



Skills Nova Scotia

Annual Progress Report 2005–2006

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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 future social and economic prosperity of our province is influenced by the ability of Nova Scotians to contribute fully to our economy. The *Skills Nova Scotia Annual Progress Report 2005–2006* demonstrates our continued commitment to building a strong workforce and a vibrant economy. Stakeholders across the public and private sectors are working together to ensure our province is ready to meet the demands of today and the promise of tomorrow.

In the past few years, we have made significant progress in our efforts to create a skilled, knowledgeable, and responsive workforce. We have built a solid foundation of policies, programs, and services to help us meet labour market demands and must now focus on developing and expanding collaborative efforts among our partners. The accomplishments outlined in this report are a testament to strong partnerships between governments, provincial departments, businesses, industries, community organizations, and educational institutions. We are all working together to advance the province's skills agenda.

The following are but a few examples of the positive outcomes that have resulted from these partnerships:

- The Office of Immigration works with businesses and labour organizations to attract, integrate, and retain immigrants, recognizing the important contributions they make to our province.
- The One Journey-Work and Learn project, a multi-partner initiative, responds to identified skills shortages by providing essential, industry-specific skills training for income assistance recipients.
- The Nova School of Adult Learning, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Community College, Université Sainte-Anne, regional school boards, and community-based organizations, offered programs for adult learners at 170 sites around the province. In 2005–2006, over 500 adult learners graduated with a High School Diploma for Adults.
- Industry, business and government are working to advance educational programs Nova Scotians need to take advantage of current and future opportunities. Practical Nursing, Occupational Diving, Boat Building, and Aircraft Maintenance are a few examples.

Thanks to the co-ordinated efforts of stakeholders across Nova Scotia, our people and our businesses are better able to compete in the global marketplace. We are building a brighter future for all Nova Scotians.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Rodney MacDonald'.

Rodney MacDonald
Premier of Nova Scotia

Message from the Minister of Education



Office of
the Minister
of Education



I am pleased to present the *Skills Nova Scotia Annual Progress Report 2005–2006*. As Minister of the lead department for Skills Nova Scotia, I am encouraged by our progress in building a workforce that is able to compete in today's global marketplace. This report highlights the initiatives that the Nova Scotia government has taken in 2005–2006 to address labour market challenges and prepare for future opportunities.

Since the launch of the Skills Nova Scotia Framework in 2002–2003, the number of initiatives has more than doubled. We've been working diligently with partners at every level of the private and public sector to ensure Nova Scotians have opportunities to develop the skills they need for the jobs and careers they want. Part of this endeavour is ensuring access to quality education programs and continually enhancing our education system to deliver those programs effectively. It's also about providing Nova Scotians with quality labour market and career information. This information is critical in making wise career and employment choices. Finally, it's about connecting industries and employers with the resources and supports needed to create high performance work environments.

The progress report demonstrates that the Skills Nova Scotia Framework and Annual Action Plans are working. We have succeeded in building a solid foundation and we're working toward building a system of strategic partnerships from which we can continue to grow and develop Nova Scotia's workforce.

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

Karen Casey
Minister of Education

Executive Summary

The Skills Nova Scotia Framework outlines three key strategies to ensure that Nova Scotia's workforce is fully prepared to take advantage of the economic opportunities emerging in Nova Scotia. They are

- meet the skill needs of Nova Scotia's labour market
- provide better labour market access and supports to Nova Scotians
- strengthen Nova Scotia's system of lifelong learning opportunities

The *Skills Nova Scotia Annual Progress Report 2005–2006* highlights Nova Scotia's impressive record of success in moving the province's skills agenda forward in 2005–2006.

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

Meeting the skill needs of Nova Scotia's labour force means having a finger on the pulse of Nova Scotia's immediate, emerging, and future labour market needs. Timely and accurate labour market information underlies the development of responsive policies and programs, and supports labour market decision making. It is a key factor in education and career decision making for students, employers, employees, human resource specialists, teachers, and anyone else who has a role in the labour market.

In 2005–2006, numerous initiatives were undertaken to collect, analyse, and ensure the accessibility of labour market information. A series of roundtables were held throughout the province to advance our understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing employers and employees in the province, and surveys were conducted to extend our knowledge of student learning and employment pathways. A demographic research project was initiated to gain a better understanding of the economic and social policy implications of Nova Scotia's changing demographic situation, and the Nova Scotia Labour Market Review 2005, which outlines key labour market statistics in Nova Scotia, was published.

Meeting the skill needs of Nova Scotia's labour force also means developing the policies, programs, and systems to ensure an ongoing supply of trained workers. Numerous education and training programs were introduced in 2005–2006, to address labour market skills shortages and gaps. The expansion of the specialized welding training program to meet international industry standards, the development of a customized training program to upgrade maintenance technicians' skills at Michelin plants in Nova Scotia, and the development of apprenticeship curriculum standards, are a handful of examples of last year's initiatives.

The development of policies and programs to promote safe and healthy work environments, fair employment standards, and stable labour-management relations continued. Considerable progress was also made in developing a process for recognizing international credentials and helping immigrants to understand the process that must be undertaken to practise their professions in Nova Scotia.

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

Co-ordinating programs and services to support Nova Scotians in making career and employment choices is critical for the success of the Skills Nova Scotia Framework. This involves providing career and employment counselling services and resources, and ensuring access to education and training, for all Nova Scotians.

In 2005–2006 access to employment counselling services was expanded through a variety of print, classroom, and web-based resources. New publications and resources to support students, teachers, counsellors, and parents, were developed, and the Nova Scotia career website was expanded to include career development and employment sections as well as additional Nova Scotia-specific labour market information.

Thousands of under-employed Nova Scotians accessed enhanced employment opportunities in 2005–2006 through various provincial programs. The Educate to Work program, the Employment Development Pilot Project, and a new grant for first-time students from low-income families, all provided workplace learning and enhanced employment opportunities for income assistance recipients and low income individuals. These programs added to the already substantial number of ongoing Skills Nova Scotia initiatives that provide educational upgrading, skills training, and employment for Nova Scotians.

The principles of equity, fairness, and diversity are crucial to the success of the Skills Nova Scotia Framework. Commitment to these principles is clearly evidenced by the province's support for programs such as the Diversity Round Table, the Round Table on Women's Economic Security, the Black Business Initiative (BBI), Mi'kmaq Quest, the Aboriginal Labour Market Strategy, and targeted funding to support literacy programs for Acadian, African Canadian, and Mi'kmaq communities and deaf learners.

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

The nurturing of a lifelong learning culture in Nova Scotia is a prerequisite for the continued development of a skilled and knowledgeable labour force. In 2005–2006, great strides were made in encouraging positive attitudes toward learning to prepare Nova Scotians at all stages of life for success in the future.

Developmentally appropriate education and literacy programs such as the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund (FLIEF), the Literacy Success initiative, the Family Literacy Advisory Group for Nova Scotia, the Class Size initiative, and the Mathematics Strategy, support curiosity for learning in children and the ability to learn. High school courses such as Health and Human Services 12 and Applied Networking Technology 11 & 12, and programs such as Options and Opportunities, which was designed to expand secondary students' exposure to the education and career choices available to them after graduation, were rolled out in 2005–2006. Co-operative education and apprenticeship programs were also developed to provide valuable work experience and apprenticeable hours for our youth.

In 2005–2006 alone, approximately 500 adult learners graduated with their High School Graduation Diplomas through the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning, bringing the total number of graduates to almost 2000 since 2001. Most of these adult learners went on to further education and to find better employment opportunities.

Perhaps the greatest outcome in 2005–2006 is the commencement of the construction of the new Nova Scotia Community College metro campus and the renovations for existing campuses, which will increase Nova Scotia's college system capacity to approximately 10,000 seats by 2007.

The Skills Nova Scotia Framework is also an effective catalyst for creating strategic partnerships and opportunities for skills partners to work hand-in-hand to advance programs to meet common needs. The development of certification and professional development programs for workplace education instructors, the development of new curricula and more flexible learning opportunities such as part-time, customized, and online learning to meet learning needs for business, the review of existing apprenticeship trade regulations, and the development of apprenticeship curriculum standards to improve the apprenticeship system in Nova Scotia are several such examples. The activities contained within this report also reflect the mutually beneficial efforts between the Canadian and Nova Scotian governments. The result of these co-operative efforts among industry, business, and government is a more focussed and sustained effort to develop and distribute the programs and services we need to develop a skilled, knowledgeable, and responsive workforce.

This summary provides a sampling of Nova Scotia's activities and achievements in advancing the goals and objectives of the Skills Nova Scotia Action Plan. Please read on to gain a true appreciation of the innovative solutions and creative strategies for building a world-class workforce fully prepared to take advantage of existing and future opportunities that took place in 2005–2006.

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Introduction

In June 2005, the Province of Nova Scotia released its annual action plan for advancing the goals and objectives of the Skills Nova Scotia Framework. The activities outlined in the action plan reflected the actions needed to support Nova Scotia in meeting the challenges and opportunities of today's global market. The plan brought together partners from 21 provincial departments, agencies, and offices and engaged stakeholders from the government, business, industry, educational institutions, community organizations, and labour in a co-ordinated effort to support Nova Scotia in developing a world-class workforce fully prepared to take advantage of existing and future opportunities.

The *Skills Nova Scotia Annual Progress Report 2005–2006* marks our commitment and our steady progress toward building a strong workforce and a vibrant economy.

The accomplishments detailed in this report were submitted by the following Nova Scotia government departments, offices, and agencies:

- Aboriginal Affairs
- Acadian Affairs
- Agriculture
- Community Services
- Economic Development
- Education
- Environment and Labour
- Health
- Intergovernmental Affairs
- Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women
- Office of Immigration
- Public Service Commission
- Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations
- Senior Citizens' Secretariat
- Tourism, Culture and Heritage
- Transportation and Public Works
- Youth Secretariat

The *Skills Nova Scotia Annual Progress Report 2005–2006*, highlights the achievements and outcomes of these action items.

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

Annual Progress Report

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

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

Objective 1

Research, develop, and distribute high-quality labour market information

Activity

- working with the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework–Labour Market Information Task Team to identify priority sectors, industries, and occupations about which better supply and demand information is needed and undertake work to address these needs (**Lead:** Service Canada; **Partners:** Office of Economic Development, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Department of Finance, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Industry Canada, Department of Community Services, Department of Environment and Labour, Nova Scotia Community College, Department of Education)
- co-ordinating a research project to outline the economic and social policy implications of Nova Scotia's changing demographic situation (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Department of Finance, Senior Citizens' Secretariat, Office of Economic Development, Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Department of Health, Service Canada)
- updating and releasing the 2005 *Nova Scotia Business Climate Index*, a key measure that compares Nova Scotia's business climate to that of other Canadian jurisdictions (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Various partners across government)

Achievement

The task team has redefined this activity to develop a methodology to identify key sectors where better supply and demand information is required. Activities will take place in 2006–2007.

A steering committee of interdepartmental representatives have been working with contracted consultants on this project.

The *2005 Nova Scotia Business Climate Index* was updated. Final preparations are under way for release in the fall of 2006. The index will be posted online at <www.gov.ns.ca>.

Activity

- participating on the Labour Market Information Committee under the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework to develop such projects as a single point of entry portal for web-based labour market information in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Service Canada, Office of Economic Development, Department of Finance, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Industry Canada, Nova Scotia Business Inc., Department of Environment and Labour, Nova Scotia Community College)
- participating in the development of survey tools to collect labour market information from groups such as employers, sector councils, industry associations, labour organizations, and regional development agencies (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Service Canada, Department of Community Services, Office of Economic Development, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Nova Scotia Community College, business, industry, labour)
- providing input to the Petroleum Human Resources Council of the Canada Alignment Strategy project, which is intended to narrow the gap between what education and training institutions currently provide and what knowledge and skills oil and gas employers seek in new employees (**Lead:** Department of Energy; **Partner:** Petroleum Human Resources Council of Canada)

Achievement

The website has been completed and is available online at www.labourmarketinfo.EDnet.ns.ca.

In 2005–2006 the Workforce Skill Development Forum approved a plan to consider options to proceed with the implementation of an employer survey. The plan is now being reviewed by the Department of Education.

Provincial representatives attended steering committee meetings in Calgary, Alberta. The steering committee developed and released a strategic plan for improving the alignment between the delivery of post-secondary educational curriculum and the needs of employers as identified in *The Decade Ahead* study which can be found at www.petrohrsc.ca.

Activity

- supporting the Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP) in its Smart Halifax Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) project and assessing practices for engaging employers to address human resource issues (**Partners:** Office of Economic Development, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Department of Education)
- supporting the work of the Atlantic Apprenticeship Council related to the national Construction Sector Council Labour Market Information project and outcomes of the Atlantic Construction Symposium (**Partners:** Department of Education, Construction Association of Nova Scotia, other industry representation)
- participating in planning an Atlantic Provinces Information Technology Sector Symposium to be held in 2005 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Council of Atlantic Premiers, Atlantic Provinces Community College Consortium)
- developing labour market information and career information for parents through the Canadian Career Information Partnership (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Department of Community Services)
- working with provincial government partners, the federal government, business, and labour to better understand current and future skills needs in the province to help target our immigration strategy to fill these needs (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partners:** Department of Education and Office of Economic Development, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)

Achievement

Through the Smart Business Retention and Expansion project, LumberMart, the Nova Scotia Community College, the Building Supply Dealers Association, and other building supply companies launched a 20-week course aimed at addressing a skills gap of qualified building supply sales professionals in the region.

With the support of the Atlantic Labour Market Information Committee, the National Construction Sector Council has made significant progress in advancing the analysis of construction occupations in Nova Scotia and elsewhere. The council will release its reports in June 2006 .

Planning is under way and the date for the symposium has been changed to October 2006.

A career information handbook and Internet resource for parents, *The Parents Resource*, has been developed and will be distributed in September 2006. This handbook will also be available online at <www.ccip-picc.org>.

Employment profiles were developed to assist with the recruitment of foreign workers at immigration marketing fairs. *Hiring Immigrants: Opening Doors to New Opportunities* has been published and distributed to membership of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters and other employers interested in learning about services that can assist them in hiring immigrants. This publication is available online at <www.cme-mec.ca>.

Activity

- evaluating, through the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework–Labour Market Information Task Team, the skills inventory process and results and identify means by which the skills inventories can be developed as effective labour market information resources
(**Lead:** Department of Education;
Partners: Service Canada, Office of Economic Development, Department of Finance, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Industry Canada, Nova Scotia Business Inc., Department of Environment and Labour, Nova Scotia Community College)
- promoting access to career information from sector councils via the National Integrated Delivery Strategy project
(**Lead:** Department of Education, Nova Scotia Career Development Association;
Partners: Department of Community Services, sector councils)
- engaging agriculture and fishing industry participation in discussion of issues, including labour market challenges, that are affecting the development and success of their business, to highlight barriers and challenges that affect growth and to consider opportunities for future development through a series of roundtable sessions across the province
(**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture)

Achievement

This project has been deferred.

A national website, <www.workapedia.ca>, has been developed. The National Integrated Delivery Strategy held a one day consultation session with over 45 participants representing 12 constituency groups. Action items for 2006–2007 were recommended to support the delivery and implementation of sectoral information and resources through the Alliance of Sector Councils.

A total of 11 business development round tables involving business managers from the agriculture, aquaculture, and fishery sectors, as well as key stakeholders in the processing and value-added sectors, were facilitated to look at development trends in the food industry and to identify business opportunities. Participants identified challenges to the growth of their businesses and provided input into strategies they felt would be effective in addressing these barriers.

Activity

- updating statistical publications and developing policy briefs on women in the labour market (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Black Educators Association)
- continuing to enhance data quality and collection in support of the Atlantic Advisory Council on Health Human Resources regional study (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Department of Education, educational institutions, professional associations)
- participating in the development of an inter-jurisdictional public-sector engagement model index that will guide a common set of questions for use in employee surveys across provinces (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- conducting employee surveys that will provide metrics for strategic human resource planning and allow the provincial government to monitor employee satisfaction and commitment (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- disseminating *In The Picture ... a Future with Women in Trades, Science and Technology: Volumes 1 and 2* (**Lead:** Hypatia Association, Women for Economic Equality Society [WEE]; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)

Achievement

A brief with recommendations for labour standards revisions was submitted to the Government of Canada's Federal Labour Standards Review. *Women With Disabilities in Nova Scotia: A Statistical Profile* will be released in April 2006. A revised edition of *Money Matters* is expected to be released in May of 2006. Both publications will be available online at <www.gov.ns.ca/staw/pub.htm>.

The Atlantic Study for Health Human Resources Planning has been completed and the Executive Summary is on the AHHRA website <www.ahhra.ca>. Additional documents associated with the study will also be available on the web, once translated.

An inter-jurisdictional public-sector engagement model was developed, and agreement on common employee survey questions was reached across jurisdictions. The Common Employee Engagement Measurement Tool was endorsed at the June 2005 Public Service Commission Conference.

The 2004–2005 Employee Survey was conducted and results were released. The results can be found on the Public Service Commission website at <www.labourmarketinfo.EDnet.ns.ca/>.

Volumes 1 and 2 of *In the Picture ... a Future with Women in Trades, Science and Technology* were disseminated and distributed to secondary educational institutions and the Nova Scotia Community College. Volume 3 was published and disseminated to employers, managers, human resource specialists, and employees.

Activity

- releasing statistical information on the economic situation of women with disabilities (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- analyzing statistical data to define areas at risk for skill shortages in the public service and to inform human resources planning in government departments (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- advising on the development of follow-up surveys for students who have graduated from the Nova Scotia Community College and from Nova Scotia universities to determine their employment pathways, success, and satisfaction (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities and Nova Scotia Community College)
- supporting the expansion of the Nova Scotia Community College graduate follow-up survey to create a better understanding of the learning and employment pathways of apprenticeship students and Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning students. (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- conducting a graduate follow-up survey for students enrolled in post-secondary training at registered private career colleges in Nova Scotia; survey results will be available online and found the site index at <www.EDnet.ns.ca> (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Registered private career colleges)

Achievement

Women With Disabilities in Nova Scotia: A Statistical Profile will be released in April 2006. The report will be available online at <www.gov.ns.ca/staw/pub.htm>.

Retirement forecast models were developed to determine the extent of employee retirement. A survey was conducted to define at-risk areas in government. Reports have been developed to support succession management programs.

The Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission Advisory Committee on Information and Analysis has provided input on two graduate follow-up surveys: the class of 1999 in 2004 and the Class of 2003 in 2005. Survey results will be posted online at <www.mphec.ca>.

This project was not completed due to resourcing issues.

The survey process has commenced, and it is anticipated that the survey results will be published and available online in the fall of 2006.

Activity

- publishing and distributing 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)
- publishing a comprehensive *Mathematics Pathways* poster map and distributing it to schools for mathematics classrooms, and continuing the development of additional *Pathways* poster maps (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, sectoral partners, intergovernmental partners)
- developing information resources that will encourage students to consider various careers and entrepreneurial opportunities in the cultural sector (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, sectoral partners, intergovernmental partners)

Achievement

The first series of 13 *Career Pathways* pamphlets for students and parents was completed. The pamphlets are in production and will be distributed in 2006–2007.

Comprehensive *Mathematics Pathways* poster maps were published and distributed to secondary schools for display in all junior high school and senior high school mathematics classrooms. A *Trades, Technology, and Business Pathways* poster map has been developed.

The first series of 13 *Career Pathways* brochures was developed, and a set of five *What's Your Favorite Subject?* pamphlets were published.

Objective 2

Co-ordinate targeted initiatives that satisfy emerging skill needs

Activity

- convening a Workforce Development Planning Forum with the Skills Nova Scotia partners to identify common labour force skill development challenges and to create partnered solutions (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Office of Economic Development, Department of Community Services, industry organizations, Department of Environment and Labour)

Achievement

Industry and government partners worked together to develop a guide to ensure that labour market information proposals to government will be guided by a standard framework. The document *Standards and Guidelines for Labour Market Proposals from Industry* was approved.

Activity

- working with the other provinces and territories through the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM) 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:** Intergovernmental Affairs)
- supporting the implementation of CEO roundtables to better understand and address workforce-related issues as identified by Nova Scotia businesses (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- 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 employers (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development, Department of Education, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency; **Partner:** Human Resources and Social Development Canada)

Achievement

A draft Labour Market Framework Agreement was developed by the Forum of Labour Market Ministers, which led to the creation of the Labour Market Partnership Agreements signed by Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. Progress in Nova Scotia and other provinces and territories is contingent upon the direction of the new federal government.

Eleven CEO Roundtables were hosted around the province with 143 business leaders attending. An internal report was issued.

Sponsorship was provided for Human Resource Association of Nova Scotia conference, Return on Investment through Human Resources, including sponsorship of small and medium enterprise (SME) business participants, and a SME focus group during the conference.

Research was conducted and two reports were produced: *Survey: Benefits of Training, Barriers and What Incentive to Train Would Be Meaningful to Business*, and *Benefits of Training: A Look at the Returns from Human Capital Investment to Employers*. These reports can be accessed through the Department of Education, Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development website <skillsnovascotia.EDnet.ns.ca>.

The delivery of a peer learning guide was supported.

Activity

- 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)
- implementing a comprehensive Brand Nova Scotia strategy that includes targeting expatriate Nova Scotians to return to Nova Scotia to live, work, invest, and do business
(**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Various provincial departments)
- continuing to support 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)

Achievement

Acted in an advisory capacity and provided funding to create and distribute 1,000 copies of *Hiring Immigrants: A Guide for Nova Scotia Employers*. This publication is designed to encourage Nova Scotia manufacturers to consider immigrants as part of their hiring strategy. Support was provided to the Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium, resulting in two new consortiums being formed: Colchester and Halifax. Funding was provided to the Trucking Human Resource Sector Council to support an Attraction and Retention Best Practices project. This project resulted in laying the foundation for the development of a human resource action plan for the trucking industry.

Quality of life information and career opportunities have been added to the *Nova Scotia: Come to Life* website, <www.novascotialife.com>. The website provides information to immigrants, newcomers, and expatriates and is promoted through targeted advertising campaigns in major Canadian cities and through stories in Nova Scotia's brand publication, *Open to the World*. Responsibility for Brand Nova Scotia was transferred to Communications Nova Scotia as of March 31, 2006.

A total of 143 workplace education grants were awarded in 2005–2006.

Activity

- supporting the Nova Scotia Association of Regional Development Authorities (NSARDA) in expanding the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) project to the province (**Partners:** Department of Education, Service Canada, Office of Economic Development, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)
- supporting the Greater Halifax Partnership (GHP) in its Smart Halifax Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) project and assessing practices for engaging employers to address human resource issues (**Partners:** Office of Economic Development, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Department of Education)
- working with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) and a consultant to conduct an evaluation of the preliminary results of the Greater Halifax Partnership Smart Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) project and to address issues identified through the evaluation (**Partners:** Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Office of Economic Development, Service Canada, Nova Scotia Community College)
- continuing to lead a Sector Engagement Program to improve communication with industry sector councils and sector-like organizations and to identify areas for collaboration and partnership around common labour market development goals (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Industry organizations, industry sector councils, employers)

Achievement

The NSARDA Business Retention and Expansion initiative will be implemented in 2006–2007.

Through the Smart Business Retention and Expansion project, LumberMart, the Nova Scotia Community College, the Building Supply Dealers Association, and other building supply companies, launched a 20-week course aimed at addressing a skills gap of qualified building supply sales professionals in the region.

The evaluation has been completed and incorporated into the next phases of the BRE project.

Supported 10 sector initiatives, including research, forums, communications, and workforce development programs to support the identification of areas for collaboration and partnership for labour market development goals.

Activity

- working with stakeholders to develop a co-ordinated strategy for recruitment and retention of women in science, trades, and technology occupations; Women Unlimited will initiate two pilot projects at the Nova Scotia Community College to provide the necessary training and on-the-job mentoring and support (**Lead:** Women for Economic Equality Society, Hypatia Association, Women in Science, Trades and Technology Working Group; **Partners:** Department of Education, Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Nova Scotia Community College, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- 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)

Achievement

A three-year funding strategy for Women Unlimited, a multi-faceted, co-ordinated strategy for re-entry of women to the workplace, has been put in place. This strategy provides women with access to education and training in science, trades, and technology occupations. The Bridgewater and Halifax campuses of the Nova Scotia Community College were selected as pilot sites for this project. Intake will take place in the spring of 2006 for the Bridgewater Campus and in the fall of 2006 in Halifax.

Supported 15 Older Worker Client Navigators in career resource centres. Delivered the Age Advantage Program to 450 clients at six career resource centres and at the National Consultation on Career Development conference.

Activity

- assisting industries to respond to human resource issues through trade designations or compulsory trade designations (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** industry ad hoc committees)
- 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 the civilian workforce who will retire in the next decade (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Maritime Forces Atlantic)

Achievement

The boatbuilder trade has been designated and applications for designation have been received for the boilermaker, steamfitter/pipefitter, and motor vehicle body repair trades.

The Workforce Strategy Implementation Plan and ADIANS–Human Resource Partnership Human Resource Analysis were completed.

Eighteen students participated in eight-week work placements in trades, technologies and other occupations in 2005–2006. Sixty students were exposed to trades and technologies at Maritime Forces Atlantic through workplace tours during March break.

Activity

- continuing to implement the Nova Scotia Nursing Strategy by
 - supporting practising nurses—utilizing the TeleHealth Network, orientation programs, continuing education courses, and the RN Professional Development Centre
 - supporting student nurses—providing the co-operative education program for third-year Bachelor of Nursing students who have 10 weeks of paid employment between June and August
 - enhancing recruitment by supplying relocation allowances and re-entry programs for licenced practical nurses (LPNs) and registered nurses (RNs), maintaining the provincial recruitment website, and increasing the number of nurse training seats and bursary programs
 - supporting workforce deployment and utilization—awarding nursing grants, conducting leadership conferences, and supporting the Environment Collaborative Program of the Practice Environment Collaboration Program in partnership with the College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia
(Lead: Department of Health;
Partners: Provincial Nursing Network, employers)

Achievement

The number of full-time and part-time nurses working in permanent positions increased from 8071 to 8222 over the past year.

Bursaries were provided to fourth-year nursing graduates as an incentive to stay in Nova Scotia; over 80 percent of new graduates continue to be retained in Nova Scotia with nearly 90 percent finding employment in full-time positions.

An additional 100 co-operative education seats were added to the previous 120 seats.

Financial awards were provided to more than 30 nurses re-entering the profession, and relocation allowances were given to 98 nurses to work in Nova Scotia.

The \$7.1 million invested for nurse training over the four year period from 2003 to 2007 continued to support the increase of nursing graduates. A total of 238 RNs and 140 LPNs graduated in 2005. The feasibility of further expansion of nursing seats, including the possibility of new education sites, is currently being explored.

The annual Conference on Nursing Leadership continued to increase its numbers of nurses registered each year.

As of December 2005, 13 agencies were participating in the Practice Environment Collaboration Program. Twelve of the 13 agencies completed the Quality Practice Setting Survey, a survey to assess what to change in each agency's practice environments.

Activity

- training 50 medical laboratory technologists through a joint customized Medical Laboratory Technologist (MLT) program between the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) and the New Brunswick Community College (NBCC), which ensures that each lab technologist will work in Nova Scotia for two years following graduation in exchange for an \$8000 bursary (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Provincial Nursing Network, Nova Scotia Community College, New Brunswick Community College, employers)
- initiating recruitment of 25 additional medical laboratory technologist students for a third MLT program (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Provincial Nursing Network, employers)
- developing plans to establish a MLT training program in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Health, Department of Education; **Partners:** Provincial Nursing Network, employers, Nova Scotia Community College)
- identifying the capacity of the provincial civil service to provide services in French (**Lead:** Office of Acadian Affairs; **Partners:** 14 provincial departments and offices)

Achievement

The first class of the joint Nova Scotia/ New Brunswick Community College MLT program graduated in January 2006, and the second class has entered its second year.

Agreement has been reached to support an additional 22 students to access the 2006–2008 MLT program at the NBCC in order to avoid a gap in graduates prior to the NSCC launching its MLT program in 2007.

A two-year MLT program with an expected intake of 24 students per year will commence in 2007 at the Dartmouth Campus of Nova Scotia Community College.

The need for French language services across government and the public service has been established as one of the Nova Scotia government's Corporate Human Resource Plan objectives for 2005–2010. A pilot project for French-language training of public servants has been coordinated. Over 100 Government of Nova Scotia employees attended 30 hours of French classes at Université Sainte Anne campuses in Halifax, Tusket, and Sydney as part of the pilot project.

Activity

- providing opportunities, tools, and resources for French language skills maintenance and growth 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)
- launching a recruitment video at high schools, post-secondary institutions, career fairs, and professional associations and on the government website to feature exciting career opportunities in the provincial public service (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- releasing a new comprehensive corporate human resource plan, which includes as a goal for the provincial government to become a preferred employer (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- facilitating activities that will 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)

Achievement

A keyboard tool belt was produced to assist Nova Scotia government employees with typing French accents using the Alt-key and the numeric keypad. French-language Services Coordinators from 14 Nova Scotia government departments and agencies took part in a workshop on providing French-language services.

Fifty Government of Nova Scotia employees participated in French classes put on by the Federal Council of Nova Scotia In 2006–2007. Classes were held in Dartmouth, Halifax, and Sydney.

A new career website, <www.gov.ns.ca/careers>, providing job postings, links, and information on careers with government was launched in April 2006. A recruitment video was created for use at educational institutions, job fairs, and job search organizations.

The Corporate Human Resource Plan has been released. Forty-two presentations have been made to approximately 1,000 employees province-wide, and departments have begun to incorporate the human resource plan into their business plans.

Funding in the amount of \$95,000 was provided to the Tourism Human Resource Council to support current industry needs and the Council's mandate, which includes advancing short- and long-term goals related to human resource priorities. Areas that were supported include career development, human resource marketing and implementation, national development, and service excellence delivery.

Activity

- assisting and developing training programs for provincial and regional Visitor Information Centre staff
(Lead: Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing investment and facilitating training programs for Nova Scotia's tourism industry operators through the Best Business Practices Mission
(Lead: Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing investment for skill development workshops and other professional development opportunities to enhance the market-readiness of Nova Scotia's tourism business organization
(Lead: Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

Achievement

The 2005 Visitor Information Centre (VIC) training program was developed and implemented. The program consisted of product knowledge tours and tourism awareness and sales training for approximately 110 provincial VIC staff. In addition, six product knowledge tours were developed and implemented to provide training and development to approximately 200 front-line staff from provincial and regional VICs throughout Nova Scotia. Funding assistance was provided through the VIC Quality Performance Program for local and regional VIC front-line staff to attend training in various programs such as SuperHost, Service 1st, Emergency First Aid, WHMIS, and other customized training programs.

Funding was provided for tourism industry members to attend Best Business Practices Missions: eight members attended the Tourism Human Resource Development Study Tour of Scotland; seven attended the International Festival and Events Conference in San Antonio, Texas.

Skills and professional development opportunities were supported through the Nova Scotia Human Resource Council. Skills Development workshops on topics including tourism product packaging and festivals and events were funded through the newly established partnership agreements with the seven Regional Tourism Industry Associations throughout the province.

Activity

- partnering with the Offshore-Onshore Technologies Association of Nova Scotia and Nova Scotia Community College to expand the specialized welding training to offshore fabrication workers with \$421,500 from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, which will allow local welders to raise their competencies to international standards and allow Atlantic Canadian companies to become more competitive when bidding globally on offshore fabrication projects
(Lead: Department of Education)
- awarding new scholarships that will target energy-related trades and technology programs at the Nova Scotia Community College; business, sciences, and engineering programs at Nova Scotia universities; and master's-level programs in business, earth sciences, and engineering at Nova Scotia universities
(Lead: Department of Energy; Partner: Pengrowth Corporation)
- continuing to support the Skills Canada/Nova Scotia Energy Youth Quest initiative (Lead: Department of Education; Partner: Department of Energy)
- developing in partnership with Dalhousie University, an initiative whose aim is to increase the volume of entrepreneurs in technology and exports (Lead: Office of Economic Development; Partner: Dalhousie University)

Achievement

The Nova Scotia Community College Akerley Campus has received the latest technology in training equipment. The part-time studies calendar continues to offer the specialized welding program in anticipation of new welding contracts.

The first recipients of the Pengrowth–Nova Scotia Energy Scholarship Program were announced in June 2005.

A \$5000 contribution was made to the Skills Canada/Nova Scotia Energy Youth Quest initiative.

Business students were brought together with successful entrepreneurs to explore entrepreneurship at the Dalhousie Computer Science Techpreneur Showcase. Students had an opportunity to develop export markets for Nova Scotia firms and implement their plans during a work terms at the companies.

Activity

- partnering with the Nova Scotia Community College in the development of a program, to be delivered at the Composites Atlantic Mill Cove facility, to attract high-calibre students who will enrol in technology programs directly aligned with the company's needs and, upon graduation, move directly to Composites Atlantic, thereby augmenting the company's workforce by over 100 new employees over the next three years (**Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Composites Atlantic, Department of Education, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)
- working with the Michelin North America's Waterville and Bridgewater plants and the Nova Scotia Community College to address a skills gap with regard to maintenance technicians; Michelin has launched a strategy to recruit maintenance technicians from its production staff, and the community college will deliver the technical program required to move selected workers into technical positions in the maintenance department (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Michelin North America)

Achievement

A proposal has been made for co-funding from Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and the Department of Education for a program for 10 to 15 students with a possible fall 2006 launch at the Lunenburg Campus in Bridgewater.

A customized course with a completion date of April 2007 is currently being delivered to 21 students at the Kingstec Campus. Ten students completed the program at the Lunenburg Campus. Potential future intakes of students are being discussed for 2006–2007.

Objective 3

Work to enhance and improve the apprenticeship system in Nova Scotia

Activity

- undertaking a review of apprenticeship trade regulations (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Provincial Apprenticeship Board, industry representatives)
- reviewing and revising provincial apprenticeship curriculum standards (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College, industry representatives)
- partnering with education, business, labour, and sector councils to implement a Youth Apprenticeship program (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Sector councils, Nova Scotia Community College, boards of education, industry)
- optimizing the annual technical training capacity for active apprentices (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- developing opportunities for upgrading and enhancement training for trade practitioners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Industry and labour)
- implementing a model for mentor/coach training for journeypersons (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Boatbuilders Association, Nova Scotia Community College)
- reviewing the program delivery model options for the Apprenticeship Program (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

Ten trade regulations were reviewed and forwarded for legislative approval.

Provincial curriculum standards continue to be developed; approximately six trades were reviewed and revised in this process.

The Workit youth apprenticeship initiative launched a marketing campaign and website, <www.workitns.ca>, in November 2005. Procedures were designed for apprenticeship registration of youth between 16 and 19 years of age.

In-class training weeks offered increased from 725 in 2004–2005 to 797 in 2006–2007. A total of 1779 apprentices participated in in-class training, and an additional 472 accessed training through virtual delivery.

Upgrading was supported in the construction, electrician, plumber, carpenter, welder, and steamfitter/pipefitter trades.

The pilot mentor/coach course content and tools were researched and drafted. The pilot program is scheduled for completion in May 2006.

Piloted combined training delivery in the bricklayer and restoration stonemason trades and developed a modified apprenticeship delivery model. Continued to pilot concurrent training delivery in the construction and electrician trades.

Activity

- establishing components of a Blue Seal (post-journey person) business skills program (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Acadian Centre for Small Business and Entrepreneurship)
- working towards re-establishing hands-on learning experiences at the Nova Scotia Community College, and making investments in the plumber, steamfitter, and sheet metal apprenticeship programs this year (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- facilitating joint marketing initiatives with Skills Canada/Nova Scotia to promote careers in the skilled trades and technologies (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Skills Canada)
- implementing a comprehensive marketing strategy for the Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development division and the Apprenticeship Board (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Board, Skills Canada/Nova Scotia, Communications Nova Scotia)
- distributing the results of the provincial Youth Decision Survey related to occupations in the skilled trades and technologies (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Communications Nova Scotia)

Achievement

Completed the research to develop Business Competencies for Journey persons endorsement (previously referred to as Blue Seal). Information will be utilized in establishing training for journey people in the area of business management competencies related to owning and operating a business as a skilled trades person.

The old welding shop at the Akerley Campus was converted into an Apprenticeship Sheet Metal Laboratory. Equipment was purchased to support the program allowing students to acquire hands-on apprenticeship training while taking the associated courses. Student feedback has been very positive.

Skilled Trades Days were facilitated at five high schools; over 40 presentations were made to more than 1500 youth in schools across the province. Information on careers in the skilled trades and technologies was targeted specifically to young women, African Canadians, youth with employability barriers, Aboriginal youth, and teachers; and 15,000 copies of *Skills InDemand* magazine were distributed.

Developed and disseminated *Ask for the Card* brochures, apprenticeship toolbox stickers, and booth display materials. Distributed information on apprenticeships at the Ideal Home Show and through *The Link* newsletter.

The Youth Decision Survey Report 2004 was distributed and is available at <http://apprenticeshipboard.EDnet.ns.ca/>.

Objective 4

Improve mobility of skilled workers within Canada

Activity

- 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)
- creating and revising 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)
- levelling the Atlantic curriculum standards to enhance mobility for apprentices and provide shared training options (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Apprenticeship offices in Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island)

Achievement

The province continues to work with regulators and through the Labour Mobility Coordinating Group of the Forum of Labour Market Ministers to facilitate labour mobility efforts. The 2004–2005 progress survey was used to identify occupations that may require help to reduce inter-provincial barriers to mobility.

The implementation plan was delayed due to staffing constraints; it will be developed in 2006–2007.

A total of 665 Red Seals were issued in Nova Scotia. Eleven national occupational analyses were validated. Workshops on specification and examination development were generated, activated, and monitored.

Six curriculum standards were reviewed and revised, ensuring consistency and mobility for apprentices across Atlantic Canada.

Curriculum standards for the welder and metal fabricator (fitter) trades were piloted for common levelling of training.

Activity

- communicating a federal–provincial consensus recommendation to the offshore petroleum boards that would provide for local employment preferences for vessels operating in jurisdictions of both boards to be met more economically and in a less disruptive manner, providing safety advantages and improving career opportunities for Atlantic Canadians (**Lead:** Department of Energy; **Partners:** Atlantic provinces, Government of Canada, offshore industry)

Achievement

A recommendation in support of a broader initiative to reduce regulatory burden to companies employing Nova Scotians in offshore projects was communicated to the offshore boards.

Objective 5

Improve Nova Scotia's competitive edge in attracting and retaining highly skilled international workers

Activity

- working with professional associations and regulatory bodies to develop pathways and procedures for the recognition of international credentials and qualifications to assist immigrants before they come to Nova Scotia; this will help them to understand the process that must be undertaken to be licensed to practise their professions so they can begin the process before their arrival (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partner:** Citizenship and Immigration Canada)
- developing partnerships between the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia, RN Professional Development Centre, and the Halifax Learning Centre to apply for funding for initiatives that will support the assessment and the recognition of credentials of international medical graduates (IMGs) and internationally educated health professionals (IEHPs) in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Department of Education, Office of Immigration, Health Canada, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia, College of Registered Nurses of Nova Scotia and Association of Licensed Practical Nurses of Nova Scotia, educational providers)

Achievement

Liaison with the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association and various other associations is under way. Stakeholder engagement in various professions and sectors has been initiated. The Metropolitan Immigrant Association received funding to conduct research into licensing apprenticeable trades in Nova Scotia. The “Welcome to Canada” website, which provides employment and licensing information to immigrants, was developed in co-operation with Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The website is expected to be launched in 2006–2007.

Health Canada announced \$75 million in funding for provinces and territories to increase their capacity for internationally educated health professionals (IEHPs) including international medical graduates (IMGs). Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island entered into a partnership agreement for this initiative, and collaborative projects have been entered into.

Activity

- participating in Atlantic Metropolis Centre workshops on topics such as accreditation and qualifications of immigrant women (**Lead:** Atlantic Metropolis Centre; **Partners:** Various partners including Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- developing qualifications for additional Nova Scotia Nominee Program streams to allow international students who have studied in Nova Scotia and obtained their education credentials here to be allowed to apply for permanent residency (**Lead:** Office of Immigration)
- following up on the recommendations made during the immigration strategy consultations to ensure the inclusion of immigrant women in the strategy's implementation (**Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Office of Economic Development, Department of Community Services, Department of Health, Office of Immigration, Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association, Atlantic Metropolis Centre, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)
- participating in Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency's Partners Forum to discuss shared priorities such as women immigrants and their participation in the labour force (**Lead:** Atlantic Metropolis Centre; **Partners:** Multi-partners including Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)

Achievement

A round table with immigrant women to support the recruitment and retention of women immigrants in Nova Scotia's labour force took place in February 2006. A summary report is being developed.

The Canada–Nova Scotia Memorandum of Understanding on the Off-campus Work Permit Program for International Students was signed and has been implemented. The International Student Nominee Program category is currently under development and will be introduced in 2006–2007.

A round table with immigrant women took place in February 2006. A summary report will follow.

Participated in the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency Partners Forum to share thoughts and ideas regarding women immigrants and their participation in the labour force.

Activity

- delivering a panel presentation at an International Metropolis conference on women immigrants and their labour force situation in Nova Scotia (**Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women and related organizations)
- continuing the policy development and approval process for the Multiculturalism Policy by working with an interdepartmental forum and external stakeholders (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- promoting the Nova Scotia Nominee Program, Skilled Worker Stream, as a way of filling immediate skills shortages with immigrants who have unique skill sets (**Lead:** Office of Immigration)
- completing the Investment Prospectus Development study of industry capital investment/new producers and identifying new investment promotion initiatives (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries)
- pursuing opportunities to attract industry capital investment/new producers and to assist in sustaining and further developing our agricultural industry (**Leads:** Department of Agriculture and Nova Scotia Aquaculture and Fisheries)

Achievement

The Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women participated in a panel on the role of the advisory council in fostering the inclusion of immigrant women at the International Metropolis Conference Toronto in October 2005.

The draft policy was circulated to the interdepartmental forum for final comment.

Meetings were held with over 50 organizations including chambers of commerce, employers, regional development agencies, municipalities, and regulatory bodies, to provide information about the Nova Scotia Nominee Program and the Nova Scotia Immigration Strategy. Three hundred and three individuals were nominated under the Nova Scotia Nominee Program in 2005. Of these nominees, 33 were skilled workers, more than double the number nominated in 2004.

The research was completed and promotional materials were developed.

Participated in investment-attraction events in Norway, the UK, and Brussels focussing on aquaculture, new agriculture producers, and mink opportunities.

Activity

- supporting international learning opportunities for Nova Scotia Community College students (**Partners:** EduNova, Office of Economic Development, Nova Scotia Community College, Department of Education, school boards, private sector partners)
- collaborating with the Fijian Agriculture and Forestry University (FAFU) in China to bring a contingent of 40–50 students to the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) in September 2005. (**Leads:** Department of Agriculture, Nova Scotia Aquaculture and Fisheries, Nova Scotia Agricultural College; **Partner:** Fijian Agriculture and Forestry University)
- supporting the English in the Workplace Program, which provides customized language training to employed immigrants (**Partners:** Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre, Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association, Department of Education, Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

International learning opportunities were provided to over 60 learners through the following programs:

- Approximately 14 health and human services students spent eight days working in St. Lucia at a number of locations including orphanages and a school for troubled youth.
- Twenty culinary arts and tourism students spent a week working with tour operators and resort employees in Mexico.
- Approximately 12 licensed practical nursing students spent 10 days working in orphanages in Odessa, Ukraine.
- Two field schools are currently operating at UNIVA in Guadalajara, Mexico. Upon completion, students receive Nova Scotia Community College credits in Spanish and marketing.

Immigration challenges were overcome, enabling nine students from FAFU to attend the program at the NSAC in 2005–2006. An additional 14 students are expected to enrol in 2006–2007.

Adult immigrant students completed an English as a second language (ESL) course through video-conferencing technology. Seventeen students from Kentville, Truro, and Halifax graduated from the English for Communications and Networking course on March 29, 2006. The course is a pilot partnership between the Halifax Immigrant Learning Centre, the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association and Nova Scotia Community College.

Activity

- partnering with the Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association on phase two of the Enhanced Language Training Project: Nova Scotia Language Pathways (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partners:** Metropolitan Immigrant Settlement Association, Citizenship and Immigration Canada)
- continuing to support English as a second language (ESL) training programs (**Lead:** Office of Immigration)

Achievement

Funding was provided to the Enhanced Language Training Initiative in 2005–2006 to provide sector-specific language programming and employment connections (for example, medical professions) to help newcomers access meaningful employment more quickly. Settlement funding totalling \$1.2 million was provided for over 30 projects in the province to support the successful integration of hundreds of immigrants in Nova Scotia.

Provided funding to support 54 learners in 20 ESL Essential Skills Training in the Workplace programs.

Objective 6

Design and implement labour policy to promote safe and healthy work environments, fair employment standards, and stable labour-management relations

Activity

- promoting safe and healthy workplaces/ work practices and safe facilities and equipment (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour)
- promoting employment standards, fair processes for wage compensation, effective labour-management relations, and fairness for injured workers (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour)

Achievement

Continued to promote a collaborative approach between stakeholders to build capacity and improve safety within regulated industries. For example, injuries in the forestry industry declined as much as 50 percent over the last five years as a result of collaborative efforts between the Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Department of Environment and Labour, the Forest Industry Safety Society, and employers.

An Employer Self-Audit Program to ensure consistent compliance in industry sectors and an amendment to the Labour Standards Code limiting the employer's ability to deduct business losses from employee wages have been implemented. Bill 219 providing for a duty of fair representation and expedited arbitration was passed by government. This bill is effective in enhancing labour-management relations. Through effective use of conciliation and mediation processes, in 2005 Nova Scotia achieved a percentage of working time lost per year due to strikes and lockouts of .03 percent, which is lower than the national average of .11 percent.

Activity

- implementing a multi-year Competitiveness and Compliance initiative designed to enhance the government's capacity to contribute to a positive business climate in Nova Scotia and deliver effective protection for workplace and public safety, the environment, and consumers (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour; **Partners:** Workers' Compensation Board, Occupational Health and Safety, Labour Standards, Canada Revenue Agency)
- implementing decisions resulting from the Minimum Wage Review Committee's report and the subsequent response from the Minister of Environment and Labour (**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 (**Lead:** Workers' Compensation Board; **Partners:** Department of Environment and Labour, Department of Justice)
- developing and implementing a strategy for interdepartmental co-operation on trade certification, certification renewal, and occupational licensing (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour; **Partner:** Department of Education)

Achievement

Introduced the Competitiveness and Compliance Initiative. A multi-year science strategy was developed and exchange of information between stakeholders and the public on current issues in science continues in an effort to build mutual capacity and awareness.

Developed and delivered Minding Your Business sessions to help business owners and operators understand how laws affect them. More than 1700 people attended these sessions throughout Nova Scotia.

Minimum wage was increased from \$6.50 an hour to \$6.80 on October 1, 2005, and was increased again to \$7.15 on April 1, 2006.

New occupational diving regulations that reflect modern industry practices and address health and safety challenges of diving in commercial, industrial, seafood harvesting, and scientific activities have been developed and will take effect in May 2006. A new diver training program has also been developed to facilitate compliance and allow Nova Scotians to obtain a nationally recognized certification, which will enable divers and contractors to compete for diving contracts across the country.

Establishment of joint task teams to address enforcement and compliance issues is currently under way and a draft issue analysis document is being developed. Issues for analysis include licensing, efficiencies to be gained, enforcement issues, need for legislative and regulatory change, and use of consistent terminology. Training and certification for the blaster trade is nearing completion.

Activity

- researching issues pertaining to women and disabilities within the Nova Scotia labour market (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Disabled Persons Commission)
- promoting a healthy workplace initiative that will (1) promote good individual health practices; (2) focus on promoting a workplace culture that values a work–life balance and has zero tolerance for violence in the workplace; and (3) provides a safe work environment by going beyond compliance and focussing on air quality and appropriate ergonomics (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- reviewing and identifying new policies to build safe and healthy workplaces for provincial employees (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)

Achievement

Work has begun to follow-up on issues outlined in the document, *Report of the Task Force on the Economic Integration of Women with Disabilities in Nova Scotia: Women Willing to Work*. This report can be accessed online at <www.gov.ns.ca/staw/>. The first of a series of roundtables on women with disabilities will take place in April 2006.

An interdepartmental Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee was established, and a communication plan for healthy workplaces was developed. Presentations to senior leadership were conducted, resulting in 13 of 16 departments forming Healthy Workplace Committees. The corporate Take Back the Break Lunch program was successfully implemented, and a healthy workplace eating manual is in development, and will be circulated by fall 2006.

Stakeholder consultations were held as part of the Healthy Workplace Policy development. A policy sub-committee was formed, and an environmental scan was conducted to collect information on what the various provincial jurisdictions were doing in the area of healthy workplace policy. The need for an employee safety and well-being policy encompassing topics such as workplace violence, sexual harassment, discrimination, and respectful workplace guidelines was identified.

Activity

- 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 efficiently and effectively without injury or incident (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partners:** 4-H and rural organizations, Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Resource Stewardship Agriculture Resource Coordinators, 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)
- 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 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 and Fisheries; **Partner:** Canadian Agriculture Safety Association)

Achievement

Continued to actively participate in a stakeholder committee to review regulations that affect agricultural operations. A consensus was reached by the committee, and several amendments to the Motor Vehicle Act that will improve safety and workplace on farms were proposed.

Collaborated with the Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee to promote knowledge of farm safety issues and preventative practices among the farming community.

Five hundred and fifty-six farm safety radio ads played across the province on eight radio stations in September and October 2005. A full page media feature on farm safety was published in the *Chronicle Herald* in March 2006. Industry meetings and a major education initiative and at the Nova Scotia Exhibition promoting tractor safety and other general farm safety management practices during August and September 2005. It is estimated that these programs reached approximately 102,633 participants. Posters were developed to educate motorists on the slow moving vehicle sign and stressing road safety when meeting slow moving farm vehicles on highways; 400 of these posters were distributed.

Activity

- 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)
- updating *Standards of Practice for Farms in Nova Scotia Risk Management Tool* and updating *Protect Yourself from Livestock Injuries*. These publications can be accessed online at <www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/farmsafety/> (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partner:** Canadian Agriculture Safety Association)

Achievement

Continued to promote the upgrading and training of farm workers to meet responsibilities under the Occupational Health and Safety Act through various initiatives such as first aid training and the distribution of the *Farm Safety—Standards of Practice* and *Protecting Yourself from Livestock Injuries* booklets.

Both these resources were reprinted in 2005 with 450 copies of each available for use across the province.

Activity

- meeting the needs of the farming community by providing financial assistance to the Farm Family Stress Line and Support Centre (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **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)
- promoting continuous improvement in the quality, coherence, and effectiveness of regulatory systems that protect the public interest and support sustainable economic competitiveness (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour; **Partners:** Owner/operators of amusement devices, elevators, and lifts; propane and natural gas installation technicians)

Achievement

Provided funding to the Farm Family Stress Line and Support Centre to ensure that the needs of their clients were met. The centre received 15 referrals in 2005–2006.

The Amusement Safety Devices Regulation and Training Program was introduced. A new framework was established to regulate the more than 2700 owners of elevating devices in Nova Scotia. A regulatory framework for propane and natural gas installations was introduced.

Objective 7

Improve opportunities for youth to develop the leadership skills required for successful labour market participation

Activity

- advancing Open for Business, a province-wide youth initiative that introduces entrepreneurship and business skills to youth (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Youth Secretariat, Department of Education, other provincial departments)
- continuing to advance the Junior Achievement Youth initiative across the province and developing a proposal to introduce the initiative in mainland First Nation schools (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Office of Economic Development, Department of Education, other provincial departments)
- recognizing leadership credentials through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award for credit toward graduation (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Duke of Edinburgh's Award—Young Canadian Challenge)
- producing learning resources and recommending program components for the Youth Apprenticeship program (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Human resource sector councils, industry, Nova Scotia Community College, school boards)

Achievement

The Open for Business Halifax office was moved to a high traffic location in the Halifax Shopping Centre to be more visible and to better serve youth in Halifax.

Participated on the Tripartite Forums Economic Development Working Committee to introduce the Junior Achievement Youth Initiative in mainland First Nation schools.

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award is now recognized for credit as a personal development academic credit. Participation in this program increased by 140 students in 2005. Funding, material, and services to support the program was put in place, and a Duke of Edinburgh's Award Program Guide was designed and published.

A youth apprenticeship website has been developed and resource guides for co-op students, teachers, and employers have been drafted.

Activity

- finalizing the development of the Nova Scotia Youth Employment and Skills Development Strategy and Action Plan to provide direction for the provincial government in assisting young Nova Scotians to make a meaningful connection to the labour market (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Office of Economic Development, other government departments)
- 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 (**Partners:** Department of Community Services, Department of Education)
- 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)

Achievement

The strategy has received final refinements and is expected to be presented to the Executive Council in the upcoming year.

The centre received \$35,000 to help build its capacity to deliver youth professional development workshops and products across the province.

Two YouthBuild projects received funding assistance to consult with local stakeholders on building projects tailored to the host communities. Consultations are expected to begin in the upcoming year.

A total of \$150,000 was invested in the following youth organizations involved in skills development: ArtsSmarts Nova Scotia; Canadian Music Competition, Halifax Chapter; Canadian Children's Book Centre; Dance Nova Scotia; Educational Drama Association of Nova Scotia; Federation of Music Festivals of Nova Scotia; Nova Scotia Choral Federation; Nova Scotia Kiwanis Music Festival Association; Nova Scotia Youth Orchestra; Nova Scotia Talent Trust; Perform!; Scot Dance Nova Scotia; and Writers Federation of Nova Scotia.

Activity

- 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)

- developing a *Guide for Girls*, which is a resource book for teenage girls that covers a series of topics including financial management, relationships, healthy choices, body image, keeping a journal, and finding your passion
(**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Hypatia Association, Phoenix House, Antigonish Women's Resource Centre, Nova Scotia Community College, IWK Health Centre)

Achievement

Opportunities for skill development for rural youth were offered through the Nova Scotia 4-H program with emphasis on lifelong learning including leadership, decision making, interpersonal skills, employment, communication, teamwork, self-confidence, healthy lifestyles, and community engagement.

Seventy 4-H members attended the 4-H Intermediate Conference in February 2006. This conference offered fun and educational sessions that encouraged the 4-H members to set and reach their goals, build self-esteem, and plan for agricultural careers.

Three hundred 4-H members from across the province attended 4-H Weekend at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Bible Hill in May. Work done by 4-H program youth was showcased, 4-H members were challenged in a variety of competitions, and the technical skills learning components of the 4-H program were promoted during this three-day event.

Ten thousand copies of *Guide for Girls* were published and disseminated throughout the province.

Activity

- recognizing youth leadership opportunities at school and in the community by promoting volunteering, service learning, and community service and by supporting student participation in leadership skills development programs (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Nova Scotia Fitness Association)
- expanding youth leadership and development programs for African Nova Scotian learners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Council on African Canadian Education, school boards)
- continuing to offer skills development opportunities to youth in care, dependents, and direct recipients of income assistance through the Youth Development Initiative (**Lead:** Department of Community Services)
- revising the Youth Development Initiative, which provides skills development and employment opportunities for recipients of income assistance (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Community-based organizations)

Achievement

Expanded and promoted the fitness training and certification program for youth leaders, and supported the Rural Youth Healthy Relationships Education project. Incorporated guidelines for recognizing youth leadership opportunities in *Community Based Learning: A Resource for Schools*, scheduled for distribution in the 2006–2007 school year.

Funding for youth leadership development programming was increased. Work is ongoing with partners to increase opportunities for African Nova Scotian youth to utilize the apprenticeship program.

Approximately 800 youth in care received skills development opportunities through job placements, participation in workshops and training sessions, mentoring, and involvement in community-based projects.

The Youth Development Initiative was re-implemented under a three-tier program. Tier one provides pre-employment opportunities for youth to enhance their skills and personal traits through workshops, volunteer placements, and/or job shadowing; tier two enhances youth leadership and critical thinking skills through participation in innovative community projects; and tier three provides youth with full- or part-time employment experiences.

Activity

- developing the Nova Scotia GoverNEXT initiative, whose mission is to contribute to the future of the provincial public service by providing a voice for youth in the renewal of the public service and by promoting a workplace that is diverse, rewarding, and collaborative (**Lead:** Department of Environment and Labour; **Partner:** Public Service Commission)

Achievement

The Nova Scotia GoverNEXT initiative was endorsed by the Deputy Ministers' Forum, and a steering committee made up of representatives from most government departments was established. A charter and direction for 2005–2006 were set in motion and GoverNEXT was formally launched at an all-day facilitated event where 120 participants from across government discussed issues and solutions, shared ideas, and provided input into the future of the initiative. From that, GoverNEXT solidified its mission and direction for the remainder of the year. A half-day career development session was hosted by GoverNEXT, which offered an exciting mix of guest speakers and café-style discussions about career planning and how to seize opportunities within the public service.

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

For the Province to be successful in its efforts to accomplish the goals and objectives laid out in the Skills Nova Scotia Framework, it is necessary for the province to co-ordinate programs and services that support Nova Scotians in their career development and employment choices. This includes providing access to career and employment counselling and education and training, as well as promoting the principles of fairness, equity, and diversity.

Objective 1

Provide career- and employment-related services to Nova Scotians to help them develop their skills and find sustainable jobs

Activity

- offering the Employment Development Program, a work-based training program designed to provide workplace learning opportunities and foundations for long-term employment; this program is targeted to individuals facing significant barriers to obtaining sustainable employment (**Lead:** Department of Community Services)
- supporting the National Integrated Delivery Strategy (NIDS) project, which will ensure access to career information products for a number of audiences (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Skills Canada, Department of Community Services, sector councils)
- continuing to develop a co-ordinated continuum of career development through the Nova Scotia Career Development Initiative, including a menu of services and standards and guidelines for career practitioners in conjunction with the Canada/Nova Scotia Skills and Learning Framework Labour Market Attachment Task Team (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Department of Community Services, Service Canada)

Achievement

An updated profile of employment support service clients' assets and barriers to employment was completed. Approximately 120 individuals participated in the Employment Development Program in the Halifax County.

The Department of Education and partners have continued to participate in and support the NIDS project to ensure access to career information products.

The task team has progressed by developing a menu of employment counselling and career development services. Consultations on the menu will take place with stakeholders in 2006–2007. The task team has reviewed and will advance the understanding and commitment towards the Canadian standards and guidelines in 2006–2007.

Activity

- rebuilding and relaunching the WorkInfoNet website, which includes 7000 career information links and was formerly hosted by Nova Scotia Career Development Association (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- distributing *Career Planning: A Website Guide for Career Practitioners* as a tie-in to other career websites (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Service Canada)
- publishing and distributing a career-planning guide for out-of-school adults (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- offering career and job development services to eligible income assistance recipients for participating 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)
- providing professional development opportunities to career practitioners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Service Canada)

Achievement

Some information from the WorkInfoNet website has been incorporated into the Career Options website. Further review of the information on the website will take place.

The guide was developed, and 20,000 copies were distributed to career practitioners. This publication can be found at <www.EDnet.ns.ca> by selecting "Site Index" from the menu and "Career Sites" on the Links page.

The *Adult Career Guide* has been developed and published. The guide will be distributed in May 2006. Copies may be ordered by contacting <novascotiacaareeroptions.ca>.

Over 10,000 income assistance recipients and employment disadvantaged individuals throughout the province received counselling, assessment, and literacy, life, and work skills development services. A SCAN tool was developed and used to ensure that intended outcomes were consistent with national standards as outlined in the *Blueprint for Life/Work Design*.

A professional development session for career practitioners was held in November 2005, with over 80 participants. Professional development topics included an overview of the Career Options website, educational referral information on the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning, and inclusive services training.

Action

- revising the Adult Learning Program (ALP) Level II curriculum to reflect the changing demographics of Adult Learning Program students in community-based programs (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- Integrating employability into the ALP curriculum (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- providing resources for African-Canadian and deaf adult literacy tutor training initiatives (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, community literacy organizations)
- developing a training program to assist women in developing skills to launch and manage political campaigns for electoral office (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partner:** Mount Saint Vincent University)
- encouraging women to run for municipal office (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** YWCA, Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)

Achievement

The ALP Level II curriculum was revised to provide more support for community-based program students. Changes include focusing outcomes on literacy and numeracy and overcoming learning blocks.

Employability as one of the critical five cross-cutting themes was integrated into all Level II, Level III, and Level IV ALP curriculum by incorporating the Conference Board of Canada Employability Skills. All curriculum documents now include career explorations throughout the outcomes, suggested teaching/learning activities, and assessment activities and resources.

Supported the revision of the Deaf Adult Literacy Tutor Training Program and supported the training of tutors to deliver the program. Supported the development of a new African-Canadian adult tutoring program.

A two-day session of the Nova Scotia Campaign School Women, which was developed to equip participants with skills to launch and manage political campaigns for elected office, was held in December 2005.

Recommendations of the report *Untapped Resources: Women and Municipal Government in Nova Scotia*, found at <www.gov.ns.ca/staw/pubs2005_06/UntappedFinal_Report.pdf>, were accepted by the membership of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities. The Steering Committee has begun plans for implementation.

Activity

- initiating implementation of the Rural and Remote Nursing Recruitment and Retention in Nova Scotia initiative (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Employers)

- supporting the work of the Provincial Nursing Network, Rural and Remote Working Group, which examines nursing recruitment and retention in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Employers)

Achievement

Implementation of the Rural and Remote Working Group recommendations began in 2005–2006 and will continue into 2006–2007. In addition, new opportunities to promote, support, and enhance nursing in these areas were explored, including development of a continuing education program in rural nursing and expansion of the Co-operative Learning Experience for Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) students.

Initial work on recommendations to enhance the sustainability of the rural nursing workforce as outlined in the Provincial Nursing Network report *Rural and Remote Nursing—Recruitment and Retention in Nova Scotia*, found at <www.gov.ns.ca/health/nursing/pubs/>, began with the following actions:

- developing and implementing a marketing strategy through partnerships between health providers, educational institutions, and communities
- supporting employer initiatives that enhance quality of work life
- supporting leadership education for rural managers and nursing staff
- monitoring and evaluating indicators to support planning for recruitment and retention of nurses in rural areas

Activity

- promoting public education to improve Nova Scotians' awareness of energy-related occupations and career opportunities (**Lead:** Department of Energy)
- hosting the annual Job Fair at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) with an emphasis on emerging job opportunities in environmental science and management, agriculture, and land and natural resource management (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture, Nova Scotia Agricultural College; **Partner:** Skills Canada)
- implementing the Canadian Agricultural Skill Service (CASS) federal–provincial program to help farmers and their spouses increase family income on or off the farm by providing them with assistance for skills development and access to training in areas such as business management, accounting, finance, human resource management, and training for other employment or for starting a new business (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partner:** Human Resources and Social Development Canada)

Achievement

The Department of Energy's website, <www.gov.ns.ca/energy>, has been redesigned to assist in improving Nova Scotians' awareness of energy-related occupations and career opportunities.

Skills and educational requirements for the energy sector were promoted through communication of the Pengrowth—Nova Scotia Energy Scholarship program.

Support in the amount of \$60,000 was provided to Techsploration to provide opportunities for young women to explore non-traditional occupations in trades and technology.

The annual career fair took place at the NSAC, providing hundreds of students the opportunity to talk to potential employers in the field.

The CASS Program was successfully launched and promoted to industry groups. Discussions were held with Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (AAFC) and Service Canada on alternative program delivery options, and presentations were made to AAFC through the national Renewal Working Group on ways to enhance program implementation and how to better target the needs of the Nova Scotia agricultural community.

Activity

- promoting the benefits of an agricultural career through workshops, tours, and an affiliation with the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Agricultural 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)

Achievement

Numerous tours and visits were arranged to the Nova Scotia Agricultural College campus, beginning with the AgZone days in the spring, which brought 400 grade 6 students to the campus. Hundreds of visitors of all ages came for open houses in the summer, and smaller group tours for potential students took place in the fall and winter. Plans for special emphasis on open house, AgZone, and AgriFEST were made for 2006–2007.

A total of \$81,410 was invested in 30 skills development projects: \$64,735 was invested in 23 skills development projects workshops funded by Cultural Activities Program, and \$16,675 was invested in seven skills development projects funded through the professional development component of the Grants to Organizations and Small Groups. The Emerging Music Business Program funded approximately 50 projects designed to develop and enhance business, recording, and marketing skills for emerging artists and community presenters.

Funding totalling \$37,800 was provided through 64 scholarships and seven special awards. The Nova Scotia Talent Trust (NSTT) partnered with the Dalhousie Music-in-Medicine program to start a trust fund to support the Portia White Award into the future. Theatre Nova Scotia partnered with NSTT to fund the Theatre Nova Scotia Award.

Activity

- 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 offer training or support services to individuals in the cultural sector (Lead: Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

Achievement

Funding for programs and workshops to develop exporting skills relative to working with international buyers was provided through the Industries Program and the Export Development Program.

The Export Development Program for Music invested close to \$350,000 into 108 projects, such as the 2006 East Coast Music Awards and Conference, the World Music Expo, the North American Folk Alliance Conference, the South by Southwest Music Conference, and Canadian Music Week.

The International Business of Music Program was offered in Halifax to 15 participants by the St. Francis Xavier Enterprise Development Centre.

Funding was provided for three artists to attend the summer Buyers Market of American Craft show and for one artist and two design companies to attend the Sculptural Objects and Functional Arts show with the purpose of gathering competitive marketing intelligence and attend workshops on exporting to the United States.

A wide variety of youth and adult courses were delivered in five craft studios.

A total of \$2.9 million was provided to 68 organizations and facilities through the Operating Assistance to Cultural Organizations program, formerly known as the Anchor Organizations Program.

Activity

- 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)
- implementing tools that support the succession management process as outlined in the Public Service Commission's *Guide to Succession Management* (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- providing government employees with opportunities to accelerate development and learning that is focussed on portable skills and leadership competencies through the Leadership Continuity Program and the Career Assignment Program (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- developing and piloting parent information workshops to help parents better support their children's career planning (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- developing print and web-based versions of *Career Planning: A Website Guide* for use in schools (**Lead:** Department of Education)

Achievement

Eight leadership competencies have been identified and incorporated into the performance management system. The Premier's Award of Excellence was created and implemented to recognize individual and team accomplishments.

A comprehensive toolkit for succession management was created and is available on the Public Service Commission website, <www.gov.ns.ca/psc>. A Succession Management Advisor role was created to support departments in implementing the Succession Management Program.

The Leadership Continuity Program had an intake of 78 new participants and is currently under way. The Career Assignment Program has been completed.

Resources to support parent information workshops have been developed, including a facilitator's guide and training manual. Implementation of the workshops, Parents as Career Coaches, will take place in 2006–2007.

A student version of the adult career planning guide has been developed and will be distributed to students, guidance counsellors, and principals in the spring and fall 2006.

Activity

- expanding and upgrading the Career Options website, handbook, and accompanying teacher's resource for grade 9, which are career and labour market information products (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Service Canada)
- discussing and developing career awareness initiatives through the Career Awareness Strategy Group, a partnership between the Department of Education, educators, and business/industry associations to better meet the career information needs of students in the public school system (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia School Counsellors' Association, Nova Scotia Teachers' Union, Service Canada, Nova Scotia Community College)
- developing a new teachers resource for a career awareness component of Career and Life Management 11 (**Lead:** Department of Education)

Achievement

The website <www.novascotiareeroptions.ca> has been expanded and upgraded to include additional labour market information and sections aimed at youth, adults, and career coaches.

Nova Scotia Career Guide was developed; 10,000 copies were distributed to all grade 9 students and a related teachers resource was distributed to teachers. The guide and teachers resource are available at <www.skillsnovascotia.EDnet.ns.ca>.

The committee has made recommendations regarding increasing career development capacity in schools.

The teacher's resource has been developed and will be distributed to grade 11 Career and Life Management teachers in the fall of 2006.

Activity

- developing and delivering comprehensive educational Agriculture Awareness and Agriculture in the Classroom programs, which improve students' awareness of the Nova Scotia agriculture industry to help them make educated decisions about food choices and career choices in agriculture; this includes the grade 11 Agriculture/Agri-Foods course, as well as public awareness programs like AgZone and the Nova Scotia Museum program
(**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 Agrifood Canada, Nova Scotia Agricultural College)
- 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)
- developing a guide to help employers provide better co-operative work experiences for students
(**Lead:** Department of Education;
Partners: Employers, institutions offering co-op programs)

Achievement

Several thousand students, teachers, and consumers participated in several Agriculture Awareness and Agriculture in the Classroom events such as AgZone, Ag Cot, the Nova Scotia Museum program, and the grade 11 Agriculture/Agri-Foods course. The benefits of an agricultural career were promoted through the 4-H program and through workshops and tours offered in affiliation with the Nova Scotia Agricultural College.

A total of 20 positions (10 Summer Employment Diversity positions and 10 Summer Female Mentorship Program positions) were created and filled, providing employment opportunities for Aboriginal students, racially visible students, students with disabilities, and female students pursuing studies in non-traditional areas.

A draft of the guide has been completed. Final revisions will be made and distribution will take place in summer/fall 2006. The guide will be available online at <www.novascotiacaeroptions.ca> once complete.

Objective 2

Assist low-income Nova Scotians, including income assistance recipients, to access education and training

Activity

- providing access to education and training for income assistance and employment income 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)
- working with federal partners on a proposed new grant for first-time students from low-income families, which will be funded through the Canada Student Loan Program and administered through the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Office. In addition, proposed increases to loan limits, changes to parental contribution formulae, and the introduction of computer allowances will provide a greater level of assistance to a greater number of students (**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)
- administering the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Program and the Canada Student Assistance Program to serve approximately 18,000 Nova Scotian post-secondary students per year (**Lead:** Department of Education)

Achievement

Over 2250 Nova Scotians benefitted from full-time education and training through supports provided to the Nova Scotia Community College and the Université Sainte-Anne through this agreement.

Implemented the grant for first-time students from low-income families for the 2005–2006 academic year; increased combined federal and provincial loan limit to \$360 per week of study in Nova Scotia (up from \$315); introduced a computer allowance; and adjusted parental contribution rates for both Canada and Nova Scotia Student Loans.

To date in excess of 4,000 applications for debt reduction have been processed, and \$13.9 million in recognition of future liability has been accrued.

A total of 19,229 applications for assistance were processed, providing assistance to 16,510 students.

Activity

- offering the Educate to Work program to provide opportunities for income assistance recipients to attend Nova Scotia Community College and Université Sainte-Anne (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partners:** Department of Education, Human Resources and Social Development Canada)
- working on the One Journey—Work and Learn project, a labour market attachment project partnering with industry that combines essential skills training and specific industry skills training and 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)
- supporting income assistance recipients in accessing literacy and academic upgrading programs through the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** 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, and territorial jurisdictions)
- disseminating copies of *Building Transitions to Good Jobs for Low-Income Women* and strategically communicating recommendations on access issues and best practice in transition to employment programs for low-income women in Nova Scotia (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)

Achievement

Two hundred and seventy-nine individuals received financial support for tuition, books, and student fees to attend core programs at the Nova Scotia Community College through the Educate to Work Program.

One Journey projects enabled 62 individuals to become employed in the following occupations: floor covering installer, customer service representative, professional truck driver, and building supplies sales associate. Over 70 percent of the participants remain employed. One Journey was also expanded to the northern region of Nova Scotia this year.

Approximately 2100 income assistance recipients accessed educational upgrading through the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning.

A scan of initiatives being undertaken by other provinces and territories was completed.

Building Transitions to Good Jobs for Low-Income Women has been disseminated and is available online at <www.gov.ns.ca/staw/pubs2004_05/Transitionsemployment_full.pdf>.

Activity

- ensuring that farm safety publications are at an accessible reading level for all Nova Scotians (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture)
- providing free access to educational 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 education level (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture)

Achievement

The resources 4-H members use were evaluated informally by leaders and members of the farm community, in regards to their relevance. Leaders met to provide feedback and input on changes.

The resources of the Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee were made available free of charge to all Nova Scotians in response to requests, at workshops, programs, and other public promotion activities.

Objective 3

Promote equity, fairness, and diversity throughout labour market programs and services offered in Nova Scotia

Activity

- working with federal, provincial, and territorial partners through the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM) to address labour market programs and services for equity groups (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- 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)
- creating a Diversity Round Table that will drive the corporate diversity initiative (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)

Achievement

A draft *Labour Market Framework Agreement* was developed by the Forum of Labour Market Ministers, which led to the creation of the Labour Market Partnership Agreements signed by Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan.

Guidelines for affirmative action plans have been created. These guidelines are available online at <www.gov.ns.ca/tpb/manuals/PDF/500/50300-08.pdf>.

The membership and structure of the Diversity Round Table has been determined, including three main sub-committees: communication, policy, and recruitment and retention. Meetings will be held at least six times a year.

Activity

- working with businesses, labour unions, and professional associations to promote the benefits of hiring a diverse and multicultural workforce, including our existing populations and new immigrants (**Lead:** Office of Immigration; **Partners:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Office of Acadian Affairs)
- redesigning the Rehabilitation Programs and Services Performance Based Grant program in consultation with community stakeholders (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)
- developing a communications strategy designed to create better awareness of goods and services offered and funded through Rehabilitation Programs and Services (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

Meetings were held with over 50 organizations including chambers of commerce, employers, regional development agencies and municipalities, and regulatory bodies to disseminate information about the Nova Scotia Nominee Program and the Nova Scotia Immigration Strategy and to promote the benefits of developing a diverse workforce. The Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, Nova Scotia Division, received funding for the completion of the publication *Opening Doors to New Opportunities*.

The Provincial Access Grant for Students with Disabilities was provided to over 780 students attending university, community college, or private careers colleges. Three-year accessibility plans for students with disabilities were developed 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 in collaboration with Rehabilitation Programs and Services. The plans are in the final stages of development and anticipated to be complete by June 2006.

A Communications Advisory Committee has been struck and has had several meetings. The committee consists of Rehabilitation Programs and Services staff, Community Services staff, disability support providers at post-secondary institutions, and students with disabilities.

Activity

- identifying and implementing strategies to assist students with disabilities with the transition from the public education system to post-secondary institutions (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

- working with federal partners to propose new access grants for students with permanent disabilities, which will be funded through the Canada Student Loan Program and administered through the Nova Scotia Student Assistance Office (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

A web-based application for the Provincial Access Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities was implemented. The web-based application resulted in a 200 percent increase in applications and approvals over the previous intake process.

Smart Steps information sessions are provided through the Nova Scotia Community College and Educational Resource Facilitators in secondary schools. These information sessions provide advocacy, assistance with student loan completion, and assistive technologies.

A disability services website is in development. This website will provide a central source of information on scholarships and bursaries, financial assistance, assistive technology, advocacy, career exploration, helpful links, faculty and teacher resources, and parent guides.

The new Provincial Access Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities was harmonized with the Federal Canada Access Grant for Students with Permanent Disabilities resulting in over 780 students receiving full or partial non-repayable grants to support their post-secondary studies.

Activity

- assessing campus-based services for students with disabilities for the purpose of enhancing and improving delivery of goods and services (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

- supporting post-secondary institutions in the delivery of services for students with disabilities (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

Rehabilitation Programs and Services met with disability services providers from Universities and the Nova Scotia Community College to discuss of the development and provincial implementation of service standards for goods and services provided to students with disabilities in post-secondary environments. Standards were developed for two key services.

A new version of the NSCC Service Delivery Model is in the implementation stage and has been developed through internal and external stakeholder consultations. The new model incorporates improved communication strategies and enhanced collaboration with disability resource facilitators, Disability Services, academic chairs, and the Centres for Student Success. The Disability Services Policy has been updated to reflect current legislation.

During the 2005–2006 fiscal year, Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) were signed by the Department of Education with 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 detailing how the department and universities will work together on improving disability training-related goods and services. As well, a MOU with the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) was extended for the 2005–2006 fiscal year, while a new agreement was being developed. Over 1900 students with disabilities were provided services through the universities and the NSCC MOUs in 2005–2006.

Activity

- negotiating new agreements with post-secondary institutions that will require each institution to develop a multi-year accessibility plan to support the delivery of goods and services for students with disabilities (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

- supporting the development of targeted programs and services in post-secondary institutions to encourage the participation of students with disabilities, Aboriginals, African-Canadians, and women in trades and technology programs (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

In the 2005–2006 school year, 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 developed three-year accessibility plans for students with disabilities. The accessibility plans were developed in collaboration with Rehabilitation Programs and Services and the Department of Education. The accessibility plans are in the final stages of development and are anticipated to be complete by June 2006.

Numerous special project submissions from post-secondary institutions across the province detailing proposals to enhance services to students with disabilities were reviewed. The following six projects were approved:

- web information for Nova Scotia Community College students with disabilities
- professional development for Nova Scotia Community College staff providing services to students with disabilities
- a feasibility study on all post-secondary institutions collaboratively developing and sharing alternative format materials for print-handicapped students
- a fall conference at Saint Mary's University concerning students with disabilities in post-secondary environments
- establishing a disability support and services model at Mount Saint Vincent University
- developing and implementing a transition program for St. Francis Xavier University graduating students with disabilities

Activity

- providing targeted funding to support adult literacy and essential skills for the Acadian, African-Canadian, Mi'kmaq, and deaf communities (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Équipe d'alphabétisation-Nouvelle-Écosse, Deaf Literacy Nova Scotia Association, Literacy Network Unama'ki, Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre, Preston Area Learning Skills Society, Provincial Black Literacy Network)
- 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)
- supporting the Black Business Initiative's business skills training activities, including the Business is Jammin' Program, to encourage youth entrepreneurship (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Various provincial departments)

Achievement

The Adult Learning Program Level III pilot started with the First Nations Community at Eskasoni. The program included resources, professional development workshops, and partnership links with NSCC Marconi Campus to encourage student transition. Targeted funding was also provided to support literacy programs for the following communities: Acadian community: 151 learners in 18 programs; African-Canadian community: 89 learners in 7 programs; the Mi'kmaq community: 80 learners in 7 programs; and deaf learners: 27 learners in 3 programs.

A total of 273 off reserve Aboriginal people in receipt of income assistance received employment and training support through the Social Assistance Recipients Employment and Training (SARSET) program.

Persons with disabilities continue to be supported in employment-related activities through the Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities.

The Black Business Initiative (BBI) continued its success in training entrepreneurs and helping them to start and grow their business. The BBI made its first equity investment using the Community Economic Development Investment Fund.

Activity

- identifying opportunities for Aboriginal organizations and provincial and federal governments to work collaboratively towards an Aboriginal Labour Market Strategy, 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, Mi'kmaq-Nova Scotia-Canada Tripartite Forum)
- delivering Mi'kmaq Quest, an entrepreneurship skills training program for Aboriginal youth (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Office of Economic Development, other provincial departments)
- advancing the Aboriginal Workforce Participation Initiative, which will enhance the labour market participation of Aboriginal people through a collaborative and integrated approach such as the memorandum of understanding with the Government of Canada, the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia, and Michelin North America (Canada) (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Michelin North America (Canada), Mi'kmaw community)
- establishing a committee and beginning the planning for an Aboriginal Youth Business Summit for fall 2005 (**Lead:** Office of Aboriginal Affairs; **Partners:** Office of Economic Development, other provincial departments)

Achievement

A First Ministers Meeting on Aboriginal issues was held with several agenda items including education and economic opportunities in November 2005. As a result, provincial and territorial governments were asked to develop regional strategic frames around economic opportunities. A key component of this in Nova Scotia is a focus on greater participation of Aboriginal Nova Scotians in the labour force.

The Adult Learning Program Level III program was piloted with the First Nations community at Eskasoni. The program included resources and professional development workshops and facilitated transition and partnership links with Marconi Campus.

The steering committee is currently overseeing a grassroots implementation of employment training and development opportunities that break down the barriers to equitable employment access. The Initiative was successfully implemented at Michelin North America in Nova Scotia in 2005, and work continues in identifying and promoting opportunities to expand the initiative to other corporate entities in Nova Scotia.

Acted as leader in the Tripartite Forum to organize the Aboriginal Youth Business Summit, which took place in the fall 2005. The agenda for the conference revolved around youth entrepreneurship, education, training, and career opportunities for Mi'kmaw youth from around Atlantic Canada. Several hundred participants attended the summit.

Activity

- promoting collaboration and information sharing between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders on issues affecting women in the labour market through the Nova Scotia Advisory Council Round Table on Women's Economic Security (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Department of Education, Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, United Way, Women for Economic Equality Society, Hypatia Association, Office of Aboriginal Affairs, Health Canada, Department of Health, Women's Employment Outreach, YWCA, Feminist Just and Equitable Public Policy, Women's Centres Connect, Transitions House Association of Nova Scotia, various others)
- supporting groups such as Hypatia Association and the Women for Economic Equality Society to promote women's access to education, training, and labour market activity (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Hypatia Association, Women for Economic Equality Society; **Partners:** Department of Education, Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

Sponsored Women, Work & Care: Policy at the Crossroads a two-day forum that examined the impact of policy on women's lives in the areas of maternity leave, childcare, dependent care, and family-friendly workplaces.

Provided ongoing commitment to the Round Table on Women's Economic Security with a focus on family policy issues involving business, labour and government, and women.

Supported the Women Unlimited initiative.

Contributed to the publication of *In the Picture*, Volumes 1, 2, and 3.

Provided funding for the development of a gender curriculum.

Acted as an ex-officio member on Women for Economic Equality board of directors and assisted in reviewing funding proposals.

Activity

- supporting 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)
- developing and adapting gender and diversity analysis approaches and tools for use in labour force development work (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women)
- 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, other related organizations)

Achievement

The development of the Women Unlimited initiative was funded. The pilot for the Lunenburg/Queens project location was launched in December 2005, and the local steering committee for the Halifax pilot location was formed.

Funded the development of a gender and diversity curriculum for the Women Unlimited initiative, which will be tested in fiscal 2006–2007.

Funding was provided, supporting the participation of 105 young women Techsplorers at 17 high schools. Over 2200 high school students were exposed to trades and technology occupations through presentations by Techsplorers and by more than 125 role models.

Activity

- ensuring fair, equitable, and diverse recruitment, development, and retention of staff through human resource policy, programs, and services (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)

- continuing to develop a strategy to increase under-represented groups within Apprenticeship Training and Skill Development's staff and client base (**Lead:** Department of Education)

Achievement

A review of the Public Service Commission human resource policies has begun.

The Valuing Diversity Action Plan was completed and has been adopted by the Diversity Round Table for implementation. The plan is available online at www.gov.ns.ca/psc/pdf/Diversity/affirmativeAction.pdf.

The Diversity Talent Pool received 102 requests for resumes in 2005–2006, with 39 of those requests resulting in placements.

Findings from the provincial public service hiring audit that was held in 2004–2005 have been tabulated, and a hiring audit report has been drafted for internal review.

The following strategies were undertaken in 2005–2006:

- conducted a trades summit with the African Nova Scotia community to introduce trades and apprenticeship, resulting in exploration by 12 individuals
- presented trades and apprenticeship information to Mi'Kmaq Kinamatnewey education and economic development committees of the Tripartite Forum and at the Aboriginal Youth Forum
- provided carpentry training to carpentry apprentices in Membertou
- supported the Union of Nova Scotia Indians to begin development of a provincial aboriginal strategy to increase participation in trades and apprenticeship

Objective 4
 Develop and implement
 prior learning
 assessment and
 recognition (PLAR)
 processes and tools

Activity

- developing a Youth Apprenticeship program for under-represented groups (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Maritime Forces Atlantic, organizations of under-represented groups, Nova Scotia Community College Career and Transition Services, Nova Scotia Automotive Human Resource Sector Council)
- improving supports for and success of struggling Adult Learning Program students (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, community literacy organizations)
- initiating a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) initiative that will develop a framework for a systematic approach to the recognition of learning gained through formal, non-formal, and informal mechanisms (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Various partners)
- working with the post-secondary education institutions to establish a written agreement on the transfer of credits among universities and between universities and the community colleges, based on the memorandum of understanding between the province and the universities, signed in December 2004 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

Completed a six month out-of-school youth apprenticeship pilot in the automotive sector in August 2005, which included essential skills programming and work placements.

A new provincial initiative aimed at improving the success of struggling Adult Learning Program (ALP) students has been formed with committee representation from the Nova Scotia Community College, ALP staff, and community literacy organizations. A strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats analysis was completed, resulting in the development of a concrete, broad-based, multi-faceted, multi-year plan.

Creation of a framework to advance Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition for students has begun.

The Universities and Colleges Division participates in a pan-Canadian Credit Transfer working group, which shares best practice and current status information. Preliminary discussions have taken place regarding the establishment of a credit transfer working group to be set up in 2006–2007.

Activity

- 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; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- working with the Prior Learning Assessment Centre to provide career and life portfolio programming to recipients of income assistance (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** Prior Learning Assessment Centre)
- encouraging the Nova Scotia Community College to continue its development of accessible programs supporting the following activities:
 - reviewing Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) processes with a goal of enhancing and expanding services available to students
 - integrating PLAR concepts and practices into academic advising services
 - creating the concept of a prior learning assessment community in the Digby area in partnership with the Prior Learning Assessment Centre

(**Lead:** Department of Education;
Partners: Nova Scotia Community College, Prior Learning Assessment Centre)

Achievement

Recognition of potential post-secondary elective credits toward the Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults continues to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

A total of 123 income assistance recipients completed Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition portfolios during the past year.

The Nova Scotia Community College partnered with the Prior Learning Assessment Centre to support the following skills initiatives in 2005–2006:

- A study to identify economic opportunities and skills needed to meet those opportunities in the Digby Community has been conducted. Phase II of this study is currently under way to identify and address closing the skills gaps to meet those opportunities.
- A sector-wide PLAR process for continuing care assistants in the province is currently under way. Carried out in partnership with the Health Care Human Resources Sector, this project supports the province's need to recruit and retain qualified continuing care workers in Nova Scotia.

Activity

- collaborating with various industry groups to provide advice and guidance in the areas of the practice and promotion of Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Health Care Human Resource Sector Council)
- developing and implementing an apprenticeship PLAR and transfer of credit policy (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- researching with other jurisdictions to identify joint projects for essential skills and developing transferable skills assessment for apprenticeable trades (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Apprenticeship offices in Manitoba and British Columbia, Canadian Apprenticeship Forum)

Achievement

The Health Care Human Resource Sector Council Continuing Care PLAR Pilot Project was completed and the implementation stage has begun. The Provincial PLAR Advisory committee, which is comprised of a broad range of stakeholders (universities, immigrant associations, community colleges, sector councils, businesses, and labour) was established.

A process for certificate holders of recognized credentials was developed and implemented. Transfer credit agreements were reviewed and renewed in approximately 50 pre-employment programs available at the Nova Scotia Community College.

Piloted the Transferable Trade Skills Project in partnership with British Columbia United Food and Commercial Workers. Led the development of an Apprenticeship Essential Skills conceptual model and national survey tool.

Activity

- working with the Health Care Human Resource Sector Council (HCHRSC) to develop an action plan to address recruitment and retention issues with continuing care assistants (CCAs) in both long-term care and home care environments (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Employers, Nova Scotia Community College)
- supporting implementation of the Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition policy and procedures that provide an additional pathway to acquire the Continuing Care Assistant designation (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Employers, Nova Scotia Community College)
- implementing the compulsory Continuing Care Assistant designation for entry to practice (**Lead:** Department of Health; **Partners:** Employers, Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

A study was conducted by the HCHRSC. This study confirmed the need to recruit CCAs. This need was addressed in a number of ways in 2005–2006:

- The development of brand and marketing tools targeting the recruitment of CCAs was begun.
- An online and toll-free survey of current CCAs was carried out.
- Funding was provided to nursing homes and home support agencies to provide bursaries to new CCA students in exchange for return for service agreements. This bursary funding will continue in 2006–2007.
- A database was established to track CCA course offerings and the number of CCA graduates.

A consortium of organizations (the Nova Scotia Community College, the Prior Learning Assessment Centre, and the Health Care Human Resource Sector Council) was formed to develop and implement the PLAR process for CCAs. This consortium is committed to training 24 prior learning assessors across the province and to having at least 24 persons achieve CCA certification through PLAR.

The Continuing Care Assistant (CCA) Educational Entry to Practice requirement policy was implemented April 2006 establishing a standard certification process for CCAs being employed for the first time. A phased-in implementation plan for the first two years was developed.

Activity

- working with industry to produce a practice guide to assist business and industry to incorporate PLAR approaches within their sectors (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Industry sector councils, other partners)
- developing the Challenge for Credit process for Physically Active Lifestyles 11 and Physical Education 10 based on a commitment to and documentation of physical activity in the community (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, intergovernmental partners)
- developing training programs for service providers to increase the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning's capacity regarding PLAR (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- delivering PLAR training to Department of Community Services staff through the Career Theory Program and the Career Practitioner Certificate Program, which will result in staff being trained to determine evidence of the competencies of their clients (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** Prior Learning Assessment Centre)
- working on the development of a workbook to assist the Department of Community Services career practitioners with a model based on PLAR that would assist them in determining evidence of competencies in relation to the National Standards and Guidelines for Career Practitioners (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** Prior Learning Assessment Centre)

Achievement

The *Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition Practice Guide and Handbook* was produced October 2005 and made available to sector councils.

This initiative is in progress and will be addressed in the context of physical education curriculum development over the next three years.

Developed and delivered PLAR 101 training program, to various provincial organizations. Conducted training session for a province-wide network of Adult Learning Program (ALP) counsellors. Consulted with ALP counsellors regarding PLAR training and service needs.

Forty-two staff accessed Career Theory Training programs, and 36 staff completed Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) skill update sessions. Four staff received advanced PLAR practitioner training.

The final draft for the *National Standards Workbook* has been completed and will be released in January 2007.

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

The continued development of a skilled and knowledgeable labour force will require the nurturing of a lifelong learning culture in Nova Scotia. This means that we must create an environment where learning opportunities can be taken advantage of at all ages and stages of life and that our education and training practices encourage Nova Scotians to develop the skills and attitudes that they need to be lifelong learners.

Objective 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

Activity

- initiating the Pre-Primary Program pilot in up to 20 sites in areas where access to day care is limited and where school space is available; curriculum will be based on early childhood development principles and will emphasize activities and socialization skills (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, Department of Health Promotion and Protection, Department of Health, Department of Community Services, Mount Saint Vincent University, Nova Scotia Community College)
- initiating family literacy pilot projects that enhance the role that parents can play in helping their children to meet with school success (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards, libraries, community groups)
- participating in the YWCA of Halifax task force on Early Childhood Learning and Care (ECLC) to develop a model for ECLC for Halifax (**Lead:** YWCA; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, various others)

Achievement

Pilots are now under way in 19 sites and will continue through the 2006–2007 school year. The program, which began in September 2005, is staffed by two qualified early childhood educators working with each group of up to 18 children. The curriculum is developmentally appropriate and emphasizes emergent skill sets that must be learned at the age of four years to ensure success in lifelong learning.

Funding in the amount of \$50,000 was provided to support five family literacy pilot projects across the province.

Community Architecture for Early Childhood Learning and Care—Halifax Regional Municipality was completed last year. Copies were distributed through the YWCA and at the Women, Work & Care: Policy at the Crossroads forum, which was held in October 2005.

Activity

- developing plans for a forum in 2005 on the role of Nova Scotian women in the family and policies that affect them, including policies related to early childhood learning and care (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Round Table on Women's Economic Security, United Way, Public Service Commission, Department of Community Services, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, NSGEU, CUPE, Canadian Labour Congress, Canadian Federation of Labour, Atlantic Centre of Excellence on Women's Health)
- 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)

Achievement

Women, Work & Care: Policy at the Crossroads was held on October 26–27, 2005. A forum report and highlights document will be published and will be available online at <www.gov.ns.ca/staw/pubs.htm>.

A total of 13 family literacy projects were funded under the Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund in 2005–2006.

Created a family literacy list serve for practitioners in Nova Scotia in partnership with Literacy Nova Scotia and the National Adult Literacy Database. Organized seven regional networking meetings across the province to enable family literacy practitioners and stakeholders to share information, resources, research, and funding. Created a draft family literacy strategic plan for the province, which was reviewed and endorsed by the seven regions.

Activity

- supporting the Francophone Family Literacy Committee in implementing its action plan for the Acadian community through the second year of a four-year nationally funded initiative (**Lead:** Equip 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 story times for infants, toddlers, and preschool children at all public libraries in the province (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- implementing the Class Size initiative, the Literacy Success initiative, and the Mathematics Strategy in schools across the province (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- expanding the early intervention Reading Recovery™ program to continue to increase accessibility for grade 1 students (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

Achievement

Continued support to the Francophone Family Literacy Committee as they move forward in the second of a four-phase plan to advance literacy and family learning in the Acadian community.

Read to Me! continues to be offered at all Nova Scotia hospitals.

Preschool programming is offered on an ongoing basis in all library regions at each library branch; major events include annual Read to Me! Jamborees.

The Department of Education continues to support and expand the Class Size initiative, the Literacy Success initiative, and the Mathematics Strategy as part of its Learning for Life II: Brighter Futures Together plan.

The Reading Recovery™ program was expanded to continue to increase accessibility for grade 1 students. A research project is under way to examine how to adapt the assessments and teaching in Reading Recovery™ for French immersion students. This initiative includes training for teachers and the provision of learning materials.

Objective 2

Improve the core skills of children in Nova Scotia's education system

Activity

- expanding the Class Size initiative to cap grade 2 classes at 23 students as of September 2005; in addition, combined grades primary to 1 classes will have a maximum of 20 students or an additional non-teaching adult in the classroom (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- developing a new grade primary program guide (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- introducing *Teachers in Action: Reading and Writing in Primary–3* (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- providing training and funding for more literacy mentors for grades primary to 9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

Achievement

The Class Size initiative was introduced as part of the Learning for Life (2002) plan and is continuing as part of the Time to Teach and Time to Learn theme of *Learning for Life II: Brighter Futures Together* (2005). Class sizes were capped at 25 in grade primary in September 2003, grade 1 in September 2004, and grade 2 in September 2005.

Blueprint for Building a Better Nova Scotia also committed to capping combined grades primary–1 classes at 20 or providing an additional non-teaching adult in classrooms with 21–25 students. Implementation of this initiative began in September 2005.

A draft *Grade Primary Program Guide* and a pamphlet for parents, *Let's Talk About ... Primary Program*, have been developed. Learning resources to support delivery of the grade primary program were purchased and distributed.

Teaching in Action: Grades Primary–3 was completed and launched in May 2005 at a workshop for 100 lead teachers. Teachers also received related resources.

Partnered with the Nova Scotia Educational Leadership Consortium, providing five days of training for 22 literacy mentors. Boards were provided with \$500,000 in 2005–2006 for literacy mentors in grades 7–9. To date, targeted funding supports 10 full-time literacy mentors. The Learning for Life II: Brighter Futures Together goal is to provide targeted funding for 50 literacy mentors.

Activity

- implementing new Atlantic Canada curriculum for social studies, grades primary to 3 and grade 7 and sciences humaines maternelle à 3 and 7^e année (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- introducing new mathematics classroom assessment resources for grades primary to 3 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- implementing *MathLinks Primary to 3* (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- providing targeted funding for mathematics mentors and for the professional development of mathematics teachers and school-based math leaders, grades primary to 9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

Achievement

- Implementation began in September 2005.
- An implementation workshop was conducted for 66 Social Studies 7 lead teachers.
 - Textbooks, curriculum guides, and teacher resources were provided to support Social Studies 7 and sciences humaines 7^e année.
 - An implementation workshop was conducted for 74 lead teachers for social studies in grades primary–2.
 - Professional development was provided for French early immersion lead teams and late immersion grade 7 teachers.
 - Schools were provided with curriculum guides and classroom and teacher resources for Social Studies grades primary–2 and sciences humaines maternelle à 2.
- These resources are in development. Field tests of grades primary to 3 were conducted and analysed.
- The draft resource was completed and is currently being revised. Support resources have been identified for future purchase.
- Targeted funding of \$527,500 was provided for the expansion and support of boards' mentoring programs. To date, this funding supports 12 full-time math mentors. The Learning for Life II: Brighter Futures Together goal is to provide targeted funding for 60 math mentors. Targeted funding of \$472,000 was also provided to support professional development for junior high resource teachers, grades 4 and 9 teachers, school-based mathematics leaders, and high school teachers, and for the delivery of five days of intensive training for 150 junior high mathematics leaders in the area of assessment.

Activity

- assisting school boards in providing site-based mathematics professional development for teachers of grades primary to 9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- providing training and funding for more math mentors for grades primary to 9 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- providing new mathematics textbooks and teacher resources (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- providing classroom resources to support the writing program in grades 1 to 3 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- implementing new Atlantic Canada curriculum for Science 4 and supporting the implementation of Science 3 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

Achievement

Resources were provided to school-based math leaders to support the provision of three site-based mathematics professional development sessions for teachers of grades primary to 9.

Targeted funding was provided for math mentors. Leadership training was provided for eight lead mentors and a five-day Mentoring and Coaching workshop was conducted for 25 math mentors.

Mathematics Assessment: A Practical Handbook teacher resources were provided for grades primary–12.

Roads to Reasoning: Developing Thinking Skills through Problem Solving resources were provided for grades 1–6.

Together: A Combined Grade Resource: Grades 3 and 4 was distributed.

Mathematics 9: Focus on Understanding and *Math Makes Sense 4* textbooks and teacher resources were purchased and distributed.

Teachers were provided with copies of *Writing Essentials: Raising Expectations and Results While Simplifying Teaching*, *Write Traits Classroom Kit Grade 1*, *Write Traits Classroom Kit Grade 2*, and *Write Traits Classroom Kit Grade 3* were provided for each classroom.

A resource for principals, *Hands-on, Minds-on Science: What Does It Look Like in Grades Primary–3 Classrooms?*, was published and distributed.

Atlantic Canada Science Curriculum guides for grade 3 and grade 4 were completed and distributed.

A three-day Science 3 and Science 4 Implementation Workshop was conducted for 75 lead teachers.

A variety of supplementary resources were provided to schools.

Activity

- supporting implementation of Active Young Readers/Jeunes lecteurs actifs, grades 4 to 6 with a focus on effective classroom assessment strategies and increased support for struggling readers
(**Lead:** Department of Education;
Partners: School boards)
- supporting implementation of Writers in Action/Écrivains l'oeuvre, grades 4 to 6, with a focus on effective classroom assessment strategies and increased support for struggling writers
(**Lead:** Department of Education;
Partners: School boards)
- supporting implementation of Active Readers/Lecteurs actifs, grades 7 to 9, by implementing the *Active Readers Assessment Resource for Young Adolescents*, providing additional learning resources for students, and conducting a professional development workshop for more than 100 lead teachers
(**Lead:** Department of Education;
Partners: School boards)
- implementing Writers in Action 7 and Écrivains l'oeuvre 7–9
(**Lead:** Department of Education;
Partners: School boards)

Achievement

The implementation of Active Young Readers/Jeunes lecteurs actifs, grades 4 to 6, was supported with the provision of a number of supplementary resources for teachers and students. Supplemental passages for the *Active Young Readers Grades 4–6 Assessment Resource* were developed.

Supplementary resources were provided for grade 4. Boards provided Writers in Action 5 and Writers in Action 6 workshops to support implementation.

The implementation of Active Readers/Lecteurs actifs 7–9 was supported by an infusion of more than 98,000 print resources for grades 7–9 students, as well as software programs and professional resources.

An Active Readers 7–9 workshop was provided for 100 lead teachers.

Regional in-service education focussed on use of *Active Readers Assessment Resource: Young Adolescents* and on effective ways to support students' development as readers across the curriculum.

Boards were provided with Active Readers Program Implementation Support Grants.

A summer institute, *When Kids Can't Read, What Teachers Can Do: Finding Ways in to Support Struggling Readers*, was conducted for 125 participants.

Supplementary resources were provided for grade 4. Boards provided Writers in Action 5 and Writers in Action 6 workshops to support implementation.

Activity

- providing targeted funding for learners in grades 7 and 8 who are struggling with reading and/or writing
(**Lead:** Department of Education;
Partners: School boards)
- piloting alternative delivery methods for Core French, field testing a classroom resource to assess grade 9 immersion students' French language skills, and providing more learning resources to support implementation of French second language teaching
(**Lead:** Department of Education;
Partners: School boards)
- developing *Écrivains l'oeuvre 10* and implementing *Writers in Action 10*, including the provision of professional resources for teachers and a professional development workshop for lead teachers
(**Lead:** Department of Education;
Partners: School boards)
- implementing English 10 Plus, a new 220-hour course option, including the provision of resources for students and professional development for teachers
(**Lead:** Department of Education;
Partners: School boards)

Achievement

Funding in the amount of \$1,900,000 has been provided for interventions and support for learners in grades 7 and 8 who are struggling with reading and/or writing.

Two new classes of grade 6 piloted the Intensive French program in 2005–2006; resources were provided for these classes. Professional development was provided for new teachers and for continuing teachers. Written and oral skills were assessed in spring 2006. A classroom resource to assess French language skills of French immersion students was field tested. Learning resources were provided for the grade 9 Core French program.

The Department of Education conducted a three-day English 10: Writers in Action Implementation Workshop for lead teachers.

English 10 teachers were provided with three professional resources: *Beyond Monet: The Artful Science of Instructional Integration*; *Why Workshop? Changing Course in 7–12 English*; and *Writing for Real: Strategies for Engaging Adolescent Writers*.

Resources were provided for grades 10–12 French immersion classrooms.

Regional school boards conducted two in-service workshops for all grade 10 English language arts teachers.

The Conseil scolaire acadien provincial conducted three workshop sessions on the new grammar for French language arts senior high teachers.

Implementation of English 10 Plus began in September 2005. English 10 Plus teachers attended a provincial implementation workshop. More than \$230,000 was invested in resources for English 10 Plus students and teachers.

Activity

- implementing Mathematics Essentials 10 and piloting Mathematics Essentials 11 (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

- encouraging learning in archaeology, biology, culture, geology, heritage, and palaeontology through delivery of a comprehensive program of curriculum-linked school classes through the Nova Scotia Museum (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

- supporting curriculum-based education through the delivery of the School Kits Program, in 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)

Achievement

Textbooks, teacher resources, and other learning resources were provided for Mathematics Essentials 10 and a two-day implementation workshop was provided for Mathematics Essentials 10 teachers.

Resources and professional development were provided for Mathematics Essentials 11 pilot teachers. The Mathematics Essentials 11 pilot has begun.

A total of 285 classes participated in curriculum-linked museum programs, providing 8,068 students with direct access to learning about their natural and cultural heritage. Museum staff also supported targeted learning through participation in special events such as the Association of Science Teachers Conference and school heritage fairs.

A new school program was piloted through the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic in which heritage interpreters visited schools in advance of class trips to the museums.

The Prescott House school program curriculum was developed to promote learning in cultural and natural history. The Ducks Unlimited Natural History school program was delivered at Uniacke Estate Museum Park.

The Museum School Kits program operated throughout the school year providing loans of kits of artifacts, specimens, and learning materials for school classes and students in home schooling. Kits were distributed from distribution centres around the province and provided over 10,000 students with direct access to learning about heritage.

Activity

- investing in programs delivered by professional artists in schools, including programs such as Arts Smarts, Professional Artists in the Schools (PAINTS), and Writers in the Schools (WITS) (Lead: Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- offering summer reading programs in 77 public library locations (Lead: Department of Education)
- participating in the national TD Summer Reading Club with all Nova Scotia regional libraries (Lead: Department of Education; Partner: TD Bank)
- working collaboratively at a national level for a first ministers meeting on Aboriginal issues and at a local level through the Tripartite Forum to improve the educational outcomes of Mi'kmaw learners in Nova Scotia both within the public school system and through the Mi'kmaq Kina'matneway (Lead: Office of Aboriginal Affairs; Partners: Federal government, other partners, national and local Aboriginal organizations, Mi'kmaq Tripartite Forum)

Achievement

Support in the amount of \$58,000 was provided to the following programs: Perform!, a joint initiative of Theatre Nova Scotia, Dance Association of Nova Scotia, and the Nova Scotia Choral Federation; the Writers in the Schools Program of the Writers Federation of Nova Scotia; and Arts Smarts, a program delivered through the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and NSCAD University.

All 77 library locations offered summer reading programs.

All regional library systems participated in the TD Summer Reading Program in the summer of 2005; 11,120 Nova Scotian children took part in the program, reading 222,179 books over the summer.

A clear focus on how to close the gap on educational attainment levels between local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners has been developed through the Education Working Committee of the Tripartite Forum.

A number of youth initiatives were executed through the Economic Development Working Committee, including a Mi'kmaq Youth Summit and the establishment of the Open For Business site in Eskasoni First Nation to support entrepreneurial opportunities for the community's youth.

Objective 3

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

Activity

- 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 departments, Industry Canada)
- continuing student placements under the Co-operative Employment Program in partnership with universities and with Nova Scotia Community College (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, universities)
- providing opportunities to support co-operative students to gain apprenticeable hours and experience while earning high school credits (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Provincial school boards, employers)
- promoting and recommending that co-operative and work experience opportunities for students include measures to expose girls and young women to careers in science, trades, and technology fields (**Lead:** Women for Economic Equality Society, Hypatia Association; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Department of Education, Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia Community College)
- promoting community-based education initiatives in school boards across the province (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

Achievement

The C@P program created 197 placements for students last year.

This program provided 176 employment opportunities for students last year.

Procedures and tools were developed to allow co-op students to acquire hours towards future apprenticeships. A network was established with co-operative education co-ordinators in two school boards for sharing of information.

Participation on the Program Advisory and the Program Expansion Committees of Techsploration was continued.

All school boards have been provided with funding to hire a community-based learning consultant.

Activity

- resuming work on a community-based education support document for schools (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- including work experience components in new career-related courses at the high school level (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- 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)
- continuing to offer a bursary at Dalhousie University Faculty of Engineering and one at the Nova Scotia Community College, through the Transportation and Public Works Planning for Progress: Employment Bursary Program (**Lead:** Department of Transportation and Public Works)

Achievement

A new draft of this document is in progress.

A work experience component is included as an alternative for project work in Design 11, Computer Programming 12, Multimedia 12, and Geomatics 12.

A Nova Scotia Community College Library Studies student completed a work placement in the library at the Museum of Natural History.

A \$1200 bursary continues to be offered to Dalhousie University for a first-year engineering student, and a \$1000 bursary continues to be offered to the Nova Scotia Community College for a survey technician student.

Objective 4

Increase the opportunities for Nova Scotians to access adult basic education

Activity

- 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 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)

Achievement

Approximately 4700 students enrolled in the NSSAL in 2005–2006. A total of 1235 Nova Scotians wrote the GED test at over 50 testing sessions scheduled across the province. Approximately 450 adults graduated with a high school diploma in the academic year ending June 2005.

Activity

- working with the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning on referring individuals who require academic upgrading as part of essential skills development (**Lead:** Department of Community Services; **Partner:** Department of Education)
- supporting regional planning teams, through the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning, 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 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)
- reviewing and revising the Adult Learning Program's Career Skills Development Level IV curriculum to make it more relevant and applicable to the world of work (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

The Nova Scotia Employability Achievement Assessment Action Plan was developed to identify academic upgrading needs of individual income assistance recipients. Approximately 250 recipients participated in career assessments and many were referred to the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning to acquire these skills.

Learning Theory Workshops were conducted at the Cape Breton Professional Development Day in March 2006 for approximately 60 NSSAL practitioners; a career fair in Cape Breton attended by over 200 students from the Strait Regional School Board, and a career fair in Halifax for over 100 military personnel. A literacy workshop, *Solution 2006—Sowing the Seeds of Learning*, was held in April 2006 for over 55 NSSAL practitioners.

The ALP Level II curriculum framework was revised with a focus on literacy and numeracy, and on bridging students to Level III. Annual collaborative planning around themes relevant to learners was initiated.

The new Career Skills Development Level IV course will be piloted at six Nova Scotia Community College campuses in September 2006.

Activity

- working in consultation with the community-based literacy organizations to review and revise all courses in the Level II ALP to better serve adult learners (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Community-based literacy organizations, Literacy Nova Scotia, National Adult Literacy Base, Department of Health)
- developing a professional development strategy that will provide information and training to adult education instructors regarding employability and essential skills training and links to emerging trends in the world of work (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, Université Sainte-Anne, school boards, community-based literacy organizations)
- providing opportunities for seniors to participate in senior-friendly learning programs (**Lead:** Senior Citizens' Secretariat; **Partners:** Department of Education, community learning networks, senior's organizations)
- developing and implementing a strategy to promote the implementation of measures such as transportation and child-care support for single mothers seeking educational upgrading, particularly those not on income assistance as part of follow-up to *Building Transitions to Good Jobs for Low-Income Women* (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women; **Partners:** Members of the Round Table for Women's Economic Security)

Achievement

The ALP Level II curriculum was revised to reflect current adult learning theory and focus on literacy, numeracy, and bridging students to Level III. Ten ALP Level II programs will pilot the revised curriculum during 2006–2007.

A professional development day for Adult High School instructors was held in April 2005. A new agreement was developed with the Nova Scotia Community College to further engage faculty in professional development opportunities.

Four Community Learning Networks received grants through the Seniors' Literacy and Learning Initiative to provide senior-friendly literacy programs.

Through Women Unlimited, worked was done with employers in the pilot communities to enhance a match between the skills emerging from the program and their needs.

Activity

- developing a proposal to access funding for a health literacy manual for older adults (**Lead:** Senior Citizens' Secretariat; **Partners:** Department of Education, Community Learning Networks, Seniors' organizations)
- working with Literacy Nova Scotia (LNS) 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)

Achievement

The proposal was approved by the National Literacy Secretariat, and the manual is expected to be completed by late fall 2006.

Expertise was provided to the LNS Professional Development Committee and the LNS Advancing Learning Technologies project was supported.

Objective 5

Make education and training more relevant to the emerging skill needs of the learners and employers

Activity

- supporting 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)
- consulting with stakeholders and partners in winter 2006 on adult literacy and essential skills by hosting an Adult Literacy and Essential Skills Summit (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Community College, community literacy organizations, Human Resources Skills Development Canada)

Achievement

Worked with

- the Health Care Human Resource Sector Council to develop a PLAR practice guide to conduct research on creating learning organizations
- the Trucking Human Resource Sector Council through the One Journey program
- the Association of Industry Sector Councils and the Nova Scotia Boatbuilders to research employer training tax incentives to support apprenticeship
- the Tourism Human Resource Sector Council to deliver essential skills to taxi drivers to support national certification

The Adult Literacy and Essential Skills Summit, Working Together, Learning Together, brought together key stakeholders to discuss the results and implications of the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey. The summit included a broad range of partners with the goal of working to meet the literacy and workplace essential skills requirements of Nova Scotians.

Activity

- increasing capacity to deliver occupational needs assessments for business (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia)
- 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)
- supporting the skill development of the current workforce through the award-winning Workplace Education initiative to assist employees with managing change brought on by a rapidly changing workplace (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Partners Committee, Nova Scotia business and labour)
- providing trade-relevant essential skills learning options for apprentices and trade qualifiers to support their success in the Apprenticeship Training Program and with trade qualifications (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia)

Achievement

Created a consultant training program, and certified 12 consultants in assessing occupational needs in organizations.

An organizational needs assessment was performed for each new partnering organization to address workforce training needs.

Six professional development workshops with 80 participants were delivered in Halifax and Sydney.

One hundred and forty-three programs were developed in partnership with 58 businesses, representing over 1400 participants in essential skills programs. Total investment equalled \$921,067: \$493,355 through grants and \$427,711 through leveraged funds.

Delivered math refresher training to three groups of apprentices. Developed and piloted Document Use Refresher for Apprentices. Funded tutoring for essential apprentice skills. Supported essential skills training for Membertou carpentry apprentices.

Activity

- providing training to external groups (lawyers, surveyors, realtors, title searchers, legal assistants, developers, and municipal development officers) in the use of the new land registry system; training will include use of new forms, systems, processes, procedures, policy, and regulations (**Lead:** Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations)
- evaluating the provincial government corporate training calendar to ensure that appropriate courses are provided to government employees (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- building a new learning management system for the provincial public service to improve methods of securing training and development programs and to provide an alternative route for education through e-learning (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- completing a needs assessment of the farm community to ensure that 4-H program resources meet their needs and are relevant to the skills they require to complete their daily job tasks (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture and Fisheries; **Partners:** Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture)
- developing curriculum for new programs such as Water Resources Management, which will be delivered as a master's degree at Nova Scotia Agricultural College and has a target implementation date of September 2007 (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture, Nova Scotia Agricultural College)

Achievement

Training has been provided to more than 1300 individuals across the province, and a plan is in place to train a minimum of 60 lawyers per year in future.

A needs assessment with stakeholders was conducted to determine the course selection for the upcoming year.

The learning management system (LearnNet) was implemented across government in August 2005.

The resources 4-H members use were evaluated informally by leaders and members of the farm community, in regards to their relevance. Leaders met to provide feedback and input on changes.

The program is scheduled for implementation in September, and new programs continue to be developed as planned.

Activity

- monitoring the needs of current and prospective Nova Scotia Agricultural College students through the Enrolment Management Council (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture, Nova Scotia Agricultural College)
- developing a marketing and communications plan for the new programs at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (**Lead:** Department of Agriculture, Nova Scotia Agricultural College)
- continuing to work with the Nova Scotia Community College to develop a process for supporting ongoing program review (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)
- providing advanced diploma programs for university and college graduates wanting to enhance their skills in preparation for employment (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

The enrolment management process continued to evolve. Program targets and strategies to attain them have been developed.

The marketing plan was developed and implemented with good success. Follow-up phases are currently in development.

The Nova Scotia Community College is developing a new academic plan, to be released in June 2006, that will outline new processes for the annual program review.

The following Nova Scotia Community College programs were initiated, expanded, and accredited in 2005–2006.

- Beginning in September 2006, the practical nursing program will increase from a 49-week, three-semester program to a 69-week, four-semester program with a change in credential from a certificate to a diploma upon graduation.
- The Aircraft Maintenance Engineering Program was awarded national accreditation by the Canadian Aviation Maintenance Council.
- The Pictou-based School of Fisheries was expanded to the Shelburne campus.
- A new Communication Disorders Technician program was launched in partnership with Nova Scotia Hearing and Speech Centres.

Activity

- supporting the implementation of the Options and Opportunities initiative for high school students who plan to pursue trades and technology studies at post-secondary institutions (Lead: Department of Education)
- building on opportunities for high school students to make successful transitions to college learning through Nova Scotia Community College's College Prep program (Partners: Nova Scotia Community College, Department of Education)
- implementing the Youth Pathways and Transitions initiative, including the introduction of the new career-related courses Agriculture/Agri-food 11, Business Management 12, and Food Science 12 (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, sector partners)

Achievement

The General Arts and Science Program which was designed to give prospective and returning students the knowledge and skills they require to pursue the post-secondary program of their choice was offered at nine campuses across the province. The number of students in the program rose from 138 in 2001–2002 to approximately 295 in 2005–2006.

New courses, such as Health and Human Services 12 and Applied Networking Technology 11 and 12 were designed to link high school students to college programs and careers.

A team of students from Auburn High School are participating in an international robotics competition, which will take place in Texas in June 2006.

High school students learned about careers in the aerospace sector through attending a national aerospace industry forum held at Nova Scotia Community College Aviation Institute in May 2006.

High school students across Nova Scotia “test-drove” Nova Scotia Community College programs. This ongoing initiative gives students an opportunity to experience a program of choice for a day.

Agriculture/Agri-food 11, Business Management 12, and Food Science 12 have been implemented.

Activity	Achievement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing new career-related and interactive technologies courses such as Health and Human Services 12 (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, sector partners) 	<p>Health and Human Services 12 has been piloted.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> developing the new career-related and interactive technologies courses Geomatics 12, Computer Programming 12, and Tourism 12 (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards, Nova Scotia Community College, universities, sector partners) 	<p>Computer Programming 12 has been implemented. Tourism 12 has been developed and piloted. Geomatics 12 has been developed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> piloting the new course Multimedia 12 (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards, Nova Scotia Community College) 	<p>Multimedia 12 has been piloted.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> piloting the Responsible Citizenship and Canada's Tax System learning unit in 15 to 25 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 our society as a whole (Lead: Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations; Partners: Department of Education, Canada Revenue Agency) 	<p>A pilot was conducted in 25 schools with positive feedback from both students and teachers. This unit will be rolled out to at least 25 additional schools in the 2006–2007 school year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> implementing the Applied Networking Technology articulation program where high school students from across Nova Scotia can obtain credit towards the Nova Scotia Community College Information Technology Diploma as well as advanced Cisco Academy credentials (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: Nova Scotia Community College, school boards) 	<p>An articulation program was put in place in 2005–2006.</p>

Activity

- resuming and expanding outreach programs designed to educate students with the range of skills used in jobs through efforts such as job fairs, departmental speakers bureaus, and open houses (**Lead:** Department of Transportation and Public Works)
- supporting more flexible learning opportunities at post-secondary institutions that respond to the changing needs of learners, such as part-time, customized, and online learning (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partner:** Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

Job fairs were held at Cape Breton University, Dalhousie University, University of New Brunswick, and various high schools throughout the province.

Participation in the Adult Learning Program has increased from 369 participants in 2001–2002 to 1088 in 2004–2005.

Objective 6

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

Activity

- increasing the capacity of the Nova Scotia Community College to approximately 10,000 seats through the \$123 million development plan, which includes renovations at all existing campuses and the construction of a new metro campus (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- encouraging and supporting the development of articulation agreements between the Nova Scotia Community College and the universities to allow students to receive credit for relevant courses and diplomas taken at other institutions, thus reducing overall costs for students (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Universities, Nova Scotia Community College)

Achievement

Renovations are complete at most rural campuses, and Phase I construction of the new metro campus is on schedule for the September 2007 opening. The enrolment of 8,978 students for 2005–2006 was on target with the development plan. Planning for Phase II of the metro campus is well under way. Nova Scotia Community College has been steadily growing throughout the duration of the development project, and it is expected that by September 2007 over 10,000 students will be enrolled.

Preliminary discussions have taken place regarding the establishment of a credit transfer working group within the province, as set down in the Memorandum of Understanding on Funding and Tuition Fees. The *Guide to Articulation and Transfer Agreements for Nova Scotia Community College* is available online at <www.nsc.ca>.

Activity

- supporting the articulation agreements between the Nova Scotia Community College and Mount Saint Vincent University, which allows students to get two years' credit towards a degree from their two-year diploma in business administration and human services (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** Mount Saint Vincent University, Nova Scotia Community College)
- supporting graduate study programs by funding research (**Lead:** Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust Fund, Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation)
- 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)
- renewing the Entrepreneur Skills program in collaboration with the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Dalhousie University, and Mount Saint Vincent University (**Lead:** Office of Economic Development; **Partners:** Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Dalhousie University, Mount Saint Vincent University)

Achievement

Mount Saint Vincent University and the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) have signed an articulation agreement for three programs within the School of Health and Human Services: Human Services Diploma—Gerontology; Human Services Diploma—Child and Youth Studies; and the Early Childhood Studies Diploma. The agreement is in effect for NSCC graduates from 2003 onwards. Similar agreements for Business Administration and Tourism and Hospitality Management have been completed.

The Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust Fund was reviewed, and recommendations for operational changes were made.

University Business Development Centres continued to provide an entrepreneurial environment for their students and communities. A new centre, the Norman Newman Centre for Entrepreneurship, opened on the campus of Dalhousie University.

Approximately 12 programs were funded under the Entrepreneurship in University Environments Initiative, exposing over 1000 students to entrepreneurial content as part of their university studies.

Activity

- supporting groups such as Hypatia Association and the 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
(**Partners:** Women in Science, Trades and Technology Working Group, which includes Department of Education, Department of Community Services, Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Nova Scotia Community College, Hypatia Association, and Women for Economic Equality Society)
- supporting programs that will provide students exposure to practical experiences within the oil sector
(**Lead:** Department of Energy)
- working with the Nova Scotia Community College to supplement curriculum and teaching labs in programs related to the energy sector
(**Lead:** Department of Energy;
Partner: Nova Scotia Community College)
- offering skill development enhancement and work experience opportunities to students attending private career colleges, community colleges, and universities through work-term placements in Visitor Information Centres (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

Achievement

Educational institutions and workplaces were assisted to attract and retain women in science, trades, and technology occupations through Women Unlimited.

Wage incentives were provided to local companies again in 2005–2006 for hiring Nova Scotia students in career-related summer and co-op positions through the Energy Training Program for Students. This program enables students to build sector-specific competencies required to compete effectively in the labour market upon graduation.

Potential partnerships in Mexico were identified through working closely with the Nova Scotia Community College.

A work-term placement was completed by one community college student at the Amherst Visitor Information Centre.

Activity

- providing work experiences that focus on topics such as cultural history, practical business skills, marine history, science, and technology through work placements in museums (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- providing meaningful and applicable employment opportunities with the Province of Nova Scotia to post-secondary co-op students through the Co-operative Employment Program (**Lead:** Public Service Commission; **Partners:** All government departments)
- assisting local companies in hiring Nova Scotian post-secondary students in career-related summer and co-op work terms through the Energy Training Program for Students (**Lead:** Department of Energy; **Partners:** Energy sector employers)

Achievement

In 2005–2006, a student from Sackville High School completed a co-op work placement working in a museum geology collection gaining direct experience with work relating to Nova Scotia's natural heritage.

A total of thirty co-operative employment positions (10 positions for each session: summer, winter, and fall) were created and filled by post-secondary co-op students.

The Energy Training Program for Students placed 44 students in career-related summer and co-op positions with local energy-sector companies.

Objective 7

Promote lifelong learning through the development of a learning culture

Activity

- 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)

Achievement

Presented the Workplace Education model to Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters and Literacy Nova Scotia.

Awarded four Workplace Education Ambassador awards.

Co-ordinated a provincial Adult Learning and Essential Skills Summit.

Met with employers at 13 CEO roundtables.

This project is ongoing through work with employers, unions, and project teams.

Activity

- investigating the development of an organizational audit and human resource planning tool kit for workplaces that participate in workplace education programs (**Lead:** Department of Education)
- introducing the first 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)
- developing 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)
- expanding the Lunch n' Learn program to field offices across the province (**Lead:** Department of Transportation and Public Works)

Achievement

- Developed a concept paper for the Human Resource Capacity Program.
- The first COF Literacy Award was presented at the International Literacy Day Awards ceremony on September 8, 2005.
- The Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee continually evaluates member needs and secures resources to develop identified training and resource materials. Examples include
- development of farm safety messages for radio spots in September/October 2006
 - development of the message and presentation for a poster highlighting slow-moving farm vehicles on highways
 - content development for a feature on farm safety in the *Chronicle Herald* in March 2006
- Research on best practices for creating and communicating a corporate philosophy of learning, including a vision, goals, and underlying principles has been undertaken. Career development tools and processes were developed, allowing employees to self-manage their learning and development.
- The Lunch n' Learn program is ongoing.

Activity

- supporting recipients of income assistance to develop learning plans designed to promote labour market attachment (**Lead:** Department of Community Services)
- promoting health literacy initiatives that raise awareness of the role that literacy plays in the ability of Nova Scotians to access and understand health-care information and to successfully navigate the health-care system through activities such as launching a Health Literacy Awareness Initiative that targets primary health care providers; publishing a health literacy edition of the *East Coast Reader*, a plain language newspaper for literacy and ESL learners; and exploring ways that health literacy can be incorporated into Adult Learning Program Level II curriculum revisions (**Lead:** Department of Health, Department of Education)
- promoting educational resources and opportunities by increasing the accessibility of provincial and community heritage resources and genealogical information available online through the Nova Scotia Museum and Public Archives (**Lead:** Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)

Achievement

The Nova Scotia Employability Assessment process was used to assist income assistance recipients in developing career action plans to assist in connecting to the labour market. All clients received employment support services such as counselling, workshops, and access to educational programs to support their learning action plans.

The health Literacy Awareness Initiative was launched in April 2005. The following activities have taken place:

- A health literacy edition of the *East Coast Reader* was published on April 8, 2005.
- Health literacy material was integrated into the Adult Learning Program Level II curriculum.
- A health literacy awareness workshop was provided for the Nova Scotia Pharmacy Association.
- The Adult Learning Program Level II Health Literacy project was initiated with 10 Community Literacy Initiative pilot programs.

Two new online components of the Nova Scotia Museum website were created: an educational Did you know? section and a new link to facilitate the purchasing of museum publications online, linked to the Nova Scotia government publications site at <www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/publications>. The Nova Scotia Museum's online *Learning Resources Catalogue* for educators was also updated.

Through the Heritage Division Strategic Development Initiative, new online community heritage web portals were developed in Iona and Guysborough.

The Heritage Division developed and hosted three week-long and two day-long boatbuilding workshops at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, allowing participants to learn and practise heritage skills.

Activity

- organizing, participating in, and supporting annual celebratory events, 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)
- promoting lifelong learning opportunities for seniors in the *Programs for Seniors* directory (Lead: Senior Citizens' Secretariat)
- encouraging an interest in archaeology, biology, culture, geology, heritage, and palaeontology by providing a comprehensive schedule of interpretive programs and exhibits specific to Nova Scotia through the Nova Scotia Museum (Lead: Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage)
- launching an interactive website to provide parents with information on public school programs and services and expectations for student learning and achievement at different grade levels (Lead: Department of Education; Partners: School boards)

Achievement

An International Literacy Day Awards ceremony recognizing literacy volunteers and learners was held on September 8, 2005. Thirteen Family Learning Initiative Endowment Fund projects were announced at a Family Literacy Day Celebration in January 2006. Funding and support were provided to the Peter Gzowski Invitational Golf Tournament and Word on the Street.

An expanded listing of computer-related opportunities was included in the *Programs for Seniors* directory released in March 2006.

The Nova Scotia Museum created a new introductory film piece for the *Titanic 3D* film, created new interpretative exhibits on F. W. Wallace, the Franconia model and restoration, and the virtual Canada iNet exhibit for Expo 2005 in Japan. The Museum renewed eight other interpretive exhibits and programs toward the development of new knowledge specific to Nova Scotia natural and cultural heritage.

The website has been launched and can be found at <www.EDnet.ns.ca> by selecting "Site Index" from the menu and then selecting "Families & Students/P-12."

Activity

- providing information and materials for parents to support their children's literacy and mathematics learning in the early years (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

- administering the elementary literacy assessment to grade 6 students and providing individual student results to parents (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

Achievement

Let's Talk about ... pamphlets providing information for parents about elementary mathematics and grades 4–6 reading and writing programs were developed and distributed.

Let's Talk about ... Mental Math and Estimation pamphlets were developed and distributed for parents of students in grades 1–3, 4–6, and 7–9.

Home-School Communications Resources for grades primary to 6 were developed and distributed to all elementary schools.

Home activity resources for grades primary to 3 were developed and distributed.

The Elementary Literacy Assessment was administered to grade 6 students, and individual student results were provided to parents.

The Student Tracking and Monitoring System is being used to keep track of students identified by the Elementary Literacy Assessment as struggling with reading and/or writing and to monitor supports/interventions provided.

The Department of Education has targeted funding for learners in grades 7 and 8 who did not meet expectations for achievement in reading and writing in the administrations of the Elementary Literacy Assessment. Targeted funds are being used to implement Literacy Support Plans developed for those students.

Activity

- implementing the Time to Learn strategy, which emphasizes the importance of effective use of instructional time available in the school day (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)
- implementing anti-bullying initiatives such as the Positive and Effective Behavioural Support initiative, including the *School Code of Conduct Guidelines* and *Meeting Behaviour Challenges: Creating Safe and Caring Learning Environments* (**Lead:** Department of Education; **Partners:** School boards)

Achievement

Time to Learn strategy components for literacy and mathematics have been implemented in grades primary–8. An Instructional Time and School Activities Tracking pilot has been undertaken.

The three-year plan to support implementation of the School Code of Conduct through the provision of in-service education regarding *Positive and Effective Behaviour Supports*, the *School Code of Conduct Guidelines*, and *Meeting Behaviour Challenges: Creating Safe and Caring Learning Environments* has been continued. Provincial in-servicing has been provided for lead teams and for 200 schools.

Conclusion

The activities and achievements described in the *Annual Progress Report 2005–2006* demonstrate the steady progress that has been made in building a strong foundation of common goals, infrastructure, and partnerships from which innovative solutions to labour market challenges can be developed.

The acceleration of partnerships and collaborative efforts among government, industry, sector, business, labour, and community to build a highly skilled and educated workforce is evident. This growth in collaboration across stakeholder groups, and the ongoing commitment to the Skills Nova Scotia Framework, will undoubtedly build more synergistic progress toward building a strong workforce and a bright future in the coming years.

