



Learning & Literacy Program Initiative – Year Two Update

The Learning & Literacy Program Initiative supports a new model of delivery in programming for students with learning disabilities. The initiative is characterized by students in Learning & Literacy (L & L) programs situated together with a community school class at a particular grade level. L & L teachers and Community School Classroom teachers team teach the blended class in all core subjects. L & L teachers are also available to deliver explicit, extensive and intensive instruction to L & L students. In addition, this initiative is designed to provide assistive technology as a vehicle for students' to access necessary learning tools to accommodate their unique learning needs.

In Phase One (2007-08 school year) of this three year Capital Budget initiative, 160 students, in seven schools received dedicated laptops with text-to-speech and speech-to-text software. Classrooms were equipped with mobile SMARTBoards, projectors, scanners and color printers. Additional handheld devices such as reading pens, iPods, digital cameras and video cameras support a Universal Design for Learning framework which allows for flexible methods of presentation, expression and options for engagement.

In Phase Two (2008-09 school year) of this initiative, computers, laptop carts and equipment was deployed to five additional schools, benefiting an additional 144 students. An Assistive Technology Strategist is supporting the use of assistive technologies and other learning technologies into the new model of program delivery for L & L and Community Program teachers. Technical support for this Initiative is available for all 11 participating schools. This year all students participating in this initiative have the opportunity to take their laptops home so that their learning can extend beyond the school day.

In Phase III (2009-10 school year), another four schools, 112 students, will transition into the new model of program delivery. In addition, Dr Oakley School (a congregated setting for 135 students with learning disabilities) has been added to this initiative.