

Summer 2005  
Vol. 7 • No. 4

# voice

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in recognition of her dedicated  
contribution and activism to her  
union, her community and the  
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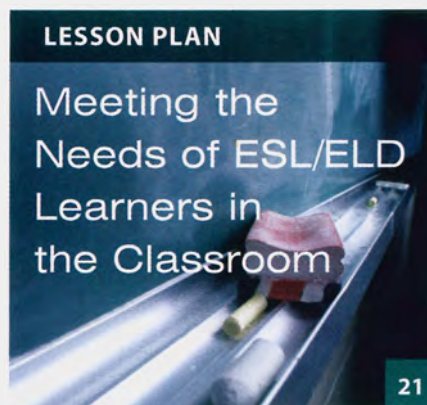
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## LESSON PLAN

### Meeting the Needs of ESL/ELD Learners in the Classroom



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On our cover: Anita Dhawan. Photo: Vitusha Oberoi.





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## FROM THE EDITOR

This is the last issue of Voice for this year and, fittingly, it highlights, some of the accomplishments of ETFO as an organization and of ETFO members individually.

In April, ETFO and the provincial government reached agreement on a unique provincial framework for collective bargaining. In their columns President Emily Noble and General Secretary Gene Lewis discuss the significance of the accord.

Improving teacher working conditions was the major goal of ETFO bargaining this round. Research commissioned by ETFO earlier this year shows how heavy teacher workload is. You will find an overview on page 27.

Also in this issue is the first of what will be a series of profiles of ETFO activists. In this issue you will meet Anita Dhanwan who received the first 'Women of Labour' award from the Toronto and York Region labour council this spring. Other ETFO award winners are listed on pages 10 and 11. Congratulations to all those whose outstanding work in the classroom received special recognition. And hats off to all members for their dedication during the past year.

How will you spend your summer vacation? Bruce Stodart and Audrey Armstrong describe how they spent some of their time last summer.

Our lesson plan this issue is a departure from the very specific lessons we usually provide. Colleen Early outlines ideas and resources to help you teach the ESL students you may find in your classroom next fall.

The lesson plan in the Spring 2005 issue was excerpted from Free from Fear, an anti-homophobia curriculum published by ETFO. The authors are: Anita Dhanwan, Mark Duwyn, Lauren Meichenbaum and Sherry Ramrattan Smith. Morgan Holmes was the editor. Their names were inadvertently omitted.

Happy reading. Enjoy your summer.

  
**JOHANNA BRAND**  
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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Member support leads to bargaining success

#### EMILY NOBLE

President, ETFO

**ETFO** members take a bow. You've become the leaders in Ontario teacher bargaining and have achieved success. And, even though at the time I write this not all our locals have crossed the finish line, I am confident that all will ultimately be successful.

When we launched Campaign 200 last spring we were determined to improve teacher working conditions. The touchstone of our campaign was 200 minutes of preparation time for every teacher in every local.

We have achieved that goal and more. In April, ETFO and the provincial government reached a unique provincial accord on a four-year agreement. It provides 200 minutes of preparation time by 2008, caps on supervision time, and a 10.6 per cent salary increase. In addition there are funds for each teacher for professional development. The agreement provided that these improvements were not to be achieved at the expense of diminishing existing collective agreement provisions.

Our success is due to one thing – strong support from you, the members.

From the time we announced our bargaining goals member support has been unwavering. The overwhelming strike mandates achieved in each local this winter – ranging from 87 to 100 percent – were concrete evidence that you believed in, and were prepared to stand up for our bargaining goals.

During the fall and winter we heard again and again from boards of education that they couldn't bargain because they had no money. With strength and determination we went out and got the money for them.

Political leaders saw elementary teachers standing up for themselves and recognized the need for change. Over the course of the winter Education Minister Gerard Kenney took the steps that resulted in the framework accord. As of mid-April, boards no longer had any excuse not to bargain.

As of this writing, we have agreements in the majority of boards. We have successfully bargained both the provincial framework issues and the specific issues that matter to members in each local. I am confident we will reach agreements with most boards before the end of this school year.

However, some boards continue to be stubborn, no doubt about it. If you are reading this in mid-June and have no settlement, it is highly likely that you will be on strike in September – not work-to-rule, but a full withdrawal of services strike. Now is the time to prepare.

Our goal has been and continues to be, to get agreements that meet your needs. We want you to be able to put 100 percent of your energy into educating Ontario children.

We will need your continued support. Your tremendous response to Campaign 200 shows that we can count on it.



## FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

### ETFO now the leader in teacher bargaining

#### GENE LEWIS

General Secretary, ETFO

This has been a landmark year for elementary teachers. We have come a long way. We are now the leaders in teacher bargaining in Ontario.

Last spring, with some fanfare, we announced our bargaining goals for all teacher locals across the province – symbolized by the demand for 200 minutes of preparation time.

Our goal was to improve teacher working conditions and the learning conditions of our students. We decided we needed a bold strategy. It was not without its risks.

In our favour we had a Liberal government that had campaigned on the issues of health and education. Our Premier has made it clear he wants to be known as the 'education premier'. Our minister of education, Gerard Kennedy, is seeking peace and stability. Both respect the work that you do in the classroom.

However, we knew we would have a fight on our hands, with boards of education claiming they could not afford the improvements we wanted. And, through the fall and winter bargaining in most locals moved at a glacial pace, if it moved at all.

In December, Education Minister Gerard Kennedy took the unusual step of inviting representatives from ETFO and the boards of education to discuss ways of achieving collective agreements. Your President and I met several times with the Minister and his staff.

This was not an easy process. There were a number of missteps along the way. We not only wanted to get the improvements we were seeking but we also wanted to make sure that those improvements would be enshrined in appropriate language in each local collective agreement. We were not satisfied with promises. We were seeking guarantees.

In March ETFO locals began working-to-rule, some at the beginning of the month, others after the spring break. Those work-to-rule sanctions were stepped up in April.

In mid-April we were able to announce that we had reached a deal with the government and we agreed to suspend work-to-rule sanctions until June 1. As of this writing, the majority of boards have reached agreements that include the provincial framework standards and address local issues.

There are several significant aspects to the process that resulted in the accord. First of all, ETFO was the first and only federation to have an agreement with the province in writing. Other federations followed our lead. Elementary teachers set the benchmark for bargaining in this province.

Secondly, we embarked on a process in which the main bargaining goals were negotiated at the provincial level.

Has this process been successful for all parties? Is this the precursor of more formalized province-wide bargaining? That remains to be seen.

What we do know is that there will be more teachers in elementary schools – specialists in physical education, music, and art, as well as teacher-librarians and guidance counselors. Class sizes in primary grades will be smaller. And we have moved forward with improved wages and working conditions for our members across the province.

It may be that bargaining processes will change. But, our focus on fighting for the needs of teachers will not. Your working conditions will improve and Ontario children will receive a better, richer education.



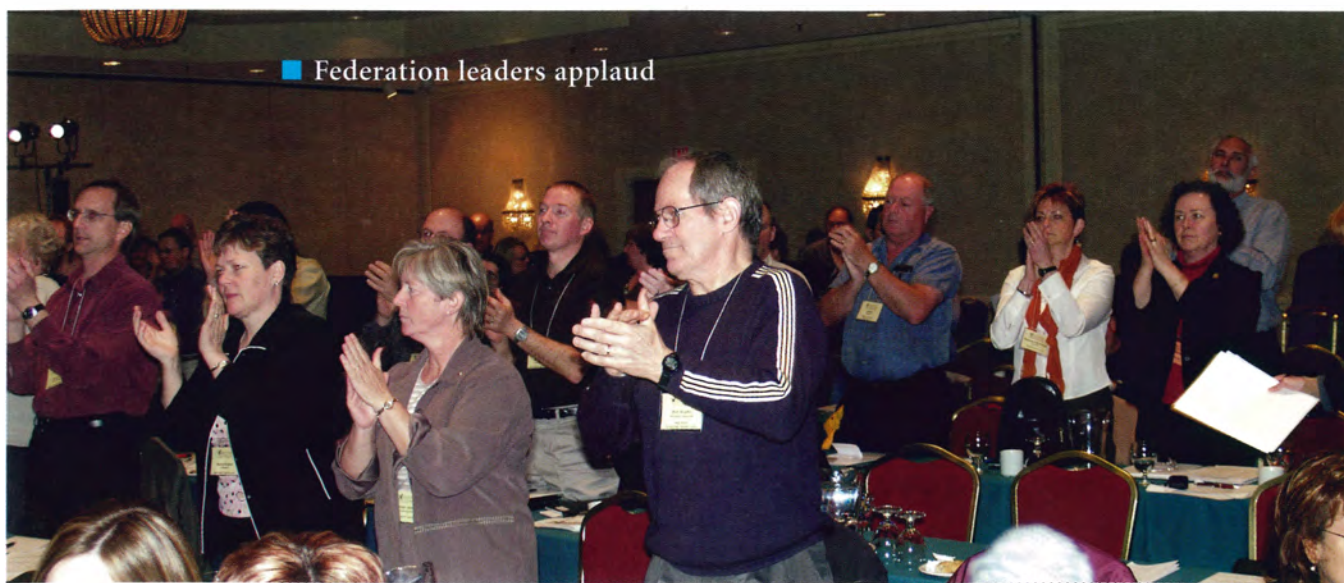
## AGREEMENT ON A UNIQUE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING FRAMEWORK



On April 14 ETFO announced that it had reached agreement on a unique collective bargaining framework with the provincial government. The four-year accord provides funding for a 10.6 percent salary increase, 200 minutes of preparation time, caps on supervision time and the addition of 1300 specialist teachers to the elementary public school system. Above: President Emily Noble and Dave Kendall, coordinator of protective services, speak to the media at ETFO's provincial office.



President Emily Noble also participated in a news conference at Queen's Park with Education Minister Gerard Kennedy and Bill Crothers, representative of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association.



Presidents and chief negotiators scrutinized the accord at a special April meeting.





### ■ *Think on Your Feet* workshop

*Think on Your Feet* is a two-day workshop for aspiring women leaders, particularly those interested in collective bargaining. It teaches public speaking and communication skills and is funded from ETFO Women's Program budget. ETFO Vice-President Cynthia Lemon (left) and instructor Susan Lyne welcome participants.



Vice-President Sam Hammond speaks with a delegate at the annual meeting and conference of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations in April.

### ■ Kindergarten workshops



First Vice-President David Clegg presents certificates of achievement to members who took part in the Kindergarten Mini Series workshops. The 12-hour course looked at how to address the kindergarten expectations in a way that is developmentally appropriate for young children.



# REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL



First Vice-President David Clegg chairs Representative Council meetings. He is also chair of ETFO's budget committee, which presented the proposed 2005-06 budget to delegates.



Observers at Representative Council included 12 participants in the Leaders for Tomorrow program. Funded by ETFO's Women's Program Fund, Leaders for Tomorrow provides an opportunity for a diverse group of women to develop their skills for leadership within ETFO.



President Emily Noble spoke about the provincial bargaining framework, noting that, at the time of the meeting, two locals had reached agreements under the framework. (See also President's column, page 4).

Lorna Bele spoke to delegates about the Mother's Love community self-help project based in Umlazi, South Africa. About 20 women living with AIDS—many of them grandmothers—use their traditional bead-working skills to make AIDS pins, which they sell to earn income to support the orphaned children they look after.



The safety pin that holds the beadwork symbolizes the way in which these women are trying to hold together their torn and damaged families. ETFO made a donation to the Mother's Love project on behalf of members.





## KALEIDOSCOPE 2005

■ *Preparation meets opportunity*  
Marnie McBean's prescription for success



Marnie McBean (centre left) with Cynthia Lemon, Emily Noble and Sam Hammond.

Photo - Vitusha Oberoi

■ by **Vitusha Oberoi**

Three-time Olympic champion Marnie McBean says her elementary school teachers played a big role in shaping the skills which helped her leave an indelible imprint on the world of sport.

McBean was the keynote speaker at the ETFO provincial conference Kaleidoscope 2005, held in April.

She particularly remembers her seventh-grade teacher, Mr. Armstrong, who had the after-school chess club. "An athlete now, I look back on it as a time when I was building my tactics and strategy. I remember the time he put in to train me. I still love to play chess."

McBean also paid tribute to those teachers who supported her during the difficult years when she was training as an athlete and at the same time trying to keep up with her studies. "I had a lot of training to do and it was easy for me to get stressed. But there were some teachers who understood I

was multitasking and they made it easier for me by accepting it."

McBean is one of only two Canadians ever to have won three gold medals in the summer Olympics, striking gold twice in Barcelona and once in Atlanta. Her overall Olympic and World Championship record is equally impressive: six gold, four silver, and two bronze medals. Along with her partner, Kathleen Heddle, she has been instrumental in turning Canada into a rowing powerhouse.

McBean told conference participants that an ordinary person like herself can accomplish extraordinary things.

"The framework for success is teamwork, preparation, goal setting, and being ready to accept the trials and tribulations, to accept a challenge. Luck is when preparation meets opportunity." **V**

# ETFO Award Winners 2004-2005

ETFO is proud to announce the winners of its awards and honours for this year. Congratulations to the recipients and thanks to all those who submitted applications.

## Honourary Life Members

**Hope Grayson**  
**Ron Gugula**  
**Marina Howlett**

ETFO Staff  
Durham Teacher Local  
Upper Grand Teacher Local

<b>Anti-Bias Curriculum Development Award</b>	<b>Carole Paikin Miller</b>	Hamilton-Wentworth Teacher Local
<b>Curriculum Development Award, WP</b>	<b>Evelyn Quist</b>	Halton Teacher Local
<b>Curriculum Development Award</b>	<b>Kim Henbest</b>	Upper Canada Teacher Local
<b>Humanitarian Award – Non-ETFO Member</b>	<b>Douglas Helmer</b>	<i>Nominated by:</i> Upper Canada Teacher Local
<b>Local Leadership Award</b>	<b>Rian McLaughlin</b>	Hamilton-Wentworth OT Local
<b>Local Website Award</b>	<b>Randy Drexler &amp; Mario Spagnuolo</b>	Greater Essex Teacher Local
<b>New Teacher of the Year Award</b>	<b>Mario Spagnuolo</b>	Greater Essex Teacher Local
<b>Newsletter Editor's Award, multi-sheet</b>	<b>Kurt Uriarte</b>	Peel Teacher Local
<b>Newsletter Editor's Award, single sheet</b>	<b>Phillip Mack</b>	Thames Valley Teacher Local
<b>Rainbow Visions Award</b>	<b>Tamara Williams</b>	Trillium Lakelands Teacher Local
<b>Science &amp; Technology Award</b>	<b>Tara Tasker</b>	Elementary Teachers of Toronto
<b>Women Working in Social Activism on Behalf of Women and Children</b>	<b>Donna Miller,</b> Executive Director, Hiatus House	<i>Nominated by:</i> Greater Essex Teacher Local
<b>Writer's Award, Published</b>	<b>Stan Hallman-Chong</b>	Elementary Teachers of Toronto
<b>Writer's Award, Unpublished</b>	<b>William Cowan</b>	Hamilton-Wentworth Teacher Local
<b>Writer's Award, WP, Published</b>	<b>Terry Rotella</b>	Elementary Teachers of Toronto
<b>Writer's Award, WP, Unpublished</b>	<b>Barbara Brockmann</b>	Ottawa-Carleton Teacher Local

Information about ETFO awards, scholarships and bursaries is available in the following ways:

- on our website, [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca)►
- *About ETFO`ETFO Awards & Scholarships*
- ask your steward for a copy of the *ETFO Reference Book*
- contact your local president
- contact Jerry DeQuetteville ([jdequetteville@etfo.org](mailto:jdequetteville@etfo.org)) at provincial office.

Winners of ETFO scholarships and bursaries will be published in the fall issue of *Voice*

## Education Wife Assault receives Greer Award

V. K. Greer dedicated his life to education. Born in 1885, he began teaching in a rural school near Hamilton. In 1944, he became superintendent of elementary education for the province. Greer died at age 60.

The Greer Award, created in his memory in 1947, is presented each year to recognize outstanding service to education. Each affiliate of

the Ontario Teachers' Federation, in rotation, names the beneficiary of the award. This year, ETFO nominated Education Wife Assault.

Education Wife Assault works to educate the community about violence against women, so as to decrease and prevent the abuse of women and their children.



## Sandra Murray receives 2005 OTIP Teaching Award

Sandra Murray, a Grade 7 and 8 mathematics teacher at Tecumseh Public School, Chatham, is the winner of this year's Ontario Teachers' Insurance Plan (OTIP) Teaching Award, in the elementary teacher category. Murray has been a teacher for 29 years.

In supporting her nomination for the award, colleagues describe Sandra Murray as a teacher who "challenges, inspires, supports, and cares for her students, colleagues and school community." Parents emphasized her ability to challenge and encourage her students to be the best they can be.

Students called her an "outstanding teacher, a fabulous coach and a great role model" who is "always involved in things at Tecumseh." One student said: "I just feel sorry for the students who won't be able to have Mrs. Murray as their teacher next year, because she's retiring."



OTF President Jim McQueen; Sandra Murray, elementary winner; Cynthia Lemon. (Gary Beechey, BDS Studios)

## Teachers' excellence recognized by Prime Minister



ETFO members David deBelle (left) and Steven Hammel (below) are two of 15 Canadian teachers who received the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence. Steve Hammel teaches Grades 1-4/ special education, literacy, numeracy, and visual and creative arts at Woodview Children's Centre in Burlington. David deBelle teaches Grades 1-5 mathematics, information computer technology, library, gym, French, and science at Joyce Public School in Toronto. The awards recognize the efforts of outstanding Canadian teachers in all disciplines. Christopher Gorczynski, a Grade 6 teacher at Hillcrest Community School in Toronto, received a certificate of achievement. For more details on the award winners, please go to [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca) ► About ETFO.





■ by Bruce Stodart

# When school isn't...

It was when he was reviewing his school's reading scores in September 2002 that the light went on for Wayne Copp, principal of Toronto's Baycrest Public School.

"I was looking at our DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) results for September through to June and instead what was glaring at me was June through to September," he explained. "After I did the math, I saw that our kids were, on average, losing six levels over the summer."

At the time the school could, at best, hope to place five Grade 3 children in the board-run summer school program. Wayne Copp had bigger ideas. He wanted to run a literacy and computer summer camp for 75 of his students, about a third of the school population.

Not that it was easy. "We thought we were dead in the water at least three times," he recalled with a wry smile. The first problem was finding the necessary funding. The second was how to guide this novel idea through the thicket of regulations and bylaws. And when seed money was found and the regulations met, the problem was staffing.

"I didn't know if any teacher would be interested. I knew we had very limited funds. We won't mention what we paid those teachers. If I had had a number of teachers say 'Sorry, Wayne, I have other plans for the summer' then it would have died right there."

Given the tight budget there was only a small honorarium for teachers who took on the task of running the program that first year. In fact some thought it was a volunteer position and were pleasantly surprised to find out they were getting paid at all.

The result? Not one kid who attended camp lost ground in reading over the summer as measured by the DRA.

This year the Toronto District School Board will operate 24 to 27 summer camps across the city. Although there is a curriculum of sorts, a key to the camps' success is the level of autonomy each has in deciding the methods it will use and the activities it will provide for its kids. Teachers are not only free but are encouraged to improvise, to use their own creativity and ideas in teaching the children. The result is a group of summer camps with common aims but widely differing approaches.

Bruce Stodart teaches at Baycrest Public School.



"It felt kind of weird. On my summer break I usually go to the United States, to Los Angeles. I was mad because I had to go but it turned out to be a lot of fun."

Mary Plevak-Mohamed taught the JK to Grade 1 class last summer. What struck her most was how well the teachers worked together. "It was an excellent group. Having a team like that makes all the difference. All of us were committed to developing our kids' literacy skills and to the children themselves."

The children made and flew kites, explored bubbles and wind, and had plenty of time for songs, poems, rhymes and dance. A trip to the local bagel shop let them form their own bagel and then watch as it was cooked before their eyes. Needless to say, the little ones were thrilled.

With so many neat things to do, it is not surprising that out of a class of 25, attendance usually ran to about 24 students, dipping rarely to 21. That in itself speaks to the success of the camp.

Each classroom had three high school students who acted as tutors and education assistants. Mary was high in her praise of her students. One of them had a talent in music and would lead the children in daily sing-songs and dance, while another was particularly adept at computers and acted as a resource for the camp as a whole. All took the initiative as opportunities presented themselves.

Most teachers would love to have even one assistant in their classroom. Having three meant that each child received much more intensive and individualized attention. Moreover, it may prove to be a valuable recruitment tool for students who had not previously considered a career in teaching.

When asked if she would recommend teaching at the summer camp to a fellow teacher Mary laughs: "Well, I enjoyed it a lot but it really does require commitment and energy. But I felt good



at the end of it all, knowing that we had made a difference, that it was such a positive experience for the kids."

And what of the children themselves? Key to the success of the summer camps is that they are indeed summer camps and not summer schools. As someone who had to go to summer school for Grade 11 algebra, I can well understand why most kids would be reluctant to spend any of their summer vacation back in a school building. Unlike summer school, summer camp is designed to be fun. One third of the time is spent on academics, another third is spent on computers, and another third is devoted to the arts.

Of course, the ultimate assessment is the one that comes from the children themselves. During a round table discussion with some 11 year-old graduates, one child volunteered, "It felt kind of weird. On my summer break I usually go to the United States, to Los Angeles. I was mad because I had to go but it turned out to be a lot of fun."

"I really didn't want to go because I didn't want to do any work on my summer vacation but it wasn't work," another piped up. "Well, half of it was and half of it wasn't. There was a lot of gym and computers. We got to go on a lot of trips, like to the doughnut place (the Krispy Kreme factory)."

Surprisingly one child liked working in her notebook best. "We did reading, crossword puzzles and science about polar bears."

At one point the discussion became so animated that the children were talking over each other as they recalled the great time they had at camp. Not too surprisingly snack time and a chance to play soccer in the yard or basketball in the high school gym were big plusses as well.

Wayne Copp wanted it to be a summer camp rather than a summer school. He wanted it to be fun for kids. When I tried to suggest that the summer camp was sort of like school, I was immediately corrected by the kids. "It was way better than school!" ♥

# Challenging the status quo made easier with ETFO support

Anita Dhawan showed spunk as a girl of 11 when she broke an ancient taboo by embracing a low-caste woman in her native India. Later, she challenged the patriarchal society of her hometown, who mistreated her widowed mother because in their eyes a woman merited no dignity after losing her husband. As an adult, the iconoclastic Anita smashed yet another barrier by forcing York University to recognize her foreign credentials, paving the way for her teaching career in Canada.

■ by **Vitusha Oberoi**

**T**he quest for social justice and equity is Anita Dhawan's *raison d'être*, the driving force of her life. This search has caused her much pain but has also provided her immense satisfaction as she tries to make the world a better place than she found it.

"I believe in challenging people about their preconceived notions. I am sure that by exposing them to new ideas, I can bring about positive changes," Anita says. In March she became the first recipient of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council's Women of Labour Award for her work combating discrimination and raising awareness about rights and equity issues.

Anita is a librarian and ESL teacher at Lord Roberts Public School in Toronto. She views the award as a validation of the kind of social justice work women like her are doing all over the world. One of the criteria for the award was community contributions as a volunteer. "It is also a call for me to continue with our struggle and challenge systemic barriers for a more just and equitable society."

Anita's first battle against discrimination in Canada is the stuff to inspire every foreign-trained professional. After emigrating from India in 1979, she fought York University for six years

to have her BA and MA degrees from Punjab University in India recognized. She persistently refused to be pushed to the bottom of the academic ladder and to "upgrade" her qualifications by repeating her undergraduate work.

"When I approached York University, I was told that my qualifications were equivalent to Grade 13 and I must do undergrad work. I felt that if today they tell me my academic qualifications are not good enough, tomorrow they'll say my skin is not good enough, then they will say my hair is not good enough, and then they will say my accent is not good enough. When do we become good enough? I was determined to find out what were the specific reasons my qualifications were not good enough," Anita said.

"I would go to York University and sit outside the director's office and wouldn't move, asking for answers. It took a good six years because they make it a very complicated process. Finally, I received a letter from the Ministry of Education upholding my degrees and York University had to admit me to the teachers' college on my academic qualifications."

The battle with York University established her credentials but not her identity. At teachers' college many of her fellow teacher candidates

Vitusha Oberoi is an ETFO staff member and freelance writer.





Anita Dhawan (second from left), helped organize a protest against Wal-Mart stores coordinated by the Canadian Labour Congress. For more information, go to [www.clc-ctc.ca](http://www.clc-ctc.ca) ► walmart campaign.

found it tough to accept her accent, often asking her if she had come through the “back door,” implying that she had managed to get admission due to special programs and not because she qualified on her own merit.

“I faced discrimination at many levels. I was not given time for presentations at functions or interrupted rudely as I tried to speak,” says Anita. The flashpoint came when one of her professors interrupted her as she was practice teaching and corrected her pronunciation in front of the Grade 6 class.

“I was shattered. I cried for hours, and after I had cried out every tear in my eyes, another student teacher came and offered me a book, *Sister Outsider*, by the American gay black activist, Audre Lorde. She said though she could not take away my pain, the book might help.

“I read that book, taking in every word, every sentence. As I read, I felt my spine grow straighter, taller.” Ever since she has worn a button quoting her favourite line from the book: “Your Silence Will Not Protect You.”

Instead of suffering in silence, Anita filed a human rights complaint with the dean. She connected with the Federation, and instantly became involved in programs and workshops aimed at achieving equity and fighting discrimination of all kinds. In 2002–03, she received an award from the Elementary Teachers of Toronto for excellence in teaching equity.

“My union empowers me. I would have been fired at least ten times in my 11 years of teaching, for challenging school-and board-wide inequities that affect school learning were it not for the support and strength which my union gives me.” However, she does not want to get in a groove. “I never miss an opportunity to challenge everyone, to think critically, to look at ideas and views beyond the obvious, including my own school board, the local and the provincial Federation.”

“My union empowers me. I would have been fired at least ten times in my 11 years of teaching, for challenging school-and board-wide inequities that affect school learning were it not for the support and strength which my union gives me.”

She has not excluded herself from such continual soul-searching either and attributes to it her deep involvement with Pride Day, African Heritage Month, Aboriginal Awareness Week and all such events which are aimed at promoting equity for historically disadvantaged groups such as gays, lesbians, blacks, and aboriginals. She is a co-author of an ETFO curriculum document, “Imagine a World That Is Free from Fear,” which provides teachers with resources to address issues relating to homophobia and heterosexism. For the last 11 years, she has run the Young Women’s Club in the schools where she has taught. Through this program, she reaches out to the girls in Grades 4 to 8 on issues such as poverty, homelessness and the challenges faced by girls. Anita also presents a workshop to teachers, “Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges: by Books.”

“There are four things which are very dear to me – my involvement in stopping violence against women, fundraising for charities, the December 6 Committee and the Daily Food Bank,” says Anita, who also volunteers for Frontier College, a 150-year-old organization which aims to spread literacy. “We go to community centres and read with children, their parents, babysitters and grandparents.”

Anita says she celebrates her role as a teacher and a librarian, and hopes that she is able to instill the spirit of social justice and equity in her students. “Sometimes I do panic to think that I started late, that I do not have enough years left to do what I want to do. But the consolation is that if I put my mind to it, I can still do a lot.” ♥



Dr. Jean Clinton speaks with Luisa D'Amato, a reporter with the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* who was covering the conference for her paper.



Kindergarten teachers took part in workshops that gave them new skills and materials to take back to their classroom.

## Kindergarten Matters

**A**re kindergarten teachers the most important teachers in the system?

Dr. Jean Clinton certainly thinks so.

Dr. Clinton, a McMaster University psychiatrist, says early-years teachers can make the difference between life long academic success and failure for their students.

In a presentation to about 260 members at ETFO's *Kindergarten Matters* Conference, she outlined the ways in which intellectual development is linked to emotional nurturing and development.

"Emotional learning is essential before any other learning can take place," she said. Providing examples from scientific studies, Dr. Clinton stressed that when teachers take the time to make a connection with children, students' ability to learn is greatly improved.

"The quality of the relationship the teacher has with students is most important," and creating

"an emotionally safe space" for students – especially those with difficulties – can help turn them around, said Dr. Clinton.

She added that research shows that the brain can be physically altered by emotional experiences. "The brain is the pathway by which experiences affect health, learning and behaviour."

Incorporating this knowledge into classroom practice, she urged teachers to consider a shift in thinking "from fixing children's problems to promoting their strengths." And, she added, they should recognize that "it's not just programs but the quality of the student-teacher relationship that promotes learning."

A variety of workshops followed Dr. Clinton's keynote address.

The Waterloo Region ETFO local provided logistical support for the conference. The Waterloo Region District School Board donated space in Jacob Hespeler High School. **V**





Itah Sadu was one of the workshop presenters.

## Le français, ça se partage

Drummer Doug Sole (right) was the keynote presenter at the ETFO conference for French teachers this spring. Sole not only entertained teachers but was an example of how to integrate the arts into every aspect of teaching, including French. He also facilitated a drumming circle workshop.

The conference provided participants – which included core, extension and immersion teachers – with an opportunity to network and to increase their skills in such areas as classroom management, literacy enhancement, cooperative and brain based learning. About 100 ETFO members attended.





■ by Vivian McCaffrey

## Why teachers should – and do – care about child care

The Ontario government has announced a plan to enhance and improve child care. Much more is needed, however, to address the demand and to better integrate education and care for young children.

Elementary educators know first-hand the importance of early childhood development and early identification of children's learning needs. Children come to school demonstrating a wide range of developmental differences.

The 1999 *Early Years Study* gave national prominence to what teachers know intuitively. Co-authors Margaret McCain and Fraser Mustard argued forcefully that early brain development affects learning, behaviour, and physical and mental health throughout life.

Quality early childhood development also plays an important role in addressing equality and social justice. Universal programs foster social inclusion of new immigrant families and close the opportunity gap for poor families.

Child care is an important issue for many ETFO members personally, as parents or future parents. The 2003–04 survey of members showed that 56 percent have at least one child and 28 percent are under 34.

In short, greater accessibility to affordable, high-quality child care programs is a natural issue for elementary educators to embrace.

### Canada lags behind other countries

Among member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), only the Scandinavian countries have a higher participation rate of women in the paid workforce than Canada. Yet, in comparison to most major OECD countries, Canada has a long way to go to before it achieves comparable universally accessible children's services. Quebec has a system of publicly funded, community-operated child care programs. Elsewhere in the country we have a patchwork of fragmented child care services accessible to only a small minority of families.

There has been talk about a national "children's agenda" for over a decade but lack of political will and conflicting ideological viewpoints have blocked real progress. Starting in 2000, the federal government began to increase funding for a range of children's services and in the February 2005 budget earmarked \$5 billion over five years to support child care and early learning programs.

Unable to get unanimity among the provinces and territories for a national framework for child care funding, the federal government has begun to negotiate separate bilateral deals, reaching agreement first with Manitoba and Saskatchewan and, on May 6, with Ontario. A federal election before the budget is passed, however, could mean the collapse of these accords. The Conservative Party, the most likely beneficiary of disgruntled voters, supports giving parents personal child tax deductions rather than directly funding child care programs.



## Ontario is taking action

Beginning in the late 1980s and continuing until 1995, Liberal and NDP governments expanded funding for child care spaces and required all new schools to include space for child care centres. But, when they were elected in 1995, the Tories cut child care funding and downloaded a significant share of the costs to municipalities.

The Tories refused to spend any of the federal funds on child care and directed them instead to existing health programs for special needs children and to the creation of Early Years Centres that are primarily referral centres for children's services. But, starting in 2003, funding for licensed child care in Ontario began to increase once again.

## The Best Start plan

Children and Youth Services Minister Marie Bountrogianni announced the Best Start plan in November 2004. Beginning next fall, pending passage of the federal budget, Ontario will use its share of federal funds to expand subsidies for licensed child care for four- and five-year-old children. These new spaces are to be located in or near elementary schools to provide children with a "seamless" day.

Local Best Start networks are to be developed by local municipal social service agencies that will build partnerships among health and social service agencies and school boards. The networks are to establish service hubs that link education, child care, and parenting programs.

Three demonstration sites will pilot an expanded version of the Best Start plan. They will have wrap-around child care for JK and SK students; a half-day, free preschool program for two-and-a-half to four-year-olds; newborn health screening; 18-month well-baby check-ups; and early identification of specialized hearing and language needs.

## ETFO's involvement in child care issues

ETFO's two predecessor organizations were among the founders of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care in 1981. Ever since we have actively supported the coalition's advocacy for high-quality, accessible child care. In April ETFO local and provincial representatives participated in a Queen's Park lobby responding to the Best Start initiatives. We raised a number of concerns.

While Best Start represents a significant renewed commitment to child care, it does not yet provide a seamless day. Best Start continues to treat child care as a "wrap-around" the school day rather than move toward integrating child care and education. It risks promoting the view that child care provides custodial

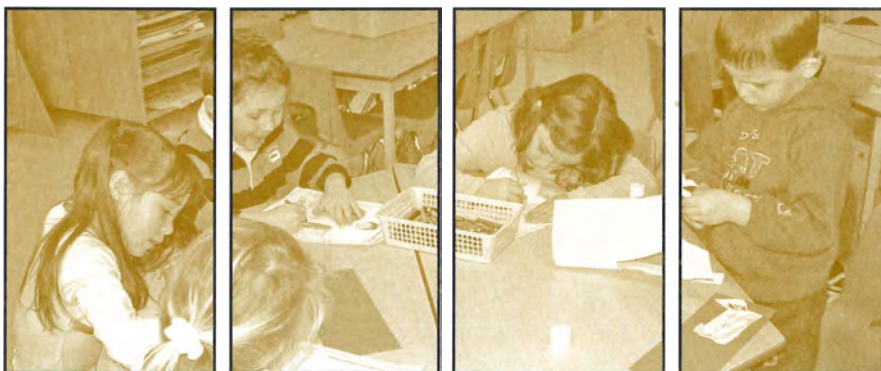
care rather than important early childhood development and learning. At a minimum ETFO is urging the development of program links between school and child care programs for kindergarten children.

Because of consistent under-funding, the salary and benefits of child care staff do not fairly reflect their qualifications or the value of their work. Attracting and retaining qualified staff is key to quality child care. Best Start does not address these issues.

Research shows that not-for-profit programs are more likely to deliver higher-quality care, are more accessible to special needs children, and are more accountable than commercially operated programs. However, the government is letting municipalities decide about whether or not to limit Best Start to non-profits.

We do, however, commend the government for its renewed commitment and are hopeful that it will listen to and address our concerns as it rolls out the Best Start program. **V**

(More information about the Best Start plan is available on the Ministry website: [www.children.gov.on.ca](http://www.children.gov.on.ca))





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# Meeting the Needs of ESL/ELD Learners in the Classroom

■ by Colleen Early

*The lesson plan in this issue is not our usual specific lesson on a specific subject. Instead, Colleen Early provides strategies for teaching ESL/ELD students.*

Teaching ESL/ELD students effectively can be a challenge for the classroom teacher. The good news is that as educators we know it is important to have high expectations but reasonable targets for all. If we can think about what ESL/ELD students need to succeed, they can and will.

English as a Second Language students may be new to the country or Canadian-born but with a first language other than English. More and more ESL students are proficient in several languages. All have limited facility in English.

English Literacy Development (ELD) students have limited or no English or use an English dialect. They have limited literacy skills due to interrupted and/or limited educational opportunities.

*The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8, English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development, A Resource Guide, 2001* identifies a continuum of expectations for ESL/ELD learners. Available to every classroom teacher, this guide provides concrete supports for the adaptation of Ontario curriculum expectations. It is also the basis for collaboration between ESL/ELD and classroom teachers.

Colleen Early is an ESL/ELD resource teacher in Simcoe County DSB and member of the ESL Resource Group of Ontario (ERGO).

The *Resource Guide* is organized under the headings of Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing and Orientation for primary, junior and intermediate grades. There are sample adaptations and modifications for selected teaching units for each grade level.

Modifications or adjustments are made when a student is unable to meet the grade expectations and/or performance criteria. Descriptors in the appropriate ESL or ELD stages are used to determine the modifications.

Accommodations are strategies and provisions (such as appropriate resources) provided by the teacher to help students meet the expectations.

You may accommodate as much as your ESL/ELD students need to assist in academic achievement.

## Stages of Second-Language Acquisition

The *Resource Guide* (page 9) outlines the stages in the acculturation process.

The rate at which individuals experience this process may vary even among members of the same family.

The four stages are:

1. Survival/beginning English
2. English in familiar and supported contexts
3. English with some independence and inaccuracies
4. Independent and accurate English

Students will proceed through the stages at individual rates depending on many factors such as age, language knowledge in first language, ability, and other factors such as personal trauma (*Resource Guide*, p. 8).

In the early stages of acculturation and language acquisition, there are periods of rapid growth and "silent periods", or plateaus. During these times the student is absorbing large amounts of linguistic and cultural information but is not yet ready to produce oral language, especially in front of the class.

## Resources

Coelho, Elizabeth

### **Adding English**

Toronto: Pippin Publishing, 2003

Gibbons, Pauline

### **Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning: Teaching Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom**

Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002.

[www.heinemann.com](http://www.heinemann.com)

Ontario Ministry of Education

### **The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1–8, English As a Second Language and English Literacy Development – A Resource Guide, 2001**

Available as a PDF from the Ontario

Ministry of Education website,

[www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/elemcurric.html](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/elemcurric.html)

Schechter, Sandra and Jim Cummins

### **Multilingual Education in Practice: Using Diversity As a Resource**

Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2003.

### **[www.ergo-on.ca](http://www.ergo-on.ca)**

*ESL consultants and teachers meet at ERGO to discuss ESL across Ontario and lobby government about ESL concerns.*

### **[www.teslontario.org](http://www.teslontario.org)**

*The website of Teachers of English as a Second Language of Ontario has links to a number of sites that offer resources.*

### **[www.iteachilearn.com/cummins](http://www.iteachilearn.com/cummins)**

*Jim Cummins' website features key links to current research papers and ESL/ELD supports.*

Most ESL/ELD students are able to use English to communicate in social situations and day-to-day classroom interactions within one or two years. However, students may require from five to seven years to develop the ability to understand the academic language used in textbooks and to use English to express the increasingly complex and abstract concepts encountered in the higher grades. (*Resource Guide*, p. 11)

The latest literature states that it takes anywhere from two years to nine years to acquire both the oral and written skills of a native English speaker. This year the Ministry of Education changed its funding formula to allow for four years of financial support rather than three, acknowledging that it does take longer to acquire English than previously recognized. However, it is individual boards that decide for how long students will receive ESL support.

Many teachers say, "They speak English, they are not ESL." Weeks later the teacher comes back saying the writing level is quite a bit behind the speaking level. Keep in mind that writing is the most difficult skill to master and students will still need ESL/ELD support in this area.

Students sometimes require ESL/ELD support and special education support. The latest statistics show that 12 percent of the general population has exceptionalities (including giftedness) and the proportion of ESL/ELD representation in special education classes should be approximately the same.

Standardized tests often don't produce valid/reliable information due to cultural and/or linguistic bias and are inappropriate for ESL/ELD learners. It is therefore

important to look at alternative ways to gather data. The ESL Resource Group of Ontario (ERGO) has been working on this issue for the past two years.

## **Strategies for teaching the ESL/ELD student**

Have confidence that you know more than you think about teaching your ESL/ELD student. Speak with your eyes and your heart. People do not remember what you said. They remember how you made them feel.

### **1. Use of first language**

Students should be encouraged to continue speaking their native language at home. Otherwise, in years to come they may lose it altogether and not be able to communicate with some family members such as their grandparents.

Some benefits of using first language are:

- being able to transfer skills from one language to another
- developing mental flexibility
- developing problem-solving skills
- experiencing a sense of cultural stability and continuity
- understanding cultural and family values
- developing awareness of global issues
- expanding career opportunities.

Encourage the use of the first language at school when students first arrive. Another student in the class who speaks the same language can be a translator for instructions.

Within the first few days the student may write in their journal in their first language. Even if you cannot read the



language, you as the teacher will be able to determine certain literacy skills.

If possible, post charts, work, and lists in the first language. This validates the language and culture and helps students to feel accepted.

Encourage parents to use their first language at home, as using only English may limit family interactions. Families can also support learning at home. For example, they may teach their child to tell time in their first language. Children will then understand the concept of time and will only need the English vocabulary to communicate their understanding.

## **2. Visuals/gestures/concrete materials**

**Visuals:** Fill your classroom with visuals. Label things around the room or use simple diagrams to help get a meaning across.

**Gestures.** We all use gestures all the time; for example "big-small," "come here," "no-yes." Many cultures use their hands to speak. Body language says a great deal. Your smile is the first expression the student sees at the beginning of each day.

**Concrete materials.** Teach vocabulary using concrete objects, flashcards, pictures and other things readily available in a primary classroom. A partner can help.

Tools such as strategies, word-walls, alphabet displays, big books, pictures and a variety of other teaching methods create a supportive environment for the ESL/ELD learner.

## **3. Buddy system/peer tutors**

Students who are just beginning to learn English do benefit from the support of

a bilingual same-language partner if possible.

Buddies (for younger children) or tutors support new English-language learners.

A peer-tutor from the same class or an older student from another class works well in older grades to help with content, reading, writing or math skills.

The teacher chooses a buddy/tutor the first day to sit beside the newcomer to help not only in class but also at lunch and recess. The buddy changes regularly so that everyone gets a chance to meet the new student and be of assistance. Buddies/tutors benefit from developing their own social and leadership skills and enhancing their own understanding of concepts after explaining them to someone else.

# **General Hints for Teaching ESL/ELD Students**

- ▶ Simple, straightforward words and sentences are easier to understand. Avoid passive verbs. Avoid slang and unusual idioms. Figurative language like "run that by me again" may be confusing.
- ▶ Speak naturally, remembering that learners have to learn to recognize English as it is actually spoken.
- ▶ Give clear instructions. Number and label steps, reinforce oral instructions with written outlines.
- ▶ Use non-verbal clues, gestures, facial expressions, and mime (be aware that some gestures may have negative meanings in some cultures).
- ▶ Highlight and introduce key vocabulary. Preteach and provide vocabulary ahead of time so students can look up new words.
- ▶ Check often for comprehension. At frequent intervals say, "Tell me what you have to do next" instead of "Do you understand?"
- ▶ Allow sufficient response time. Students need time to think in their first language and compose a response in English.
- ▶ Do not correct grammar when students first begin to speak English. Instead model it back in the correct form. Allowing students the freedom to speak and make mistakes will give them the self-confidence to take risks and try again.
- ▶ Work collaboratively with all teachers of ESL/ELD students. Share information, tips and ways of helping students become familiar with vocabulary and concepts of subjects.
- ▶ Verb tenses are a common area of concern with ESL/ELD students. This will require a few formal lessons, and these will probably benefit your whole class.
- ▶ Checking the ESL or ESD box on the provincial report card indicates that accommodations and/or modifications of curriculum expectations are in place for that student (*Resource Guide*, p. 22).
- ▶ Try to get to know your students and their stories. It will open your eyes and your heart and is a good opportunity to teach acceptance in your classroom.

The author would like to acknowledge the members of the ESL Resource Group of Ontario (ERGO) and the ESL/ELD resource teachers in Simcoe County who contributed ideas for this article.

For journal writing, the journal could be dictated or copied. At first have the student write it entirely or partially in the first language. The student then reads it to the buddy, the teacher and the school secretary. The buddy could read to the student and the student could read to the buddy. There are many possibilities

#### 4. Use games, puzzles, chants and songs

Many commercial games such as *Guess Who* and *Concentration* need little language.

Puzzles are great because they require no language and the child just needs to match the picture on the box. The student may already be familiar with puzzles. The smaller the child, the bigger the pieces should be.

Chants and Songs: the ESL/ELD student should be sitting right in front of the teacher during this group activity. It is a great opportunity for the child to hear his/her own voice in unison without taking a risk of being embarrassed. All cultures appreciate music and rhythm.

Use audio tapes, drama, and visual arts.

#### 5. Resources

Schools, classrooms and libraries have a variety of picture dictionaries. Some of these are available in dual language format using English and another language. Dual language picture books can also be ordered from some book companies that carry multicultural literature.

Letting the child borrow the book to take home is a great way to show the family that you respect their language. Having parents read it to the child encourages them to be in contact with the school in a non-threatening way.

Think about computer programs you are already using in your classroom and school. ESL/ELD students can be put on a computer with or without a buddy depending on their computer ability.

ESL websites have teacher material.

### Working with buddies

Here is a sample list of ideas that buddies can work on. You or the students could make more, using themes and topics from the regular program. Ideas can be put on file cards and kept in a box.

- ▶ Label the school; e.g., office, desk, wall, washroom.
- ▶ *Introduction* game. The ESL student introduces himself/herself to various people in the school.
- ▶ Car survey: check parking lot, colour, make
- ▶ Make a map of the school
- ▶ Interviews: principal, secretary, custodian (make questions, then record the answers)
- ▶ Playing cards: teach counting and asking; Fish, 21, Crazy Eights
- ▶ Miming action words: partners must guess action words
- ▶ Preposition tour of the school: Who is *in* there? What is *on* the shelf?
- ▶ *I Spy* game
- ▶ Scavenger hunt
- ▶ Make a magazine collage (favourite things)
- ▶ Family survey (how many people in your family?, etc.)
- ▶ Newspaper: tell a story from a picture, weather, etc.
- ▶ Birthday: how do you celebrate?
- ▶ Languages-spoken survey
- ▶ Trace a body on mural paper; measure, label parts
- ▶ Teach a song, clapping, skipping
- ▶ Measure up: measure and record things around the school
- ▶ Play *Battleship*: a word and number for each coordinate
- ▶ Cookie sheet with objects on it: after looking at the articles, take the tray away and guess what things are missing
- ▶ Make a pictiary
- ▶ Tape a story
- ▶ Draw pictures and label them with appropriate vocabulary for their language stage
- ▶ Read a story into a tape with a friend
- ▶ Sequence games; use cut-up comic strips
- ▶ Activity: make a paper doll and dress it in the dress of your native country and label the items



Last summer I attended a three-day workshop in Hamilton. It was the best professional development opportunity I have had in my 20-year teaching career.



# Teaching and Learning with Monarch Butterflies



■ by Audrey Armstrong

**T**eachers often take workshops during the summer, but Teaching and Learning with Monarch Butterflies is unique in its content and outreach.

The workshop is a combination of classroom and field experiences, led by Eric Mollenhauer of the Educational Information and Resource Centre (EIRC), a New Jersey public agency, and a team of teachers from New Jersey and Ontario. This workshop has a global impact, involving Canada the United States and Mexico.

In Ontario, we endeavour to deliver enduring lessons to our students. The story of the monarch butterfly is one such lesson. As Eric Mollenhauer said, "We, as humans, learn through stories; the amazing journey of the monarch is one great story. The monarchs that fly north to Ontario in the summer may be the great-great-grandchildren of the original ones, which flew south in the fall. At 4,000 km they have the longest migration of any insect in the world."

## Becoming monarch midwives

The living science centre was an example of what we can create in our own classrooms. Each table was set up with an inverted tomato cage encased in black netting with several monarch chrysalises hanging from threads near the top. Inside the cage was a water bottle stuffed with fresh milkweed, the monarchs' favourite food.

On the first morning of the workshop we heard an enthusiastic cry from one table: "Emerging!" All 50 participants and 13 teachers gathered around to witness an adult butterfly emerge.

Wet crumpled wings unfolded and enlarged before our eyes as a miraculous metamorphosis took place.

As the adults emerge, they are removed to a roomy net with fresh coneflowers pinned inside. As well as being offered this natural source of nectar, the butterflies are fed sugar-water nectar each morning. This feeding process required some instruction from the experienced staff.

You gently hold the butterfly with wings folded and ensure the proboscis (feeding tube) is extended into the nectar. The insect drinks this nectar for a minute or so, and then rolls the proboscis up, indicating it is full. Occasionally one would escape and have to be netted and returned to its home.

On the final day, we released the butterflies, one by one. We applied nectar to our hands or noses to provide a final feeding for the migrating butterflies. The sensation on the nose of the tiny, suction-like feet of an insect about to travel to Mexico was humbling.

## Practical skills to take home

Learning how to create a butterfly garden at our own school was an important part of the workshop, with several experienced teachers addressing the creation and maintenance aspects and the potential teaching opportunities when you have a garden at your school.

Nell Hotke, an elementary teacher with the Toronto District School Board said, "I see future environmentalists in my classroom. We saved

Audrey Armstrong is a teacher with the Bluewater District School Board.



Adult butterflies in net cages. Inset: Eric Mollenhauer, EIRC Institute.

Photos - Willy Waterton

seeds for our garden, we composted stuff from snack time, we had a worm farm. This kind of project gave some of my ADD kids a focus.”

We spent one afternoon in the field: it was an opportunity to identify tiny monarch eggs and larvae. We visited the Urquhart Butterfly Gardens in Hamilton created as a tribute to Dr. Fred Urquhart, a Canadian entomologist who pioneered the tracking of monarchs with tags.

Back home in Grey County, I netted a male monarch to meet my students on their first day of school. A monarch caterpillar in my classroom created a chrysalis and emerged the last week of September. “It is a girl,” was the birth announcement on the PA. (The male has a single black dot on each hind wing; the female does not.) The children named her Sparkles.

Warton Public School students were excited when we released our monarch in the playground. Tagged EBL191 for Monarch Watch, she fluttered due south over the orange and red sugar maples as the crowd of children called out, “Fly to Mexico, Sparkles.”

### The Monarch Teacher Network

The Monarch Teacher Network is composed of (mostly JK-8) teachers who have received training in how to use monarch butterflies to teach a variety of concepts and skills, including our growing connection with other nations and the need to be responsible stewards of the environment. The network is sponsored by the EIRC and is growing in Canada

The workshop sessions included practical activities, and games. We viewed videos about the monarch and environmental concerns. We received various language, math, art and social study projects to see and try out.

The volunteer teaching staff who had tested the projects in the classroom shared instructions and handouts.

The workshop cost \$60 and, considering the value of the books, videos and teaching resources, I have about \$120 worth of materials to use in my classroom. The Hamilton Wentworth District School Board and ETFO provided funding.

This year workshops are being held in Merrickville (south of Ottawa) on July 25, 26, 27 and in Kingston on July 27, 28, 29. **V**



For more information and workshop registration details visit: [www.eirc.org](http://www.eirc.org) ► global connections. Or send your registration and cheque to: Monarch Canada Teacher Network Canada, 19 Cartwright St., Kingston On K17 1P3





# Making Teachers' Work Visible



■ by Pat McAldie

Ontario's public elementary teachers are hard-working, dedicated professionals. Nobody knows this better than you, our members. Time in the classroom is only a part of what you do. Much of your work is invisible to most parents and the public. That "invisible" work – specifically, improved preparation time – has been the key focus in ETFO provincial and local negotiations.

And because it is often invisible we wanted to quantify how much time you spend on each of your non-classroom activities. We also wanted to know how you feel about all this – what impact your workload has on your physical and mental health, and what you believe are the main problems that need to be fixed.

We hired Jim Matsui Research and in mid-February 2005, over 3,000 teacher members answered a somewhat challenging telephone survey to address these questions. We sincerely thank you for taking the time to answer the survey.

Here's what we learned about teachers' workload.

Full-time public elementary teachers in Ontario work an average of 53 hours a week. This finding is comparable to research done in other provinces over the last few years: teachers work 52.3 hours per week in Newfoundland (2004); 53.1 hours in BC (2001); 52.5 hours in Nova Scotia (2000); 52.9 hours in Alberta (1999).<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the hours shown in the box, full-time teachers work on 16.5 holiday and vacation days each year.

These results should put to rest the myth that teachers work only five hours per day for nine months of the year.

Pat McAldie is an ETFO research officer.

## How full-time teachers spend their time

Activity	Hours / week	Percent of total hours
Classroom instruction	25.6	48
Preparing for classes	7.5	14
Marking	6.1	12
Working with individual students outside of class	3	6
Supervision and extracurricular activities	3.1	6
Meetings: staff, team and with colleagues	2.4	5
Professional development*	1.9	4
Meeting and conferring with parents	1.2	2
Preparing report cards*	1.8	
Preparing ISA and IEP reports*	0.4	
Travelling for work-related duties	3.6	

\*These activities are concentrated in particular times of the year, but are calculated as weekly averages.

## Part-time teacher workload

The workload of part time teachers is even heavier, proportionately. Part-time teachers across the province work on average 35.5 hours per week. As for full-time teachers, classroom instruction accounts for less than half that time.

Interestingly, part-time teachers' total work hours are 67 percent of those of full-time teachers. However, their classroom teaching time, the basis of their pay, is only 64 percent of a full-time teacher's workweek. Compared to full-time teachers, part-time teachers spend proportionately more time on work outside the classroom.

## Perception of working conditions

We also questioned teachers about their work lives. Half of full-time teachers and 40 percent of part-time teachers feel overworked all or most of the time.

Here are the details

I have enough time to:	Always	Sometimes	Total
accomplish all work to personal standards	13	42	55
develop professional skills	10	43	53
work with individual students	12	37	49
consult with colleagues around curriculum issues	10	47	57

## Stress and workload

Increased workload definitely has had an impact: more than three quarters of respondents report an impact on their physical or mental health and on family and personal life. Specifically:

- Fifty-eight percent believe that workload has increased a great deal over the past five years, and 68 percent believe say it is a great deal more onerous than 10 years ago.
- Thirty-six percent say personal life has been affected a great deal, and another 50 percent say it has been affected somewhat.
- Thirty percent report a great impact; another 49 percent report some impact on mental or physical health.
- Thirty-seven percent report a great deal of stress from overwork, and 54 percent report some stress.

## What has changed

Teachers were asked to identify the specific changes in public education that have had an impact on their workloads and stress levels. The top four factors identified are:

- increases in special needs students (86 percent)
- cutbacks in the number of specialist teachers (78 percent)
- class sizes that remain too large (73 percent)
- cutbacks in support staff (71 percent)

You cited class size, preparation time and specialist teachers as the most important factors to change. The provincial framework provides 200 minutes of preparation time and is expected to add 1300 specialist teachers to the system in the next four years.

We know that with improved working conditions, the education system in Ontario will also improve. It is not just rhetoric – teachers' working conditions really are students' learning conditions. **V**

<sup>1</sup> *It's About Time!! A Report on the Impact of Workload on Teachers and Students*, David Dibbon, Newfoundland, 2004, available on the internet at [www.nlta.nl.ca](http://www.nlta.nl.ca), for details of other research that has been conducted.



# Students go to bat for Attawapiskat



■ by Fran Côté

Last fall, Teviah Moro, a reporter for the *Timmins Daily Press* wrote a series of articles on a desperate situation in Attawapiskat, a First Nations community on the James Bay coast. I shared these stories with my Grade 5/6 class at Iroquois Falls Public School. They immediately decided that they needed to do something to help.

Fumes from a leaking diesel fuel tank under the J.R. Nakogee Public School permeated the school, making people sick. In 1999, the school was condemned and its 400 students placed in about 20 “temporary” portable classrooms. They’re still there six years later! They have no gymnasium, no library, no lunchroom and few of the services that we take for granted in our southern Ontario schools.

Our MP, Charlie Angus, came to speak to the class and praised them for their interest. He suggested a letter-writing campaign and reminded them of this quote: “A small drop of ink can make hundreds, perhaps thousands, think.”

Charlie told the students that they have a voice and could be heard. The federal politicians who decide on aboriginal issues, including education, needed to hear about the public’s displeasure with the plight of students in Attawapiskat. We hoped the issue would get more attention and would be resolved sooner.

Soon after Charlie’s visit, we invited *Timmins Daily Press* columnist, Xavier Kataquapit, who is originally from Attawapiskat, to come to our

school. He thanked the students for their efforts on behalf of his community. Then he talked about the building of J.R. Nakogee PS and how very proud the whole community was of their school. For many children the school was the only place that was always warm and had electricity (from the diesel-fed generators) and running water. He said people were very sad to see their well-loved school boarded up, contaminated and condemned, with mushrooms growing out of the carpets and mold everywhere.

Charlie and Xavier’s talks motivated the students to start their letter-writing campaign. They wrote to the MPs on the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Issues and some also wrote to Prime Minister Paul Martin and to Indian and Northern Affairs Minister Andy Scott.

Charlie told the Attawapiskat Education Authority about our campaign and their officer, Ignace Gull, thanked us for our efforts.

As promised, Charlie returned to IFPS to collect the students’ letters and distributed them in the House of Commons. “I am inspired by the spirit of today’s young generation. Never let anyone tell you that the world cannot be changed. Never let anyone tell you that young people cannot make a difference,” he wrote.

The students soon began receiving responses from politicians. Mainly, the response was a polite “Thank you for your interest in the situation.” But we expected that. It was the act of writing the letters that was so very valuable, not the response.

The students are very proud of what they have done. The life lesson about speaking up for others when you see an unfair situation is invaluable. Learning that you have a voice and that your voice can be heard is a fundamental lesson in our democratic society. This is putting our social studies program into action.

We like to think of our letter-writing campaign as a pebble dropped in a quiet pool of water. The ripples are gently moving out and who knows how far they will go. We are beginning to get interest from other teachers who wish to participate. Perhaps if enough students write enough letters, Attawapiskat may finally get its new school.

To learn more about this campaign, please visit our website Student Advocacy at [www.dsb1.edu.on.ca/ifps/sa](http://www.dsb1.edu.on.ca/ifps/sa). You will find sample letters in French and English, as well as addresses of politicians. ♡

*Chi Meegwetch.*

(This means ‘thank you very much’ in Cree.)

Fran Côté teaches Grade 5/6  
French immersion at Iroquois  
Falls Public School.

# Families and Schools Together

■ by Jennifer McCarthy

Parents say  
they feel part  
of the school  
community,  
where previously  
they felt afraid  
to come into the  
building

**A**n innovative family support and prevention program is helping children succeed in school in more than 30 communities across Canada.

Families and Schools Together (F&ST) targets elementary school children with academic or behavioural problems in the classroom. The program brings the children, their families, teachers, school administrators, and community workers to the school for eight weekly meetings. It is co-ordinated nationally by Family Service Canada.

"I got involved because I agreed with the philosophy of the program," says Jennifer Pirri, a grade 3-4 teacher at Connaught Public School in Ottawa, Ontario. "As teachers we often mention that for a positive learning environment, it is important to have full participation from all three partners: parents, students and teachers. This program allows us to foster this relationship."

F&ST meetings are about family fun and community support. Families share a meal, play games, sing songs and meet community workers and teachers in a non-threatening environment.

And while it may seem light and airy on the surface, the program is producing serious results. According to national evaluations, teachers see an average decrease in child behaviour problems of nearly 20 percent after eight weeks, and continued success as families graduate to F&STWORKS – a follow-up program led by parents.

"The general in-class work and homework completion of the student improve," explains Ms. Pirri, who has participated in two F&ST sessions in the past two years. "One particular student, who is now in Grade 7, still visits me and shares

work that he has completed successfully in his intermediate school. His attitude toward learning really changed during the course of the F&ST program."

Mary Jo Holmes, a school counsellor for grades K to 6 at Margaret Park School in Winnipeg, Manitoba, has been working with the F&ST program for the past seven years.

"The program helps some students gain confidence and self-esteem, so they make more positive choices," explains Ms. Holmes. "As well, teachers say they enjoy seeing how students from their classes interact with their parents during the F&ST evening. They get a new insight into family dynamics."

As an added bonus, parental involvement and contact with their child's school increased dramatically after participating in the F&ST program. The time they spent volunteering and fundraising doubled.

"Parents say they feel part of the school community, where previously they felt afraid to come into the building," says Ms. Holmes.

"This program builds relationships," says Judi Varga-Toth, national programs manager at Family Service Canada, which oversees training and quality assurance for every F&ST program in Canada.

"New research shows that parental involvement with their child's school in the early years is associated with higher grades and lower rates of high school dropout. F&ST, by strengthening the relationship between parent and child, and parents and teachers, creates a strong support network where children can really flourish."

For more information about the F&ST program, contact Family Service Canada at 1-800-668-7808, or [www.familyservicecanada.org/fast/](http://www.familyservicecanada.org/fast/). ♥



# Celebrating 20 years of equality rights

## ...and the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund

ETFO, the Women's Future Fund (WFF), LEAF, community partners and members of the public came together on Equality Day to honour LEAF on its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.



Emily Noble and Chryse Gibson, executive director, Women's Future Fund.



ETFO President Emily Noble, general secretary Gene Lewis and Toronto mayor David Miller.

Equality Day commemorates the day 20 years ago that equality rights were enacted in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. That same day – April 17, 1985 – the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) was born. Its goal: using the Charter to advance women's equality through legal challenges, law reform, and public education.

LEAF has participated in over 140 cases over the past 20 years. It has helped women win landmark legal victories in crucial areas such as violence against women, bias in employment, unfair pensions, sexual harassment, pregnancy discrimination, parental leave, reproductive choice, and social assistance. ETFO has provided financial support to LEAF to intervene in many of these cases.



The band Spirit Wind provided music.




LEAF founding mother  
Beth Atcheson

### The Women's Future Fund

LEAF is a member organization of the Women's Future Fund (WFF), a national organization that supports Canadian women's organizations that promote equality. The WFF promotes a payroll deduction program through which individuals can make regular donations to the WFF. ETFO provincial office was one of the first workplaces to implement a payroll deduction for the WFF.

The Women's Future Fund has launched a poster project with Green Dragon Press, on the theme of "Our Great Canadian Women – Past, Present and Future."

Six ETFO teacher locals have taken on the challenge of identifying the great Canadian women or girls in their communities: Algoma, Bluewater, Hamilton-Wentworth, Hastings Prince Edward, Elementary Teachers of Toronto and Upper Grand.

For more information visit these websites: Women's Legal Education and Action Fund [www.leaf.ca](http://www.leaf.ca); Women's Future Fund [www.womensfuturefund.com](http://www.womensfuturefund.com). 



### CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY IN ALGOMA

Thanks to a donation from ETFO, Women in Crisis (Algoma) were able to celebrate International Women's Day on March 8. More than 200 women and children participated in a Wellness Care event during which practitioners provided free alternative healing services, hairstyling, and make-overs. Participants were also able to enjoy free lunch and snacks throughout the day.



**"Please do tell,  
what is a provincial  
committee?"**

■ **by Agostina Patterson**

*Algoma Committee Member, Status of Women*

In ETFO there are many different opportunities for involvement.

You can participate in or present workshops or conferences. You can write curriculum materials, or contribute to *Voice*. You can attend the Annual Meeting, run for local or provincial executive positions, and, of course, volunteer to be a steward. Members can apply for provincial staff positions. And everyone can access the ETFO website and support services.

One additional valuable opportunity is involvement on provincial standing committees.

Did you know that there are 22 provincial standing committees? Did you know that all ETFO members are eligible and encouraged to apply to sit on these committees? A selection committee is responsible for selecting members to fill these two-year appointments.

I have been extremely fortunate and pleased to serve on the Status of Women provincial standing committee. The committee is made up of five women teachers who work together in consultation with Carol Zavitz, a provincial staff member.

The committee's role is to advise the provincial executive. It also advises on the resources provided to each local status of women chairperson. Like all provincial standing committees, it can send resolutions to ETFO's Annual Meeting.

The committee's terms of reference are reviewed annually, and guide the work of the group. We meet twice a year in Toronto and once in the spring by conference call to do the groundwork and planning for our work.

The Status of Women Committee dedicates itself to recommending measures to enhance the status of women in the teaching profession and in society. We are very proud to be involved in some excellent ETFO women's programs. This includes two training sessions for chairs of local status of women committees: one in the fall in Toronto for all newly appointed chairs, and another during "...and still we rise" in February. We help them access the valuable materials and programs that ETFO's women's program produces for members.

Serving on the provincial committee has been an invaluable learning experience for me, both personally and professionally. I have been and remain strongly committed to the promotion of women's programs especially in a Federation that is 80 percent women.

It is unfortunate but true that women around the world today still face discrimination, harassment and oppression. All ETFO members should be proud of the work our union does to raise awareness, inform, and educate on behalf of girls and women everywhere. There is no better place to start than in our elementary schools and with our own members.



# The Perils of Perfectionism: Too Good for Your Own Good?

"A healthy goal-setter has a drive.

A perfectionist is driven and does not enjoy  
the process of goal attainment."



[[www.spicewoodgroup.com/html/perfect.html](http://www.spicewoodgroup.com/html/perfect.html)]

■ by **Diane Balanyk-McNeil**

**F**rom the time we are born we are expected to meet standards. We learn very early on to measure our self-worth on the basis of how well we measure up to expectations, first from family, then teachers, friends, employers and society at large. Gradually we internalize such expectations and develop a set of personal performance standards. Sometimes however, our desire to meet those standards can lead to an unhealthy preoccupation with perfectionism.

Psychiatrist David Burns defined perfectionists as people "whose standards are high beyond reach or reason, who strain compulsively and unremittingly toward impossible goals and who measure their own self-worth in terms of productivity and accomplishment."

It is important to set high standards for your performance, but if you are trying to meet *unrealistic* expectations (be it at work or at home), then your perfectionism may cause emotional distress and actually interfere with your performance.

## Perfectionism is a problem when...

Monica Ramiree Basco in *Never Good Enough* writes that "perfectionism becomes a problem when it causes emotional wear and tear or when it keeps you from being happy." Perfectionist standards result in burnout, physical and emotional distress, and the desire to leave the profession.

Ask yourself the following questions:

Do I...

- push myself to the point of exhaustion?
- criticize those who don't measure up to my expectations?
- obsess about body image and appearance?
- have difficulty taking risks or doing things differently?
- hate making a mistake or admitting I am wrong?
- procrastinate important tasks?
- get lost in detail and miss the big picture?
- think in 'black and white' terms?
- argue with family who claim I'm unreasonable?
- find it difficult to trust others to do things as well as I can?
- feel concern about my habits re excessive eating, drinking, exercising, and working?

If you've answered yes to some of these then you may want to begin to address this issue.

If you are experiencing difficulties and need to talk to someone in confidence, call staff in Professional Relations Services at (416) 962-3836 or 1-888-838-3836.

## Dealing with perfectionism

Strategies exist for both prevention and cure, including proper diet, rest, and exercise. Counselling can help perfectionists realize that excellence is achievable but perfection is not.

To get started on dealing with your perfectionist tendencies consider the following:

- start the exercise and healthy eating programs that you've been putting off!
- experiment with ways to find places to unwind, relax, and reflect
- read and learn about perfectionism
- do a self-assessment of your own perfectionistic tendencies
- identify what is interfering with work, family, and friends
- develop a manageable plan for change
- share your goals with trusted others
- start a journal to track your journey
- find a mentor or buddy on staff to provide support
- celebrate successes in healthy ways
- seek the support of a trained professional if you are feeling anxious about change.

## When the principal is a perfectionist

Principals can play an active role in lessening stress by offering positive feedback, maintaining high standards, encouraging professional growth, promoting support systems, and including parents and the community. But what if your principal always criticizes your performance and rarely praises work done well?

Educators as professionals are expected to meet specific performance standards set by school boards, and Ministry of Education and Ontario College of Teachers policies and guidelines. In addition, there are various laws educators must adhere to.

As well, it is a standard of the profession that every teacher must be fairly assessed according to the teacher performance appraisal model. Although the criteria for a satisfactory appraisal may at times seem daunting, they are nevertheless deemed to be fair and reasonable in law.

If you are performing well, have no formal evaluation concerns, and are working hard to maintain high standards in your work, then the problem may be the principal. If your colleagues share these perceptions and morale is low, then it may be time to address your concerns.

One productive strategy is to try to understand your principal's way of thinking. Does she/he

- feel frustrated, under pressure, stressed and tired?
- believe that everything that happens in the school community reflects directly on her/him?
- realize the impact of what she/he says to staff?

When you make an appointment to discuss your concerns, don't focus on criticizing. Instead, try to frame your discussion so that you accomplish the goal of telling your principal how you feel when criticized and the impact it has on your performance, and seek advice on how you can work more effectively together.

If staff members have tried this approach before and nothing changed, then you may wish to contact your Federation to explore other solutions. Although we cannot change the behaviour of others, we can change how we respond to them.

## Support from ETFO

- If you are personally experiencing serious performance problems and feel your job may be in jeopardy, seek the advice and support of your Federation.
- Professional Relations Services (PRS) staff provide advice and support on many professional issues. This is a confidential service. Call 1-888-838-3836.
- Addicted to perfectionism workshops: Watch for flyers in stewards' mailings or contact Diane Balanyk-McNeil in PRS for information about the 2005-06 retreat schedule. Or visit our website [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca)  
► *Professional Relations*.
- Print resources will be available in the fall of 2005. **V**

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## The Duty to Accommodate:

# Ensuring that disabilities don't limit teachers' ability to work



■ by Christine Brown

Two-thirds of all accommodation measures cost less than \$500. Many, of course, cost nothing at all. But what they do often require is an ability to look in a creative way at the nature of work, jobs, and workplaces.

An ETFO member experiences depression, or vision loss, or restricted mobility. For that individual, the school is now a place filled with barriers. How far must a school board go to remove barriers in order to accommodate an employee with a disability? The answer is, quite far indeed.

Under Ontario's *Human Rights Code (HRC)*, employers must make all possible efforts to accommodate employees – up to the point of “undue hardship.” That little snippet of legalese has been dissected repeatedly before the Human Rights Tribunal, arbitrators, and the courts. Undue hardship is an increasingly difficult test to meet. It is harder than ever for employers to avoid their legal obligations towards employees with disabilities.

Employers cannot plead mere inconvenience. In fact, there are only two things under the law which will exempt an employer from the obligation to implement an accommodation measure. The first is concern over health and safety, though this must be quite specific and provable.

The second is cost, which includes looking at outside sources of funding (e.g., grants for retrofitting premises). However, the cost of the proposed accommodation measure must be sufficiently high that paying it would substantially affect the employer's ability to remain in business, or would alter the essential nature of its enterprise. Given such stringent criteria, it is extremely difficult for employers to prove undue hardship on the basis of cost. Moreover, adju-

dicators are even less likely to accept an undue hardship claim from large enterprises with multi-million dollar budgets (such as school boards).

In fact, two-thirds of all accommodation measures cost less than \$500. Many, of course, cost nothing at all. But what they do often require is an ability to look in a creative way at the nature of work, jobs, and workplaces.

From a labour relations standpoint, many school boards are fairly conservative institutions. Creative thinking along such lines may not be part of the culture, as ETFO representatives sometimes discover when advocating for members with disabilities.

Some strategies are obvious, such as providing appropriate software to a member with low vision, or ensuring that someone with restricted mobility has a classroom on the ground floor (someday, perhaps, all schools will be fully accessible).

Other measures, especially those that involve re-examining what a particular job really means, are sometimes a harder sell. Yet, as in workplaces outside the education sector, a wide range of options is generally available. In school boards, these can include changing assignments or grade level, reducing hours of work, removing certain job duties, substituting some job duties for others, job sharing, team teaching, “bundling” duties in a different way, or even providing work outside the classroom. The rights of other employees are a factor too, of course, though that is a topic for another piece.

Depending on individual needs, accommodation measures may be temporary or permanent. But the goals are the same – ensuring that members can work, and that employers retain the benefit of their skills, training, and commitment to education. ♥

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



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For the last decade, we as professional educators have not been used to being meaningfully consulted by the government. These working tables give us the opportunity to shape our schools, our system, and our own professional lives.

Sharon Aloian is the OTF Table Officer for ETFO.

# Education Partnership Table gives teachers a voice

by Sharon Aloian

When Gerard Kennedy became minister of education he established the Education Partnership Table, a forum for stakeholders. He invited organizations representing students, parents, teachers, administrators, trustees and faculties of education to participate in discussions around major policy areas.

This forum has now been refined to include a number of working tables. Representatives of the same organizations have been invited to work on specific topics and make recommendations to the Partnership Table.

Currently the topics for the working tables include:

- literacy and numeracy
- learning to age18
- special education
- teacher development

In April, the minister announced that the co-chairs of the Teacher Development Table are OTF President Jim McQueen and Harold Braithwaite, executive director of the Retired Teachers of Ontario (also the former director of education for the Peel District School Board).

The guiding principles governing the work of the Teacher Development Table are respect for teachers, recognition of teacher interest in on-going professional development, and teacher choice.

In the first phase, the working table will look at an induction program for teachers in their first year of practice. Subsequently the group will examine programs for experienced teachers, and the number of professional development days and their effective use.

All of this activity is intended to demonstrate that the current government is committed to enhancing the professionalism of teachers. For the last decade, we as professional educators have not been used to being meaningfully consulted by the government. These working tables give us the opportunity to shape our schools, our system and our own professional lives.

As teachers we have a professional responsibility to our students and to ourselves to ensure that our education system is the best it can be. By participating in the minister's Education Partnership Table and in the working tables, we are accepting and acting on those responsibilities. ♥

## Classroom Management: Orchestrating a community of learners

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# The year in review



■ by Terry Price

We presented  
"Cut-out Friends"  
to MPs and to the  
deputy prime  
minister and  
challenged them  
to act on Canada's  
commitment to  
education for all  
children around  
the world.

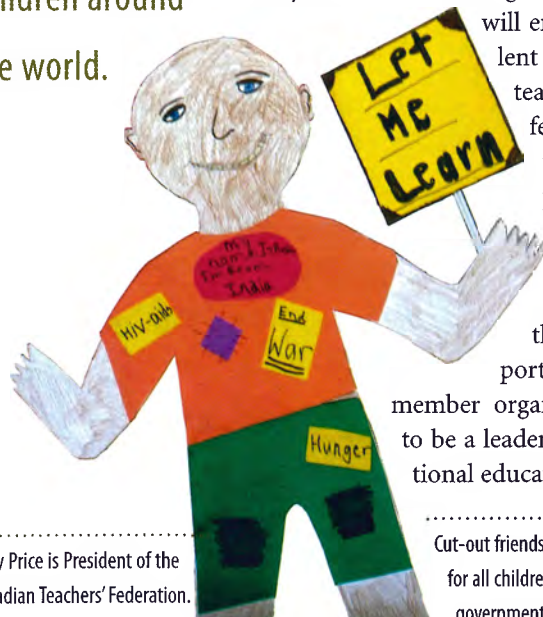
The approach of summer is a good time to look back at the past year.

Teachers and their federations don't stop working in the summer – and the Canadian Teachers' Federation will also be meeting and working on your behalf.

At CTF's annual general meeting in Saskatoon in July, member organizations will debate the recommendations of the CTF task force on governance structures. The task force, which includes representatives of member organizations across the country (including Gene Lewis of ETFO), has looked at how this organization functions and has developed a series of recommendations designed to ensure CTF's vitality and cohesion.

CTF's international development work, including Project Overseas, has been recognized by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), resulting in an unprecedented five-year \$10 million agreement. These funds

will ensure that the excellent efforts of Canadian teachers and teacher federations can continue in many of the poorest and HIV and AIDS affected countries in the world. CTF, with the exceptional support of ETFO and other member organizations, continues to be a leader within the international education community.



Terry Price is President of the Canadian Teachers' Federation.



Global Action Week 2005 highlighted the plight of children around the world. The participation of Canadian teachers in the *Send My Friend to School* campaign brought the United Nations' millennium development goals to life for many federal politicians. In late April we presented "Cut-out Friends" to MPs and to the deputy prime minister and challenged them to act on Canada's commitment to education for all children around the world.

The solidarity of teachers worldwide will help make it possible for countries in the developing world to achieve their millennium development goals and quality education for all. We must continue to pressure the world's wealthiest countries, including Canada, to meet the commitments for overseas development assistance they adopted in Dakar in 2000.

Despite a pledge to spend \$555 million by 2007, Canada's contribution is well below its fair share of the total needed. Prime Minister Paul Martin has refused to set a timetable to reach the promised threshold of 0.7 percent of GNI (gross national income) in international aid.

ETFO members faced many challenges in 2004–05. Through your solidarity you have achieved several very significant goals that will improve the working conditions for teachers and the learning conditions for all students in the future.

On behalf of your colleagues across the country, congratulations on your successes and best wishes for a restful and refreshing summer.

For more information visit the CTF website [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca) ♥

Cut-out friends like these were given to federal politicians to remind them of their pledge to help provide education for all children around the world. Each cutout friend represents 10 girls who don't get an education because governments around the world have failed to keep their promises.





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Reviewed by **Rachelle North**

*Long Live Kids* is an exciting new initiative from Concerned Children's Advertisers (CCA). The program promotes active living, healthy eating, and media literacy by providing a series of child-directed public service messages, as well as an education program consisting of lesson plans for teachers, information for parents, and tips for kids.

The program arose from public concern over the rise in childhood obesity and a drop in physical activity, which experts believe is leading to an increase in serious illnesses and diseases, such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease.

A VHS tape outlines the program and provides the individual commercials. My own students, already familiar with the song from television, were excited to watch the public service messages at school and were highly

engaged in the lessons and discussions that followed.

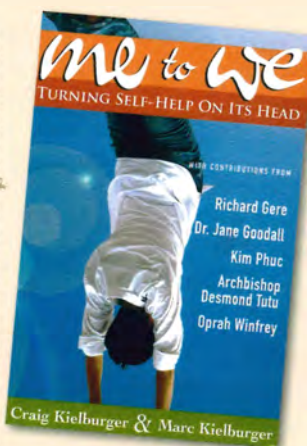
The lesson plans provide curriculum connections, extensions, and suggestions for assessment. Lesson Block One is called "Making the Connection, looking at healthy eating and physical activity." Lesson Block Two addresses media literacy and advertising. Lessons are provided at the primary (K-3), Junior (4-6), and Intermediate (7-9) levels.

The lessons are fun and teacher-friendly. Each lesson is designed to take place during a standard-length school period but is open-ended, allowing for rich dialogue. The educator's package provides questions and activities that encourage active learning and questioning, and delivers an important message.

My class particularly enjoyed the "House Hippo" lesson. This commercial tells a far-fetched story that comes across as authoritative but is too ridiculous to believe. Children are encouraged to question what they see and reminded that everything on television is not necessarily real. The "House Hippo" sparked some lively discussions.

*Long Live Kids* will be a welcome addition for teachers looking for practical ways to approach the topics of healthy eating, active living, and media literacy within their classrooms.

.....  
*Rachelle North teaches Grade 2 with the Halton DSB and co-authored the ETFO body image curriculum, "Reflections of Me."*



## Me to We: Turning Self-Help on Its Head

Craig Kielburger and Marc Kielburger

Mississauga: John Wiley & Sons Canada Ltd., 2004. 244 pp.

Reviewed by **Staceyanne Grochowina-Totolo**

*Me to We: Turning Self-Help on Its Head* examines a new philosophy of approaching life – living life helping others.

The authors outline various ways of integrating this philosophy into everyday life. Moving from *Me to We* can be accomplished by taking action in the home, workplace, faith groups, and communities. Not all actions need to be large; small ones can also make a difference.

As the founders of Free the Children and co-founders of Leaders Today, Craig and Marc bring the *Me to We* philosophy alive by sharing life-changing experiences as volunteers, social advocates, and humanitarians. They present their ideas in a manageable, non-threatening, and compassionate manner, making

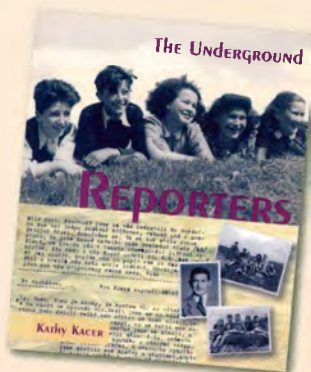
them easy to understand, relate to, and integrate into one's life.

Each chapter begins with a quote by a notable humanitarian such as Mother Theresa and Gandhi – people who exemplify the philosophy of helping others. After each chapter, other well-known contributors, such as Richard Gere and Oprah Winfrey, share stories that provide a deeper understanding of what it means to lend a hand and to appreciate the simplest things in life.

For teachers, this book validates and supports efforts to build stronger bonds with students, communities, and colleagues. Classroom communities that have a sense of the value of volunteering, helping in the community, and respecting others can also become more balanced and successful learning environments. Students become stronger advocates for community and international issues, such as poverty and child labour.

Embracing the *Me to We* philosophy can instill a spirit of community, a greater feeling of purpose and appreciation for life within the educational community and beyond.

.....  
*Staceyanne Grochowina-Totolo teaches Grade 5 and 6 French with the Niagara DSB. She has been the professional development chairperson of the Niagara ETFO local for the past five years.*



## The Underground Reporters

by Kathy Kacer

Toronto: Second Story Press.  
2004. 128 pp.

Reviewed by Jodie Howcroft

*The Underground Reporters* is a true story about a group of Jewish youths living in the small Czech village of Budejovice who performed "an act of quiet rebellion" during the Second World War.

Forbidden to attend school, shop, even walk down certain streets, these children were permitted to meet at "the swimming hole": a small plot of land near the local river. It was there, in August 1940, that the first issue of a secret newspaper called *Klepy* (Czech for "gossip") was conceived.

Over the next two years, 22 issues of *Klepy* were written and shared covertly among the local Jewish community. Remarkably, all 22 issues of the newspaper survived and excerpts from the originals are dispersed throughout this novel.

Drawings, stories, poetry, and editorials filled the issues, most conveying optimism and humour despite the severe restrictions placed on the young "reporters" lives. The newspaper came to an abrupt end when the Jewish community of Budejovice was deported to a concentration camp.

Kathy Kacer is no stranger to writing about the Holocaust. *The Underground Reporters* is the fourth novel in her award-winning Holocaust Remembrance Series for Young Readers.

This story is well-written and interesting, and meets the equity test. However, the target audience is ages nine to 13. While not overly graphic, this novel is honest about its subject matter. Certainly, background knowledge about the Second World War and in-depth discussion would be essential to put this story into historical context.

Although connections could be made between this novel and the curriculum, other material exists that fits better, especially with the Social Studies/History expectations.

*The Underground Reporters* would best be suited for use with reluctant readers in Grades 9 and 10 or in an enrichment setting for students in Grades 7 and 8.

Jodie Howcroft works for the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board where she is on a maternity leave from her position at Memorial School in Stoney Creek.



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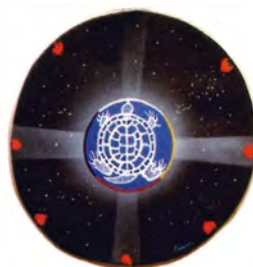


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Please visit the Canadian Teachers' Federation website at [www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca) for more information and registration forms.

For further assistance, please call Jo-Ann Gallant at (613) 232-1505, ext. 115.



## Summer Aboriginal Learning Experience

July 12-14, 2005  
Best Western Brant Park Inn and Conference Centre  
19 Holiday Drive, Brantford, Ontario

A three day course that explores Aboriginal culture and provides participants with skills and resources to incorporate Aboriginal perspectives and make teaching more inclusive.

Participants will engage in learning to value and respect aspects of Aboriginal cultures.

Cost: \$150.00 includes three-day course, materials, and resource package. Accommodation and meals (except for Longhouse lunch) are not included.

For more information contact Jan Beaver, provincial office, 416-962-3836 or 888-838-3836; e-mail: [jbeaver@etfo.org](mailto:jbeaver@etfo.org); or go to [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca) Professional development Conferences and workshops





# Teachers' Trivia

by Peter Harrison

## Enlarger

Some time ago I discovered a rather unusual number.

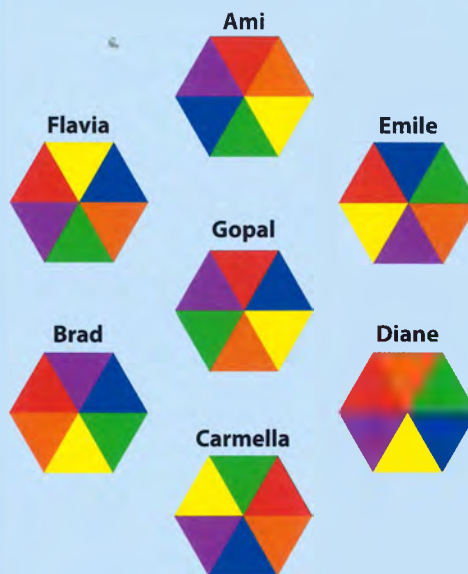
When I move a particular digit, N, from one extreme end of it to the other, it becomes N times larger.

It took me a while to find the number. After all, it does have 58 digits !

Since then, I've found a second number with the same property, where N is a different value, but this one has an odd number of digits and is less than a quarter of the length of the first.

What is my second number ?

### Solution to Rainbow's End



### Winners are:

Sandra Taylor  
Pauline Pearce  
Susan Kopulos  
Nadia Evgrafova  
Laurene Hayman

We prefer to receive solutions to the Trivia puzzle by email. Please send them to [ETFOVoice@etfo.org](mailto:ETFOVoice@etfo.org). You may also send them by regular mail to Lori Kuzela at the address on the masthead. The deadline for entries is September 7. A draw will be held on September 8 of all the correct answers to the puzzle. Five winners will receive an ETFO sweatshirt.

## Summer Body Image Training



**Open to:** ETFO members (school teams of 2-4) interested in being trained to facilitate the ETFO body image curriculum in their schools.

**When:** Wednesday & Thursday, July 6 & 7, 2005; 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

**Where:** Royal Botanical Gardens Centre 680 Plains Road West, Burlington

**Costs:** \$25/person. (Includes refreshments, lunch, parking, training sessions, and materials.)

**Note:** Travel/accommodation are your individual responsibility.

You may wish to seek funding from your school or ETFO local funds.

Final registration date: June 24, 2005

**To register contact:** Jan Moxey, provincial office; 416-962-3836 x 2237; e-mail: [jmoxey@etfo.org](mailto:jmoxey@etfo.org) ; **OR:** go to [www.etfo.ca](http://www.etfo.ca) > Professional Development> Conferences and Workshops> Workshops and download the registration form.



# calendar

SUMMER 2005

**May 14–September 5 - OTTAWA**

## *Your House My House*

An interactive exhibit at the Canadian Children's Museum takes children on a discovery tour of homes around the world. The exhibition focuses on how a home's environmental setting influences what it is made of, how it is built and organized, and how the different parts of the home are used.

**July 24–August 5 - NEW BRUNSWICK**

Huntsman Marine Science Centre

## *Various courses:*

*Beachcombing for Marine Biodiversity*

*Following Food Chains*

*Whales, Seals and Seabirds*

Contact: Tracey Dean, Dir. of Education

Tel: 506-529-1220

E-mail: [tdean@huntsmanmarine.ca](mailto:tdean@huntsmanmarine.ca)

[www.huntsmanmarine.ca](http://www.huntsmanmarine.ca)

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**August 15-18 - MATTAWA**

## *Fifth Annual Eastern Canadian Teachers' Tour*

The Canadian Ecology Centre

Contact: Josée Babineau

Tel: 705-744-1715 ext. 545

Fax: (705) 744-1716

E-mail: [josee@canadianecology.ca](mailto:josee@canadianecology.ca)

Teacher's Tour:

<http://teacherstour.canadianecology.ca/>

**October 5–November 2 - TORONTO**

## *A Matter of Life & Death: Addressing a complex topic appropriately with children*

A new five-part course promises to help you become more confident in dealing with the often "taboo" topic of death sensitively and in a culturally appropriate way with your students. The course will give participants a better understanding of their own ideas and those of various world religions and philosophies. Participants will receive many practical strategies to use to facilitate discussions with young people.

The course is offered FREE of charge, thanks to the generous support of G.H Hogle Funeral Homes Ltd.

**Wednesdays from 4:30-6:30 p.m.**

Contact: Vera Teschow

Tel: 416-992-8372

E-mail: [vera.teschow@utoronto.ca](mailto:vera.teschow@utoronto.ca)

(subject line: LIFE/DEATH COURSE).

**November 1,2 - HUNTSVILLE**

## *National Character Education Conference*

Hosted by Character Education Committee, Huntsville High School, Trillium Lakelands District School Board at Deerhurst Resort, Huntsville, Ontario.

For additional conference information or registration please visit our website [www.ncec.ca](http://www.ncec.ca)

**November 3, 4 - TORONTO**

## *From Research into Practice: A Conference on Learning Disabilities for Educators, Practitioners, Parents, and Researchers*

Metro Toronto Convention Centre

Contact: Mary-Gayle Goebel, Conference Manager

Tel: 416-226-9756

Fax: 416-221-9926

e-mail: [mggoebel@interlog.com](mailto:mggoebel@interlog.com)

[www.frip2005.ca](http://www.frip2005.ca)

**November 3, 4, 5 - HUNTSVILLE**

## *Ontario Music Educators' Association REPRISE 2005*

Deerhurst Resort, Huntsville, Ontario

[www.omea.on.ca](http://www.omea.on.ca)

Contact the co-chairs of conference:

[Andrew.locker@yrdsb.edu.on.ca](mailto:Andrew.locker@yrdsb.edu.on.ca)

Phone: 905-472-3474

[Robert\\_Denney@ocdsb.edu.on.ca](mailto:Robert_Denney@ocdsb.edu.on.ca)

Phone: 613-823-0367

**November 3, 5 - PHILADELPHIA, PA**

## *CALL for PRESENTERS to NMSA National Middle School Association 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference & Exhibit*

Contact: NMSA

Toll free: 800-528-NMSA or Tel: 614-895-4730 or

Fax: 614-895-4750 Website: [www.nmsa.org](http://www.nmsa.org)

Download an application form at [www.nmsa.org/annual/call.pdf](http://www.nmsa.org/annual/call.pdf) or

[www.nmsa.org/annualconf2004/presentations05.htm](http://www.nmsa.org/annualconf2004/presentations05.htm)



## Life-Changing Experience Restored My Passion for Teaching

Nicole Mondesir, a high school teacher in Brampton, Ontario, had a "life-changing experience" last year that sharpened her skills and recharged her enthusiasm for teaching. She spent the school year at Meadowcreek Elementary in Norcross, Georgia, as an exchange teacher placed by VIF – the Visiting International Faculty Program.



"My VIF experience really changed my outlook on life," Nicole says. "I returned with a repertoire of strategies and skills that are improving the quality of my instruction. I learned something new every day and was able to share my expertise with others."

Nicole is one of nearly 2,000 teachers who travel to the United States each year as part of VIF's educational and cultural enrichment program. The goal is to help good teachers become even better, enhance the satisfaction they derive from teaching and to broaden their cultural horizons as well as their students'.

Nicole says one of the most rewarding aspects of her year as a VIF teacher was the support she received from the principal and staff at her host school. From the very first day, she felt personally welcomed and professionally valued.

"They were very appreciative of my efforts, both large and small. Receiving positive feedback from co-workers, administrators, parents and students helped renew my sense of worth as an educator and restore my passion for teaching."

When Nicole returned to her school in Ontario, her fellow teachers wanted to know: "Is it harder to teach in the United States than in Canada?" and "Are the kids different?"

"I tell them no; kids are the same everywhere you go," Nicole says. "And if you're a good teacher in Canada, you'll

be a good teacher anywhere. But there's no doubt I'm a better and more energized teacher because of my VIF experience."

By placing Canadian teachers in U.S. schools, VIF provides opportunities to learn new strategies, share knowledge and cultural insights, advance professionally, take on new adventures outside the classroom and return with a renewed enjoyment of teaching. If you would like to have an experience like Nicole Mondesir's, you can learn more by visiting the VIF web site at [www.vifprogram.com](http://www.vifprogram.com) or by calling 877-798-4115.



## classifieds

**COTTAGE FOR RENT.** Beautiful lakefront property 10 minutes North of Goderich, very private, Million-dollar view, \$1100 per week, July and August. Phone 519-579-5017

**PRINCIPALS – TEACHERS.** Looking for cultural & educational experience? The Canadian Trillium College in China requires qualified ESL/English teachers for September 2005 and February 2006. Terms: 1 or 2 semester contracts available. Excellent comp. (CND\$), return air, accommodation and more. Ideal for beginning or retired teachers or teachers on "teacher funded leaves". Attention to: Garry Ku - Fax: 416-763-5225, [kenyanku@hotmail.com](mailto:kenyanku@hotmail.com)

**COTTAGE FOR RENT.** Lake Huron. Attractive 3 bedroom cottage for rent: Lake Huron, beautiful sunsets, lakefront tranquility, sandy beach, pristine swimming, Bruce Peninsula near Red Bay, bright, spacious, good fishing nearby, great for families, \$590-\$890, [www.priorityrentcottage.com](http://www.priorityrentcottage.com), Phone: 416-626-5734.

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Personal Goal: Learn how to surf

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







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<b>Spring:</b> April to June	<b>Spring:</b> April to June	<b>Summer:</b> July
<b>Summer:</b> July to August		

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