

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

WHO WE ARE:

Strathmore and Area Adult Inclusive Learning (SAIL) is at Strathmore Municipal Library to help adult learners along a personal journey towards literacy. Our target is to ensure every adult in and around Strathmore will be able to participate fully in society, at home, at work, and in the community. SAIL helps people with: Adult Literacy, Numeracy, English Language Learning, Basic Digital Skills, and Foundational Life Skills. We offer a warm, welcoming space that emphasizes learner-centered education through relevant and non-judgmental opportunities. Through volunteer learning coaches, family literacy offerings, knowledgeable referrals, and flexible programming we are helping reduce barriers to participation in learning.

EVENT GOALS:

This dialogue was a first step in recognizing new opportunities, and building a vision of economic prosperity by meeting the needs of adult learners in our community. Our goals were:

- To raise awareness and discuss Adult Literacy in the area.
- To Find new ways to work together to meet adult learning needs.
- To strengthen existing relationships and partnerships, and build new ones.
- To Set our future direction and direct our activities to meet those needs.

PARTNERS:

This event was hosted by SAIL and the Strathmore Municipal Library. We are supported by the Community Learning Network and funded in part by Alberta Advanced Education.





PARTICIPANTS:

The following groups were invited to join us: community agencies, local government, school trustees, members of the media, business owners, local industry representatives, seniors, volunteers, and members of the community. In total 26 people participated in the event. Also in attendance were board members, a Community Learning Network representative, Library management, and SAIL volunteers.

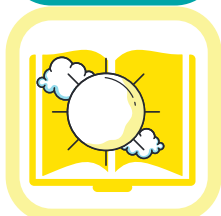
EVENT FORMAT:

Our Community Literacy Cafe began with a presentation and blessing from a Siksika Nation Elder, Eileen Black, whom offered a personal perspective on the importance of community connections. Lunch was served, and then participants were invited to circulate between seven interactive feedback stations. The attendees embraced our informal atmosphere and there was much discussion as table facilitators guided the activities. Following the luncheon we opened the room to drop-in attendees from the community who were drawn to the event as part of our Family Literacy Day activities.

QUESTIONS WE ASKED:



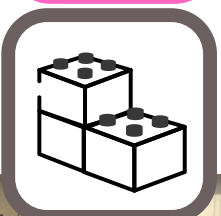
What basic skills do we all need to be successful in work, family and community? What can the community do to help people develop those skills?



I'm grateful for these learning opportunities:
I'd like to explore these learning opportunities:
I can personally help with:
Opportunities that would help people I know:



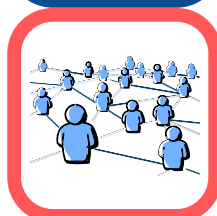
Have you ever had a positive learning experience at the library or elsewhere?
How can we duplicate that experience?



What does a strong vibrant community look like?
Build it using the tools provided.



Create a map to learning success.



Include images of things that prevent you from learning.

How do you hear about learning opportunities in the area?
Follow & like our Library!



How can we work together effectively? How can we expand our partnership?





WINDOW ON THE COMMUNITY

Employment and soft skills were indicated as areas of concern in the community. Additionally, volunteerism, and collaboration around communication appear to be areas of interest. There were many positive comments about services already present in the rich and diverse learning environment around Strathmore.

CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

The feedback indicated course timing and finding time in one's schedule to take courses as a significant challenge. Other barriers included course fees and childcare.

OUR DIRECTION AND PRIORITIES:

Strathmore Municipal Library has a history of providing free programs for community members including parents, children, and volunteers. Feedback shows the community wants the Library to continue community capacity building for all ages.

SAIL addresses the barriers and challenges identified by offering engaging, responsive, and relevant programming with a focus on affordability and accessibility.

We are deliberately planning our future activities to address unmet literacy needs and actively developing partnerships to avoid duplication of services.

Other priorities we are addressing through our SAIL programs
that have received support in this feedback session:

1. Offering computer access and training so people can build basic digital skills through courses and one-on-one sessions.
2. Building opportunities for volunteerism in the literacy program and investing in facilitator training and development to ensure high standards of instruction.
3. Offering complimentary childcare, coffee & snacks, and acknowledging learner's time by offering certificates of completion for our learning activities.
4. Creating a warm and welcoming, well-organized space that enables us to assist a range of needs and levels of ability.



SPECIAL THANKS

Town of Strathmore | Strathmore FCSS

Elder Eileen Black

Community Learning Network

Alberta Advanced Education

