

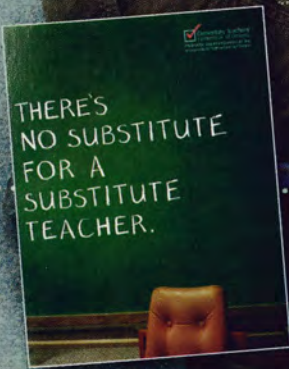


Fall 2005
Vol. 8 • No. 1.

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Supporting new teachers



Annual Meeting 2005



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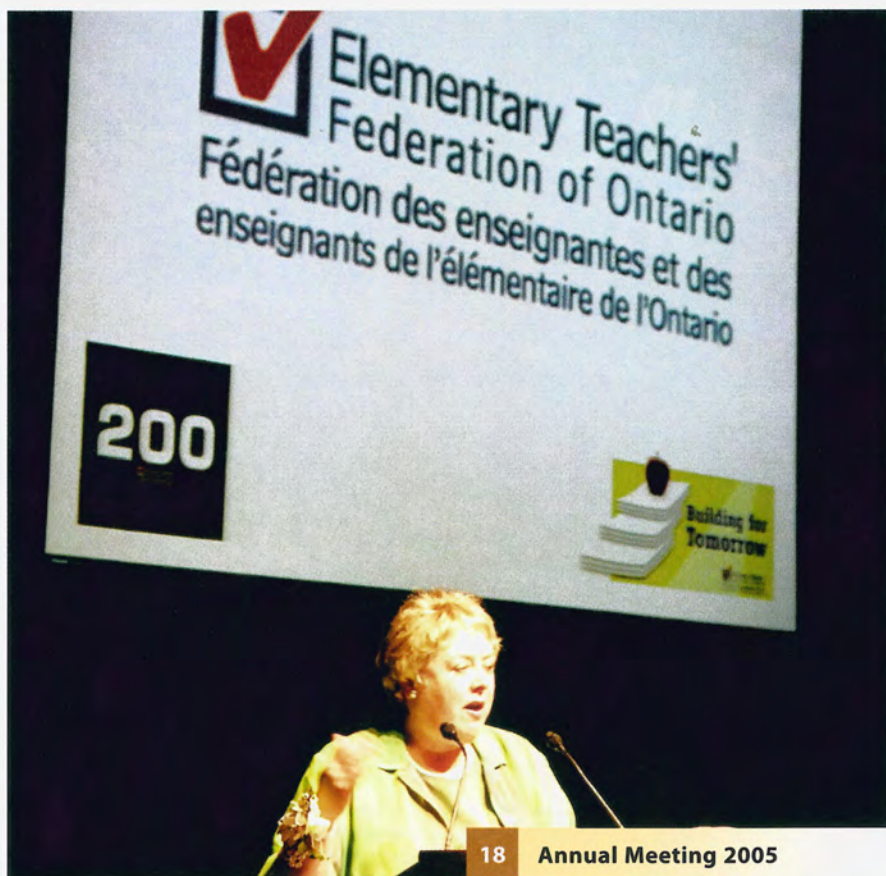
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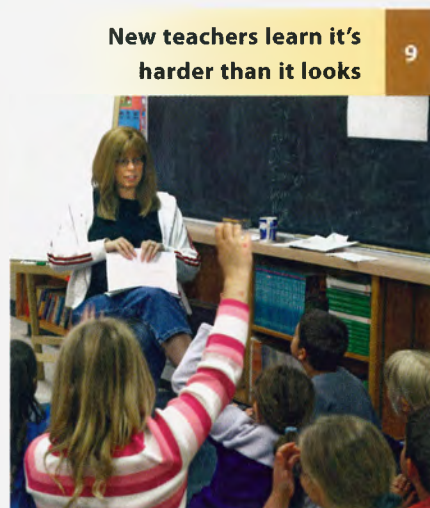
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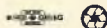
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The first day of school has come and gone, but for many of our members the firsts will continue—first parent meeting, first report cards, and first teacher appraisal.

New teachers have unique needs, and in this issue of *Voice* we take a look at some of them.

As we go to press, the Minister of Education has announced the details of a new teacher induction program. This is a victory for teacher federations. The Professional Services column (page 6) outlines the supports new teachers will receive.

Kara Smith's article presents experiences of new teachers in their own voices which reinforces the need for strong supports as teachers start their careers.

We also introduce Mario Spagnuolo, who received the first ever ETFO New Teacher Award at the 2005 Annual Meeting.

A good number of the new teachers in Ontario classrooms this year are there because of ETFO's resoundingly successful bargaining campaign last spring. Campaign 200 focused on increasing preparation time (and other improvements in working conditions) for teachers. That created space to bring more teacher-librarians, physical education, music, drama, and art specialists into Ontario schools.

This year's Annual Meeting was a celebration of Campaign 200's success. Our coverage begins on page 18.

Christine Brown's Collective Bargaining column (page 27) sums up the gains locals made, and previews the issues that will predominate in occasional teacher bargaining this fall. As president Emily Noble notes in her column, the federation is determined to duplicate the level of success achieved by teacher locals.

Also in this issue we continue a series profiling emerging ETFO leaders, people from diverse backgrounds and experience. Deb St. Amant is an activist working to promote equity.

Both new and experienced teachers may be tempted to reach for Jon Mighton's JUMP program, which has been widely promoted as a surefire fix for better math scores. Charles Wyskowski, a math consultant in York Region, takes a critical look at the program's claims.

Finally, this issue of *Voice* includes an insert that outlines ETFO's women's programs. Every year the federation reserves six per cent of its budget for programs specifically for women.

There are members who question the need for this asking "Haven't women achieved equality?" Shari Graydon, the keynote speaker at the Annual Meeting women's caucus, shows why specific support for women members continues to be important.

To all of you reading *Voice* for the first time, welcome. To everyone else, I hope that you continue to find the magazine useful and informative.


JOHANNA BRAND

PS: As always I welcome your feedback and input. If you have an idea for a story for *Voice*, send a brief e-mail outlining your idea to jbrand@etfo.org.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

There is No Substitute For a Substitute Teacher

EMILY NOBLE

President, ETFO

By the time you read this I hope that you have settled comfortably into the rhythm of the new school year. The revitalization that teachers experience each fall is an amazing thing that most workers do not have an opportunity to experience.

Similarly, each new school year brings both opportunities and challenges for your Federation. This year we will ensure that ETFO teacher members receive the full benefit of the gains achieved in local negotiations last spring. We are also determined to see significant improvements in the working conditions of ETFO occasional teacher members.

The 2004 Annual Meeting set a clear direction: every occasional teacher collective agreement will include a 'timetable of the teacher replaced' provision. It is a goal that will be met. Occasional teachers deserve the recognition, the compensation, and the working conditions that reflect the value of their contribution to the education system.

We have all heard the stories: an occasional teacher arrives at the school full of enthusiasm and captivating ideas to share with the class, only to find that the day has become a merry-go-round of disjointed assignments. Instead of following the timetable of the absent teacher, the occasional teacher is shuffled from room to room and class to class.

This type of treatment is demeaning to both students and teacher. Occasional teachers need preparation time just as much as the teacher they are replacing, so that they can be as effective as possible.

Our message throughout this round of bargaining is: "There is no substitute for a substitute teacher."

Our media campaign will feature radio and newspaper ads using the term 'substitute teacher' because it effectively captures the professional image of our members and is easily understood. We want our message to resonate, not only with our own members but also with parents, administrators, and the wider public.

Bargaining for occasional teachers is, in some ways, more complex than teacher bargaining. We have members who work regularly, members who work intermittently, and members who are on long-term assignments. Their unique needs and challenges must be met in a single collective agreement. Moreover, they all need to be respected by their employer and to have that respect demonstrated within their collective agreement.

I expect that most school boards will want to reach collective agreements and be prepared to recognize the value occasional teachers bring to their schools. Unfortunately, I anticipate that a handful of boards will not bargain appropriately and a strike will result. Hopefully, the strikes will be few; our goal is to negotiate collective agreements, not to hold strikes.

Occasional teachers need the support of all of us. The Federation will ensure that the staff and other resources necessary to get the collective agreement our members deserve are in place. But it will take more than that: the support of every ETFO member – education worker, teacher, or occasional teacher – is needed to ensure better agreements for occasional teachers.

Effective bargaining is about solidarity and supporting each other. There is no substitute for solidarity. Our success depends on the support of all our members.



FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Put The Resources Where the Students Are

GENE LEWIS

General Secretary, ETFO

Elementary teachers and their students are experiencing the benefits of a new working relationship with the provincial government. It has taken some time to get used to a Minister who makes positive comments about teachers. In recent memory there has not been a Premier forward thinking enough to seek the mantle of “Education Premier.” Even the Ministry staff, conditioned to believe otherwise, are slowly relearning that teachers, and teacher unions, have a lot to offer in the development of curriculum and education policy.

Consultation appears to be the rule as working tables and work groups are set up to wrestle with key issues like teacher induction, Ontario College of Teachers’ governance and the role of the principal. History has taught us, of course, that being consulted and being listened to are two very different things, and that the implementation of great ideas requires dedicated resources. I remain hopeful.

One nagging problem continues: the disparity in resources between the elementary and secondary panels. Sometimes elementary students are shortchanged by the provincial funding formula (the per pupil grant for elementary is significantly less than that for secondary) and at other times by poorly thought out school board decisions. The end result is the same – elementary students receive an inferior learning environment.

An example of poor board decision making is the moves by some boards to uproot and relocate grade 7 and 8 students to an under capacity high school, allowing it to stay open. This upheaval is seldom motivated by a true desire to provide intermediate students with the most appropriate learning environment, and more often by a desire to save money. The intermediate students lose but the high school stays open, sometimes at the expense of the community’s elementary school.

There are many educational reasons why teachers

and parents should be concerned about this trend. We know that young adolescents do better in small schools with close teacher contact and significant parental involvement. Grade 7 and 8 students also benefit from the leadership opportunities that come with being the oldest students in a school. Most parents prefer to have their youngsters in the less volatile milieu of a properly-resourced elementary school. These positive features make elementary schools a more effective learning environment for children in grades 7 and 8.

Sometimes boards use pilot projects as the means to an end. One board moved intermediate students into a secondary school which was under capacity, all the while insisting that the move would provide better programming for the elementary students because of the superior facilities available. Of course, if better programming truly is the goal, the answer is to put the resources where the students are.

This is an argument often heard – that locating intermediate students in a high school will give them access to more resources, such as science labs, musical equipment, and gymnasiums. Where this is the case, it is the secondary students who should be bused to a neighbouring school, and their former high school reopened as an elementary school. Any other course of action reinforces the discriminatory funding of the elementary panel.

If the relocation of intermediate students is being proposed in your school community or district school board, get your staff and your community mobilized. Contact your ETFO Local president.

The Minister and the Premier have demonstrated a genuine interest in building a strong public education system in Ontario. As with all politicians they need to hear from their constituents. Raiding elementary schools of their intermediate learners does not advance the cause of a high quality public education system. The answer, of course, is to put the resources where the students are.

■ by Wendy Matthews, Anne Rodrigue and Johanna Brand

New teachers get much-needed support

Beginning teachers need support if they are to be successful, happy and – perhaps most importantly – stay in the profession.

ETFO has been involved in designing a new, province-wide initiative to ensure they get that support.

A province-wide induction program is something ETFO has long been advocating for. This new system of supports replaces the Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test, the much-reviled teacher testing program brought in by the Mike Harris government.

Provincial government listens to teacher concerns

Education Minister Gerard Kennedy, aware of teacher opposition to meaningless testing, has been a strong supporter and key proponent of the new initiative. He assembled the Teacher Development Working Group in the spring to take a comprehensive look at teacher development. One of its first tasks was a made-in-Ontario provincial induction program.

The Minister's goal is to be able to prove that classroom teachers are qualified and competent and that the education system has the checks, balances and supports teachers need to help them increase their teaching skills and contribute to the success of students.

The working group – which includes members of all major education stakeholder groups – looked at international research, the results of focus group testing, and at induction programs that some Ontario boards already have in place.



Photos - Anne De Haas



Teacher support and local flexibility are the hallmarks of the framework that the working group developed. The induction program is meant to support teachers in their learning and development, not to punish them. There are province-wide principles and a requirement that boards report to the province, but boards retain the flexibility to design their own programs.

Basic survival skills

The framework focuses on orientation, professional development, mentoring, and teacher performance appraisal.

A successful orientation program will give new teachers knowledge of the system they work in: the policies, mission statement, beliefs, and structure of the board, as well as the role of the federation and the local. Teachers will understand what the system they work in looks like and how they can survive in it.

New teachers will be able to access professional development opportunities both during school time (that is they will be released from the classroom to pursue them) and on their own time. PD will be focused on the needs of new teachers, covering topics such as classroom management and teaching diverse students. But it will be designed to be flexible and to respond to the needs teachers themselves identify.

Mentoring, as envisioned by the working group, can take many different forms: a new teacher may be paired with an experienced teacher 'buddy'. There may be group mentoring or same grade mentoring. Mentoring can take place in person or on-line.

The new teacher program also includes a streamlined teacher performance appraisal that is more focused and reduces the number of outcomes. Again, the goal is to support new teachers and enhance their development throughout the performance appraisal process. ♡

New teacher programs are a victory for federations



Teacher federations have a long history of promoting induction and mentoring programs.

In the early 1990s, one of ETFO's predecessor organizations, the Federation of Women Teachers of Ontario, developed the Cooperative Induction Program. This partnership between the federation, a school board, and faculty of education resulted in a model mentoring program for new teachers in the Toronto area.

ETFO has long advocated for a province-wide, provincially-funded mentoring program for beginning teachers in their first two years. This position is outlined in *Ensuring High Professional Standards in Ontario Education – A Response to Teacher Testing* (1999).

In 2002, ETFO published *Professional Beginnings: An Induction Resource Guide*. This book has received wide acclaim as a practical and comprehensive guide for local federation leaders and district school boards to use as they work together to initiate new support programs for beginning teachers or enhance existing ones.

ETFO provided workshops for chairs of local new teacher committees to help them take the lead in implementing the ideas in this resource.

Niagara success story

Across the province there is concern about the number of new teachers leaving the profession. The attrition rate is estimated to be 30 per cent.

Not so in Niagara. That board's attrition rate for new teachers is a minuscule 0.5 per cent.

Sharon Aloian, ETFO Niagara local president attributes this success (in part) to the new teacher induction program that has been in place for the past five years. The program is the result of a successful collaboration between the federation, the board's curriculum department, principals, and senior administrators, Aloian says.

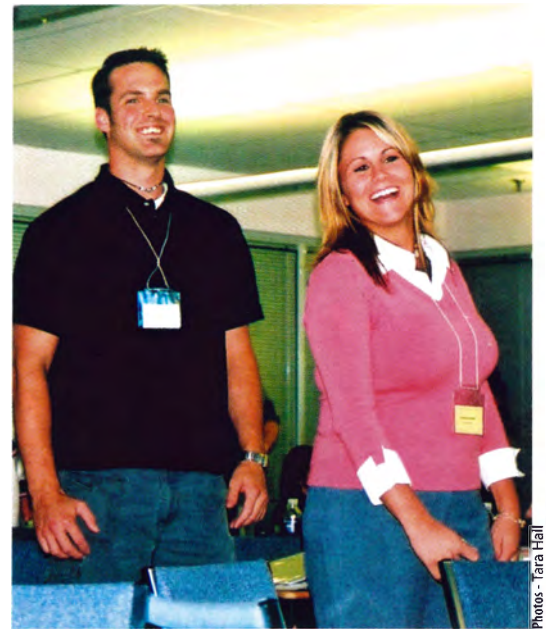
The program began as a federation initiative. "In 2000 we had an influx of new teachers that we hadn't seen before. I felt we needed to connect with new teachers and that it was important for them to understand what the role of the federation is, especially given the political climate at the time," Aloian said. "The phone calls we got showed they needed support emotionally, socially, and intellectually."

At the same time the board's curriculum department was offering new teacher training.

"We approached the superintendent to build a partnership, to focus on building a team."

That partnership has flourished into a full development program for about 120 new teachers and long term occasional teachers.

Kathy Thompson, consultant for staff development and early years, has worked with Aloian in developing the program. Two years ago a board superintendent, working with school principals, began a mentoring pilot project in which two partner teachers mentor a group of teachers in the same division. The mentoring and induction programs were joined to ensure coordination. Last year, the mentoring program went board wide. "It got rave reviews," Aloian said.



The Niagara board became a Ministry of Education demonstration site for teacher development and received additional funds that allowed (among other supports) for the addition of a third component – classroom visits. New teachers are released from their classroom duties so that they can observe experienced teachers in the classroom.


There are a total of seven training sessions throughout the school year. Their focus is the development of learning communities in the classroom, with colleagues, and in the broader community.

The learning communities concept emphasizes the importance of relationships for effective learning. "We don't ignore curriculum," Thompson said, "but we've learned from research and from experience that relationships are at the heart of effective learning."

That includes the teacher's relationships with students, with colleagues and with parents.

One session focuses on demonstrating how to communicate effectively with parents in the 15-minute time block they have for parent-teacher interviews.

Aloian credits the program with building a connection with members that was critically important during bargaining and work-to-rule this past spring. "The goodwill created toward the federation built a level of trust and support that helped us be successful."

For more information on the Niagara program contact: Sharon Aloian, pres@etfoniagara.com. 





New teachers learn it's harder than it looks

■ edited by **Kara Smith**

"I had no idea how much work teaching was!"

Last September, 250 pre-service language arts teachers at the University of Windsor entered classrooms in South-western Ontario to teach for the first time. Having only experienced teaching from a student's perspective, they were shocked to find out how much work and preparation actually went into a single day of teaching!

What follows is a summary of their experiences.

- *I remember being excited to learn as a student. I don't think I ever misbehaved. I was so surprised when my students just sat there; they didn't want to listen to me. (laughs) Somehow, I thought that students would be motivated to do their work to get marks. I thought that they would all try really hard just for a 'Level 4' (because I remember marks meaning everything to me). But that just wasn't the case. Most of my students seemed okay with a '2' or a '3'.*
 - *I had to learn how to be more creative, how to somehow make the learning intriguing and relevant to their world. Being creative seemed to be a major key in getting them motivated. Activities such as shared reading, writing, acting out skits, and illustrating a favourite story were creative alternatives to simply reading aloud from a text. Playing various motivational games with students for points or rewards that varied from bonus marks, stickers, candy, to month-end movie parties worked, but to have this amount of creativity on a daily basis, whew! I was so tired by the end of the day!*
 - *Classroom routines had to be followed. My students really craved routine. If I stepped out of the schedule once, or changed a rule, I had chaos on my hands. The routine they would follow – me, I don't think so. Whatever happens in that first week of September was so critical to the way the class continued for the rest of the year.*
 - *I had to be organized and prepared every single morning before I began. How to deal with behavioural problems and motivate the students to actively participate in the class at the same time was one of my biggest stumbling blocks.*
- Every night, I would spend more and more time organizing every detail of the lesson, because once the bell went, I was 'on', and then, I didn't even have time to go to the bathroom, let alone plan or re-think my lesson. That's something my associate could do really well – think on her feet. She could always switch directions and try something new if the lesson wasn't working. And it worked for her! All I could do was ask the students to keep going, keep on top of them, and survive. I didn't have any back-up plans, all I had was the one I had stayed up preparing until 2 a.m. the night before.*
- *Coming from another country, I didn't realize how important it was to know these names. Tiffany, Joelle, Kristy, Madison – I had never heard of these names! I didn't know how to pronounce them, and it was so hard for me to remember all these strange words. Knowing their names seemed to give me a lot more control in front of the classroom. There's a lot in a name.*
 - *I had to practice teach in high school as well. High school was so much easier to teach than elementary. I only had two different classes, repeated twice, but still in the same subject area. In elementary, teaching science, math, language arts, history, geography, and sometimes music or physical education was a lot of work, especially when I didn't know the subject area. Some days, I felt like I was only a couple of steps ahead of what the students themselves were learning! I was learning right along with them. But isn't that what Oscar Hammerstein said in The King and I: "If you teach, by your pupils you will be taught!" ♥*

.....
Kara Smith is a faculty member at the University of Windsor.



New Teacher Award

Mario Spagnuolo is the first recipient of the ETFO award for new teachers, an award established by Annual Meeting delegates last year.

While presenting the New Teacher Award to Mario Spagnuolo, ETFO President Emily Noble noted that he has demonstrated all the qualities the award recognizes: he is known as an excellent teacher, participates in extra curricular activities with students, and is active in the school community and in his ETFO local.

“Most of the members of ETFO don’t accomplish this within their entire careers; it is incredible that Mario has done so within his first four years!” Noble said.

Spagnuolo, a teacher at Maplewood Public School in Essex, attributes his achievement to teamwork and support from his colleagues, locally and provincially.” I think that’s what keeps me going – the connections and friendships you make in the federation,” he said.

Spagnuolo became active in the federation in his second month of teaching. He has worked on several committees in his local, and is a member of the local executive and the

collective bargaining committee table team. He was one of three recipients of the ETFO Website of the Year Award for his work on the local’s website.

The experience of being a young teacher and a member of the table team continues to amaze Spagnuolo. “Here I was, a teacher of two years, going into schools and trying to gain the confidence of members of all ages and experience to support the strike vote,” Spagnuolo said. He was challenged and put on the spot several times but managed, thanks to support and mentoring from ETFO leaders. “You learn that you can make a difference.”

Spagnuolo believes new teachers must get involved with the federation. “You have to expand your horizons beyond the classroom by making contacts which connect you to others. You reach out to equity-seeking groups and social groups. In doing that, you improve your classroom work by learning about your rights and responsibilities as a teacher and you grow as an individual and a human being,” he says.

What motivates Spagnuolo is the knowledge that a teacher affects countless lives. “It is overwhelming. Many teachers do not realise the impact they have till a former student comes back to tell them. That is the rewarding thing, that’s the drive.”

GET CONNECTED

Here is a list of websites recommended for new teachers by ETFO staff.

Your federation

- ▶ [etfo.ca](#)>Survive and thrive – specifically for teachers in their first five years
- ▶ [etfo.ca](#)>Professional relations – information about a variety of professional issues
- ▶ [etfo.ca](#)>Professional development – for courses, workshops and curriculum
- ▶ [otip.com](#) – pension information
- ▶ [ctf-fce.ca](#) – Canadian Teachers’ Federation
- ▶ [otffeo.on.ca](#) – Ontario Teachers’ Federation

Curriculum

- ▶ [ascd.com](#) – the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- ▶ [ophea.net](#) – the Ontario Physical Health Education Association; physical health activities and teacher resources
- ▶ [oaje.org](#) – The Ontario Association of Junior Educators
- ▶ [caslt.org](#) – The Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers

- ▶ [stao.ca](#) – Science Teachers’ Association of Ontario
- ▶ [nctm.org](#) – National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- ▶ [oame.on.ca](#) – Ontario Association for Mathematics Education
- ▶ [eduscapes.com](#) – a rich website of resources that integrate technology into teaching and learning
- ▶ [Readingonline.org](#) – the International Reading Association (IRA) website focuses on literacy, including visual, media and digital literacy
- ▶ [schoolnet.ca/aboriginal](#) – first peoples’ curriculum resources on Schoolnet
- ▶ [goodminds.com](#) – resources for First Nations studies
- ▶ [coolmath4kids.com](#) – An amusement park of math and more – especially designed for kids
- ▶ <http://nlvm.usu.edu/en/nav/vlibrary.html> – The National Library of Virtual Manipulatives for Interactive Mathematics
- ▶ [mathforum.org](#) – math resources, materials, activities

- ▶ [mysciencesite.com](#) – specifically for grade 6 and 8 science
- ▶ [ontariosciencecentre.ca](#) – interactive games, science experiments, quirky questions column; new and interesting science topics

Diversity issues

- ▶ [mediawatch.ca](#) – media portrayal of women and girls
- ▶ [pflag.ca](#) – deals with sexual orientation and gender identity issues from a family perspective
- ▶ [unicef.ca](#) – UNICEF is a UN agency advocating for children’s rights

Government

- ▶ [edu.gov.on.ca](#) – the Ontario Ministry of Education
- ▶ [schoolnet.ca](#) – resources from the government of Canada
- ▶ [on.ec.gc.ca/kids_e.html](#) – Environment Canada kids pages for students and teachers



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It **is** possible to manage impossible people



■ by **Vitusha Oberoi**

How does a teacher differentiate between constructive criticism from her principal and browbeating aimed at harassing her? What are the warning signals she should look out for as she deals with over-protective parents? When does a student's interest in class degenerate into disruptive behaviour? In short, when does the behaviour of principals, parents and students amount to bullying, and what can the teacher do to protect herself?

If students perceive a teacher as weak, or negative, or condescending, or disrespectful to them, they feel they can bully her.

Facilitators at the ETFO workshop, *It is Your Dignity: Managing Impossible People*, tackled these questions and more.

"Often teachers are expert at dealing with bullying among children, but when it comes to getting bullied themselves, they don't know how to handle that," said Victoria Reaume, lawyer and ETFO counsel. Her goal as a conference facilitator was to help participants to understand what constitutes bullying and what are their options if faced with it.

While teachers should be aware of their rights, it is equally important for them to be aware of their responsibilities, Reaume said. "They should remember that they are operating in an environment where they have responsibilities certainly to their class, but also to their colleagues, and to the system in general. They also have a responsibility to try and have a reasonable dialogue if these things happen, to ask questions, to figure

out a way of dealing with the situation, and to behave professionally."

ETFO President Emily Noble applauded the conference's goals: "This is the first conference that I have seen which takes the philosophical and puts it down to the practical. She pointed out that previous conferences tended to operate on a philosophical level.

"What can teachers and a classroom do? How can they work in an environment conducive to learning? This is very practical and very useful. It gives teachers some practical tools to deal with their work situation. While this is the first workshop on bullying, I hope that it will be the first of many."

Reaume warned the 45 participants that harassment can often be a matter of perception. "All of us find it difficult to take in criticism.

"And, a collective agreement can't protect you from a bad boss. You can't make someone who is a bad boss into a better boss through a grievance," she said.

"Our first approach on a harassment issue is to try and resolve it without going forward on a grievance because most often people just want a resolution to their problem. We think the legal process is one which people are reluctant to use. In many cases they are intimidated by it. That is a difficult hurdle to overcome," Reaume said.

Conference facilitators explored what is it that students see in a teacher which lets them treat her with disrespect. Facilitator Joanne Myers, who surveyed a large section of students, said students targeted certain common traits.

"Students like a teacher who knows the curriculum, has a sense of humour, who looks confident. If they perceive a teacher as weak, or negative, or condescending, or disrespectful to them, they feel they can bully her," Myers said. She also outlined instructional strategies that teachers can use to show the students that they are organised, in control, and have the power to run the classroom. **V**

.....
Vitusha Oberoi is an ETFO staff member and freelance writer.

Workshop offers skills and support

Emily Puddicombe has been teaching for only four years. Yet, she has seen enough bullying to want to find strategies to handle the problem, or as she puts it, “just cope with it.”

“There are students if you mark their work as B or B minus, or if their grades drop, you are certain to find their angry parents at your doorstep. Whenever I look at the work of these students, I honestly go over it six to seven times just to make sure that it is so perfectly graded that there is no margin for error.



“It is so very wrong to feel that you have these parents at the back of your mind all the time. That is why I took this workshop, to learn strategies and to basically just cope with it,” Puddicombe said.

“One parent who had a reputation for bullying teachers went to the principal over something she absolutely misunderstood. Then she came to me and used abusive and foul language. She threatened me, telling me how her husband was so angry that he wanted to come and damage my car,” Puddicombe recalls.

She took the matter to her principal who supported her, causing the parent to backtrack. But the incident left her extremely worried about the extent to which a parent can go to express anger.

Puddicombe believes teachers should be better trained at the faculties of education to handle such problems. “We are often told that there are things we won’t understand because we are not parents ourselves. We need to be taught skills to deal with people who are older than we are and how to come across as professionals and get respect.

“A conference like *It is Your Dignity! Managing Impossible People* makes you realize that you are not alone. At first, you feel it is you and that you are doing something wrong, that you have to do more and more to become better. But here, just talking to other teachers and teachers who have been teaching for a longer time, you understand the problem better. It helps to share their experiences, to learn what they have gone through, and to get their advice. I intend on going back to work and sharing this information with my colleagues.”

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ETFO PQP Part I - FALL 2005

Offered in Partnership with
York Region District School Board

DATES

SATURDAYS: October 22, 29
November 12, 26
TUESDAYS: October 18, 25
November 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
December 6

LOCATION:

Aurora High School
155 Wellington Street West
Aurora, ON L4G 2P4

Offered in Partnership with Halton
District School Board

DATES

SATURDAYS: October 22, 29
November 12, 26
WEDNESDAYS: October 19, 26
November 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
December 7

LOCATION:

Tecumseh Public School
3141 Woodward Avenue
Burlington, ON L7N 2M3

Building a Stronger Federation



■ by Shari Graydon

How do you demonstrate the power of language to students weaned on a diet of dramatic and engaging visuals? I have them close their eyes and picture an image to accompany the famous words of British poet, Robert Browning: “A man’s reach should exceed his grasp, or what’s a heaven for?”

Often repeated as an encouragement for people to strive beyond what seems possible, the words almost always inspire visions of a guy in a suit climbing a corporate ladder, or of Michelangelo’s Adam reaching out to God on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Rarely does anyone picture a woman.

This shouldn’t be surprising. Research has found that we tend to be quite literal in response to language. When we hear specific words like “statesman” or “mankind”, the visual reference created in our minds is invariably male.¹

Words are both a cause of inadvertent gender-based assumptions, and symptoms of a much larger cultural and historical context. In this case, the context includes centuries of men wielding power, passing laws, and making decisions that governed every aspect of women’s lives: who they married, whether they were educated, and what control, if any, they had over their bodies.

Much progress has been made over the past hundred years. Many women’s lives today – as principals, union leaders, politicians and CEOs – would be unrecognizable to our 19th century sisters.

Yet, despite the gains, remnants of entrenched and naturalized power relations remain. Men’s conversational style and managerial approach are still seen as normative – the standard by which women are measured and so often found wanting.

Educators have greater opportunities than most to help change this. Well-known linguist Deborah Tannen has documented the way in which gender socialization in childhood continues to play out in adult communication styles. While many boys learn to speak up with authority and promote their status, girls are still more often encouraged to ask questions, build consensus, and defer to others.²

One result of this continues to be that journalists seeking to provide gender balance in their stories find that their male contacts are willing to comment on issues even outside their particular area of expertise. In contrast, women often decline to be interviewed even when they are certified experts on a topic. This predictably limits their profile and opportunities.

Elementary students see women in positions of authority every day. (Indeed, women dominate ETFO in numbers – if not in political leadership – precisely because the teaching of young children has traditionally been seen as easier, less important – indeed, less valuable – than the teaching of older students and adults.)

But this role modeling is countered many times over by other messages. In the reading of



Shari Graydon is an educator, the author of two media literacy books for kids, and the president of the Women’s Future Fund.

news and movie trailers alike, masculine tone and timbre constitutes “the voice of authority”. And newsmakers – disproportionately politicians and business executives – are also overwhelmingly male. Indeed, research has found that a woman is more likely to make the news as the victim of a crime than in any other capacity.³

When women *do* make the front page, it’s often as much because of their physical appearance – their status as a model or actor – than for any other reason. How they are depicted is also influenced by unconscious sexism. Female athletes, musicians, and politicians all are more likely to be described in terms of their clothing, appearance, or relationships than their male counterparts.

Clearly, even with enormous progress and special programs within institutions, inequities remain. And women’s lives will always be affected by circumstances – such as pregnancy, childbirth, and breast-feeding – that don’t affect men. Women also remain the primary caregivers for both children and aging parents. They put in more hours at home than male colleagues. And they are more likely to have interrupted work histories or to work part-time. Their power – financial and otherwise – suffers accordingly.

Here in Canada, home of a politically progressive culture, only 21 per cent of our members of parliament are female, placing us a dismal 33rd among nations around the world.

The complex barriers that give rise to such numbers exist in virtually every institution, including ETFO. Although men make up a minority of ETFO members, they are empowered in a way that many of their female colleagues are not. At ETFO meetings women are less likely than men to ask questions from the floor, to move or second a motion, to raise a point of order, or to run for office.⁴

As a result, male ETFO members hold a disproportionate number of leadership positions. The allocation of six per cent of the organization’s budget for special programs, training and resources for women and other equity seeking groups has in no way limited their opportunities. Without such programs, the imbalance would likely be even more dramatic.

ETFO joins many other labour organizations in allocating funds for progressive equity work. Even the profit-driven private sector recognizes that economic prosperity is dependent on enhancing equity. Corporations of all sizes are now investing in measures to increase their organizational effectiveness by integrating the unique perspectives and skills of the entire talent pool, including *all* traditionally disenfranchised groups: women, minorities, aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, and those who are lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender.⁵

Edmund Burke once wrote: “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” By designating a small portion of its budget to equity programs, ETFO demonstrates its awareness that “good women” need to be included in leadership positions at all levels.

We all look forward to the day when “women’s programs” are no longer necessary – when society has achieved not just legislative equality, but substantive equity that effectively supports members of all disadvantaged groups in participating fully and actively despite the obstacles.

In the meantime, ETFO has an opportunity to continue leading the way, to “reach beyond [its] grasp”: To challenge inequities, to change attitudes, and to empower the girls and boys, women and men, who are touched by what you do, every day. ♥



Resources:

1. Parks, Janet B. and Mary Ann Robertson. *Development and Validation of an Instrument to Measure Attitudes Toward Sexist/Nonsexist Language, Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*, March 2000.
2. Tannen, Deborah. *Talking from 9 to 5 – Women and Men in the Workplace: Language, Sex and Power*, Avon Books, 1995; and Gilligan, Carol. *In a Different Voice - Psychological Theory and Women’s Development*, Harvard University Press, 1982.
3. MediaWatch, *Global Media Monitoring Project – Women’s Participation in the News*, 1995.
4. ETFO *Equity and Women’s Services Report to the Annual General Meeting*, 2004, pp. 14-15.
5. Lockwood, Nancy R. *Workplace diversity: leveraging the power of difference for competitive advantage*, HR Magazine, June 2005.

Deb St. Amant humbly describes herself as “the least political person ever” but within a few minutes of listening to her passionate assertion of her commitment to social justice and Aboriginal causes, it is obvious that beneath her quiet, respectful manner lie strong, clear political convictions.

Stepping forward to promote equity



■ by Janice Rogers

Deb St. Amant holds the distinction of being the first equity chairperson for the Kawartha Pine Ridge local. When they formed the committee earlier this year, the other members and local president Mark Fallis thought that with her experience in equity issues she would be the most suitable chair.

Deb was born in Penetanguishene. When she was 11 her family moved to France, then later to England where her father managed the first European refrigerated factory for food. The family travelled extensively throughout Europe. Five years later they returned to Canada where Deb completed grade 13.

The St. Amant family is very close, so much so that when Deb began undergraduate studies at the University of Western Ontario she did not move to London alone. “Not everybody’s family moves off to university with them,” she notes. Now, she and her two teenage boys live three houses away from her parents. When Deb’s work takes her away from home, her boys are under the watchful care of their grandparents whose own experiences were more difficult than Deb’s have been.

“My mom used to hate being called “squaw” and tried to hide the fact that she was Aboriginal. I’ve never experienced that in Canada. No one has ever called me names. When I was in Australia, some people there were excited to meet an Aboriginal Canadian and others called me Boong...a derogatory name for Aborigines. People everywhere are afraid of anybody the least bit different.”

The oldest of four children, Deb says she was a teacher from the day she was born. She graduated from Queen’s University Faculty of Education in 1982 and has taught core French to grades 1 through 9 and extended French to grades 5 to 8. She is a certified level 3 soccer coach.

She is also a self-taught artist. A copy of one of her paintings, *Mother and Child*, was included in

Janice Rogers is an ETFO staff member and freelance writer. This is the second in a series highlighting ETFO leaders.

the kits given to conference delegates at the 2004 Trent University conference, *Repositioning Native Women in Canadian History: Enhancing Curriculum*, a conference she helped plan.

Deb did not become actively involved in ETFO until 2001 when she took part in a focus group about Aboriginal members. Until then she had paid little attention to the federation as she considered it to be the domain of politicians – those with the power and the access to influence decisions and policy. She believed that as a simple elementary teacher, she was far removed from that milieu.

This false perception of ETFO as an entity distant and separate from the individual teacher is widely shared amongst members, Deb believes, and is important to change so that new and diverse voices feel encouraged to become involved. She says that in fact ETFO makes it easy for any member to do what she is doing.

Deb is now member of the Aboriginal education committee. Last spring, she successfully co-ordinated a race relations retreat involving members from the Kawartha-Pine Ridge, Durham, and Peel locals. She is proud that a young Iqaluit man who was the fire-keeper at the race relations retreat told her he had decided to become a teacher because he was inspired by the experience of being among such a dynamic group of teachers.



Deb is a presenter at ETFO teaching circle and equity workshops. This summer the Canadian Labour Congress invited Deb to be a presenter at its equity workshop. She has also been working for the Toronto District School Board and the Ministry of Education as a member of the team writing the social studies curriculum, which includes Aboriginal education.

A shy person by nature, it was her involvement in ETFO activities that helped her discover the confidence to speak and present her ideas publicly, Deb says. At the 2005 Annual Meeting she spoke to motions and responded to issues that in her opinion affect every ETFO member. She believes it is impossible to stand up for Aboriginal rights and not stand up for the rights of other marginalized groups. “The refusal to recognize one group of people creates the conditions for the same treatment of others. Aboriginal teachers need to understand the importance of all aspects of equity education.”

She was disappointed that resolution 5 – which would have given designated seats on the executive to minority group members – did not pass. “Many Aboriginal, racial minority, LGBT, and members with a disability will not run for executive ... the majority of voting members are not within these groups. That’s why they need to have designated seats. We all want to see ourselves reflected in our executive.”

“This is the third time this resolution has been tabled. Each time the vote is closer. Maybe next time delegations will have more equity-minded individuals who will vote in favour of designated seats. Maybe the locals will encourage people from these four groups to be a part of their delegations.

“Maybe I dream in colour...but at the next Annual Meeting I’ll be asking the candidates to define equity and to tell me what they have done on a personal level to promote it.” ♡

“Maybe I dream in colour...but at the next Annual Meeting I’ll be asking the candidates to define equity and to tell me what they have done on a personal level to promote it.”

Annual Meeting

 Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario
Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'élémentaire de l'Ontario

 Building for Tomorrow

Photos - Nir Barakiet



ETFO celebrates bargaining success

The 2005 ETFO Annual Meeting was a celebration of the bargaining successes of the past year and a look forward to the challenges teachers face as professionals.

“This has been an incredibly successful year for ETFO – in our bargaining, in our programs, in our relationships, and in our growing stature as a labour union,” ETFO President Emily Noble told the 550 meeting delegates in her opening address.

“We set out to achieve 200 minutes of preparation time, and on that journey became recognized as the leader in teacher bargaining in Ontario and one of the foremost labour unions in this country.

“This is the year that elementary teachers earned respect.”

She added, “Now is the time to set our sights higher, on an even tougher challenge... It is time for our members to reclaim control of their classrooms.... It is time for teachers to dare to dream.”



ETFO priorities for 2005-2006

Annual Meeting delegates passed the following priorities for 2005-06:

- 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.
- To promote the care and protection of the environment.



“Over the last decade the professionalism of teachers has been challenged by the push to standardize teaching and testing, and remake schools in a corporate image,” Noble said. These practices are often in conflict with what teachers know is in their students’ best interests.

“It is time for the true professionals, who understand best the educational needs of elementary students, to determine the learning strategies that take place in their classrooms.

“We have led a revival in public support for public education. It is time for our members to also lead the province and the country in teacher professionalism. As a union we will increase the focus on teachers as self-directed professionals.”

Noble outlined the gains achieved in the 2004-2008 teacher collective agreements which included 200 minutes of preparation time, caps on

supervision time, and an individual professional development fund for each teacher. Locals were also able to bargain important improvements in other areas. (For more, see the collective bargaining column on page 27.)

Noble also acknowledged the importance of achieving gains in occasional teacher collective agreements, in particular the ‘timetable of teacher replaced’ provision. This would give occasional teachers only the duties of the teacher they are replacing, not the burden of additional supervision time and other work that a classroom teacher would not usually do.

“It is time for our members to reclaim control of their classrooms.”



Respect returning: Kennedy

Elementary teachers play a key role in reducing Ontario's high school drop out rate, Education Minister Gerard Kennedy told delegates attending ETFO's Annual Meeting.

He challenged every elementary teacher to "reach out to one more struggling student", a goal he feels is achievable "if we're able to support you; if you're able to tell us what resources are required and if schools, principals, and staff teams are able to tell us what strategies will work."

With the introductions of the new curriculum, the drop out rate in high school increased by 10 percent to 32 per cent or 14,000 students, Kennedy said.

The job of preventing those drop outs "needs to be done in elementary," he said, adding that "the elementary panel has the optimism and the possibility to provide individual intervention."

In his speech Kennedy dwelt on the partnerships that are needed to improve public education in the province. He cited ETFO leaders for being the first to agree to negotiate a provincial framework in collective bargaining. "You are part of an organization willing to take on new territory and that's what education requires."

He noted that partnerships between government and educators, including federation representatives, are continuing at the education partnership table and the working tables that are looking at teacher development, literacy and numeracy, special education, and student success to age 18.

There's a new era of respect between teachers and government, Kennedy said, and that respect is beginning to spread into the community at large. "It's okay now to admit you're a teacher; and you are doing a damn fine job."

He further challenged ETFO leaders to become vocal in their communities in talking about what is going on in education, "about the good things that are happening and what is needed in the future."

Kennedy received enthusiastic response from delegates at several points during his address. Nevertheless, delegates asked pointed questions about closing the gap in funding between the elementary and the secondary panel, and about making the Ontario College of Teachers a truly self-governing body with a majority of working teachers on its Governing Council.

Kennedy noted that the government's promised cap on primary class size goes about half way to closing the elementary-secondary gap. He qualified his support for a teacher governed OCT by saying there is a need to depoliticize the way Governing Council members are chosen.



Emily Noble



David Clegg



Barbara Burkett



Sam Hammond

2005-2007 Provincial Executive

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Emily Noble, Algoma

First Vice-President

David Clegg, York Region

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Barbara Burkett, Ontario North East

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Rian McLaughlin, Hamilton-Wentworth OT

Sharron Raymond, Peel

Helen Victoros, Toronto



His Honour's simple steps

ETFO members can have a "tremendous impact" on improving conditions in "Canada's own third world."

That was the message delivered by Ontario's Lieutenant Governor, the Honourable James K. Bartleman, in his address to ETFO's Annual Meeting.

He challenged elementary teachers to get involved in the initiatives he has launched during his three years in office to improve conditions for Aboriginal children in Ontario's north.

The Lieutenant Governor began with a book drive. His goal was to collect 60,000 books to send to northern schools that can't afford to buy books and don't have libraries. In the end some 850,000 books were delivered to schools and friendship centres as a result of a partnership that involved the OPP, trucking and transportation companies, and his own staff.

Next, Mr. Bartleman worked with the Ontario Principals' Council and Ontario chiefs to twin Ontario native schools with schools in non-native communities an effort that resulted in more than 100 such pairings earlier this year.

The twinned schools agree to hold Aboriginal awareness days, hold a small book drive, establish pen pals among students, and develop professional relationships between teachers in the two schools. The Canadian Legion, Rotary International, and the IODE have committed their local organizations to help with fundraising.

"This is a simple concept that's of enormous benefit to children, teachers and schools. It could really change lives," Bartleman said. He spoke about two schools ten miles apart whose kids had never met (and fought when they did). Since May the schools have been holding classroom visits back and forth something that has significantly changed the relationships between the two communities.

This summer Mr. Bartleman set up five literacy camps modeled on camps established in Toronto (See the Summer 05 issue of *Voice*). He is now in discussions with ETFO to determine how that model could be expanded and how teachers and retired teachers can be recruited to work as volunteers in the camps.

Annual Meeting delegates voted to donate \$25,000 to the literacy camp initiative.

More information is available on the Lieutenant Governor's website www.lt.gov.on.ca.

Ads in schools

Many corporations look at schools and school children and see the potential for increasing sales and profits.

A 2004 Canadian Teachers' Federation survey measured the extent of commercial activity in Canadian schools.

The survey found that of Ontario elementary schools:

- 30 per cent have advertising – located primarily in hallways, cafeterias and on school supplies
- 24 per cent have an exclusive arrangement with either Coke or Pepsi
- 12 per cent provide some services or programs in partnership with a corporation or business.

For Ontario elementary school results go to www.etfo.ca ► getting involved ► privatization. For Canada wide results visit the CTF website, www.ctf-fce.ca

"This is the year that elementary teachers earned respect."

EMILY NOBLE, *ETFO President*



ETFO 2005-06 BUDGET General Fund

REVENUE	\$54,250,160
Fees from Teachers, Occasional Teachers, ESP/PSP & associate members + interest Defense Fund	(10,407,506)
Political Action/Public Relations Fund	(1,342,904)
OTF/CTF/EI Fees	(3,411,460)
QECCO Fees	(933,538)
OFL/CLC Fees	(804,796)
NET REVENUE	\$37,349,956

Projected Expenditure

OTHER PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS	\$148,900
GOVERNANCE	2,344,300
Annual, Executive, & Representative Council meetings & released executive costs	
ETFO LOCALS	15,180,700
fee rebates to locals, local release time, training & materials for locals & stewards	
COMMITTEE, TASK FORCE & WORK GROUP MEETINGS	173,700
two meetings for each	
ASSISTANCE	433,801
awards, donations, scholarships & project overseas	
EQUITY & WOMEN'S PROGRAMS	1,112,825
race relations, employment equity, anti-violence & women's programs*	
PROTECTIVE SERVICES FOR MEMBERS	2,865,451
collective bargaining, professional relations services, health & safety, pensions & legal costs	
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	1,342,031
PD programs, teacher education & conferences, publication & distribution of VOICE, LINK, EXPRESS & other communications, pamphlets	
PROVINCIAL OFFICE	2,181,400
rent, maintenance, taxes, phones, equipment, printing & postage & members' records	
STAFF SALARIES & BENEFITS	10,748,526
provincial staff salaries & benefits	
ORGANIZATIONAL SERVICES & SUNDRIES	380,700
legal costs, consultants, insurance & auditors	
TRANSFERS TO RESTRICTED FUNDS	709,768
transferred assets to be accumulated in separate funds to meet long term goals	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$37,622,102
surplus (deficit) of expenditure over revenue (\$272,146)	

* Each year, ETFO allocates 6% of the annual budget (\$2,186,997) to programs for women. Some of these programs are in the Equity & Women's Programs section but most are spread throughout the budget.

President's Award

Wambui Gaitho, a member of the Elementary Teachers of Toronto, received the President's Award for her outstanding contributions to ETFO.

In presenting the award President Emily Noble said that Gaitho exhibits a quiet but solid strength. She is "a true unionist and community activist."

"She has been a mentor to me and many leaders and teachers in ETFO...and a solid source of strength and solid support to me as leader," Noble said.

"I remember her taking me aside when I first was elected and saying 'Emily I need to talk to you about real equity, not rhetoric or tokenism, but what real equity should look like, be like and feel like in ETFO.'"

In accepting the honour, Gaitho thanked "those who came before and laid a foundation that I could use to do what little I do...It is our duty and responsibility to make sure we leave a strong foundation for those who come after us to do the job they need to do."

Gaitho is a former local president and has been a member of the provincial executive. She continues to be active in the federation as a leader of workshops for aspiring women activists.



Humanity Fund

At the 2004 Annual Meeting delegates voted to make the ETFO Humanity Fund a bargaining objective.

Six locals were successful in reaching an agreement with their boards to allow payroll deductions of 10 cents per member per day, either automatically or by member request.

The Avon Maitland, Durham, Grand Erie, Hastings-Prince Edward, Niagara, and Waterloo Region teacher locals join the Bluewater and Ottawa-Carleton teacher locals as fund contributors.



Accepting the award are: Susan Swackhammer, president, Grand Erie; Brian Doubleday, president, Avon Maitland; Carolyn Walker, vice-president, Waterloo Region; Sharon Aloian, president, Niagara.

Douglas Helmer

The kids of Muzaffarpur in Bihar, India, call Douglas Helmer the Eighth Wonder of the World. This year ETFO named him Humanitarian of the year.

Helmer is revered in Bihar because he is striving to take computer education to the state's physically handicapped children. Bihar is one of the poorest states in India.

Since 1999, Helmer has taken three unpaid leaves of absence from his job as a communication technology teacher in Upper Grand DSB to work with the teachers and students of the Shubham School for the deaf, blind, and physically handicapped in Muzaffarpur. During his visits he lived with Indian families, rode a scooter to work in the dusty streets of Muzaffarpur, and developed computer manuals in Braille, Hindi, and English.

While in India, he posted weekly reports on the web so that his students in Canada could share his experiences.

Helmer helped create an international network of technical and educational support for staff and students of Shubham. They are now communicating directly with the Rochester Institute of Technology, Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf in Belleville, and the director of the Deaf India Project in California. He is trying to formalize a partnership between W. Ross MacDonald School for the Blind in Brantford and Shubham. He has also worked to develop partnerships between Rotary International, CIDA, SchoolNet, the CNIB, Shubham, and the Upper Canada District School Board. At the same time, he is working on a project, partnering school boards and the Rotary districts in Sri Lanka to help the tsunami-damaged schools of the country with technology.

"You can't make significant changes by yourself. You can initiate the change but you need the synergy of working with other groups and other people to have a long-lasting and profound impact," Helmer says.



Honouring extraordinary achievements

Recipients of ETFO awards with ETFO President Emily Noble (third from left, front) are: Rian McLaughlin, president, Hamilton-Wentworth Occasional Teacher Local, ETFO Local Leadership Award; Douglas Helmer, the Humanitarian Award for a non-ETFO Member; Donna Miller, executive director of Hiatus House, Windsor, the Women Working in Social Activism on behalf of Women and Children Award; Tom Fleming, Randy Drexler, and Mario Spagnuolo, Greater Essex Teacher Local, Local Website of the Year Award; Kurt Uriarte, first vice-president, Peel Teacher Local, Newsletter Editor's Award (multi-sheet); and Phillip Mack, president, Thames Valley Teacher Local, the Newsletter Editor's Award (single sheet).



Honorary Life Members

Hope Grayson, retired ETFO staff member; Ron Gugula, Oshawa teacher and activist; Marina Howlett, Guelph, retired teacher and now president of the Upper Grand Occasional Teacher Local.

Resolutions Passed

Annual Meeting delegates passed resolutions dealing with diversity in the federation, in school boards and in faculties of education. They also called for enhanced support for school library programs.

A number of resolutions called on the Ontario Teachers' Federation to take action on behalf of ETFO.

Your local president can provide you with full details of the resolutions passed.



■ by Alan R. Heatherington

Finding Your Voice

An announcement posted in our staffroom in the spring of 2004 spurred me – after 17 years of teaching – to get involved more directly in ETFO. I decided to apply for a position on the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) provincial standing committee. In June President Emily Noble called me to confirm my two-year term. Three weeks later I was able to meet her in person and introduced her to my partner, Tim, at the Toronto Pride Parade. (Thanks, Emily, for your support!)

Fed by the enthusiasm and dedication of LGBT committee members and those attending the provincial joint equity meeting in January 2005, I decided to submit a couple of motions at my local's Annual Meeting in April. I was the only individual to do so. All the other motions were submitted by the executive.

Due to the re-organization of our local, the anti-racist education, political action, status of women/equity, and new directions committees were subsumed by the member services committee. I moved to establish a human rights committee and proposed the inclusion of a designated minority position (one out of 28) in the delegation to the provincial Annual Meeting (AM). Because it was my first attempt to address my colleagues in the local, I came prepared with a written script. Apart from my seconder, only two other members spoke in support of my motions. Since I had been warned that my motions were likely to fail (which they did), I took the necessary measures to become a delegate to the AM.

To be quite honest, I had no prescient notion of how directly I would get involved in the business of the AM. Given the statistics in the 2005 Report to the Annual Meeting that show only one per cent of the membership self-identify, I knew that my presence at the first LGBT caucus would be important. I also participated in the joint equity caucus.

After the introductory speeches and festivities on Monday, I watched and listened to the presentation of motions and subsequent discussions. Some arguments seemed trivial; others made good sense.

The session that began on Tuesday morning quickly focused on the motion to create designated positions for minority representatives on the ETFO executive. Stepping up to the microphone in front of hundreds of one's peers can be quite daunting, but I found that my words flowed

Alan R. Heatherington is a grade 5 teacher at Northdale Public School in London, Thames Valley local.

freely as I addressed the issue from a personal viewpoint.

Afterwards, to my amazement, several people approached me with an effusive show of gratitude for having the courage to share my opinion.

Emboldened by others, I rose to speak on additional proposals and succeeded as seconder in having two motions passed. The first was to establish a study of how locals schedule delegates and alternates at the Annual Meeting, with a report to the executive. The second was an amendment to clarify a motion (resolution 86) which instructs ETFO, through OTE, to lobby the Ministry of Education to change the reporting periods for elementary schools to twice during the school year.

Throughout the sessions that followed, I was enthralled by the positive energy that flowed from the floor. It was gratifying to hear Gerard Kennedy speak so positively about education and our role in it. I was captivated by the excellence of the speeches presented by the 13 candidates for executive positions. Lieutenant-Governor Bartleman's call to alleviate the plight of Aboriginal children in isolated northern communities, as well as his honest revelation of how he has dealt with depression, moved me to tears.

At the end of the day a delegate rallied the group to participate in a march to show our support for the locked-out employees of CBC. Thousands of dollars were collected immediately to assist them and the Hydro One workers, members of the Association of Energy Professionals, who have been on strike since the spring.

In contrast, Wednesday evening's banquet and dance afforded all Annual Meeting participants the opportunity to dress up, enjoy a great meal, socialize, and have a blast.

Since the adjournment of the 2005 AM, I continue to replay mentally the course of events. It may seem strange, but I tell people that the best part of my summer vacation was attending ETFO's Annual Meeting. My search for social justice has been fuelled by the comments and actions of others. I eagerly await next year's meeting.

I hope that you will feel inspired to get involved as well. Recently, I read a quote from Charles DeGaulle who stated, "Nothing strengthens authority so much as silence." Learn to find your own voice, then speak up. As I discovered, your opinion does matter.

ETFO Scholarship and bursary winners

Deadlines for applications for ETFO awards

December 1

- Anti-Bias Curriculum Development Award
- Arts and Culture Award
- Curriculum Development Award
- Curriculum Development Award – Women's Program
- Multi-Media Award
- Multi-Media Award – Women's Program
- Rainbow Visions Award
- Women Who Develop Special Projects in Science and Technology – Women's Program
- Writer's Award (Published)
- Writer's Award – Women's Program (Published)
- Writer's Award (Unpublished)
- Writer's Award – Women's Program (Unpublished)

February 1

- ETFO Local Website of the Year Award
- Health and Safety Activist Award
- Honorary Life Membership
- Humanitarian Award for an ETFO Member
- Humanitarian Award for a Non-ETFO Member
- Innovative Projects on Behalf of Children Living in Poverty Award
- Local Leadership Award
- New Teacher Award
- Newsletter Editor's Award (single and multi-sheet categories)
- Occasional Teacher of the Year Award
- Outstanding Role Model for Women – Women's Program
- Women Working in Social Activism on Behalf of Women and Children – Women's Program

Aboriginal Women in Education

Betty Gunner, James Bay
Robyn Turgeon, Thames Valley
Janette Richmond
Tina-Gracie Neadow

Arts and Culture

Anne MacInnis, Hastings-Prince Edward

Bev Saskoley Anti-Racist Scholarship

Abraham Blair, Elementary Teachers of Toronto

Doctoral Scholarship

Helen MacDonald, Kawartha Pine Ridge

Doctoral Scholarship – Women's Program

Pamela Nancarrow Snow, Waterloo OT

Bursaries – sons and daughters

Marlys Niskanen, Daughter of Heather Niskanen, Rainy River
Leslee Morrison, Daughter of Heather Longboat, Hamilton-Wentworth
Tadd MacKenna, Son of Eva MacKenna, Algoma
Sheila Johnston, Daughter of Sheila Johnston, Peel
Lindsay Ferris, Daughter of Kim Ferris, Bluewater

Bursaries

Persons with Disability/Visible Minorities/Aboriginal
Delanie Nilmini Ratwatte, Peel
Gary Williams
Min Lee

Bursaries – Women's Program

Persons with Disability/Visible Minorities/Aboriginal
Oanh Nguyen, Elementary Teachers of Toronto
Sabrina Razack, Elementary Teachers of Toronto
Charansheel Kaur Sembhi
Dana Ben Halim

Masters Scholarship

Mylène Ménard, Bluewater
Jody Conod, Limestone
Sandra Broekhof, Elementary Teachers of Toronto
Stephanie Moschonissios, Elementary Teachers of Toronto
Thomas Widstrand, Elementary Teachers of Toronto
Lisa Piggott, Trillium Lakelands
Catherine Roper, Peel

Masters Scholarship – Women's Program

Cindy Spackman, Lakehead
Susan McGrath, Hastings-Prince Edward
Anne George, Renfrew
Judith Gorry, Halton
Lori Drawetz, York Region
Karlene Ebanks, Elementary Teachers of Toronto
Janet Spring, Simcoe



Building new teacher skills

“Create a clear classroom structure; make a connection with your students; communicate with your principal; seek support.”

Words of advice for the 150 teachers attending the second annual Connect conference last May.

Participants in the conference – those in their first five years of teaching – heard from a panel of experienced teachers about the critical importance of classroom management.

Panelists Ian Brandon, Joanne Myers, Cathy Miller-Davis, Jennifer Paziuk, and ETFO staff officer Susan Thede stressed such concepts as the 3Rs of classroom management.

These include:

- Respect for students of varying backgrounds, learning styles, and developmental levels
- Routine and rules that are clear and consistent
- Recognition of student achievement, using appropriate feedback rather than external rewards.

Panelists emphasized that classroom management is the most important component of the program planning.

Participants were able to attend workshops offered by ETFO and the 20 subject/divisional provincial associations that partner with ETFO to deliver the conference. Speakers included Education Minister Gerard Kennedy and ETFO President Emily Noble. Vice-presidents Sam Hammond and Cynthia Lemon answered questions about the federation.



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Randy McGlynn,
Chief Executive Officer, OTIP

Karen Brown, Chair of the OTIP Board of Trustees, is pleased to announce the appointment of Randy McGlynn as Chief Executive Officer.

Randy has over 33 years of experience in all areas of insurance including life, property and casualty, extended health, long term disability, and claims management. Randy has been an integral member of the OTIP senior management team for the past 25 years, most recently as chief operating officer.

In 2001, Randy received the prestigious Fellowship Award from the Ontario Teachers' Federation recognizing his contributions to education in Ontario. Randy has focused his insurance expertise exclusively on the education community and has been a strong voice and advocate for the Provincial affiliates.

In addition to an Honours Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Wilfrid Laurier University, Randy recently completed his corporate governance and director's education program at Rotman's School of Management.

His community support includes serving as a recent member on the Dean's Advisory Council for the Wilfrid Laurier School of Business and Economics and as a member and past Chair of the Canadian Cancer Society.



OTIP RAO

OTIP (Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan) is a non-profit organization directed by a Board of Trustees comprised of two representatives from each of the Ontario education affiliates (AEFO, ETFO, OECTA and OSSTF). For more information, please visit www.otip.com.

We're Halfway There



■ by **Christine Brown**

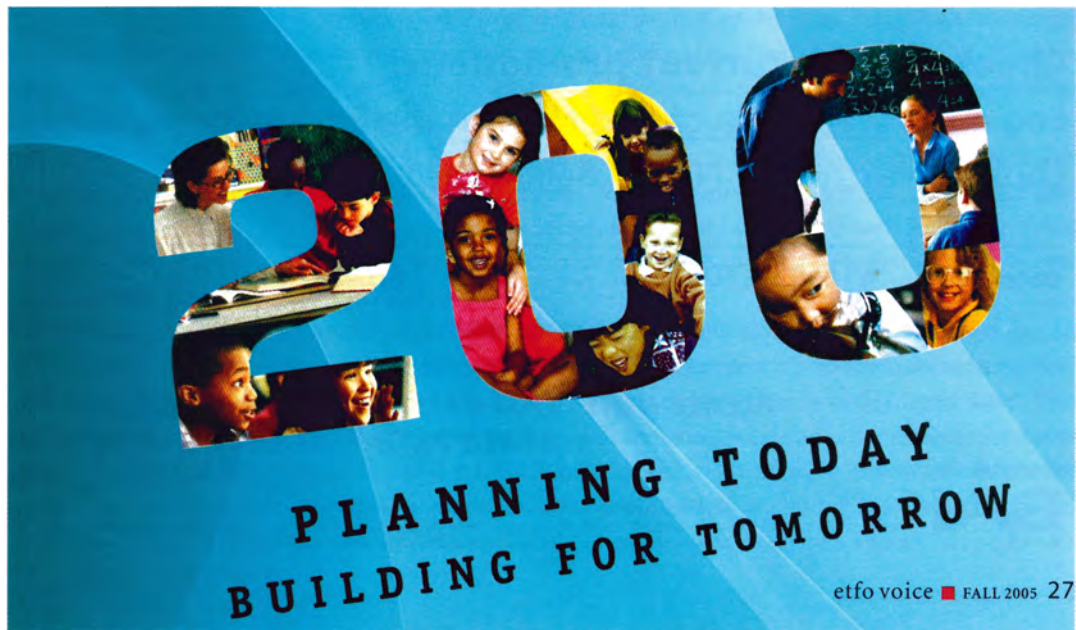
The new school year finds us halfway through the task of negotiating four-year collective agreements for teachers and occasional teachers. All district school board teachers now have agreements. But the big challenge this year will be reaching occasional teacher settlements, nearly all of which are still outstanding. Before turning to the issues driving occasional teacher negotiations, here's an overview of how the bargaining dust finally settled last June.

By 2008,
all teachers
will have 200
minutes of guar-
anteed weekly
preparation time
— just like the
billboards said.

By 2008, all teachers will have 200 minutes of guaranteed weekly preparation time – just like the billboards said. But the provincial framework agreement reached among ETFO, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, and the Ministry of Education included much more. It meant that locals could negotiate capped supervision time, a limit on instructional time, solid salary increases, and roughly \$500 per member for individual teacher professional development. These provisions were not legislated. Rather, they had to be individually bargained at the local level. At the same time, negotiators had to keep their eyes on key local issues. Here is just a sampling.

In this round, local negotiators made significant improvements in “work/life balance” provisions. Work/life balance is a term that has entered mainstream labour relations discourse. It refers to an array of policies, practices, and collective agreement provisions which are family-friendly and which support the mental and physical health of employees.

Nineteen out of the 31 district school board locals improved their Supplemental Employment Benefits (SEB) plans. SEB plans top up payments to members on pregnancy and parental leaves. The changes extended the number of weeks for which a SEB is payable and/or increased



Christine Brown is an ETFO research officer.



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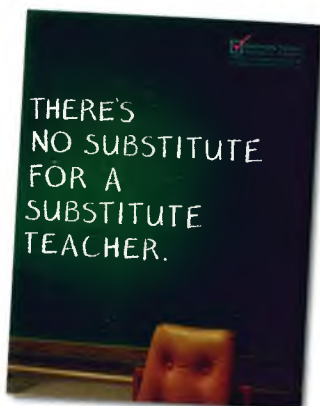
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Occasional teachers' bargaining

the dollar amount. This provides tangible support to teachers beginning or adding to their families. Fourteen locals enhanced other aspects of their pregnancy and parental leaves, with particular gains for the rights of those returning to work following a leave.



Short-term personal leaves are one of those areas where tensions typically run high in school board negotiations. Despite this, 15 ETFO locals improved their family medical/compassionate leave provisions, seven locals expanded their personal leave provisions, and six locals built upon their existing bereavement leave language.

Given the experience of the past 10 years, it is no surprise that local negotiators took great care to enhance job security and basic employment rights in their collective agreements. Sixteen locals bargained provisions which protect members undergoing performance appraisals. Ten locals strengthened their provisions on member personnel files, including curbing the employer's ability to keep negative materials on file. Six locals successfully tackled the issue of voluntary and involuntary transfers. Ten locals even made progress on the ever-vexing staff meeting question.

Gains were made as well by 11 locals in protecting members against discrimination and harassment. Many of these improvements address the rights of members with same-sex partners.

Progress was also made in health and safety. Of the 14 locals which moved forward in this area, three addressed workplace violence, and 10 negotiated provisions to help protect teachers against Fifth disease and other communicable illnesses in the workplace.

Insured benefits were improved across the board. In a number of locals, benefits will be enhanced in each of the remaining years of the agreement.

Will occasional teachers be able to replicate this success? In some ways, the fact that teacher agreements will not be reopened until 2008 has made occasional teacher negotiations easier. For one thing, the 13 occasional teacher locals whose daily rates are already tied to teacher grids will not have to re-fight that particular battle, though some of these locals have not yet reached the desired formula of "a day's pay equals 1/194 of Category A1 Step 0."

Yet the issue that may receive the most attention (for those locals which have not already addressed it) is timetabling. Specifically, the objective is to negotiate provisions which guarantee that an occasional teacher assumes the timetable of the teacher being replaced. As you may recall, the 2004 Annual Meeting passed a resolution authorizing ETFO to use all strategies "up to and including a full withdrawal of services strike" to achieve this particular goal.

Occasional teachers are crucial to school operations, and deserve the same level of respect granted their teacher colleagues. Boards sometimes need to be reminded of this. Among other things, respect means that an occasional teacher called into a school should not be asked to race from one end of the building to the other, filling slots in various teachers' schedules.

Occasional teachers' work also needs to be recognized in other ways. Most boards do not include casual teaching days when calculating experience credit for grid placement. Similarly, those who begin a daily assignment which subsequently becomes long-term, often must wait far too long before being switched from a daily rate to a grid rate.

And there are numerous other issues, such as gaining better access to full-time positions, achieving cumulative sick leave entitlement, ensuring that appointments are made in either half or full-day increments, accessing paid professional development opportunities, making sure all teacher absences are covered by occasional teachers, building salary structures with incentives for cumulative days taught, and guaranteeing that the local has the necessary information to fulfill its function of representing members.

No one is under the illusion that this year will be easy. While a strategy has been mapped out provincially to assist locals to reach strong collective agreements, there are always unexpected twists that give the bargaining process its special edge.

Though it is not anyone's first choice, the possibility of job action is a necessary part of the process. Making appropriate preparations is a key part of supporting the team at the negotiating table. Some local leaders may find themselves working with provincial staff to organize a first-ever strike vote of their members.

Making predictions about bargaining is always a good way to get egg on your face, but here goes: by this time next year, all occasional teacher collective agreements will be in place, and they will run until August 2008. This means occasional teachers will be living with those agreements for some time. Whatever it takes, it's important to get them right, for they will be the last word on occasional teacher compensation and working conditions for some while. **V**

JUMP

Junior Undiscovered
Math Prodigies

John Mighton's math program

■ by Charles Wyszkowski

BIG claims ... global mission!

“Though the developed countries of the world presently have the resources to feed and educate everyone on earth, more than half the world’s children live in abject poverty ... JUMP was founded in reaction to the institutionalized apathy and ignorance that underlie these problems.”¹

“JUMP’s results show that even children written off by the school system can succeed.”— *Today’s Parent*, quoted on the cover of the grade 4 workbook.

Although he does not enter into the ongoing debate about whether genetics or environment is the more dominant factor in a young person’s development, John Mighton is definitely on one side of the dispute when it comes to being able to comprehend mathematics. His book is entitled *The Myth of Ability*.

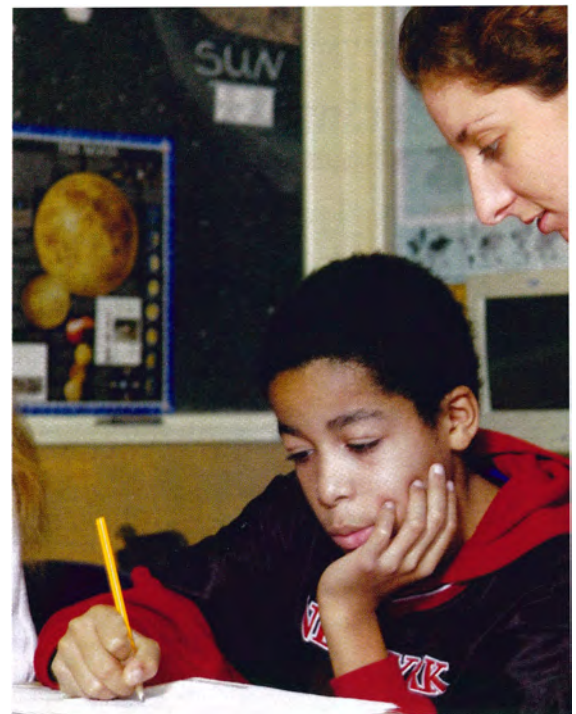
His program, then, operates from the basic assumption that, “all children, except possibly those who are so severely disabled that they would not be enrolled in a regular public school, can be led to think mathematically,” and that “we can raise the level of even the weakest students sufficiently to enable them to appreciate and master genuine mathematics. At this level, sheer intelligence is almost secondary.” Hence the subtitle of his book: “Nurturing Mathematical Talent in Every Child.”

Mighton sees the present Ontario school system itself as being very nurturing, but in a destructive way: he points to oversized classrooms and a “system predicated on the idea that only a few students will excel.”

Mighton also points an accusatory finger at the Ministry of Education, arguing that it is not the ideals of the new math but “the way those ideals have been implemented in our school – with textbooks that appear to have been written in a great hurry and by teachers who have received insufficient training and support” that make many children feel they can’t do mathematics.

Unfortunately, his criticisms are not mere rhetoric; and while he may paint with too broad a brush, and sometimes with the wrong shades of colour, he is addressing a real situation: namely, that too many students are not developing satisfactory levels of mathematical proficiency. The question, however, remains open as to how best deal with the situation.

We have had, together with varying degrees of teacher comfort with the



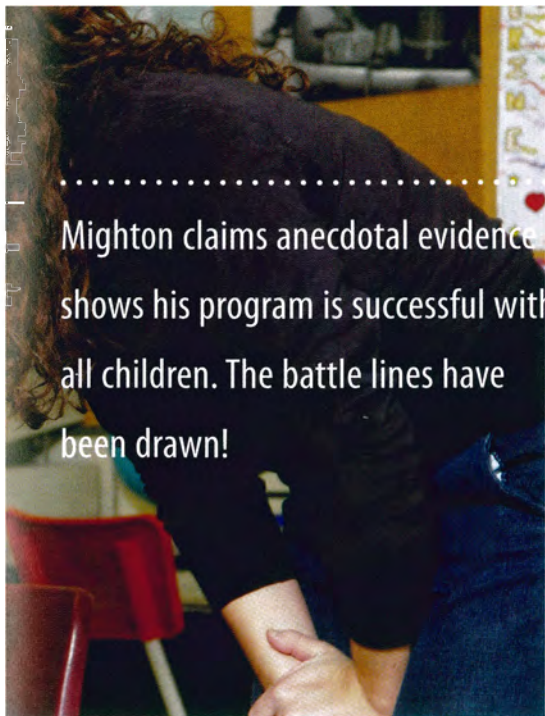
subject, awkward teaching resources, and out-of-date traditions around pedagogy and remediation. However, we also now have widespread professional development taking place to increase teacher confidence in mathematics, and province-wide professional development in both research-based pedagogy and in how children learn mathematics. We also have independent solutions such as John Mighton’s JUMP program.

The problem we face is that the two programs, provincial and independent, clash in philosophy as well as practice.

“To most educators, the idea of an entire class doing well in any subject seems absurd.”

Mighton throws out this challenge in the face of the new approaches for the teaching of mathematics: experiments and open-ended activities “should not, I believe, be used extensively in a large classroom until a teacher is certain the entire class has developed the numerical and logical skills, as well as the confidence and motivation, to do this kind of work.... any such approach should be formulated in rigorous detail by its proponents and tested exhaustively in large classrooms with teachers who are not confident in math. If it doesn’t work for every student in the class, it shouldn’t be used.”

The new pedagogy that is being presented across the province through such programs as the Early Math Strategy, TIPS, and now Junior Math Strategy, has much anecdotal evidence from around the world as being successful with many children; Mighton claims anecdotal evidence



.....

Mighton claims anecdotal evidence shows his program is successful with all children. The battle lines have been drawn!

shows his program is successful with all children. The battle lines have been drawn!

Mighton does once make a small step back toward a more inclusive view, but with a proviso: “The JUMP program was specifically developed to help children who have fallen behind to catch up quickly. I would never claim it is the only way to teach mathematics, or even the best.”

Mighton’s program is built around the breaking down of all the learning into small steps. The steps that he often uses as illustrations, whether in his book or in his talks, have led to the criticism that he is teaching students to perform algorithmic operations through pattern recognition and memorization of mechanical responses to specific patterns.

Mighton’s response to such criticism is, “It is not the intention of the JUMP program to produce students who can only do mathematics by rote, or who experience mathematics as an endless series of mechanical drills. Even in the most basic units, students are expected to explain how operations work and generalize rules to deal with new cases by themselves.” However, the limited materials I have seen (his book and the student workbooks), have not widely lent themselves to

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1. Page 52.

2. Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001; Bredekamp & Copple, 1997; Kilpatrick et al., 2001; NCTM, 2000; Pallascio, 1990; *The Report of the Expert Panel on Early Math in Ontario*.

3. *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8, Mathematics, 2005*.

.....

presenting the higher level thinking activities that Mighton suggests are also part of his program.

One of the features of ‘doing mathematics’ is problem solving – an activity which involves taking risks. “Many major international reports have confirmed that teachers need to use problem solving and reasoning as the focus of their instructional practice.² Yet, judging by the workbook (in this case, grade 4) rich learning tasks and problem solving (as opposed to simple word problems) are not prominent. Nor do there seem to be sufficient opportunities for developing (as the new curriculum requires) the seven mathematical processes “through which students acquire and apply mathematical knowledge and skills.”³

Taking risks sometimes results in failure as an intermediate step on the way to solving the problem. John Mighton’s program, at present, is designed to be risk free. However, he claims his development team recognizes that kids do have to learn how to deal with failure; the problem is that they don’t know yet when to let kids fail. They want the kids to be able to fail without them thinking of themselves as a failure.

But what of all the anecdotal evidence John Mighton has, both in his book and on his website as to the efficacy of his program? What I haven’t mentioned to this point is how the program is implemented – and that might possibly help explain his successes. There isn’t space enough to go into great detail but two features stand out.

First, to address all of the needs in a class, a teacher must be assisted by tutors that work with students one-on-one. He recommends having an assistant “several times a week” and “in the first few months of the program, to have several extra tutors on hand once a week, so that students who are extremely delayed, unmotivated, or inattentive can be given lessons individually, or in small groups.” A mid-size grade 3 to 6 school would need 20 volunteer tutors to set up an effective program.

Secondly, building-up self-esteem and self-confidence in students is a critical component of his program. “A program that allows children the luxury of success also allows teachers the luxury of giving them praise. This approach may take some getting used to for some teachers, especially those who have learned to rely on more traditional means (such as guilt, fear, or anger) to motivate their students, or who are afraid to encourage false hopes...”

Research tells us these two factors alone – one-on-one tutoring and continual positive reinforcement alongside activities with built-in success – can have enormously positive effects on a student’s attitude and performance.

John Mighton’s strategy for bringing along students who are lagging behind academically is novel: “I have come to believe that the best way to motivate children who have fallen behind is to skip them ahead – to convince them they are capable of doing work beyond their grade level.” Which leaves only the question of whether a grade 3 student performing grade 7 fraction manipulations is as valuable a learning achievement as that same student working successfully on truly problematic situations requiring only grade 3 skills. There are many educational researchers today who would say, “No.”

The debate has ended with a split decision: there is much that should be learned from John Mighton ... and much that John Mighton should learn. ✓

Le cerveau au service du

Le monde de l'éducation est constamment en mouvement, tant dans le domaine de la pédagogie, de la politique et de l'apprentissage. Cette tendance est positive et démontre un système où les intervenantes et intervenants recherchent les meilleures stratégies d'apprentissage pour leurs élèves.



■ par André Charlebois

Les études sur le fonctionnement du cerveau et la mémoire—des intelligences multiples— ne sont plus des théories, mais plutôt des repères sur lesquels on peut bâtir et créer un curriculum et des activités d'apprentissage qui amèneront les élèves à mieux communiquer et à former une identité bilingue.

On peut s'inspirer du livre *Learning and Memory* de Marilee Sprenger et tenir compte de certains faits au niveau du fonctionnement du cerveau chez les élèves. Alors qu'elle décrit les sortes de mémoires différentes et les voies dont on se sert pour rechercher l'information, elle fait référence à un élément fort simple qu'on peut intégrer dans l'enseignement.

Pouvoir de se concentrer = âge de l'enfant + 2 minutes

Cette formule revêt une grande importance dans la planification d'activités pour les élèves. Le pouvoir de se concentrer chez l'élève est réalisé lorsque le cerveau de celui-ci est entièrement à la tâche — il écoute, il absorbe, il enregistre, il réfléchit et il intègre l'information qui lui est transmise. Au bout d'un certain temps toutefois, le cerveau décroche de la situation et passe à un autre mode.

En tenant compte de l'âge de l'élève, l'enseignant peut se servir de ce repère afin de planifier

un nombre d'activités variées, stimulantes et pertinentes. Au cycle moyen, les âges peuvent être répartis comme suit : 4^e année — 9 ans, 5^e année — 10 ans, 6^e année — 11 ans. Alors que le système scolaire ontarien est conçu en suivant ces âges, il existe des cas particuliers selon les écoles et les classes qui ne reflètent pas cet énoncé.

Le plan suivant est une suggestion pour la répartition du temps d'une leçon qui contient une composante orale importante.

Répartition du temps d'une leçon avec une composante orale importante

Durée : 40 minutes
Niveau : Cycle moyen
(4^e, 5^e, 6^e année)
Âge des élèves : 9 ans à 11 ans

NB : Cet aspect est important à retenir afin de calculer la durée optimale de temps alloué à une activité (âge + 2 minutes)

Nombre d'activités différentes :	3 à 4 activités d'apprentissage significatif
Activité 1	
Salutation / mise en train :	8 à 10 minutes
Activité 2	
Concept à apprendre :	8 à 10 minutes
Activité 3	
Servo-jeu :	4 à 5 minutes
Activité 4	
Mise en application :	8 à 10 minutes

Note : il est important de varier le nombre d'activités durant la période même si ce nombre peut varier légèrement d'une journée à l'autre. Une activité ne peut pas durer plus de 40 minutes pour un élève du cycle moyen.

André Charlebois enseigne à l'Université d'Ottawa. Il était précédemment coordonnateur de l'enseignement, langues secondes, au conseil scolaire du district Upper Canada.

français!

Alors que les composantes « salutation / mise en train, concept à apprendre et mise en application » ne sont pas entièrement nouvelles pour plusieurs, la composante « servo-jeu » est peut-être étrangère à certains enseignants et enseignantes.

Qu'est-ce qu'un servo-jeu?

Une explication du mot « servo-jeu » ainsi que son étymologie démontrent la pertinence de ce nouveau nom composé.

« SERVO » – ce mot réfère à quelque chose qui assiste ou qui aide.

« JEU » – ce mot réfère à une activité où jouer est de mise. Évidemment, on ne fait pas référence au sens large du mot mais bien à une activité de salle de classe.

« SERVO-JEU » – un jeu qui permet au cerveau de se rafraîchir afin de passer à une autre activité significative.

Par exemple, passer d'une leçon sur les verbes à un exercice écrit sur les verbes n'est pas un servo-jeu, même si c'est une activité différente. Voici quelques règles générales afin de garantir que le servo-jeu obtienne l'effet voulu.

1. Le servo-jeu n'est pas nécessairement une activité langagière.
2. Le servo-jeu doit impliquer l'élève, physiquement, intellectuellement et émotivement
3. Le servo-jeu doit stimuler différentes parties du cerveau – tant cérébral que physique.
4. Le servo-jeu doit être amusant, tout en amenant l'élève à participer de façon active.
5. Le servo-jeu fait partie du déroulement de la leçon et n'est pas une surprise ou une récompense pour un travail bien fait.
6. Le servo-jeu ne fait pas partie du curriculum comme tel, mais se veut un complément au développement intellectuel de l'élève. **V**

Un exemple de servo-jeu

« Qui dit non? »

Habiletés à développer

- l'écoute, l'oral
- le développement de vocabulaire
- le pouvoir de concentration
- la pensée

Matériel nécessaire

- faire un collier avec une corde et y accrocher trois épingles à linge
- placer le collier autour du cou

Déroulement de l'activité

1. Les élèves mettent les colliers autour de leur cous.
2. Les élèves forment deux lignes et se placent face à face avec un partenaire.
3. Les élèves commencent une conversation selon leur niveau de connaissance du français.
4. Si un élève dit « non » au cours de la conversation, l'autre prend une de ses épingles à linge et l'ajoute à son collier.
5. Après deux minutes de conversation, on change de partenaire et on continue la conversation.
6. Le temps alloué détermine la fin de l'activité; il n'y a pas de gagnant ou perdant. Les élèves peuvent se forcer à créer une compétition mais elle devrait être avec eux-mêmes.

Variantes

1. Les élèves posent des questions ouvertes qui portent sur un sujet étudié en classe.
2. On peut demander aux élèves de ne pas dire les mots « oui » et « non », sinon ils perdent une épingles à linge.

Une explication de l'activité est à prévoir au début de la mise en œuvre du servo-jeu dans la leçon, mais le tout devrait se dérouler assez rapidement une fois que la routine est établie.

Les enseignantes et enseignants de français langue seconde possèdent l'énergie, les connaissances et l'expérience nécessaires. Il s'agit d'amener les élèves à un autre échelon dans leur cheminement scolaire et personnel.

Autant l'exercice physique est important, autant une gymnastique intellectuelle est nécessaire afin de garder le cerveau alerte et en santé.

Experiencing Aboriginal culture

■ by Jan Beaver

//The entire program was an excellent combination of philosophy, history, interaction, artwork, teaching strategies, curriculum development and implementation methodology.”

That’s how one participant described this year’s Aboriginal Summer Learning Experience, held in Brantford for three days in July.

The focus of the course was on the Haudenosaunee peoples, better known as the Six Nations: Mohawk, Seneca, Cayuga, Oneida, Onondaga and Tuscarora.

The presenters were Deneen Montour and Sherri Vansickle, teachers from the Six Nations community.

In keeping with the philosophy that people learn best through rich experiences, teachers were immediately immersed in the Haudenosaunee culture. A tour of the Woodland Cultural Centre provided participants with a chance to hear from Six Nations Haudenosaunee scholar,

Jan Beaver is an executive assistant in Equity and Women’s Services



“Wow! Such a privilege to have experienced this – much greater understanding and awareness of the need to give students an unbiased perspective.”

Keith Jamieson. The oral tradition of learning was very evident in the entertaining stories shared about the history of the Six Nations community and Haudenosaunee people who changed the course of that history.

On a tour of Kanata Village in Brantford, a recreation of a 17th century longhouse community, teachers learned that the word Kanata originates with the Aboriginal peoples that Jacques Cartier met when he landed at Gaspé in 1535. When Cartier asked the name of the land the Aboriginal peoples replied that it was Kanata, which means lodges/home.

Teachers listened closely as Wolf explained traditional methods of hide tanning, canoe making, longhouse construction, and food preparation.

No good course would be complete without excellent food. Strawberry juice, traditional Haudenosaunee donuts, and cookies kept everyone happy on the very hot school bus tour of the Six Nations community where teachers learned about the contemporary issues affecting residents. Traditional Haudenosaunee dances to the water drum were demonstrated by Six Nations Tourism dancers and everyone learned how to do the friendship dance. Then it was on to the Sour Springs Longhouse for an excellent lunch with traditional Haudenosaunee dishes.

Tom Deer, Six Nations diplomat to the United Nations and Secretary of the Confederacy Council (50 hereditary Chiefs), spoke eloquently about the thanksgiving address given before every celebration, ceremony, and gathering. This prayer gives thanks for all things in creation. It is a vital component of the great law, the philosophy – brought to the Haudenosaunee people by the prophet known as the Peacemaker – that guides life for those who follow the longhouse traditions.

Darren Thomas, Director of the New Orators Youth Project, spoke about the importance of giving youth a strong foundation in their culture



Summer Academy

Hundreds of ETFO members took part in summer courses during July and August. A wide range of professional development courses were offered by ETFO in partnership with locals around the province. Courses are taught by ETFO members and designed to provide teachers with practical skills and resources to use in their classrooms.

ETFO offers a full range of professional development for teachers in every stage of their career. For more information go to etfo.ca ► *professional development.*



and the need to make good decisions today for those people coming after us for the next seven generations.

Teachers got lots of ideas and had numerous opportunities to explore resources and strategies for incorporating Haudenosaunee perspectives, philosophy, culture, and history into curriculum throughout all of the elementary grades. Goodminds, an Aboriginal resource company located in Brantford, provided many excellent bias-free resources about Aboriginal peoples for teachers to take home.

Participants expressed their enjoyment of the course:

“Wow! Such a privilege to have experienced this – much greater understanding and awareness of the need to give students an unbiased perspective.”

“Thanks for sharing so much. thanks for all of the planning you did... thanks for caring... chi miigwetch (thank you in Ojibwa)... nya:weh goa (thank you in Mohawk).” ✓

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Look Again



■ by Christine Brown

Your co-workers with invisible disabilities are willing to pull their weight in the school and capable of doing so. But this may mean coping with the workload in a slightly different way.

Quick – what two things do the following have in common? Diabetes, multiple sclerosis (MS), epilepsy, depression, hearing loss, dyslexia, alcoholism, rheumatoid arthritis, irritable bowel syndrome, fibromyalgia, epidermolysis bullosa.

First, these are all conditions which are potentially disabling. And second, you may have been teaching for years next door to a colleague living with one of them, and been unaware of its existence. They are often characterized by the term “invisible disabilities,” though this phrase has attracted a certain amount of controversy in the field of disability studies. Like individuals with other kinds of disabilities, those living with them are protected under human rights legislation against workplace discrimination and harassment.

How do you know if your co-worker is living with an invisible disability? You don’t – unless she or he chooses to disclose this information. Given the problem of stigmatization – especially with respect to mental health issues – many school staff members simply choose not to. A member whose circumstances require a job accommodation measure, of course, will have no choice but to share some information with the employer, though often of a much less personal nature than many people think. If you are contemplating requesting a job accommodation measure, you are encouraged to contact either your local ETFO office or the staff who deal in professional relations at the provincial office. They will be able to fill you in on what may be required.

But what about those members who exercise their right not to request a formal accommodation? Some have been extraordinarily creative in designing their own accommodations. Sometimes co-workers are requested to assist, but most often they are not.

For example, a high level of fatigue can accompany a number of the invisible disabilities listed above, and coping mechanisms vary. Individuals living with MS often find that pacing themselves, and scheduling rest periods, is a crucial part of managing the disease.

Similarly, teachers who are hearing impaired can experience severe fatigue at the end of a long day at work. Listening under less than ideal conditions is tiring work. Think of the times you have had to listen for extended periods when there has been a high level of background noise, or electronic audio interference, or where the language being spoken is not your first language. It can be exhausting.

Your co-workers with invisible disabilities are willing to pull their weight in the school and capable of doing so. But this may mean coping with the workload in a slightly different way. For those whose circumstances bring high levels of fatigue, it may mean that attending that one extra meeting at the end of the school day is simply not an option.

Part of what makes workplaces function well (when they do) is co-operation and goodwill among staff. Frankly, the education system would collapse without them. At the individual level, co-operation may mean recognizing that when we deal with co-workers who may be living with disabilities, not all workplace situations are as transparent as they may seem at first glance. **V**

Christine Brown is an ETFO research officer with an interest in disability issues.

OTF challenges in the year to come



by Hilda Watkins

The work of OTF is focused around three pillars: pension, advocacy, and policy and legislation.

Pension

As you have heard, the pension plan had an actuarial deficit of approximately \$19.4 billion as of January 1, 2005. The pension partners, OTF, and the Ontario government are meeting to address this shortfall. Details of any decision will be shared expeditiously.

Members can rest assured that the viability and the integrity of the teachers' pension plan remain beyond doubt. Every effort will be made to minimize any negative impact on members.

Advocacy

OTF is in the process of developing an advocacy campaign for public education. Research shows us that simply talking at parents is futile. We need to build an alliance with parents on issues that they believe to be important. It is essential that OTF be proactive and that we garner strong public support during the period of relative peace and stability. We cannot afford to be reactive – to act after a crisis has developed.

Policy and Legislation

OTF continues to participate in the Minister's Education Partnership Table and the four working tables. The topics include:

- Literacy and Numeracy
- Learning to 18
- Special Education
- Teacher Development.

OTF is also engaged in the revision of regulation 184 of the Ontario College of Teachers Act.

This regulation deals with teacher qualification. The first phase of the review process examined initial teacher education. It is OTF's position that Ontario's teacher candidates graduate from faculties of education accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers; accordingly, further assessment of these beginning teachers is unnecessary. What is critical is the support of these new teachers by means of mentorship, additional resources, and a streamlined performance appraisal process.

Discussions continue in regard to the second phase of the review process that examines ongoing teacher education including Additional Qualifications (AQs), the Principals' Qualification Program (PQP), and the Supervisory Officers' Qualification Program (SOQP).

Governance of the Ontario College of Teachers has been an issue for teachers since the inception of the College. As teachers in publicly funded schools, we believe that if the College is truly to be a self-regulatory body that acts in the public interest, then teachers must have a clear majority of the seats on the governing body.

Presently the Governing Council is comprised of 31 members (14 government appointees and 17 elected members). However, four of the elected positions are designated as follows: one supervisory officer, one principal, one faculty representative, and one private school educator. OTF represents 144,000 teachers in the publicly funded public, Catholic, and francophone schools in Ontario. Clearly, representation on the Governing Council needs to be restructured to better reflect this membership.

When the Liberal government took office, the Minister of Education promised that he would restructure the College in a more representative fashion. OTF will continue to push for this change. Time is an issue as the next Council is scheduled to be elected in April 2006. **V**

Research shows us that simply talking at parents is futile. We need to build an alliance with parents on issues that they believe to be important.

Hilda Watkins is the OTF Table Officer for ETFO.

CTF 101 – an open letter to beginning teachers



■ by **Winston Carter**

As a new teacher you may not know that you have a national federation as well as a provincial organization to support you. You are part of a national professional organization, the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) through your membership in ETFO.

(This coming year, we welcome your president Emily Noble, to our executive committee. We look forward to continuing our strong working relationship with ETFO.)

Since its creation in 1920, CTF has been a powerful voice for teachers, promoting a strong public education system, thanks to the involvement of 17 member organizations in each province and territory. Today, CTF represents over 215,000 teachers across Canada.

CTF connects teachers and member organizations in various parts of the country by holding seminars and conferences on national educational issues.

Building Inclusive Schools: A Search for Solutions, the next national conference, will be held this November. Participants will examine and develop solutions and strategies that ensure children and youth are not excluded in the classroom as a result of culture, race, language, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, or ability. Registration and information are available on our website, www.ctf-fce.ca.

CTF supports teachers at the bargaining table with research and information from across the country on teacher salaries, pensions, and the full spectrum of benefits. To complement this research, CTF and ETFO held a national collective

bargaining conference in Toronto last June that brought together member organizations to focus solely on the current Canadian bargaining situation.

(As an aside, let me offer special kudos to ETFO for its remarkable work in obtaining the unique accord on a provincial framework for local collective agreements. This accord certainly sets a precedent for teacher collective bargaining in Canada.)

CTF provides the big picture on education issues. Whether it's teacher workload, commercialization in schools, media literacy, Francophone minority education, or the funding of public education, CTF strives to be on the leading edge of research covering national issues that member organizations have told us were relevant and important.

In addition to publishing research bulletins exclusively for member organizations, CTF also produces a variety of resources available to teachers and to the general public.

Some recent examples:

- *Virtual Education, Real Educators*: issues in on-line education
- *Seeing the Rainbow*, produced by CTF in cooperation with ETFO, presents some of the social and political contexts in which bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender, and two-spirited issues in education have been, are being, and need to be addressed
- *Lessons Learned*, a follow-up to *Seeing the Rainbow*, features personal stories and anecdotes.

More information on our publications is available on our website at www.ctf-fce.ca

CTF advocates for public education. Although education is a provincial and territorial responsibility, there are national issues that touch education, children, and youth including such issues as copyright in schools, the Young Offenders' Act, women's issues, the federal budget, tax and pension reforms, and employment insurance. CTF steps in and lobbies to make our positions and concerns known to the federal government.

CTF is a leader in international programs. Thanks to the support of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), CTF leads all Education International (EI) organizations in its commitment to international development. Our work, in partnership with member organizations, has helped colleagues around the world build teacher unions, recruit members, and promote the profession and the professional growth of members.

ETFO has been a major player in our international programs. For example, some 298 members of ETFO (and of its predecessor organizations, the Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario [FWTAO] and the Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation [OPSTF]) have helped teachers in developing countries as part of CTF's Project Overseas program. They are part of a national contingent of 1,711 Canadian teachers who, since the program began in 1963, have worked with close to 100,000 teachers around the world. Project Overseas participants have touched the


Winston Carter is President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation.

Since its creation in 1920, CTF has been a powerful voice for teachers, promoting a strong public education system.

lives of approximately 3 million students!

And this just skims the surface. I haven't covered all the work we've done on equity issues, literacy, anti-racism, and bullying. There is more information about our programs and activities on our website www.ctf-fce.ca.

I fully realize there's much stress for beginning teachers as you attempt to meet the educational needs of your students while juggling the many challenges imposed by the curriculum, class composition, and working conditions. But it is important to remember that, according to a March 2005 survey conducted by Léger Marketing, teaching is one of the most trusted professions in Canada.

All this to say that you're in good company. Welcome aboard! 

Project Overseas Seeks Volunteers

CTF is looking for English and French-speaking Canadian teachers at the primary, elementary, and secondary levels who are interested in working as volunteers in countries throughout Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean.

Each year about 50 Canadian teachers participate in the Canadian Federation of Teachers' Project Overseas. These teachers offer professional development in-service programs in partnership with teacher organizations in developing countries.

Based on requests from CTF's partners overseas, teams of Canadian teachers are formed in January and in-service projects take place in July and August.

Application criteria include:

- membership in a provincial or territorial teacher organization which sponsors Project Overseas and is a member of CTF
- an appropriate teacher's certificate
- at least five years teaching experience in Canada
- Canadian citizenship
- excellent health.

Project Overseas is a volunteer experience. Administrative, travel, and living expenses are borne by CTF, provincial and territorial teachers' organizations (which are CTF members), CIDA, and the Wild Rose Foundation. No salaries or honoraria are paid to participants, and the sponsors do not cover costs associated with substitute teachers or release time.

To apply: Application forms and further information are available from: www.ctf-fce.ca
The deadline for applications is **November 7, 2005**.

CTF's International Programs – Together We Make a Difference!

Karen Russell: Teaching in the U.S.A.

Home Country: Canada

U.S.A. Placement: Georgia

Professional Goal: Start an international pen-pal program

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Karen is teaching in the U.S.A. and gaining experience that will advance her career. Find out how you can do the same, at an information session in your area. Register to attend at www.vifprogram.com, call 877-798-4115 or e-mail canada@vifprogram.com for all inquiries.



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Grammarama!

by **Les Parsons**

Pembroke Publishers Limited,
2004
112 pages, \$ 21.95

Reviewed by Marjan Glavac

Grammar. Just saying the word brings back painful memories of dull, boring, and repetitious exercises.

It also brings back the words of my teachers: "You may hate me now for doing this, but you'll thank me later."

They were right. We did thank them later for teaching us proper grammar. But, was it ever boring!

Les Parsons' book, *Grammarama!*, is an attempt to change all that. He gives teachers and students a series of reproducible, ready-to-use activity sheets designed to build on the language skills students already possess. His activity sheets are indeed easy to understand and easy to do. They are suitable for grades 5-8. An answer key is also provided.

The author's knowledge of grammar is all encompassing, including the influences on English grammar – from Latin to

instant messaging. (The former has influenced countless grammar teachers and the latter, students in the digital generation.)

Parsons has a very engaging, down-to-earth, and intuitive way of connecting grammar to students. (Not an easy task in the best of times!) He weaves a middle, flexible path in his method of teaching grammar.

This can clearly be seen in Parson's discussion of American English and British English, and in the way he deals with specific aspects of grammar that cause no end of grief for students (and teachers!): 'and' beginning a sentence; can and may; gotten; he as a gender-neutral pronoun; hopefully; indefinite pronouns in a plural sense; like; Ms; prepositions ending a sentence; pronunciation; shall/will; so as conjunctions; and split infinitives.

Parson's exercises are far from the parsing exercises of old and dusty grammar books. This is an author who knows how students of today use and compose their own grammar (hw r u ? cul8r). He understands what teachers are up against when they teach grammar and what kinds of exercises truly engage today's students.

.....
Marjan Glavac teaches at Wilfrid Jury PS in London.



My Sad is All Gone: a Family's Triumph over Violent Autism

by **Thelma Wheatley**

Publisher: Lucky Press, LLC,
2005
288 pages, \$18.00 US

Reviewed by Ruth Boughan

This book is a very personal story of an autistic boy written by his mother, a special education teacher. It is a Canadian story, taking place in southern Ontario, so the struggles with educational programs, funding, accessing specialists, and trying different programs and medications are relevant to Ontario teachers and parents today.

The story follows the boy from infancy to his mid-twenties, citing the struggles that his family went through to receive educational and medical help. The boy, Julian, became violent as a young teenager and was suspended from school many times. He also trashed his home and put his family's and his own safety in jeopardy. The family researched and tried different programs and took Julian to several doctors.

It is a heart-rending story, but has a happy ending when Julian's violence is controlled with medication and he is able to work in the community with limited supervision.

I would recommend this book to any teacher who works with PDD/Autistic children. It is particularly relevant for those who work with children in intermediate or high school programs, but I work with primary/junior children and found it very engaging and relevant. It helped me give more thought to where my students are headed and how I need to better prepare them for life in the real world.

If you've ever had a problem with a parent who seems to advocate very strongly for their child, this book will give you a glimpse into the struggles from the parent's perspective.

.....
Ruth Boughan teaches a communications behaviour area class at Blair Road School in Waterloo Region DSB.

Teacher Professional Development Courses

The University of Ontario Institute of Technology is offering AQ and ABQ courses to support professional development. The courses will be offered online, in-class, or blended.

For schedules, course descriptions, and registration information please visit <http://education.uoit.ca> and click "inservice" under the "future students" link. Visit www.oct.ca for additional information about AQ and ABQ requirements.



Putting on a Show: Theater For Young People

by **Kathleen McDonnell**

Second Story Press,
200 pages, \$14.95

Reviewed by Jane Cliff

Although poems, novels and picture books written for children are an excellent source of good dialogue for dramatic activities, teachers are hungry for scripts appropriate for junior/middle grade classrooms.

In *Putting On a Show*, award-winning author and playwright Kathleen McDonnell provides the complete text and stage directions for four of her best-known plays. These deal with issues like self-esteem and the impact humans have on nature, and provide numerous opportunities for discussions about relationships and conflict resolution.

Most stories are populated by fairy godmothers, Greek gods, and characters who morph into loons and ravens.

In "Loon Boy" a troubled eleven year old learns how to deal with the strong emotion associated with past, hurtful relationships as he develops a new,

trusting friendship with his foster mother.

The eleven-year-old heroine of "Ezzie's Emerald" struggles to find the inner voice that will allow her to deal effectively with bullies. The author captures the angst associated with negotiating friendships at this age. The situations that Ezzie faces will resound with compelling familiarity among all school-age children.

"The Seven Ravens" is a Brothers Grimm tale in which the female character, Little Dove, rescues her seven brothers. Two versions of this play as well as the original story are included, showing how the same story can be adapted in different ways.

"Foundlings" is set in ancient Greece but includes modern characters who grapple with familiar problems.

Putting On a Show provides the reader with an excellent introduction to the history of theater. It also discusses the roles of the playwright, actors and behind-the-scene theater workers.

This book provides rich, thought-provoking material that educators can use to allow students to explore their feelings and values. Plays are easily adapted for use during literature circles.

.....
Jane Cliff teaches Grade 6 at Royal Orchard Middle School, Peel DSB. She is passionate about teaching drama.

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Teachers' Trivia

by Peter Harrison

Age Rage

Jane is twice as old as Jean was when Jane was half as old as Joan will be when Joan is three times as old as Jane was when, 16 years ago, Jane was three times as old as Jean.

How old is Jane ?

Send your answers to ETFOvoice@etfo.org, with the word 'Trivia' in the subject line. You may also mail your entry to Editor, ETFO Voice at the address on the masthead. Three winners will be drawn from the all correct entries received by November 30, 2005.

Answer to our last puzzle, Enlarger

We had three correct entries.

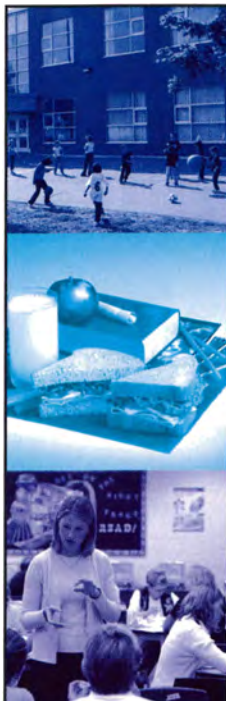
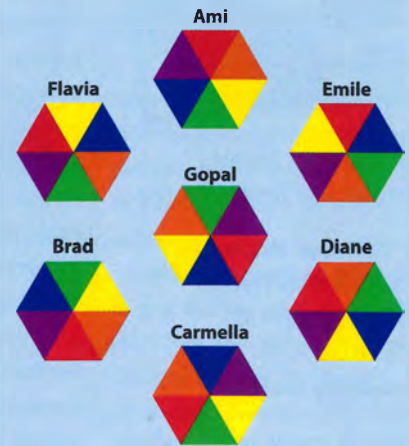
The winners are:

Colin Bridges, Christine Kutenkeuler, and Laurene Hayman.

Congratulations!

Solution to Rainbow's End

In our last issue we inadvertently rotated some of the hexagons in our diagram of the solution to our spring puzzle, Rainbow's End. Here is the solution to that puzzle again.



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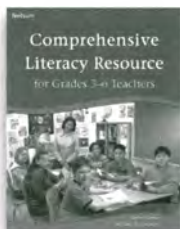
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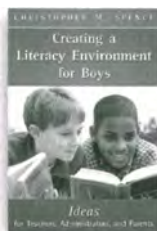
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November 3, 4 - Toronto

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Metro Toronto Conventorio Centre
 Contact: Mary Gayle Goebel, Conference
 Manager
 Telephone: 416-226-9756 or Fax 416-221-9926
 E-mail: mggoebel@interlog.com
 Website: www.frip2005.ca

November 3 - 5, 2005 - Philadelphia, PA National Middle school Association (NMSA) 32nd Annual Conference & Exhibit

Contact: NSMA
 Website: www.nmsa.org
 Phone: 1-800-528-NMSA or 614-895-4730
 Fax: 614-895-4750

November 2, 2005

The Learning Partnership presents TAKE OUR KIDS TO WORK

A chance for kids to try on a different hat or a completely new wardrobe. Parents, teachers, and workplaces are asked to register online at
 Website: www.takeourkidstowork.ca.

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the Council of Drama and Dance in Education (CODE) and the Ontario Society for Education Through Art (OSEA) Conference 2005.
 Harold M. Brathwaite Secondary School
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 For additional information see
www.code.on.ca and /or www.osea.on.ca.

April 27 - April 30, 2006 - Toronto

Collage 2006

Carol Orff Canada-Music for children presents their 19th national conference entitled COLLAGE 2006. The annual conference for both classroom & specialist teachers features seminars and workshops hosted by world-class clinicians from Canada and abroad. 2006 Keynote speaker, Farley Flex of Canadian Idol. Toronto Hilton Hotel
 145 Richmond Street West
 Toronto, ON M5H 2L2
 Contact: Brenda Schepper
 E-mail: collage2006@hotmail.com
 Phone: 705-745-6807

The Canadian Education Exchange Foundation

is now accepting applications for the 2006/2007 school year. Destinations include the Republic of Ireland (elementary only), the United Kingdom including Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales and England, Denmark, France, Switzerland, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Australia, and the United States. For more information or an application: go to
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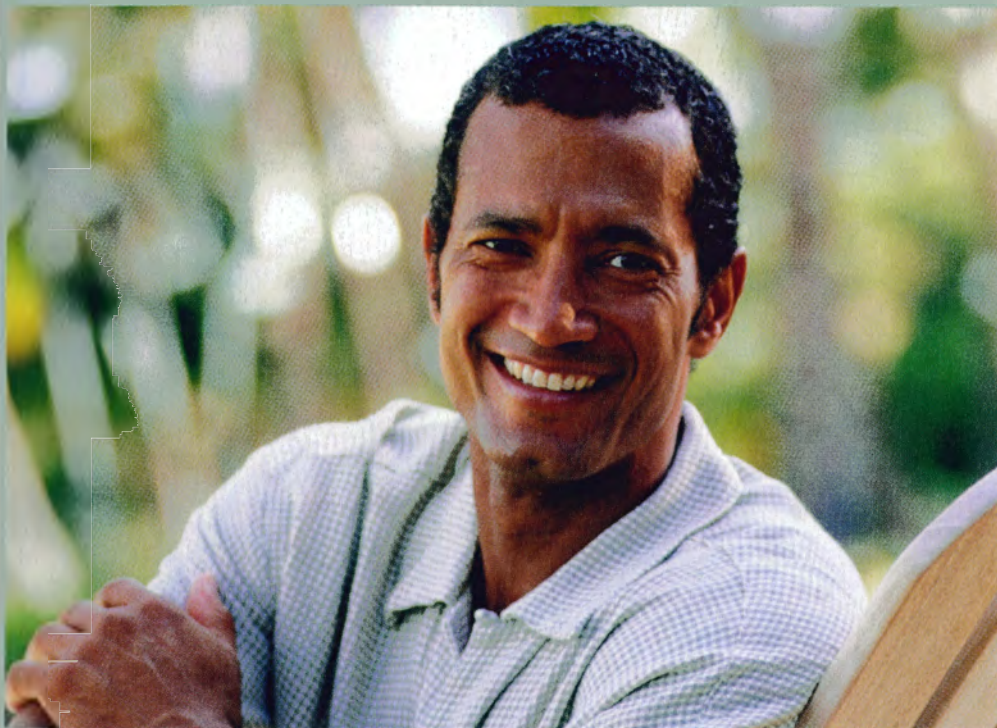
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