

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick

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Message from the President & Executive Director

Brent Melanson, President



The mission of the Literacy Coalition is to provide leadership to advance literacy, life-long learning, and essential skills for all New Brunswickers through partnerships and collaboration with others.

Susan Yarom, Executive Director



This has been another productive year for the Literacy Coalition as we carry out our mission to provide leadership to advance literacy, life-long learning, and essential skills for all New Brunswickers.

In May, we bid farewell to our longtime Executive Director, Lynda Homer. Lynda has been Executive Director since 2015, with several years of service being both President and Board Member. She brought an incredible amount of experience and knowledge to the Literacy Coalition and has been a steadfast leader in literacy and essential skills over her career. While she will be sorely missed, we wish her all the best in her well-deserved retirement.

Our new Executive Director, Susan Yarom, has been with LCNB since 2018. She will continue the Coalition's work to help children, families, and adult learners across the province.

In September, we also said goodbye to our Treasurer, Greg Gillis, who has been part of the Board since 2010. Over the years, Greg has given an incredible amount of time and effort to the Literacy Coalition's mission. He brought care and diligence to the organization's financial well-being, and his work has made a lasting impact. We are grateful for all that he has done and extend our best wishes to him moving forward.

We are excited to be continuing our *Talking, Singing, Reading...Everyone, Everywhere!* project with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD). With the second year well on its way, Early Childhood Educators continue to receive training in singing, storytelling, and reading aloud. These Educators are then going on to become Early Literacy Mentors for their peers.

On October 16th, we held our 2025 Gala Literacy Dinner and Auction at the Delta Fredericton. It was a truly wonderful evening, and we were delighted to be able to celebrate our 2025 Literacy

Champion, Gardiner MacDougall, as well as our other award winners and adult learners. We want to extend our immense gratitude to our co-chairs, Bob Scott and Ashley Counsell, as well as our volunteers, supporters, and staff who helped make this evening another success.

This coming spring, we will once again recognize and celebrate the incredible literacy programs and individuals who make a difference in our province with the Dr. Marilyn Trenholme Counsell Literacy Awards. The next celebration is scheduled for April 2026 once again at Government House in Fredericton.

Our *Let's Learn! A parent's guide to giving your child a great start* series continues to expand as we add more languages. With the grant from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development we received last year, we have been able to create a new Ukrainian booklet, as well as continue to print and distribute all of our booklets. This valuable resource is now available in 5 languages and continues to be offered free of charge to families across the province.

As an organization, we continue to support families, children, and adult learners across the province. Over the past year, we have once again held our Adult Learner's Writing Contest, celebrating Family Literacy Day and International Book Giving Day, and distributing thousands of *Let's Learn* booklets to organizations and families across the province. We also continue to maintain our toll free Learn Line referral service and our website with resources and contacts for programs in New Brunswick.

Through our meetings, newsletters, social media, and website, we share knowledge, information, events, and best practices, as well as raising awareness for literacy and the many valuable programs available in our province.

We would like to recognize the incredible efforts from everyone on the Literacy Coalition team over the past year. Thank you to our past Executive Director, Lynda Homer, for her incredible work and dedication for the past decade, and to our new Executive Director, Susan Yarom. Thank you as well to the exceptional LCNB staff: Dianne Léger, Project Coordinator, and Memory Gajurel, Communications Director. Your commitment, work, and dedication shines through in LCNB's many successes.

Thank you to our amazing Board of Directors, who generously donate their time, expertise, and experience to the management of this incredible organization. Your tireless commitment to the Literacy Coalition is what allows us to work towards our common goal of improving the lives of all New Brunswickers.

Finally, thank you to our incredible volunteers, supporters, and donors. We are truly honoured by your generosity, and we are so grateful to be able to continue our important work.

The Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick is committed to fostering and improving literacy in this province and it would not be possible without our partner organizations, Board members, and community supporters.

EVENTS

Family Literacy Day 2025

Taking place on January 27th, 2025, the theme for this year's Family Literacy Day celebration was "Learn to be Green, Together". To celebrate, LCNB held a contest on our Facebook page: a giveaway for 3 gift cards to the bookstore of the winner's choice. The first place prize was \$50, with two \$25 runner ups.

To enter the contest, participants had to like our page and then leave a comment telling us how they were celebrating. Some comments included:

- Taking their children to their local library
- Doing crafts with recycled materials
- Taking a nature walk to learn some new winter words
- Reading together as a family
- Having a screen free day

Our first place winner was Gabriella Al, who won the \$50 gift card. Our runner ups, each winning a \$25 git card, were Shannon Cameron and Danielle Wiseman. THANK YOU to everyone who participated!



International Book Giving Day 2025

February 14th is International Book Giving Day, and to celebrate, LCNB visited the Fredericton Family Resource Centre to give away some wonderful books to the families attending the Life with Babies program. Packages were made to give to each of the families, which included a wonderful book for the babies and LCNB's "Family Time Online" resource booklet for the parents, which has fantastic tips and digital resources for families.

LCNB Executive Director, Lynda Homer, talked with parents about how they share books with their babies, and what their favourite books were. She stressed that it is never too early to begin reading with babies, and that it is about feeling good, having fun together and building a foundation for literacy. The more words babies are exposed to, the better their language development and literacy learning in later life.



2025 Writing Contest Winners

The Literacy Coalition hosted the annual Adult Learner's Writing Contest in February of 2025. We received 24 amazing submissions from learners across the province. These submissions were compiled into an e-book that can be found on our website by [clicking here](#). The winners of the contest received a \$150 prize, with the runner up receiving \$75, and they received their framed certificate at our 2025 Literacy Dinner and Auction.



"It has been a long road full of ups and downs. But I have learned a lot from it and am incredibly grateful for the support of my family and my teacher, Indu."

Katrina Evans, 1st place winner, English – South East Adult Education

« Je suis fière de mon parcours, fière d'avoir cru en moi malgré les difficultés, et fière de pouvoir inspirer d'autres personnes à ne jamais abandonner leurs rêves. L'apprentissage a changé ma vie, et je sais qu'il continuera de la changer, jour à la fois. »

Denebe Josiane, 1^{ère} place, Français – Éducation des adultes du Nord-Ouest



"Upon completion of my CAEC, I intend to do one of two things. One possibility is starting my own business as a hairdresser. The other one is going to Community College to become a carpenter. I cannot wait for this next chapter of my life to start!"

Jessica Nicholas, 1st place winner, Indigenous – Tobique Adult Learning Centre



"I finally understood that if I wanted my life to change, I had to be the one to change it. Within the first month of returning to classes, I had accomplished more than I ever dreamed possible."

Abigail Smith, Runner Up – Miramichi Adult Learning

2025 Literacy Dinner and Auction

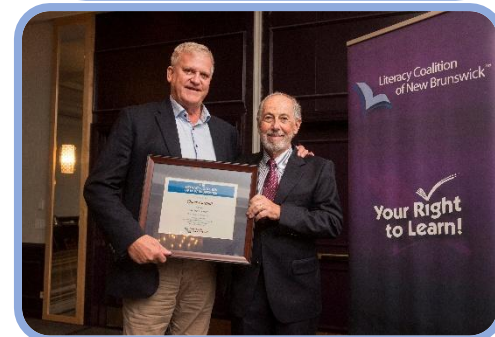
On October 16th, 2025, LCNB held its 2025 Gala Literacy Dinner and Auction at the Delta Hotel in Fredericton, the first to be held after the end of the Peter Gzowski Invitational (PGI) name. We are so grateful to all of our supporters and for our remarkable planning committee: co-chairs Bob Scott and Ashley Counsell, Acting Executive Director Susan Yarom, and LCNB President Brent Melanson.

Mark Depow was Master of Ceremonies for the evening, and the Honourable Claire Johnson, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development, gave greetings on behalf of the province.

Our 2025 Champion of Literacy was Moncton Wildcats coach, Gardiner MacDougall. One of the most accomplished hockey coaches in Canadian history, Gardiner has been recognized with numerous accolades, including the King Charles Coronation Medal. Off the ice, Gardiner fosters academic excellence, with more than 100 of his players achieving Academic All-Canadian honours. The Moncton Wildcats also promote the importance of literacy in their “Reading in Wild” program, which leverages their popularity to encourage children to read. In 2016, they reached the incredible milestone of a million books read through this program since its inception in 1998.

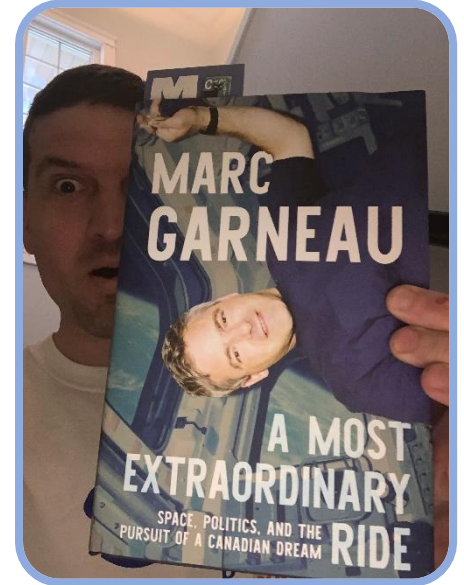
The Marian Zaichowski award was presented to LCNB’s former Executive Director, Lynda Homer, for her outstanding dedication, passion, and work to literacy over her career. The President’s Award was presented to Chuck Cartmill, former CEO of LED Roadway Lighting, for his incredible support of literacy both in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

A very special part of the evening was honouring and hearing from our award-winning adult learners: Katrina Evans, Josiane Ndenebai, and Abigail Smith. The Delta Hotels Adult Learner awards were presented by LCNB President Brent Melanson, Minister Claire Johnson, and Colin Richardson from the Delta Fredericton. Thank you to everyone who supported and attended this inspiring event!



Summer Reading Contest

This summer, LCNB held another Summer Reading Contest on our Facebook page. Participants were instructed to like our Facebook page and leave a comment about what book they were reading for the summer. Our first place winner, Frank Hach, won a copy of Marc Garneau's book, *A Most Extraordinary Ride: Space, Politics, and the Pursuit of a Canadian Dream*. The runner up, Katie Hargreaves, chose a book from LCNB's collection: *Ghost Stories & Legends of Prince Edward Island* by Julie V. Watson.



Dr. Marilyn Trenholme Counsell Literacy Awards 2026

The Literacy Coalition will be holding its Dr. Marilyn Trenholme Counsell Literacy Awards in spring of 2026! This important event recognizes outstanding achievements in the fields of literacy and essential skills. Nominations are now open in the following categories:

- Early Childhood Literacy
- Community Literacy Programs
- Individual Outstanding Contributions to Literacy
- Business/Corporate Literacy Initiatives/Workplace Essential Skills
- Published Author
- Outstanding Effort in Indigenous Literacy



Projects

Talking, Singing, Reading...Everyone, Everywhere! Update

In January of 2024, LCNB and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) partnered to carry out the “Talking, Singing, Reading...Everyone, Everywhere!” project. Funded by the Walton’s Trust Foundation, the project will see up to 400 Early Childhood Educators trained in foundational early literacy practices across the province over a 4-year period. The training includes singing, storytelling, and reading aloud. The first year of the project completed in April of 2025, with the second year beginning soon after. The first year of the project saw 93 early literacy mentors trained, who in turn supported 894 educators in their facilities. These educators are going on to influence 4,185 children and their families.

Now in its second year, a new cohort of Early Childhood Educators are receiving this valuable training. In May and June of 2025, educators in Fredericton, Moncton, Saint John, and Miramichi once again participated in Storytelling training sessions. In Saint John and Miramichi, one of their two-day sessions was led by Educators from the first year, who returned as mentors after receiving training the previous year.

In Saint John, participants received a special training session with First Nations Storytellers. Dave Smith led the group of educators on an Indigenous Storytelling Walk at Harbor Passage, where he spoke about history and told personal and cultural stories.



This October saw the year 2 educators engaged in singing training with Parent-Child Mother Goose. This training builds skills in performative singing and storytelling, as well as in mentoring. In the new year, the final round of training will be led by Dr. Kim Stewart and Dr. Sherry Rose in Reading Aloud. As in Storytelling, some of the Reading Aloud sessions will be led by former participants of the first year’s cohort, returning as mentors to share their experiences and what they learned.



Krista Billard, a cohort one early literacy mentor from ASD-N, joined us for the second day of storytelling in ASD-N. She told the group about her process, shared a story about bees co-created with children; talking during an exploration time about how she uses felt board stories and shared her groups' favourite book – *Don't Push the Button*, and how the children have been retelling the story through their drawings of Larry the Monster!

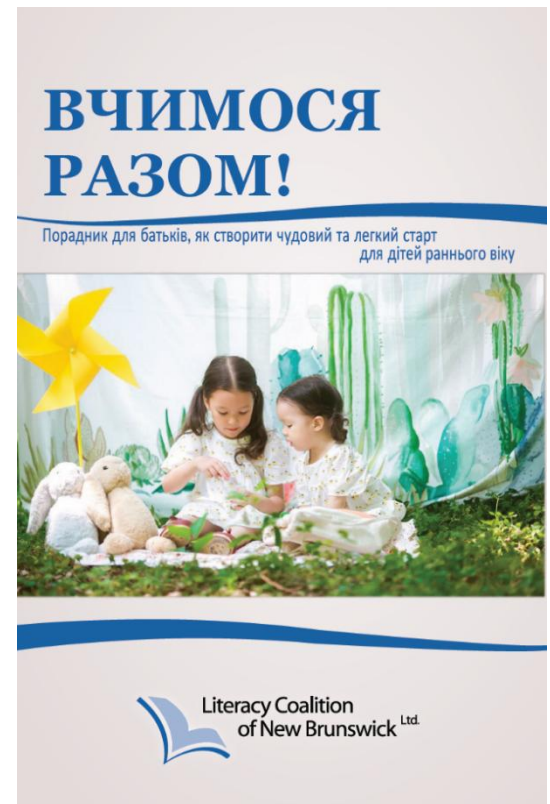


Let's Learn Ukrainian Translation

This year, we officially added a new translation to our “Let’s Learn: A parent’s guide to giving your child a great start” series. We are excited to have our Ukrainian booklets fully translated and printed, as well as available on our website. These valuable, in-demand resources will reach families from many backgrounds to ensure they can give their children the best start in their literacy journey!

All of our booklets can be found online on our website:

<https://nbliteracy.ca/publications-families/>



Distribution of Arabic *Let's Learn*

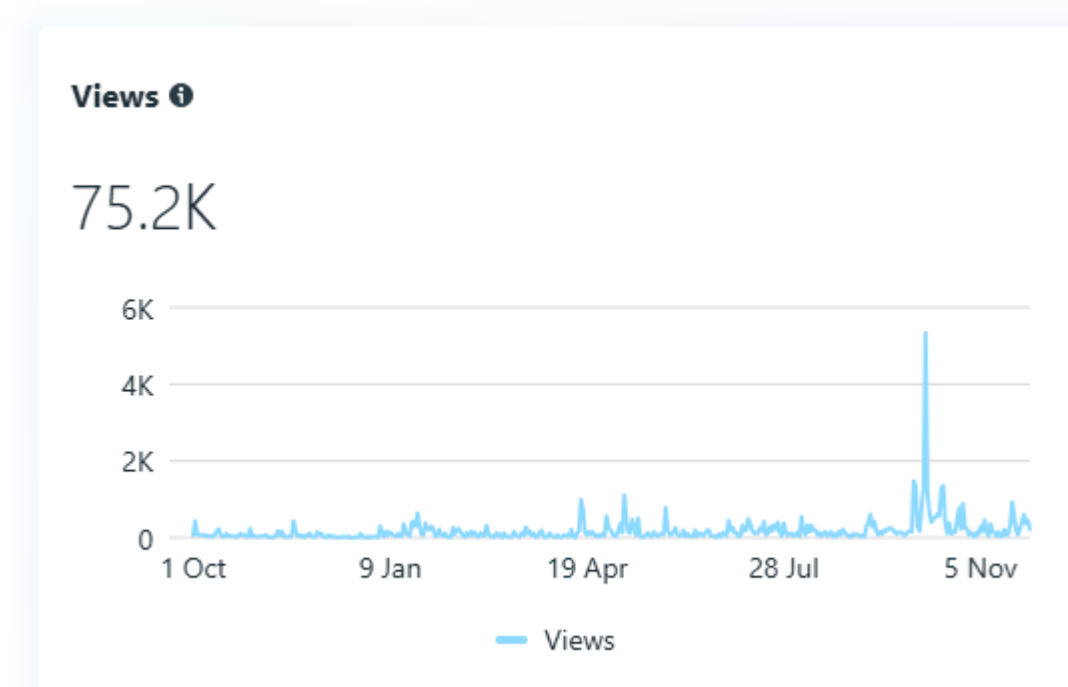
This past spring, we were excited to distribute our newly translated Arabic *Let's Learn* booklets to the Multicultural Association of Fredericton (MCAF). These wonderful resources were distributed to the families in MCAF's HIPPY (Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters) program.



SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT REPORT

Facebook

Views

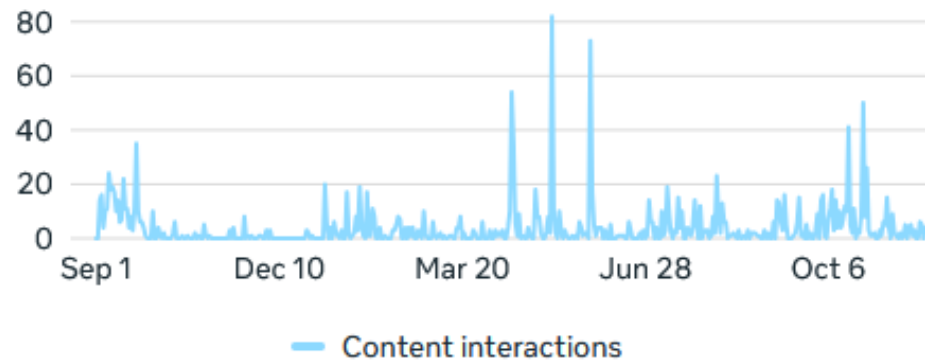


The above graph shows the amount of views accumulated by our page during the 2024 –2025 time period with 75,328 views. However, there is no comparative data here since this is a new metric Facebook has developed that mostly interacts with the amount of times our content has been viewed. This along with *Content Interactions* combined have replaced the *Reach* metric. The spike in early Fall can be attributed to our post for National Truth and Reconciliation which garnered more likes than our general non-event related posts which gives us an idea of what this metric mostly focuses on (this being the post that reaches a general audience as a result of the NDTR hashtag) as well as our posts about the Literacy Dinner event.

Content Interactions

Content interactions ⓘ

1.8K ↑ 6.1%



The report from the last AGM did not use the Content Interaction metric since Facebook has since switched to this insight instead of Reach. This metric reports on the number of person-specific interactions that any content gets, such as likes, comments and saves. There's been a **6.1%** growth in content interactions during this time period, with a lot of the interactions being attributed to event-related posts, campaigns and general posting.

Note the major spikes in the graph above, from left to right:

Mid-May 2025, Celebrating Adult Learners Winners Posts

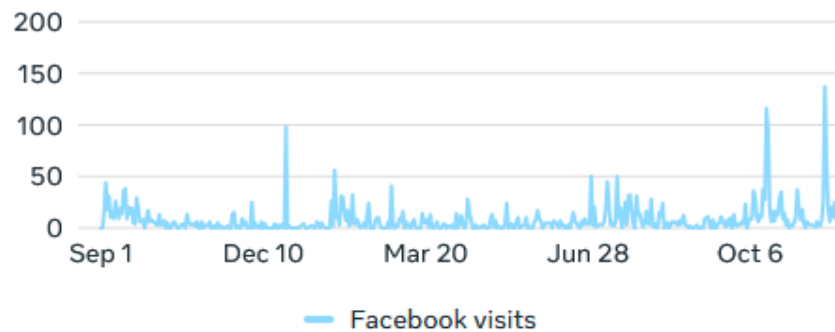
Early June 2025, Executive Director Press Release Post

October 2025, 2025 Literacy Dinner & Auction Coverage

Visits

Visits ⓘ

3.6K ↑ 8.8%

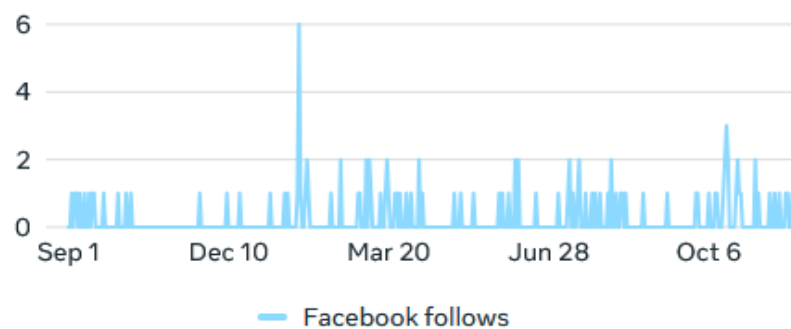


From September 2024 to November 2025, our Facebook page was visited by **3,572** visitors with an **8.8%** growth. The spikes in the graph can be attributed to the same content as with the *Content Interaction* spikes.

Follows

Follows ⓘ

110 ↓ 43%



The above graph shows the rate of new followers on our Facebook page over the last year. Facebook no longer shows the exact number of followers; however, we have an estimated **2,184** followers as of now, which is an increase of **20** from the last report of April 2024. However, the results from

Facebook from this insight show a 43% decrease compared to the comparative timeframe. This communications report covers a longer period of time for analysis than a year (covering 14 months instead of 12). The decrease in the rate of *Follows* here represents the comparison between that extended period. However, there has been a growth in *Follows* in the past year.

The spike in the above graph in late-January can be attributed to our Family Literacy Day giveaway.

Twitter (X)

Analytics on Twitter (X) remains unhelpful for non-Premium Accounts. It seems to have stopped showing even the 3 months' impression data like older quarterly communications reports. Only X Premium subscribers have access to Twitter analytics tools now. However, we are able to see impressions (times a post was seen on the platform) and engagements (user interactions on a post) for individual posts. Going through the post impressions manually, we have average impressions of **25-30** over the September 2024 – November 2025 period. We currently have **1,628** followers.

Newsletter

From September 2024 to November 2025, we ran 10 newsletters, 4 in 2024 and 6 in 2025.

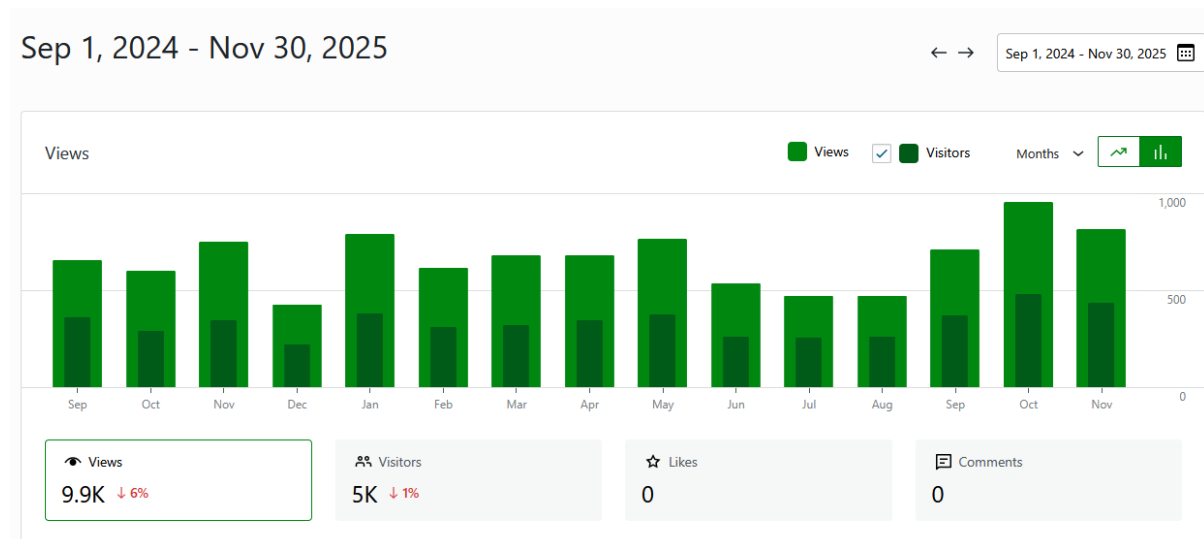
Our newsletter continues to perform well overall.

- The September 2024 newsletter had an open rate of **31.3%** with a click rate of **4.0%**.
- The November 2024 newsletter had an open rate of **45.5%** with a click rate of **19.8%**.
- The Giving Tuesday Newsletter 2024 had an open rate of **30.8%** and a click rate of **2.0%**.
- The end-of-year holiday newsletter had an open rate of **40.8%** and an average click rate of **7.5%** between the newsletter subscribers and the board members.
- The Spring 2025 newsletter had an open rate of **33.3%** and a click rate of **11.8%**.
- The Executive Director's Retirement newsletter had an open rate of **59.2%** open rate and a click rate of **4.7%**.
- The Summer 2025 Newsletter had a **29%** open rate and a **7%** click rate.
- The Literacy Dinner newsletter had an open rate of **38.8%** and a click rate of **7.4%**.
- The Fall 2025 newsletter had an open rate of **32%** and a click rate of **7.4%**.
- The Giving Tuesday 2025 newsletter had an open rate of **35%** and a click rate of **2.2%**.
- The final newsletter for 2025, which is the Holiday newsletter, had an open rate of **27.1%** with a click rate of **3.4%**.

Overall, the newsletters have an average open rate of **36.7%**.

As of December 2025, we have 419 subscribers down from 465 in September 2024. This comes as a result of a bot issue we encountered early on with our Mailchimp this summer 2025. We conducted a second round of subscription purge to deal with suspected list bombing, where bots were signing up fake accounts with invalid information which would cause issues with metrics where open rates would not be on par with the number of average “active” subscribers we had. This practice runs the risk of de-legitimizing our newsletter, with an increased number of users potentially marking it as spam.

Website



From September 2024 to November 2025, our website had 9,912 views. The most popular pages apart from the general Home page, which had 2,207, was the Community Adult Learning Programs page. This rate of traffic is very similar to that of the previous reports, with a negligible drop in views and visitors. 87% of our viewers come from Canada followed by 7.8% from the USA.

IMPACT SUMMARY

10,090

**"LET'S LEARN!" BOOKLETS
DISTRIBUTED**

894

**EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATORS SUPPORTED**

30

**FACEBOOK CONTEST
PARTICIPANTS**

24

**ADULT LEARNER ESSAY
CONTEST PARTICIPANTS**

20

**LEARN LINE
CALLERS**

2,184

**FACEBOOK
FOLLOWERS**

36.7%

**NEWSLETTER
AVERAGE OPEN RATE**

114

**2025 LITERACY DINNER AND
AUCTION
ATTENDEES**

Media Awareness

Media Releases and Events

- Family Literacy Day Celebration
- Celebrating Adult Literacy Week 2025
- CBC Interview of Executive Director (Lynda Homer)
- Announcement of Executive Director Retirement
- 2025 Gala Literacy Dinner and Auction a Success!

MARIAN ZAICHOWSKI ENDOWMENT FUND

**MF-Literacy Coalition
Fredericton Community Foundation Inc.
Fund Income Summary Jul 01, 2025 to Sep 30, 2025**

<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expense</u>
Opening Balance	266,835.56	
Interest & Dividends	2,096.16	
Realized Gains/Losses	-4.68	
Unrealized Gains/Losses	14,617.11	
Admin Fees-FCF		466.96
RBC Management Fees-Endowment		347.61
	<u>283,544.15</u>	<u>814.57</u>
Closing Balance	282,729.58	

LCNB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive:

- Brent Melanson, President
- Marilyn Trenholme Counsell, Past President

Board Members:

- Ivan Augustine, Director of Education: Elsipogtog First Nation
- Christopher Watson, New Brunswick Federation of Labour (NBFL)
- Johnny St-Onge, United for Literacy
- Valerie Blyth, New Brunswick Association of Family Resource Centres
- Carol Cottrill, Laubach Literacy NB
- Ginny Hooper, Saint John Learning Exchange
- Bob Scott, Literacy Dinner Chair
- Dr. Kim Stewart, UNB Early Childhood Centre
- Ben McNamara, New Brunswick Multicultural Council
- Dave Lawrence, Local Author & Community Volunteer

Government Representatives:

- Lisa Blackmore, Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour
- Kate Thompson, New Brunswick Public Library Service
- Cheryl Brown, Education and Early Childhood Development

LCNB STAFF



Susan Yarom
Acting Executive Director (2025 – present)
Administrative Assistant (2018 – 2025)



Lynda Homer
Executive Director (2015 – 2025)



Dianne Léger
Project Coordinator



Memory Gajurel
Communications Director
(2024 – Present)