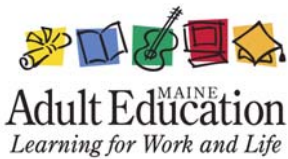


# MSAD #27 ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION NEWS BRIEF

January, 2010



*Providing Multiple Pathways  
to Lifelong Learning*

- High School Diploma
- GED Preparation and Testing
- College Transitions
- Workforce Development
- Adult Literacy
- Family Literacy
- Northern Maine Community College Courses
- Custom-Designed Workshops
- Personal Enrichment Programming

## Learner Spotlight



Ken Parent

Ken Parent left high school in 2003 without earning his diploma. After losing his job with Maine Woods LLC, Ken, now 23, joined our program in Fall 2009 to complete work on his diploma. This semester he also is enrolled in our College Access Program.

## ADULT AND FAMILY LITERACY EDUCATION: THE INVESTMENT THAT KEEPS ON PAYING DIVIDENDS

In MSAD #27, Adult Literacy and Family Literacy services play a critical support role to the K-12 mission and vision established for our local schools and students. These cost-efficient Adult and Community Education program components, their essential vitality to the work of our K-12 colleagues, and their cost-benefits to the communities, families, children, and adult learners we serve are articulated below.

**Adult Literacy:** Adult Literacy programming in MSAD #27 encompasses a range of services, including: basic literacy instruction in reading, numeracy, and writing; literacy-based workplace preparation classes and programs; college transitions classes and programs; and both General Educational Development (GED) and High School Diploma courses.

Adult Literacy services have three main goals: 1. to help adults gain the skills they need to get or keep a job or to enter college; 2. to help adults who are parents obtain the skills they need to support their children financially and in school; and 3. to help adults complete their high school diploma or GED.

Between July, 1999 and June 2009, 1,257 district citizens received Adult Literacy services through MSAD #27 Adult Education: 240 earned either a High School Diploma or a GED. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that a High School Diploma or GED is worth an additional \$7,500 per year in earnings. In the last 11 years, therefore, our program potentially has helped generate at least an additional \$1.8 million in additional earnings that benefit the local economy by serving local people who fill local jobs.

In addition, in the last five years alone, 610 district citizens participated in Adult Literacy services in MSAD #27: 156 earned either a High School Diploma or a GED; 111 enrolled in further academic or vocational training at the post-secondary level; 326 either obtained employment, retained employment, or advanced in the workplace; 92% with specific voting goals registered to vote and/or voted; 90% who are parents reported increased time spent engaged in literacy-developing activities with their pre-school age children; and 86% who are parents reported increased time spent helping their school age children with school-work, contacting their children's teachers, and getting involved in activities at their children's school.



10 of 32 Members of the Graduating Class of 2009

*"I'm looking to the future with hope, because I'm taking the time to learn."*

These outcomes are even more noteworthy when considered through a cost-benefit lens. We have, for example, expended an average of \$571 per learner per year, in both federal and local funds, in the MSAD #27 Adult Literacy program for the last five years. The average local expenditure per learner per year in the last five years has been \$333. The average total cost per hour for Adult Literacy services in the last five years has been \$4.20. The average local per hour expenditure during that five-year period has been \$2.45. Given the outcomes identified earlier, it is clear that modest investments in Adult Literacy pay significant dividends to local communities, employers, schools, adults, and families.

**Family Literacy:** Family Literacy services in MSAD #27 combine the positive effects of Adult Literacy, Early Childhood Literacy, Parenting Education, and Interactive Literacy Activity (ILA) Time — also known as Parent And Child Together (PACT) time. Our comprehensive family literacy program address two significant socio-educational challenges at once: 1. supporting the literacy development of young children, birth through age 8, with a specific emphasis on youngsters birth through age 4; and 2. addressing the persistent problem of underdeveloped literacy among adults. Underdeveloped literacy skills among adults has been linked to significant difficulties for these adults, their children, and their families, including but not limited to the following:

- ➔ increased periods of unemployment and reduced annual earnings for parents due to low educational attainment;
- ➔ extended and/or extensive reliance by adults and families on public assistance in order to subsist;
- ➔ restricted access to health care and other human/social services for families due to income limitations and/or due to difficulties reading printed information or completing paperwork; and
- ➔ lower educational achievement for children as a result of reduced opportunities for informal academic support within the family.



Interactive Literacy Activity (ILA) Time  
at the CHIPPY Center for Learning

Since 1996, the CHIPPY Even Start Family Literacy program and its home-based expansion, Project OUTREACH, have served 184 of our member-communities' most vulnerable families, including 191 adults and 322 children. During a typical year 50% of the pre-school age children our program serves demonstrate significant speech or language delays that, if left unaddressed, can (and often do) result in the need for either Special Education or Title I services when children enroll in school.

Worth noting is that, in a 2006 external evaluation that tracked the school progress of 100 former child learners from our program, 65% of those children who were enrolled in grades 1-8 in district schools at the time of the evaluation required neither Special Education nor Title I services. Special Education services alone can cost between \$9,000-\$15,000 per year per child, so this finding points to the long-term cost savings that result from investments in early intervention Family Literacy services.

Family Literacy services in MSAD #27 also are cost-efficient in an immediate sense. During 2008-2009, for example, the average cost of education *per elementary school student* in our district was \$5,465 and the average cost of education *per secondary school student* in MSAD #27 was \$5,799. In 2008-2009, our Family Literacy program served 30 adults and 45 children at an average cost *per participant* of \$2,021 for full-day, full-week, year-round services. This average cost per participant represented 37% of the average elementary per pupil rate and 35% of the average secondary per student expenditure in our district in 2008-2009.