



## A Learning Agenda: 2013-2018



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## 1. Executive Summary

The NB2026 Initiative on Learning was developed to engage citizens and organizations in a process and to facilitate a culture of Learning in making New Brunswick the Learning Province of Canada.

Achieving this vision will require the development of a system that:

- ⇒ Improves collaboration between businesses and organizations involved in learning;
- ⇒ Enhances coordination of available learning programs and services throughout NB;
- ⇒ Improves access to learning opportunities;
- ⇒ Strengthens organizational capacity to continuously improve learning programs;
- ⇒ Increases communities and citizen participation in learning opportunities.

Right now, we have a unique opportunity to build on the momentum and commitment and respond to the concerns and strategies of citizens, communities and organizations. The *Learning: Everybody's Project* initiative has the backing of influential champions, cross-sector support and a sense of urgency. By engaging in an innovative approach to learning that seeks to align measure and celebrate learning activities in the province, the Initiative on Learning will inspire stakeholders and achieve critical mass towards the vision.

The *Learning: Everybody's Project* backbone organization will improve learning outcomes across the province by coordinating cross-sector organizations to transform a fragmented system. This Learning Agenda describes how the *Learning: Everybody's Project* initiative will develop a backbone organization (Steering committee) that brings together the province's learning organizations to build the shared vision of New Brunswick becoming the Learning Province of Canada.

## **2. Introduction: Setting the Stage**

### **2.1 NB2026 Roundtable and the Learning Agenda**

The NB2026 Roundtable is a non-partisan group of leading citizens who share a love for the province and a passion for creating a strong foundation for the future. They come from all walks of life and from all corners of the province, representatives of the academic community, the private sector, labour unions, the environmental sector, government, First Nations people, the multi-cultural community, and the community non-profit sector.

NB2026 Roundtable participants believe that learning is the foundation upon which progress can be made across our society: greater economic success, healthier lives, social justice and an ability to retain and develop our culture and make better choices regarding resources allocation as well as environmental protection. Participants agreed that fostering a broader culture of learning among New Brunswick citizens should be a top priority.

Having identified strengthening New Brunswick's culture of learning as its main priority, the NB2026 Roundtable engaged the Government of New Brunswick to seek support and collaboration with the process of engaging citizens in understanding and exploring the issues, concerns, expectations and aspirations around learning in the province. Government agreed and has shown its support and dedication to the project with a substantial contribution of both human and financial resources. In 2010 the NB2026 Initiative on Learning was born.

### **2.2 NB2026 Initiative on Learning**

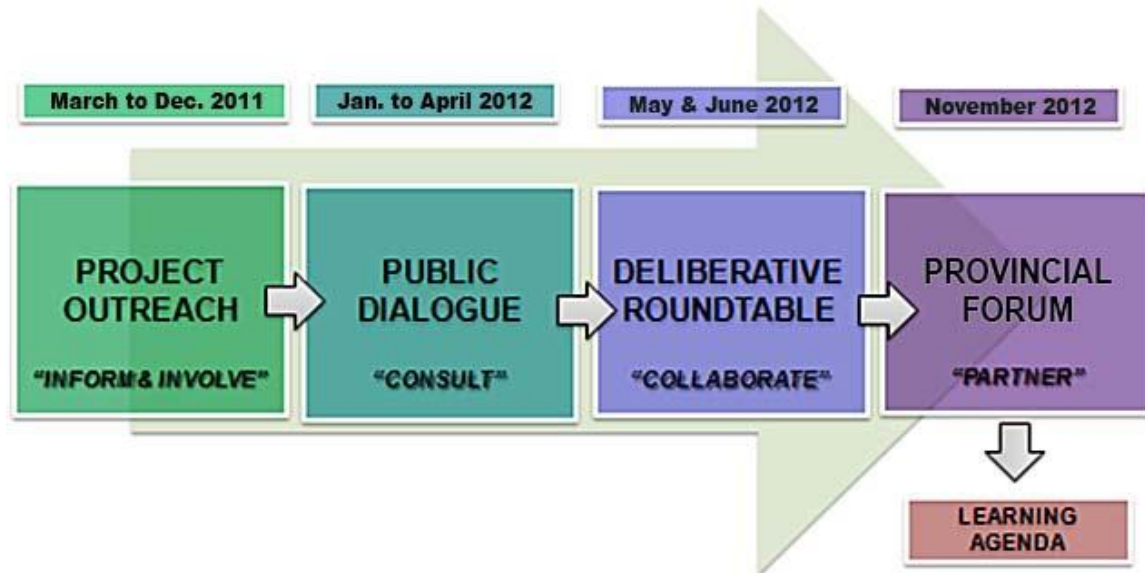
The NB2026 Initiative on Learning was developed to broadly engage citizens, communities and organizations across the province to develop the vision of making New Brunswick "the Learning Province of Canada". The process to develop a common learning agenda began in the spring of 2011 and involved four phases (Figure 1) that included discussions with more than 150 learning-related organizations and conversations with New Brunswickers from around the province. In total, more than 5,000 New Brunswickers had their chance to provide input.

The outcome of the Initiative on Learning was a detailed list of commitments from stakeholders and a background document: "*Learn: For Life! Building a Learning Agenda for New Brunswick Together*" and discussed during a Provincial Forum in November 2012. The document provided a shared vision, options for action toward fostering a culture of learning, and ideas for implementation. It also presented ideas of how to monitor progress toward achieving the vision of New Brunswick becoming the Learning Province of Canada.

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**Figure 1: Four Phases to a Learning Agenda**

## ENGAGEMENT PROCESS




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Participants in the Initiative on the Learning process:

- Appreciated the importance of working together;
- Acknowledged there are a broad range of learning programs and services;
- Were concerned over the lack of coordination and collaboration among providers;
- Were concerned by lack of accessibility to some programs (knowledge of what is available);
- Highlighted importance of aligning existing learning related strategies (and programs);
- Agreed on the necessity of success indicators to measure collective progress

Participants in the engagement process framed the challenge of becoming the learning province:

*“[They] appreciated the need to work together to create welcoming environments and opportunities that will engage those who are not currently involved in learning. Although we have many learning programs and services, there is concern over the lack of co-ordination and collaboration among those who provide these services, as well as accessibility. They spoke of the importance of aligning the Learning Agenda with the learning-related strategies and plans which are currently being implemented by the government, business and community sectors (poverty reduction, literacy, inclusion, early childhood development, commission on francophone education(GACEF), postsecondary education, Future NB, economic development, etc.)”*

(pg. 12, *Learn: For Life!*).

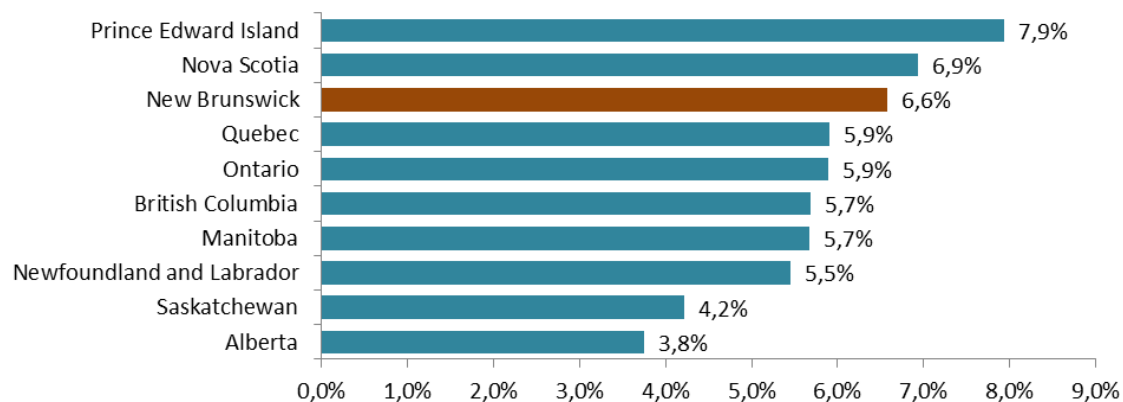
## 2.3 Becoming the Learning Province

Now is the time for us to come together and develop a shared vision for transforming New Brunswick into the Learning Province. There is a growing energy among both the organizations involved with learning and the public as a whole to develop this vision. The Initiative on Learning led to wide-ranging commitments from individuals, organizations and communities from across New Brunswick to work collaboratively to become the Learning Province.

There is a tendency for us to view big social challenges as a problem for government to solve. If we really want to foster broad social impact and become the Learning Province it will take commitment from all corners of our society – government, learning organizations, business associations, communities and community groups.

What the Initiative on Learning taught us is that key leaders and average New Brunswickers agree we need to do a better job of fostering a culture of learning in the province. It's not necessarily about the amount of money invested in learning but the effectiveness of that investment. Approximately, \$2.5 billion is spent on learning in New Brunswick across sectors annually on education and training in the province (or about \$8,000 per household). This includes all funds spent by the Department of Education, the university system, workplace training, as well as public and community programming. In total, education spending in New Brunswick represents 6.6 percent of the province's gross domestic product (Figure 2). If other learning expenditures were added in the total would be well above seven percent of GDP.

**Figure 2: Education spending as a percentage of GDP (2012)**



Source: Statistics Canada CANSIM Table 379-0028.

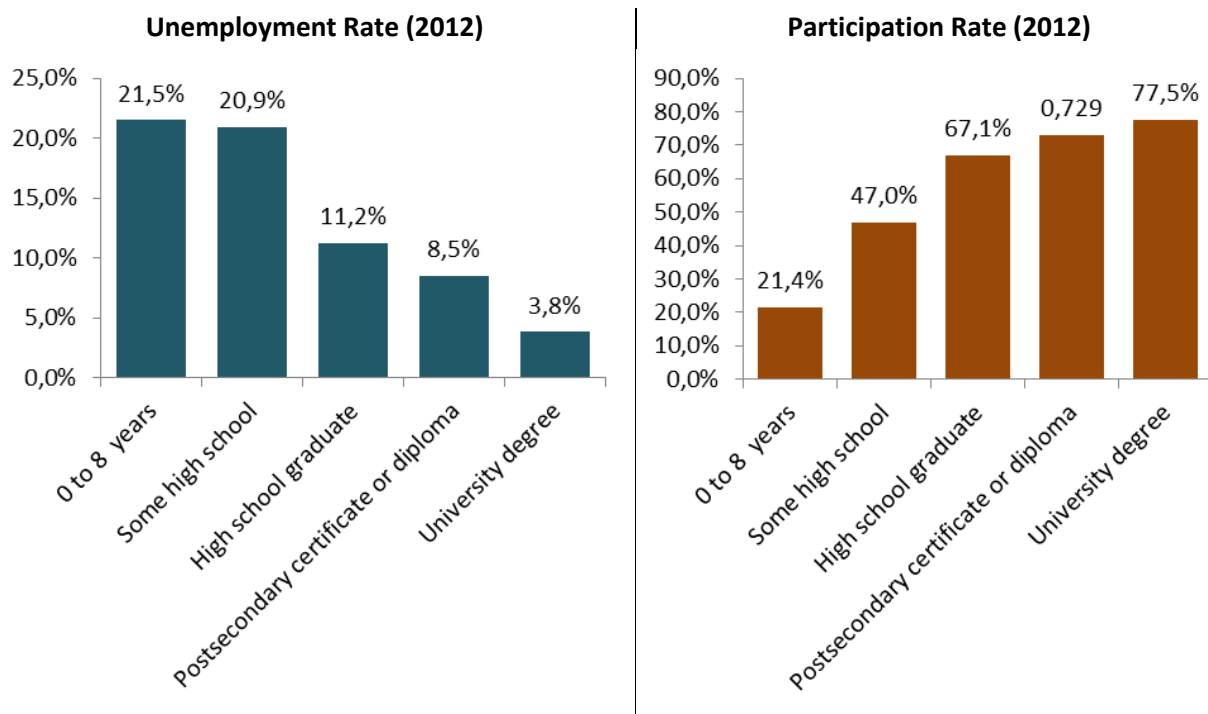
Outcomes on learning do not reflect the amount of resources invested. Our young people are scoring well below the Canadian average on standardized tests. New Brunswick is second lowest among the 10 provinces in for preschooler participation in organized activities. Our early learners are not being given the opportunities to learn and grow their curiosity through extramural activities, such as participating in the great programs offered by museums, science centers, YMCAs, cultural initiatives and sports associations.

Our citizens are not engaging in learning opportunities to the level of other provinces. More than three-fourths of all new jobs in the coming years will require some type of post-secondary education and yet only a little over half of New Brunswickers have a post-secondary education.

New Brunswick’s small and medium-sized businesses invest less than \$2,000 per employee on training compared to \$4,600 per person invested by Alberta’s businesses. At the same time, for seven straight years, a survey of Conseil économique du Nouveau-Brunswick members has found that the lack of qualified workers is the number one challenge facing businesses. Clearly, many of our workers are not accessing the learning opportunities they need to develop their skills to meet the changing demands of the labour market.

In general, New Brunswick has among the highest rates of illiteracy in the country. This is even more true for the francophone and the native communities. Illiteracy is among the largest economic and societal challenges facing the province. Those with limited education have a much higher unemployment rate compared to those with at least a high school diploma (Figure 3). Even more concerning, those with limited formal education are far more likely to not be in the workforce at all. As shown below, among adult New Brunswickers with Grade 8 education or less only 21.4 percent were in the labour market in 2012. For those with some high school, only 47 percent work in the labour market.

**Figure 3: Education and labour market outcomes in New Brunswick (2012)**



Source: Statistics Canada CANSIM Table 282-0004.

**Despite this data on learning access and outcomes, we know there is a lot of important and exciting work being done around the province. We just need to figure out a better way to achieve better collective outcomes from the work that is being done.**

## 2.4 The Role of “*Learning: Everybody’s Project*”

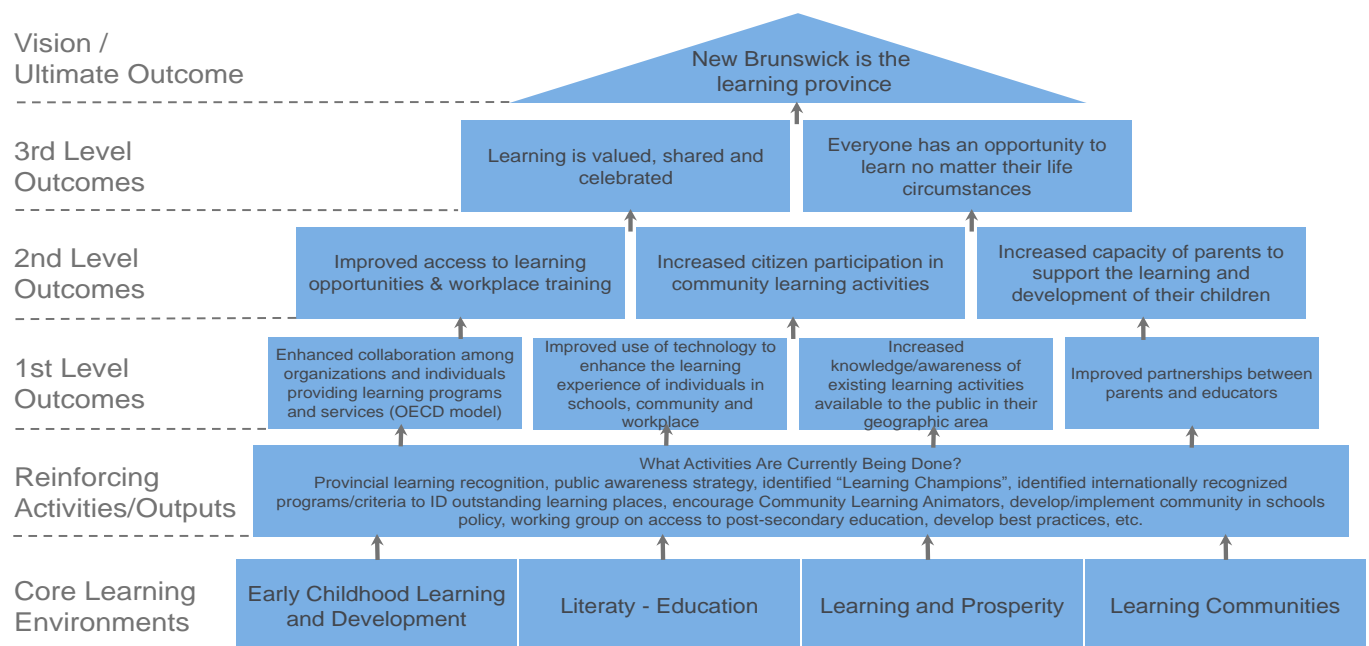
*Learning: Everybody’s Project* is a new initiative meant to facilitate a culture of Learning and guide the transformation of New Brunswick into Canada’s Learning Province. From the broad consultations undertaken during the Initiative on the learning process, it is clear we do not need more learning organizations nor do we need more layers of bureaucracy. What we do need is a new way to achieve better collective impact leveraging the existing learning infrastructure across the province.

Figure 4 provides a high-level logic model outlining how we will get from the development of focus areas to activities through to achieving our vision.

Section 3 provides details on the four priority areas (pillars) for the *Learning: Everybody’s Project* initiative and summarizes the strategic objectives we have proposed for each of these pillars. These four broad learning pillars are: early childhood learning, literacy and education, learning and prosperity and learning communities.

Section 4 develops the structure that will be used for the *Learning: Everybody’s Project* initiative and Section 5 provides the action plan and key strategies that will be used to help us achieve our vision of becoming the Learning Province.

**Figure 4: Logic model outlining high-level outcomes to become the Learning Province**





### 3. The Four Learning Pillars: Strategic Objectives

#### 3.1 Vision: The Learning Province

Fundamentally the *Learning: Everybody's Project* will focus on achieving better collective impact. As outlined above, New Brunswick has dozens of different public sector, private sector and not-for-profit learning and education organizations generating \$2.5 billion worth of economic activity each year (not including volunteer efforts). No single organization – not even government – controls or even influences all the various stakeholders in the learning sector. We must find a way for as many of the learning-related organizations as possible to support a collective impact model. The *Learning: Everybody's Project* collective impact model is developed in Section 4 below.

**Intended Outcome:** *Learning-related organizations and key stakeholders across the province-geographical, linguistic and cultural communities - mobilize around a concerted Learning Agenda to make New Brunswick: The Learning Province.*

In addition to strategic objectives for each of the four pillars below, we also have objectives for the *Learning: Everybody's Project* initiative as a whole.

#### Strategic Objectives:

- ⇒ Create under the NB2026 Roundtable a Steering Committee to oversee the *Learning: Everybody's Project* initiative and adopt a concerted a Learning Agenda based on the broad consultations from the Initiative on Learning.
- ⇒ Put a formal process in place to celebrate the value of learning by recognizing the achievements of the learners, the communities and the learning stakeholders around the province. We will develop a campaign to help us take every opportunity to celebrate learning and our successes.
- ⇒ Develop a set of indicators to measure the collective impact of learning activities across the province.

#### 3.2 The Four Learning Pillars

The people who participated in the citizens' engagement process and the participants of the Provincial Forum leading to the *Learning: Everybody's Project* initiative all recognized the need for a more concerted a Learning Agenda to facilitate a culture of learning that will transform New Brunswick into the Learning Province.

After the citizens' engagement process and the Provincial Forum, four pillars of engagement became prominent:

1. Early Childhood Learning and Development
2. Literacy and Education
3. Learning and Prosperity
4. Learning Communities

This section provides an overview of the four pillars and the strategic objectives for each of them. It also provides high level indicators to measure collective impact. Section 4 develops the approach and structure to achieve collective impact.

**Why four pillars?** *As will be developed in Sections 4 and 5, the Learning: Everybody's Project initiative is based on the concept of learning organizations coming together under a shared vision, measurement and accountability framework (respecting their own organizational vision, objectives and structure). These four pillars provide a way to foster alignment of similarly mandated organizations*

### 3.2.1 Early Childhood Learning and Development

Investment in early childhood learning and development yields great returns as children grow into adulthood. There is growing evidence that early childhood experience have significant long term effects, shaping children's health and wellbeing and their capacity for lifelong learning well into their adult lives.

Children should access a wide range of learning experiences from birth to entry into the formal K-12 education system.

**Intended Outcome:** *New Brunswick's children have lived various and diverse learning experiences since birth and are well equipped to engage in the formal process of learning by the time they enter the K-12 system.*

#### Strategic Objectives:

- ⇒ Ensure parents are aware of their critical role as the primary educators for their kids and have access to the support services they need so that their children access various and diverse learning experiences.
- ⇒ Ensure each New Brunswick community or region has a parental support services network (i.e.: similar to a one stop shop and build on an existing network).
- ⇒ Ensure each New Brunswick community provides access to learning environments for preschool kids to help them start a lifelong journey of learning.(Examples: portfolio on learning activities, information booklets on home learning activities to support parents)

#### Indicators:

- ⇒ The percentage of children and their parents who participate in preschool learning activities around the province.
- ⇒ The number of times we have reached out to the expectant parents to offer them programs and services in preschool learning activities.
- ⇒ The percentage of children who are well-equipped to engage in the formal learning process when they enter the K-12 system.
- ⇒ The number of communities who have a Learning Agenda that will offer various learning opportunities to children.

### 3.2.2 Literacy and Education

In the 2003 International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey<sup>1</sup>, only 44 percent of New Brunswickers aged 16 years of age and over had literacy scores in the Level 3 category or above (this was the lowest rate among the 10 provinces). Level 3 is generally considered to be the minimum level of literacy required to function well at work and in daily living. This means that 56 percent of New Brunswick had low levels of literacy. Levels 4 and 5 are the highest and represent advanced literacy. The survey covered the four aspects of literacy: prose, document, numeracy and problem solving. While that specific survey has not been updated since 2003, other reports have reaffirmed New Brunswick's relatively poor rates of literacy and the challenge this poses to both personal and community development. Immigrants, incidentally, have much higher rates of literacy than non-immigrants.

***Intended Outcome:*** *New Brunswick will exceed the national average for the percentage of its adult population with at least a Level 3 of literacy in the Anglophone, Francophone and First Nations communities.*

#### **Strategic objectives:**

- ⇒ Significantly increase basic literacy skills among the population with a specific focus on people who are having a hard time staying in the workforce because of literacy challenges.
- ⇒ Achieve above the national average on secondary school tests. By 2026, the number of high school graduates having reached the required level of literacy when they graduate will be 75% or higher within the Anglophone, Francophone and First Nations communities.
- ⇒ Better target children early on in the education system who are most likely to face the greatest challenges and intervene with services to support their efforts to achieve a good level of literacy.
- ⇒ Encourage New Brunswickers to push themselves to achieve high levels of literacy – directly tying this objective to their overall personal, family and economic goals.

#### **Indicators:**

- ⇒ Primary student educational outcomes – exceed the literacy outcome targets set by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for 2nd, 3rd and 8th Grades.
- ⇒ The percentage of students targeted who have reached the required literacy level.
- ⇒ High school graduates' literacy levels.
- ⇒ The percentage of people who participate and reach the required literacy level.

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<sup>1</sup> The 2013 version of this survey will be published in the Fall.

### 3.2.3 Learning and Prosperity

An educated and trained labour force is crucial for sustained economic development. In addition, there is a strong relationship between investment in employee training and productivity and innovation. The background document prepared for the Learning Initiative and developed from the feedback of over 5,000 New Brunswickers had a lot to say about learning and the future prosperity of the province and its citizens.

The *Learn: For Life!* report made many excellent recommendations<sup>2</sup> including:

- ⇒ Focus on learning (education and training) as a growth sector to foster economic development.
- ⇒ Build a collaborative workplace training model where organizations and the businesses share training and facilities.
- ⇒ Look at tax incentives and other policy tools to encourage employers to take an active role in their employees' learning.
- ⇒ Dramatically increase cooperative education, mentorship and internship programs, and structured on-the-job training to serve as a bridge to the labour market; design specific training measures for persons with disabilities, youth, Aboriginal people, marginalized and seasonal workers, and those trying to re-enter the labour market.
- ⇒ Strengthen the ties between learning and the labour market including better labour market information for students, guidance counsellors and parents to better support students' decisions about postsecondary education.

***Intended Outcome:*** All New Brunswickers have broad access to learning opportunities at home, school and in the workplace. Focusing on lifelong learning will help them advance in the workplace, increase their standard of living and actively contribute in the development of their community.

#### **Strategic objectives:**

- ⇒ Ensure a qualified workforce to meet labour market needs and economic development opportunities.
- ⇒ Significantly expand experiential learning opportunities within businesses, K-12, colleges, universities and organizations including apprenticeships, internships, international exchanges programs, formal cooperative education programs, leadership, entrepreneurship and work placements; develop/strengthen bridging measures to the labour market for persons with disabilities, youth, Aboriginal people, marginalized and seasonal workers, and those trying to re-enter the labour market.
- ⇒ Increase the percentage of working age citizens participating in the workforce (labour market participation).
- ⇒ New Brunswick employers, including small businesses, are leaders across Canada for their focus on workplace learning including the development of workplace essential skills.

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<sup>2</sup> p. 23, *Learn: For Life!*

**Indicators:**

- ⇒ The increase of the percentage of post-secondary graduates in the workforce.
- ⇒ The labour market participation rate, including among key groups such as persons with disabilities, youth, Aboriginal people, marginalized and seasonal workers.
- ⇒ The increase in the number of training programs that integrate experiential learning and on the job training and that permit students and workers to acquire the skills and abilities needed for the workplace.
- ⇒ Business investment in staff training, including small businesses.
- ⇒ The number of participants and the investments made in literacy within the workplace.

**3.2.4 Learning Communities**

Efforts to foster a culture of learning must occur at the community level. It is in communities where learning takes place. Building “learning communities” will be key to New Brunswick’s vision to become the Learning Province.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines a learning community as one that:

*“...uses lifelong learning as an organizing principle and social goal for neighbourhoods, villages, towns, cities and regions. It mobilizes the resources of the five sectors of the community: civic (governance), economic (private and social enterprises), public (libraries, museums, social and health agencies), education (early learning through postsecondary) and voluntary. Learning communities are built by community members by forging partnerships and fostering collaboration and cooperation amongst the five sectors.”*

p. 19, *Learn: For Life!*

The learning community model is based on engaging municipalities/communities, community organizations, learning champions and community learning facilitators to foster community learning activities. The partnership created through the implementation of this model could embark upon an ambitious outreach program to involve citizens of all ages and at all stages of life in community learning activities. It could also undertake the creation of a community learning resource pool (i.e. under the leadership of a Community Learning Round Table/Steering Committee) where community members could register to contribute or receive learning resources. The pool could accept contributions of funds, equipment, facilities, program spaces and volunteers. These resources would then be available to support community learning activities.

The *Learn: For Life!* report recommended that learning communities across New Brunswick work hand-in-hand with the implementation of a “communities in schools” policy that invites citizens’ support of and use of our local public schools, community colleges and universities. This would include a wide variety of activities such as mentoring, coaching, tutoring, leading extracurricular learning and enrichment activities. Such a policy would also provide for the opening of these places of learning for use by community organizations during the day, in the evenings and on weekends. This would provide access to suitable spaces for a myriad of community learning activities such as literacy classes, Workplace Essential Skills programs, seniors programs, youth programming, etc.

Implementation of a “communities in schools” policy will not happen spontaneously. It will take a significant effort and thus it will be important to ensure that every public school, community college and university has access to community/school liaison capacity.

***Intended Outcome:*** *Municipalities/communities across New Brunswick are informed of the learning communities’ movement, and mobilize and support their population to join forces in order to increase learning opportunities.*

**Strategic objectives:**

- ⇒ Municipalities/Communities become learning communities. They set up a committee/round table, identify learning champions and community learning facilitators, and adopt a Learning Plan with a focus on learning opportunities for pre-school children and youth.
- ⇒ Municipal government – particularly local mayors - are leading efforts to promote a culture of learning in their communities.
- ⇒ These learning communities are using a broad community engagement mechanism with stakeholders and citizens to develop a learning agenda that support learning for preschool children and youth through adulthood.
- ⇒ Learning is promoted and celebrated in all its forms.
- ⇒ The citizens are engaged and taking an active role in the Learning activities.

**Indicators:**

- ⇒ The number of municipalities/communities that implement the Learning Communities model.
- ⇒ Celebrate successes and share best practices.
- ⇒ Community-level literacy initiatives.
- ⇒ The number of citizens engaged in learning activities.
- ⇒ The number of citizens taking an active role in learning activities.

## **4. Achieving Collective Impact**

### **4.1 What structure do we need?**

There is broad support for the vision of transforming New Brunswick into the Learning Province, among government at the highest levels and among key learning organizations across the province. The main challenges and strategies to address these challenges were outlined during the broad-based consultation process that occurred over a two-year period leading up to the Provincial Forum in November 2012.

The key question is how can we achieve greater collective impact with the vast learning resources already in place across New Brunswick? How can we truly come together under a shared vision, agreed upon measurements and accountability for transforming ourselves into the Learning Province?

Should we merge learning organizations into a single structure? This would be virtually impossible and even if we could, there is no guarantee one large bureaucracy would be able to achieve the community level results we are seeking.

Do we need to set up new learning organizations to address specific challenges as identified above such as literacy, workplace training and experiential learning? There are already many learning organizations across the province working on these issues. Would setting up more help us achieve greater overall impact? Are there many organizations tied to learning? Do we need to have more learning organizations to reach our goals?

What we rather need is a structure that will help us achieve greater overall collective impact (i.e. becoming the Learning Province) by better leveraging the learning resources we currently have in place – and by supplementing with new resources if needed.

We need a structure that will:

- ⇒ Foster the sharing of resources and the alignment of effort where greater collective impact opportunities can be identified.
- ⇒ Determine gaps in the current learning environment.
- ⇒ Encourage the establishment of learning communities all across New Brunswick with learning champions and community learning facilitators.
- ⇒ Monitor progress on specific learning initiatives (as outlined in the four pillars above).
- ⇒ Celebrate success and champion a culture of learning.
- ⇒ Admit when things are not working and find solutions to problems.
- ⇒ Share best practices in learning – from early childhood through to senior citizens.

## **4.2 The *Learning: Everybody's Project* Collective Impact Model**

Collective impact is an exciting new approach to solving large-scale social problems. It has been defined as a process of diverse organizations coming together from across sectors to solve a complex social problem through a coordinated, structured approach.

*“Collective impact is not just a fancy name for collaboration, but represents a fundamentally different, more disciplined, and higher performing approach to achieving large-scale social impact. Rather than seeking to develop a new program or service, or dictate to organization what “they should be doing differently”, this approach seeks to establish a trans-sector organization to coordinate, support and enhance current initiatives<sup>3</sup>.*

The collective impact framework is the most innovative process that could be applied to the challenges identified through the engagement process. Continuing to embark on this process would be a bold step forward with the potential of inspiring stakeholders and achieving critical mass to become the learning province.

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<sup>3</sup> As discussed in Channeling Change: Making Collective Impact Work. Stanford Social Innovation Review. Jan. 2012.

Appendix A includes an overview of The Strive Partnership which is a Cincinnati-based collective impact organization meant to transform the learning environment in that urban region. It is an excellent model for New Brunswick as we develop the structure to help us achieve our vision.

### 4.3 Implementing the *Learning: Everybody's Project* Collective Impact Model

There are three preconditions that are necessary to achieve collective impact:

- An influential “champion”
- Adequate financial resources
- Sense of urgency for change

These three pre-conditions for collective impact within the learning environment in New Brunswick have been met. The NB2026 Roundtable is the “influential champion”. With a total spending of some \$2.5 billion dollars annually on learning activities in the province and the support of the government and the business community - the financial resources exist. Finally, there is a sense of urgency. The relatively high spending on learning, below average outcomes, low literacy rates, outmigration and unemployment all point to the urgency.

In addition to the three preconditions, there are three phases to a successful collective impact initiative as outlined in Figure 5 below.

**Figure 5: The three phases for collective impact**

Components for Success	Phase I: Initiate Action	Phase II: Organize for Impact	Phase III: Sustain Action and Impact
Governance & Infrastructure	Identify champions and form cross-sector group	Create infrastructure (backbone and processes)	Facilitate and refine
Strategic Planning	Map the landscape and use data to make case	Create common agenda (goals and strategy)	Support implementation (alignment to goals and strategies)
Community Involvement	Facilitate community outreach	Engage community and build public will	Continue engagement and conduct advocacy
Evaluation & Improvement	Analyze baseline data to identify key issues and gaps	Establish shared metrics (indicators, measurement, and approach)	Collect, track, and report progress (process to learn and improve)



The *Learning: Everybody's Project* initiative has substantially completed the first phase of the collective impact process. We have the champion organization (NB2026); we have mapped the landscape and engaged learning organizations and communities through the two-year engagement process. We have also analyzed baseline data and identified key issues and gaps.

This *Learning: Everybody's Project* Learning Agenda is focused on Phases II and III.

## **4.4 Organizing for Impact on Learning**

Participants in the citizens' engagement process of the *Learning: Everybody's Project* initiative and the participants of the Provincial Forum all recognized the need for a coordinated a Learning Agenda if we are to truly achieve our vision of transforming New Brunswick into the Learning Province.

### **4.4.1 Summarizing objectives and measurement**

The *Learning: Everybody's Project* objectives are summarized by learning pillar in Figure 6 below. We have organized strategic objectives by pillar and provided outcome measurements. We intend to develop a full set of annual measurements that allow us to track progress over time. These measurements will – wherever possible – be numeric and quantifiable. They will use a variety of data sources.

**Figure 6: Summary of Objectives and Indicators**

<b>Learning Pillar:</b>	<b>Strategic Objectives:</b>	<b>Outcome Indicators (Annual measurement):</b>
<b>Early Childhood Learning and Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parents are engaged and empowered to support their children's learning.</li> <li>● Communities have parental support networks and learning environments.</li> <li>● Ensure that communities offer various learning activities to preschool children (learning portfolio, information booklet)</li> </ul> <p><i>By 2026... Every child is engaging in diverse learning opportunities.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ % of children participating in preschool learning activities</li> <li>✓ The # of times we have reached out to the expectant parents to offer them the programs and services in preschool learning activities.</li> <li>✓ The % of children who are well-equipped to engage in the formal learning process when they enter the k-12 system</li> <li>✓ The number of municipalities/communities who have a Learning Agenda.</li> </ul>
<b>Literacy and Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Significantly increase basic literacy skills among the population.</li> <li>● Achieve above the national average on secondary school tests (PISA or others)</li> <li>● Better target children early on in the education system who are most likely to face the greatest challenges</li> <li>● Encourage New Brunswickers to push themselves to achieve high levels of literacy</li> </ul> <p><i>By 2026... New Brunswick has well above average literacy rates.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The % of people who reach the required literacy level</li> <li>✓ Primary student educational outcomes.</li> <li>✓ The # of student targeted who reached the literacy level required.</li> <li>✓ High school graduates' literacy levels.</li> </ul>
<b>Learning and Prosperity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure a qualified workforce to meet labour market needs and economic development opportunities.</li> <li>● Significantly expand experiential learning opportunities, apprenticeships, internships, international exchange, coop programs, leadership, entrepreneurship, etc.</li> <li>● Increase the percentage of working age citizens participating in the workforce.</li> <li>● New Brunswick employers are leaders across Canada for their focus on workplace learning including the development of essential skills in the workplace.</li> </ul> <p><i>By 2026... New Brunswick is a best-practices example of learning integration in the workplace and the community.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The increase in the percentage of post-secondary graduates in the workforce.</li> <li>✓ The # of citizens, particularly among target groups, participating on the labor market.</li> <li>✓ The increase in experiential learning opportunities.</li> <li>✓ Investments of businesses in staff training, including small businesses.</li> <li>✓ The number of investments and number of participants in the Workplace literacy initiatives.</li> </ul>
<b>Learning Communities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Municipalities/Communities becoming learning communities with a steering committee, learning champions and community learning facilitators.</li> <li>● Municipal governments are leading efforts to promote a culture of learning in their communities.</li> <li>● Local Learning Agendas are developed.</li> <li>● Learning is promoted and celebrated in all its forms.</li> <li>● The citizens are engaged and taking an active role in the Learning activities.</li> </ul> <p><i>By 2026... Every municipality has a learning community's initiative in place.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The number of municipalities/ communities having implemented the Learning Communities model.</li> <li>✓ Celebrations of successes and sharing of best practices.</li> <li>✓ Community-level literacy initiatives.</li> <li>✓ The # of citizens engaged in learning activities.</li> <li>✓ The # of citizens taking an active role in learning activities.</li> </ul>

**Note: The four aspects of literacy: prose, document, numeracy and problem solving.**

**Prose** is a form of language speech.

#### **4.4.2 The *Learning: Everybody's Project* - A Steering Committee and a “Community Learning Secretariat”**

Creating and managing the collective impact of the *Learning: Everybody's Project* initiative requires a Steering Committee and staff to support, facilitate and coordinate the activities of participating organizations as well as monitor and report progress against the above goals and indicators. The Steering Committee and the Community Learning Secretariat primarily engage in six activities:

1. Guide vision and strategy
2. Support alignment of activities within the four pillars
3. Establish shared measurement practices
4. Build public will and the culture of learning
5. Advance policy
6. Mobilize funding

The objective of the *Learning: Everybody's Project* Steering committee and the Community Learning Secretariat are to improve learning outcomes by coordinating cross-sector organizations to transform a fragmented system.

Collective Impact is process driven. To begin, the Community Learning Secretariat facilitates the collection and dissemination of all the necessary data to understand the issue, identify gaps and make informed decisions. While much of this work has been done, more data needs to be collected.

#### **4.4.3 Creating a common agenda and shared metrics**

Before shared metrics and a common agenda can be established, the Community Learning Secretariat needs to identify what organizations and programs exist. This will require compiling a list of, and surveying, organizations involved in learning. Such a survey will seek to create a detailed database of organizations and catalogue of programs. Analysis of the data would identify commonalities of what is currently being measured; measurement processes, and establishes a baseline of metrics. The survey would also support the development of a program map to improve access to programs around the province. The *Learning: Everybody's Project* initiative will partner with data research centers, provincial government and organizations and business groups to design and administer the survey.

Shared indicators must reflect (p. 26, *Learn: For Life!*):

- ⇒ Improvements in educational and learning outcomes
- ⇒ Measurements of citizen engagement
- ⇒ Availability of workplace learning
- ⇒ Participation in community learning
- ⇒ Contribution of learning to GDP

***The New Brunswick Health Council Partnership:*** *The New Brunswick Health Council (NBHC), represented on the NB2026 Roundtable, has developed a broad range of health-related indicators for New Brunswick and its communities. These indicators include both health-related and health care system-related metrics. Rather than the Learning Everybody's Project initiative setting up a separate team and budget to develop and measure indicators we will be partnering with the NBHC to help us develop the detailed indicators and the sources of data needed to measure them on an annual basis.*

#### **4.4.4 Engage community and build public will**

Once the initial data has been collected and analyzed learning leaders and organizations will be convened involving the three linguistic/cultural communities in NB to identify initiatives that have the most potential to trigger and contribute to the development of a learning culture. Based on our four pillars, meetings with stakeholders will also be organized to identify strategic initiatives.

Following this step, a Forum and a Tradeshow on Learning in NB will be held to present the data and expertly facilitated to establish a common agenda and shared measurements. To support the proposed process, resource persons from existing projects (ex. Strive Partnership) could be invited to present on the model. With buy-in from partners on a common agenda (goals and strategy) and shared metrics, an infrastructure to support and align the work being done will be developed.

#### **4.4.5 Create infrastructure (backbone and processes)**

NB2026 has established a cross-sector *Learning: Everybody's Project* Steering committee to oversee a shared vision and strategy, and align funding resources. It is imperative that this committee also include representatives from foundations, sponsors, education funders, community organizations, and government. Financial resources will need to be secured in order to develop the Learning Agenda and facilitate the work of the backbone organization (the Steering committee and the Learning Community Secretariat).

In order to achieve the large scale impact on learning - becoming the Learning Province - we will need to invest in building a better system supported by a backbone organization. In other jurisdictions, a backbone organization's funding is typically less than one percent of the total budgets of the organizations under the umbrella but it can dramatically increase the effectiveness of the other 99 percent of expenditures<sup>4</sup>.

With appropriate resources in place, staff will need to be hired to facilitate the process of developing a data gathering and open communication system. The system will be part of an intuitive website and dashboard to communicate progress. The feedback loop will support continuous improvement and the emergence of best practices for partner organizations. Additionally, the collection and analysis of programmatic data will support the measurement of impact through access to Statistics Canada datasets.

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<sup>4</sup> Channeling Change: Making Collective Impact Work. Stanford Social Innovation Review. Jan. 2012.

*“The process and results of collective impact are emergent rather than predetermined, the necessary resources and innovations often already exist but have not yet been recognized, learning is continuous, and adoption happens simultaneously among many different organizations. In other words, collective impact is not merely a new process that supports the same social sector solutions but an entirely different model of social progress. Under conditions of complexity, predetermined solutions can neither be reliably ascertained nor implemented”<sup>5</sup>.*

Building on the citizens’ engagement process and the document produced from that effort, the *Learning: Everybody’s Project* initiative will significantly enhance the work that is already being done in the province. A modest investment in the establishment of the *Learning: Everybody’s Project* backbone organization and staff (the Steering committee and Learning Community Secretariat) is meant to considerably improve the effectiveness and alignment of all of the organizations, agencies, and systems involved in making New Brunswick the Learning Province of Canada.

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**Figure 7: Establishing the *Learning: Everybody’s Project* Initiative Steering committee and a Community Learning Secretariat**

Collect Data

Establish Baseline (outputs, outcomes, measures)

Identify Commonalities (methods, goals, indicators, strategies)

Get commitment from partners (present data, propose common agenda, approach)

Establish cross-sector executive (steering) committee

Secure funding (propose 3 year ‘runway funding’)

Hire staff (feedback loop, communications, project management)

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Three years of secure funding will be required in order for this project become established and demonstrate its value. This funding could come from a mix of public (ie provincial and federal governments) and private (ie foundations) sources. The first two years will allow the project to organize for impact and once impact has been demonstrated, sustain it. After two years the project will seek financial contributions from partner organizations of under 1 percent of their operating budgets, based on its demonstrated value.

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**Figure 8: Timeline to sustain impact**

Year 1 - Establish processes, systems and baseline data, adopt a common Learning Agenda

Year 2 - Report on progress against shared metrics; establish communities of practice (best practices)

Year 3 - Secure financial commitment from partner organizations, 10 year strategic plan (2026)

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<sup>5</sup> Embracing Emergence: How Collective Impact Addresses Complexity. Stanford Social Innovation Review. Jan. 2013.

## 5. Next Steps: From Concept to Implementation

New Brunswick has many structural challenges that are limiting its ability to truly become a Learning Province including the structure of our economy, the rural/urban mix and other historical factors. Demographic factors also work against us as we have an older population than Canada as a whole and we continue to suffer from out-migration – particularly among the most educated of our citizens. Dr. Michael Haan at the University of New Brunswick looked at the demographic profile of New Brunswickers who were born here but had moved away and found those that moved away were three times more likely to have a university education than those who stayed here in the province. Even our lack of immigrants is holding back our learning outcomes as nationally immigrants have much higher levels of both literacy and formal education.

But these weaknesses can end up becoming our strengths. If New Brunswick does achieve its vision and becomes the Learning Province it will have transformative effects on our economy and our communities making us more attractive for Canadians and for new immigrants.

After the NB2026 Roundtable approves the structure of the Learning Agenda, the *Learning: Everybody's Project* Steering committee will:

- ⇒ Finalize the structure of the Steering committee
- ⇒ Finalize the structure and budget for the Steering committee and Secretariat
- ⇒ Work with the New Brunswick Health Council on the measurement of the indicators
- ⇒ Secure three-year funding
- ⇒ Hire the staff required
- ⇒ Roll out the *Learning Everybody's Project* initiative in the Fall 2013.

A provincial forum and tradeshow on Learning in NB is scheduled for November 18-19 to validate a set of strategic objectives and indicators, the Collective Impact approach and collaboratively target actions to move forward. The participants will be asked to discuss the following questions:

- ⇒ What is the province's performance within the four pillars and what are the changes needed to help NB in becoming Canada's Learning Province?
- ⇒ Will the strategic objectives and indicators proposed permit the stakeholders to unite and participate in the Learning Agenda to make NB the Learning province in Canada?
- ⇒ Within each pillar and each linguistic / cultural community, what are the actions already in place that are most likely to make a difference in changing the learning culture in NB?
- ⇒ Within each linguistic and cultural community, what other actions and indicators would be helpful and mutually reinforcing, to enable NB to become Canada's Learning Province?
- ⇒ Is your organization / community amenable to the Collective Impact process?

11-2013

NB2026 is well aware that to change the culture of Learning is a complex and rigorous process that extends well over a decade. Many recently successful examples of cultural change in Canada exist. The “ParticipAction – Let’s get moving” campaign for Wellness is a perfect example. Our day to day habits have clearly changed over the last decade and this program certainly played a key role. The work has to continue, just like the national studies demonstrate in relations to obesity and health in our population. Another major cultural change that took place is tied to smoking.

These cultural changes required diverse, support measures, from awareness campaigns to legislative policies to financial contributions and cross-sector stakeholder commitments. The emergence of a Learning Culture in NB requires a structured and supported effort from community, private sector, government and learning champion partners, such as the late Andy Scott, for NB2026 and the Learning Initiative, and the many stakeholders in this movement for the last three years.

## **Appendix A: Case Study - The Strive Partnership**

As an example of how the collective impact framework has been successfully applied to learning in other jurisdictions, it is a worthy endeavor to review the case of the Strive Partnership. The Strive Partnership is a collaborative of learning organizations in the United States. It supports the work of learning organizations in the Cincinnati/Covington/Newport region, a region with a combined population of 353,000.

The Strive Partnership has a cross-sector executive board of 31 individuals and a staff of eight. Positions include: Executive Director, Director of Continuous Improvement, Assistant Director, Communications & Community Engagement Coordinator, Implementation Coordinator, Director of Collaborative Action, Team Coordinator and Project Manager. The Strive Partnership receives contributions of \$500,000 per year.

It has been in existence as a backbone organization for just three years and has reported significant progress in its effort to support the education of every child from cradle to career. It has been so successful that it has begun to spread across the United States through the Strive Network. Strive has five shared goals, six priority areas, eight common outcomes, and is developing an online dashboard for its partner organizations.

### **Goals -**

Strive has five goals as part of its shared agenda:

- Every child is PREPARED for school
- Every child is SUPPORTED inside and outside of school
- Every child SUCCEEDS academically
- Every child ENROLLS in some form of postsecondary education
- Every child GRADUATES and ENTERS A CAREER

### **Priority Areas -**

In addition it has established priority areas to improve outcomes:

- Early Childhood Education
- Linking Community Supports to Student Achievement
- Teacher and Principle Excellence
- Postsecondary Access and Success
- Promoting Data-Informed Decision-Making
- Advocacy and Funding Alignment

### **Outcomes -**

The measurement of progress for Strive is done around eight shared outcomes:

- Kindergarten readiness rates
- 4th grade reading proficiency
- 8th grade math proficiency
- High school graduation rates
- ACT scores
- Postsecondary enrollment rates
- Postsecondary retention rates
- Postsecondary completion rates



## **Dashboard -**

As part of the feedback loop to inform the activities of partner organizations, Strive is in the process of developing a Learning Partner Dashboard with the help of corporate sponsors. The dashboard will be an open source web application. As their website states: “This system will ensure that more comprehensive student level data is available to determine what is working and where to invest resources. Academic and nonacademic student support data will be incorporated in one web-based system so that a comprehensive picture of student learning will be available to all stakeholders”.

Partners will have the ability to input student-level information about the programs and services they are providing to students. The benefit to the partners is that they can help students deal with issues they’re having in school, as well as have better data to modify and enhance their programs.

This system will facilitate communication and collaboration between schools, community partners, students, and parents. “The expected outcome is that schools, the district, and community partners will have much better data for use in decision making and resource allocation. Elements of the system include:

- ⇒ Student data would be linked by individual student identifier
- ⇒ Partner organizations would enter or upload this data and analyze it with selected parts of the district’s data.
- ⇒ Confidentiality would be ensured through a system of safeguards, including agreements between the school, the partners, and the parent/guardian(s) of each child tracked.
- ⇒ The system would enable the ability to track common shared outcomes.
- ⇒ District and partners could channel resources to what is effective at helping students achieve.”

## **Appendix B: The Learning Agenda: 2013-2018**

What will the Learning Everybody's Project backbone organization and the Learning Community Secretariat do? There are five broad strategies the organization will use to address the strategic objectives under the four learning pillars.

### **Strategy #1: Improve Collaboration**

The Learning Everybody's Project backbone organization will improve collaboration among organizations and individuals providing learning programs and services – with a specific focus on the learning groups within each of the four pillars.

#### **What will we do?**

⇒ Facilitate continuous communication between partner organizations.

#### **How will we do it?**

- ⇒ Build an interactive website (and blog)
- ⇒ Build & maintain database of learning organizations and programs
- ⇒ Develop a communications portal to enable sharing and collaboration
- ⇒ Distribution of a newsletter celebrating learning successes
- ⇒ Bring organizations and individuals regularly to share and learn

### **Strategy #2: Enhance Coordination**

The Learning Everybody's Project backbone organization will enhance coordination of available learning programs and services throughout New Brunswick.

#### **What will we do?**

⇒ Define a common agenda and shared measurement system for each of the three pillars

#### **How will we do it?**

- ⇒ Engage partners to identify common goals, mutually reinforcing activities and objectives
- ⇒ Develop 5 year plan to make progress on common goals
- ⇒ Facilitate the identification of shared metrics based on what is currently being collected
- ⇒ Facilitate process for data sharing, best practices

### **Strategy #3: Improve Access**

The *Learning Everybody's Project* backbone organization will improve access to learning opportunities for New Brunswickers.

#### **What will we do?**

⇒ Increase knowledge of the general public of available learning opportunities

#### **How will we do it?**

⇒ Maintain database of learning programs

⇒ Manage publicly available program map

⇒ Engage in collective marketing campaigns of learning opportunities

⇒ Identify Learning Champion/Tzar to promote learning in New Brunswick

### **Strategy #4: Continuous Improvement**

The *Learning Everybody's Project* backbone organization will strengthen organizational capacity for continuous improvement of learning programs.

#### **What will we do?**

⇒ Maintain a feedback loop for continuous improvement via shared measurement system

#### **How will we do it?**

⇒ Design/Develop/Deploy a shared measurement system

⇒ Monitor and evaluate system use through end-user feedback

⇒ Conduct on-going data-analysis and verification

⇒ Track progress towards shared goals, report via dashboard on website

⇒ Provide training seminars to partner agency staff (technological, evaluation)

⇒ Facilitate the emergence of communities of practice (best practices)

## **Strategy #5: Citizen Engagement**

The *Learning Everybody's Project* backbone organization will increase citizen participation in the delivery of learning opportunities.

### **What will we do?**

⇒ Develop and mobilize a pool of community learning facilitators (CLF) through local learning community initiatives.

### **How will we do it?**

⇒ Promote volunteer opportunities in learning

⇒ Provide development opportunities for citizens interested in becoming CLAs

⇒ Connect CLFs to learning program providers throughout NB

⇒ Promote the implementation and reinforce a “communities in schools” policy

⇒ Host Learning Celebration at annual symposium