

voice

Fall 2002 vol. 5 no. 1



Firsts

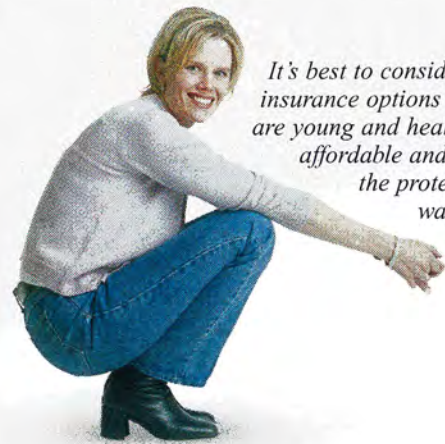
from Aboriginal
Peoples to Pioneers

Aboriginal Education
and Action Research

Annual Meeting Report



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CONTRIBUTORS



Meme Lavell, B.Ed., M.Ed., has taught for the Wikwemikong Board of Education and is currently completing Ph.D. studies on the needs, concerns and aspirations of Aboriginal secondary school students on Manitoulin Island. She also sits on the board of the Ontario Native Women's Association.



Lillian Blakey retired as a consultant with the Toronto DSB.



Adrienne Ficzero is a learning resource teacher with the Hamilton-Wentworth DSB.



Susan Gillies-Rezo teaches grade 3-4 with the Hamilton-Wentworth DSB.



Brian Pickell is a freelance photographer and an accomplished Celtic musician singer/songwriter who lives in Paris, Ontario. His new CD *Fresh Canadian Fiddle Tunes* features ten of central Canada's best fiddle players and is available from www.brianpickell.com.



Charlotte Morgan is the Editor of the ETFO *Voice*.



ON THE COVER

Jan Beaver demonstrates the stick game to students at Forest Valley Outdoor Education Centre, Toronto. Jan is a former chair of ETFO's Aboriginal Education Committee and has represented ETFO at the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

Photo by **BRIAN PICKELL**

voice

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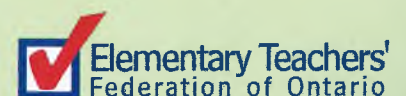
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Respect. As educators, we understand the role it plays in the lives of our students and our society.



Emily Noble,
President, ETFO

Respect. As educators, we understand the role it plays in the lives of our students and our society. Indeed, it is respect for others, and for ourselves, that makes both socialization and civilization possible.

We are living through a period in Ontario in which the notion of respect in the workplace is eroding for those who have chosen public service. Government short-sightedness has meant that everyone from nurses to civil servants to municipal workers must struggle to maintain dignity in their working lives.

In education, we have recently seen an example of monumental disrespect towards elected

trustees (and the electorate) with the hostile takeovers of the Toronto, Ottawa-Carleton and Hamilton-Wentworth district school boards. Though it is early in the appointed supervisors' tenure, disrespect for employees has already damaged the workplace environment.

In Ottawa-Carleton, 27 special education positions were summarily cut. The actual work to be done by those staff members, however, was not so easy to eliminate. There is evidence that classroom teachers are now being pressured to pick up this work, for example, by assuming a larger responsibility for producing IEPs.

In Toronto, suggestions abound that teachers are to take on the work of lunchroom supervisors. What next? Will Hamilton-Wentworth teachers

be maintaining the boilers once caretakers are gone?

While the situations in the three captive boards are the most dramatic at the moment, there is a larger picture. Sooner or later, every ETFO member will be "asked" to take on someone else's work. It is vital that we refuse to comply.

Just as we respect the integrity of our own work, so too must we respect the integrity of the work of others. Unions have fought hard to negotiate collective agreements with decent working conditions. We do ourselves no favours, and the system even less, by assisting the government in its drive to decimate publicly funded education.

FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Ontario's Future
in Hands of Task
Force



Gene Lewis,
General Secretary,
ETFO

This fall, the Education Equality Task Force, chaired by Dr. Mordechai Rozanski, has been holding hearings on the education funding formula. Many ETFO locals made presentations. Provincially, ETFO sent in a written brief and later met with the Task Force to discuss it.

ETFO's brief says that high quality public education is a cornerstone of our democratic society. It provides not only the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, but also a wealth of skills, knowledge and experiences. It helps children

become citizens who contribute to the financial and social well-being of the province. Our brief goes on to describe areas where the funding formula must be changed to ensure all elementary students have the resources they need to succeed.

Some argue that public education should teach only the three Rs. Everything else should be left to parental choice and the parental purse. This minority view would scrap outdoor education centres, parenting centres, breakfast programs, heritage language programs, swimming lessons, music and arts programs and much more. It fails to understand that some children come to school more ready to learn than others; that

some children enjoy rich learning environments at home, while others are raised in poverty.

Our public school system is not perfect. However, it is the only institution whose goal is social cohesion.

While most of the submissions were from those who support a broad vision, Rozanski has heard from both sides in this polarized debate. We can only hope that he will promote a legacy of public education that will strengthen our most important democratic institution – our public schools.

The complete text of ETFO's brief to the Education Equality Task Force is posted at www.etfo.ca.

FROM THE EDITOR

Shaping Minds with Passion and Dedication

October 5 was first proclaimed World Teachers' Day in 1994 by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Education International (EI).

This year, October 5 was marked by

- a poster created by EI and sent to schools around the world;
- a proclamation signed by the Hon. James Bartleman, Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, officially recognizing World Teachers' Day;
- an ETFO drive time radio spot on stations across Ontario;
- a Canadian 48 cent stamp recognizing teachers' work.



Canada Post said it was issuing the stamp in recognition of the indispensable, often-difficult and extremely important role played by our nation's teachers. The Hon. André Ouellet, President and Chief Executive Officer for Canada Post, explained that the stamp "will pay tribute to every teacher in Canada, who has undertaken to shape the great minds of tomorrow with passion and dedication."

Three million stamps will be printed and sold at participating post offices. Why not buy a bunch and use them for your holiday greetings!

Charlotte Morgan
cmorgan@etfo.org

On Look

Name _____

Position _____

School _____

School Address _____

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Event Date(s) _____

Event or Award Description _____

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You can also reach Members' Records by telephone at 416-962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836 or by Email to jjpoints@etfo.org

ation Report

Prime Minister's Award

Congratulations to **IAN NAISBITT**, a grade 5, 6 teacher with the Greater Essex DSB, who has received a Certificate of Excellence from the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence.

In the words of one parent, Ian has "literally moved a mountain, a mountain of garbage." In 1989, he began the project that eventually became known as the Little River Enhancement Group, or Lil' Reg. Since that time, Lil' Reg has involved more than 2,100 elementary students and 1,100 secondary students, as well as several classes of special needs and developmentally challenged students, in removing tones of garbage from a local creek. Lil' Reg has also helped to restore the creek's main channel, as well as 65 square kilometers of its drainage basin, and planted more than 12,000 trees. Visit the school at www.gecdsb.on.ca/sub/schools/elem/concord.

For more information on the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence, call 1-800-575-9200 or visit www.schoolnet.ca/pma. The awards, offered at the Certificate of Excellence and Certificate of Achievement levels, carry cash prizes of \$5,000 and \$1,000 respectively, given to recipients' schools to be spent under their direction.

A&E ETFO Winners

Congratulations to the following members who won grants from A&E for describing creative ways they incorporated A&E programs and resources into the curriculum: **CAROL WHITE**, Limestone; **MARC HODGKINSON**, Thames

Valley; **FAYE POSMITUK**, York Region. Their ideas are included in A&E's *The Idea Book For Educators*, Fall 2002 issue.

Deadline for the 2003 entries is April 11. Four educators will receive \$1,000 plus a TV, VCR and an A&E video library for their school. Four runners-up will receive \$500. Contact classroom@aetn.com or call 1-800-722-6146. A&E is a member of Cable in the Classroom. Cable in the Classroom is endorsed by both the Canadian Teachers' Federation and the Ontario Teachers' Federation. Every program offered through Cable in the Classroom is copyright cleared and commercial free. Visit www.cableeducation.ca.

Walk to School Day

More than 500 Ontario elementary schools participated in International Walk to School Day on October 2. They joined thousands of schools in 22 countries around the world 'blazing trails in the urban jungle.' Walk to School Day supports Active and Safe Routes to School, a national program that encourages the use of active modes of transportation to and from school.

Active and Safe Routes to School enjoys support from police, public health units, local councils and district school boards. Working with parents, interested schools explore their neighbourhoods and map out the best routes for children to walk to school. Children generally walk in groups or with an accompanying adult. Get ready for next year's Walk to School Day! Visit

www.greenestcity.org or call 1-866-588-0788. This site has practical ideas that link the program to the Ontario curriculum. Visit the official International Walk to School Day website for news from other countries, links and more resources.

www.iwalktoschool.org.

Day with a Difference

The 13th annual Day with a Difference conference for grade 8 girls hosted by ETFO Waterloo and the Waterloo Region DSB, Waterloo was held at the University of Waterloo in March. **CINDY MATTHEWS**, an itinerant resource teacher, coordinated the event. Cindy was assisted by a host of volunteers and by funding partners such as the Ontario Women's Directorate. Day with a Difference encourages female students to consider non-traditional careers and to make the link between maintaining choices in high school and engaging in satisfying careers. Facilitated by female presenters working or studying in technology, science or mathematics, workshop topics included life as a paramedic; a homicide sergeant's life; and making lipbalm (chemistry). Plans are already underway for next year's conference.

Who Touches the Future?

A Canadian name will appear in the seventh edition of *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*, 2002, that of **PHYLLIS NEWMAN**, Vice-President, ETFO Ottawa Carleton Occasional Teachers. American high school and college students who have been cited for academic excellence are

invited to nominate one teacher from their entire academic experience. Amily Chowdury, a Canadian student in her first year at a university in the U.S., chose Phyllis. Phyllis taught Amily for grades 4 and 7 at Blossom Park Public School, Ottawa and the two are still in touch regularly, thanks to the wonders of email.

Visit This Site

JAN BEAVER, a teacher at Forest Valley Outdoor Education Centre, Toronto, has created The Global Indigenous Voice on Education - <http://www.thegivenetwork.com>. Scheduled to be on line by November 1, 2002, the site enjoys support from the Canadian Teachers' Federation, Education International, New Zealand Educational Institute and Union of Education Norway. So far, educators from Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii, North America, South America and Europe have signed on and are working to expand thegivenetwork. The site will include a dialogue area, a library, an educator's profile area with information about educators on the network, as well as events listings. Visit thegivenetwork or email Janet.Beaver@tdsb.on.ca for more information.

Correction

In G.H.E.T.T.O. Dolls (*Voice, Summer 2002*), the correct reference is: Schwartz, Susan and Bone, Maxine. *Retelling, Relating, Reflecting: Beyond the 3Rs*. Irwin Publishing. Toronto. 1995.

Profile of a President

Emily Noble, M.Ed., is the new president of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), the largest teacher union in Canada outside of Quebec.

Noble has previously served as ETFO's vice-president (1998-2000) and first vice-president (2000-2002). Her 30 years as a teacher have been spent with the Algoma District School Board, where she has taught all grades from kindergarten to grade 8, as well as special education. She holds principal's qualifications as well as primary and special education specialist qualifications.

Noble's teaching career began in her home-town of Sault Ste. Marie. She believed then, and believes now, that it is the teacher's role to give students the confidence and the skills to achieve their goals. She credits Algoma's First Nations communities, many of whose children were in her classrooms, with teaching her to listen carefully to others before deciding on a course of action.

Noble's involvement with federation began in the early 1970s when, as the newest teacher on staff, she volunteered to represent the federation in her school. She went on to serve as her local's grievance officer and negotiator, as a member of the public relations committee, and as local president. She served several terms on the federation's provincial executive before being elected vice-president of ETFO.

In 1997, the government used Bill 160 to take principals and vice-principals out of the union. Noble chose to stay with her federation and resigned as principal of Alex Muir Public School, Sault Ste. Marie, continuing her career as a classroom teacher.



Emily Noble

Noble is a director of the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) and a governor of the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF). She is a member of the Ontario Federation of Labour's (OFL) Executive Board, and Executive Council. She is a vice-president of the Canadian Labour Congress. Noble received the CTF Roy C. Hill Award in recognition of her work in mathematics. She is a fellow of the Ontario Teachers' Federation.

Noble has not confined her activities to education. She has been an active member of the Sault Ste. Marie Business and Professional Women's Club. She was a member and leader of the Algoma 4H Club for many years. She is an accomplished organist. And, as befits someone from Northern Ontario, Noble canoes and fishes with the best of them.



Congratulations to ETFO's scholarship and bursary winners!

Aboriginal Women in Education Award

Jennifer Aver, Near North OT
Katherine Bennett, Peel
Janet Bruyere, Rainy River

Anti-Bias Curriculum Development Award

Shakil Choudhury, Toronto

Anti-Racist Scholarship Award

Vincent Spadaro, Toronto

Doctoral Scholarship Award

Jeff Scott, Near North

Doctoral Scholarship Award – Women's Program

Anne Moore, York Region

ETFO Bursaries

(for sons and daughters of ETFO members)

Cindy Brown, Toronto
Neil Burke, Simcoe County
Bonnie Edwards, Peel
Amy McDermid, Bluewater
David Thériault, Simcoe County

ETFO Bursaries (Persons with a Disability /Visible Minorities/ Aboriginal Persons)

Philomena Bonis, Waterloo
William McArton, Near North
Karen Su, Toronto

ETFO Bursaries (Persons with a Disability/Visible Minorities/ Aboriginal Persons) Award – Women's Program)

Christina Doyle, York Region
Régine Grand-Pierre, Toronto
Kiki Lau, Toronto
Winsome McBean, Toronto

Master's Scholarship Award

Reena Anand, Upper Grand
Mark Campbell, Greater Essex
Colleen Ellison-Wareing, Thames Valley
Lothar Endler, Remote Northwest
Heather Anne Jessop, Peel
Renée Meloche, Halton
Bruce Morgan, Thames Valley

Master's Scholarship Award – Women's Program

Staceyanne Grochowina, Niagara
Jennifer Jilks, Ottawa-Carleton
Lynn McClean, Simcoe County
Nicole Miller, Toronto
Cori Pitre, Rainbow
Barbara St. Arnaud, Upper Canada
Miriam Woodall, Greater Essex

Other ETFO award winners were announced in the Summer, 2002 issue. For photos of those who received ETFO awards at the Annual Meeting, see page 31

For more information on nominating yourself or nominating a colleague for one of ETFO's many awards, honours bursaries and scholarships for 2002-2003, see the ETFO Reference Book in your school, call your local president, or contact Shauna Petrie at provincial office.

When you think about Retirement... ...think about RTO/ERO!

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In Memoriam



Beverly Saskoley

We are saddened by the death of Beverly Saskoley, whose vision and integrity inspired staff and members throughout her years with the federation.

Bev began her teaching career in Dryden in the early 1970s. In 1987, she joined the staff of the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario (FWTAO), with responsibilities in collective bargaining, pay equity, employment equity and race relations.

With the birth of ETFO, she assumed responsibilities as co-ordinator of Equity and Women's Services. Her leadership in ETFO's first years was key in developing the structures and policies that distinguish ETFO as a union proud of its commitment to social justice and equity.

Bev was awarded an OTF Fellowship in 2001. She passed away on August 22, 2002, just days after she had been presented *in absentia* with an Honorary Life Membership in ETFO.

Bev's personal warmth and compassion, clarity of vision and commitment to finding the way ahead continue to inspire those who were lucky enough to know and work with her over the years. She will be sadly missed.

ETFO Voice is pleased to provide "PD Notes," a column written by the ETFO Professional Development Services Staff. It introduces issues, new programs and publications.



PD NOTES

ETFO's Induction Resource Guide is a practical "how to" book that identifies the key components and considerations in designing and implementing an induction/mentorship program for teachers in the first two years of their careers.

Regional Conference on Special Education

The date for this regional conference sponsored in partnership with ETFO Kawartha Pine Ridge Teacher Local and the district school board, has been changed to Friday evening, January 24 and all day Saturday, January 25. The keynote speaker on the Friday will be Sharon Stasuik. Participants will be able to choose two Saturday workshops. Watch your steward's mailing for the application form. Contact John Guiney at the provincial office for additional information.

Induction Resource for ETFO Locals

ETFO PD has developed a resource for locals interested in entering into a partnership with their DSB to establish an induction/mentoring program to support new teachers. This practical "how to" book identifies the key components and considerations in designing and implementing an induction/mentorship program for teachers in the first two years of their careers. It is based on solid research and proven practice. ETFO hopes that this new resource will encourage the development of high quality entry programs for the growing number of new teachers in our profession. Contact Wendy Matthews at provincial office for additional details.

Occasional Teacher Handbook

The *OT Handbook* is now available and can be found on the ETFO website. Plans are underway to provide occasional teachers with opportunities to contribute their knowledge and experiences to what will become a living resource. Sherry Ramrattan Smith is taking the lead on this innovative project.

ETFO PD Online

Jan Moxey and Diana Tomlinson, coordinator, have been exploring how best to bring distance independent learning to our members. We are currently working with a fourth year computer science co-op student from Ryerson University on our first short course, which is on classroom management strategies for teachers new to the profession. Also in the works is a short course on ESL and another on FSL strategies for new teachers.

Social Studies CD ROM

This interactive CD-ROM features three resources in one: *Grade 3 Rural and Urban Communities*, *Grade 4 Medieval Times*, and *Grade 5 Early Civilizations*. The topics include an overview, text with voice, text with links, images rich in Ontario life, video components, glossary, quizzes and culminating tasks for students. It is particularly useful for combined grades. There is a link to a website where teacher resources can be downloaded. This resource is the product of a joint project with ETFO, OECTA and the Independent Learning Centre.

ETFO PD Materials Shared with Kosovo Teachers' Union

ETFO PD received a request from the Canadian Teachers' Federation for copies of materials and resources that reflect the diverse programs and services provided to members by our Professional Development Staff. These will be shared with a fledgling teachers' union in Kosovo to assist them in building professional development programs and services for their members.

Kindergarten Resources

ETFO PD has designed a desk-top organizer for the three valuable kindergarten resources that have been developed over the past four years under the guidance of Nancy Wannamaker.

- *The Kindergarten Years: Learning Through Play* – a curriculum resource with a focus on play-based learning and the principles of developmentally appropriate practices.
- *Kindergarten Matters* – an ETFO position paper on the importance of high quality kindergarten programs in the development of young children.
- *Observation* – a curriculum resource with a focus on evaluation, planning and growth for the kindergarten learner.

These may be purchased individually or as a set from shopETFO. www.etfo.ca.

The Canadian Psychiatric Research Foundation (CPRF)

CPRF is a national charity established to raise and distribute funds for research to find a better understanding of and improved treatments for mental illnesses. Its Education Committee has created a “quick reference” resource guide of useful classroom strategies to help teachers assist children with mood, behaviour or thinking difficulties. Called, *When Something's Wrong*, this resource may be ordered via telephone, 416-351-7757 or by email, cprf@interlog.com.



BRIAN PICKELL

ETFO's Position Paper on Special Education

Our newest position paper, *Fulfilling the Promise: Ensuring Success for Students with Special Needs*, was released during the 2002 Annual Meeting. This position paper was developed through a series of focus groups and discussions with major stakeholders. A copy was included in the first stewards' mailing to your school. Additional copies are available for \$5.00 from shopETFO.

JOHN GUINEY, COLLEEN LEE, WENDY MATTHEWS, JIM MCMAHON, JENNIFER MITCHELL, JAN MOXEY, SHERRY RAMRATTAN SMITH, DIANA TOMLINSON, coordinator, and NANCY WANNAMAKER. Working to make a difference in the professional lives of our members.

ETFO PD at the 2002 Annual Meeting - Althea Jensen, PDS staff member, helps members to explore the growing collection of Curriculum Connections. These resources are created by teachers for teachers.

Professional Relations Services

CRIMINAL ALLEGATIONS... IT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU



No one working in schools today escapes the possibility of facing allegations of physical or sexual assault made against them by the students in their care. ETFO members who have faced such allegations consistently describe their experience as the worst nightmare they could ever have imagined in their professional lives. Any allegation of inappropriate contact, whether physical or sexual may lead to a criminal charge.

Staff in Professional Relations Services respond daily to urgent calls from members requiring professional advice and legal assistance in dealing with such allegations. When an allegation of criminal – especially sexual – misconduct is made against a member, he or she is immediately suspended from their duties and instructed not to have contact

with students or parents until the investigation is concluded. The Children's Aid Society and police are contacted by board officials and an investigation, which may take weeks, begins immediately.

Our experience as staff officers has led to the conclusion that all too often members are unaware of the proper procedures to follow in such situations.

WHAT TO DO IF IT HAPPENS TO YOU...

Members are entitled to legal support when an allegation arises directly from the performance of their professional duties.

Has someone made an allegation against you? At the first hint of a problem involving any allegation that could potentially lead to a criminal charge against you, contact ETFO's provincial office immediately. There is no such thing as a "minor" concern around this issue.

DURING OFFICE HOURS

If you are contacted by the police or the Children's Aid Society (CAS) regarding an allegation made against you **DO NOT** participate in or consent to an interview.

- Make no statement to anyone regarding the allegation or charges.
- Say "I am willing to co-operate, but I am unable to comment until I contact my Federation and legal counsel."

- Call Professional Relations Services at **1-888-838-3836** or **416-962-3836** and state that your call is urgent. You will be put in touch with the Professional Relations Services counselor on call who will provide you with the necessary assistance.

"AFTER HOURS" EMERGENCY LEGAL ASSISTANCE

What is an emergency?

- Police are on the scene or on the way.
- You are facing criminal charges for an alleged offense directly related to the performance of your professional duties.
- You are at risk of being arrested and/or incarcerated.

What to Do?

Call: **1-888-838-3836** or **416-962-3836**

After Hours:

A voice message will provide the necessary instructions to put your call through to an operator. You will be asked a few important questions. Where appropriate, a criminal lawyer will be contacted and you will be connected immediately.

What to Do to Prevent False Allegations

Members must be ever mindful of professional boundaries. Exercise good judgment in

relation to your students. At all times, keep your professional role separate from your personal life. The most caring teachers with the noblest of intentions are often the most vulnerable to perceptions that they may have crossed the line.

Professional Boundaries

When teachers were interviewed and asked to provide their understanding of the term "professional boundaries," some of the common threads to their responses were

- violation of the position of trust.
- abuse of power in a teacher's relationship with a child.
- teachers using their relationship to meet their own needs instead of the needs of their students.

Boundaries: A Definition

"Boundaries define personal space and the area you occupy that you feel is appropriately under your control. When there is a mutual understanding of what is appropriate, boundaries are crossed if someone intrudes beyond that understanding or withdraws from it unilaterally."

College of Physiotherapists of Ontario, *Maintaining Profession Boundaries* (a questionnaire workbook)

The most extreme form of boundary violation is sexual abuse of a student. Sexual abuse represents the ultimate breach of the trust reposed in a teacher.

The onus is on you!

What makes the issue of professional boundaries an important and dangerous one for teachers is the fact that teachers are responsible for recognizing in themselves whether they are "at risk" of crossing boundaries and, if they are, of immediately addressing this issue.

Further, teachers have a responsibility to address this issue when they witness a colleague who may be crossing boundaries. Administrators and colleagues need to recognize danger signals in other teachers' interactions and intervene. In serious situations, reporting suspicion of child abuse may be required.

What Places You at the Highest Risk?

Teachers insufficiently trained in their roles can become too personally involved with students. This can lead to actual or alleged sexual misconduct. Ignorance of the law is no excuse! Teachers need to be informed about legal liability issues and the standards of the Ontario College of Teachers.

Unacceptable Behaviours

In general, activities which take a teacher beyond the expectations of the employer could easily qualify as boundary violations. These include

- becoming too personally involved with students - friend, confidant, surrogate parent.
- seeing students in private or non-school settings.
- writing or exchanging unofficial notes, letters or emails.

- serving as a confidant with regard to a student's decision about his or her personal issues.
- inviting students to one's home or cottage.
- having students stay overnight in one's home or cottage.
- driving individual students to or from school.
- treating one student as special-gifts, attention etc.
- being alone with a student except in an emergency
- disclosing personal or confidential information to students.
- initiating physical contact.
- keeping information from other staff or supervisors.

Tips to Avoid False Allegations...

The best way to protect yourself is to follow that old adage "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

As a teacher, ask whether you protect yourself by

- learning about the law and your liability as a teacher.
- teaching with your classroom door open.
- having another adult present when attending to the personal needs of special needs students.
- complimenting or commending students without "hugging or touching" them.
- clarifying procedures with your principal regarding potentially threatening situations such as disciplinary measures, communications with home and emergency procedures.
- getting parents' and principals' approval regarding all activities off school property.
- letting students know when they are overstepping your personal boundaries.

- seeking input from colleagues or other professionals if unsure of the appropriateness of your actions or plans.

Remember... a caring professional relationship always helps a student to learn. But this relationship has boundaries of time, place, purpose and activity. Reflect upon your own practices. Be aware but not paranoid.

Announcing

IT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU Preventing Allegations of Assault and Professional Misconduct

It Can Happen To You is a powerful and provocative documentary about unfounded allegations of both physical and sexual assault against public elementary school teachers. Four courageous women and men describe how they lived through these allegations and the impact that these events have had on their lives, and especially on their professional practices. They describe the nature of the allegations and the unrelenting investigations, which were conducted by their employers, The Children's Aid Society and the police. In some instances, criminal charges were laid.

Criminal lawyer Vanora Simpson provides important advice to educators not only on preventing potential allegations but also on exactly what to do and what not to do when an allegation is made.

If you are interested in viewing this documentary or wish to arrange a workshop or presentation to accompany this film, contact Diane Balanyk-McNeil at provincial office. Telephone 1-888-838-3836 or 416-962-3836.

PRS Staff are:

Diane Balanyk-McNeil, Coordinator
Jerry DeQuetteville
Jennifer Mitchell
Sharon O'Halloran
Shauna Petrie
Susan Thede
Nancy Wannemaker
Jim White

For calls related to Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) claims or Long Term Disability, please call PRS staff Mary Bricco and Doreen Hammill.

DIANE BALANYK-MCNEIL
for ETFO'S Professional
Relations Service.



ABORIGINAL EDUCATION and *ACTION* RESEARCH



Memee Lavell with her daughter, Autumn Sky.

This article was adapted with permission from "An Aboriginal Educator's Perspective on Action Research as a Strategy for Facilitating Change in Aboriginal Education," by Meme Lavell, published in the *Ontario Action Researcher*, Volume 3, Issue 3, 2000. The full text of the article, including bibliography and references, can be found at www.nipissingu.ca/oar

Introduction

As an Aboriginal woman who has struggled for many years within the current education system, as both a student and a teacher, I have become increasingly aware of the difficulty that an overwhelming majority of Aboriginal people experience within the confines of mainstream educational institutions.

Studies of contemporary Aboriginal education point to an epidemic of low academic achievement and phenomenally high drop-out rates. In 1982, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development reported that the secondary school retention rate is 20 percent. When compared to a national average of 75 percent, these figures indicate the problematic state of Aboriginal education in Canada. This appalling situation calls for an immediate and sustained effort to change both the content and the process of education before more of our Aboriginal children are unnecessarily stricken by academic failure.

Current theories of, practices in, and attitudes towards the education of Aboriginal people have been far from successful. Perhaps action research, with its focus on the contextual nature of education and its reliance upon the lived experiences of the teachers of our children (both of which are often overlooked in more traditional forms of research) will prove to be a viable method to facilitate the necessary educational changes in our communities and classrooms. As in much of the literature, teacher research and action research are seen as synonymous and are used interchangeably in this analysis.

Action Research and Aboriginal Educators

Cochran-Smith and Lytle define action research as "systematic and intentional inquiry about teaching, learning, and schooling carried out by teachers in their own school and classroom settings."

This contextual nature of teacher research is the key. Aboriginal people recognize that no one theory can ever deal with the intricacies of diverse Aboriginal communities, schools and classrooms across the continent. Because of tribal differences, varying levels of contact and assimilation, geographic diversity, and changing social and economic structures, research on the education of Aboriginal children must focus on the realities of the individual classrooms and communities in question, rather than seek to find or create generalized rules that will apply to all First Nations. Thus action research, with its focus on the concrete situations of the individual classroom, ought to be an ideal method for gaining meaningful insight into the complexities of revitalizing Aboriginal pedagogy.

According to Elliot, action research can be viewed as a solution to the perceived division between theory and practice in more traditional forms of educational research. Because much research bases its worth on the ability to generalize about all teacher practices, it "constitutes a denial of the individual practitioners' everyday experience." Thus much theory is easily disregarded by teachers as useless, or at least irrelevant, in the real classroom situation. Furthermore, teachers feel threatened by theory because it is produced by

outsiders who "claim to be experts at generating valid knowledge about educational practices" for the masses and powerless to contribute to the body of knowledge that defines their practice.

Aboriginal people are in a similar position of powerlessness when it comes to determining what knowledge will be seen as valid in the classroom or, perhaps more importantly, whose knowledge is deemed valid in the classroom. Decisions about the content, process and organization of education for Aboriginal children have been made by outside experts based in universities or governments, far removed from the classrooms they affect. For centuries, Aboriginal children have been subjected to theories of education defined entirely by external experts including, in chronological order, religious zealots, government officials, and now educational researchers. As a result of these years of inappropriate education, Aboriginal children face the highest failure and dropout rates of any group on this continent.

Much like the teachers who have grown weary of merely implementing the educational theories of outside expert researchers, so too have the Aboriginal people become discontent with their role as subjects and consumers, rather than producers, of educational research. In an analysis of available literature on the subject, Swisher argues there is a need for Aboriginal people to become the producers of academic research in order to introduce a more accurate and more meaningful portrayal of both the historical and contemporary Aboriginal experience of education in North America.

Strieb sees journals as a way “to learn about, inquire into, collect data about, and enhance” her teaching practice.

To illustrate, Swisher points to three non-Aboriginal authors who have written over 30 articles and books on Indian education since 1985 and who are cited more often than the Aboriginal “experts from whom their experience and information was gathered.”

The legitimate contributions of a body of non-Aboriginal writers notwithstanding, Swisher contends that even when the literature is well researched, historically accurate and sensitively written (as opposed to the plethora of Eurocentric, biased, or downright prejudiced literature that has filled our libraries in the past), it is still missing the “passion from within” that can only come from an Aboriginal perspective.

A number of scholars believe that action research needs to take on a broader socially critical stance. For example, Tripp contends that teachers as action researchers must move beyond the problem-solving model of action research to questioning why something is a problem and asking what the larger societal forces are that create and maintain this problem. Only then will their action research be socially critical and have the kind of impact Tripp believes is necessary.

It is this form of socially critical action research that holds the greatest potential for Aboriginal educators and researchers, for we have long known that the problems our students face in education are not the result of inherent inferiority or cultural deprivation as some would have us believe, but symptoms (or perhaps objectives) of a system that functions to deny Aboriginal people any real power in society. Thus, any action research that hopes to make meaningful change in the education of

our Aboriginal children must begin and end with social critique.

Authors such as Welch, Orzechowska and Smieja argue for the potential of action research to give a voice to those who have previously been ignored in the process of constructing knowledge in the field of education. Specifically, they point to the minority educators who have been silenced by the “preponderance of European perspectives.”

The body of intellectual thought produced by minorities has been largely ignored in education research and therefore has had “limited influence on prevailing paradigms and ideology within the scholarly community,” Welch says. It is marginalized under labels such as multicultural studies, while “Anglo scholarship actually dominates educational practice.” Thus the importance of minority groups’ cultural knowledge and their ways of knowing are implicitly and explicitly devalued. Ideally, the inclusive dialogue and collaborative knowledge construction that are promoted by action research will allow the voices of the disempowered to be heard in a meaningful context.

Action Research Methods

Linear Sequential Process: The action research model is based on a linear sequential method of testing and processing information into knowledge.

While the action-observation-revised action continuum may be conceptualized as a spiralling process, it is still a clearly linear, sequentially organized progression towards a specific end. In contrast, many Aboriginal people think and learn in a holistic fashion, that is they perceive

the world as a whole rather than as a compilation of parts.

Trial-and-Error Methods: Many scholars agree that the action research method is based on a continual process of trial-and-error evolving in a spiral fashion towards increasingly improved ends.

Trial-and-error is not appropriate behaviour among many Aboriginal cultures, including specifically the Ojibway people. In a culture where for centuries one’s continued survival has depended upon close observation and the subsequent correct application of proven techniques, there is no room for trial-and-error learning. When resources are precious, error is seen as wasteful, unproductive and unacceptable, if not outright fatal. Even though the hunting and gathering days are effectively over, Aboriginal people are still in an extremely vulnerable position in comparison to the rest of society.

Today our most precious resource is our children, and the only hope they have for survival as Aboriginal people is education. As Aboriginal people, therefore, we are reluctant to subject our children to a continual process of trial-and-error, preferring long periods of observation and thoughtful application of historical and cultural knowledge, which may in fact have more empirical application.

Journals: Some action researchers propose the use of journals to record one’s data, insights, reflections and ideas for further research. Harris describes how her journals have informed her work by harboring questions, inviting reflections and jolting her memory. Strieb sees journals as a way “to learn about, inquire into,

collect data about, and enhance" her teaching practice. As an action researcher, she states that journal writing is the genre most compatible with her "style of writing," her "way of teaching" and most importantly, her "way of thinking"

This statement unconsciously points to the very problem that Aboriginal people may encounter with journal writing (and, by extension, with action research itself). Journal writing is compatible with a non-aboriginal way of thinking that has evolved in literate cultures but is both incompatible with and contrary to the ways of thinking that are predominant in cultures that have a strong oral tradition, history and culture.

Over the last 10,000 years, at least, Aboriginal people have practiced and perfected methods of transmitting knowledge that do not rely upon, or even involve, the written word. For example, though illiterate, my great-grandfather could recite verbatim the history of the Ojibway people in its entirety, including the relationships with the French, British and American empires and the Ojibway understanding of the attendant treaties. Thus, for most members of the Aboriginal community, not only is journal writing unfamiliar and impractical but, based on my extensive personal observation and experience, it is outright abhorrent. The Aboriginal avoidance of written communication of any kind extends beyond university essays, reports, journals, expense accounts, to personal letters, diaries, thank-you notes, and Christmas cards, in short, to anything that involves the written word.

This is not to say that Aboriginal people cannot write journals, nor does it

imply that journals would have absolutely no benefit for the Aboriginal teacher.

What we can conclude is that, for people who have maintained an oral history for thousands of years, any form of reflection and communication that relies on the written word does not allow most Aboriginal people to exercise the full potential of their intellect. Suggestions for alternative methods of data collection include the use of audio or video tape recordings, which can then be reviewed at later dates if this is necessary to the teacher's research process. Personal reflections and insights could also be mechanically recorded and later transcribed; such a method would preserve the flow of thought for future reflections and analysis.

The point is not to suggest that Aboriginal people cannot learn through, or benefit from the action research model, but rather to highlight specific aspects of the process that may conflict with traditional Aboriginal learning styles and therefore must be taken into consideration when Aboriginals, and those teaching Aboriginals, embark on action research projects. Factors such as acculturation, assimilation, education, and adoption will influence the degree of individual variance from the cultural norm of any given minority group, including Aboriginal populations.

As Ogbu and Simons suggested, "some individuals will always believe or behave differently from the dominant pattern" within their ethnic minority group, but certain behaviours apply to enough members of the minority group to form a recognizable pattern. To suggest differently would be nothing less than

racial prejudice, and is certainly not the intent of this work.

Research suggests that learning style is not genetically fixed; rather, it is constructed by the social and physical environment of the individual or cultural group and, as such, it can be altered. Whether it is preferable to adapt the action research model to meet the needs of the Aboriginal educator or to encourage Aboriginal teachers to adopt the action research model as is, and in doing so adapt their learning processes, is not something we can conclude at this stage. However, the survival of the Aboriginal modes of thought despite centuries of large-scale efforts to eradicate or assimilate Aboriginal people leads me to believe that not only is it morally preferable, it is likely more profitable to adapt the action research model to the needs of the culturally distinct educator.

Conclusion

For too long, educational theory has begun with the imposition of Eurocentric norms and then focused on supporting people in adapting to these demands rather than beginning with what Graveline calls a completely "new paradigms of knowledge." So long as we continue to focus on problems and remediation rather than on critically examining the ideological foundations that undergird the entire education system, we will never achieve any real meaningful change in our society.

Graveline further argues that the relation between white educators and Aboriginal peoples has long been one of oppression. As educators we must examine our role in maintaining this

Graveline believes that the ideal new paradigms of knowledge need to be based on Aboriginal values, perspectives and philosophies, not only to “ensure our survival as Indigenous peoples but for our very existence as humans.”

discourse, for if we are not actively opposing it, we are, in our complacency, supporting it. Theorizing the school as a political and cultural site, Graveline explains that teachers and students “produce, reinforce, recreate, resist, and transform” ideas about race, class, equality, justice and power.

While recognizing that simply using an Aboriginal teaching model in one classroom cannot overcome the realities of a racist, sexist and oppressive society, Graveline believes that the ideal new paradigms of knowledge need to be based on Aboriginal values, perspectives and philosophies, not only to “ensure our survival as Indigenous peoples but for our very existence as humans.”

Action research seems to have both the potential and the mandate to be subversive enough to make a significant contribution to the process of altering the balance of control of the educational knowledge that defines and informs the work of teachers and policy makers. Ideally, once embraced by Aboriginal scholars and adapted to suit our learning styles, action research can take on the socially critical stance that it seems to be lacking

Perhaps what is necessary, then, is an Aboriginal holistic educational perspective that looks beyond the sequence and sum of the parts to find meaning in the whole picture, i.e., the social structures that work to oppress the many for the benefit of a few. Aboriginal contributions have the potential to create a new variety of action research that may allow us to alter the course and nature of educational research in our own communities. Placing the power to construct knowledge about teaching into the hands of those who work in the field of teaching, especially in Aboriginal communities, is not just a revolutionary idea, it is a truly empowering one as well.

MEMEE LAVELL, B.Ed., M.Ed., has taught for the Wikmemikong Board of Education and is currently completing a Ph.D. on the needs, concerns and aspirations of Aboriginal secondary school students on Manitoulin Island. She also sits on the board of the Ontario Native Women's Association.

new RESOURCES

Learning Circles – Curriculum Links for Ontario Teachers grades 3-6

ETFO has created curriculum support resource material, *Learning Circles – Grades 3-6, Curriculum Links for Ontario Teachers*. This material was developed in partnership with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and is available free of charge on ETFO's website or can be ordered from shopETFO as a CD ROM.

ETFO developed this resource as a companion to INAC's teacher resource package *The Learning Circle, Classroom Activities on First Nations in Canada – Ages 8-11*. The two resources must be used together. In so doing, teachers and their students will maximize their experience using the tools, techniques and strategies outlined within an Ontario context.

While the target group for these resources is grades 3-6, these materials can be adapted to suit students in other grades, as well as classrooms outside Ontario. By using these resources, all students will benefit from participating in meaningful experiences that broaden their knowledge and understanding of First Nations in Canada.

Activities in all the grades will challenge stereotypes often associated with Aboriginal peoples. Teachers are encouraged to explore students' prior knowledge as they begin to use these

activities. Raising awareness is a long process. The activities are designed to be used throughout the year. Teachers will find numerous opportunities to observe students' progress and increase their understanding of First Nations people.

ETFO realizes that one of the many roles and responsibilities of our members is to implement the Ontario curriculum through innovative, challenging and dynamic daily programming. ETFO's *Learning Circles – Grades 3-6, Curriculum Links for Ontario Teachers* makes INAC's publication more relevant to Ontario teachers.

To use these resources, teachers must first obtain *The Learning Circle, Classroom Activities on First Nations in Canada – Ages 8-11*. This can be downloaded at no cost from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)

<<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ks>>.

This resource can also be ordered by mail at no cost from

Publications and Public Enquiries, Room 1415, 10 Wellington Street, Ottawa, ON K1A 0H4.

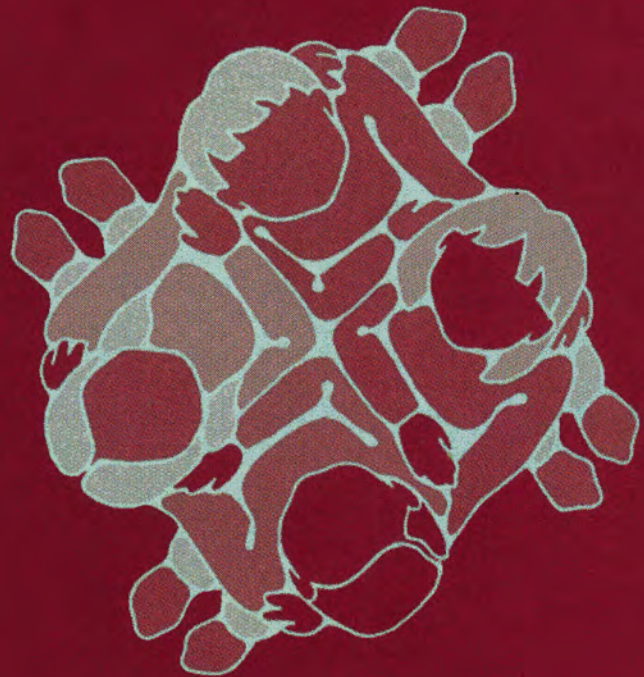
The document is available in English and French.

ETFO's *Learning Circles – Grades 3-6, Curriculum Links for Ontario Teachers*, has been organized by grade. Within each grade, units and activities have been aligned with INAC's *The Learning Circle*. For example, if grade 3 teachers want to use ETFO's Learning Circles material for Unit 1, Activity 5, they must refer to INAC's *The Learning Circle*, Unit 1, Activity 5.

Each activity in ETFO's *Learning Circles – Grades 3-6, Curriculum Links for Ontario Teachers* includes an activity synopsis; a number of relevant, grade-specific Ontario Ministry of Education curriculum

learning expectations; required materials/equipment; a time frame to observe; a methodology to follow; adaptations and extensions to consider; and assessment and evaluation strategies to implement.

Teachers will also find additional resources; a chart of grade specific Ontario curriculum learning expectations that apply; and a feedback form included in ETFO's resource material. Teachers are reminded that any of the ETFO Learning Circles material can be freely reproduced with acknowledgement to the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario.



Recertification

While all public district school boards have registered with the Ontario College of Teachers as providers of Professional Learning Program (PLP) courses, a significant number of boards are holding back from fully embracing the government program.

The College implementation of recertification is becoming increasingly bureaucratic and costly to members. The College has approved a \$35 increase in the annual membership fee. This is a 33.6 percent increase in fees to pay for recertification. Administration of the courses is also becoming increasingly onerous and costly for school boards, which are being looked to as the key source of PLP courses for teachers.

Check below to see where your school board fits in terms of their participation in the recertification program. The information is based on reports from ETFO local presidents and the Ontario College of Teachers website. It reflects each board's position as of the beginning of the 2002-2003 school year.

PLP Report Card

Level 1 – Needs Attention and Remedial Work

The following school boards have enthusiastically embraced the PLP program and have registered a wide array of courses for teachers and for principals and vice-principals.

- Durham
- Greater Essex
- Hastings and Prince Edward
- Lakehead
- Limestone*
- Ontario North East
- Toronto

Level 1+ – Needs Attention

The following boards are offering a small number of PLP courses for their teachers and principals and vice-principals.

- Algoma*
- Avon Maitland
- Keewatin-Patricia
- Peel*
- Rainbow*
- Simcoe*
- Superior-Greenstone
- Thames Valley*
- Trillium Lakelands*
- Upper Canada

** These boards have provided some PLP-free PD for their teachers.*

Level 2 – Room for Improvement

The following boards have responded positively to representations from their teacher locals by not offering PLP courses for teachers, but only for principals and vice-principals. A number of these boards have worked in partnership with their local teachers to provide PLP-free PD:

- Bluewater
- Grand Erie
- Halton
- Hamilton-Wentworth

- Kawartha Pine Ridge
- Lambton Kent
- Ottawa-Carleton
- Renfrew
- Upper Grand

Level 3 – Close to Exemplary

The following boards have responded to appeals from their teacher locals by refraining from offering any PLP courses with the College. They could reach a Level 4 by withdrawing from the College list of PLP providers.

- Near North
- Niagara
- Rainy River
- Waterloo
- York Region

Send a Message to Your Board

Contact your school board and communicate your concern or your support for the position it has taken regarding support for the government's recertification program.

Fight Recertification

- Focus your energy on your classroom responsibilities.
- Boycott courses registered with the Ontario College of Teachers as Professional Learning Program (PLP) courses.

- Continue to keep a personal record of all your professional development activities using the ETFO Professional Development Portfolio.
- Return your recertification notice to the College of Teachers to the attention of the Registrar.
- Inform the Registrar of the College of Teachers in writing that no course provider has your authorization to submit your results to the College.
- Refuse to complete the assessment portion of any PLP course that you may be required to take by your school board during the instructional day.
- Demand, in writing, that the board not forward your results to the College of the Teachers.
- Write a letter to the Minister of Education outlining your opposition to recertification.

Check the Accountability Yes/Recertification No section of the ETFO website www.etfo.ca for regular updates and new resource material. The website includes information about PLP-free professional development.

VIVIAN McCaffrey is ETFO's Government Relations Officer.



BY LILLIAN BLAKEY,
ADRIANNE FICZERE,
SUSAN GILLIES-REZO

Lesson
Plans

FIRSTS

from Aboriginal Peoples to Pioneers

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario has published a new resource *Firsts – from Aboriginal Peoples to Pioneers*. Intended to present the historical perspective of Canada's Aboriginal peoples, it is also a resource for teaching pioneer studies.

Illustrations by BILL POWLESS

FALL 2002 etfo voice A1



About Firsts

This EIFO resource complements the Ontario curriculum. It is appropriate for the heritage and citizenship strand of the grade 3 Ontario Social Studies Curriculum. It is also suitable for the heritage and citizenship strand for grade 6 – *Aboriginal Peoples and European Explorers*. The grade 3 expectations are outlined at the beginning of each focus. Grade 6 expectations are found in the Ontario Curriculum Social Studies Grades 1-6; History and Geography, Grades 7 and 8.

The resource is divided into 12 sections. Each section contains a series of learning experiences. Social Studies curriculum expectations and related curriculum expectations are identified for each focus. There are opportunities for extended learning and making home connections within the experiences, as well as suggestions for modification and assessment.

Each learning experience is outlined under the following headings

- Materials and Resources
- Multiple Intelligences Addressed
- What the Teacher Does
- Modifications and Extensions
- Assessment

The following is a brief excerpt from *Firsts*. This section has been selected because every teacher is a storyteller and because storytelling builds on the strong oral tradition of First Nations peoples in Canada.

Storytelling and the Circle

Materials and Resources

- *This Land is My Land* by George Littlechild.
- Chart paper and markers.
- Instructions on making a dream catcher.*
- The Legend of the Talking Feather.
- Mural paper and art supplies.
- Assignment for environmental problem-solving: urban vs. environment.
- Books on the habitats of waterfowl and on cities.
- The Native Stories from *Keepers of the Earth* by Michael J. Caduto and Joseph Bruchac.
- Storybooks about cultural myths.

Multiple Intelligences Addressed

- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal
- Visual Spatial
- Logical Mathematical
- Verbal Linguistic

What the Teacher Does

Discuss the importance of elders.

- Talk about the importance of elders in Aboriginal and many other cultures.
- Have children bring pictures of elders in their own lives, or they can choose a special person.
- Ask the children to write a story told to them by an elder.
- Create an “elder board” with the pictures and the stories.

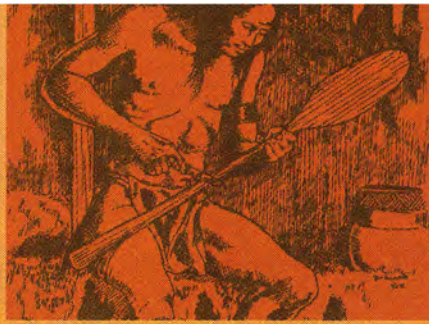
Discuss the Importance of the Circle

- Ask the children to sit in a large circle and explain that the class will form the talking circle whenever issues need to be discussed.
- Explain that the importance of the talking circle in Aboriginal cultures is to ensure that everyone is listened to with respect.
- While discussing the circle with the children, make a talking feather to be used in the talking circle.

- Read the selection from *This Land is My Land*, entitled *This Warrior Goes Dancing*, and introduce the symbol of the circle in Aboriginal culture.
- Ask the children why they think the circle is better for communication than sitting in rows or at their desks.
- Discuss the reasons why the circle is very important to Aboriginal people:
- Circle of Life; Medicine Wheel (Ojibwae Circle of Life); Talking Circle; Giving Thanks.
- Demonstrate how to make a dream catcher*. The dream catcher demonstrates the web of life and the interconnectedness of all living things.
- Set up a center where children, working in pairs, can make dream catchers.
- Give a lesson on the circle of life and record the students’ response on chart paper.
- Discuss the following Aboriginal beliefs:
 - Everything in nature is connected and all things in life are in a circle. The earth, sun, moon and planets are spheres, the cycle of days and nights (moon and sun), the cycle of seasons, the life cycle from birth to childhood to adulthood to old age to death and rebirth.
 - The circle can be broken by the actions of humans.
 - The food chain and the ecosystem.

Environmental Problem Solving

- Have the students research the habitat of waterfowls and make a mural in groups. Include: appropriate foods, rivers, lakes, marshlands, forests and a small village.
- Give each group a problem-solving activity. The area is on a migratory route for Canada geese.
- The village will be expanded so that it will be a city with tall buildings, power lines, an airport and a highway.



- Each group is responsible for one of the urban developments.
- The groups are urban planners who must design an urban plan that will cause the least harm to the geese.
- Students can draw and cut out objects that can be used on the mural.
- All groups must reach a consensus on the solution.
- The teacher then holds a discussion about the solutions in the talking circle and discusses the hazards that humans pose to nature and our responsibility to look after the earth.
- This activity is adapted from *The Learning Circle, Classroom Activities on the First Nations in Canada*, Ministry of Northern Affairs, Ottawa.

Storytelling and the Circle of Life

- In the talking circle, talk about the Aboriginal storytelling tradition which explains how all things on earth came to be.
- Read the story *The Coming of Corn* from the book *The Native Stories from Keepers of the Earth*.
- Discuss how people in many cultures, not just Aboriginal cultures, have stories to explain how things came to be in the world.
- Assign home reading and book reports of Aboriginal stories and stories from other cultures which explain natural phenomena.
- Have the students role play *The Coming of Corn* or prepare and present a puppet play.
- Tell about the three sisters, Corn, Squash and Beans in Aboriginal mythology.
- Explain that Aboriginal peoples showed European settlers how to grow these three vegetables, which were the main crops grown by Aboriginal peoples.
- Talk about other contributions of Aboriginal peoples that were shared with or adopted by the settlers.

- Put students in pairs to research books and the internet to find some of these contributions that have since been adopted by other people in the world.

Assessment

- Recount an elder's story. See the rubric for Language
- Research waterfowl habitats and establishing a conservation area. See the rubric for Science and Technology.
- Paint a mural. See the rubric for the Arts.
- Problem-solving and the environment. See rubrics for Language, Mathematics and Social Studies.
- Observation checklist for the talking circle.
- Reading stories. See the rubric for Language.
- Role play or puppet play. See the rubric for the Arts.

Modification

- Special emphasis on storybooks from the cultures of ESL students.
- Ask ESL students to share stories told to them by elders in their families.

Extensions

- Take a field trip to a museum or Aboriginal Cultural Education Centre to learn more about traditional Aboriginal ways of life, their homes, clothing, arts and tools.
- Go the Museum of Civilization web site to learn more about Aboriginal peoples. www.civilization.ca/cmc/cmce.asp.
- Invite elders from different cultures in the community to tell stories.

Contributions by Aboriginal Peoples

See the video *More Than Bows and Arrows* from the Alaska Native Film Production Co. (1977-78). Contributions include government; environment; vegetables; urban planning; architecture.

The Talking Circle

By forming a talking circle in the classroom, children can understand how Aboriginal people honoured and respected one another. A long time ago, all Aboriginal peoples used to pass on their history and learning through the oral tradition of the elders in the circle. It was very important to listen well.

To help children focus on the speaker, a talking feather or a talking stick is held by each speaker in turn. Use words such as honour, respect, values, tradition, and trust frequently.

Giving Thanks

Traditional Aboriginal people always thanked the spirit of an animal they had to kill and never killed for sport or fun. They also used every part of the animal and wasted nothing. They had great respect for all creatures.

Elders and the Community

Elders have many roles. They are the keepers of all of the accumulated knowledge of the community. They are advisers to young people. They are teachers, healers, historians, counsellors and guardians of spiritual ceremonies which are thousands of years old. One must earn the right to be an Elder, who has gifts of understanding and insight.

Importance of Listening Skills

Why was listening important to Aboriginal peoples?

- No written system of communication.
- Difference between life and death.
- Roles as witness.
- Keeper of oral history.
- Teaching patience.

The Number Four

The number four is very important to Aboriginal peoples.

- Four seasons.
- Four cycles of life (birth, childhood, adulthood, old age).
- Four directions (north, east, south, west).
- Four elements (earth, wind, fire, water).
- Four kinds of animals (those that fly, walk, swim, crawl).

Elders and Storytelling

Through myths, stories and legends, elders taught the children the beliefs and values of the people. The stories explained how things came to be and illuminated the relationship between the people, the earth and the spirit world. Stories also taught morals and values to the young. Elders hold a place of high esteem in Aboriginal cultures. At major powwows, Aboriginal war veterans are the first to enter.

Rubrics

When rubrics are mentioned in this resource, it is a reference to the achievement levels in the Ontario curriculum documents. Teachers can use the descriptions to assess students' achievement levels.

The Legend of the Talking Feather

The talking feather was usually an eagle feather. The eagle is the symbol of truth, since it is the creature who flies the highest and is closest to Creator, Gitche Manitou. The eagle is the messenger between the people and Creator. The Eagle saved people from destruction by interceding for us with the Creator.

It was a time when people had forgotten how to live in harmony with the earth and so Creator was going to destroy everything and start over. Eagle pleaded

with Creator to wait and see if Eagle could find some people who still remembered how to live in a good way. Eagle told Creator that he would fly out each morning at sunrise and if Eagle could find only one person who still remembered to live in a good way, Creator would have to spare the Earth. Eagle found a good family, who spoke the truth and lived the way people should, with respect and honour. And so Creator spared the earth.

The talking feather is used in the talking circle to keep the speaker honest, for the person who holds the feather must speak the truth. The person holding the feather is also the only one who is speaking in the circle.

How to Make a Talking Feather

Materials

- Beads
- Embroidery thread.
- A large feather. Schools may use other feathers to symbolize eagle feathers, which are rare.

Steps to Make the Feather

- Cut off a piece of embroidery thread 30 cm long
- Tie the middle of the thread around the quill of the feather.
- String some beads on one side of the thread hanging down.
- Tie the two ends of the thread together to form a loop of beads.
- The feather is decorated with beads to make it special and to indicate that it is used for a significant purpose.
- Each student could make a talking feather to take home and use in their family circle.
- Allergies and the cleanliness of the feather must be considered.

About the Authors

LILLIAN BLAKEY retired as a Consultant with the Toronto DSB.

ADRIANNE FICZERE is a learning resource teacher with the Hamilton-Wentworth DSB.

SUSAN GILLIES-REZO teaches grade 3-4 with the Hamilton-Wentworth DSB.

Visual Content Recognition

The richness of the visual content of this resource is designed to enhance the message and to facilitate student learning. ETFO would like to express sincere thanks to Aboriginal artist BILL POWLESS for the sketches used.

Firsts, from Aboriginal Peoples to Pioneers is available from shopETFO for \$23.50. *The Canadian Firsts Game* – a game in a book designed to complement *Firsts*, costs \$9.25. Taken together, the two resources are available for \$30.00 + GST. shopETFO on line at www.ETFO.ca.

While *Firsts from Aboriginal Peoples to Pioneers* does include instructions on making a dream catcher, there is no room in this *Voice* to publish them. However, some instructions can be found at <http://web.onramp.ca/rivernen/>

Resources Available

Beaver, Jan; Blakey, Lillian; Arnold, Julia. *Aboriginal Voices – Then and Now – An Integrated Program with a Focus on Social Studies and Language*. Grade 6. ETFO, 2001. www.eto.ca.

Community Role Model Resource Inventory. Thames Valley and Toronto. ETFO 2001. www.eto.ca.

Learning Circles – Grades 3-6. Curriculum Links for Ontario Teachers. ETFO 2002. www.eto.ca.

We're Erasing Prejudice for Good. A complete resource for kindergarten to grade 8. Revised 2002. www.eto.ca.

The Ministry of Indian Affairs and Northern Development's website lists a broad range of resources, including an Aboriginal Book List for Children and an annotated list of Canada's best resources for teaching First Nations studies, all available in English and French. Visit www.ainc-inac.gc.ca.

Canadian Aboriginal Festival

November 28 - December 1, 2002
SkyDome, Toronto

Thousands of elementary students and their teachers will be at Toronto's SkyDome on November 29 to attend Education Day – Aboriginal Teaching Circle. Five years ago, in response to requests from teachers, this education component became an important part of the Canadian Aboriginal Festival.

The objectives of the Education Day are to give students a positive Aboriginal experience and to instill in them a desire to learn more about Aboriginal peoples.

The day's program is planned around the grade 6 curriculum on Native studies. Although grade 6 is the median, the event has appeal for students and teachers from grades 3 to 8.

Over 30 teaching stations are mounted around the SkyDome, each of them taught by a knowledgeable Aboriginal instructor. Stations include topics such as hands-on crafts, dwellings, dancers' regalia, the Metis and more.

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, the Ontario Teachers' Federation, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada are assisting Indian Art-I-Crafts of Ontario, a non-profit Aboriginal organization, in planning this event.

The day is financed through the generosity of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Bank of Montreal and Historica and through the registration of \$7.00 per student. Without assistance from these sponsors, the registration fee would be more than double.

For more information, please visit www.canab.com or call **SHERRY RAMRATTAN SMITH** at ETFO's provincial office.



TOP: An elder talks with students in the stands at last year's Canadian Aboriginal Festival.
MIDDLE and BOTTOM: ETFO's Aboriginal Education Committee hosted a learning tent that attracted hundreds of students.

ETFO's *Back to School Afghanistan* CAMPAIGN



BRIAN PICKELL

UNICEF wants every teacher in Afghanistan to receive a School in a Box like the one displayed at ETFO'S Annual Meeting. All the money raised by ETFO members between now and the end of December 2002 will be used to help UNICEF reach this goal.

More than two decades of war have made a shambles of the education system in Afghanistan. Schools have either been small, clandestine home schools, or Taliban-approved fundamentalist schools teaching a limited curriculum to boys only. Last March marked a return of educational opportunities for all Afghans. Elementary teachers know the importance of education – education that is universal, education that includes young children, and education that includes girls and women. Education is essential for any lasting stability and peace in Afghanistan.

Back to School

While about a million and a half children were able to go

back to school in Afghanistan last March, there are still over a million children in Afghanistan who are unable to return to school because there are no schools, supplies, teachers, or it is unsafe to travel even a short distance.

ETFO/UNICEF Back to School Afghanistan

ETFO is working with UNICEF, a global charity dedicated to children, as its partner to support the rebuilding of education in Afghanistan. ETFO's campaign will run throughout the fall. During this time we are asking every local to run at least one member-focused fundraising event. These events could be held in combination with other locals or community

groups. A local, school staff, or individual members may want to expand the fundraising for Afghanistan into the schools and/or the community.

Donations

The ETFO provincial executive donated \$5,000 to the UNICEF campaign in 2001-02. In addition, a collection at ETFO's Annual Meeting raised another \$5,000. Our goal is to contribute a dollar per ETFO member to the Back to School Afghanistan campaign.

Donations should be sent directly to UNICEF, clearly labelled as part of the ETFO campaign. UNICEF will track these donations and provide us with a running total of all contributions from locals, schools, community groups,

and individuals indicated as part of the ETFO campaign.

Information

For more information on how much money is being raised, check the thermometer on the ETFO home page - www.etfo.ca. For information on your local initiative, contact your local president. For more information on UNICEF visit www.unicef.ca. Send donations to:
UNICEF Ontario
2200 Yonge Street, Suite 1100
Toronto, Ontario M4S 2C6
Attn: Cathy Memah

Annual Meeting Report

BY
CHARLOTTE MORGAN

5

Six hundred delegates and alternates from across Ontario were in Toronto August 12-15 to attend ETFO's fifth Annual Meeting. In the course of the three-day meeting (Monday afternoon to Thursday afternoon), the ETFO members debated over 100 resolutions, elected a new provincial executive, passed the federation's budget for 2002-2003 and celebrated with award recipients.

A central focus of the meeting was the acclamation of a new provincial president, Emily Noble. Noble, who has 30 years of experience as a teacher, administrator and federation leader, grew up and taught in Sault Ste. Marie. Noble succeeds Phyllis Benedict, who led the federation through its first four years of existence.

In her final address as president, delivered at the meeting's opening session, Benedict spoke of her concern for low morale in the profession. Successive governments have attacked education and undermined the work of teachers and education workers, she said. Benedict challenged delegates to leave the meeting with the determination that no one has the right to denigrate the excellence of the work done by individual teachers and education workers, or to belittle the profession. She also said that educators should be vigilant in protecting and improving collective agreements and protecting the fragile gains made on social justice, women's issues and equity.

As president of ETFO, Noble told the meeting's closing session "We have serious work ahead of us this year. Twenty-eight of our teacher locals and 19 of our occasional teacher locals are in bargaining. They are in bargaining at the same time as the government-appointed auditors are telling school boards that they have been overspending. Some boards are resisting the penny-pinching education policy of this government. Others have given in to it.

"ETFO has worked hard to bargain good contracts for our members. And we have been successful. We intend to continue. We will not let accountants or auditors tell us what our contracts should be. We will not let accountants or auditors tell us how to teach the children in our classrooms.

"Let me make it very clear that balance-sheet education policy isn't good enough for this federation. It is not good enough for our members and it certainly isn't good enough for the children of Ontario!

"The government has appointed the Education Equality Task Force to review the education funding formula. We will seize this opportunity to ensure that the voices of elementary students, elementary teachers and education workers are heard" Noble said.

Noble went on to introduce the other members of ETFO's newly elected executive:

Ruth Behnke, First Vice-President, Lambton-Kent

David Clegg, Vice-President, York Region

Kathy Clarke, Vice-President, Halton

Phyllis Benedict, OTF Table Officer/Past President, Kawartha Pine Ridge

Sharon Aloian, Niagara

Barbara Burkett, Ontario North East

Lorelei Crump, Durham

John Curtis, Toronto

Cynthia Lemon, Bluewater

Gayle Manley, Algoma

Rian McLaughlin, Hamilton-Wentworth

Dave Patterson, Hastings-Prince Edward



Gene Lewis, General Secretary, discusses a motion with Emily Noble, President.



Incoming First Vice-President Ruth Behnke, Lambton-Kent, speaks to a motion.

Following the elections, a vacancy still remained on the Executive and was filled through the process described in Bylaw 6 – “Procedure to Fill a Vacancy on the Executive.” The vacancy was filled by Hilda Watkins, Greater Essex, on September 20, 2002.

Minister Rebuffed

Early in the meeting, delegates passed a motion amending the agenda and deleting an address by Elizabeth Witmer, Minister of Education. The delegates were particularly incensed by the Minister’s refusal to engage in a question and answer session with them. The Minister had said that she had been allotted only enough time to deliver her speech and would be leaving immediately afterwards.

Opposition Parties Welcomed

Delegates warmly welcomed both Howard Hampton, leader of the Ontario New Democratic Party, and Gerard Kennedy, education critic for the Ontario Liberal Party. Both criticized the government for its failed education policy and vowed to work with teachers to improve conditions for both teaching and learning in Ontario’s schools.

Priorities Set

Delegates agreed that the federation’s priorities for 2002-2003 would be

- to protect the collective bargaining rights of all members.
- to defend publicly funded public education.
- to serve the needs of the membership.
- to provide for the professional development of members.
- to promote social justice in the areas of anti-poverty, non-violence and equity.
- to support international assistance and co-operation.

Resolutions Debated

Among the motions passed, the following are of broad interest to the membership.

Teacher, Student Testing: Delegates voted unanimously in support of once again calling on the government to repeal the recertification program outlined in the *Stability and Excellence in Education Act, 2001*.

No organization offering approved teacher recertification programs will be allowed to advertise in ETFO publications or at ETFO functions.

Delegates agreed that ETFO should advise all active members, associate members and honorary life members not to participate in the development or marking of any government-sponsored testing for students, teachers, or teacher candidates.

ETFO will be advising teacher candidates not to participate in the development of any government-sponsored testing for students, teachers or teacher candidates.



Incoming Vice-Presidents David Clegg, York Region, and Kathy Clarke, Halton, discuss an upcoming resolution.

Funding Formula: Delegates also unanimously called on the Education Equality Task Force to demonstrate its commitment to quality public education for Ontario’s students by recommending bold actions, including restoration of the \$2 billion cut in funding since 1995 and the elimination of the gap in per pupil funding between elementary and secondary students.

Ontario Teachers’ Federation: Delegates unanimously reaffirmed ETFO’s commitment to a strong, viable Ontario Teachers’ Federation.



An internet cafe set up at the Annual Meeting enables delegates to email the government on the issues of funding and recertification.

Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan: A motion reaffirming ETFO's commitment to the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) governance structure passed unanimously.

Another motion committed ETFO, through OTF, to lobby the board of the OTPP to use its power and influence as a shareholder to improve corporate practices with regard to the following screens: child labour, environment practices, employee relations, human rights, community relations and to regularly report their actions and the outcomes in a public format.

ETFO's Ethical Screen Task Force will report on the screen's finished design to the 2003 Annual Meeting.

Committee Created: The Annual Meeting created a new provincial standing committee, New Teachers. This brings the number of provincial committees to 21. For more information on ETFO committees, see the *ETFO Reference Book* in your school.

Union Support: Delegates showed strong support for other unionized workers. In a series of motions, delegates said that, both provincially and locally, ETFO should use unionized facilities for programs whenever possible. Delegates also urged that, when purchasing products, ETFO give priority to Canadian union-made goods.

Wherever possible, ETFO will refrain from using any business, corporation, or organization known to be involved in a labour dispute, to be exercising unfair labour practices or to be violating human rights.

Professional Relations: Delegates agreed that ETFO should amend its criteria for legal support to include members who require support to challenge decisions in family court, when allegations related to their duties as a member have resulted in actions being taken against the member by the Children's Aid Society or the Catholic Children's Aid Society.

Males in Elementary: ETFO will establish a long-term plan of action to encourage men to enter and remain in the teaching profession at the elementary level.

Curriculum Review: ETFO will undertake a study on the suitability of the Ontario curriculum as it relates to researched stages in child development.

Human Rights: All ETFO locals will be encouraged to establish Human Rights Committees.

All bargaining units represented by ETFO will strive vigorously to include language in their collective agreements which prevents discrimination against disabled members.

Locals will be encouraged to include, as a component of steward training, a session addressing homophobia, heterosexism, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender realities.

ETFO will encourage children's book clubs that have access to schools to have, in their publications, a greater diversity, including books and teacher resources that address lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender realities.

Back to School in Afghanistan: Cathy Memah, Director, Youth Program/Education Ontario, addressed delegates on UNICEF's Back to School, Afghanistan campaign. The campaign delivers school supplies to Afghan teachers and students. ETFO locals are being urged to hold one fundraising event this year to support the campaign. Collections at the Annual Meeting raised more than \$5,000.00 for this initiative.

In a related event, Nelofer Pazira, Canadian journalist and star of the award-winning movie *Kandahar*, was guest speaker at a special forum held on Tuesday evening Pazira, who grew up



Nelofer Pazira speaks at the forum on Afghanistan.



Delegates voted on more than 100 resolutions

and went to school in Afghanistan and Pakistan before coming to Canada, spoke of her life under the Russian occupation and her experience with the Taliban.

"Afghanistan was a forgotten world until September 11, 2001," Pazira said. "My biggest fear is that, now that Afghanistan has a new government and the war is over, it will disappear from the world map again.

"What Afghans want more than anything is to see the warlords disarmed. They are living in glory and glamour and their bodyguards have been heavily armed by western powers. By themselves, the Afghans will never be able to disarm these people.

"A visit to my old school in Kabul showed me the true extent of the Taliban's mission to destroy anything to do with knowledge. My school had been stripped to the bare walls.

"Education is so important because people must be exposed to knowledge and have choices," she said. "Replacing school buildings is expensive. In Afghanistan, schooling can continue in private homes and mosques. The Afghan people must regain their self-confidence and begin freeing themselves from reliance on non-governmental aid agencies," Pazira said.

Policies Passed: Delegates debated a wide change of amendments to existing ETFO policies and added new sections with regard to professional development in-service; instructional day; social justice and equity. For more information on ETFO policies passed at this and previous annual meetings, please see the ETFO Reference Book mailed to every ETFO steward in October.

Voices of the Union

To critical acclaim, the Annual Meeting premiered ETFO's short video, *Voices of the Union*. This video features ETFO members talking about their professional lives and their involvement with the federation. Every local president left the meeting with a copy of the video. Probably coming soon to a location near you!



Left to Right: Phyllis Benedict, President, ETFO 1998-2002, with ETFO award winners Dave Krook, Upper Grand, Newsletter Editor's Award; Rian McLaughlin, Hamilton-Wentworth, Local Website of the Year; Tracey Armstrong, Upper Grand, Outstanding Role Model for Women; Susan Gibbons, Waterloo, Occasional Teacher of the Year; Larry Miyata, Toronto, Local Leadership Award. Inset: John-Mark Cockram, Simcoe, Newsletter Editor Award

Resources Released

Throughout the meeting, ETFO also released a whole series of new resources.

- Social Studies Multi-Media Resource – an interactive CD ROM.
- *Observation*, the third in a series of kindergarten resource books, joins *Learning Through Play* and the *Kindergarten Years* on ETFO's best-seller list.
- *The Power of Story* – Vol. 1
- *Fulfilling the Promise* – Ensuring Success for Students with Special Needs
- *Firsts* – from Aboriginal People to Pioneers
- *Canadian Firsts Game* – a game in book form designed to accompany *From Aboriginal People to Pioneers*.
- LGBT Issues in Education Resource List.
- *Respecting Cultures and Honouring Differences* – A Supplement to ETFO's *We're Erasing Prejudice for Good* resource.

For more information on these and other ETFO resources, contact shopETFO at provincial office – 416-962-3836/ 1-888-838-3836 or shopETFO on line www.etfo.ca.

Awards Presented

ETFO awards offer opportunities to recognize outstanding service by federation members and others to the profession, to students and to the broader community. Many of these awards are presented locally; others are presented at the Annual Meeting. The photos of the award winners present at this Annual Meeting appear on page 31 and were announced in the ETFO Voice Summer 2002. The winners of ETFO's scholarships and bursaries are listed on page 7 of this issue.

For more information on ETFO awards, see your ETFO steward or contact Shauna Petrie at provincial office. There is still time to apply yourself or to nominate a colleague for one of the many awards and scholarships that will be offered in 2002-2003.

CHARLOTTE MORGAN is the Editor of the ETFO Voice.

Honorary Life Members: Wanda Bailey, Kerry Donnelly, Dale Ford, Randy Frith, Sandra Gaskell, George Merrett, Beverly Saskoiey (see page 9), President's Award: Mark Fallis. Humanitarian Awards: Deby Justice for Lillian Berg Educational Advocates, Dave Patterson. Women Working in Social Activism: Bev Lefrançois.

Award Winners



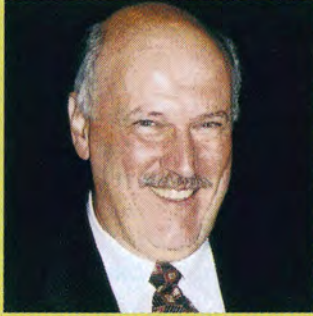
Wanda Bailey, Hamilton-Wentworth



Kerry Donnelly, Toronto



Mark Fallis, Kawartha Pine Ridge



Dale Ford, Niagara



Randy Frith, Upper Canada



Sandra Gaskell, Durham



Deby Justice, Keewatin-Patricia



Bev Lefrançois, Halton



George Merrett, Greater Essex



Dave Patterson, Hastings-Prince Edward

ETFO 2002-2003 Budget General Fund

Projected Net Revenue

REVENUE	\$46,811,064
Teachers, Occasional Teachers, ESP/PSP & Associate Members + interest	
Defense Fund	(8,966,956)
Political Action/Public Relations Fund	(1,157,027)
OTF/CTF Fees	(3,106,886)
QECO Fees	(763,788)
OFL/CLC Fees	(746,695)

NET REVENUE 32,069,713

Projected Expenditure

OTHER PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS	89,500
GOVERNANCE	1,909,981
annual, executive, & representative council meetings & released executive costs	
ETFO LOCALS	13,274,000
fee rebates to locals, local release time, training & materials for locals & stewards	
COMMITTEE, TASK FORCE & WORKSHOP MEETINGS	150,900
two meetings for each	
ASSISTANCE	337,900
awards, donations, scholarships & project overseas	
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	623,401
PD programs, teacher education & conferences	
EQUITY & WOMAN'S PROGRAMS	709,952
race relations, employment equity, anti-violence & women's programs*	
PROTECTIVE SERVICES FOR MEMBERS	2,436,351
collective bargaining, professional relations services, health & safety, pensions & legal costs	
STRATEGIC SERVICES	617,500
publication & distribution of VOICE, LINK, EXPRESS & other communications, pamphlets	
PROVINCIAL OFFICE	1,938,200
rent, maintenance, taxes, phones, equipment, printing & postage & members' records	
STAFF SALARIES & BENEFITS	9,455,955
provincial staff salaries & benefits	
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES & SUNDRIES	323,450
legal costs, consultants, insurance & auditors	
TRANSFERS TO RESTRICTED FUNDS	312,558
transferred assets to be accumulated in separate funds to meet long term goals	

TOTAL EXPENDITURE 32,179,648

Surplus (deficit) of expenditure over revenue (109,935)

*Each year, ETFO allocates 6% of the annual budget (\$1,885,051) to programs for women. Some of these programs are in the Equity & Women's Programs section but most are spread throughout the budget.

FOCUS ON EQUITY

The following are some of the provincial workshops, conferences and programs offered through the Equity and Women's Services area of ETFO. For further information on any of the programs listed or other equity initiatives please call the provincial office. For 2002-2003 the staff of the Equity and Women's Services area are John Guiney, Kathleen Loftus, Sherry Ramrattan Smith, Sharon O'Halloran and Carol Zavitz.

Throughout the year we will be highlighting both provincial and local equity and social justice initiatives and activities on the Equity pages of Voice. Members and locals are encouraged to send information about these activities.

Conferences/Workshops/Programs

...and still we rise

February 12-14, 2003. Fairmount Royal York Hotel, Toronto. ETFO's third annual conference for women. The conference includes Leadership and Personal Growth workshops, dynamic plenary speakers, an evening of Celebration of Women Through Art and Song and networking opportunities.

Breaking the Silence: Examining Violence

Against Women. Women members from across the province are trained as facilitators to deliver anti-violence workshops in their locals.

Building Coalitions Among Diverse Women

October 18-19, 2002. Kempenfelt Centre, Barrie. Women who identify themselves as First Nations, disabled, racialized and lesbian/bisexual/transgender come together to identify issues, strategize and network.

Community Role Models Resource Inventory

Each year ETFO provincial staff partner with one local to assist in the planning, development

and production of a Community Resource Inventory. The completed material becomes a resource document for both curriculum studies and local resources, including Aboriginal and racial minority speakers within the community.

Connecting Equity Issues with the Curriculum: Workshops for Student Teachers – Faculties of Education

This workshop, developed and presented by ETFO members, emphasizes the importance of training teachers to be effective diversity educators.

Crisis Intervention Training ESP/PSP

This is a professional growth experience for women ETFO members in the role of ESP/PSP. Key components include prevention, intervention and communication.

Economic Literacy Toolkit

This train-the-trainer workshop, in partnership with the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, will provide a model for teaching women about the importance of "economic literacy" in understanding the impact of economic policies on women.

Equity in the Classroom, Equity in the

Curriculum Equity Conference, May 2003. York University, Toronto. Staff in Equity and Women's Services assist in the planning and organization of this provincial conference sponsored by a coalition of equity seeking organizations and school boards geared to teachers and focusing on creating more inclusive teaching practices.

First Nations and Racialized Women's Leadership Training Program

April 3-6, 2003 ETFO Provincial Office, Toronto. This leadership experience for First Nations and Racialized Women will focus on becoming

an agent of change in an individual's area of interest. Sessions are designed to develop skills, build on participants' strengths, examine barriers to change, set strategic goals, create support networks and assess politics in individual environments.

International Women's Day

Locals are encouraged to plan events and participate in local activities with other organizations celebrating International Women's Day. International Women's Day is March 8 but may be celebrated on various days in different communities

Local Anti-Racist and Equity Committees

Staff in Equity and Women's Services assist locals in forming committees and assisting committees in equity initiatives.

Race Relations, Local Retreats

Locals are encouraged to access funding and staff assistance in planning a local networking and growth opportunity for Aboriginal and Racialized women.

Sharing Our Lives Through Stories In-Service

Writers of *The Power of Story* will facilitate workshops on how to do similar projects locally and also train members to use the document in their classrooms.

Status of Women New Chairperson Training

October 24-25, 2002. Toronto.

All Status Chair Training.

February 12-14, 2003 at *...and still we rise* conference, Toronto. This program is designed to train Status of Women chairpersons from each local at provincial leadership sessions. The program enables chairpersons to understand their role in promoting women's issues within the local and the community.

Stewards' Training in Equity Issues

These are local workshops facilitated by Equity and Women's Services staff and designed to support stewards as communicators and school-based leaders on a variety of equity and social justice topics.

"We're Erasing Prejudice for Good" workshops

Authors of the resource *We're Erasing Prejudice For Good* provide an in-service to members on the resource. School staffs, groups of schools or locals may access this in-service. The workshop provides practical, specific strategies and encouragement for the use of the kit in the classroom.

Publications

An Anti-Racist Education Perspective: Practical Tips for Teachers (Three brochures)

- *Working in the Classroom*
- *Working with Parents and Community*
- *Working with Students*

Blurred Vision: Rethinking the Ontario curriculum

Challenging Homophobia and Heterosexism

Equity and Women's Services Report to the Annual Meeting

Community Role Models Resource Inventory

- Thames Valley
- Toronto

International Women's Day poster and postcards.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Education Resource List

Respecting Cultures and Honouring Differences

The Power of Story

We're Erasing Prejudice for Good

- Complete resource (K-8, 360 lessons) or
- Individual grade packages (40 lessons)

Posters

Focus on Ability

Positive Space

Welcome to School

For more information on any of these conferences, workshops and resources, call ETFO's Equity and Women's Services staff at 416-962-3836/1-888-836-3836.

One of ETFO's objects is "to foster a climate of social justice in Ontario and continue a leadership role in such areas as anti-poverty, non-violence and equity." These are some of the programs offered in accordance with this goal.

When do you, the union member,
get the last word? When you're wearing it...

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Christine Brown for ETFO's Collective Bargaining Services

Justice in labour relations often comes with a lengthy waiting period attached. In the Hamilton-Wentworth case, justice did indeed arrive, though not until late August 2002.

There was a time, somewhere between the birth of the industrial revolution and the death of the dot.com era, when engaging in union activity could cost you your job. In parts of the world it still can. Protection against reprisals for lawful union activity was not a right which was granted – it was won. And like many rights gained under such circumstances, periodically it needs to be defended.

In Ontario, the right to engage in union activity can flow from a number of legal instruments. One of these is the collective agreement, which might set forth, for example, the union's right to post notices on a union bulletin board in the workplace, the right of a workplace steward to represent members and to sit on committees and the right of all union members to be free from harassment and discrimination for engaging in union activity.

Statutes also provide protection for union activity. Ontario's *Labour Relations Act* stipulates the right of trade unions to operate free of employer interference (of which more below). In addition, depending on the circumstances, the guarantees of freedom of expression under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* may be relevant.

Two years ago, the 2200 teachers of Hamilton-Wentworth were called upon to defend their right to engage in union activity. As many of you who have been involved in the arbitration process will know, justice in labour relations often comes with a lengthy waiting period attached. In the Hamilton-Wentworth case, justice did indeed arrive, though not until late August 2002. That was when the Ontario Labour Relations Board handed down its decision in the "Fair Deal or No Deal" union button case.

Over the course of the 2000-2001 school year – a particularly strife-filled year on the

collective bargaining front – roughly 18,000 ETFO members found themselves sporting "Fair Deal or No Deal" buttons at one point or another. Though that particular slogan was later used in Toronto, York Region, Kawartha Pine Ridge, Renfrew and Lambton Kent, it was first developed in September 2000 in connection with the Hamilton-Wentworth dispute.

The buttons were distributed in mid-October, roughly three weeks before a strike/lockout began. The intent was to help build awareness and support among the teachers for the negotiations then underway. Many members wore their buttons to work. Management, to put it mildly, took offense at the buttons, and issued an order to principals to direct teachers to remove the buttons while on board property. Should a teacher refuse, the principal was to "insist" that the button be removed; should the teacher still resist, a "written order" was to be provided, with disciplinary action to follow.

The union immediately filed a complaint that section 70 of the *Labour Relations Act* had been violated. That section reads:

No employer or employers' organization and no person acting on behalf of an employer or an employers' organization shall participate in or interfere with the formation, selection or administration of a trade union or the representation of employees by a trade union or contribute financial or other support to a trade union, but nothing in this section shall be deemed to deprive an employer of the employer's freedom to express views so long as the employer does not use coercion, intimidation, threats, promises or undue influence.

The case was heard by Christopher Albertyn, Ontario Labour Relations Board Vice-Chair. Mr. Albertyn ruled that the button issue fell within the "representation" function of the trade union, ETFO. As he wrote: "Unions need

to communicate with their members, and the members need to communicate with each other, in order to carry out collective bargaining, and to organize collective action. Communication is an integral part of what the union does, and what employees do with each other when they must make decisions affecting the collective bargaining undertaken on their behalf.”

In other words, there are two parts to this protected right to communicate. “Bargaining,” he notes, “cannot be undertaken, nor maintained, nor solidarity mobilized unless there is communication not only between the union and its members, but between the members themselves.”

The management side put forth numerous creative arguments for banning the buttons. These encompassed the unique position teachers occupy in society, case law with respect to off-duty conduct by teachers, potential disruption to the classroom, the *Education Act* and its Regulations, the management rights clause under the collective agreement, the notion that wearing the buttons somehow constituted an illegal strike, the Regulation 298 prohibition against unauthorized advertisements or announcements in schools, the daft suggestion that the button was not necessary since the union had negotiated a bulletin board clause in the collective agreement and therefore had an alternative means of communicating with its members, etc.

Was there a legitimate operational concern on the part of the employer which might justify such a drastic curtailment of an otherwise protected right to expression? As we well know, elementary schools are not just any workplace. Because of what they do for a living, teachers, both inside their classrooms and in the community, are under continual observation. The decision in this case dealt as well with the sensitive nature of the employment involved, the very public scrutiny to which teachers are

subjected, and the fact that young children are particularly susceptible to the actions and opinions of their teachers.

On the evidence placed before him, Mr. Albertyn could find nothing to indicate that the decision of teachers to wear their buttons brought about any harm to the employer’s operation of the school system. He noted that teachers who received questions about the buttons from their students replied in a professional and age-appropriate manner.

The button caused no disruption to curriculum or classrooms. There were no complaints from parents. To wit: “... I am not persuaded [the employer] had a pressing, bona fide and substantial objective. Its real objective was to avoid the union’s criticism. The reaction of the employer was not a proportional response. It was an over-reaction to the possibility of classroom disruption, which did not materialize at all.”

While this case turned on a violation of the *Labour Relations Act*, and not the collective agreement, the latter is still relevant. The Hamilton-Wentworth teachers’ collective agreement contains a prohibition against reprisals for participating in the lawful activities of the union. “Wearing the button,” Mr. Albertyn notes, “is a lawful activity of the union.”

This Ontario Labour Relations Board decision comes in the form of a “declaration.” There is no fine or other penalty attached. Nevertheless, it is an important win for the union.

There is a substantial body of case law which upholds the right of union members to wear union buttons in their workplaces, although this right is not unfettered. A button merely critical of management may pass muster, while a malicious or deliberately false one may not. Similarly, there may be circumstances, and there are cases to this effect as well, in which wearing buttons could be proven to have a significant detrimental impact upon the employer’s operations.

What is especially interesting about the Hamilton-Wentworth case, however, is that the “**Fair Deal or No Deal**” button was found to be acceptable in a highly sensitive employment setting – the elementary school. While the *Labour Relations Act* has taken significant hits under the present Tory government, particularly with respect to the right to organize, it still provides protections critical to the ability of any union to function.

This decision does not mean that some school boards will cease trying to interfere in ETFO business. It does, however, reinforce the notion that even teachers need not check their union rights at the classroom door. Labour boards, courtrooms and arbitration hearings, of course, are not the only way union members defend their rights. Any number of Hamilton-Wentworth teachers were subsequently spotted wearing buttons that said “Ask Me About My Button” and “Is This Button Okay?”

A belated happy Labour Day to all.

**FAIR DEAL
or NO DEAL**

Hamilton-Wentworth Elementary Teachers

The quality of student learning depends on the human and financial resources provided to the system, including the capacity and commitment of the teachers and educational workers.



OTF REPORT

Phyllis Benedict, President, OTF

In the spring, the Minister of Education asked Mordechai Rozanski, the President of Guelph University, to undertake a review of the funding formula for education. Dr. Rozanski has been meeting with stakeholders and holding hearing presentations from the public at large. He is expected to report sometime in November 2002.

The Ontario Teachers' Federation has been part of the stakeholder meetings, and as the President of OTF, I met with Dr. Rozanski in early October. OTF's position on the public funding of education is clear.

A functional model for the distribution of public funds for elementary and secondary education is necessary, although not sufficient in and of itself to ensure the quality of student learning. Public education is a shared public good. It is essential that a model for its funding be understandable and that the recipients be accountable if the implicit contract with Ontario's citizens is to be maintained.

The best accountability is in clear and open reporting of expenditures in ways that are understandable. Attempts to control decision making through excessive regulation often produce new distortions and other unintended and unexpected consequences. Sufficient new money must be allocated to education to provide a genuine ability for school boards to respond to local needs and public expectations. Other jurisdictions, such as Britain, that have experienced large-scale reform are also finding it necessary to increase their education investment significantly.

Funding for education must be sufficient, stable and secure. The time and resources necessary for appropriate implementation must accompany innovation and reform. There must be a shared commitment by government, education stakeholders and the public to excellence in our school system.

No model will be perfect in its design. Regular review and adjustment are required as new information becomes available, circumstances change and problems are identified. The process of review and adjustment must be shared between government and those responsible for the day-to-day operation of the schools, with significant community and stakeholder advice.

The quality of student learning depends on the human and financial resources provided to the system, including the capacity and commitment of the teachers and educational workers. It depends as well on the continued support of the larger community and on a clear and shared understanding of system standards and expectations.

Much depends on Dr. Rozanski's assessment and recommendations. The students, parents and teachers of Ontario are all awaiting his report with great anticipation.

PHYLLIS BENEDICT is the President of the Ontario Teachers' Federation, Past-President of ETFO and ETFO's OTF Table Officer.



This year's OTF Fellowship recipients, front row, left to right: Tony Andreaacci, OECTA; Carolyn Stephens, OECTA; Lise Routhier-Boudreau, AEFO; Susan Swackhammer, ETFO; Nancy Wannamaker, ETFO. Second row: Howard Golblatt, LLB. (non-member category); Paul Howard, OECTA; Jacques Gascon, AEFO.

In Puzzleland ...

LIVED
A
DEVIL...

Teachers' Trivia

... who tormented anyone who couldn't solve his fiendish puzzles like this "alphameric".

Each digit of the original multiplication sum has been consistently replaced by a letter, so that "LIVED" times "A" equals "DEVIL" (with no leading zeros). You can conquer this little 'devil' by sending in the correct numerical difference between "ALIVE" and "DEAD".

What is this difference ?

A draw will be held on January 15, 2003 of all correct answers to "In Puzzleland" received by that date. Five winners will receive an ETFO logo item. Correct answer (with explanation) and names of the winners will be published in the winter issue.

Send your answers to Charlotte Morgan at provincial office. Fax to 416-642-2424. Email cmorgan@etfo.org. Regular mail to Charlotte Morgan at the address on the masthead.

Solution to Waiting for Ages, Summer 2002 Voice

The daughters are aged 2, 6 and 6. Without knowing the number of the house next door, we are at a considerable disadvantage. We are faced with a number of different possible age combinations whose product is 72. E.g. 3,4,6; 3,3,8; 2,6,6; 2,4,9; etc. The official knows their sum because he has been next door. So, he should be able to work out which set is correct. But he doesn't. This can only mean that two or more sets come to the same total. This happens in only one case - $3+3+8=14$ and $2+6+6=14$. This is why he needs more information. The statement "My youngest daughter has a dog with a wooden leg!" appears unhelpful in separating the two sets. However, only one of the two sets, $2+6+6$, is consistent with the phrase "my youngest daughter" and this therefore eliminates the other set. Now you can see why the youngest daughter might have a dog with a wooden leg - a toy one!

Five correct answers were drawn from those received. ETFO logo items have been sent to Charlotte Martin McCaffrey, London; Brenda Potter-Moen, Kitchener; Therese Myrick, Nepean; S. Morris, Glen Williams; Krishna Rajballe, Toronto.

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Reviews

Books, and games, CD ROMS and...

Music in the Classroom

Jivin' Johnny's love of teaching and kids radiates through all three of the books reviewed. The material in the *Notebook* is a reflective look at a teacher's professional philosophy and a set of vignettes from a long teaching career. The second two books are classroom lessons based on popular music (pop, rap, country, rock, folk and blues). The author maintains that, "Songwriting and presentation of songs became important vehicles for helping us understand *who we are, how we are and why we are...*"

Individual song titles are organized under chapter headings such as "Growing Up", "Our World", "Heroes", "Sexuality", and "The Lives We Choose." Each title is followed by questions the teacher can use to encourage discussion or inspire writing. Additional songs for comparison are also listed.

The second Jukebox collection uses language arts concepts such as setting, point of view, mood, imagery, metaphor etc. as organizers.

These books form a useful reference tool for finding popular song literature on particular themes. There are no lesson plans as such, although projects are suggested. Use for English/language arts programming at the middle and high school levels. Teachers looking for a different way to engage students in this

age group would find this an attractive resource, especially as a novel entry point into a topic. The books would also be valuable as something to leave for an occasional teacher.

There is a fourth book in the series (not reviewed) called *The Classroom Teacher's Emergency Lesson Plans*. The books would be less useful to the Ontario music teacher, as the focus is on response to the content not the musical concepts.

The material here is from one musical and cultural tradition which, for all its diversity and creativity, is not a complete menu for a language arts or music classroom. The songs listed in these books are best used as a once-in-a-while experience within a much broader-based program.

★★★

Jivin' Johnny (aka John Philips), *A Teacher's Notebook: Reflections and Inspirations from the Classroom, Classroom Jukebox... for Elementary and High Schools, Classroom Jukebox 2... for Elementary and High Schools* (Midland, ON: Johnny Press, 2000 - 2001). Available from Johnny Press, Box 756, Midland, ON Canada L4R 4P4 or johnnypress.com. \$21.88 each book.

Catherine West is an elementary music/orff specialist with the Toronto DSB.

Adult Reading

Paper Shadows is a memoir about growing up in Chinatown, Vancouver, so well-shaped, so poetic, so intriguing, I read into the early morning hours, disregarding the heavy workday that awaited.

It opens, in the first three paragraphs, with a mystery, and I'm hooked.

Wayson Choy writes as he speaks, with humour and compassion, carefully shaping spaces in which things happen. He, whose name, Choy Way Sun, translates as "to reform old ways through peaceful means," lives in several worlds, concurrently. As we read, we share them.

There is good luck and there are hauntings. Choy's experiences of racial discrimination, both towards his people, and by them, his being accused of being a banana - "yellow on the outside, white in the middle." Choy presents his early childhood with overt childlike perceptions, writing, at the same time, so that we perceive the undercurrents of which the child was not really aware.

Juxtaposed with memories common to most born in the 1940s (Hopalong Cassidy, Little Black Sambo, itchy woollen clothes), are the unique impressions of one who has a Chinese Canadian cultural background, a world of Chinese Opera, "paper" brides, Gold Mountain dreams and many "uncles." (His child's perception was that "The Chinatown churches were where the dead went," and his kindergarten teacher was therefore, a ghost-lady).

He takes us back to his parents' and grandparents' times and relationships, writing with compassion and realism.

Many threads move through the story, one of which is the author's awakening to his own sexuality, another, his changing relationships with his family.

Each chapter is introduced by a relevant photograph. They are interesting because Choy is writing about real people. However, they are not really necessary to the book, which stands alone.

It's a book to read over and again, no longer for the mystery, but to re-experience the word-paintings.

Now, I look forward with great anticipation to reading Choy's Trillium Award-winning novel, *The Jade Peony*

★★★★1/2

Choy, Wayson. *Paper Shadows - A Chinatown Childhood*. Penguin books, 1999. \$18.99 US.

Patricia Elford is the President of ETFO's Renfrew Occasional Teacher Local.

Interactive CD

The year is 1663 in a problem stricken colony in New France. The fur trade has fallen on hard times, the settlements are under attack, dwindling food supplies are inadequately protected, relations with the First Peoples are tense, a power struggle exists between the trading companies and the Church over

the colony's control, and the King of France, Louis XIV demands more and more wealth from his beleaguered colony. Into this scenario, the student takes on the role of a judge at a trial to resolve the crisis and ensure the future prosperity of the colony.

Any teacher teaching grade 6 Aboriginal Peoples and European Explorers or grade 7 New France, will find this information rich, interactive CD a welcome resource. The CD contains over 30 movies which include historical re-enactments of colonial life from Canadian film archives, hundreds of images, traditional songs, arrangements of baroque composers of the 1600s and a cross reference of topics related to New France. In addition to the CD, a detailed 34-page teacher resource package gives invaluable tips on using the program to support different learning styles, characteristics, active participation, problem solving, assessment, independent study, co-operative learning study and other suggested activities. Tracking and answer sheets, screen shots and appendices further support teachers in using the program in the classroom.

★★★★1/2

Crisis in the Chateau: A Canadian Learning Adventure: New France 1534-1670. Edutech Productions and Arnold Publishing Ltd. School version includes teacher guide, student progress, student review and custom setup modules. Tel: 1-800-817-4551. www.edutechproductions.ab.ca

Marjan Glavac teaches grade 5 at Wilfrid Jury Public School, Thames Valley DSB. He is the author of *The Busy Educator's Guide To The World Wide Web 2ND Edition* and editor of *The Busy Educator's Newsletter*. He can be reached at marjan@glavac.com or <http://www.glavac.com>

Teachers' Handbook

In less than 80 pages, Jo Phenix gives a comprehensive and practical guide to teaching children how to write. She begins with the need to create the proper environment to encourage children to want to record their stories. Such areas as the materials needed and how to record story starters and ideas are included as well as specific guidelines on carrying the process from first draft to publishing.

Phenix does a good job of explaining the different types of writing and how to fit these with the purpose and audience the writing is intended for. She is careful to encourage both fiction and nonfiction writing to motivate students to learn new information as well as draw on their own creativity.

The book is easy to understand and would be an excellent resource for beginning teachers or someone who would like to start fresh. Though there are a couple of pages on assessment and comments about evaluation throughout the book, this is one area that could use more coverage.

The book passes the equity test. There are sporadic illustrations that show males and females in all roles.

The material would be most suited for grades 2 to 6, though there is useful information for younger grades also.

The book fits well with the Ontario curriculum as long as the teacher gleans what is needed for his or her grade level.

★★★★

Phenix, Jo. *The Writing Teacher's Handbook*. Pembroke Publishers. Toronto 2002.

Ruth Boughan is an occasional teacher with the Waterloo DSB.

Correction

The reviews of *My Grandpa Plays With Trains* and *Come and See My Rainbow* published in the Summer 2002 issue of *Voice* were written by Soula Aivalis, a teacher with the Toronto DSB.

In a real democracy, an election has the same importance as the punctuation mark at the end of a sentence.



CTF REPORT

Doug Willard, President, CTF

I read an *Ottawa Citizen* newspaper column on August 9, 2002, that claimed democracy didn't work because some countries elected dictators. The columnist was right about the despicable nature of these governments but wrong with his premise that holding an election proved the presence of democracy.

In a real democracy, an election has the same importance as the punctuation mark at the end of a sentence. An election in a democracy is only a preliminary indication of the will of the electorate. A true democracy is not characterized by election results but by the activities that lead up to any vote or decision.

A true democracy is one in which the individual citizen is engaged. It is identified by open discussion and debate. It is mirrored by joint decisions intended to serve the needs of all society and not a select few. Any democracy that spends time in discussion and debate and exploring their own doubts will be successful. A society preoccupied with who wins or loses the election may never discover its potential.

In a democratic society, citizens have the responsibility not just to vote, but to actively engage in the democratic process. Teachers play a crucial role in helping their students achieve a healthy scepticism and a willingness to question. A democracy is a living, breathing, evolving experiment. The questions we ask in a democracy are the oxygen that keeps it alive.

Teachers' federations help ensure that the voice of teachers is heard not just at election time but, more importantly, between elections. They also provide vehicles to help teachers and all citizens to be involved in their democracy.

Teachers and teacher federations have a responsibility, not just to today, but to the future. We cannot predict the future. However, if we play our individual and collective roles, democracy will grow and flourish. Let's keep the oxygen flowing.

"A true democracy is not characterized by election results but by the activities that lead up to any vote or decision."



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FAX: 416-642-2424
EMAIL: cbrown@etfo.org & sansara@etfo.org www.etfo.org

DECEMBER 6-7 | TORONTO
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Confident Choices: Personal Planning For Financial Security
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TEL: 416-962-3836/
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EMAIL: ssmith@etfo.org www.etfo.org

JANUARY 24-25 | PETERBOROUGH
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Regional PD Conference
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FAX: 416-642-2424
EMAIL: jguiney@etfo.org www.etfo.org

FEBRUARY 7-8 | TORONTO
ETFO Representative Council Meeting

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FEBRUARY 12-14 | TORONTO
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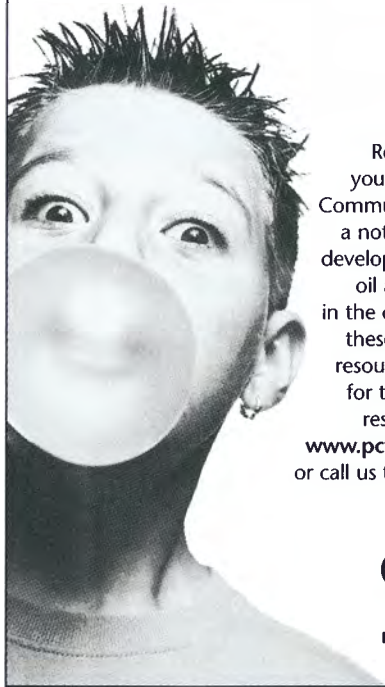


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