



ETFO VOICE

Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

Contents

Volume 1 Number 2

Page 2

- President
- General Secretary
- Professional Relations

Page 3

- ETFO Class Size
- Get Connected

Page 4

- ETFO News
- Child Poverty

Page 5

- Equity in ETFO

Page 6

- Election 1999 - Get Involved

Page 7

- Report Cards Fail Grade

Page 8

- Meaningful Participation in the Regular Classroom
- How Fit Are You?

Page 9

- Collective Bargaining
- OTF News

Page 10

- Classifieds
- Calendar

Page 11

- Good News from ETFO Locals

Page 12

- Dive Into The Wonderful World of Art
- Take Action - Provincial Election Checklist



Visit the ETFO Web Site at www.etfo.on.ca for up-to-the-minute information on your Federation.

Take Action! ETFO prepares for the Election

Mike Harris is likely to call an election sooner rather than later this spring. ETFO has been working hard to meet this challenge and to make sure education remains at the centre of debate during the election period. Here's how ETFO has been preparing to protect publicly funded education and the rights of teachers, education workers and students:

Building coalitions

ETFO has been working with the other Affiliates of the Ontario Teachers' Federation, labour unions, social justice networks and others to build a strong coalition capable of speaking out about the effects of Tory policies on education, health and social issues. This coalition has developed into a valuable forum for information sharing and coordination of communications and political action strategies.

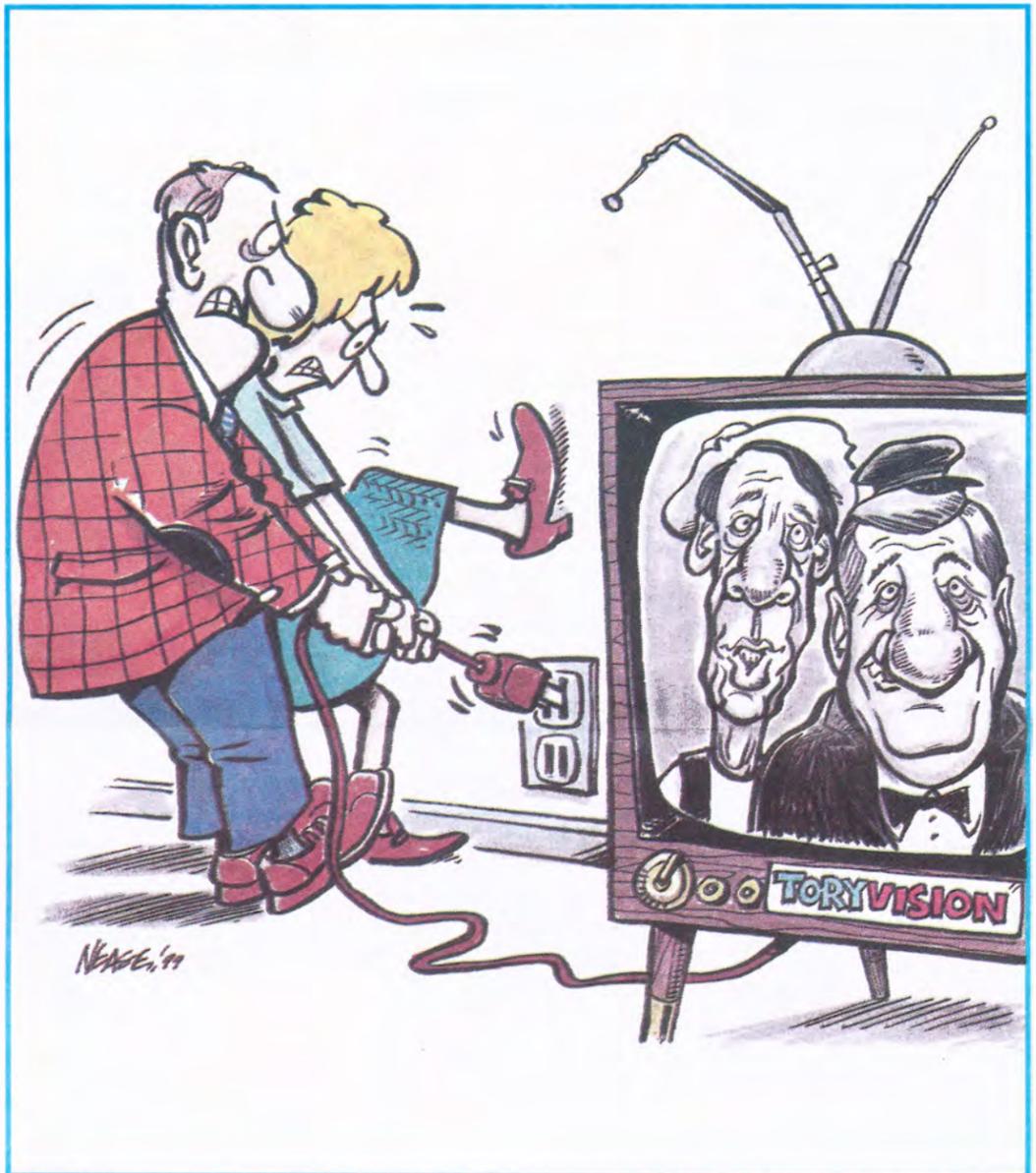
One of the coalitions with which ETFO is working is dedicated to increasing the number of women voters. The coalition, which is active in a number of cities and towns across Ontario, wants to ensure more women get out to vote. Polls show that women are more likely to support progressive health and education related policies than men - a gender gap that has been tracked right across North America.

Provincial training

An All-Affiliate meeting of Local Presidents took place in Toronto on January 23. A great deal of information was shared. On February 6, a follow-up session for ETFO Local Presidents took place at the Representative Council.

Local training

ETFO, through OTF, has been offering local level workshops to train members to work in election campaigns. Provincial office staff are also working with Locals to support their election activities.



Riding analyses

ETFO and its coalition partners have analyzed the voting patterns of each electoral riding and have offered preliminary advice on the best candidate to support. Each ETFO Local is deciding on how best to allocate resources and implement an effective election strategy.

Local support materials

ETFO is preparing posters, pamphlets and other election materials for distribution to school stewards. Radio scripts and print advertisements will be made available for Local use.

Media campaign

ETFO has purchased

space on 205 billboards across Ontario for a four-week period commencing April 12. ETFO will be running a radio campaign as well. OTF and the Affiliates will mount a media campaign during the election period.

While members can expect to see their Federation in the forefront during the election, here's something that might give you an unpleasant surprise:

Voters' list chaos

The voters list that will be used for this provincial election is the same one used for the last Federal election. This potentially creates a major problem for people con-

cerned about democratic process in Ontario.

With this out-dated list in hand, it appears the provincial government is preparing to enumerate only brand new subdivisions - particularly in the suburban belt surrounding Toronto. What this means is that the many thousands of people who have moved since the Federal enumeration will not be correctly identified on the voters list. While voters will be able to sign up at the polls on voting day, long lines at polling stations will discourage all but the most determined from doing so.

Story continued on page 10. See "Take Action."

ETFO Political Action Calendar

For the latest information about nomination meetings, campaign fundraisers, education forums and other public events, check the ETFO web site (www.etfo.on.ca) and click on "Political Action Calendar". If you know of a local event that should be added to the list, contact Vivian McCaffrey at Provincial office.

President

EVERY MEMBER IS PART OF THE PLAN

Election fever is rising in Ontario. Why else would the provincial government be spending money on health care and responding to emotional education buttons like "Safe Arrival" programs, zero tolerance for violence and dress codes? Interestingly, all these topics had already been field tested by the Tories, who were ready to trot them out as needed.

The question is - Are we ready? Are we, as one of Mike Harris' much maligned "special interest" groups, prepared to do whatever we can to protect our public education system?

At February's meeting of ETFO's Representative Council, I was asked when "The Plan" was coming to engage members in political action. Once again, I realized that some members still believe there is a "ready-made, one-size-fits-all" program that can be unwrapped and, magically, political activism begins.

There is no such plan.

What ETFO, OTF and our sister Affiliates have developed is a strategic plan which has a number of components and initiatives. We have identified the provincial electoral ridings where, with our commitment and involvement, we can potentially affect the outcome at the ballot box. We have researched political histories of

ridings and have offered our best advice to the Locals. We have reached out and made important connections to other labour groups, social coalition groups, health coalitions and parent groups.

But none of this can work without you.

I know curriculum demands have eaten away considerably at your personal time. I know you have barely recovered from this first round of report cards and here they are again. I know many of you are still reeling from collective bargaining crises. I know many of you are still in the midst of the process.

You are tired, over-worked and underappreciated. You have had politicians attack your professionalism through unfounded insinuations and insults.

However, you, and only you, will make a difference in this election. For if we, as educators, do not give of our time and expertise to informing our family members, our friends and the public about what quality education should be in this province, then we will see the continued dismantling of our once fine public school system.

We cannot allow ourselves, or any other voter in Ontario, to believe that this government has been good for either students or public education in this province. We must think strategically. We must support the candidate most likely to defeat the local Tory. Sometimes, the choice between the Liberal and the New Democrat is a difficult one. You can help by calling your Local President and asking which candidate the

Local has decided to endorse or feels most comfortable supporting. Some of us might have to hold our noses. The process is not always a clean one. But will we be able to look each other in the eye if this government is re-elected without opposition from teachers and education workers? Think about it. Make sure you are on the voters list - there will be no enumeration this time around - work for the candidate of choice - and vote.

This democratic exercise just might return a government that is more responsive, more genuinely interested in public education and children, less committed to change for the sake of change, and definitely less confrontational.

Ontario deserves better government than has been delivered by these Reform/Tories. Now is our opportunity to exercise our democratic right and do everything we can to remove them from the powerful positions which they have abused so thoroughly.



Phyllis Benedict is the President of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. □

General Secretary

Your Union, Your Profession.

Just as your life and your profession have changed over the years, your union is changing as well. Some will find the changes discomfiting, others will find them not nearly aggressive enough. Everyone should recognize that the status quo is not an option. As an organization we must evolve to meet the needs of our members and our profession. Most importantly, as a new organization and the largest teacher union in Canada, our foremost goal must be to provide the highest calibre of service to our members. To achieve that goal we offer much to our members; we also expect a lot from our members.

ETFO is first and foremost a union to represent and protect our members. We bargain aggressively and confidently to secure the best possible terms and conditions of employment. We support members who are subject to unjust allegations. We provide unparalleled professional growth programs. We speak out on status of women, social justice and equity issues. We provide leadership and training opportunities for members

that no school board can equal. In return, we expect the loyalty and support of our members.

Most members will recognize that the challenges we face differ little from those of the broader public sector and understand the need to strengthen our ties with the labour community. As well, in a democratic organization the promotion of status of women, social justice, and equity issues must be at the centre of all we do. We are presented with an unparalleled opportunity to build an organization that is strong, responsive and unique. This is an opportunity that must be embraced in all corners of the Federation; not a task to be left to a few.

Get involved

If you are an experienced teacher and have yet to take on the challenge of Federation work, it's never too late. If you are a beginning teacher, there is no more effective leadership training program than working in the union. One learns very quickly how to establish priorities, promote concepts, and reach consensus. The knowledge and leadership skills gained in Federation work last a lifetime and are very transferable.

The face of teaching and the character of our schools will change dramatically over the next few years as the age of the average

teacher continues to rise. Many of those who have for decades served children and their school communities valiantly will exercise their option for early retirement when they reach the 85 factor. This group will bid adieu to a career which has been their livelihood and their life. As those with more hair and hair slightly less silver take up the profession, we can't help but wonder whether teaching will serve them as well as it has their predecessors. Most will admit that, barring the last few tumultuous years, education and teaching has been an exciting and fulfilling journey.

Similar to the renewal that is occurring in our schools, our Federation is changing as well. In the "good old days" the Federation was, for many, a social club as well as a bargaining agent. Regular meetings provided time to get together with teacher friends. For most, other than the select few who toiled on collective agreements and teacher board relations, that was all that was required. In today's environment our Federation is a full fledged union and it is equally as challenged by the political and financial attacks on public education as are the schools in which we teach. Working in Federation is now a job for every

Story continued on page 5. See "Your Union."

Allegations of Assault What to do if it happens to you

by Professional Relations Services Staff

Even if an allegation is unfounded, the stakes are very high. An improperly handled response to an allegation can have serious consequences for your career.

Increasingly, calls come in to ETFO's Professional Relations Services from members who may be facing an allegation of assault. The Federation takes these kinds of allegations very seriously and advises proceeding with great caution even if the allegation seems totally unfounded.

The Federation's experience is that even the most minor matters of this type may escalate out of control up to and including a criminal investigation and criminal charge. A supportive principal and board cannot always guarantee that matters will resolve themselves. Parents have the right to take such allegations beyond school board personnel. The most likely agencies are the police and the Children's Aid Society (CAS). All three in fact may become involved before the issue is resolved.

Protect yourself against allegations

Our advice is always to avoid situations that could lead to an allegation of assault. It is unwise to touch children, physically move them, or steer them in another direction. A simple touch can become the basis of an allegation of assault. Avoid situations where you are alone with a student. At times it will be necessary to use restraint procedures in a potentially harmful situation. Be certain that the procedures used by staff are agreed upon by your principal and communicated to parents.

What to do if an allegation is made

Here are the steps to follow if an allegation of assault is made against you:

- Call Professional Relations Services immediately at 416-962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836. Each situation is unique and PRS will provide confidential information and assistance. The ETFO and, if necessary, its lawyers are there to protect you.

- Make no statements to anyone, no matter how sympathetic or convincing they are, until you have spoken to your federation. This includes board personnel and even your own family members because in criminal cases involving children anyone is a compellable witness. A statement is anything that you say or that you put in writing related to the alleged incident.

Our advice in these matters is not meant to cut members off from support systems. Members may discuss the fact that there is an allegation with family members and spouses and may discuss their feelings and reactions. The only prohibition is upon

discussion of the alleged incident, the member's version, and response to allegations.

- If you are asked for a statement, the following will suffice: *I would like to cooperate but I can not make any statement or discuss the matter further until I have had an opportunity to speak with the ETFO.*

Additional information to note

Even if the police and CAS are not yet involved, there is a distinct possibility that they may be. When a parent contacts a principal about an assault allegation, the principal has the responsibility to investigate the allegation and may in turn contact CAS or police should she/he feel there may be any substance to the complaint. CAS in turn may contact the police. Procedures may vary somewhat from board to board. Members should be informed of board policies for investigations.

The police and the CAS can be very persuasive in attempting to get a statement. Two common approaches include to keep asking questions after the member declines to give a statement - people often feel obliged to respond - and the old 'we just need to hear your side of the story to clear this matter up' line.

Members are often certain that they have done nothing wrong and have difficulty understanding why they should not make statements. *Even denials are statements and can be dangerous.* Part of the role of legal counsel is to ensure that appropriate denials are properly communicated but they must first obtain the information and discuss the matter with the member.

If time has passed since the incident or it involves complicated sequences of events, you may make personal *Story continued on page 9. See "Allegations"*

ETFO VOICE

Volume 1, Number 2
Toronto Station F,
P.O. Box 1100, Toronto,
ON M4Y 2T7
Telephone: (416) 962-3836
/1-888-838-3836 (ETFO)
www.etfo.on.ca

Editor
Charlotte Morgan
Editorial Assistant
Pauline Doucet
Designer
Pat Walker

Printer
DelGraphics Ltd.
Business Manager
Gene Lewis

Advertising Sales
Charlotte Morgan

MEMBER
Canadian Educational Press
Association
Indexed in the Canadian
Educational Index/Repertoire
canadien sur l'éducation.
ISSN: 1481-4072

Three editions of VOICE will be published in 1998-1999.

Articles contained herein reflect the view of the author and do not necessarily express official policy of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario.

Acceptance of an advertisement does not imply ETFO endorsement of the product or service. Advertising contracts are subject to cancellation if members complain.

Publications mail agreement 1444905

No winners in ETFO's class size contest

Pat McAdie and
Mary Morison

Last August, ETFO announced a contest to find the largest elementary public school class in Ontario. Bill 160 sets average class size limits per board of 25 in elementary and 22 in secondary. ETFO's contest was designed to show the public that the use of the word "average" does not mean elementary students would be in classes of 25 or fewer. On December 2, ETFO held a news conference at the Ontario Legislature to announce the contest's results.

Phyllis Benedict, President of ETFO, told journalists that "There are no winners in our class size contest. There are losers, though, our students."

Benedict said that 550 entries had been received from teachers working in 28 of Ontario's 31 district school boards.

In their entries, teachers described:

- a kindergarten class with 32 students;
- a grade two/three class with 35 students, eight of whom have special needs;
- a grade four French class with 43 students, 15 of whom have special needs;
- a grade five class with 39 students, 12 of whom have special needs;
- three grade eight music classes with 50 students;
- a grade eight class with 38 students, three of whom have special needs; and many, many more.

ETFO decided not to identify the individual teachers and classes who 'won' this contest. The teachers did not want their classes to be the talk of the town. They want to do their job. Here's what teachers said about their classes:

The very biggest class
The music teacher at a

grade six, seven, eight school in southern Ontario has three classes of 50 grade six students, a total of 150 students, to whom he teaches recorder and vocal music. Each class of 50 is made up of students from two different grade six classes. In each class there are several special education students, a small number for whom English is a second language, and some behavioural problems. The music period is only 40 minutes long.

"We are trying to cope!" this teacher says.

And the next largest class

This core French teacher at an inner city JK-eight school in southern Ontario teaches core French every day to 42 grade four students, 15 of whom have special needs. The students come from two classes, a grade four and the grade four students from a split class. This part-time teacher shares her classroom with another French teacher who uses the room in the afternoon.

"It's crowd control!" this teacher says.

And another one

This grade eight teacher at a small JK-eight school in southwestern Ontario has 38 students in his class, including three students with special needs and 15 of whom fall under the 20th percentile in testing. He is also the computer contact person for his school.

This teacher is concerned he can't give students individual attention or do the evaluation he feels would be helpful. "There is no point complaining; we need to get on with doing the job," he says.

And another one

This grade two/three teacher in a small school in rural eastern Ontario has a

class of 33 students, six of whom have special needs. She has a teaching assistant who works all day with three of the special needs students. As well, the special needs students spend time each day in the school's Learning Resource Centre.

"We are managing. The classroom is very crowded. There are enough desks and a couple of aisles. There are sufficient materials. The staff at this school are wonderfully resourceful. Each day brings a new challenge" this teacher says.

And a whole school that deserves a mention

One school stood out as we looked at the finalists in the class size contest. This school, located in an eastern Ontario suburban community, has three classes among the finalists, two grade four classes and a grade seven class, each with 35 students. No senior class in this school has fewer than 30 students.

The school is large, over 800 students in JK to grade eight. It is relatively new. The parents are actively involved and the school has many resources other schools do not have. But even with that, the classes are large.

The Board has already eliminated teacher-librarians. There is no allocation for guidance teachers. Discrete special education classes have been cut back. There are no assigned computer resource people in the schools. This leaves very little flexibility for staffing. Teachers accepted larger classes to protect the Junior-Intermediate music program. Teachers shouldn't have to make these choices. Students deserve better.

In summary

The government's funding model means that:

- in most parts of the province, the average class

size will increase;

- many classes will be significantly larger than 25 (that is, after all, the meaning of average - some bigger and some smaller); and

- students will not get the individual attention they need and that teachers want to give them.

No teacher would choose to teach large classes. Everyone who responded to ETFO's contest noted that large classes make it hard to give students individual attention or effectively evaluate students' progress. Teachers work very hard to make the best of the resources allocated to the school. The problem is, they have no control over how these resources are meted-out further up the administrative chain. Teachers are just left to divide up the resources when they arrive at the school.

"The situation is not accept-

able," said Benedict. "We can and should be providing our students with the small classes we know will enhance their learning now and into the future. Ontario should follow the lead of British Columbia and many U.S. states and cap class sizes and provide funds to ensure that the caps can be met."



Mary Morison and Pat McAdie are staff in ETFO's Communications and Political Action Services Department. □

Class size facts

- Students in small classes consistently outperform students in regular classes.
- In small classes, more time is spent on curriculum, covering the material faster and in more depth. Less time is spent on classroom management.
- Students in small classes receive more individual attention from their teachers.
- Students in small classes are less likely to repeat a grade.
- More students who need special services are identified earlier in small classes. This reduces the long-term costs of later identification.
- Students in small classes are more motivated and less likely to be disruptive.
- In British Columbia, no kindergarten class will be over 20 and no grade one, two or three class will be over 22 by the year 2000/2001. This is being phased-in, beginning in 1998/1999.
- The Alberta Conservative Party has adopted a resolution to limit class size to 22 students from kindergarten to grade three and provide sufficient funding for the limit.
- In Ontario, the average class size in the elementary grades was 24.3 in 1997. The government has mandated that the average class size by board be no more than 25.
- The class size "contest" conducted by ETFO reveals there are a great many classes with over 35 students, some as high as 42, 43 and even 50.
- Capping average class size, as the Ontario government has done, does not limit class sizes.



GET CONNECTED

Let the Education Network of Ontario (ENO/REO) work for you



Marg Couture

Some members of ETFO will remember the early 1990s, when the Ontario Teachers' Federation introduced "Creating a Culture of Change," also known as the "3 Cs" program. Many took the opportunity to join the "Electronic Village," as it came to be known. As an early participant in this project, I spent many hours participating in the conferences that dealt with issues of concern to educators.

The 'Village' has undergone many changes in the last five years:

- It has been renamed the Education Network of Ontario (ENO/REO) and is now an independent, non-profit Ontario-based corporation.
- It is now a joint project of the Ministry of Education and Training and the Ministry of Economic Develop-

ment and Trade and Tourism with the mentorship of the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF). ENO/REO's primary goal is to enhance school-based educator professionalism through electronic networking.

ENO/REO has developed as an industry-standard Intranet, a professional environment in which to communicate, solve problems, enhance classroom activities, develop model programs, and showcase new ideas. Services include:

- Internet electronic mail;
- moderated conferencing (150 newsgroups) with different permissions and access for different groups; and
- full Internet access through a system of distributed servers (34) and access points throughout Ontario.

All Ontario educators can access the services from anywhere in the province with-

out incurring long distance charges. This is done by means of "local" call numbers in 25 communities and "1-800" service elsewhere. Students are able to interact at appropriate levels while their true identity and location is unknown to one another and the general adult community. Student use is sponsored by teachers and schools with Acceptable Use Policies for the Internet.

ENO/REO enlarges the scope of all JK-OAC educational professionals, including administrators, trustees, support staff and Ministry and Faculty of Education staff. The project presently involves 60,000 members, half the elementary and secondary educators in the province.

Who can join ENO/REO?

Anyone who works in or who is involved in a formal

role in publicly funded elementary or secondary education in Ontario is eligible to become an ENO/REO member with a private account. Teachers who are not currently employed but who possess a current Ontario College of Teachers Certificate of Qualification and are involved in ENO-sponsored projects are also eligible to become ENO/REO members.

There is no charge for the service, because ENO is funded by the Ontario government. However, members are required to limit their use to educational pursuits and work off-line as much as possible. Members who abuse this service will be subject to suspension and membership review by the Board of Directors.

If you are already a member, have not used the system in a long while and have forgotten your password, sim-

ply call ENO and your password will be provided to you. Your usercode is the first four letters of your first and last name. For example, if your name is John Brown, your usercode is johnbrow.

To join for the first time, complete an ENO application. Once you complete the form, your usercode, password and information sheet will be mailed to your address within three to four weeks.

To access ENO requires Netscape 3 (Navigator), Netscape 4 (Communicator) or Internet Explorer software.

Conference areas

ENO/REO's 150 conference/newsgroups for general member participation encourage discussion and develop on-line collaboration.

Story continued on page 9.
See ENO/REO

ETFO Acts Globally Support for Mexican Teachers

The Government of Mexico is attacking public education in much the same way the Mike Harris Tories are attacking education in Ontario.

During the Political Protest, the National Educational Workers' Union of Mexico (SNTE) sent letters of support to OTF. Since then, SNTE has been very interested in learning the strategies OTF used to involve not only teachers and education workers, but also parents and concerned citizens in our struggle to protect public education. SNTE was particularly interested in the peaceful aspects of our actions.

In September 1998, the Mexican government jailed five SNTE leaders. Recently, the government increased its pressure to silence the union by imprisoning another union representative and cutting the telephone and fax lines to the union office.

ETFO and other Canadian teacher organizations sent strong messages to the Government of Mexico and, at its January 1999 meeting, ETFO's Provincial Executive approved financial support for the legal defense of the imprisoned teacher leaders.

ETFO has just been informed by the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) that the Supreme Court of Mexico has ruled in favour of Blanca Luna Becerrill, Nestor Manuel Trujano Molina, Elio Bejarano Martinez, Alejandro Salcido and Maria del Refugio Jimenez Florescano. These five union leaders have been released from prison and charges of illegal confinement, theft and mutiny have been dropped.

"I am sure that the many letters of protest sent to President Zedillo and other Mexican officials by teacher organizations and labour groups were instrumental in obtaining the release of our colleagues," said CTF President Jan Eastman. For further information, 'e' mail mariluz@servidor.unam.mx.

Apply now for an ETFO Committee Appointment

ETFO invites applications from members interested in joining one of the Federation's provincial Standing Committees. Committee members may expect to meet three times a year in Toronto.

Applications have been forwarded to Local Presidents and ETFO School Stewards. **Deadline for applications for appointments to all committees is April 15.**

Members are now being sought for the following 1999/2000 appointments:

- Aboriginal Education
- Annual Meeting
- Anti-racist education
- Awards
- Collective bargaining
- Curriculum/Professional Development
- Early Years
- Education Support Personnel
- Gender Equity
- Human Rights
- International Assistance
- Occasional Teacher
- Pension
- Political Action
- Positions of Added Responsibility*
- Professional Relations
- Status of Women
- Teacher Education/Faculty Liaison.**

*ETFO's PAR Committee is currently inactive.

** Applicants should live near a Faculty of Education.

Appointments may be sought also to the following OTF Committees:

- Curriculum Forum
- International Assistance
- Relations and Discipline
- Roy C. Hill Awards
- Status of Women
- Teacher Education*

* No applications are required.

Committee members will be selected from the ETFO Teacher Education Committee according to Faculties of Education designated by OTF.

Committee members are being sought also for:

- Qualifications Evaluation Council of Ontario
- Ontario Teachers Insurance Plan
- Northern Centre for Instructional Leadership*

* Meetings will be held in North Bay. Applicants should live near North Bay.

Deadline for all applications is April 15. For more information, contact your School Steward. □

Child Poverty increasing in Ontario

On January 6, Campaign 2000 held a news conference in Toronto to announce the results of their 1998 Report Card on Child Poverty. Formed in 1989, Campaign 2000 is a Coalition of organizations dedicated to eliminating child poverty in Canada by the year 2000. Ontario Campaign 2000 coalition partners include: Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario, Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, Ontario Social Development Council, Registered Nurses Association of Ontario, Interfaith Social Assistance Review Coalition, and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

many families today rely on food banks to feed their children. Forty per cent of all food bank users are children.

- In 1990, more than 80% of unemployed people were eligible for unemployment insurance. In 1998, fewer than 30% of the unemployed in Ontario were eligible.

- In 1980, after-tax average family income in Ontario was \$49,620. In 1996, it was \$48,988 (in 1996 dollars). Total household income in Toronto dropped by 9.9% between 1991 and 1996.

- Three hundred thousand poor people in Ontario are crowding into the homes of friends and relatives, living from shelter to shelter or on the street. Families now represent about 56% of the homeless.

- There were 5,300 children living in hostels in



Appalling but true:

- In 1989, there were 254,000 poor children in Ontario. By 1996, the number had more than doubled - to 548,000.

- In 1989, one child in ten was poor in Ontario. By 1996, one child in five was poor. The increase in the child poverty rate in Ontario is the highest in Canada.

- The number of children in unaffordable rental housing in Ontario has increased 123% since 1989. For children, housing is more than shelter; it is a secure place in the community - a place to play and go to school.

- The poverty gap - the money it would take to lift all poor children in Canada out of poverty - increased from \$4.4 billion in 1989 to \$7.5 billion in 1996 (constant 1996\$).

- Nearly half the families with incomes under \$20,000 were not able to participate in sports/physical activities because of high costs.

- Food banks report that, compared with 1989, twice as

Toronto in 1996. There are more than 100,000 people on the waiting list for social housing in Toronto, including 31,000 children. It will take 17 years to work through this list.

- In 1973, the richest 10% of families with children under 18 made 24 times more than the poorest 10% of Canadian families. In 1996, the richest 10% of families made 314 times more than the poorest 10% of Canadian families.

It is Canada's national shame that Campaign 2000 will not reach its goal of eliminating child poverty by the beginning of the new millennium. And there can be no doubt the situation has been exacerbated in Ontario by the Harris government's 21% cutback to social assistance.. The upcoming provincial election campaign is a good time to ask those running for office about their commitment to helping all our children grow up properly housed, nourished and educated.

WANTED Instructor for Planning and Programming Course

The Federation plans to hold a provincial planning and programming course during a week in July.

Participants in this course are members who have experienced professional difficulties and who have been in contact with ETFO's Professional Relations Services Staff.

As an instructor you would be assisting participants in planning and preparing for the next school year. The format includes knowing the characteristics of the learner; the study of curriculum appropriate to the grade level; the creation of long and short term plans; and modifying plans for individual students. The time is divided between planning, classroom management and professionalism.

Participants will have time to apply their learning to their own planning for September under the supervision of the instructors.

As an instructor you will work as a member of a team with two other instructors in delivering the workshop.

The following characteristics are needed in an instructor for the planning and programming course:

- Strong human relations skills
- Flexibility in working with a range of individuals with specific needs.
- A broad knowledge of curriculum - kindergarten to grade eight in all subjects.
- A firm understanding of how planning occurs and how it can be adjusted to class and individual needs.
- Workshop experience and/or experience in working with elementary teachers in a resource capacity.

Any member interested in applying to be an instructor should send a copy of their resume and references to the ETFO Provincial Office, Toronto Station F, P.O. Box 1100, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2T7; Attention: Jan Moxey. Deadline for receipt of applications to the ETFO office is Friday April 23, 1999.

Teachers' Institute on Canadian Parliamentary Democracy

November 1-6, 1999 ♦ Parliament Hill ♦ Ottawa

Get an insider's view of Canada's parliamentary system ♦ Meet political, procedural and pedagogical experts ♦ Explore key issues in parliamentary democracy ♦ Share ideas, resources and methods for teaching about government and citizenship

To be eligible, you must currently teach social studies (or a related subject) to students between grades 4 and 12, OAC (Ontario) or CEGEP (Quebec) ♦ Seventy applicants will be selected by a committee of educators from across the country ♦ A registration fee of \$300 is payable upon selection ♦ The programme covers travel costs, meals, accommodation and materials

To apply, please contact: Library of Parliament
Tel.: (613) 992-4793 ♦ Fax: (613) 995-1309
Internet: www.parl.gc.ca (Parliamentary Programs)
Applications must be postmarked by April 30, 1999
Renseignements disponibles en français



Playbill Theatre Productions' 1999 Season

Professional Theatre for Student Audiences. Open a new door. Open a new mind.

TOM SAWYER

Recommended Grades 3-7

The Greatest children's adventure story ever!

Hamilton February 11
Nepean February 15
London February 17-19
Toronto February 22-26

THE SECRET GARDEN

Recommended Grades K-4

Unforgettable tale of caring, giving and hope.

Hamilton May 5
Toronto May 10-14
Nepean May 17
London May 19-21

Ryerson Theatre Toronto (416) 762-0191	Talbot Theatre London (800) 387-8460	Centrepointe Theatre Nepean/Ottawa (613) 727-6700 x 530	Mohawk Theatre Hamilton (800) 387-8460
--	--	---	--

TICKETS \$4.95 (includes all tax) TEACHERS FREE! Ask about special DISCOUNTS

Equity in ETFO

Equity in ETFO is a regular feature of VOICE. It supports the Federation's determination to eradicate the inequities that pervade our teaching and learning environment.

Frequently asked questions with regard to sexual orientation

What does "homosexual" mean?

Literally, the word "homosexual" is derived from the Greek word for "same" and the Latin word for "sex." "Homosexual" was first used by Karl Maria Kertheny, in an 1869 pamphlet in which he argued for the repeal of Prussia's anti-homosexual laws.

What causes homosexuality?

The exact causes of sexual orientation (heterosexual, homosexual, lesbian or bisexual) are unknown. A person's sexuality is likely the result of a combination of several factors, including genetic, hormonal, environmental, psychological and social. Over the past 50 years, there have been a number of plausible and implausible theories proposed. Sexual orientation has been related to: genetics, the level of male and female hormones in a human body, problems in parent-child relationships, a reaction to social and environmental events, and learned behaviour. All that can be agreed upon by scientists is that none of the contributing factors alone can determine sexual behaviour, and that sexual orientation cannot be charged.

Is homosexuality a choice?

Based on the research done on the cause of sexual orientation, it is clear that homosexuality/bisexuality is not a choice, but is pre-ordained. The only choice is whether or not a gay, lesbian or bisexual person is open about their sexual orientation.

What percentage of the population is gay, lesbian or bisexual?

10 percent of the population is gay, lesbian or bisexual. This number was originally determined in studies by Albert Kinsey in 1948 and 1953, and has been substantiated today. Also from Kinsey, we know that 37% of men have had an orgasm with another man some time in their life, and 26% of university educated women have had at least one homosexual experience.

Is there a difference between homosexual behaviour and homosexuality?

Homosexuality is a persistent pattern of emotion and physical attraction towards people of the same sex. Homosexual behaviour is just sexual contact between same-sex people, and may not reflect a homosexual identity. When teenagers experiment with same-sex partners, they are not necessarily lesbian/gay. Roughly 30% of the population have a homosexual experience

at some point in their lives.

What does "coming out of the closet" mean?

"Coming out of the closet" or "coming-out" refers to the developmental process when gay, lesbian and bisexual people tell friends and families about their sexual orientation. It can also refer to the personal process of acknowledging one's sexual orientation and integrating that awareness into one's life. When someone is "outed" or "forced out of the closet" this means that they did not want to reveal their sexual orientation but it was discovered by others and made public.

Why are there so many more gays, lesbians and bisexuals today than in the past?

Throughout history, there have been gay, lesbian and bisexual people. At various times in history (ancient Greece, for example), there has been more wide-spread acceptance of a homosexual lifestyle. There are no more lesbian/gay people today than 50 years ago, but since the 1970s, it has become easier for North Americans and Europeans to be "out." Fifty years ago, even five hundred years ago, the ostracization and condemnation of homosexuals would prevent an individual from revealing his/her sexual orientation.

How long has homosexual/bisexuality been around?

There have always been men and women who have had same-sex relationships throughout history and across cultures. Famous figures include Plato, Sappho, Michelangelo, Byron, Tchaikovsky, Gertrude Stein, James Baldwin, and Walt Whitman. The gay liberation movement in the twentieth century is usually dated from the Stonewall riots in New York, in June 1969, though small groups in Toronto started five years earlier.

Is homosexuality against the law?

In Canada, the decriminalizing of same-sex sexual activity took place in 1969. The Ontario Human Rights code was amended in 1986 to include sexual orientation as prohibited grounds for discrimination in access to goods, services and accommodation. In 1991, the Ontario government instituted same-sex health benefits for all public servants, and companies have started to follow suit.

Why is the Pink Triangle used for gay/lesbians?

The Pink Triangle (point-down) was first used by the Nazis during World War II to identify homosexuals in concentration camps, in much the same way as Jewish people wore a yellow Star of David. During the 1970s, as more became known about the persecution and murder of homosexuals under the Nazi regime, the symbol was adopted to signify commemoration and pride.

Why is the Rainbow Flag used as a symbol?

The Rainbow Flag was designed in 1978 by San Francisco artist Gilbert Baker. He used eight colours to represent personally important aspects of life: sexuality, life, healing, sun, nature, art, harmony and spirit. This was reduced to six colours by the 1979 Pride Parade Committee in San Francisco and the flag was recognized by the International Congress of Flag Makers. The Rainbow Flag is today an international symbol of lesbian/gay pride and support.

What is the relationship between lesbians and the AIDS virus?

Anyone, regardless of their sexual orientation, is at risk of contracting the AIDS virus (HIV) through unprotected or unsafe sex. Unsafe activities, such as sharing needles or sex without a condom, spread the virus; not a particular type of sexual preference or activity. Proper use of condoms or dental dams can protect both partners from receiving HIV.

Why do gay men talk that way, walk that way, dress that way? Why are lesbians so masculine?

When dealing with any stereotype it is important to point out the assumed generalization. All gay men do not walk or talk in a particular way. There is a circular logic of stereotyping when it comes to invisible minorities, e.g. "Since I expect gay men to be effeminate, the only men I recognize as gay are effeminate men; thereby all the gay men I see are effeminate." Stereotypes are oversimplified ideas based on limited experience. They help us deal with the vast amount of information we can never learn about the outside world. Remind your students that there are many lesbian/gay individuals who are not "out" and who do not conform to the stereotypes.

If I have a lesbian/gay friend, will that change my sexual orientation?

There is no evidence to support the myth that being associated with lesbian/gay individuals will change another's sexual orientation. Contrarily, most lesbians are raised in heterosexual households.

What is meant by the term "heterosexual privilege?"

This term refers to the social rights and privileges enjoyed by heterosexuals but denied to lesbians because of their sexual orientation. Examples include: being affectionate in public without threat or punishment, and being able to adopt or foster-parent children. Currently, laws regarding long-term relationships are being re-worked to accord homosexual couples with the same benefit, insurance and inheritance rights as heterosexual couples.

Are gay men sexually attracted to young boys?

The majority of sexual assaults (both same sex and opposite sex) are committed by heterosexual men. There is no research to substantiate the myth that gay men (or, for that matter, lesbian women) are sexually attracted to children.

This article reproduced with permission from the Study Guide to The Other Side of the Closet. The play reflects stories and testimonials from gay and lesbian teenagers who have experienced discrimination, harassment, abuse and hate-motivated violence in school because of their sexual orientation. The Other Side of the Closet was produced at Toronto's Young People's Theatre in April 1998 and can be seen again April 6 - May 7, 1999 at YPT. The Teachers' Preview Evening on April 8 will include an anti-homophobia education presentation focusing on curriculum support and community resources. For more information call the YPT Box Office at (416) 947-1027. □

ETFO's Professional Development Services area will be offering a provincial conference "Financial Management for Women".

This conference will be offered on a Friday night and Saturday - May 7-8, 1999 in Toronto. The number of participants will be limited to 5 ETFO women members per district school board. It will consist of plenaries and workshops providing women members with a forum to achieve a comfort level when discussing their personal financial planning.

Application forms will be available from your ETFO Stewards in early March.

(continued from page 2.)

Your Union

teacher. Not alone of course, but in concert with all your colleagues who believe that as a profession we make a difference in the lives of children and that, through them, we can influence the direction in which society will evolve.



Gene Lewis is the General Secretary of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. □

THE INFORMED EDUCATOR

A bi-monthly educational newsletter which reviews educational research and policies. Annual subscription, CDN \$10; Two years, CDN \$18. Send subscription information to: 5993 Lakeshore Road, Stouffville, ON., L4A 7X3. or FAX-905.640.7204 or subscribe online at <http://www.globalserve.net/~sbull>

Call For Proposals Attention: ETFO Members

Presenters On The Road is a provincial/local shared cost program which honours the talents of our members by identifying those members who can provide in-service to their colleagues in a variety of areas. All workshops are listed in PD Works, a compendium of professional Development Services resources. This book is distributed to each school, Local and District School Board in the province.

We are currently looking for workshop presenters who meet the criteria listed below for inclusion in the September, 1999 edition of PD Works (contingent on Annual Meeting budget approval). There will be no out of pocket costs for presenters. Provincial and Local ETFO pays all expenses. Each presenter will receive a planning and presentation fee including approved release costs. If you are interested in offering your services in this regard, please contact Ron Gugula at the Provincial Office for more details.

Criteria for selecting workshop leaders include:

- being a member (Active or Associate) of ETFO;
- having a workshop related to supporting the work of members;
- providing evidence (evaluations, letters of reference) of the high quality of the content and the presentation style;
- a willingness to travel to different parts of province to offer the workshop to ETFO members;
- providing a detailed description of the workshop along with a sample of handouts used in the workshop.

Currently, there is a particular need for workshops related to the implementation of the new Ontario Curriculum.

Election 1999- Get Involved

Take Action!

Wendy Hughes

I'm going to be honest. Anyone who has election experience knows campaigning is hard work.

Maybe it's not what you are looking forward to after a long day in the classroom, but we all know what's at stake for teachers in this election. Either we defeat this provincial government, or we spend five more years being publicly attacked and demoralized. And that's the best scenario for a renewed Conservative mandate. No one would be surprised to see the Mike Harris Tories further undermine public education, or take actions that roll back our salaries and working conditions.

Knowing what's at stake, how can you help the teacher-endorsed candidate where you live?

Here are three things every teacher can do with a single phone call to their candidate's office. You can:

- volunteer to display a

sign to show support. (They'll deliver.)

- pledge \$25.00 or more. (They'll pick up.)
- offer to help supporters of your candidate get out to vote on election day. (Okay, this is a three hour job just before the polls close, but it ends with a party!)

If you have difficulty finding your candidate's campaign office phone number:

- check with your local ETFO President;
- call the candidate's riding office if he or she is an incumbent;
- check the Ontario Liberal Party's web page: www.ontarioliberal.com/candidates.html;
- call the Ontario Liberal Party at (416) 961-3800;
- check the Ontario New Democratic Party's web page: www.net/~ondp/nominations98.html;
- call the Ontario New Democratic Party at (416) 591-8637; or
- call ETFO's Communica-

tions and Political Action Services staff.

If you want to do more, consider two things. There are about 80,000 voters in every riding. No one candidate will contact them all, but the candidate who contacts the greatest number has a big advantage over the others. Secondly, many campaigns are decided by how many supporters a candidate gets out to vote on election day. Just a few committed people like you can make a difference between contacting or not contacting supporters, and then by motivating them to get out and vote.

Teachers are great at voter contact. They're used to meeting the public; they're used to listening; they're used to getting a message across. Without a doubt, they are, as a group, the best campaigners any candidate could have.

Recognize the campaign is only four weeks long and then figure out what you can do to help in this essential work. Decide:

- whether you'll just be involved in the actual campaign period or in crucial pre-election work;
- how much time you're willing to give each week;
- whether you want to put your feet up and talk on the phone, or walk outside and get fit; or
- whether you want to talk to people, put up signs or do office work.

By thinking about these things ahead of time, you can make sure that what you do suits your needs.

If you decide to work on a campaign, I promise:

- you'll feel better about the election process because you have worked for what you believe in;
- you'll know you did your part to make education issues important and to elect people who support quality public education;
- you'll meet interesting people - people who think like you do, who are intelligent, fun and comfortable to be with;
- you'll make friends for life; and
- like most educational experiences, the more you give, the more you'll take with you to keep forever.

Happy campaigning!

Wendy Hughes teaches grade one at Howard Park Public School, Toronto. She is a member of ETFO's provincial Political Action Committee. □

THE SAVINGS ARE YOURS!

Use Your Connections... to access exclusive discounts on home and auto packages.

You've got to earn privilege, right? Well, here's an opportunity you're automatically entitled to - just because you're an educational employee. It could save you money and offer you priority services far better than your current insurance.

As an educational employee, you're a member of a special group that represents lower risk when it comes to accidents and claims.

This entitles you to:

The most competitive rates possible on home and auto insurance

Road assistance service. Call any time, day or night, and you'll get on-the-spot emergency assistance for as low as \$.50 per car per month.

Special discounts on anti-theft car devices or home alarms for our policyholders.

We're OTIP/RAEO and we're the only insurance provider dedicated to passing on these savings to you. We've arranged priority rates and services for educational employees for over 20 years.

Call us today at

1-800-267-OTIP (6847)

for a no-obligation quote.

Or visit our website at www.otip.com



The Educated Choice For Educational Employees

Attention: Faculty of Education Students

Qualifications Evaluation
Council of Ontario
telephone: (416) 323-1969
or (416) 323-0400
1-800-385-1030

Student evaluations must
be submitted by April 30.
After that date, proof of
employment must
be provided.

Report Cards Fail Grade ETFO tells Minister of Education

Mr. Dave Johnson,
Minister of Education and
Training,
Mowat Block, 22nd Floor,
900 Bay Street,
Toronto, ON
M7A 1L2

Dear Minister:

The implementation of the new Ontario Provincial Report Card for Grades 1-8 has been extremely challenging for elementary teachers in the public boards. The report card was pilot tested last year - some of the implications of full implementation should have been foreseen.

Elementary teachers across the province have expressed many concerns, specifically with the technology involved in implementation. We know of at least two school boards that had problems with computer viruses with the software to produce the report cards. Some teachers lost hours of work as a result. While this may have been unavoidable, it must be recognized as a consequence of relying on computer technology.

While many concerns have been expressed, there are five specific problems which have been encountered to which we propose the following suggestions:

Training

Many teachers did not receive adequate training. In one school, it was reported "not one staff member felt comfortable about starting their reports based on the knowledge they had gained through the training workshops." Any new technology must be implemented thoughtfully and carefully, giving all involved the training necessary to complete the work.

We recommend that the Ministry ensure full and adequate training be provided to all teachers at an appropriate time and location.

Equipment

At this time, many schools do not have sufficient or adequate computers to accommodate the increased demand of the report cards. Some schools have only one computer, others have only one laser printer, some do not have a CD-ROM.

Because of these limitations, many teachers felt they had no other choice but to purchase their own computer. We believe that the purchase of computers by teachers should be a tax-deductible expense.

We recommend the Minister of Education and Training lobby the Federal Government to make the appropriate changes to the income tax regulations.

Time

These report cards require more time to complete. "Each report card is taking from 40-90 minutes. Teachers who do not have computers at home must be in school evenings and weekends." It is clear the government's de-

cision to cut the number of professional activity days was ill advised.

We recommend that two additional professional activity days be allocated within the school year to be solely devoted to the preparation of report cards.

Necessity

The government guidelines indicate that completing the report cards on the computer is an option, not a requirement. Many boards, however, insisted that all report cards be done on a computer.

We recommend that the Minister of Education and Training communicate to school boards that using a computer to complete the report cards is an option to be chosen by the teachers.

Safety

Many teachers without a computer at home have had to work in the schools late at night and on weekends - sometimes alone. This raises some obvious health and safety concerns.

We recommend that the Minister of Education and Training direct school boards to take appropriate measures to ensure teachers' safety under these circumstances.

Technology is often seen as a time saver and as an efficiency. However, this is not the case when there is insufficient training, an inadequate supply of computers and printers, when time is not allowed to complete the task, and when there are unrealistic expectations placed on teachers.

We look forward to your

response on this key issue for teachers. We look forward to your action on behalf of the educators of this province.

Sincerely,
Phyllis Benedict,
President

In his reply to this letter, the Minister said he was not responsible for the many difficulties that have surrounded the introduction of the new report cards. And he hasn't received any complaints from school boards on the issue. He said make sure the Minister hears from you. Visit the web site: www.edu.gov.on.ca and register your concerns.

Here's what ETFO members said about the report cards:

It's hard to work 30 hours at school beyond teaching time. *Teacher, Grand Erie.*

Way, way, way too much time. I'd rather spend the time and energy on the class. *Teacher, Upper Grand.*

Many hours were wasted trying to figure out why

some aspect of the electronic report card would not work. *Teacher, Rainy River.*

Computers are crashing. *Teacher, Greater Essex.*

Functioning computers are in the room of one teacher. Only one computer prints to the office laser printer. *Teacher, Renfrew County.*

One computer for the whole school is ludicrous. *Teacher, Upper Grand.*

We are fortunate in our school to have a computer literate person who has helped train two others who then have provided 35 minutes inservice to the staff. This is in addition to a 40 minute lunch hour presentation by the board consultant. *Teacher, Rainbow.*

Two weeks to actually install, compose and work out glitches is too short. *Teacher, Grand Erie.*

Not everyone has home computers. It is inconvenient to go back to school and teachers are in empty schools late at night on their own. *Teacher, Rainy River District.*

Wouldn't you rather have a life insurance company that's interested in your future, not your premiums?



Life insurance shouldn't be a life sentence.
That's why we offer plans that fit every stage of your life.

We believe the better informed you are, the better the decision you can make about your choice of life insurance companies. Teachers Fraternal is not like everyone else. As a member-owned, non-profit organization our bottom line is caring for the future of our members, not shareholders.

That's why you'll value our life insurance products. We have a plan to take care of you through every stage of your life, including "Term to 66", "Term to 75", Level "Term to 80", "Term to 100" or Lifetime Protection. All of our policies are individually owned and coverage is available up to \$500,000 on most policies. Most important, it's comforting to know we can settle most death claims within 30 days.

We have a Living Benefit rider, which provides a portion of the life insurance benefit to terminally ill patients while they are still alive. We also offer optional riders that provide easy and inexpensive life insurance for your dependent children and your grandchildren.

Let our caring and supportive staff help you choose a policy you, and your loved ones, can live with. For peace of mind, contact us today.

**TEACHERS
FRATERNAL**
Life and Disability Insurance

916 The East Mall, Suite C, Etobicoke, Ontario, M9B 6K1
Telephone (416) 620-1140 • Toll-free 1-800-668-4229 • Fax (416) 620-6993
E-mail: insuring@teachersfraternal.com • Website: www.teachersfraternal.com



Meaningful Participation in the Regular Classroom: Supporting Students with Severe Disabilities

Susie Blackstien-Adler and Donna McGhie Richmond

Imagine you are a teacher of a grade three class of 28 students. One of your students has cerebral palsy. He is unable to sit without support, to walk, to manipulate objects with his hands, or to speak using his voice. He communicates by pointing to pictures and words in a communication book. He has an educational assistant supporting him.

This scenario is becoming more common in regular classrooms in Ontario. The evolving Ministry of Education and Training policies regarding the instruction of exceptional learners are changing the what, where, and how of teaching. As a result of policy and parental pressure, more individuals with severe disabilities are being taught in regular classrooms in their neighbourhood school.

The challenges presented by such students impact their learning and your teaching. Would you feel prepared to design activities for the class that would accommodate the individual learning style of this student? Would you feel confident about managing an additional teaching professional in the classroom? Would you know about the type of support that might be expected from other professionals who could join your team?

The Communication and Writing Aids Service at Bloorview MacMillan Centre provides augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) service to students who are unable to speak or to write adequately to meet their functional communication needs. We are often asked to consult regarding the inclusion of AAC users into regular classroom instruction, in particular, literacy and numeracy. Our clinical experience reinforces research which points out that students who use AAC have restricted opportunities and access to learning materials, passively participate in academic and social activities, and that there are often conflicting goals and expectations amongst the professionals who support them (Koppenhaver & Yoder, 1993; McGhie-Richmond & McGinnis, 1995). There is a growing need to provide systemic, specialized support services to regular classroom teams who are faced with an increasing number of children with severe disabilities.

During the 1997-98 school year, we have been involved with the Durham Region Separate School Board in a pilot project supported by the TIPP program of the Ministry of Education, entitled "Integrating Technology into the Curriculum to Support Student Participation." The purpose of the project was to support a school board team in the assessment

of student barriers and to implement a range of solutions that promote active participation of a student who has severe disabilities. The Participation Model Assessment Framework (Beukelman & Mirenda, 1997) was used to assess the student's participation and to plan interventions to promote more active participation. Videotaping of classroom activities was used for assessing barriers to participation and for self-monitoring by the classroom team. The results of the student assessment provided content for workshops on specific technology tools and applications that would enable more active participation in the curriculum. In-class coaching was also pro-

There is a growing need to provide systemic, specialized support services to regular classroom teams who are faced with an increasing number of children with severe disabilities.

vided to address issues such as learning approach, curriculum modifications and environmental adaptations. In-class coaching has been found to be one of the strategies which best supports the learning style of adult learners (Joyce & Showers, 1980).

The results of the pilot project have been promising. We evaluated the effectiveness of our training in terms of the student's participation and independence across three instructional formats:

- group;
- individual; and
- small group.

During baseline, the student showed little or no participation and independence in each of the instructional formats. Once the training of the school team was initiated, the student became a much more active and independent participant across the three formats. It was also interesting to note that the provision of workshops by itself did not result in any changes in student participation. Only when individual coaching and feedback sessions were added did we see changes in participation.

In addition to these objectives successful outcomes, the Durham team also reported benefits as a team in dealing with issues such as team roles and building consensus amongst team members regarding goals and expectations for this student. For example, it has resulted in the team having a common understanding of how students indicate willingness to participate in discussion, and, more importantly in the expectation that students should participate in class

discussion. The team agreed on issues related to the subject content and the volume of work expected in different curriculum areas. They also reported benefits for the student in terms of increased independence and participation in most areas of curriculum. It has resulted in the implementation of customized computer keyboard settings, a small keyboard, a word prediction program, and re-positioning of the computer equipment in the student's workstation. All of these changes have results in increased independence and success in writing activities. Simple low-tech adaptations such as a name stamp and a book stand have also increased independence. The construction of theme-based visual displays for various curricular areas has increased the student's ability to participate. Close scrutiny of the types of participation which meet the classroom learning goals have increased the team's awareness about meaningful participation for all students with special needs.

Dissemination of the results of this project is currently underway. In addition to a number of publications, we will share the content of the project in the form of seminars with OISE/University of Toronto and the colleges which train educational assistants. There is clearly need for continued collaboration among professionals and strong administrative support to provide meaningful educational experiences for students with severe disabilities who are being educated in regular classrooms in their community. For additional information, please contact Susie Blackstien-Adler (adler@mail.yesic.com) or Donna McGhie-Richmond (donnamr@istar.ca)

References

- Beukelman, D.R. & Mirenda, P. (1997) *Augmentative and alternative communication: Management of severe communication disorders in children and adults*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.
- Joyce, B., & Showers, B. (1980). *Improving inservice training: The messages of research*. Educational Leadership, 37, 379-385.
- Koppenhaver, D., Yoder, D.E. (1993). *Classroom literacy instruction for children with severe speech and physical impairments (SSPI): What is and what might be*. Topics in Language Disorders, 13(2), 1-5.
- McGhie-Richmond, D. & McGinnis, J. (1996). *A survey of current practices and perceived needs in teaching literacy to students who use augmentative and alternative communication systems*. Unpublished Research Report. Toronto, ON. The Bloorview-MacMillan Centre.

Susie Blackstien-Adler and Donna McGhie Richmond can be reached at the Communication and Writing Aids Service, Bloorview MacMillan Centre, 350 Rumsey Road, Toronto, ON. Telephone: (416) 424-3805. □

How Fit Are You?

Your daily choices in nutrition, fitness and stress management have a direct impact on your overall well-being. How well do you manage the little things that add up to sound mind and body?

1. How often is your blood pressure checked?
 - a) Every year.
 - b) Every two years.
 - c) Never been checked.
2. How close are you to your ideal body weight?
 - a) Within 10 lbs.
 - b) Within 20 lbs.
 - c) Off by 20 lbs. or more.
3. How familiar are you with your family's health history?
 - a) Very familiar.
 - b) Somewhat familiar.
 - c) Not familiar.
4. How many times a week do you do aerobic exercise?
 - a) 3 to 5 times a week.
 - b) 2 times a week.
 - c) less than 2 times a week.
5. How many minutes of aerobic exercise do you do in each workout?
 - a) More than 30 minutes.
 - b) 15 to 29 minutes.
 - c) less than 15 minutes.
6. How many servings from the grain, cereal and bread group do you eat every day?
 - a) 6 to 12.
 - b) 2 to 4.
 - c) 1 or none.
7. How often do you dine on fast food?
 - a) More than 3 times a week.
 - b) 1 to 3 times a week.
 - c) Rarely
8. Do you maintain a good balance between work, home and play?
 - a) Most of the time.
 - b) Sometimes.
 - c) Rarely.
9. On average, how many alcoholic drinks do you have a week?
 - a) 6 or less.
 - b) 7 to 12.
 - c) 13 or more.
10. Do you fall asleep easily and sleep soundly through the night?
 - a) Most of the time.
 - b) Sometimes.
 - c) Rarely.

Score: Give yourself one point for each "A" answer, two points for each "B" answer, and three points for each "C" answer.

10 to 15: You are doing a great job of managing your health. Keep up the good work by continuing to look for ways to improve your lifestyle.

16 to 24: You are on the right track, but there is still room for improvement. Moderate changes now will

quickly boost the way you feel and look.

25 to 30: You need help. Your doctor and other health professionals can get you started on a health-watch program to make you fit for life.



The Best 15 Minute Exercise

Can't take time to exercise? You can if you've got 15 stairs, says Mike Demeter, a personal trainer at Toronto's Good Life Fitness Club. For a great workout, Demeter recommends "lunge walking." Going up the stairs, lunge forward, taking the steps three at a time. Descend one step at a time. Do 12 to 20 repetitions.

Reprinted courtesy of PROF-IT, The Magazine for Canadian Entrepreneurs. □

ETFO's Curriculum Connections

Individuals, groups or organizations who have developed curriculum units or resources to implement the new Ontario Curriculum, Kindergarten to Grade 8, are invited to submit them for possible inclusion in the ETFO Curriculum Connections inventory. The cost of the curriculum materials will include a modest royalty for the owner of the copyright. For more information, and to receive ETFO's Framework for Quality Curriculum Development, which will guide the selection of the resource materials, contact:

Diana Tomlinson at Provincial Office (416)962-3836, ext.2425 / 1-888-838-3836. dtomlins@etfo.org

(continued from page 2.)

ALLEGATIONS

notes to aid your memory and keep facts straight but only under the following circumstances: the notes are to be made in private and no one is to know they are being made; they are to be made alone – under *no circumstances* are other witnesses to be approached or consulted; the notes are to be kept in a safe place in the home; and, finally, and *without exception*, the notes are to be given to no one except legal counsel. This is the only way privilege can be guaranteed.

Do not contact the complainant, whether parent or child, for the purpose of discussing the matter. Similarly, witnesses should not be contacted. Essentially the matter should not be discussed with anyone until you have had a chance to discuss the issues with Federation and its legal counsel if necessary. As well, do not provide names and phone numbers of witnesses to the police or the CAS. Refer such agencies to the principal or your area superintendent.

In circumstances involving assault allegations it is not uncommon for the teacher to be removed from the class and put on suspension with pay or re-assigned. The ETFO's position in response to such actions will depend upon the facts of each case. In all cases the Federation will want to ensure that it has had time to obtain as much information as possible before an assessment can be made. If a member is disciplined by the school board the safest approach is to contact the Federation and investigate the possibility of filing a grievance.

No need to worry

Teachers and school administrators are concerned about the current litigious climate that allows such things to happen, but should not worry unduly. Being prepared and protecting yourself can go a long way towards peace of mind.

Teachers in Ontario are doing a commendable job with students. A few horror stories can make a teacher feel very vulnerable and shatter confidence. It is essential that every teacher protect her/his rights by exercising her/his right to representation if any allegation of assault is made. You will reduce the trauma to yourself and prevent any damage to your professional reputation if you react in the most professional way possible. □

COME TO QUINN LAKE TO THE OTF CAMPGROUND

1200 Beautiful acres only 39km from Parry Sound. Nature trails, sandy beach, excellent fishing. Look for the poster in your school or call the Ontario Teachers' Federation at (416) 966-3424 or 1-800-268-7061.

(continued from page 3.)

ENO/REO

A particularly good example of collaborative sharing and best practices has taken place in the Report Card conference area.

While browsing ENO/REO, take a few minutes to visit two student sites. Many teachers are engaging their students in two exciting projects: Flat Stanley and Marsville.

The Flat Stanley Project, organized by Dale Hubert, a grade 3 teacher at Wilfrid Jury Public School, London, is an open-ended platform for teachers and students at the primary level. The Project encourages communication and fits nicely with the Ministry of Education and Training's curriculum for language, reading, writing, grammar and punctuation skills that are developed through the editing process. Access this site through: <<http://flatstanley.enoreo.on.ca/day.html>>. Letters written by students from around the world describing their involvement with Flat Stanley are particularly interesting.

In 1997-98, a total of 190 classes, from Canada, the United States, Australia, Mexico and England participated in the Flat Stanley Project; in 1998-99, almost 300 classes were involved. This could be an exciting opportunity for you and your students.

The purpose of the Canadian national Marsville Program is to create a positive vision for young Canadians of the technological society they will inherit in the 21st century. The program shows students how they can play a role in establishing the kind of society they want for the future. Marsville has been designed for students in Grades 5 to 8. While the primary educational thrust of Marsville is math, science and technology, the project uses a cross-curricular, holistic approach integrating various disciplines. The program is one of a series of educational activities originally sponsored by Challenger Center for Space Science Education, an organization founded by the family members of the Challenger 51-L crew.

There are a number of conferences for teacher and student conferencing about Marsville. The conferences focus on such areas as communications, air, design, energy and science. There is training for the teachers and an online etiquette guideline for using the conferences. Students use conferencing to collaborate with other teams and work on their part of the project.

Visit Marsville via <<http://mars99.enoreo.on.ca/index.en.html>>

The good news is that ENO/REO is forging ahead. I strongly encourage you to become a member. Remember, you are eligible to apply for membership at no cost to you. I look forward to meeting you online.

Marg Couture is Coordinator of ETFO's Professional Development Services. ENO/REO can be reached at (416) 410-8301/1-888-556-2012 or via www.enoreo.on.ca □

Collective Bargaining

Almost half finished

As of February 1, 1999, 46% of the District School Board teacher and occasional teacher bargaining units have achieved a collective agreement for the 1998-2000 term. The 46% represents 24 teacher and five occasional teacher Locals and a significant majority of ETFO members. The 24 teacher Locals with collective agreements in place represent approximately 85% of that segment of the ETFO membership. The five occasional teacher Locals with collective agreements in place represent approximately 17% of that segment of the ETFO membership. Only two of ETFO's 15 School Authorities have collective agreements in place.

In achieving these collective agreements, the Locals and the Provincial Federation have been involved in 13 Provincial Takeovers, three strikes, numerous work-to-rule sanctions and a tremendous amount of hard work by ETFO members in every part of this province.

Between early June and the fourth week of January, there was at least one Provincial Takeover in operation in the province every week. The commitment to achieving fair and equitable collective agreements continues as three Provincial Takeovers are in place at the time of writing this article.

Bargaining has been long and arduous for every bargaining unit and committee throughout the province. ETFO has employed a variety of strategies in effecting collective agreements and there have been many "firsts" during ETFO's first year of bargaining. Elementary teachers used rotating strikes, were locked-out by a school board, voted on a board's final offer under the Labour Relations Act, employed a forensic accountant to analyze school

board finances and trained ETFO workplace stewards to support our bargaining efforts.

Are there improvements to salaries and working conditions?

The simple answer is YES. The degree of success varies from one jurisdiction to another and from one former Board to another Board in the same District School Board. Of the eight stand alone teacher Locals, four will receive a salary increase during the term of the collective agreement. Of the 16 amalgamated District School Boards, none will receive a salary increase during the term of the collective agreement. Fifteen of the 16 amalgamated DSBs will see the harmonization of the salary grids which will result in salary increases for many members. The teachers in six DSBs will receive lump sum payments.

Preparation time for our members will average approximately 150 minutes per five days. Most collective agreements guarantee 40 consecutive minutes for the lunch break free from duties. Many collective agreements stipulate that the school year for teachers will be the same as the school year for students, (i.e. 190 instructional days). Retirement gratuity has been protected in 23 of the 24 DSBs.

Are there improvements in Occasional Teacher collective agreements?

Salary increases have been achieved in three of the five settlements. The number of days an occasional teacher must work before the assignment becomes a long term assignment has been harmonized to the lower number or reduced in four of the five DSBs.

Still a long way to go

There is still a heavy workload for Local collective bargaining committees and provincial staff in order to achieve settlements in every jurisdiction in Ontario by the end of this school year. With

26 occasional teacher collective agreements and numerous teacher and occasional teacher School Authority collective agreements to negotiate, it will be a very busy spring. Bargaining will not be any easier with the remaining collective agreements. For the most part, District School Boards have followed a pattern of negotiating with the secondary school teachers first, the elementary school teachers next, have moved on to the non-teacher bargaining units and will finally meet with the occasional teacher bargaining units.

A signed collective agreement is just the beginning

The most important facet of a signed collective agreement is ensuring that it is implemented in accordance with the language. Members cannot agree to abandon or suspend the language which guarantees a 40 minute lunch break, preparation time, holy days, leaves of absence, category placement, teaching experience or any other article in the collective agreement. Each member must be vigilant and fight to protect what has been negotiated. Every violation of the collective agreement, no matter how minimal you may believe it is, must be reported to your Local office so your Local President and Grievance Officer can rectify the issue as promptly as possible. ETFO held a Grievance Officer workshop in Toronto at the end of October to train each Local's Grievance officer in the fine points of contract maintenance. Failure to monitor the collective agreement will make the next round of negotiations even more difficult and time consuming than the 1998-2000 round of bargaining. Make sure you do your part to assist your Local leadership to ensure that your collective agreement is enforced. It is just common sense!

Duncan Jewell is ETFO's Coordinator of Collective Bargaining Services. □

OTF News

On January 23, the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) facilitated a meeting of all local Presidents of all four Affiliates in Toronto. Over 450 leaders of the teachers and education workers of Ontario came together to learn details of OTF's strategy to build support for publicly funded public education.

The OTF Executive and Board of Governors have approved, in principle, a strategic framework. The goal of this framework is to build support for excellence in Ontario's publicly funded elementary and secondary schools. The framework starts now, in this pre-election period, takes us through the election campaign and carries us forward into the next century.

At the All Presidents' meeting, Don Guy of Pollara, Jane

Armstrong of Environics, and Catherine Fournier Associates shared the results of their work in education. Pollara and Environics are both in the business of conducting research on public opinion; Catherine Fournier uses focus groups as her research tool. All this research has been used to help OTF shape its strategy.

As leaders in education, we have learned the old ways don't work any more. We have learned to do polling, to use focus groups and social research. We have learned it is not good enough simply to say what we think is happening, but to measure and research what is happening as well. It is just not good enough to defeat political parties, we must have community support for the value of quality education as a central priority in Ontario.

To this end, one part of the strategy is a proposal for community forums. These would see teachers and education workers engage peo-

ple in their neighborhoods in discussions about the future of education in Ontario. A pilot forum took place in Ingersoll on January 21. The organizers enthusiastically reported to the All Presidents meeting on their forum's overwhelming success. The OTF Executive is considering expanding this proposal across the province.

The year will likely be an election year in Ontario. The betting on the date is heating up, with the smart money on a late spring election. The election campaign will focus public attention on a variety of issues; we know from polling that education is a very strong public concern. As teachers who are concerned about education, we will be deeply involved in the campaign, both personally and collectively.

In preparation for the campaign, OTF and the Affiliates are offering a series of workshops to introduce newcomers. (Story continued on page 10. See "OTF News.")

(continued from page 9.)

OTF News

ers to the political process. If you are interested in having one of these workshops, contact Paul Howard at the OTF office (416) 966-3424/1-800-268-7061.

These are difficult times. These are times of great change. We have to change too. We have to do things differently. We must set out, not only to defeat the Harris Tories, but also to build strong community links to education. No future government, whatever its political stripe, must believe it can attack education and enjoy popular support while doing so.

Barbara Sargent represents ETFO on the OTF Executive.

(continued from page 1.)

Take Action

To date, Elections Ontario seems almost totally incapable of dealing with an upcoming election. Staff have been cutback - there's hardly anyone to answer the phone. Even if you get through, no one seems to know what is going on. ETFO will keep you up-to-date on any information that will help you confirm your status on the voters list. If you've moved since 1998, don't expect an enumerator at your door. It's going to be a bit more complicated than that. Interneters might wish to check the Elections Ontario web page: www.electionsontario.on.ca for more information.

For information about how your Local is preparing for the election, contact your Local President.



ETFO Provincial Executive 1998-1999

Phyllis Benedict, *President, Kawartha Pine Ridge*
Susan Swackhammer, *First Vice-President, Grand Erie*
Florence Keillor, *Vice-President, Avon-Maitland*
Emily Noble, *Vice-President, Algoma*
Barbara Sargent, *OTF Representative, Lambton-Kent*
Deborah Castello, *Toronto*
Ken Collins, *Rainbow*
Mike Essex, *Upper Grand*
Dale Ford, *Niagara*
Shelley Jones, *Keewatin-Patricia*
Dave Krook, *Upper Grand*
Christina Lofts, *Lakehead*
Elizabeth Papadopoulos, *Toronto*
Hilda Watkins, *Greater Essex*

The ETFO VOICE accepts classified advertising on the following basis: \$1.00 per word for ETFO members; \$1.50 for non-members. There is a minimum charge of \$20.00 plus GST; maximum 60 words. For more information, call Pauline Doucet at (416) 962-3836/1-888-838-3836, ext. 2413.

Curriculum Heads Up

Electronic Planner is almost ready to go

The Ministry of Education and Training is field testing computer software designed to assist teachers to plan units for all subjects in the new Ontario Curriculum from grades 1-8. Eleven District School Boards are currently involved.

One ETFO member involved with the field testing is encouraged by what she sees. Here is how she describes her experience with the planner:

"I have been extensively involved with piloting the MET Electronic Unit Planner since last April. Approximately 40 teachers in the Grand Erie DSB, 25 last May-June and an additional 10 or so since January, have had access to the Planner. Additionally, I worked with a couple of teachers during the summer to write a unit directly for the Ministry. This unit will appear on the CD which will be released to boards in March.

"The Planner is extremely useful for a number of reasons. First and foremost, it is educationally sound, following a model where we plan down from expectations with assessment at the forefront. As the planner is used by more teachers across the province, the model will become the standard. Teachers will be able to share units written in the same format: no longer will we need to fight about non-common language.

"Second, the tools in the planner are becoming much more teacher friendly. I've worked with two BETA versions and found them friendly, but there are bugs that are being worked out. Teachers will have ready access to all of the expectations for their grade level(s) in addition to the achievement levels from the expectation documents. A rubric maker is included and the Ministry is investigating whether it will be possible to add additional templates for easily generating checklists, rating scales and anecdotal records which will contain the expectations that are assessed for a subtask.

"Third, the planner is part of an environment which includes massive information that will be helpful to teachers. For example, over 80 teaching/learning strategies are explained in detail in the Guides section. A good number of assessment strategies are also included with full descriptions. The Exemplars project writing and reading samples will also be included for teachers to access and compare to their own students' work. The Guides also contain information related to special needs students.

"Finally, the planner will help analyse what you as a teacher have done in your class. Right now, the analysis feature for a unit tells which expectations have been

Story continued on page 12. See "Electronic Planner"

Classifieds

Alternative Financial Strategies that commit your money to work instead of you! Travel learn and earn \$\$\$ in tropical setting. Discover how other teachers have enhanced their pension and quality of life! Now! Call 1-800-320-9895 ext. 0542.

Children's Author John Green (Alice and the Birthday Giant; Junk-Pile Jennifer) available for classroom visits; family reading nights. Call (905)432-1345.

China! 15 days world of confucius \$2,085 (July 19); deluxe Yangtze cruise \$3,658 (July 5); Tai Chi 22 days \$3,988 (August 9) all-inclusive. Call 1-888-369-2632.

Cosburn Middle School (formerly Cosburn Junior High) Toronto, 50th anniversary October 2nd. Former students and teachers, members of the public are invited to the festivities and to renew acquaintances. For information and registration contact Cosburn Middle School, 520 Cosburn Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4J 2P1 or call (416)396-2335.

Cottage for sale: Treed and private backlot with water access on Trent-Severn near Balsam Lake; sleeps six; usable in winter; two bedrooms; two living rooms; bathroom with shower; well and pump; septic tank; walking; biking; fishing; swimming; boating. \$49,900. Suit couple. C. Morgan (416)463-1423 (vendor) or Ilsa Hunter (agent) at pager 1-800-263-7462.

Educators Bed & Breakfast Network. \$32 a night for two! Over 5,000 members worldwide. Create your British adventure with our NEW University Vacation Network! Affordable accommodations for spring and summer travel in London and the British Isles. Get some friends together and create your own tour! Prices vary. Box 5279, Eugene, Oregon USA 97405. Call 1-800-377-3480 fax (541) 686-5818 <http://www.edubabnet.com>

18th Milk International Children's Festival of the Arts, May 25-28 in Toronto. Only \$7 per student for One Performance (\$10 for Circus Ethiopia) and a Full Day of Activities!. Book now! Call Harbourfront Centre at (416)952-6204 from 8 am - 4pm. Free milk for each student attending the festival! (lactose free milk also available). One free ticket from the teacher per order of 20 tickets.

Elementary School Teachers: REPORT STAR 2.0 provides advanced marks report that link to the Ontario Provincial Report Cards. Grade 7/8 marks may be averaged for the school. Comments are entered by selecting Expectations by mouse click or by number. Files may be transferred from home to school. \$69. Send for brochure to: Doncaster Office Services, 214 Willowridge Court, Oakville, Ontario L6L 5J2 fax (905) 849-0604 telephone (905)842-9616.

Engaging Earth Science songs; junior curriculum. "Best Educational Album '98" - Music & Moore Awards. Finalist "Best New Artist" - Children's Music Web '98. CD/cassette: \$18/\$14 inclusive. FREE with performance booking. Contact Chris Rawlings 416-466-3239, wrenfolk@interlog.com

Escape to Bermuda - August 22-29. Join Christine Bretherick, teacher and artist, on a learning cruise from New York to Bermuda on Celebrity Cruise Lines' vessel Horizon. Cost from New York: \$1,696. Contact Rosemary Clark 1-800-544-2656 or Christine Bretherick at (519)766-4951.

Former staff and students of Queen Elizabeth Public School in Oshawa are invited to attend its 75th anniversary on Thurs-

day, June 10, 1999 from 1:15 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.

First Steps in Reading. 40 page workbook. Controlled vocabulary. Reproducible. \$11.40. First Steps, 710 Spadina Avenue, #303, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2J3

Grade 1 educators. Science teaching resources written specifically for the new Ontario science curriculum. Everyday structures. Materials and objects. Call toll-free 1-888-839-2153. Professor Beaker's Learning Labs.

Join Us On The Sea as we paddle to various islands to assist with research programs during - Field ornithology, July 10-17; or as we search for creatures great and small during our Marine Science Institute, August 7-14. For application forms and information contact: Tracy Dean, HMSC - Public Education, Brandy Cove Road, St. Andrews, New Brunswick EOG 2X0 (506)529-1200 fax (506)529-1212 e-mail: huntsman@nbnet.nb.ca website: www.unb.ca/web/huntsman

John Diefenbaker Secondary School, Hanover, 75th Reunion June 25-27. Registration Friday night, Saturday morning. Pep rally, 50s-60s dance, school tours, church service, barbeque and decade rooms. Join us! Fax (519)364-7519 telephone (519)364-3770 ext. 223 website: www.gcboe.on.ca/JDSS/index2.html

Kids Help Phone, Canada's only national, bilingual 24-hour help line for children and youth. Raise funds with Quarter Back event. Information packages available. Phone 1-800-268-3062. Website: <http://kidshelp.sympatico.ca> e-mail: student.ambassadors@kids.help.sympatico.ca

Looking for a job in education? If you are seeking a new challenge or position of responsibility check our internet website: <http://www.jobsineducation.com>

New Teacher? Playbill Theatre offers 20% discount to new teachers booking seats to our 1999 season. Information (416)762-0191.

Nova Scotia - Cottages for rent near Lunenburg 3 bedroom homes available for weekly rentals. Off season \$350. High season \$600. for Broad Cove, \$650. for Cherry Hill. Brochure and pictures available. Call (613)521-7869 or e-mail: bjones@cyberus.ca

OISE/University of Toronto Principals' Certification Program, Spring/Summer 1999: April 17/18, May 1/2, May 15/16, June 5/6, July 2,3,4,5. Please contact Vashty Hawkins at (416)923-6641 ext. 2721 for more information.

OTF Retirement Planning Workshops, April 9-10 - London, April 23-24 - Huntsville, May 14-15 - Terrace Bay. Contact Bill Martin, Elementary Teachers' Federation Ontario, Toronto Station F, P.O. Box 1100, Toronto M4Y 2T7 (416)962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836.

Recognition gifts for educators and volunteers. T-shirts, jewelry, lapel pins, magnets, ties, notepaper. Mail order flyer. Cabam toll free 1-888-359-7386.

Report cards made easy: MarkBook™ is easy-to-use computer software designed for the classroom teacher. Available free this academic year, MarkBook™ records and analyses all evaluation and attendance data and cuts hours off your report writing time. A copy of MarkBook™ with electronic report card capabilities will be circulated to all schools with the Science Tender in late March. Contact www.markbook.com or Boreal Laboratories at 1-800-387-9393.

Stories Needed! Inspirational, moving true stories on love, parenting, achieving goals, facing adversity, or other similar themes of the heart needed for "Chicken

Soup for the Canadian Soul," being compiled now! Authors get \$200.00! For guidelines call (905)881-8995 ext. 28 or check www.aaron.com. Submit stories 1-5 pages double spaced to Raymond Aaron, 2-9225 Leslie Street, Richmond Hill L4B 3H6 fax (905)881-8996 chickensoup@aaron.com

Teachers, Principals, Consultants. Complimentary seats to any show! Meet Playbill Theatre; watch it open a child's mind. Reservations (416)762-0191.

Travel - teach English: 5 day/40hr TESOL teacher certification course, May 12-16, August 4-8, October 20-24 in Toronto (or by correspondence) across Ontario. 1,000's of jobs available. Free information package call 1-888-270-2941.

Usborne Award Winning Books! Excellent books for children of all ages, highly acclaimed by educators. Build your own home-based business before retirement. Catalogue sales, home party plan, book fairs. Very low start-up cost. For information call Yvonne at (705)647-5324.

Calendar

March 22, 26: Toronto: First Nations House Career Day 11 am - 3 pm. Aboriginal awareness week. Contact: Office of Aboriginal Student Services and Programs, Anita Benedict, Academic Counsellor, University of Toronto, First Nations House, Borden Building North, 563 Spadina Avenue, Toronto M5S 1A1 (416)976-0733 fax (416)978-8227.

April 29-30: Waterloo: Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario presents "Act, Reflect, Revise" A forum for teacher researchers. This forum will provide a "shared space" for teachers, principals, superintendents and others interested in the process of shared with dialogue and reflection. Conference fee \$95. Contact Melanie McClelland, Administrative Assistant, ETFO, Toronto Station F, P.O. Box 1100, Toronto M4Y 2T7 (416)962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836.

May 1-2: Waterloo: Ontario Society for Environmental Education Conference '99, presents The New Curriculum - the New Millennium. Ideas and materials to teach the new elementary or secondary curriculum and to include environmental outcomes. Cost \$190. Contact: D. Arthur, conference coordinator, 32 Springdale Drive, Kitchener, ON N2K 1P9 (519)579-3097 e-mail: david.arthur@sympatico.ca, website: <http://noisy.oise.utoronto.ca/osee>

May 6-7: Toronto: 12th Annual Conference "Equity in the Classroom, Equity in the Curriculum" Plenary speakers: Ovide Mercredi, Professor, University of Sudbury, Heather-Jane Robertson, CTF, author. Registration \$125. For conference brochure call Marlene Richman, Conference Co-ordinator, York University (416)736-2100 ext. 40204.

May 6-8: Collingwood: Curriculum '99 "If I Could Change the World..." Keynote speakers include Peter Jensen and Dr. Elizabeth Thorn - The Power of Language Across the Curriculum. Cost \$200. Brochures can be requested at e-mail: paul@lynx.org or visit the Curriculum '99 website: <http://www.pc-talk.on.ca/curriculum99>

May 14-16: Hamilton: "Come To The Edge" National Intramural Recreation Conference presented by Canadian Intramural Recreation Association (CIRA). Registration \$175. For more information call CIRA (905)575-2081 fax (905) 575-2264 e-mail: harknem@mohawke.on.ca.

Good News from ETFO Locals

This column is dedicated to sharing good news from Ontario's schools. Voice is pleased to recognize the wonderful work that supports students' success.

Niagara

Ridgeway Public School has won a Clean World Award from Pitch-In Canada, in cooperation with Clean World International. The award was presented by Roméo LeBlanc, The Governor General of Canada and Allard W. van Veen, President, Pitch-In Canada.

This Award is presented to individuals and groups to recognize sustained action to improve Canada's environment. Ridgeway was one of 17 individuals or groups across Canada to receive the Award this year, and the only school. The award was presented for Ridgeway's ongoing campaign to restore and maintain a wetland site on school property. Jane Kuiper, a behavioural/learning resource teacher, has been working on the project with her students, parents and community volunteers since 1991, during which time she has learned and applied the principles of habitat restoration. The project has been recognized also by Protecting Our Planet (POP) magazine; Jane's students have appeared on TVOntario and made a presentation to their school board.

Pitch-In Canada is a national non-profit organization established by volunteers in

1967. More than 2,500,000 volunteers participate in the organization's more than 10,000 environmental projects each year. Pitch-In Canada can be reached via www.pitch-in.ca by e mail at pitch-in@pitch-in.ca or by writing to Box 45011, Ocean Park P.O., White Rock, B.C. V4A 9L1.

Simcoe

Four years ago, Jack McFadden, a teacher at W.H. Day Elementary, started "Coats for Kids." Since that time, the program has grown to the point that 5,000 coats per year are now shipped to schools, fire victims, women's shelters and others in need. Jack has involved a broad cross-section of his community in Coats for Kids, including the local bank manager, high school students and senior citizens. The program is run from an old school house in Bradford - St. Mary's School. Here, coats and snow pants are received and sorted. Hats, gloves and mitts, many of which are knitted by local seniors, are gratefully received as well. During last year's Ice Storm in eastern Ontario and Quebec, Coats for Kids sent 185 coats, 125 snow pants as well as gloves, mitts and hats for hundreds of children who required them. Coats for Kids also sent winter clothing to Bosnia and Chernobyl.

Toronto

John Ross Robertson Public School

Samuel Carter-Shamai and Kate Applin, students at John Ross Robertson Public School, Toronto, were among nine students from across Canada who won Mathieu Da Costa Awards. The program was initiated three

years ago in recognition of Parliament's official designation of February as Black History Month. The awards were presented during a special ceremony at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, P.Q., by Jan Eastman, President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation, and the Hon. Hedy Fry, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism/Status of Women). Samuel won Best Essay - English - Ages 9-13. He wrote on John Ware. Kate received an Honourable Mention in the same category for the essay she wrote on John Kim Bell. Congratulations to Grade Six French Immersion teacher Rachel Sherman who submitted her students' work.

Waterloo

Clemens Mill Public School, Cambridge

Stephanie Cipolla received a Mathieu Da Costa Awards Honourable Mention for Best Artistic Representation - Ages 9-13. Nan Thompson, who teaches Senior Art, Music and Drama at Clemens Mill, encouraged Stephanie's work on a collage of various people during and after school and was delighted with the result. To participate in the Awards program, interested students across Canada submitted an essay, short story, poem or piece of artwork celebrating the contributions of people of diverse origins who, together, built this country.

Submissions to this Good News Column are welcome. Please send to Charlotte Morgan, Editor, either by mail to Provincial Office or e-mail cmorgan@etfo.org.

YOU OFTEN TALK ABOUT DISCOMFORT AND PAIN



Now you can do something about it.



By correcting the way you walk you may relieve the pain.

PERSONAL CUSTOM-MADE ORTHOTICS



May alleviate the pain and offer you true comfort and support. Services covered by most extended health plans.

CALL KEN WEINBERG, D. Ch.

Chiropodist/Foot Specialist
"Home or office, I'll come to you."

(905) 660-7760

TEACHERS' CHOICE™

emc notes™

SIMPLIFIES YOUR PLANNING

STEP BY STEP LESSON PLANS BY EXPERIENCED MUSIC TEACHERS FOR GRADES 1-8

INSTRUCTIONAL AUDIO CD WITH ORIGINAL MUSIC TO SUPPORT LESSON PLANS

REPRODUCIBLE STUDENT MATERIAL COMPLETE WITH ANSWER SHEETS

FREE ONLINE PRODUCT SUPPORT AND REGISTRATION FOR TEACHERS



50 Richmond St E Suite 400 Toronto ON M5C 1N7 tel 416 367-4747

www.schoolcentral.com

PROFESSIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES

"We are former teachers"

- Experienced with Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan
- 50% of our clients are teachers
- Free Report: The Two Investment Mistakes Teachers Make

Order Your Copy Now

De Thomas Financial Corp
Independent Investment Fund Dealer



ROSS FLOYD, CFP
905-889-8396



FERNE SINKINS, CFP
416-534-5186



Look ahead and start building for your future....

An RRSP, the most significant financial tool to achieve your future needs. Plan now, think ahead and your savings will grow tax free. Empower yourself with an OTG RRSP and let us broaden your investment horizons. We offer flexibility, convenience, control and most importantly cost savings. **Take Action NOW!** Start contributing by investing through payroll deduction and benefit from immediate tax savings. Check with your local Federation that you are currently with to see whether this option is available to you.

For more information on OTG for your RRSP investment needs, please contact our CLIENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT.



ONTARIO TEACHERS' GROUP INC.

MAKING YOU A SUCCESSFUL INVESTOR

57 Mobile Drive, Toronto, Ontario M4A 1H5
Tel: (416)752-9410 • 1-800-263-9541 • 1-888-336-4777

Dive into the wonderful world of art

Christine Bretherick, a teacher (on leave) with the Upper Grand District School Board, draws students into a world of creative expression through her literature-based arts program.



Christine has exhibited three displays of local children's art at the Framing and Art Centre, Guelph. Students from various schools have shared in these community partnerships.

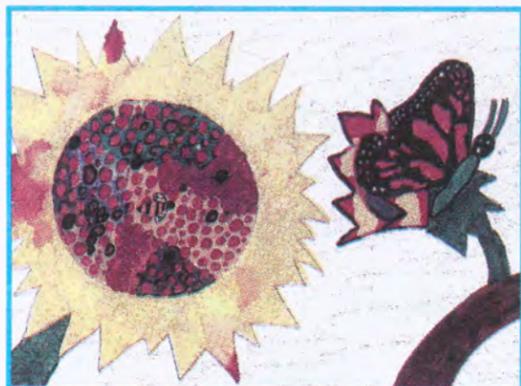
Drawing on illustrations from children's books, Christine teaches her students how to create their interpretation of what's in the book using basic elements of design - circles, ovals, rectangles, lines and squares. Her lessons are tailored to meet the overall expectation of the Ontario Curriculum - Grades 1-8 - Visual Arts.



A study of backgrounds, textures and simple animal shapes provided the inspiration for this literature-based lesson. The goose, created by a grade one student, was the student's interpretation of *Barnyard Banter*, a children's picture book written by Denise Fleming.



This bird was created by a grade three teacher as she joined in the fun. The bird is composed of geometric shapes; the horizon line is an organic line. The contrast between the light and dark and the texture of the trees are all part of the learning process.



This sunflower with Monarch butterfly was created by Jamie, a grade six student. Notice the detail in the centre of the flower and the unusual use of colour in the shading. Paint and pencil crayons were used to create this effect. Recommended book: *Angel Hide and Seek* by Lois Ehlert. Compare with Van Gogh's painting of *The Sunflowers*.



Christine Bretherick offers hands-on art workshops for students and for teachers of students in grades kindergarten to eight. She can be reached at (519) 766-4951. Fax (519) 766-9176. E-mail: art@albedo.net or www.artlinks.on.ca/ □

(continued from page 10.)

Electronic Planner

assessed and/or selected. Eventually, one will be able to ask the planner to analyse more than one unit so that teachers can quickly identify which expectations have not yet been addressed. The planner will also analyse for teachers what teaching learn-

ing and assessment strategies they use more often and with the bank of strategies available will encourage teachers to try new things.

"The planner will encourage teacher sharing while still recognizing teachers' professional judgement and decision making skills in planning units for their classrooms. I am excited about the

planner and look forward to it becoming a tool teachers will want to use."

Janet Rubas is a Teacher Consultant with the Grand Erie District School Board. □

Take Action! Provincial Election Checklist for ETFO Members

Take Action!

- ✓ Make sure you are on the Voters' List. If the list is not available, contact your District Returning Officer to confirm your name is included. Encourage others to check their names are on the list too.
- ✓ Call your Local President to determine how you can make a difference in the provincial election.
- ✓ Work for the candidate of your choice.
- ✓ Make a financial contribution to your preferred candidate(s).
- ✓ Agree to take an election sign.
- ✓ Be as informed as possible about election issues, especially those related to education. Ask your Local President for the election fact sheets and questions for candidates prepared by ETFO Provincial and Local offices.
- ✓ Attend all-candidates' meetings and ask questions on education issues.
- ✓ Write a Letter to the Editor of your local paper on education-related issues.
- ✓ Call a radio phone in show and talk about education-related issues.
- ✓ When candidates or their representatives canvass for your vote, be direct about the issues which are a priority to you. This is an important way to give a high profile to issues; candidates pay attention to what is said at the door.
- ✓ Discuss education issues with your neighbours and friends.
- ✓ Encourage family, friends, colleagues and neighbours to vote in the provincial election.
- ✓ Help get the vote out for your candidate on election day.
- ✓ Vote at an advance poll or on election day. □