



Media Release

Canadian children to benefit from over \$100,000 donated to new language and literacy products

October 4, 2006, London, ON – Canadian children will soon have enhanced ability to achieve their literacy requirements, thanks to donations from the CIBC and an anonymous funder. More than \$100,000 has been earmarked for literacy development and enhancement products, which will be created by the Canadian Language and Literacy Research Network, a Network of Centres of Excellence Canada.

The newly funded products are the online Encyclopedia of Language and Literacy for policy makers and practitioners, and the English-as-a-second-language (ESL) Assistant, a game-based software package to improve the English skills of ESL children. Both projects are scheduled for launch in 2007.

“CIBC is proud to support ESL Assistant because it aligns to our focus on youth and education,” says Bill Gray, Associate Vice President, London, CIBC. “Investment in this program will help ensure that immigrant children and families have every opportunity to become successful in this country.”

The ESL Assistant is an interactive research-based software product designed to improve the English language skills of children in ESL programs in Canadian schools. The ESL Assistant will incorporate research findings about best practices in language and literacy development to reinforce the teaching of English vocabulary, sentence structure and grammar to aboriginal, immigrant and minority language children in Kindergarten through Grade Two.

“We are pleased that the CIBC has made this generous contribution to the development of the ESL Assistant,” says Donald G. Jamieson, CEO and Scientific Director of the Canadian Language and Literacy Research Network. “It demonstrates CIBC’s commitment to youth and education. By providing new Canadian children with tools to acquire English faster, they will have higher academic achievements and be better prepared to contribute to society.”

The Canadian Language and Literacy Research Network received a second significant gift from an anonymous funder, which will be directed to the ongoing development of the Encyclopedia of Language and Literacy. The Encyclopedia of Language and Literacy is an innovative web-based resource designed to provide easy and timely access to knowledge on language and literacy development. It is specifically designed for those whose decisions and activities affect children directly and on a daily basis. Policymakers, planners and service providers will have the ability to access an easy-to-use centralized database of information covering the full scope of relevant knowledge across the field in a way never before achieved.

The Canadian Language and Literacy Research Network brings together leading scientists, clinicians, students and educators as well as public and private partners. The Network’s mandate is to generate, integrate and disseminate bias-free scientific research and knowledge that is focused on improving and sustaining children’s language and literacy development in Canada. The Network is hosted by The University of Western Ontario. For more information on the Canadian Language and Literacy Research Network, visit www.cllrnet.ca