



Report To:	Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board
From:	Donna Moroso, Director of Integrated Social Services and Gilles Plouffe, Ontario Works Program Supervisor
Date:	October 25, 2012
Re:	Alpha en Partage de Sudbury Est - Issue Report

### **Recommendations:**

That the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board supports the Municipality of St. Charles [Resolution](#) and calls on the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU) to step in and ensure that Cambrian College is meeting its obligations to MTCU and the residents of Sudbury East.

### **Purpose:**

Alpha en Partage de Sudbury Est, a non-profit organization that has been operating in Municipality of St. Charles offering vital services and programs to our adult citizens assisting them to obtain basic literacy skills. These are opportunities that are not offered elsewhere in the education system in the Sudbury East Region. The programs have proven to be very successful and beneficial to all the municipalities it serves since 1998.

### **Background:**

In 2004, Alpha entered into a partnership with Cambrian College which allowed their clients to achieve their grade 12 equivalency or upgrade their skills to the level that is required as a prerequisite for the post-secondary program of their choice. The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has been a strong and stable partner in this program during this time.

Since inception in 1998, Alpha has been funded by the Ministry of Training of Colleges and Universities (MTCU) to service Francophone clients who required literacy skills. In April 2011, English literacy skills services were transferred from St. Albert to Alpha for Anglophone learners. This transfer ensured that Anglophone clients did not lose any services.

## **Current Issue:**

Since May 2004, Alpha has had a partnership with Cambrian College to deliver the Academic & Career Entrance (ACE) program and Independent Learning Centre (ILC) program. In May 2012, Cambrian College advised Alpha that it will no longer fund the education levels that allow adult learners to complete the program, which means a loss of \$35,000 in funding. Cambrian College suggested that current and future students could start and/or complete their courses through on-line learning or by attending Cambrian's main campus in the City of Greater Sudbury. DSB Staff did meet with Cambrian College staff to try and come up with creative solutions but no avail.

The only options that remained were for students to travel daily to the main campus in Sudbury or participate through on-line learning. Cambrian College acknowledges that the completion rate of on-line learners is low compared to instructor lead programming. It is also unrealistic to expect that clients on social assistance travel to Sudbury to obtain these services when most of them do not have a method of transportation. A transportation system is already in place for students to attend Alpha with the supports from the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB and volunteer drivers.

If the students were required to attend Cambrian College or any other institution, their days would be extended, making it less appealing for them to travel to Sudbury, particularly for sole support parents with school age children. For example, a sole support parent would not be able to put their child on the bus and be home for their return. They would then be responsible for taking them to a Child Care center which would in turn pose another barrier to their situation.

As far as participating through on-line learning, this is an option however many low income individuals cannot afford internet services at home and rely on libraries and non-profits such as Alpha to obtain these services. In addition the on-line services do not provide the in person individual attention and coaching available through Alpha.

Alpha offers a very friendly and comfortable atmosphere. Students feel welcome and feel motivated by their in-class teacher to learn the skills required to graduate. Motivation is also another key factor for students on social assistance.

The Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB has provided Alpha \$35,000 to replace the loss in funding to support ACE and ILC courses. While this will keep the services for the residents in the Sudbury East Region for the next year, a long term permanent solution is required.

## **Related Issues:**

### **Cambrian College – Little Current Campus**

In April 2004, the Cambrian College and Basic Skills and Literacy (Upgrading) Program in Little Current was at risk of being lost until the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB intervened and provided Cambrian with the supports and funding required to stay open for another year. The \$35,000 that was flowed to them was money that came from the 'levels of service' funding that the DSB qualified for at the time. This reprieve, while temporary, bought time for designated members of the Cambrian Campus Advisory Committee to develop a sustainable model of delivery for future years. The \$35,000 investment equals to having six clients on social assistance for a 12 month period. As it turned out Cambrian College signed a 10 year lease for a new location on the main street in Little Current and the DSB investment was easily repaid by six clients leaving Social Assistance for post-secondary education.

Also, at that time, the upgrading program as a part of Cambrian College's satellite campus on Manitoulin only directly affected a handful of students; but for these students, the program is a very important part of enabling them to enter a college or a university program.

Today, the attendance for the upgrading program has tremendously increased; in fact there is a waiting list for almost every session. This program plays a critical role in fulfilling the Ontario Works mandate. Cambrian College and the DSB have worked in partnership with great success to ensure the success of the residents the DSB serves.

### **Conclusion:**

Without the academic upgrading program that was offered through Cambrian College's partnership with Alpha, a number of Sudbury East residents will not have access to the local upgrading that makes it possible for them to obtain a high school diploma. This is critically important to ensure their ability to move onto post-secondary education and securing employment.

The residents of Sudbury East depend on Alpha en Partage de Sudbury Est for their educational needs. Without proper education, social assistance recipients could be on social assistance for many years without opportunity for upgrading and self-sufficiency.

Staff is recommending that the Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board supports the Municipality of St. Charles Resolution and call on the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities (MTCU) to step in and ensure that Cambrian College is meeting its obligations to MTCU and the residents of Sudbury East.