's work in Nova Scotia and its effect on women, their families, and the Nova Scotia economy (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Service Canada, Members of the Round Table on Women's Economic Security)

## Goal 3: Strengthen Nova Scotia's system of lifelong learning opportunities

Objective 3.1: Increase the opportunities for Nova Scotia's children to develop a curiosity for learning and an ability to learn before entering Nova Scotia's education system

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- co-ordinating the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund (FLIEF), which funds projects to support parent/child literacy through a partnership with the Halifax Youth Foundation and the Department of Education (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Halifax Youth Foundation, National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources and Social Development Canada)
- chairing the Family Literacy Advisory Group for Nova Scotia and supporting the development of an action plan for family literacy in the province (**Lead:** Department of Education, Colchester East Hants Public Library; **Partners:** Nova Scotia provincial libraries, community groups, Department of Community Services, school boards, Read to Me!, Literacy Nova Scotia, National Adult Literacy Database)
- continuing with design and delivery of preschool literacy programming in all public libraries in the province (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Regional libraries, Read to Me, family resource centres)
- supporting the Francophone Family Literacy Committee in implementing its second year of a four-year nationally funded literacy initiative for the Acadian community (**Lead:** Équipe d'alphabétisation; **Partners:** Department of Education, Conseil scolaire acadien provincial, Fédération des parents acadiens, other francophone partners)
- supporting the Read to Me!/Lis-moi une histoire program, which provides reading materials to English- and French-speaking parents of every newborn baby in the province (**Lead:** Read to Me! Board, which includes Department of Education, Department of Health, IWK Health Centre, Halifax Youth Foundation)
- providing opportunities to support co-operative students in gaining apprenticeable hours and experience while earning high school credits (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Provincial school boards, employers)
- delivering curriculum-linked programs on a range of heritage topics through the Museum School Class Program in 2006–2007 (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- supporting curriculum-based education through the delivery of the School Kits Program, through which education kits of museum artifacts, specimens, and teaching materials are loaned to teachers, schools, and other educational groups (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- delivering the Prescott House program to school groups in the 2006–2007 season (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- initiating family literacy pilot projects that enhance the role that parents can play in helping their children to achieve school success (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, libraries, community groups)

- continuing to implement the Pre-Primary Program Pilots at 19 school sites (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Department of Community Services, Department of Health Promotion and Protection, Nova Scotia Community College, Mount Saint Vincent University)

### **New Actions**

- develop and distribute Career Options products such as the *2006 Career Options Handbook*, the *Grade 9 Career Guide*, and the *Grade 9 Career Guide and Teachers Resource* (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- evaluating the Pre-Primary Program pilot currently under way at 19 school sites (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Department of Community Services, Department of Health Promotion and Protection, Nova Scotia Community College, Mount Saint Vincent University)
- conducting year two of the Pre-Primary Program pilot currently under way at 19 school sites (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Department of Community Services, Department of Health Promotion and Protection, Nova Scotia Community College, Mount Saint Vincent University)
- explore opportunities for Extended Day Pre-Primary (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Department of Community Services, Department of Health Promotion and Protection, Nova Scotia Community College, Mount Saint Vincent University)

## **Objective 3.2: Improve the core skills of children in Nova Scotia's education system**

### **Highlights of Activities Under Way**

- training Reading Recovery™ teacher leaders for French immersion at Mount Saint Vincent University (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Mount Saint Vincent University)
- working collaboratively at a national level through the First Ministers Meeting on Aboriginal Issues, and at a local level through the Tri-partite Forum to improve the educational outcomes of Mi'kmaq learners in Nova Scotia, through both the public school system and the Mi'kmaq Kina'matneway (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Federal government, national and local Aboriginal organizations, Mi'kmaq, Tri-partite Forum)
- providing skill development programs to increase communication, evaluation, and entrepreneurship skills of 4-H participants (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Department of Education, Maritime Fall Fair, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, Nova Scotia Agricultural College, Nova Scotia 4-H Council)
- implementing the Class Size Initiative (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- implementing the Literacy Success Strategy (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- implementing the Mathematics Strategy (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- implementing new curriculum and resources in other core areas (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

## New Actions

- expand the Class Size initiative from grades primary–2, to grade 3, which will cap grade 3 classes at 25 students (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- cap combined grades 1–2 and grades 2–3 classes at a maximum of 20 students or allocate an additional non-teaching adult to the class (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- expand the early intervention Reading Recovery™ program to continue to increase accessibility for grade 1 students (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- increase targeted funding for literacy mentors for grades primary–9 teachers (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- support the implementation of Teaching in Action in grades primary–3; complete the development of Teaching in Action for grades 4–6 and for grades 7–9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- conduct a summer institute featuring international leaders in literacy education (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- implement Writers in Action, which includes providing resources for classroom writing centres, to support writing instruction in grades 8, 9, and 10 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- provide professional and resources development for grade 8 English language arts teachers (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- implement Cross-Curricular Reading Tools for grades 7, 8, and 9 teachers (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- increase targeted funding to boards to implement the Literacy Support Plans developed for learners in grades 7–9 who did not meet expectations for achievement in reading and writing in the 2003–2005 administrations of the Elementary Literacy Assessment (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- expand the Language Literacy Assessment program from the current assessment, which is administered in grade 6, to include Language Literacy Assessment for junior high students in grade 9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- introduce the Literacy Success Strategy at grade 10, which will include the provision of professional development and learning resources (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- increase targeted funding for the professional development of mathematics teachers for grades primary–9, school-based math leaders, and mathematics mentors (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- increase developmental math and estimation resources for grades 1–9 teachers (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

- pilot a new professional development model at the elementary level (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- begin implementation of new mathematics classroom assessment resources for grades primary–3 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- develop an Early Mathematical Literacy Assessment to be administered in grade 3 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- publish grade-specific teaching resources for grades 3–6 mathematics (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- provide new mathematics textbooks and teacher resources, for grade 5 and grade 7 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- support the expansion of the Dynamic Classroom Assessment professional development initiative at the junior high level (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- implement the new Mathematics Essentials 11 course (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- expand professional development opportunities for resource teachers and for teachers of Mathematics Plus 10, Mathematics Essentials 10, and Mathematics Essentials 11 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- expand the online assessment item bank to include items for Mathematics Foundations 11, Mathematics 12, Advanced Mathematics 12, and Pre-Calculus Mathematics 12 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- develop new Atlantic Canada curriculum for grade 5 science and for grade 8 social studies (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- provide new textbooks and teaching resources for Science 5, Social Studies 8, and Biology 11 and 12 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, universities, other Atlantic provinces' departments of education)
- develop an integrated French language arts and social studies curriculum for the grade 7 and 8 Français intégré program (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

## Objective 3.3: Expand co-operative and work experience opportunities for students in Nova Scotia's secondary education system

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- providing significant opportunities under the Community Access Program (C@P) for students to access entry-level work placement opportunities throughout Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Department of Education, other provincial government departments, Industry Canada)
- continuing student placements under the Co-operative Employment Program, in partnership with universities and with the Nova Scotia Community College (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, universities)
- reviewing a number of Nova Scotia Community College courses as part of an ongoing articulation agreement for the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning and the Nova Scotia Community College (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- continuing to provide targeted funding for school board co-operative education facilitators to co-ordinate, promote, and support the expansion of community-based learning (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College, sector councils, business and industry partners)
- working with boards and other partners to expand co-operative and work experience opportunities for students in Nova Scotia's secondary education system (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College, sector councils, business and industry partners)

### New Actions

- provide strategic leadership for the province-wide expansion of community-based learning, including co-op placements in the workplace and other community settings that provide opportunities for work experience (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College, sector councils, business and industry partners)
- publish and implement a community-based learning handbook and support materials (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College, sector councils, business and industry partners)
- establish a community-based learning web board to facilitate problem solving, exchange of ideas, resources, and information (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** school boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College, sector councils, business and industry partners)
- consider visitor information centre placements for secondary and post-secondary education co-op students (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

## Objective 3.4: Increase the opportunities for Nova Scotians to access adult basic education

### Highlights of Activities Under way

- administering and co-ordinating the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL), which provides programs for adults seeking to improve their literacy and essential skills and/or acquire a high school diploma or the General Educational Development (GED) certificate (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia Community College, Université Sainte-Anne, school boards, adult high schools, community-based learning organizations)
- continuing to work with community-based literacy organizations to maintain a sustainable delivery model for literacy programming in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Community-based literacy organizations)
- continuing to provide opportunities for seniors to participate in senior-friendly learning programs (**Lead:** Senior Citizens' Secretariat; **Partners:** Department of Education, community learning networks, seniors' organizations)
- referring individuals who require academic upgrading as part of essential skill development to the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** Department of Education)
- working with Literacy Nova Scotia to support the provision of professional development for adult educators and the development of expertise to support board development with community learning organizations (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Literacy Nova Scotia)
- supporting regional planning teams, through NSSAL, to carry out regional workshops, conferences, and sessions to improve services for adult Nova Scotians and to improve informal and referral systems (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Department of Community Services, community-based literacy organizations, Nova Scotia Community College, school boards)
- working in consultation with the community-based literacy organizations to review and revise all courses in the Level II Adult Learning Program to better serve adult learners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Community-based literacy organizations, Literacy Nova Scotia, National Adult Literacy Base, Department of Health)

### New Actions

- promote the *Health Literacy Manual for Seniors* and the importance of health literacy to health providers, educators, and seniors (**Lead:** Seniors Citizens' Secretariat; **Partners:** Department of Education, Community Learning Networks, seniors' organizations)
- promote the Strategy for Positive Aging in Nova Scotia, particularly in employment and life transitions goal setting, and encourage appropriate sectors to take steps to ensure that older Nova Scotians have access to basic adult education (**Lead:** Seniors Citizens' Secretariat; **Partners:** Department of Education, Community Learning Networks, seniors' organizations)
- enhance the literacy and basic computer skills of Transportation and Public Works employees through offering programs such as Workplace Education in partnership with the Department of Education (**Lead:** Department of Transportation and Public Works)
- pilot the General Educational Development (GED) information line in the metro area (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- review the pilot of the new GED information line to prepare for province-wide implementation (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- investigate the feasibility of online student surveys for NSSAL students (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- pilot the new Adult Learning Program Level II curricula at 10 pilot sites; changes in curricula include the following:
  - a focus on outcomes on literacy and numeracy
  - additional information, compensatory learning strategies, and resources to identify and respond to specific learning blocks
  - new transition outcomes to improve the selection and supports for students moving into the Adult Learning Program Level III programs
  - collaborative planning for teaching/learning activities using the National Adult Literacy Database website and the Literacy Nova Scotia discussion board(**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Community-based literacy organizations)

## Objective 3.5: Make education and training more relevant to the emerging skill needs of the learners and employers

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- conducting organizational needs assessments for business and industry to identify workforce training needs and options for addressing those needs (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia business and labour)
- providing professional development and certification opportunities for workplace education instructors to customize essential skills programs to meet the needs of business, industry, and labour (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia)
- continuing to support a sector engagement program to facilitate sharing of labour market information and to develop customized responses to labour market challenges (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Association of Industry Sector Councils, provincial sector councils)

- providing trade-relevant essential skills learning options for apprentices and trade qualifiers to support their success in the Apprenticeship Training Program and to achieve the necessary qualifications for their trades (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia)
- continuing to provide a half-day refresher and new training sessions on business processes for the new land registry system and on new practices and procedures resulting from changes in legislation, regulation, and policy (It is expected that up to 60 lawyers, as well as additional individuals in target occupations such as realtors, title searchers, and legal assistants, will access these training sessions in 2006–2007.) (**Lead:** Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)
- completing a needs assessment to ensure that 4-H program resources meet the needs of the farm community (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture)
- rolling out the Responsible Citizenship and Canada's Tax System learning unit in at least 25 additional schools across the province, to teach what it means to be a responsible citizen and to increase awareness of how our tax system contributes to society (**Lead:** Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations; **Partners:** Department of Education, Canada Revenue Agency)
- developing programs designed to educate students about the emerging skills necessary for employment with Transportation and Public Works (**Lead:** Department of Transportation and Public Works)
- continuing to implement the Youth Pathways and Transitions strategy to inform students of the linkages between high school courses and Nova Scotia Community College programs (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- funding the implementation of the Options and Opportunities (O<sub>2</sub>) program in 27 schools, to provide options to enable students who are not succeeding or not engaged by the high school program, to establish a career plan, complete high school, and go on to find meaningful work or continue with their education (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- developing a report to summarize the Adult Literacy and Essential Skills Summit—Working Together, Learning Together, to help form future adult learning and essential skills policies and programs (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Various)
- evaluating the provincial government corporate training calendar to ensure that appropriate quality courses are provided to government employees (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- supporting the skill development of the current workforce through the award-winning Workplace Education Initiative, to assist employees with managing change (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Partners Committee, Nova Scotia business and labour)

## New Actions

- respond to the Nova Scotia results of the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (Lead: Department of Education; Partner: Statistics Canada)
- assist school boards to establish career academies in a number of high schools (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, industry partners)
- provide professional development workshops and resources for Options and Opportunities (O<sub>2</sub>) teachers (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- support the O<sub>2</sub>, Skills for the Workplace component; develop and pilot classroom resources to support employability skills, essential skills, work readiness, aptitudes, and skills inventories (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, industry partners)
- support the O<sub>2</sub>, Head Start in the Trades component; work with boards to expand linkages to community college and industry (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, industry partners)
- work with the Nova Scotia Community College and Université Sainte-Anne to establish the parameters of guaranteed admission or advanced standing in programs for O<sub>2</sub> graduates (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, Université Sainte-Anne)
- introduce the Nova Scotia Student Life/Work Portfolio at the grade 8 level (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards)
- implement four new career-related courses for the public school system: Multimedia 12, Geomatics 12, Health and Human Services 12, and Tourism 12 (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards)
- implement Child Studies 11 and pilot a number of new family studies courses including Textile Arts and Design 7, Food Technology 10, and Food Preparation and Service 10 (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- work with education and industry partners over the next several years to develop new curriculum and resources for technology education for grades 7–12 (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards, school communities, Nova Scotia Community College, universities)
- build on Dalhousie University's recognition of the new Computer Programming 12 course and Acadia University's recognition of Business Management 12 by putting other career-related courses forward to universities and other post-secondary institutions for recognition (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: school communities, Nova Scotia Community College, universities)

## Objective 3.6: Increase the post-secondary education and training system's capacity to respond to emerging labour market needs

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- encouraging the continuation of university-based development centres that expose students and the community to entrepreneurship development activities and techniques (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, universities)
- supporting groups such as the Hypatia Association and Women for Economic Equality Society in their work of improving the culture of educational institutions and workplaces to attract and retain women in science, trades, and technology occupations (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Department of Education, Department of Community Services, Service Canada, Nova Scotia Community College)
- supporting graduate study programs by funding research through the Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust Fund (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- providing work placement opportunities at museums and cultural centres across Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing work experiences that focus on broad topics such as cultural history, science, and marine history through work placements of high school students in museums and in provincial visitor information centres (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- supporting the Co-operative Employment Program by increasing the number of meaningful summer co-op employment opportunities available with the Government of Nova Scotia from 10 to 15 (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- supporting the Energy Training Program to provide opportunities for students to gain work experience within the energy sector (**Lead:** Department of Energy; **Partners:** Energy sector employers)

### New Actions

- develop curriculum for the Medical Laboratory Technician Program to be offered at the Nova Scotia Community College beginning September 2007 (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Community College, Department of Education)
- expand the Practical Nursing program at the Nova Scotia Community College Akerley Campus to accommodate an additional 30 students beginning in September 2006 (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Community College; **Partners:** Department of Education, Department of Health)
- support the active participation of the business community in the education of Nova Scotia's youth by increasing awareness and access to partnership opportunities (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Employers, sector associations)

## Objective 3.7: Promote lifelong learning through the development of a learning culture

### Highlights of Activities Under Way

- promoting workplace learning as a primary strategy for addressing the skills requirements of our workforce (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Business, labour, chambers of commerce, NovaKnowledge)
- promoting the benefits of human resource development, employment equity, lifelong learning, and best practices guidelines (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Employers)
- organizing, participating in, and supporting annual events that celebrate learning including International Family Literacy Day, the Peter Gzowski Invitational (PGI) Golf Tournament, International Literacy Day, International Adult Learning Week, and Word on the Street (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- supporting recipients of income assistance to develop learning plans designed to promote labour market attachment (**Lead:** Department of Community Services)
- organize the second annual Council of the Federation (COF) Literacy Award to an outstanding adult literacy learner in the province (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Council of the Federation)
- integrate health literacy theme material within the Adult Learning Program Level II curricula (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- promoting lifelong learning opportunities for seniors in the *Programs for Seniors* directory (**Lead:** Senior Citizens' Secretariat)
- implementing a lunch n' learn program for various municipal government departments in Halifax Regional Municipality (**Lead:** Department of Transportation and Public Works)
- develop training and resource materials to promote the culture of continual learning and updating of skills among farmers, farm families, and farm employees (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partners:** 4-H and rural organizations, Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Resource Stewardship Agriculture Resource Coordinators)
- supporting lifelong learning in the provincial government by working towards becoming a learning organization through a learning strategy and through the service excellence goal, which encourages employees to further contribute to corporate goals (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- implementing the ArtReach program (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, community partners)
- implementing the School Code of Conduct through the provision of inservice education on programming documents and guidelines (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- supporting the implementation of *Challenge for Excellence: Enrichment and Gifted Education Resource Guide* through the provision of professional resources for teachers (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- providing targeted funding to increase support for school libraries (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

- expanding the range of advanced course options available to students in grades 11 and 12 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- increasing support for health education, personal development, and physical education programs in public schools (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- providing targeted funding to school boards to refresh school library resources and to improve the ratio of school library technician staff to students (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

### **New Actions**

- identify and promote the capacity of public libraries to support the lifelong learning pursuits of Nova Scotians (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Metro Council on Continuing Education, regional libraries)
- develop a multi-year professional development plan and an interactive website to support the professional development of adult learning practitioners, particularly those working in community-based settings (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning delivery partners, National Adult Literacy Database)
- provide expert advice through the Nova Scotia Symposium on Career Development Steering Committee to support the professional development activities of Literacy Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Literacy Nova Scotia)
- implement improvements to the Nova Scotia Employability Assessment program to better support income assistance recipients in developing plans for their return to the labour market; further refinements may result from an ongoing evaluation of Employment Support Services administered by the Department of Community Services (**Lead:** Department of Community Services)
- implement year two of the province-wide plan for school improvement and planning/ accreditation, which engages schools in an extensive review of their student achievement and school performance (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- engage an additional 60 schools the province-wide plan for school improvement and planning/ accreditation process (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- expand artist-in-schools programs (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, community partners)
- work with boards to develop resources and provide professional development to ensure that school advisory councils have a meaningful voice in support of quality education in the province (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- pilot new public school advanced courses for English and chemistry at the grade 11 level and for music, visual arts, chemistry, global geography, and global history in grade 12 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- begin implementation of Advanced Physics 11, Advanced Music 11, and Advanced Visual Arts 11 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- assist schools in preparing for the implementation of International Baccalaureate (I) grade 11 courses in 2007–2008 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- provide 2,300 computers, LCD projectors, software, and accessories to expand access to information technology in schools (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

- release eight correspondence study courses for students' use in 2006–2007 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- fund a total of 100 seats in online courses for small high schools and develop three new online courses (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- provide four hands-on boat building courses to enhance opportunities for direct learning in cultural heritage and foster the preservation of traditional skills (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- develop a new participatory course in coastal navigation to enhance learning opportunities in heritage skills (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

# Conclusion

Nova Scotia's capacity to respond to the labour market skill development needs of the province has grown immensely since the Skills Nova Scotia Framework and the first action plan were launched in 2002–2003. The creation of the Office of Immigration and Nova Scotia's Immigration Strategy, the signing of the memorandum of understanding with universities, the initiation of the construction of the new Nova Scotia Community College Dartmouth campus, and the expansion of the number of sites at which adult learning classes can be accessed are among the province's many accomplishments since that time. The *Skills Nova Scotia Action Plan 2006–2007* continues to build on the many accomplishments that have been achieved.

Given the great number of changes that can take place over the course of five years, it is time to review our priorities and reset our course for the future. In the fall of 2006, a review of the Skills Nova Scotia Framework will be initiated to validate the province's vision, goals, and objectives and to clarify key deliverables to advance Nova Scotia's skills agenda in the future.





