



Now and Tomorrow
Excellence in Everything We Do



Literacy and Essential Skills Issues for Newcomers to Canada

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What are Essential Skills?

Reading

Writing

Document Use

Numeracy

Computer Use

Thinking

Oral
Communication

Working with
Others

Continuous
Learning

- Fundamental skills that make it possible for people to **learn other skills**.
- Help people **grow** with their jobs, **adapt** to workplace change, and **participate fully** in their communities and family life.
- Workplaces, families and communities are **interconnected** – strengthening Literacy and Essential Skills (LES) in one area of an individual's life will have an **effect in all areas**.

NB: In general, the 4 first essential skills are used to represent literacy, whereas the term 'essential skills' encompasses all nine skills.

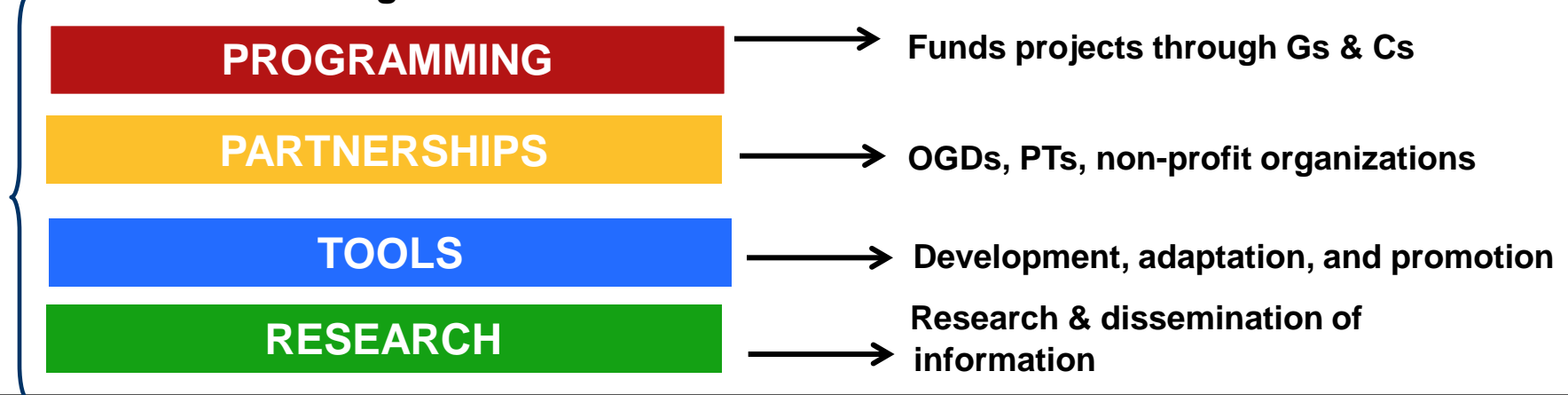
Office of Literacy and Essential Skills (OLES)

Mandate: OLES is a “centre of expertise” with a labour market focus, building awareness and capacity in “what works” for improving the literacy and essential skills of adult Canadians.

■ To achieve this goal, **OLES focuses on:**

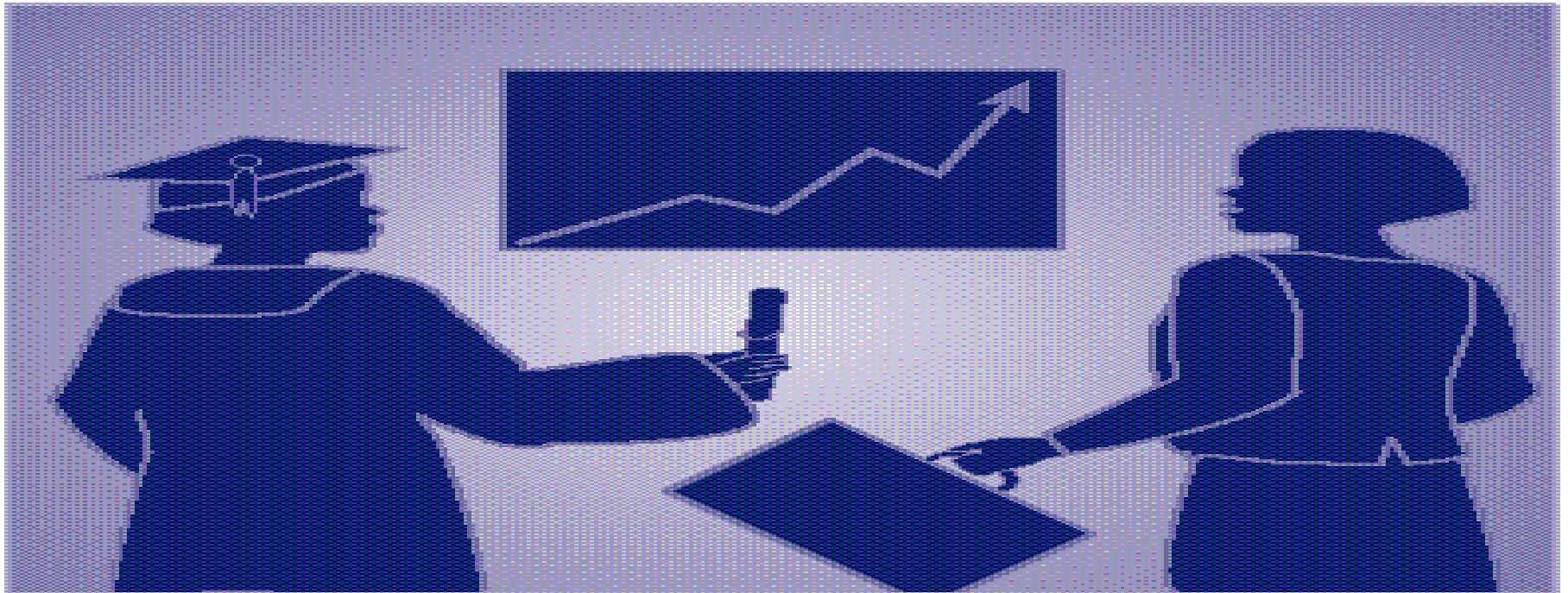
- Supporting effective essential skills networks and partnerships
- Generating and disseminating research, tools and supports
- Promoting embedding of essential skills into other programs, policies and training activities
- Advising on essential skills concepts, trends and policies

OLES does this through:

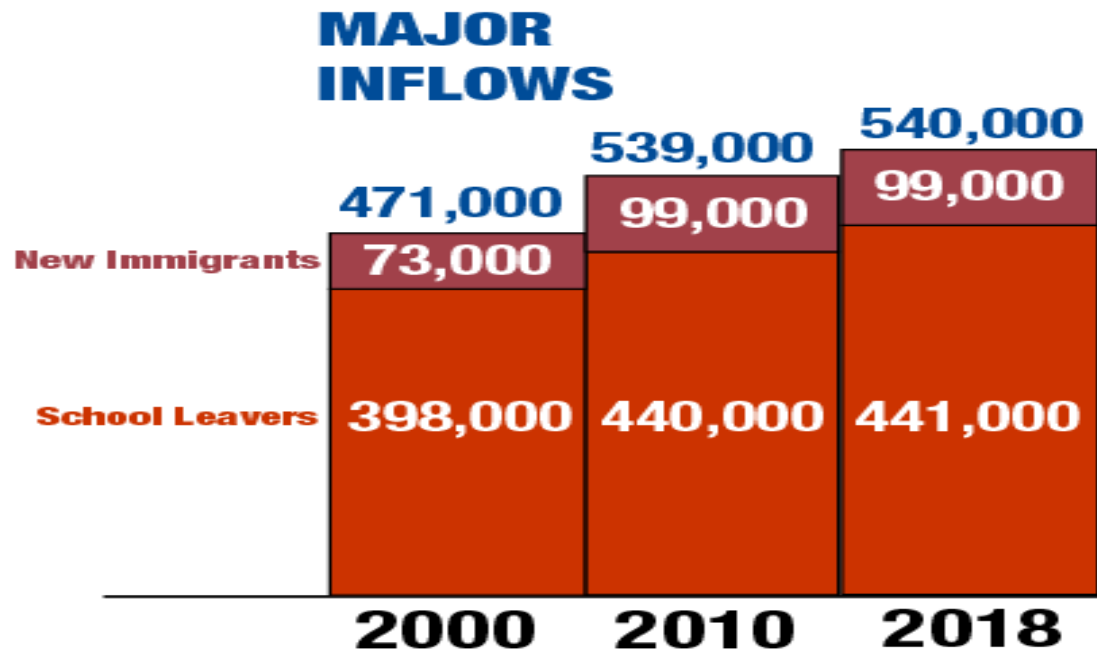


LES contributes to Workplace Success

A more literate workforce boosts productivity



Immigrants matter to the Canadian labour Market



- Immigration is a key support to labour force growth

Context

There is a distinction between the LES levels of immigrants and other Canadians:

*“In a global economy, a highly skilled population is an asset and fundamental to economic growth”
(Statistics Canada, 2008)*

Strong literacy and essential skills are a prerequisite to learning new skills and ensuring effective transitions into the labour market

60% of recent and established immigrants lack the necessary skills to function in a knowledge based economy, compared to 37% of the Canadian-born population

Despite having high levels of education, recent immigrants are more likely than Canadian-born workers to have lower earnings: 67% earn less than \$20/hour as compared to 43% of Canadian-born.

Official language fluency and literacy skills are identified by both immigrants and employers as being primary barriers to immigrant labor market integration.

Our Opportunity

