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## **Message from the Co-Chairs**

Our theme for this report, *From Pivot to Purpose*, crystalizes our shared opportunity. Together with our member partners in the Ontario postsecondary sector, we are living in a moment when we can purposefully pursue the development and adoption of technologies, some of them newly emerging and others that created value during the past two years' pivot to emergency remote teaching.

We are no longer in a pandemic-reaction mode. Now is the time to maintain our momentum to more thoughtfully and artfully design virtual learning environments across Ontario to remove barriers to access, create better outcomes for learners, and assist our members in competing more successfully in a global education environment.

eCampusOntario pursues this vision, engaging member institutions, learners and partners to enrich learning experiences; building capacity and contribution from across the system; facilitating collaboration for competitive advantage; and sharing in the success to create the future of postsecondary education in Ontario. According to the 2021 study on digital learning in Ontario post-pandemic, 97 per cent of learners expect greater flexibility with more digital learning opportunities and increased use of technology for their postsecondary experiences going forward.<sup>1</sup>

After two challenging years when ever-shifting pandemic restrictions obliged educators and learners to adapt to a host of often-unfamiliar technologies, these findings paint an optimistic view of a future in which traditional instructional methods blend seamlessly with new and exciting approaches.

Our new Strategic Plan, completed this past year, sets our direction through 2024, strengthening the central role eCampusOntario will play in convening, championing and advancing the efforts of postsecondary institutions in Ontario that are leading in innovating teaching, learning and innovation for the future of learning.

1. Johnson, N., 2021 Ontario Report: Tracking the Impacts of the Pandemic on Digital Learning in Ontario, Canadian Digital Learning Research Association (Victoria, British Columbia), p.16.

**Ann Marie Vaughan, EdD** President & CEO, Loyalist College



**Steven Murphy, PhD**President & Vice-Chancellor,
Ontario Tech University

This report reviews the contribution our major programs and initiatives made to each of the three strategic themes of the Strategic Plan:



### **Enabling Flexible Lifelong Learning**

Focus on learners and supporting a learner-centric approach in our initiatives with member institutions and creating flexible learning supports, tools and practices to foster rich, inclusive, and flexible digital educational experiences for Ontario's diverse lifelong learners.



### **Facilitating Capacity and Contribution**

Amplify faculty and staff capabilities through professional development, capacity building and collaboration initiatives to enable them to design and deliver the highest quality digital learning while engaging learners as co-designers.



# Supporting System-Wide Collaboration for Future-focused Global Leadership

Pursue opportunities for collaboration and shared benefits, new business models, approaches and solutions for Ontario's postsecondary education system to excel, nationally and internationally, in digital teaching and learning.

This year's accomplishments could only have been achieved with the dedication, professionalism and resilience – through a second pandemic year – of eCampusOntario employees, led by our CEO, Dr. Robert Luke. To each of our valued team members, we express our gratitude.

We are grateful to our eCampusOntario Board members who are actively engaged in guiding our vision, our member institutions who play an active role in transforming our sector, and the many stakeholders helping the Ontario postsecondary education reach global excellence.

Most of all, we thank our partners in the Government of Ontario, that this year made some of the largest-ever investments in our shared vision of a technology-enabled future for postsecondary education and a stronger Ontario.

### Message from the CEO

At the beginning of 2020, a committed percentage of educators in Ontario's postsecondary sector embraced digital teaching and did it well, creating and calling on more than 30 years of research to create pedagogically rich digital learning environments. Three months into that year, as we collectively grappled with the pandemic and the necessary restrictions on in-person learning, 100 per cent of teachers at postsecondary institutions everywhere in the province suddenly had to pivot to online teaching.

Two years later, as we emerge back into face-to-face engagement, there is one clear certainty – the pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital learning tools and strategies. Over these past two years eCampusOntario provided guidance, support, expertise and resources to Ontario's universities, colleges and Indigenous Institutes. Collectively, we embraced appropriate, effective and scalable approaches to purposefully design the rich learning environments that improve the student experience, advance professional competence, provide ongoing opportunities for students at all levels to participate, and foster greater diversity, inclusion and access.

This was, perhaps, one of the most significant years in the history of eCampusOntario. We more than doubled our organizational capacity to serve and support our sector. Among many of our achievements, we rolled out the largest digital education initiative ever undertaken in Canada, the Government of Ontario's Virtual Learning Strategy (VLS) that saw us fund almost 400 projects, from the development of new teaching resources to capacity support for advancing digital learning options across Ontario. We doubled the size of our Open Library, already the largest repository of Open Educational Resources in the country. Our first-ever VLS Collection Open House in May showcased hundreds of these new resources. We launched a new micro-credentials Portal based on the outcomes of 36 pilot projects the Government of Ontario funded last year and that were completed this year.



**Robert Luke, PhD**Chief Executive Officer
eCampusOntario



I want to express my gratitude for the visionary guidance eCampusOntario receives from an active Board of Directors and the keen industry insight we receive from all postsecondary stakeholder groups and the eCampusOntario Advisory Committee. Most of all, I am grateful for the dedication and professionalism of our staff who this past year embodied the very ethos of eCampusOntario with their embrace of technology, their adjustment to the evershifting workplace demands during a pandemic, and their commitment to making Ontario a global leader in digital-bydesign teaching and learning.

I know you will find many more examples in this report of the collaborative, creative and effective work eCampusOntario and its 50 member institutes are doing to realise our collective ambition of being global leaders in the design of rich, inclusive and flexible digital learning experiences grounded in an evidence-based, creative understanding of learners, educators and communities. I welcome your feedback.



# eCampusOntario Member Institutions (at March 31, 2022)

Our members and their learners and educators are why eCampusOntario exists. In collaboration with our members, we work to build a strong foundation for the long-term evolution of virtual learning to deliver rich, equitable, inclusive and flexible digital educational experiences.

### Colleges

Algonquin College Collège Boréal Cambrian College Canadore College Centennial College Conestoga College Confederation College **Durham College** Fanshawe College Fleming College George Brown College Georgian College Humber College Collège La Cité Lambton College **Loyalist College** Mohawk College Niagara College Northern College St. Clair College St. Lawrence College Sault College Seneca College **Sheridan College** 

### **Indigenous Institutes**

First Nations Technical Institute (FNTI) Kenjgewin Teg Seven Generations Education Institute Six Nations Polytechnic

#### **Universities**

Algoma University **Brock University Carleton University** University of Guelph Lakehead University Laurentian University McMaster University **Nipissing University OCAD University** L'Université de l'Ontario français Ontario Tech University University of Ottawa Queen's University Royal Military College of Canada **Toronto Metropolitan University University of Toronto Trent University** University of Waterloo University of Windsor Western University Wilfrid Laurier University York University

### **Board of Directors** (at March 31, 2022)

We are honoured by the diversity of the eCampusOntario Board of Directors and the passion they bring. Composed of students, faculty, administrators and members of the public, the Board collaborates to establish eCampusOntario as a leader in online and technology-enabled learning.

### **Board Co-Chairs**

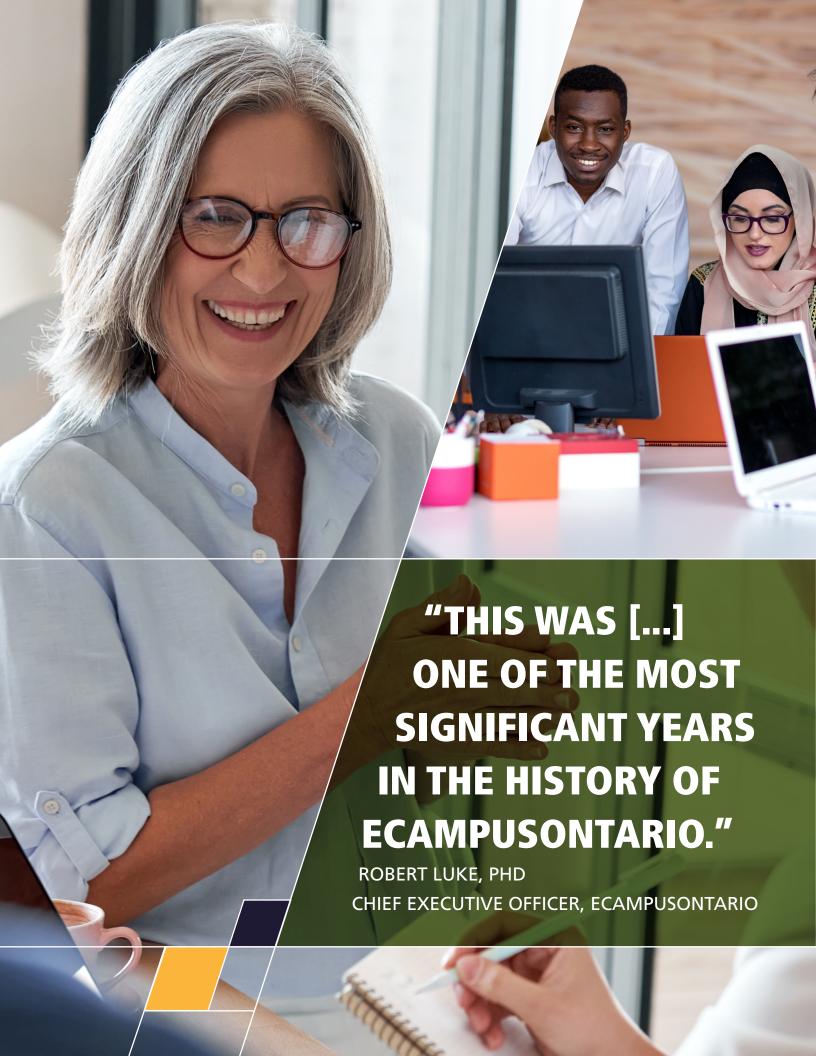
- » Steven Murphy, President & Vice-Chancellor, Ontario Tech University
- » Ann Marie Vaughan, President and CEO, Loyalist College

### **Board Directors**

- » Aldo Caputo, Director, Centre for Extended Learning, University of Waterloo
- » André Côté, Principal Consultant, Côté & Company Strategies
- » Aidan D'Souza, Student, Seneca College
- » Mark Green, Provost & Vice-Principal (Academic), Queen's University
- » Laurie Harrison, Director, Digital Learning Innovation, University of Toronto
- » Jenni Hayman, Dean, Academic Excellence and Innovation, Cambrian College
- » Marilyn Herie, Vice-President, Academic and Chief Learning Officer, Centennial College
- » Peter Hickey, Director, Finance and Administration, Children's Aid Society of Toronto
- » André Léger, Associate Dean, School of Contemporary Teaching and Learning, St. Lawrence College
- » Umair Majid, Student, University of Toronto
- » Lyne Michaud, Vice-President Academic Affairs, Collège Boréal
- » Jill Scott, Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, University of Ottawa

### **Non-Voting Representatives**

- » Janet Hope, Vice-President, Policy and Innovation, Colleges Ontario
- » Vacant, Representative from Contact North
- » Vacant, Representative from Council of Ontario Universities
- » Vacant, Representative from Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer



### **About eCampusOntario**

#### Vision

Support Ontario and its academic institutions to be global leaders in the design of rich, inclusive, and flexible digital learning experiences grounded in an evidence-based, creative understanding of learners, educators, and communities.

#### Mission

To imagine and co-create Ontario's postsecondary digital learning ecosystem by supporting academic institutions, educators, and learners to navigate change and deliver excellent and innovative digital learner-centric experiences.

#### **Values**

We align our activities with the needs of Ontario's postsecondary education ecosystem to achieve meaningful impact through the following values:



**INCLUSION:** We strive to build a digital postsecondary ecosystem that allows every learner to thrive.



**CURIOSITY:** We ask questions and bridge connections that leverage the community's strengths and visions to realize our collective goals.



**CREATIVITY:** We use human-centered design practices to iteratively co-create solutions and learn what works best for our educators and learners.



**EXPERIMENTATION:** We test ideas for digital learning to push boundaries and set new paths toward more equitable, fairer and thriving futures.

### eCampusOntario Team (at March 31, 2022)

We cannot do the work we do without the passion and commitment of the eCampusOntario team. They have stepped up this year to take on the Virtual Learning Strategy and deliver important new programs such as the microcredential portal while keeping our flagship programs such as TESS relevant.

- » Imohimi Ahonkhai, Director, Finance and Administration
- » Brett Anderson, Manager, Information Technology Services
- » Alissa Bigelow, Associate, Digital Learning
- » Graeme Cannon, Coordinator, Research and Evaluation
- » Rocio Chavez Telleria, Associate, Research and Evaluation
- » Jerielyn Cruz-Brown, Business Partner, People and Culture
- » Lutfiyya Dhalla, Specialist, Communications
- » Aaman Dudani, Director, Projects and Innovation
- » Zizo Ebeid, Specialist, Information Technology Services
- » Don Eldridge, Associate, Digital Learning
- » Kevin Fasola, Coordinator, Accounts Payable
- » Chris Fernlund, Manager, Programs
- » Ruoxi Gao, Manager, Projects
- » Emma Gooch, Manager, Programs
- » Sonia Grewal, Director, People & Culture
- » Mary Gu, Lead, Programs
- » Nishant Jain, Analyst, Projects
- » Sandra Janjicek, Coordinator, Programs and Services

- » Rama Kaba-Demanin, Lead, Programs
- » Andrea Krasznai, Associate, Digital Learning
- » Rich Louttet, Manager, Programs
- » Robert Luke, Chief Executive Officer
- » Cindy Ly, Specialist, Digital and Graphic Communications
- » Dave Musonge, Lead, Procurement
- » Jason Northway-Frank, Manager, Governance and Strategic Communications
- » Victoria Rajkumar, Full Stack Developer
- » Muhammad Riaz, Front-End Developer
- » Marya Shabbir, Senior Manager, Finance
- » Moh Shakourirad, Lead, Digital Programs
- » Richard Switzer, Director, Digital Product
- » Emily Tamfo, Senior Manager, Digital Product
- » Laura Viselli, Manager, Research and Foresight
- » Stephen Wilfeard, Coordinator, Programs
- » Emily Woehrle, Specialist, Communications (Content)
- » Lindsay Woodside, Director, Programs & Services

### **Pivot to Purpose**

By the time you are reading this Annual Report, the postsecondary sector in Ontario will be entering the fourth academic year to be conducted in whole or in part during a global pandemic. Such an outcome was inconceivable at the beginning of 2020 when a novel virus began to spread across the globe and the whole world pivoted.

Borders closed and international travel ceased. Businesses shuttered, sending employees to work from home where possible, and scrambling to find alternative ways to service their customers. Global supply chains unravelled. Trade shows and events, many built on the very necessity of in-person interaction, were either cancelled or downscaled.

By mid-March, Canada's federal and provincial governments introduced everexpanding closures and restrictions and the postsecondary sector joined practically every other human endeavour in pivoting to a new way of doing things. There was no alternative. The balance of the academic year was at stake. Students needed final credits for spring convocation. A critical sector of the economy, one that in

# ONTARIO ALONE EMPLOYS AROUND 120,000 PEOPLE, ENROLLS MORE THAN 900,000 FULL- AND PART-TIME STUDENTS, AND GENERATES AN ESTIMATED \$120 BILLION

in direct and indirect economic activity every year, could not simply stop functioning.

As emergency pandemic responses became more routine, however, the adjustment was not uniform. Experiential learning such as in-person labs, shop-floor sessions and work placements were particularly challenging. Study groups and collaborative projects became harder to organise. While some learners flourished in the absence of noisy classrooms and challenging social interactions, other learners who thrived in such circumstances felt marooned. Wrap-around supports such as mental-health services, campus-based healthcare and even student tutoring, coaching, mentoring and academic advisory services became more difficult to provision remotely, although anecdotal reports show that some people preferred a remote option to access such services.

This pivot also saw extraordinary creativity, resourcefulness and resilience across the postsecondary sector. The entire sector is to be commended for its agility and ability to ensure the continuity of teaching and learning while we adapted with the challenges of remote work. This year, collectively, we introduced a new normal of high-quality, purposeful digital-by-design learning that engages learners in rich, virtual learning experiences.

This is no longer a pivot. eCampusOntario and our member institutions are no longer in reaction mode. We are, rather, taking decades of evidence-based best practices in digital teaching and learning, leveraging the acceleration of digital adoption that happened during the pandemic, and evaluating and facilitating the piloting, implementation and scaling of the technologies and practices that can be most usefully and effectively adopted by educators for learners.

We are, in short, plotting our future with purpose.

The postsecondary model has evolved, sometimes in wholesale fashion. In the wake of a pandemic that accelerated the adoption of digital teaching and learning, we are in the throes of perhaps the most meaningful shift ever – a call to intentionally design learning futures that empowers us to make choices to support diverse learners, hybrid modes of learning and their relationship to lifelong learning.

These are some of the actions eCampusOntario took this past year to support the future with purpose.



We launched an ongoing, research-driven, systematic exploration of possible futures by identifying trends or patterns of change that may have significant lasting impacts in the postsecondary education sector.

### WE SUPPORTED THE FUNDING OF MORE THAN 400 PROJECTS ACROSS 50 MEMBER INSTITUTIONS AS PART OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO'S

### VIRTUAL LEARNING STRATEGY.

- We began asking what types of supports future learners will need to succeed, and we adopted an intersectional approach that explores how identity shapes a learner's educational, cultural, economic, social and lived experiences.
- We recognised that lifelong learning is dynamic process that aims to create personalized, adaptable, and intergenerational hybrid learning environments.
- Our role in supporting innovation saw us amplify Ontario's sector-wide collaborative innovation impacts by actively facilitating engagements between Ontario businesses and higher education institutions. This will increase the province's competitive edge by developing learning and micro-credentials and by supporting students to work with companies on innovation challenges.
- Our organizational capacity to support Ontario's Indigenous Institutions, colleges and universities greatly increased in 2021-2022. We more than doubled our human resources and officially grew from a small- to a medium-sized enterprise.

From pivot to *purpose*. From emergency remote teaching to *digital by design* at scale. From pandemic reaction to *intentionality*.

We have put in place the foundations for unprecedented scale and scope of collaboration that will foster increased collegiality, encourage resource sharing, save system costs and continue to build a globally recognized postsecondary system that supports learners of all ages and backgrounds and at all stages of life.



# **Learning for Life**

As we outline in our <u>2021 Foresight Report: Lifelong Learning</u>, "Education is increasingly being conceptualized as a non-linear, continual process that spans an individual's life phases and stages. Learners may engage or opt in and out of their education as needed or desired." This reality is so critical and such a fundamental part of our mandate at eCampusOntario that it is one of three strategic themes of our 2021-2024 Strategic Plan.

Education, once seen as a discrete commodity completed within fixed periods early in life, is now viewed as existing on a continuum. The pandemic reinforced the idea that reskilling and upskilling are ongoing requirements in a 21st century economy dealing with rapid transformation. The long-term sustainability and resilience of our social, cultural and economic institutions rely on their capacity to innovate. The larger structural challenges of our time – including climate change, Indigenous reconciliation, labour-force change, migration and improving equity and diversity at every level of our economy and our society – all hinge on the ability of education to instil in citizens the knowledge, skills and mindfulness our society needs.

The fourth industrial revolution is underway, and it is transforming the economy and the jobs within it. As desirable skills across diverse roles and occupations continue to evolve, postsecondary education will be an essential support for the workforce. Technology can be deployed at scale to enable a richer learning environment that caters to the requirements of today's – and tomorrow's – postsecondary learner. This is especially applicable for those who may be atypical of the traditional recent high-school graduate looking to complete a degree or diploma program and who need a range of options for their ongoing engagement with learning.

Designing an education sector that meets the lifelong requirements of learners goes well beyond just embracing technology. Inclusive hybrid campus communities are built upon the perspectives of their diverse learner identities and their respective lived experiences. An inclusive campus community engages in intentional initiatives that take place across all levels of the organization from the individual, to what happens in the classroom, to across the entire campus – even to how we get learners to campus in the first place. Meaningful, equitable and holistic initiatives across all levels of postsecondary institutions can ensure learners, educators and employees have a sense of belonging, safety and inclusion.

These are some of the ways in which we supported lifelong learning last year.

#### Micro-credentials

Micro-credentials promote accelerated, targeted learning that supports individualized learning and meets the demands of Ontario businesses. Last year, the Province of Ontario extended Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) eligibility for micro-credential programs. eCampusOntario developed and hosts a portal and database of OSAP-eligible micro-credential programs, making it easier for learners to find the right micro-credential that fits their learning needs. Micro-credentials help learners develop the most relevant and in-demand skills and competencies through fast, accessible and affordable education. Whether someone is stepping into the workforce, making a career change or advancing through the workforce, micro-credential programs are an integral part of that journey.

#### **Ontario Extend**

If educators are to succeed in a digital-by-design future, they must be empowered to explore a range of emerging technologies and pedagogical practices for effective online and technology-enabled teaching and learning. Ontario Extend is a micro-credentialed professional learning program that helps faculty and staff prepare for digital teaching in the anticipated post-pandemic mass shift to hybrid teaching and learning. The program scaled up in 2021-2022. Four hundred new educators enrolled in the program, a 40 per cent increase from the previous year. They came from 19 colleges, 18 universities and two Indigenous Institutions, more than double the number of postsecondary members that had participated previously. The total number of badges and micro-credentials earned grew by 48 per cent, from 197 in 2020 to 291 in 2021 and we had our first ever graduation ceremony for learners who completed all six modules.

### Adaptive Learning Environmental Scan of the Sector 2021-2022

Adaptive learning is at the crux of encouraging a customized learning journey of exploration. To understand its impact and future direction, we conducted an environmental scan that revealed that while the use of adaptive learning in the sector remains small, educators see the promise of adaptive learning in improving learner outcomes. The power of adaptive learning is in its personalized approach, enabling learners to build on prior learning and knowledge and come and go from education as their needs require. Adaptive learning and the technologies that support it will play a significant role in democratizing education, leveling the playing field, and providing options for lifelong learning opportunities.

### **Community of Practice (CoP)**

The scaling of Ontario Extend allowed us to build and foster a community of practice for faculty and teaching and learning teams across the province. This let educators connect with each other and engage in thoughtful discussion and receive support and guidance from the Ontario Extend team.

The COVID-19 global pandemic accelerated existing technological trends, including job automation and remote work. Technology has the capacity to create meaningful opportunities for the futures of work.

As we move into post-pandemic recovery, the skills most valuable to the labour market will continue to evolve, and postsecondary education will have a significant role in preparing the existing and future workforce. Ontario's postsecondary institutions have a critical role in preparing learners with the appropriate skills to help them thrive, grow and adjust as needed in their personal life and career journeys. eCampusOntario will continue to have a complementary role in researching, piloting, evaluating and supporting the implementation of both technological advances and ways to enhance access and inclusivity as we support the sector in this shared mandate.

In this, the postsecondary sector is not simply reacting to or preparing folks for work in the future; we are actively engaged today in the future of remote working. We not only model teaching and learning in hybrid modes just because it is providing useful options; we do so because we are part of the future of work. This future is unspooling now.





# **Investing with Purpose**

With the onset of the global pandemic, institutions across Ontario adapted to emergency remote teaching and learning, embracing digital technologies to bring in-person courses into virtual spaces. This acceleration of an already established trend confirmed the merits of a digital-by-design approach to teaching and learning that combines the best of traditional, classroom- and lab-based delivery with the improved access, cost efficiencies and multidimensional experiences that technology can deliver.

In December 2020, the Government of Ontario made an historic investment through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) to drive the growth and advancement of virtual learning across the province's postsecondary institutions via eCampusOntario. Through the Virtual Learning Strategy

# ECAMPUSONTARIO PROVIDED FUNDING TO MORE THAN 400 PROJECTS LED BY ONTARIO'S PUBLICLY ASSISTED INDIGENOUS INSTITUTES, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

This First Round of projects, which were completed earlier this year, is significantly expanding options for traditional and lifelong learning through the accelerated use of both online and hybrid learning. A Second Round of funding, announced in November 2021, continues to expand the capacity and quality of virtual learning in Ontario's postsecondary education sector. To date, the Virtual Learning Strategy has invested more than \$60 million in digital transformation to increase access to high-quality, digital-by-design resources that are learner-driven, market-responsive, globally competitive and Ontario-made.

The funded projects supported the conversion of face-to-face learning to online and hybrid modes of teaching and learning. Educators, learners and support staff experimented with digital learning as the sector collectively navigated this new reality. The projects demonstrate the significant potential of long-term impacts as institutions and their collaborators confirmed high rates of commitment to adopting the created outputs renewing VLS-funded resources.

VLS projects this year were focused in five key areas:



**DIGITAL CONTENT:** Development and adoption of a portfolio of high-quality online materials at Ontario postsecondary institutions in English, French and Indigenous languages, as well as high-quality virtual simulations and lab content to help reduce the strain on campus space and infrastructure and enable more flexible delivery.



**DIGITAL CAPACITY:** Support institutions with low current capacity to receive targeted supports in areas such as instructional design, open education librarians and paying students to be learning technology rovers.



**<u>DIGITAL FLUENCY:</u>** Support development and adoption of professional learning resources and supports for faculty and students to improve virtual teaching and learning.



**<u>DIGITAL DELIVERY:</u>** Support the identification, procurement and deployment of educational technologies to support digital course and program offerings.



**INDIGENOUS INSTITUTES:** Targeted funding to support virtual learning initiatives by Indigenous Institutes.



Grants supported projects that ranged from content creation to the hiring of resources to support institutions with gaps in digital learning capacity, to piloting new emerging Ontario-based educational technology solutions.

- \$6.6 million was invested into more than 60 projects to develop simulations, serious games or extended reality (XR) experiences. These will be available for use across the Ontario postsecondary sector in 2022.
- APPROXIMATELY \$1 MILLION WAS INVESTED INTO TWO PROJECTS TO DEVELOP WRAPAROUND LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES, WITH COLLABORATION FROM MORE THAN 15 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.
- Ontario Exchange built strong partnerships between institutions and virtual learning industry professionals to create high quality, digital-bydesign educational resources. Institutions across Ontario received 1.4M in funding to procure the services of multimedia developers, instructional designers and other content-development resources to improve the capacity of their institution to respond to digital learning.
- More than 600 new open educational resources (OER) were submitted to the eCampusOntario Open Library, the most such resources to ever be catalogued and offered from the library.
- All VLS-funded materials will be available for use and reuse across Ontario public postsecondary sector through the eCampusOntario Open Library.
- Collaboration occurred between postsecondary institutions, and between postsecondary institutions and industry. Of all VLS projects, 70 per cent were collaborative, whether cross-sector or within sector.

The future of Ontario's postsecondary education includes approaches that harness the best of in-person and virtual learning experiences to support learners and instructors. Increased investment in digital-by-design resources, as well as enhanced collaboration for sharing and distributing those resources, have contributed to major advances in Ontario's virtual learning landscape.



## **Convening for Global Leadership**

eCampusOntario promotes sustainable change in our sector, change intended to have a global impact. We do this through proactive stakeholder engagement that brings together educators, learners and employees at postsecondary institutions in Ontario as well as external stakeholders, such as Ontario-based educational technology companies, governments and other agencies, that are advancing digital-by-design education.

eCampusOntario connects Ontario's postsecondary institutions to partners that support innovation, collaboration and digital by design education. Our participatory approach develops strategic solutions that best accommodate the needs of all stakeholders involved.

Sector-wide collaboration in Ontario has accelerated. By exercising our convening power, we bring together postsecondary institutions and organizations in this virtual learning ecosystem to develop digital solutions and resources for learners across Ontario to work better together so they can more quickly adapt and respond to disruption. Partnerships between institutions and collaboration with industry amplify innovation across the province and strengthen Ontario as a leader in the global virtual and hybrid learning ecosystem.

By creating virtual learning experiences that are accessible and reflect the diverse learner needs and backgrounds, Ontario-made teaching and learning materials have the potential to equip learners and institutions to contribute towards greater goals of building sustainable and flourishing global futures.

The transition from emergency remote teaching and learning to digital-by-design education in Ontario's postsecondary ecosystem prompted initiatives that shape new futures possibilities. This past year, these initiatives included:

The Experience Design (XD) Lab convenes postsecondary stakeholders to co-design solutions to well-defined problems affecting the user experience of learners and educators. The XD Lab uses human-centred design methods and tools to understand the needs of postsecondary stakeholders so that eCampusOntario and our members can build and optimize programs, services and platforms serving the end users of education.

Within the XD Lab, the Sandbox provides a safe, risk-free environment for member institutions and stakeholders to seamlessly discover, experiment, codesign and report education technology solutions to improve course delivery while building a community of practice. Sandbox is the official intake gateway for education technologies, XR content, new business models and pedagogical practices that XD Lab assesses.

In short, the XD Lab lets us chart the future in collaboration with the postsecondary sector and partners that are developing new technologies and models of teaching and learning. The Sandbox gives us a safe space to test and de-risk that future.

eCampusOntario's top accomplishments in this area this past year included:

 Developing an assessment process that provides pedagogical and specification audits of education technology tools and applying those assessments to seven educational technology products. Three Ontario emergent educational technology companies were supported by providing product optimization strategies based on learner, educator and support staff feedback.

### DEPLOYING 62,972 LICENSES FOR 5 TECHNOLOGIES ACROSS 28 INSTITUTIONS THROUGH VLS FUNDING,

while supporting these pilots through robust user experience evaluation and by creating a community space for each technology to encourage community building while testing the tools.

For the past five years, eCampusOntario has been working to help support the Ontario postsecondary education sector in the exploration, experimentation and development of **micro-credential programs**. Micro-credentials help learners develop the most relevant and in-demand skills and competencies through fast, accessible, and affordable education, and support Ontario industry with the talent it needs. Highlights of 2021-22 include:

- The formation of a community of practice on micro-credentials with more than 200 members, representing 96 per cent of eCampusOntario member institutions.
- The development and launch of a micro-credential toolkit that offers practical suggestions and knowledge about micro-credentials from practitioners developing them at postsecondary institutions throughout Ontario.

- The fifth annual Micro-credential Forum where the theme, *The Practitioners Toolbox*, moved beyond theoretical debates to showcase how micro-credential programs function in practice.
- WE LAUNCHED A MICRO-CREDENTIALS PORTAL TO PROVIDE A ONE-STOP SOURCE FOR LEARNERS TO EXPLORE THE 1,742 MICRO-CREDENTIALS OFFERED BY ONTARIO COLLEGES, UNIVERSITIES AND INDIGENOUS INSTITUTIONS.

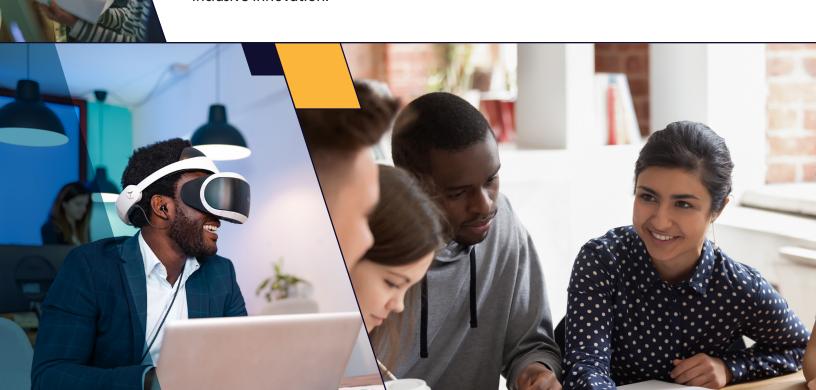
In a new initiative that will expand this coming year, eCampusOntario actively facilitated engagements between Ontario businesses, municipalities and higher education institutions to increase the province's competitive edge and support post-pandemic recovery. These partnerships help businesses grow and invest in research and development while providing valuable learning opportunities for students to directly contribute to strengthening Ontario's economy. Two major programs in which we participated this past year are potent examples of eCampusOntario's ability to convene all the stakeholders in the postsecondary sector to foster strong interdisciplinary collaboration:

- The City of Richmond Hill partnered with OCAD University and eCampusOntario to launch the Centre of Local Innovation and Collaboration (CLIC). This unique, design-driven centre for innovation is part of a broad-based approach to help accelerate recovery for local businesses post-pandemic. Businesses worked together with OCAD University researchers to uncover market insights and develop new product and service opportunities. Businesses can then leverage these proposals to tap into research and development project funding available through other government partners. Seventeen businesses piloted the program with plans in progress to welcome future cohorts.
- The Toronto Collaboration Platform (TOCP) is a partnership between the City of Toronto, CivicLabTO, eCampusOntario and Toronto's eight higher education institutions. Together, this group uses the expertise in each organization to collaborate on research and development projects to support Toronto's communities, economy and post-COVID-19 recovery efforts, providing valuable work integrated learning opportunities for students. TOCP will be the model for a province-wide platform, which will facilitate collaboration between HEIs, municipalities and businesses across the province.

**Technology and Education Seminar and Showcase** (TESS), eCampusOntario's annual conference celebrates and advances community and collaboration across the postsecondary sector. The 2021 edition, held in November, focused on how we co-create a future in which the delivery of high-quality online and hybrid programming ensures that we weather the challenges imposed by events such a global pandemic, and thrive in a future of hybrid teaching and learning.

- A learner panel acknowledged that remote learning presented both benefits and challenges. While enthusiastic about flexibility, new opportunities for internships and increased accessibility of hybrid learning, learners called for ways to foster community building online so that students can develop friendships, support systems and feel more connected.
- A thought-leader on **community, belonging, inclusion and anti-racism** said a focus on the learner would ensure a sense of belonging and help create a future where past patterns are not repeated.
- A keynote speaker on decolonization envisioned a modern decolonized classroom where learning tools are made available to everyone, both physical tools as well as modes and methods of understanding.

As innovation in virtual and hybrid learning enhances ubiquity – learning at any time, from anywhere – the impact of Ontario's local innovation has the potential to reverberate beyond the province and drive global impact. By making education more accessible, postsecondary institutions become a critical space where learners and educators from many different places can more successfully connect with each other to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to drive positive change in their communities. This enables the co-creation of better futures for all by advancing equity in education and, more broadly, sustainable development and inclusive innovation.



### **Financials**

| Ontario Online Learning Consortium (as of March 31, 2022) |                     |                      |                                  |                                     |                                                |          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------|
|                                                           |                     | Full Year            |                                  | Full Year YTD Comparison            |                                                | mparison |
| REVENUE                                                   | (B)<br>21-22 Budget | (C)<br>YTD Actual \$ | (B) vs. (C)<br>21-22 Variance \$ | (D)<br>Prior Year YTD<br>Actuals \$ | (D) vs. (C)<br>Year Over Year<br>Comparison \$ |          |
| Interest Earned                                           | 0                   | 2,368.81             | (\$2,369)                        | 0                                   | \$2,369                                        |          |
| MCU Operational TPA                                       | 6,273,408           | 5,652,146            | (\$621,262)                      | 3,965,711                           | \$1,686,435                                    |          |
| MCU Micro-credential MVP TPA                              | 500,000             | 309,462.88           | (\$190,537)                      | 0                                   | \$309,463                                      |          |
| MCU Virtual Learning<br>Strategy TPA                      | 47,075,000          | 45,867,340.22        | (\$1,207,660)                    | 529,588.51                          | \$45,337,752                                   |          |
| MCU OCP TPA                                               | 1,997,500           | 1,722,975            | (\$274,525)                      | 9,900                               | \$1,713,075                                    |          |
| TOTAL REVENUE                                             | 55,845,908          | 53,554,292.91        | (\$2,291,615)                    | 4,505,199.51                        | \$49,049,093                                   |          |

|                                                 |                     | Full Year            |                                  | YTD Comparison                      |                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| EXPENSES                                        | (B)<br>21-22 Budget | (C)<br>YTD Actual \$ | (B) vs. (C)<br>21-22 Variance \$ | (D)<br>Prior Year YTD<br>Actuals \$ | (D) vs. (C)<br>Year Over Year<br>Comparison \$ |
| Operations                                      |                     |                      |                                  |                                     |                                                |
| Salaries & Benefits                             | 1,648,886           | 1,509,820            | \$139,066                        | 1,137,892                           | (\$371,928)                                    |
| Space Rental, Insurance & Funiture              | 281,000             | 267,229.82           | \$13,770                         | 254,951.72                          | (\$12,278)                                     |
| Marketing & Communications                      | 100,000             | 92,022.78            | \$7,977                          | 37,541.89                           | (\$54,481)                                     |
| General Office Expenses                         | 23,800              | 16,729               | \$7,071                          | 8,208                               | (\$8,521)                                      |
| Travel & Meals                                  | 14,000              | 683.52               | \$13,316                         | 803.47                              | \$120                                          |
| Professional Services                           | 322,000             | 310,134.16           | \$11,866                         | 211,647.86                          | (\$98,486)                                     |
| Telecommunications                              | 32,000              | 23,054.56            | \$8,945                          | 34,592.2                            | \$11,538                                       |
| Computers, Accessories & Software Subscriptions | 120,000             | 123,203.03           | (\$3,203)                        | 109,417.51                          | (\$13,786)                                     |
| MCU (OP TPA) - SUB-TOTAL<br>OPERATING EXPENSES  | 2,541,686           | 2,342,877            | \$198,809                        | 1,795,055                           | (\$547,822)                                    |

 $\textbf{\it English Financial Statements:}\ https://www.ecampusontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2020/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2020/Ontario-Online-Content/uploads/2020/Ontario-On$  $Learning\hbox{-}Consortium\hbox{-}FS\hbox{-}2022\hbox{-}FINAL.pdf$ 

French Financial Statements: https://www.ecampusontario.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Ontario-Online-Learning-Consortium-2022-FS-FINAL-fr\_.pdf

|                                                     |                     | Full Year            |                                  | YTD Comparison                      |                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| EXPENSES                                            | (B)<br>21-22 Budget | (C)<br>YTD Actual \$ | (B) vs. (C)<br>21-22 Variance \$ | (D)<br>Prior Year YTD<br>Actuals \$ | (D) vs. (C)<br>Year Over Year<br>Comparison \$ |
| Programs & Strategic Initiatives                    |                     |                      |                                  |                                     |                                                |
| eCampusOntario Portal                               | 422,930             | 411,477              | \$11,453                         | 185,097                             | (\$226,380)                                    |
| Open Library                                        | 555,769             | 433,869              | \$121,900                        | 273,187                             | (\$160,682)                                    |
| Adaptive Learning                                   | 156,333             | 136,914              | \$19,419                         | 225,518                             | \$88,604                                       |
| Educational Technologies<br>Sandbox                 | 225,169             | 173,170              | \$51,999                         | 512,840                             | \$339,670                                      |
| Ontario Extend                                      | 369,053             | 351,870              | \$17,183                         | 141,641                             | (\$210,229)                                    |
| Technology & Education Seminar<br>& Showcase (TESS) | 305,813             | 234,435              | \$71,378                         | 92,605                              | (\$141,830)                                    |
| French Language<br>Experiential Learning            | 130,813             | 52,807               | \$78,006                         | 49,444                              | (\$3,363)                                      |
| Micro-Credentials                                   | 1,040,280           | 1,077,716            | (\$37,436)                       | 681,262                             | (\$396,454)                                    |
| XD Lab                                              | 289,249             | 218,689              | \$70,560                         | 0                                   | (\$218,689)                                    |
| Research & Outcomes Evaluation                      | 236,313             | 218,322              | \$17,991                         | 0                                   | (\$218,322)                                    |
| Shared Educational<br>Technology Services           | 0                   | 0                    | \$0                              | 9,062                               | \$9,062                                        |
| MCU (OP TPA) - SUB-TOTAL<br>P & SI EXPENSES         | 3,731,722           | 3,309,269            | \$422,453                        | 2,170,656                           | (\$1,138,613)                                  |
| MCU (OP TPA) - TOTAL EXPENSES                       | 6,273,408           | 5,652,146            | \$621,262                        | 3,965,711                           | (\$1,686,436)                                  |
| Virtual Learning Strategy                           |                     |                      |                                  |                                     |                                                |
| VLS                                                 | 47,075,000          | 45,867,340           | \$1,207,660                      | 529,589                             | (\$45,337,752)                                 |
| TOTAL VLS EXPENSES                                  | 47,075,000          | 45,867,340           | \$1,207,660                      | 529,589                             | (\$45,337,752)                                 |
| Ontario Collaboration Platform                      |                     |                      |                                  |                                     |                                                |
| ОСР                                                 | 1,997,500           | 1,722,975            | \$274,525                        | 9,900                               | (\$1,713,075)                                  |
| TOTAL OCP EXPENSES                                  | 1,997,500           | 1,722,975            | \$274,525                        | 9,900                               | (\$1,713,075)                                  |
| Micro-Credential MVP<br>Portal Development          |                     |                      |                                  |                                     |                                                |
| MC Portal Development                               | 500,000             | 309,463              | \$190,537                        | 0                                   | (\$309,463)                                    |
|                                                     |                     |                      |                                  |                                     |                                                |
| TOTAL EXPENSES                                      | 55,845,908          | 53,551,924           | \$2,293,984                      | 4,505,199                           | (\$49,046,725)                                 |
| DEVENUE LESS EVERNOSS                               | 0                   | 2.260                | (\$2.250\                        | 0                                   | (\$2.250\)                                     |
| REVENUE LESS EXPENSES                               | 0                   | 2,369                | (\$2,369)                        | 0                                   | (\$2,368)                                      |

#### **General Notes to the Statement**

Figures reprsented above do not match the Audited Financial Statements as this report follows Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) reporting requirements, whereas the Audited Statements demonstrate an overall total depiction of the organization's financials. Here the organization presents expenses and revenues broken down by Transfer Payment Agreement vs the Audited Financials Statements which represent all expenses and revenues as totals for the organization.

### 21-22 Variance Commentary

#### Revenues

The total \$2.29M unfavourable variance indicates funds that will be recovered by the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) due to underspending on various TPAs. These funds will be recovered through reductions in future MCU TPA installment payments.

#### **Cost Recovery**

Interest Earned: A total of \$2.3K was earned on the TPA amount (Jan-March 2022) due to the recent change in the organization's financial institution's interest rate offering.

#### **Operations**

The total underpsend of \$198K is due to the following variances:

- Salaries & Benefits surplus: The underspend of \$139K is largly driven by a vacancy for the budgeted Director of Communications role.
- Travel & Meals surplus: The underspend of \$11.8K is due to remote work (COVID-19 impact) which resulted in savings.
- Computer, Accessories & Software Subscriptions deficit: The overspend of \$3.2K is largely due to an increase in hires resulting in increased equipment costs including monitors, accessories, etc to support remote work.

### **Programs & Strategic Initiatives**

The total undersepnd of \$422K is due to the following variances:

Open Library surplus: The \$121.9K underspend is driven by the following:

- Employee turnover: Manager role was on Parental Leave from April-Sept 2021 resulting in savings of \$55K
- Manager role incumbent did not return after Parental Leave and was replaced with a Lead Role and resulted in hiring of a Coordinator role for the remaining of the fiscal, resulting in savings of \$45K
- Pressbooks costs came in slighly under budget resulting in savings of \$30K

Adaptive Learning surplus: The \$19K underspend is due delayed hiring of staff. Hire was planned to begin April 2021 but did not begin until late July 2021.

Educational Technologies Sandbox surplus: The \$51.9K underspend is due to the bulk purchase of licenses on the Virtual Learning Strategy TPA 1b; resulting in savings on the EdTech Sandbox budget.

Technology and Education Seminar and Showcase (TESS) surplus: The \$71K undersepnd is due to the conference being held virtually, resulting in savings in both venue and catering costs.

French Language Experiential Learning surplus: The \$78K underspend is due to loss of consultant that was planned for this work. There have been challenges in acquiring a qualified vendor for this work. A Digital Learning Associate has been hired and began the role Feb 2022.

Micro-credentials deficit: The overspend of \$37K is due to the unbudgeted media campaign push for the Microcredential Portal. In Q3 reporting this was anticipated to be higher. The media campaign costs came in lower than expected and some savings were realized for the Microcredential Forum due to a virtual event. The overspend is within the allowable TPA 10% transfer allocation rule.

XD Lab surplus: The \$70K underspend is largely due to employee turnover. Coordinator role vacant since August 2021.

Virtual Learning Strategy: The underspend of \$1.2M is due to underspent projects largely due to spending efficiencies realized during the project and over-budgeting at the project outset. There were a small number of projects that either declined or re-scoped creating an underspend overall.

**Revenue Less Expenses:** There is an overall unfavourable varaince of \$2.3K. This is the unbudgeted interest earned on the cash balance. The amount is unfavourable since these funds will be recovered by MCU under TPA obligations.

### **Year Over Year Q4 Operational Variance Commentary**

#### Revenue

Overall revenues have increased compared to FY2020 due to the addition of new TPAs. Look to commentary below related to the year over year comparisons in spend.

#### **Expenses**

**Operations:** Overall underspend from FY2020-21 of \$544K largely driven by lower Salaries & Benefits, Marketing & Communications, and Professional Services costs due to COVID-19; unanticipated vacancies and change in business operations.

#### **Programs & Strategic Initiatives:**

- Micro-Credentials: The underspend of \$396K compared to FY2020-21 is due to costs being allocated to the additional TPA provided by MCU for the MC Portal MVP Development. Please see costs of \$309,463 reported under the MC Portal Development Budget Line.
- XD Lab: The XD Lab was re-classified as a stand-alone program for FY2021-22. In FY2020-21, this program was a part of the Educational Technologies Sanbox. Both are tracking to similar trends as last fiscal.
- Adaptive Learning: The program had a higher spend FY2020-21 due to a pilot program that was run. Program has changed FY2021-22 and does not include a pilot program.
- Research & Evaluations Outcome: The increase in spend of \$218K compared to FY2020-21 is driven by the fact that it is a new program created for FY2021-22 and did not exist for FY2020-21.