

Do schools shortchange boys?

Campaign 200,
a special insert

Interview with **BEN LEVIN**
Ontario's new Deputy Minister for Education

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On our cover: Nano Valverde and students at Nelson Mandela Park Public School,
Toronto. Photo by Brian Summers.

LESSON PLAN

**Challenging
Injustice**



LP1

FROM THE EDITOR

I feel fortunate to have become the new editor of *ETFO Voice* at a time when there are so many remarkable developments taking place in education.

As 2004 draws to a close and as *Voice* goes to press, ETFO celebrates a victory with the repeal of the much-hated experiment in teacher testing that we fought strenuously to eliminate. The discussion about accountability does not end, however, as you will see in reports of the Leadership 2005 conference.

Education Minister Gerard Kennedy appointed a new deputy minister who began his job on December 6. You will find an introduction to Ben Levin and the ideas he brings to his new position on page 14.

The release of EQAO test results brought the question of the gender gap in education back into focus. In this issue Dr. Blye Frank challenges the conventional wisdom that schools short change boys.

Collective bargaining is a prime concern for members in 2005. In her column President Emily Noble outlines the minister's initiative to open a dialogue with teacher federations, in particular around issues of workload. This issue also contains a special insert about Campaign 200, the campaign to achieve 200 minutes of preparation time.

A new editor invariably does things differently. With this issue *Voice* moved to a new design firm and a new printer. The design gives us more flexibility. The work the Federation does on your behalf will get a stronger emphasis. The news from service areas continues with a new look.

But, in critical ways *Voice* will remain what it has been—a resource that offers materials you can use in the classroom and that provides ideas and articles to stimulate and inform you.

I welcome your feedback and your input.


JOHANNA BRAND
jbrand@etfo.org

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



EMILY NOBLE

President, ETFO

Minister of education hears ETFO's concerns

Our campaign to achieve 200 minutes of preparation time has taken an important step forward. On November 29, I received a letter from the minister of education inviting the Federation to join a "provincial dialogue" to find long-term solutions to the issue of preparation time for elementary teachers.

For the past year we have been advising school boards and the provincial government that every 2004-2007 teacher collective agreement must include 200 minutes of preparation time. At one point we even put that message on billboards across the province.

Throughout this fall both the Federation and the school boards' association told the minister there was little chance of local bargaining being successful without change at the provincial level, most particularly in the funding for elementary students.

The minister has listened. In his letter he said he was acting to avoid "conflict over issues that can't be resolved at the local level." He invited the federations and school boards to work with the government to find a solution. ETFO has accepted the minister's invitation.

This is an important step forward in our campaign to achieve 200 minutes of preparation time in every teacher collective agreement. We will join these discussions in a positive spirit. Like the minister, we want peace and stability in the school system, and we want our students to do better in literacy and numeracy. We are not looking for conflict; quite the opposite, we are looking for support. Our members want the support and resources to make a difference in the lives of young children.

The workload of elementary teachers is crushing. ETFO members need planning and preparation time as much as our colleagues at the secondary level do. We deserve the same professional respect and our schools deserve similar levels of per pupil funding. Our students deserve the richer curriculum and the better quality learning experience that will result. That's what Campaign 200 is all about.

Campaign 200 has set a clear goal, and this initiative by the minister will not diminish our resolve. While we are prepared to work towards a provincial solution, if, in the end, it is necessary to fight for 200 minutes board by board across the province, that is what we will do.

FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY



GENE LEWIS

General Secretary, ETFO

EQAO changes a step in the right direction

We all recognize that the EQAO tests have more to do with provincial politics than they do with improving student success, and most teachers question whether the funds spent on the testing regime could be better used in other ways to support student learning. However, recently there has been some positive news from the EQAO.

This fall the EQAO made a number of changes to the province-wide testing of students in grades 3 and 6. Finally, the EQAO seems to have listened to the criticisms of ETFO members. This is a heartening sign.

Our members have had serious concerns about EQAO testing. Teachers did not like the format, length, and timing of the tests. They said test results were presented out of context and came too late to be of use in the classroom.

Moreover, teachers did not see a link with the curriculum. And they felt the EQAO tests were not the best measure of real student achievement.

The EQAO has now made changes that respond to many of these concerns. For example, tests will

be only half as long (six hours instead of 12) and schools should receive the results early in September.

EQAO will provide a more complete picture of schools and the communities they serve. The link to the curriculum will be clearer and the EQAO, in its reports, will highlight the curriculum expectations that a pencil and paper test cannot capture.

As well, the EQAO has discontinued the process of field testing of test items on students in grades 4 and 7. Those items will now be embedded in the tests administered to grade 3 and 6 students.

While these changes are seen as positive moves, concerns remain about the true value of standardized tests for students. Classroom teacher assessments are still the best and most reliable measure of student progress and success.

The *Advisory to Members* not to take part in any EQAO marking exercise remains in effect. (For a copy of the advisory see www.etfo.ca.)

However, we are not discouraging members from joining EQAO committees. That may be the best way to push for even more change.

LOCAL LEADERS MEET AT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

■ REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL



Brian Summers



Just over 100 ETFO local presidents and delegates gathered at the Delta Chelsea in Toronto to meet as Representative Council on Oct. 21 and 22. David Clegg, ETFO first vice-president, chaired the meeting.

ETFO President Emily Noble provided an update on Campaign 200—the campaign to ensure that all teacher-local collective agreements have 200 minutes of preparation time by the time they expire in 2007.

Mark Zwelling of Vector Research reported on the findings of ETFO's membership survey. ETFO members are more satisfied with their federation than union members in Canada are generally—86 per-

cent as opposed to 66 percent of union members in Canada report being happy with their union. More ETFO members than other union members believe they get good value for their dues.



Delegates viewed the video *Life Quilt*, a production of the Industrial Accident Prevention Association and Workers' Health and Safety Centre. The video highlights workplace health and safety issues and recognizes those workers who have lost their lives on the job. The quilt will be on display at the February 2005 Representative Council meeting.

Garth Brooks, program manager, Project Love, from CODE (Canadian Organization for Development through Education), provided an overview of the Project Love initiative, and urged members and locals to get involved with this international program to provide basic learning materials for students in need in developing countries. A question and answer session followed the presentation.

Dr. Ken Leithwood provided an overview of *Teaching for Deep Understanding*, a critique of the current Ontario curriculum. (See page 17 for more) The book is the result of collaboration between ETFO and OISE/UT.

The next Representative Council meeting will take place on Feb. 4 and 5.



Johanna Brand

■ ETFO AT THE ROYAL WINTER FAIR

This is the fourth year that ETFO has had a booth at the Royal Winter Fair. The booth is staffed by ETFO volunteers—both members and staff. A full range of ETFO pamphlets was available to those who visited the booth. ETFO's new 'growth chart' developed especially for the Fair was a big hit, as were the apples that volunteers handed out. At left Cathy Smith, ETFO Executive member, speaks with parents.

ACCOUNTABILITY – CONSIDERING NEW IDEAS

LEADERSHIP 2004-2005

ACCOUNTABILITY YES: MOVING FORWARD

"Accountability Yes: Moving Forward" was the theme of this year's Leadership conference. Over 220 ETFO leaders took part in the annual conference held on Oct. 21 and 22.

Local presidents and chairs of status, professional development, and political action committees from across the province participated.

Three plenary sessions addressed issues ETFO leaders need to be aware of and understand as we move forward to redefine accountability.

Dr. Lorna Earl, a teacher and researcher, challenged teachers "to take charge of change, to reframe accountability and to buttress public trust and confidence in schools". In her keynote address, *Accountability: Where Do Teachers Fit?*, she proposed some answers to the controversial accountability questions facing teachers – To whom are they responsible? For what? In what manner? Under what circumstances?

ETFO members **Anna Jupp, Jason Johnston, Jim Giles, and Joanne Myers** inspired and energized participants with their real-life stories from the classroom in the panel discussion *Teachers Taking Charge of Accountability*.

Dr. Blye Frank's provocative presentation *Taking Difference into Account in Accountability* made participants question the filters they use in looking at the world. He made it clear that taking difference into account is "not some romantic idea; nor is it about thinking utopia exists and if we all work hard enough,

we'll get there. Rather, it's about hard work. It's about creating spaces where differences are able to flourish. It's about understanding that disagreement and conflict are inevitable and to be encouraged."

What the participants said:

"Lots of very pertinent things to think about and change in the way we do business in our schools and locals."

"An eye-opener. Equity will definitely be an issue. It will take more time to consciously consider."

"I was challenged. I was moved. I grew both as a person and as a professional."

"The following concepts really hit home: accounting vs. accountability; change must be slow; assess for yourself; what is important; balance; students as individuals; critical thinking."

"I loved the reminder of what teachers are really about – meeting emotional needs and triggering curiosity/interest."

CONNECTING WITH MPPs

Education minister Gerard Kennedy and his colleagues in the Liberal caucus were ETFO's breakfast guests on Nov. 24. ETFO President Emily Noble (with Kennedy at right) and members of the Executive used the opportunity to speak to MPPs about the issues in their regions.

The New Democratic Party MPPs will be invited to a breakfast meeting in June.



Johanna Brand



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Roger Mathieu

EDUCATION DAY AT THE CANADIAN ABORIGINAL FESTIVAL

■ COLLECTIVE BARGAINING CONFERENCE

Chief negotiators and local presidents met for a collective bargaining conference on Nov. 12 and 13. The focus of the meeting was Campaign 200 and the bargaining timeline. Participants also attended workshops designed to hone their bargaining skills and provide them with information about involving members in the campaign.

■ ARTS AND CULTURE AWARD

Delegates at the August Annual Meeting approved the creation of an arts and culture award for ETFO members. The award recognizes arts and culture activities that are over and above a teacher's instructional duties.

ETFO members are eligible for the award if

- they are members in good standing
- they participate in arts and culture activities in their community
- their activities are in keeping with ETFO's policies on social justice and equity.

For more information on this award please contact Jerry DeQuetteville at provincial office.

■ OCCASIONAL TEACHER PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

Some local school boards are developing performance appraisal programs for occasional teachers (OTs). In response the ETFO Executive has approved *Guiding Principles* for these program. All OT local presidents will receive copies of the document.

OT presidents will be encouraging their members to maintain a professional portfolio on a voluntary basis. Presidents and members should contact staff in Professional Relations for specific advice and support regarding these evaluations.

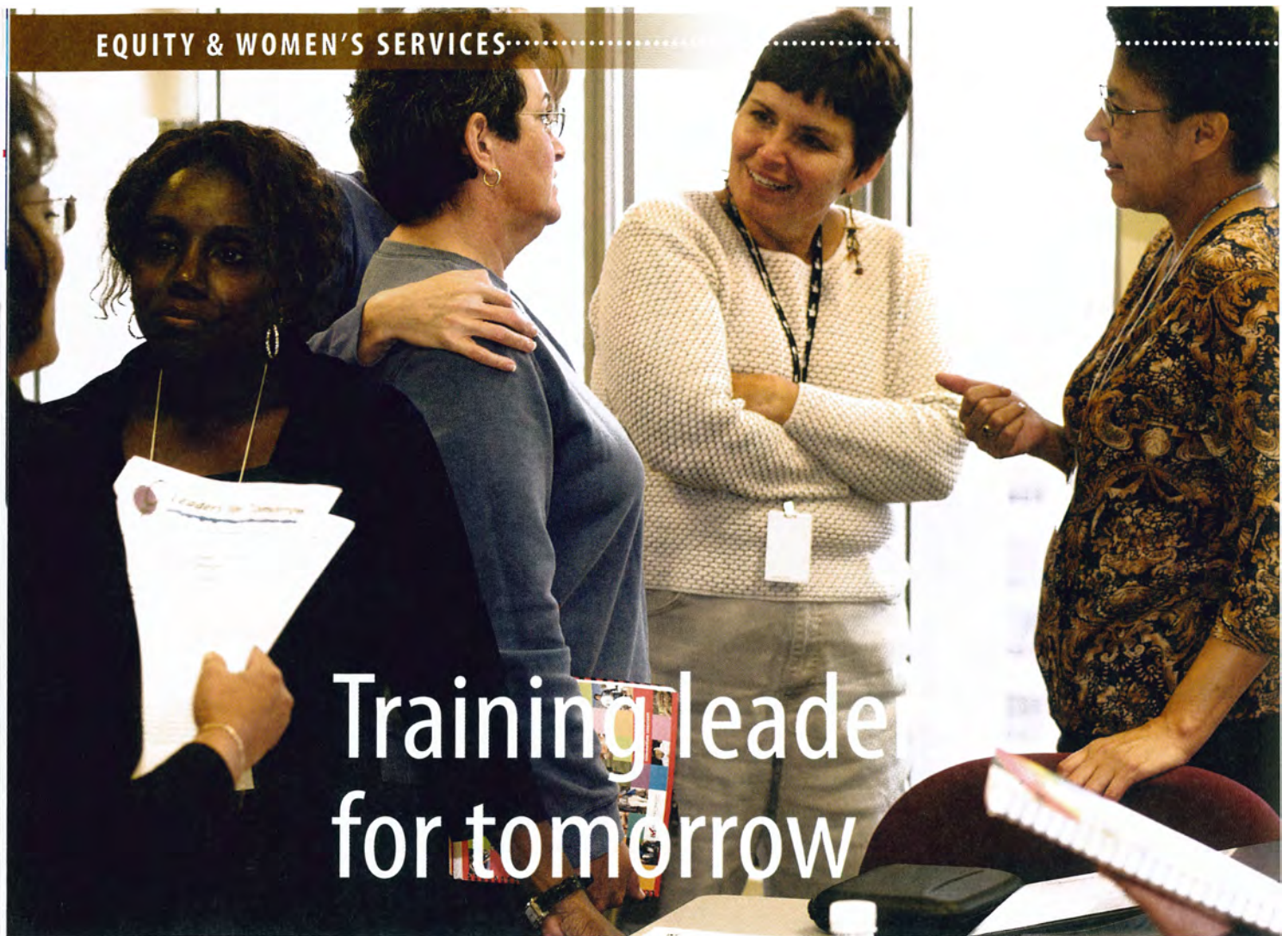
Education Day at the Canadian Aboriginal Festival was a huge success thanks to the efforts of ETFO's Aboriginal Education Committee, Aboriginal teachers and Indian Art-I-Crafts. This year's themes—pow wow regalia, crafts, dwellings and Métis—were enthusiastically received by thousands of teachers and students.

Shown above are the members of the Aboriginal Education Committee: **Katherine Bennett**, Peel; **Deborah St. Amant**, Kawartha Pine Ridge; **Esther Fraser**, Ontario North East; **Rosemary O'Hearn**, Keewatin-Patricia; **Gord Keesic**, Lakehead. ETFO staff member **Jan Beaver**, on secondment from Toronto, is also a member of the committee.

Again this year, the committee hosted a very popular storytelling tent, performing traditional Anishinabe (Ojibwa) drum songs and a reader's theatre based on the traditional story *How Fisher Went to the Skyland: The Origin of the Big Dipper*.



Brian Summers



Training leaders for tomorrow

A dynamic group of 24 ETFO members is meeting throughout 2004-2005 in the Leaders for Tomorrow program.

Leaders for Tomorrow, a leadership course for women from designated groups, aims to provide them with:

- information, strategies, supports and skills that will enhance their leadership abilities
- encouragement to expand their leadership roles in ETFO provincially and/or locally
- encouragement to prepare and apply for senior staff positions in ETFO
- a forum within the Federation to ensure that their voices are heard and their issues are addressed.

Participants meet at the ETFO provincial office four times throughout the school year. They participate in **...and still we rise** (a major conference held in February) and are expected to attend other provincial and local events as participants and observers.

Participants also complete additional assignments and communicate with each other by e-mail between sessions. They reflect on their learning by keeping a journal throughout the course.

Course activities and assignments provide a very wide range of opportunities to acquire and to practise leadership skills. ETFO staff facilitate a program that includes presentations from activists and experts from ETFO and from the broader community.

Throughout the year, sessions focus on:

- becoming familiar with ETFO's structures and resources
- participating in ETFO's political life
- learning about the experiences of ETFO's local and provincial elected leaders and provincial staff
- developing collective bargaining and negotiation skills
- exploring and securing a personal leadership vision
- developing interpersonal leadership skills – moving from a personal focus to a group focus
- understanding gender issues as well as issues of self, identity, oppression and collective responsibility
- improving communication skills
- improving computer skills
- considering wellness and balance
- making the connection between inclusive curriculum and political leadership in ETFO.

During each session E/WS staff facilitate a workshop in which participants explore difficult and/or sensitive issues and situations. These might involve personal identity, leadership and communication styles, group dynamics within the course, and struggles and strategies in other situations where participants are expanding their roles.

Members who are participating in the course have formed a very positive, creative, inquiring and mutually supportive learning environment. ♥



Brandi Granger, a teacher from Hastings & Prince Edward, writes:

When the opportunity arose to apply to a leadership course specifically designed for women from various equality-seeking groups I was immediately intrigued and excited; I knew this was meant for someone like me. Someone who has fought her way into various leadership positions (like that of steward) yet is still not invited to go further.

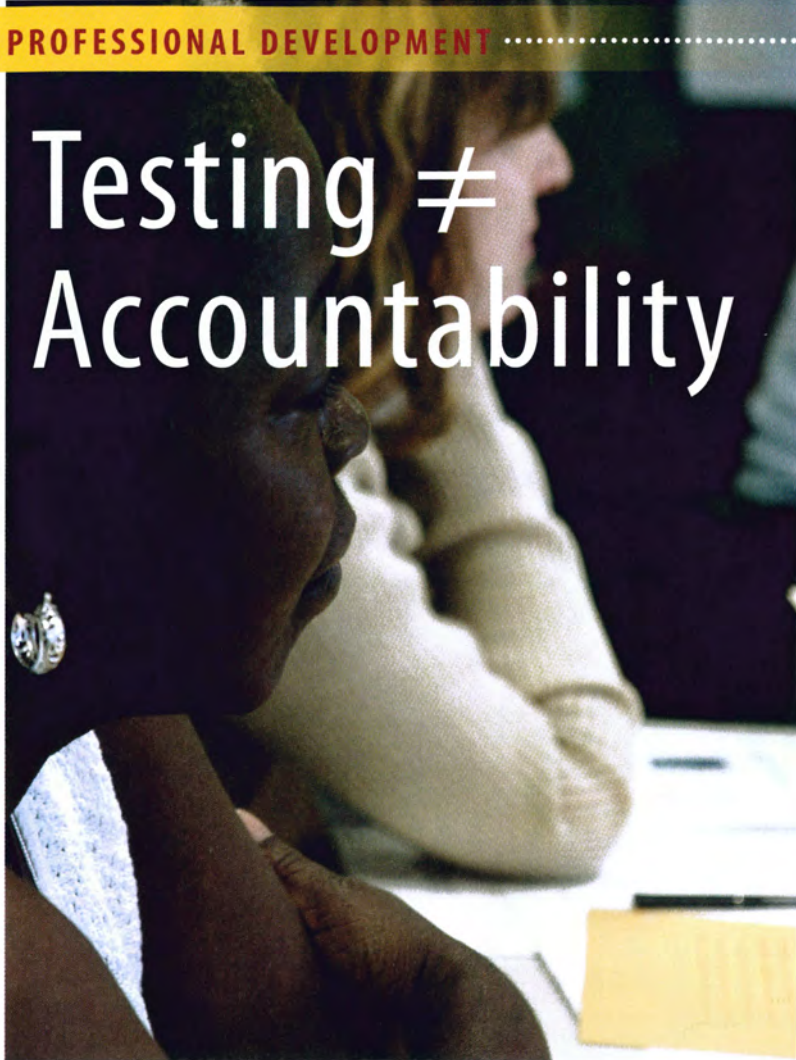
I expected the course to provide me with skills and knowledge that would help me in my local and in my professional life. What I didn't expect were the explorations I am continually challenged to make on a very personal level. For me, this is about transforming where I come from, a place of impoverishment and abuse, into how I choose to live my life today – optimistically, open, honest, free from abuse, free from fear. It's a difficult journey, but definitely worth making.

And I am not making the journey alone. The women in the Leaders for Tomorrow course come from all over Ontario and from vastly different backgrounds, yet we share many common experiences. We are all teachers, women, and proponents of social justice. Whether we have disabilities, are lesbian, are from a visible minority or are Aboriginal, we have all begun to realize the depths of our leadership and strength. Together we stand, together we learn, together we will make a difference!



Staff of ETFO's Equity & Women's Services:

Kathleen Loftus (Coordinator), Jan Beaver, Sherry Ramrattan Smith, Carol Zavitz.



Testing \neq Accountability

Assessing assessment

WE often hear that parents like standardized tests, and, therefore, governments would have a hard time getting rid of them. The results of two recent survey show it is not that simple.

The Ontario College of Teachers commissioned COMPAS to conduct a survey on the state of education in Ontario. One question asked respondents to evaluate the accuracy of teacher classroom assessments, teacher-designed tests and assignments, and province-wide standardized tests.

Both teachers and parents say the tests and assessments of classroom teachers are far more accurate than standardized tests. On a five-point scale, where 5 is very accurate and 1 is not at all accurate, the public rated teacher classroom assessments at 4.1, and teacher-designed tests and assignments at 3.9. Province-wide standardized tests trailed at 3.2. (For more details on this survey, go to www.compas.ca.)

The Canadian Teachers' Federation commissioned Vector Research to conduct a survey that also asked questions about testing.

The survey asked respondents to indicate the best way to measure student achievement—teacher evaluations or standardized tests. Once again, the majority prefers teacher evaluations.

In Ontario, 54 percent believe teacher evaluations are the best measure while only 30 percent favour standardized tests (See www.ctf-fce.ca for more information from CTF.)

Leadership 2004-2005

Moving forward on accountability: Training for professional development chairs

PROFESSIONAL development (PD) chairs from teacher and occasional teacher locals across the province explored accountability issues when they met at Leadership 2005.

They heard from Dr. Lorna Earl from OISE/UT and Dr. Blye Frank, of Dalhousie University, and from a panel of classroom teachers.

PD chairs also examined a wide variety of resources and strategies to provide PD opportunities for members locally. They shared best practices from their locals and left with a comprehensive PD Chair binder to use as a resource in their role.

Training for new political action chairs

ETFO held its first training session for some 30 new political action chairs during the fall Leadership event in Toronto. MPP Kathleen Wynne spoke about planning effective meetings with MPPs.

Participants assessed the Liberal government record on education initiatives. They reviewed ETFO political action resources and discussed how to plan political action activities at the local level.

Similar training will be held every year for new political action chairs. Training for all political action chairs will be offered prior to municipal and provincial elections.

Data literacy workshops for stewards

STEWARDS in the Limestone, Kawartha Pine Ridge, and Upper Canada locals gave rave reviews to the ETFO workshop *Data: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*. This workshop, prepared by Anne Rodrigue and Ruth Dawson, helps stewards develop a filter for questioning data – its purpose, its use, its benefits and its limitations.

Being able to look at data with a critical eye is an important skill for teachers as schools deal with the demand for more data collection and analysis as part of school improvement.



Nicole Charette

Reflections of Me training gets great reception

IN the fall ETFO staff and members taught *Reflections of Me*, ETFO's body image project to teachers, community health workers and school board staff in the Rainbow DSB, the Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB and the Keewatin-Patricia DSB.

These participants will in turn train their colleagues. The idea is to create a whole school community, where everyone in the school learns about body image issues.

Participants in Sudbury were (from left): Janet Spergel, public health nurse, Sudbury & District Health Unit; Jo-Anne Broadley, senior kindergarten teacher, Wanup PS; and Eric Bacon, grade 7/8 teacher, Copper Cliff PS. Presenters included Maureen Flynn (back left) occasional teacher, Halton DSB, and Heather Jessop, teacher, Peel DSB. The training took place at the ETFO Rainbow District teacher local office.

Reflections on Practice

THE 40 women members participating in the "Reflections on Practice" institute met for the second time in October. This course teaches participants how to critically assess their classroom practice and share their findings with colleagues.

Participants returned to their classrooms eager to implement their research studies. Session 3, scheduled for April, will focus on sharing the findings of the studies and preparing them for publication in a monograph.



Staff of ETFO's Professional Services:

Wendy Matthews (Coordinator), Jan Beaver, Johanna Brand, Ruth Dawson, Joan Littleford, Pat McAdie, Vivian McCaffrey, Jennifer Mitchell, Mary Morison, Jan Moxey, Barbara Richter, Anne Rodrigue, Linda Rowatt.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

Teaching the Whole Child – Kindergarten Matters Waterloo, Saturday April 23, 2005

ETFO is co-sponsoring an exciting conference for kindergarten teachers in cooperation with the ETFO Waterloo local and the Waterloo Region District School Board.

The theme is "Teaching the Whole Child." Workshops will include organizing an outdoor play area, the inclusive classroom, making learning centres meaningful, and reading and mathematics strategies.

This conference will focus on helping teachers make connections between the kindergarten program and early child development.

Watch the ETFO website www.etfo.ca and the stewards' mailing for application forms.

ETFO Summer Academy 2005 is coming!

ETFO will once again offer three-day intensive curriculum courses in the summer of 2005. Watch for catalogues arriving in schools in early spring.

The call for course presenters will be posted on our website www.etfo.ca in late December. Please contact Ruth Dawson at the provincial office for more information.

ETFO Book Clubs

Professional book clubs can be a great way for teachers to discuss how books they read and use link to classroom practice.

Professional services staff and a group of ETFO members are developing three facilitator guides for these clubs.

The guides will focus on three ETFO resources: *The Class That Reads*, *Making Math Happen in the Junior Years*, and *Classroom Beginnings*. We are field-testing the book club guides. They will be available to locals in the fall.

For more information about being involved in the field test, ask your local president to contact Ruth Dawson at the provincial office.

Queen's Park REPORT



■ by Vivian McCaffrey

The end of teacher testing: a victory for ETFO members

The Professional Learning Program (PLP) officially came to an end in December when MPPs passed Bill 82. Education minister Gerard Kennedy also declared the government would scrap the teacher qualifying test for new and foreign-trained teachers. With both programs terminated,

current and future ETFO members can heave a sigh of relief as we finally close the book on the Tories' ill-conceived teacher testing experiment.

Ontario teachers objected loudly and vigorously when former Premier Mike Harris started the teacher testing program four-and-a-half years ago. An overwhelming majority refused to comply, finding the mandated program an offensive and unnecessary intrusion into their professional responsibilities.

ETFO and other affiliates organized demonstrations and petitions against the program. Members were advised to boycott courses and programs offered by organizations, including school boards, that were registered with the Ontario College of Teachers as PLP providers.

Provincial and local Federation leaders spearheaded a lobbying campaign directed at Queen's Park and MPPs' riding offices. Teachers supported the campaign by writing letters and calling their local MPP.

ETFO's position paper on teacher testing offered sound alternatives for accountability in education. The Federation's proposals for a mentoring program for beginning teachers, a standard performance appraisal model, and additional professional activity days were all ultimately adopted by government.

The demise of the program is a testimony to the conviction and solidarity of thousands of Ontario teachers who put their teaching certificates and their livelihoods on the line to protest this offensive and irrational policy.

Vivian McCaffrey is ETFO's government relations officer.



Year two of McGuinty government

Premier Dalton McGuinty's Liberal government passed its one-year anniversary in early October. A key challenge for the government is to overcome its early reputation for breaking election promises. To date, much of the praise for the government has been for its education initiatives. The government still has some distance to go, however, before it earns the moniker of an activist government with a clear vision for social change.

Reducing class size

The Federation is monitoring the way school boards implement the \$90 million they received to limit primary class sizes to 20 students. The funds are meant specifically to hire more primary teachers, to provide learning materials and classroom supplies, and to help buy or lease more classroom space. The government claims the class-size funding has resulted in 1,100 new teachers and smaller numbers of pupils in 1,300 primary classrooms.

Improving access for people with disabilities

The government began the fall legislative session by introducing a law to expand access for people with disabilities. Spokespersons for the disabled say the new Liberal legislation is an important step forward. (For more details, see Christine Brown's column on p. 33.)

Expanding school-based child care

The Ontario government has announced it will be using much of its share of \$5 billion of federal funds earmarked for child care over the next five years to expand child care programs in Ontario schools. Led by the Ministry of Children and Youth Services, the government plans to complement existing junior and senior kindergarten programs by providing half-day child care programs for four- and five-year-olds, creating a “seamless” day. The programs will be separate, but the Ministry is creating an expert panel to develop an early learning and care curriculum that will guide both kindergarten and child care learning. Parents will either pay fees or be eligible for subsidies.

Creating a new parent council

Education minister Gerard Kennedy has done away with the Ontario Parent Council, a provincial advisory body first established by the former NDP government. The council was an appointed body. Critics charged that it was acting largely as a mouthpiece for government. MPP Kathleen Wynne, parliamentary assistant to the minister of education, is working with an advisory group of parents to devise a more representative model. They will report back to the government in mid-February 2005. The challenge will be to develop a model that is truly representative of a very diverse parent population.

Funding is key

All of these initiatives are in their early stages. In most cases their success, will depend on adequate funding. We will have a better sense of how the education initiatives will develop once the Ministry of Education announces its 2005-2006 school board grants. When the minister of finance delivers the next provincial budget, sometime this spring, we will have a clearer sense of the overall Liberal government vision.

Improving student health

There is growing public alarm about health statistics that show Ontario children are leading unhealthy lifestyles, and that more of them are obese. Education minister Gerard Kennedy responded by banning junk food from elementary schools. He also announced that, starting in September 2005, elementary students will have to participate in 20 minutes of physical activity every day.

There are as yet no details about the implementation of this new physical fitness plan. The Federation is advising the government that the best way to ensure elementary students receive an appropriate and effective fitness program is to fund physical education and health specialists in our schools.



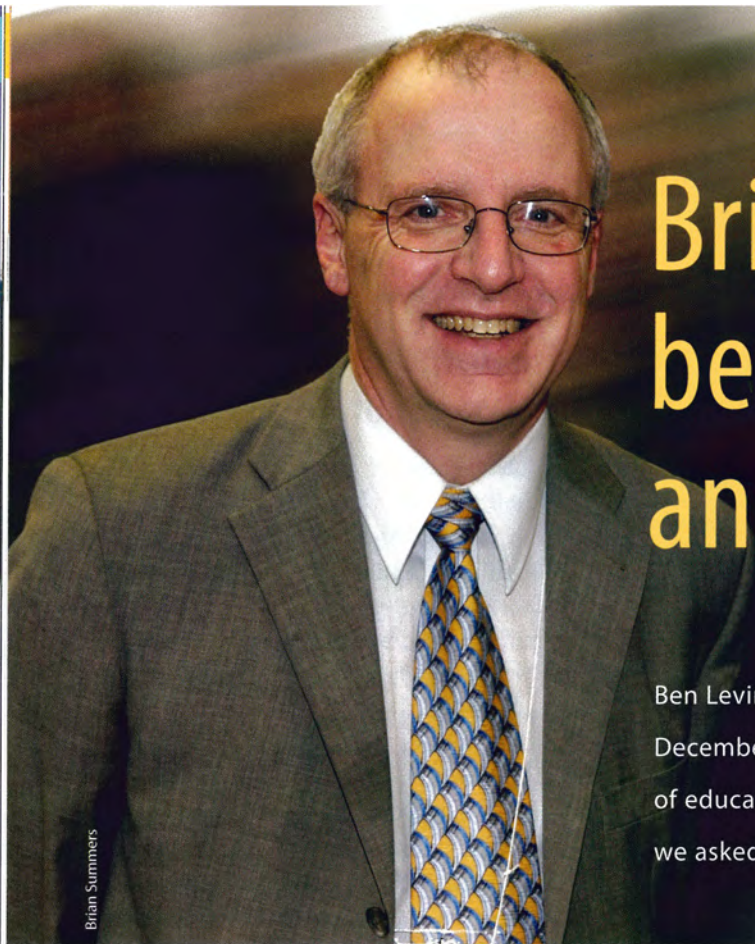
Reforming the way we choose our governments

The issues of electoral reform and political party finance reform continue to move to the forefront of the larger political scene. The federal government recently made significant changes to the way federal parties are funded. It banned both corporate and union donations.

In British Columbia, a government-appointed citizens' assembly spent several months studying various electoral systems and recently recommended that the province put in place a form of proportional representation known as a single transferable vote system. Under this system, ridings are larger geographical units and voters can vote for more than one candidate and for candidates representing different political parties. The goal is to achieve a legislature that better represents the votes cast. British Columbia voters will decide on the changes in a referendum during the provincial election next May.

Ontario is following suit. Electoral reform was a major Liberal platform promise. In November, Attorney General Michael Bryant announced the creation of a “citizens' jury” to study the issue of political party finance reform and a “citizens' assembly” to explore the merits an alternative electoral system. As in B.C., the plan is to have voters decide on the proposals during the next provincial election, in October 2007. Changes would not take effect until the following election.

For more information go to <http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public> and <http://www.fairvotecanada.org/>



Brian Summers

Bridging the gap between research and politics

Ben Levin became Ontario's new deputy minister for education on December 6. Dr. Levin is a researcher and former deputy minister of education in Manitoba. To introduce him to ETFO members, we asked Dr. Levin to tell us about his goals and accomplishments.

thank you for the opportunity to comment on these important questions, but want to note that they are all complex issues, so the answers below are necessarily brief and incomplete. I have referenced some of my writings where my ideas are laid out more fully, and I look forward very much to discussing these issues with teachers over the coming months.

■ *Your background includes working as a professor at a faculty of education. You are clearly interested in policy issues. How does that background shape your approach to your work in the political arena?*

My career has been about half in academia and half in government, so one of my big interests is in fostering connections between these two worlds. I believe that research could make a much more valuable contribution to education policy and practice than is currently the case. I've recently published a paper on this issue arising from work I did in 2002-03 for the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. I also have deep commitments to educational issues that shape my policy work and my research agenda. At the same time, I know that government is a

highly volatile arena in which many factors are at play, things often happen very quickly, and a great deal of compromise is inevitable.

■ *Don't you find it frustrating that education policy is more likely to be based on politics than research?*

It is a reality of life – and not a bad one – that policy decisions are based on the beliefs and perceptions of elected people, which are in turn shaped by what the public thinks and wants. Research can play an important role here, but citizens would not be happy if elected people consistently made decisions that they do not support, whatever research may say. A critical task, then, is for research to speak to the broad public and the interest community, as that is the

way to influence public policy. I hope that the Ministry can support these efforts. The initiatives now being launched, such as the literacy and numeracy strategy being led by my distinguished colleague Avis Glaze, will be solidly rooted in the best available research as well as in a deep understanding of teaching practice and the realities of school life. (These issues are discussed at more length in my forthcoming book about my experience in government— *Governing Education*— which will be published early in 2005 by University of Toronto Press.)

■ *You have also served as a deputy minister of education in Manitoba. What accomplishments there are you particularly proud of?*

Manitoba developed a solid, thoughtful, research-based agenda for school policy that focuses on a core set of actions to improve learning and teaching. It is not glitzy but it is substantive. I'm very proud of getting that agenda in place and moving ahead. The government in Manitoba has also done other important things—honouring the work of our professional educators, improving the collective bargaining environment, strengthening adult learning, replacing the grade 3 standards test with a teacher-led assessment, and so on. (This work is described more fully in an article with John Wiens in *Phi Delta Kappan*, May 2003). Just as importantly, Manitoba did not do the counterproductive things that some other provinces did such as creating a climate of hostility and confrontation in the sector, or focusing on limiting spending or changing governance instead of on learning and student outcomes. We did not do everything that I hoped or wanted, but we did do many good things.

■ *Manitoba is a much smaller and some would say less complex province. How different are the challenges you will face in Ontario?*

Clearly the scale is much bigger in Ontario, and there are many more participants. The geography itself is more challenging. In Manitoba one can often get all the key people on an issue into one room. Having spent much of my career in Manitoba, I already knew many people in education. Also I believe that the 1990s were a more tumultuous and difficult time in education in Ontario than in Manitoba, so there is more work to be done here to recreate a positive,

forward looking, collaborative and respectful climate. At the same time, the basic issues are very similar and the reservoir of skill and commitment is concomitantly greater in Ontario. I've also been struck by the spirit of goodwill in education in the province, and the strong desire people have expressed to work collaboratively on important educational issues.

■ *Teachers in Ontario dislike standardized testing but the public wants it. Who's right?*

This issue is a perfect example of what I meant earlier about the relationship between research and policy. Educators have legitimate concerns about large-scale testing (although I would add that many of the concerns about fairness and validity also apply to the other testing of students that goes on in schools, not just to provincial tests.) If citizens continue to believe that provincial testing is valuable, then governments will respond to that belief. Educators have work to do with parents and others around influencing beliefs on this issue. At the same time, we need to look for ways in which whatever testing is done can support an agenda of true educational improvement.

■ *Ontario is an increasingly diverse province. How can Ontario schools respond to the different educational needs and the different values of diverse communities?*

I believe that learning to live together in a diverse society (not just in schools) is, along with protecting our natural environment, the greatest challenge facing humanity in the 21st century. Nobody has got this figured out yet, but Canada is probably doing as well as any country and taking the issue as seriously as anyone else. If one compares the situation today in terms of respect for diversity in schools to what it was 50 years ago there has been clearly been some very significant progress. Yet much remains to be done to ensure that all segments of our community are well served by the public schools; equity is a very big issue for me. There is no recipe for this work but we need to have a continuing dialogue in our schools and communities about what it means to educate effectively with and for diversity. I know that many people in Ontario are working hard on these issues and look forward to learning from them.



Government is, in my experience, a very difficult environment in which to work, so I only want to work there if I believe that some vital positive things can and will be done.

■ *In Ontario, over the past eight to 10 years, an increasing number of parents have decided to send their children to private schools. What can the government do to restore confidence in the public education system in Ontario?*

Several things have already changed, such as moving to a positive rather than a negative public dialogue about education. Good relations between teachers, boards and the province will be another important element. However, in the longer term, public confidence rests, I believe, on our ensuring that student outcomes (broadly defined) are good and that schools are responsive to the concerns of parents and communities.

■ *You have disagreed with those who state that teaching and administration are being “deprofessionalized.” Could you elaborate?*

Being an effective teacher or administrator today requires more skill than ever before. Educators have to know more and be able to work in a variety of ways with a wide range of people – students, families, colleagues and communities. Pedagogical skills are vital but need to be complemented with strong people skills and understanding of the larger context. All professions, not just teaching, are facing more challenge to their authority and autonomy; this is one outcome, in my view, of having a more educated population. We need to ensure that the appropriate respect and support for ongoing learning by teachers go with this range of demands.

■ *What are your goals? What do you hope to accomplish in your new role as deputy minister?*

I still have a great deal to learn about education in Ontario. Readers interested in a more extended outline of my thinking about education policy can consult the talk I gave to the Canadian Education Association last fall (available through the CEA website). However, at this early stage I am thinking of three main areas of focus – improving student outcomes (again, with outcomes defined broadly – academic achievement, high school completion, well-rounded skills, citizenship orientation and so on); trying to reduce the gaps in achievement across the population and particularly for some groups of students; and building public confidence in public education. These goals – which I believe are broadly shared

by many people across the system – can only be achieved through people working together, so another goal of mine is to foster strong, positive relationships among all the parties to education in Ontario. To this end I plan to be in schools on a regular basis so that I can stay grounded in the realities facing teachers and students.

■ *Why did you decide to once again take a position in government after having decided to leave government and work in education research?*

I am taking on the deputy’s role in Ontario for one reason – because I believe that I can help advance the important educational objectives outlined in my response to the previous question. Each time I leave government (this will be my fourth term working for a provincial government) I rediscover how much easier it is to stand outside and criticize than it is to make good things happen. Government is, in my experience, a very difficult environment in which to work, so I only want to work there if I believe that some vital positive things can and will be done. That was the case while I was deputy in Manitoba. I believe the Ontario government is deeply committed to making a positive difference in education. I did not see how I could decline their invitation to help with an agenda that is consistent with many of my own beliefs – and those of many educators.

■ *Do you have any advice to the teacher federations with respect to having a positive influence on the public policy process?*

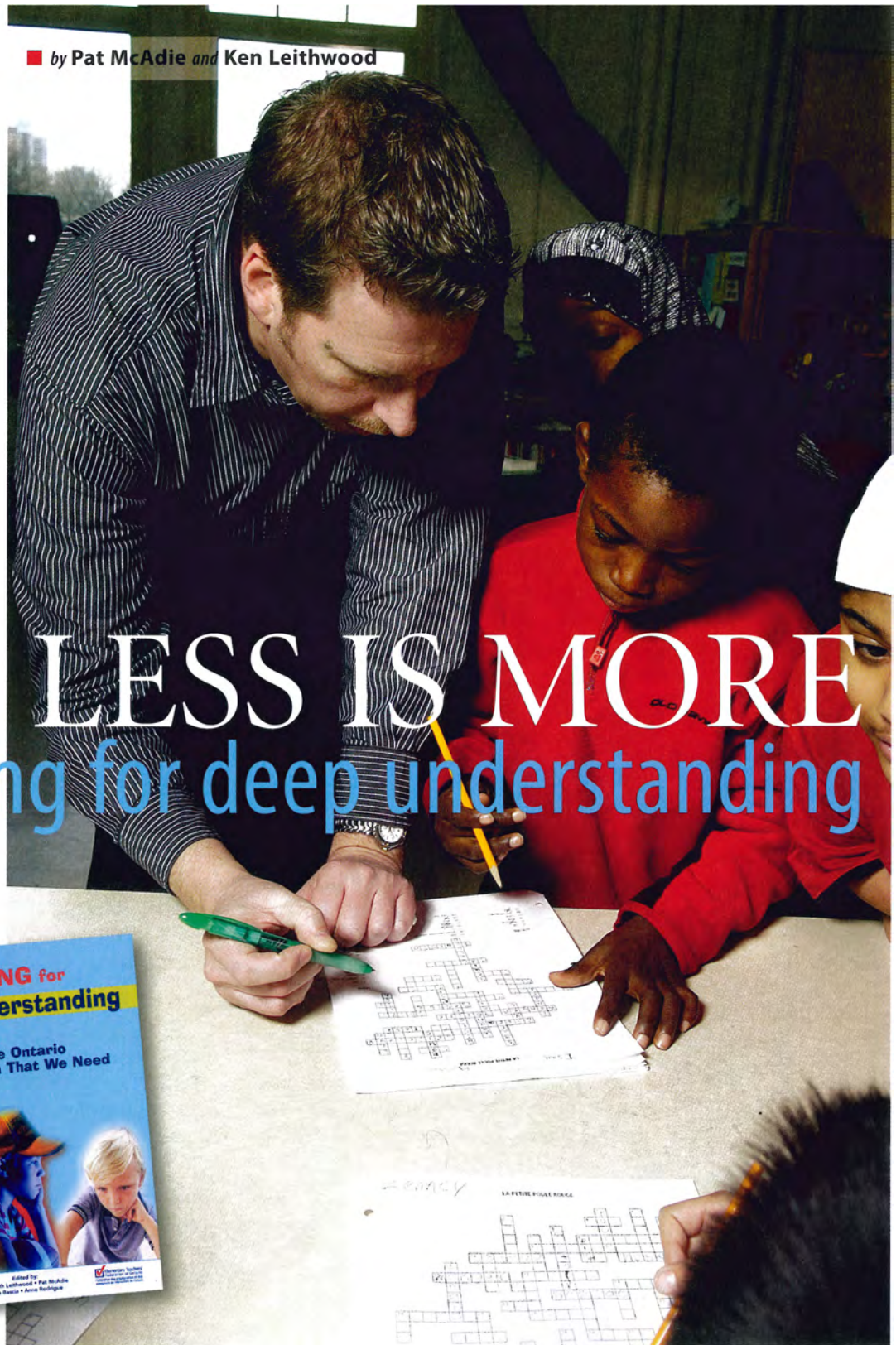
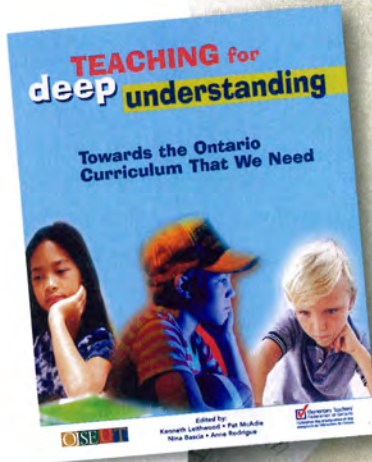
Teacher federations face a difficult challenge. You have, of course, a responsibility to represent and act on behalf of your members in the short term. At the same time, we all recognize that the long-term welfare of the education system depends on the public’s perception that we are working together effectively for the benefit of children and families. The people of Ontario are entrusting their children to us every day, not to mention putting more than \$15 billion per year into schools. We all have to show all the time that we take these trusts very seriously and that we truly appreciate our responsibility to act as guardians of and advocates for those children and the resources given to us. I am sure that the federations will, as they have in past, play an important role in this effort. ♥



by Pat McAdie and Ken Leithwood

LESS IS MORE

Teaching for deep understanding



Photos - Brian Summers

Pat McAdie is a research officer with ETFO. Dr. Kenneth Leithwood is a professor of educational leadership and policy at OISE/UT

Teaching for Deep Understanding is a call for curriculum reform in Ontario. It is our response to the concerns of our members about the Ontario curriculum. We hope our work provokes deep and thoughtful discussion about the Ontario curriculum that we need.



At the 2002 ETFO Annual Meeting, members directed the federation to study the suitability of the curriculum. They hoped to encourage the government to create a curriculum for elementary students that better fit their needs and the needs of society.

In response, ETFO approached faculty at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. Together, we set out to better understand the source of teachers' concerns and to find ways of addressing the causes of those concerns.

Eight years of upheaval

From 1995 to 2003, Ontario's education system was subjected to tumultuous change. The Conservative governments of Mike Harris and Ernie Eves introduced a new funding formula and cut the overall funding for education. The government forced the amalgamation of school boards and took principals and vice-principals out of teacher unions.

Politicians questioned teacher professionalism. The College of Teachers was created. The

government introduced teacher recertification and performance appraisal and, at the same time, cut the number of teacher professional development days.

Students also felt the brunt of an emphasis on standardization. Standardized testing began for every pupil in grades 3 and 6 and teachers were required to fill out a standard provincial report card. The government reduced the number of years of schooling by a year, and introduced a new, "speeded up" curriculum—a standard curriculum with specific expectations for each subject for each grade.

The impact of some of these changes was quickly apparent. Gaining access to resources was one of the first challenges to emerge: ETFO members said teaching had become more difficult owing to cuts to support staff and resources, increases in class size, and a loss of specialist teachers.

Over time problems with the curriculum itself began to appear. For example, critical areas, such as equity, are missing from the curriculum.

CAMPAIGN 200

CAMPAIGN 200 is a collective

bargaining strategy to improve

working conditions for

elementary teachers and improve

the quality of education for our

students. We will accomplish

this by ensuring that every

ETFO 2004-2007 collective

agreement includes 200

minutes of preparation time.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



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

This kind of curriculum is the most efficient or most effective means for developing basic skills, and it actually stands in the way of developing the more complex outcomes we

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deep understanding



A mile wide and an inch deep

The Ontario curriculum, unfortunately, is very much like those in many other jurisdictions. All students are expected to follow the same curriculum, one that urges coverage of a blizzard of specific “expectations”—almost 4,000 for students from grade 1 to 8, an average of 500 per year. This means students are learning a little bit about a lot of different subject areas—it is a curriculum that promotes memory work and rote learning, emphasizing coverage rather than understanding.

This approach qualifies the Ontario curriculum for elementary schools for charter membership in the “mile wide, inch deep” club. There are many members of this club in the United States, where the “mile wide, inch deep” curriculum is coupled with an emphasis on testing. We believe that this approach to teaching and learning in our schools is ultimately self-defeating.

This kind of curriculum is not the most efficient or most effective means for developing basic skills, and it actually stands in the way of developing the more complex outcomes we

OUR RESEARCH HAS CONVINCED US THAT WE NEED A QUITE DIFFERENT ALTERNATIVE, ONE THAT VALUES AND PROMOTES DEEP UNDERSTANDING AS THE OVERARCHING GOAL FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE PROVINCE.

aspire to for our children. A more lasting and equitable approach would ensure that all students are encouraged to be critical thinkers, to develop skills that go beyond the specific curriculum.

Our research has convinced us that we need a quite different alternative, one that values and promotes deep understanding as the overarching goal for public education in the province.

We make our case for this alternative based on six straightforward claims:

1. Many specific facts have a very short lifespan.
2. You don't need to sacrifice good test results when you teach for deep understanding.
3. The experience of deeply understanding something encourages further learning.
4. Most real-life tasks require serious, self-directed problem solving.
5. The broader context of our lives places a premium on deep understanding for survival.
6. The alternatives are not very compelling. If not deep understanding, then what?

Contributions from the OISE/UT research community

We invited 20 faculty members at OISE/UT to summarize the results of their research. The resulting chapters form an amazing collection of some of the best thinking and research on what it means to teach for deep understanding in selected areas of the curriculum, as well as across the disciplines.

Carl Bereiter was one of the first to jump in with his “Reflections on ‘depth.’” While it may sound circular, he maintains that “deep understanding means understanding ‘deep’ things about the object in question.” He goes on to

say, "Depth has two opposites: superficiality and breadth." And he observes, "Superficiality is the inevitable consequence of too much to learn in the time available."

Clive Beck and Clare Kosnik describe a "constructivist" view of learning, providing an account of the cognitive, emotional, and social processes involved in learning and what that means for instruction. In coming to a deep understanding of something, students need to make connections with their experiences, values, and the content of the thing to be learned – to construct their learning within their own context.

We have chapters on teaching for deep understanding in many of the disciplines—including mathematics, literacy and literature, science and technology, social studies, and drama and the arts.

An additional set of chapters examines these issues across the curriculum—through such lenses as diversity in language and culture, character development, technology, knowledge building, and classroom assessment.

In each chapter we give teachers some questions to ask about their classrooms or their instruction, and provide some implications for teaching. We hope that teachers do not just read the chapters, but work with them, asking themselves other questions, reflecting on how this would describe or change their classrooms.

Asking teachers about their experience

An integral part of our project was a survey of ETFO teacher members. We asked a random sample of teachers for their opinions and experiences in teaching in Ontario's public elementary schools. Over 900 surveys were returned, a 35 percent response rate.

We found out that many teachers are not able to cover the current curriculum at any grade level in any subject area. Junior teachers reported the most challenge. And almost two-thirds of teachers report assigning more homework than they would like in response to the excessive demands for coverage.

But we also found that, overall, teachers agree with and use instruction practices that promote

teaching for deep understanding – they use collaborative activities, encourage discussion, and engage students to look beyond the discipline area to prior knowledge, other subjects, and their own experiences.

Public elementary teachers are for the most part committed to teaching for deep understanding. Improvements in curriculum and assessment policies, and in key working conditions would increase their ability to do so.

Recommendations for curriculum reform

Together, these chapters guided us in making recommendations for the future of Ontario's elementary schools. Recommendations are made for the classroom, for the school, for school districts, for provincial policy makers, and for teacher education faculties.

These recommendations include the following:

- decreasing the number of curriculum expectations
- ensuring that classroom instruction builds on students' ideas and experiences
- building strong professional learning communities in our schools in which teachers and other professionals work together to improve student learning
- ensuring that school districts provide access to high-quality professional development.

There are 17 recommendations in all, not an unwieldy number by any means (considerably fewer than 4000).

We believe that now is the right time to make positive changes to our education system, changes that will benefit all students and allow teachers to really teach for deep understanding. Indeed, the current government has already indicated its intentions to make improvements – for example, its initiatives around smaller classes in the primary grades.

Together, ETFO and OISE/UT can make a stronger contribution to the education system in Ontario, working to ensure that all students are ready to meet the challenges that lie before them, and to take their places in our knowledge society. **V**

Challenging Injustice

■ Beverly Saskoley

Thoughts about activism within a union

Every aspect of our lives is, in a sense, a vote for the kind of world we want to live in.

Frances Moore Lappé

I want to share my story of being a woman union activist. That's been such an important facet in shaping who I am, and I consider it a noble way for a woman to lead her work existence. It's my belief that once you're committed to the goals of unionism you have a natural jumping-off place for all kinds of social justice work.

I grew up in a union family in Dryden, a northwestern Ontario paper mill town. My father was very involved in the paper workers' union locally. ... Most of my union career has been with teacher federations but as I look back on earlier times there was a union thread in my work life prior to teaching.

During high school I worked part-time as a clerk at a department store. A retail workers' union from Winnipeg initiated an organizing campaign. I had been glad to join because a year previously I had asked for a nickel raise as the summer began (85 cents to 90 cents an hour).

The rather nasty store manager paid me it all at the end of the summer in nickels in a toy wheelbarrow. I didn't think employees should have to endure

that kind of nonsense. So I was one of the first to sign my union card. Suddenly that was the end of my part-time job, although I had done exemplary work for three years.

I soon found another job at Bell Telephone as a long distance operator. It was an organized (union) workplace, and during my time there I participated in the first operators' strike.

When I began to teach I soon joined the local bargaining committee and was fascinated by the negotiating process. Those were good times in education funding (1972-75), but I realized school boards were reluctant to negotiate working conditions. Teachers knew what they needed to make learning better—smaller class sizes, preparation time, compensatory time—but it was difficult to negotiate these issues. In 1975, [we got] the right to negotiate working conditions. Employers were still resistant.

At this time I also became aware of some of the discrimination against women in the profession. For example, women had been forced to resign from teaching when they became pregnant, women could not get the same life insurance coverage as men, and women were under represented as principals and vice principals. I found this shocking so I

became a voice for women's equality on the bargaining team.

When I moved to Toronto in the mid 1970s, I was a committed unionist. I was selected for a bargaining team and chosen chief negotiator by my peers in my second round of bargaining. We [had a strike] on the issue of lower class sizes. In general, teachers have had to resort to strikes to make gains with learning conditions. These decisions are always agonizing for everyone concerned.

I became a feminist when I was in my late twenties. The movement crystallized for me all the gender imbalance in society. It was everywhere – the public and private sector, the media, and home life. I vowed to do my part in changing what I could to make life better for women.

As a single woman, it was apparent to me that it was hard for women with children and/or partners to get involved in unions. Meetings often took place at night or on weekends when people volunteered their time. I've tried, during my union staff career, to advocate for more day meetings to enable fuller participation for all union members.

After a few years I made the links with other forms of oppression. In my view, one couldn't be a unionist or a feminist

without being an activist in social justice issues such as racism, homophobia, disability and poverty.

Unions offer a terrific opportunity to do equity work. The membership of teacher unions is increasingly diverse. There are more racial minority, Aboriginal, disabled and gay and lesbian members who want services geared to their specific needs. Unions have funds to do the work. Unions have united voices to advocate for change both internally and outside. Unions can be powerful vehicles in a social democracy. ...

I think one of the shortcomings of the current union movement is the tendency to stay focused narrowly on members' immediate needs. By taking a broader perspective we could be serious advocates for social change. Who knows better than teachers of the problems children face because of [discrimination] and poverty? So many of the difficulties with teaching and learning would disappear if we could effectively deal with these issues. I believe we would gain tremendous respect from the public for such work.

I've learned a lot about power and the status quo in my years in the teacher union movement, both as a member and as staff. People resist change because it threatens their own world view. Too many in the status quo are stuck and choose to remain there because it worked for them.

... The gains women and other oppressed groups have made in society are so tenuous. They must constantly be monitored and protected from dismantling by those who like the power they have and don't want to share it.

In the past 25 years I have become alarmed at concerted media and government campaigns to make the term "union" a dirty word. Mainstream media parrots a business perspective that sees unionism cutting into potential profits. Unions need to continue to challenge that narrow perspective. Unions make an important contribution to society as a counter to the profit over people motive. We need to teach labour history in schools. ...

There continue to be many challenges ahead for unions. I believe we can face these. I wanted to use my story as a vehicle to raise issues and provoke thought. That is my life's work.



The late Bev Saskoley was a teacher and passionate social justice advocate. She believed that the actions of organizations must clearly demonstrate their commitment to equity and social justice work.

Resources

Leading The Way: Black Women in Canada,

Rosemary Sadlier

Fire at the Triangle Factory, Holly Littlefield

Pay Cheques and Picket Lines, Clair MacKay

Suggested Activities

- ▶ Role play the negotiation of a collective agreement. Use the backline masters Activity Sheets 1 and 2 as organizers.
- ▶ Words such as *ageism*, *classism* and *ableism* are often used to identify social attitudes. Using the Power Flower, from *We're Erasing Prejudice for Good*, identify marginalized groups within your community.
- ▶ List the reasons why they are marginalized.
- ▶ Choose one marginalized group and interview a member in that group. Create a plan to effect change. How will you know that your plan has met with some success?
- ▶ Were you aware of any negative attitudes ("isms") while you were developing and implementing your plan? Discuss.

Extensions

- ▶ Invite a union representative from your community to come and talk about the role of unions in the workplace.
- ▶ Invite a pro-union and/or anti-union management representative from your community to come and share their perspectives.
- ▶ Using cases in the media, discuss current issues; e.g., a strike or job action in a labour dispute.
- ▶ Locate your board's harassment policy and discuss the effectiveness in addressing the needs of all marginalized groups. Promote this policy throughout the schools through posters and/or presentations.

Challenging Injustice

Negotiation Activity - Grade 7

Teacher Instructions for the Activity on Negotiation

1. Distribute the mock collective bargaining table (see page LP4) to all students.
2. Divide students up into groups of 9 (3 union members, 3 managers, and 3 observers).
3. Distribute the task cards to the subgroups so they are familiar with the role they will play in this bargaining session. Both union members and management should be discussing just how flexible they will be with each item once bargaining begins.
4. Allow students approximately 20-30 minutes to negotiate the terms of this collective agreement. Once settled, the observers should debrief the participants on what they noted during the bargaining process.
5. Groups will report back to the whole class on the success/failure of their bargaining session. Teacher will debrief students on the process of reaching a peaceful and fair agreement between two opposing groups.

For information about curriculum expectations that this lesson plan addresses please see *The Power of Story*, Part 1, page 153.

TASK CARD #1: The Union

You are representing the workers' union in this labour negotiation exercise. Most of your members are so-called "unskilled" labourers who have not had an increase in pay in two years. Your benefit plan covers only the basics.

Your members would like to see it cover vision care and orthodontics. Your employers are in the auto industry and are hesitant to raise wages and benefits too much, because the industry is volatile. There are some things your members might be willing to negotiate but they DEMAND a pay raise and some measure of job security.

TASK CARD #2: The Management

You are representing the management of a factory which manufactures and exports automobile parts. The industry has been volatile in the past few years due to an unstable economy; therefore you do not want to promise your workers job stability, nor do you wish to offer them a huge pay raise. You feel that these labourers should consider themselves lucky to even have jobs in these tough times, so your job is to "lowball" any offers you extend in this bargaining session. You will also try to convince them that any guarantee of hours will make layoffs more likely, so it is in their best interest to withdraw this demand.

TASK CARD #3: The Observers

You are the impartial observers in this bargaining session. Your job is to watch silently how each side bargains and the types of interactions, both verbal and non-verbal, which take place.

Some items to look for:

1. tone of voice
2. whether respectful language is used
3. body language and other forms of non-verbal communication
4. strengths and weaknesses of each team's "performance"

Challenging Injustice

Collective Bargaining Table - Grade 7

Item	Current Status	Union Demands	Management Offer	Final Agreement
Term of Agreement	2 year agreement recently expired	3 year	1 year	
Salary	Average salary is \$19,000 No increase in 3 years	5% increase	1.5% increase	
Working Conditions				
Hours	No guarantee of hours/week	Guaranteed 38 hours/week	No guarantee of hours/week	
Overtime	Time-and-a-half paid after 40 hours	Time-and-a-half paid after 38 hours	Time-and-a-half paid after 44 hours	
Sick Leave	No paid sick days	5 days paid sick leave	No paid sick days	
Vacation Time in lieu of vacation	4% paid weekly	2 weeks' paid vacation annually	4% paid weekly in lieu of vacation	
Benefits				
Health and Dental	90% paid by employer Basic coverage No vision care or extended dental	100% paid by employer Basic coverage Vision care and extended dental	80% paid by employer Basic coverage Vision care but no extended dental	



■ by Sarah B. Hood



Photos - Brian Summers

Addressing boys' achievement in school

Dr. Blye Frank asks: Which boys?

The academic achievement of boys has long been a worrisome issue for educators. The most recent EQAO assessment of Ontario's grade 3 and 6 students (released last November) does nothing to lessen concern.

Sarah B. Hood is a Toronto writer and communications consultant.

Addressing boys' achievement in school

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IN THE PAST, WORKING-CLASS, UNDERPRIVILEGED, AND DISADVANTAGED BOYS HAVE NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN SCHOOL, AND THEY CONTINUE NOT TO BE SUCCESSFUL TODAY.



DR. BLYE FRANK



Whereas both boys and girls show improvement, girls continue to do better than boys. However, says Dr. Blye Frank of Dalhousie University, the first question to ask on the subject is: "Which boys are we talking about?"

Dr. Frank is a professor who serves as acting director in the division of medical education and as director of faculty development at Dalhousie's Faculty of Medicine. He was one of the keynote speakers at ETFO's 2005 Leadership event, held in conjunction with Representative Council in November.

"I think the serious issue here is that we are treating boys as if they were all the same," he says. "The analysis is far too simplistic. The issues around boys are complex issues around social class, income, race and sexuality."

He explains: "In the past, working-class, underprivileged, and disadvantaged boys have not been successful in school, and they continue not to be successful today.

"I would suggest that white upper- and middle-class boys historically have done well in school, and continue to do well. If we are looking for helpful initiatives, then we would continue to have a socio-economic and class analysis. That would give us a whole different perspective."

Similarly, he adds, "If we look at African-Canadian boys in Nova Scotia, or First Nations boys, we get a different analysis. Once we begin to see people as not just gendered, but raced and classed, then we begin to ask a whole different set of questions."

The debate about race-based statistics

Dr. Frank is quick to point out that information about race and class must be gathered with extreme care. "The worry, of course, is what people do with these statistics, and rightly so. If you produce statistics that show a poor rate of success in literacy and numeracy in certain groups, then people can use those statistics against that group."

These comments were mirrored last November, when the Toronto District School Board narrowly voted to move forward on a highly debated proposal to collect race-based statistics.

A lead editorial in *Share*, the large-circulation newspaper serving Toronto's Black and Caribbean communities, guardedly supported the proposal, stating, "The data from the kind of statistics the TDSB wants to gather surely will answer some important questions if they are used properly. ... To not support this proposal will leave us with the present system, the same one that has been failing too many of our children. Is that good enough? We think not."

Ontario education minister Gerard Kennedy, interviewed on the proposal by Toronto's 680

News, said, "We don't have anything that militates against it, but we aren't proposing to do that. We were asked to consider it and we're not proposing to do that province-wide."

However, Dr. Frank cautions against implementing policy before analyzing these types of data. "I fear we will have a redesign of the curriculum, intended to make it more masculine."

"We've had 30 years of serious scrutiny of the curriculum around issues of sexism and heterosexism, and surely what we don't want to do is remasculinize it," he says. "I can see coming forth a kind of affirmative action for the hiring of men in the school system."

Concern about the lack of male teachers, particularly in elementary grades, surfaced again in the fall when the Ontario College of Teachers released a study showing the number of men entering teaching is dropping. The study's authors called on the government to take steps to reverse this trend.

"I am not at all opposed to more men teaching in elementary schools," Dr. Frank said. "What I am opposed to is the lack of analysis. If we want to talk about role modeling, we want to talk about what we want modeled. If we're not careful, this is the reproduction of privilege."

Solutions require careful thought

Meanwhile, what can be done to address the issue? Dr. Frank breaks solutions down into four areas: language, curriculum, pedagogy and policies. He says teachers can bring about change in the first three areas before school boards move on the fourth. Inclusive language makes a good beginning, as long as it is not based on stereotypical ideas of "what we think boys like."

Furthermore, "Teachers can scrutinize their own curriculum, and ask 'What does this curriculum hold in place?'"

As for teachers' practice, "There's a fabulous study from Concordia that shows that whether it's a man or a woman teacher, they call boys' names first. Many teachers will say white boys get the most attention; boys of colour get the second most attention; white girls next, girls of colour last. Teacher attention is one of the most important things, but it's unequally distributed."

"We have to be very clear about attention to people in terms of gender and race. We must explore assumptions before we get to the policy stage," Dr. Frank sums up. "I am not opposed to the analysis that we need to look at boys and their success rate, but the question we have to ask is: which boys?" **V**





■ par André Charlebois



Une culture, ça se célèbre !

Chaque élève qui se présente dans une classe de français langue seconde arrive avec un riche bagage culturel, prêt à être partagé avec la communauté scolaire.

Il s'agit pour l'enseignante ou l'enseignant de puiser dans cette richesse culturelle que représentent ses élèves et de les motiver afin d'enrichir leurs interactions avec leurs camarades.

.....

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

Photos courtesy of Carnaval de Québec, Mathieu Plante.

En se servant de l'activité du *Passeport*, tel qu'expliqué dans le dernier numéro de *Voice*, automne 2004 vol. 7, n° 1, l'enseignante ou l'enseignant peut amener les élèves à partager leur culture personnelle. Tout en permettant à l'élève de s'exprimer en français, cet exercice l'amène à partager avec ses camarades un aspect important de son identité. Cette démarche est une étape clé dans la sensibilisation à la culture de la communauté étudiante.

Dis-moi ce que tu célèbres !

Dans un premier temps, l'enseignante ou l'enseignant fait un sondage auprès des élèves afin de les sensibiliser sur leur propre culture. Les élèves ont donc comme tâche de vérifier auprès de leurs parents ou grands-parents les origines de leur famille. Cette tâche se veut une préparation pour l'étape suivante.

Ensuite, chaque élève fait une recherche sur sa culture afin d'inventorier les traditions et les célébrations qui lui sont propres. Le bref questionnaire qui suit peut être utilisé comme feuille de route, ce qui permettra à l'élève d'effectuer sa recherche de façon ordonnée et simplifiée. Cette deuxième



étape favorise l'acquisition du respect des différentes cultures présentes dans la communauté.

Feuille de route – Recherche sur ma culture

- 1 - Mon nom au complet
- 2 - Mon pays d'origine
- 3 - Mon origine ethnique
- 4 - Une célébration propre à ma culture
- 5 - Une tradition unique à ma culture

Il est possible d'effectuer cette recherche en français; toutefois les élèves auront besoin d'être guidés au niveau du vocabulaire et des expressions recherchés. L'enseignante ou l'enseignant peut fournir un petit lexique avec les mots recherchés afin de faciliter la reconnaissance du vocabulaire français.

Après cette recherche, les élèves sont regroupés selon leur culture, si possible, et ils font un partage de leurs résultats. Les voilà maintenant prêts à présenter les points essentiels de leur information au reste de la classe. Cette présentation peut même être faite dans le cadre d'une mini-foire culturelle où seront invités les parents et les autres élèves de l'école.

La culture canadienne-française !

Le document ministériel *The Ontario Curriculum, French as a Second Language: Core French, Grades 4 - 8* est très clair en ce qui a trait à la culture canadienne-française dans la classe de français de base. Voici l'énoncé tel qu'écrit dans le domaine de la communication orale :

Students should also have opportunities to gain an appreciation of French culture in Canada and in the world.

Le Ministère de l'éducation de l'Ontario confère ainsi à ses enseignantes et enseignants l'obligation d'inculquer cette appréciation de la culture francophone à leurs élèves. Cette tâche peut venir à la suite du survol que les élèves auront fait de leur propre culture, tel que mentionné précédemment.



Célébrons la culture canadienne-française !

Si on donne comme exemple la culture canadienne-française, on regardera de façon plus approfondie les aspects de cette culture qui peuvent intéresser davantage les élèves. Les fêtes et les célébrations sont souvent ce qui attire l'attention des élèves. Voici quelques-unes des traditions célébrées dans les différentes provinces du Canada et qui peuvent intéresser la communauté:

- 1-La fête de la Sainte-Catherine (le 25 novembre)
- 2-Noël et le Jour de l'An (fin décembre et début janvier)
- 3-Le Carnaval de Québec (mi-février)
- 4-Le Festival du Voyageur (mi-février) (Manitoba)
- 5-La Fête de Dollard (troisième lundi de mai)
- 6-La Saint-Jean-Baptiste (fête des Canadiens-Français, le 24 juin)
- 7-L'Assomption (fête des Acadiens, le 15 août)

Comme on peut le constater, il existe plusieurs événements à être célébrés, dépendant de la province où les gens habitent. Pour les besoins de cet article, choisissons le Carnaval de Québec, une activité fort populaire chez les élèves, le Bonhomme Carnaval étant une des mascottes les plus reconnues au Canada français. Mais d'où vient le célèbre carnaval ? Le guide national d'animation culturelle *Debout !*, publié par la Fédération canadienne des enseignantes et des enseignants, résume bien les débuts de cette célébration de l'hiver canadien.

« Membre de la première colonie française à Port-Royal (N.-É.), Champlain décide d'agrémenter les rudes soirées d'hiver en instituant l'*Ordre du bon temps*. Puis, plus de trois siècles plus tard, naît à Québec la tradition du carnaval,



avec le Bonhomme Carnaval, le concours de sculptures sur neige et le célèbre défilé. Le froid de l'hiver stimule le peuple canadien-français à manifester sa *joie de vivre!* »

Muni de cette information préliminaire, l'enseignante ou l'enseignant de français langue seconde peut maintenant inviter ses élèves à approfondir leurs connaissances. Voici quelques suggestions d'activités qui permettront aux enseignantes et enseignants de mettre en pratique l'intégration de la culture à leur enseignement.

1-Présenter un thème d'enseignement basé sur le Carnaval d'hiver. À raison d'une période de 30 à 40 minutes par jour, les élèves apprennent certains aspects du carnaval :

Jour 1 : présenter le vocabulaire essentiel du carnaval: le défilé, le Bonhomme, la neige, le traîneau, la sculpture, le Palais, la glace, etc.;

Jour 2 : visionner un film ou une émission sur le carnaval;

Jour 3 : apprendre la chanson du carnaval ou la chanson du Voyageur (chantée sur l'air de la chanson traditionnelle « Chevaliers de la table ronde »);

Jour 4 : inviter les élèves à présenter un sketch ou un dialogue (1 à 2 minutes) en se servant du vocabulaire appris durant la semaine;

Jour 5 : si possible, amener les élèves à participer à quelques activités typiques du carnaval: glisser, patiner, faire une sculpture de glace, etc.

2-Inviter les élèves des classes du niveau intermédiaire à organiser un mini-carnaval pour les élèves des classes du niveau primaire et moyen. Sous la direction de l'enseignante ou de l'enseignant de français seconde, les élèves se regroupent en équipes. Chaque équipe organise une activité qui peut avoir lieu à l'extérieur ou à l'intérieur. La collaboration de tout le personnel enseignant est de mise afin d'assurer le succès d'un tel projet. D'ailleurs, cette participation ne peut être qu'enrichissante pour tous. Le site Internet « www.fesfo.ca » offre plusieurs suggestions qui aideront les élèves et le personnel enseignant à créer une telle activité.

Apprécier la culture canadienne-française

En somme, l'appréciation de la culture canadienne-française s'acquiert par le biais de plusieurs activités. Mais il ne faut pas oublier qu'au-delà de toutes ces activités amusantes et énergiques, chaque personne est le reflet de sa culture, souvent inconnue ou méconnue par les élèves et la communauté. En l'occurrence, cette personne est l'enseignante ou l'enseignant de français langue seconde. À travers les interactions quotidiennes avec les élèves, le personnel enseignant et la communauté, l'enseignante ou l'enseignant de français langue seconde devient un ambassadeur de cette culture qu'est la sienne.

Bonne chance dans cette quête ... et en avant la musique ! ♥



Bringing drama into the classroom

Stage It: 3 Plays and a Monologue. Ready, Easy, & Reproducible

by Christine Harvey

Trafford Publishing Co., 2003.

77 pages; \$19.99

Reviewed by Catherine West

This resource is best explained by its creator: "I published this book in order to make it accessible to those teachers who want to start up drama clubs or produce classroom skits. I hope that by finding my book, they can avoid the frustration of endlessly searching for an appropriate script."

Christine Harvey is a junior/intermediate drama specialist, and all the materials in this book have been field-tested in her classroom or at summer camps.

The first play is *A Look All Her Own: A Modern Cinderella Story* and is adaptable for groups of different sizes. The reality TV scenario has "Heartthrob" (the prince) promising to date the girl who meets his secret criteria. Students can perform this as written, or create scenes using the lively and humorous dialogue

as a model. Teachers might prefer to flip the sexes in the plot, as it is somewhat stereotypical.

The premise for *The Legend of the Lost and Found Box* is that there is a dangerous lost and found box which devours children whole. The funny script is written for four performers, and involves some audience participation. Christine uses the play as a class skit, or to introduce the genre of legends to her English classes.

A *Fairytale Medley* is written for three performers. It is a delightful romp through a selection of traditional fairy tales; the humour and quirkiness are sure to appeal to students.

The short monologue features a character coping with boy trouble, and finding the strength to reclaim her sense of self. It could be used as a model for students to create their own monologues about personal challenges.

This book provides engaging and practical materials that tie in well with the performance/creative work and critical thinking strands of the Ontario arts curriculum.

.....
Catherine West is a music teacher for the Toronto District School Board, and is an "arts-in-education" consultant and workshop clinician.



Spelling success for all students

High Frequency Words: Strategies that build skills in spelling, vocabulary, and word play

by Ken Marland

Pembroke Publishers, 2002.

112 pages; \$18.95

Reviewed by Maureen Coleman

Ken Marland's book is a boon for all teachers – but especially those teaching primary grades and special education – looking for a guide to teaching those basic and oft-repeated words that children tend to misspell over and over again.

Marland's goal is to demonstrate how to make spelling accessible to all students, leading them to improve not just their spelling skills, but their learning skills in general. He observes that only about 46 percent of English words are phonetic and that we need to use a variety of techniques to help students spell correctly.

Marland provides an understanding of how children learn to spell, and has included a variety of innovative and delightful

teaching techniques. His reproducible student activity sheets are just too much fun to pass up.

What strikes me as significant is Marland's unambiguous clarity as he explains his theories of learning and methods of teaching. For example, in his overview of good spellers versus weak spellers he observes that weak spellers "view spelling as arbitrary, haphazard, difficult, unlearnable, and beyond their control. Good spellers have internalized a set of cognitive skills that help them to visualize words, use an analogy, break up the words, and/or understand the words in context."

This easy-to-read book is divided into two parts. Part One includes 'Conducting the Spelling Lesson.' Marland discusses the basic tools needed—chalkboards and chalk—but also suggests alternatives like magnetic boards and letters, or sand or salt in a tray, or computers with large type.

When he selects students for the lesson, he chooses half the class at random, including both weak and strong spellers, and conducts the lesson in a circle using the chalkboards for review and for new words. His lessons are highly interactive and stress review of familiar words as much as introduction of new words. Careful, confident printing is a priority, as it allows the student to focus on the correct spelling of a word instead of on letter formation.

Part Two consists of lesson plans. A highlight is the double page devoted to tracking the spelling strategies of each word.

This is particularly useful for a beginning teacher; a chart shows how a word might be spelt phonetically, or visually, by using visualization, context, analogy, kinesthetics, or even a story.

This book provides an entertaining way for teachers and students to problem-solve new words in spelling together. It also shows how teachers can instantly gauge how well a student is learning and adjust the lesson accordingly.

.....
Maureen Coleman retired from the Toronto District School Board in 2003, after a 33-year career, mainly in kindergarten and music. She is now an occasional teacher at the TDSB.



Preventing bullying

Bullying: Deal with it before push comes to shove

by Elaine Slavens

James Lorimer & Co., 2003.
32 pages; \$12.95

Reviewed by Christine Rhoda

Elaine Slavens has tackled the important issues surrounding bullying in an easy to use 32-page, soft cover book. Slavens defines bullying, dispels bullying myths and addresses the problem from three perspectives: the target, the bully and the witness.

Initially, the reader is challenged to identify what constitutes bullying. Cartoon sketches featuring a cross-section of students in real-life scenarios ask, "Is this bullying?" A definition of bullying is then provided.

Direct, indirect, sexual and racial bullying are described in four comic strips. A quiz helps readers to decide if the situations presented involve bullying. Answers are provided in a sidebar.

A section entitled "Dear Bully Counsellor" provides five sets of questions and answers in the format of an advice column. In

the remaining three sections, targets, bullies and witnesses are defined. Information is presented in "dos and don'ts", quizzes, and "What you can do if this is you". A "Did you know?" section features results from research surveys. A list of Canadian resources dealing with bullying is provided on the last page.

Slavens's approach is student-friendly; she speaks directly to the reader. The book uses a variety of writing styles and fonts and the illustrations speak volumes. The book can be read cover to cover; or teachers can use specific sections that apply to their classrooms. Students depicted are male and female and represent a variety of races and cultures.

Teachers should be forewarned: this book uses "student" language and is sometimes explicit. Teachers will want to preview the material to ensure it is appropriate for their classroom.

.....
Christine Rhoda is a primary/junior teacher, currently teaching grade 2 with the Waterloo Region District School Board, and a part-time M.Ed. student at Brock University.

The Room Next Door



■ by Christine Brown



A “handful of pragmatic, thoughtful individuals” created change.

On November 18th a mixed crowd of Ontarians gathered in a caucus room at Queen’s Park to follow that day’s Second Reading of Bill 118, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The proceedings happening in the legislative chamber below were broadcast into the caucus room down the hall. The gathering spanned a wide range of age levels and occupations. A lawyer listened intently to the debate going on in the chamber. A group of students, as students will, carried on a running commentary amongst themselves throughout the afternoon.

Everyone’s common focus was a piece of legislation that has the potential, over time, to transform the province’s physical and social infrastructure – an infrastructure which impedes the full participation of the province’s 1.5 million citizens with disabilities. Bill 118 mandates a process for removing existing barriers and preventing new ones. This legislation, if and when passed, will supercede the current law, the 2001 Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

That statute was justly denounced for being both toothless and overly narrow in scope. By contrast, the proposed law covers both the public and the private sector, and is sweeping in its breadth. Specifically, it will cover barriers with respect to “employment, goods, services, facilities, accommodation, buildings, structures, or premises.” The Bill targets all disabilities, both visible and invisible. Likewise, it defines “barriers” to include not only the obvious ones – architecture, technology, communication – but also the attitudinal kind. As educators, parents and citizens, ETFO members will have a big role to play in this law’s eventual implementation.

The mechanism to eliminate barriers is the establishment of accessibility standards for various industries, organizations, and sectors of the economy. Of particular note is the fact that persons with disabilities are themselves an integral part of the standard-setting process. Standards are to be phased in in five-year (at most) increments.

Set timelines, as well as muscular provisions for enforcement, further distinguish the proposed legislation from its predecessor.

Over the past decade, we in Ontario have had the bracing experience of being governed by all three of the major political parties. Yet this landmark legislation is not the result of a sudden attack of conscience on the part of the current government. Rather, as Ontario Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Marie Bountrogianni herself stated on the day of Second Reading, the credit goes to the “handful of pragmatic, thoughtful individuals” who came together ten years ago to form the Ontarians with Disabilities Act Committee.

Over the past decade, the ODA Committee has provided a fascinating example of grassroots political action. Its members are scrupulously non-partisan in their tactics. Successive governments have been lauded for their (generally modest) achievements in furthering the rights of people with disabilities. They have likewise been pounded relentlessly for their (more common) mistakes and inaction. The Committee never lets up, and its patience defies all understanding.

The Bill that has resulted – at long last – is not perfect. Certain aspects have been criticized, most notably the fact that the outermost time limit specified for fully phasing in accessibility is twenty years. As the Bill moves into the committee stage, there will without question be pressure to amend this and other sections. Still, even its current incarnation stacks up extremely well against the legal frameworks in place in other jurisdictions in the world.

It is a truism to say that the best place to begin change is close to home. In part, the reason why the caucus room was needed on November 18th was because the legislative chamber itself has almost no wheelchair-accessible seating for visitors. As the students signed to one another across the room, and the dogs napped on the floor, change was happening right next door. ♥

Christine Brown is an ETFO research officer who is studying disabilities issues.

Pension plan holds the line on contribution increase



■ by Lorraine Stewart

Member contributions to OTPP will remain the same for the next two years. So will the benefits the plan provides.

Lorraine Stewart is ETFO's staff representative on the OTF Pension Committee.

The Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF) and the Ontario government jointly sponsor the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP). As the partners, they are responsible for decisions about pension benefits and the plan's contribution rate.

This fall the partners had to decide whether or not to increase member contributions in January 2005. They have decided not to do so. Here's why.

How contribution rates are decided

The financial health of the OTPP determines the contribution rate for members. If the plan actuary determines that assets and liabilities match, the plan is fully funded. If the actuary finds that liabilities exceed assets something must be done to restore balance: either contributions must be increased or benefits decreased, or both.

By law, the OTPP must file a valuation (a statement of assets and liabilities) with the Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO) every three years. When it does this, the OTPP must present a plan indicating how it will restore balance to the plan.

Plan assets include everything the plan owns, including stocks, bonds, real estate, projected future investment returns and the value of the future contributions made by today's members.

Plan liabilities are the monies needed today to pay the pensions of all current plan members (active and retired). To calculate this amount the OTPP uses real (after inflation) interest rates as set by the return on real return bonds (RRBs),

inflation-protected bonds issued by the Government of Canada.

The impact of low interest rates

OTPP's last valuation in 2003 showed the plan had a surplus of \$1.5 billion. Another valuation must be filed by 2006, although it can be filed sooner. OTPP prepares an interim valuation every year to keep an eye on the plan's financial status.

Even though assets have been increasing in value, liabilities are increasing faster. This is because interest rates on real return bonds have reached record lows. Small declines in this rate can cause dramatic increases in liability. For each 0.1 per cent decrease in the bond rate, liabilities increase by \$1.5 billion. The interest rate, which is beyond the control of the partners, is the greatest factor in the increase in liabilities.

The decision the partners had to make was whether to file the valuation now and increase contributions as of January 2005 or to wait until 2006 and see what shape the plan was in at that time. The plan's partners have decided not to file the 2004 OTPP funding valuation.

Had the 2004 interim valuation been filed, it would have shown a deficit of \$6.2 billion. Since January 2004 the interest rate has continued to drop and the deficit has continued to grow. As of August it was \$17.7 billion. If the present trend continues the 2006 valuation will show a deficit, and a contribution increase will be required in January 2007.

During 2005 the partners will continue to work together to develop a number of strategies that will minimize the impact of the contribution increase needed in 2007.

If you have questions or need more information please contact me at provincial office. ♥

Approximately one in six
Canadian children will be living
below the poverty line in 2005.

Taking action to end poverty



■ by **Terry Price**, CTF President

The Canadian Teachers' Federation is gearing up for another active year on both the national and international fronts.

Global Action Week, will be held here in Canada and around the world from April 24 to 30, 2005. This year's theme, "Educate to End Poverty," is of special importance because it will highlight the world's failure to achieve a major millennium development goal of gender parity in primary education by 2005. Our inability to accomplish this first basic goal will make it extremely difficult for any of the world's developing countries to achieve Education for All by 2015.

In Canada, our record on the eradication of poverty also receives a failing grade. Campaign 2000 released its report card on child poverty in Canada in November. Despite promises by our federal government 15 years ago, the situation has worsened rather than improved. Approximately one in six Canadian children will be living below the poverty line in 2005.

For the sake of all children, regardless of the country in which they live, CTF – in cooperation with its member organizations – will join teacher federations around the world to remind world leaders again of the Dakar promise to eradicate child poverty and to achieve Education for All by 2015.

We sincerely thank ETFO members who took part in last year's *Biggest Lobby* that focused on children missing an education. We urge you once again to participate in *Global Action Week, April 25-30, 2005* and help us spread the word.



Quality public education cannot be achieved without our involvement.

Quality public education is the cornerstone to ending poverty.

Quality public education does play a pivotal role in promoting democracy.

Look for resources and campaign materials on the CTF website to launch your own campaign locally. Please visit us at www.ctf-fce.ca to download these useful tools.

Building Inclusive Schools: A Search for Solutions

CTF will be hosting a national conference entitled *Building Inclusive Schools* in Ottawa on Nov. 17-19, 2005. Mark the event on your calendar.

The conference will present a holistic and broadly defined picture of an inclusive school through four major strands: children and youth with disabilities and other special learning needs; children and youth who are excluded by poverty, culture and language; Aboriginal learners and teachers; and bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgendered and two-spirited learners and teachers. If you register before June 30, the cost is \$321. Visit www.ctf-fce.ca for more information.

Looking forward to seeing you at one or both these events! ♥

TEACHERS' TRIVIA

One woman went to mow . . .

■ by Peter Harrison

LUCY cuts the grass on the school's two square sports fields whose sides are each a whole number of metres in length. She knows that both areas are five-digit numbers where

- the first digit of one is the same as the first digit of the other
- the last digit of one is the same as the last digit of the other, and
- the three middle digits of one are the same as the three middle digits of the other but not in the same order.

She notices that the difference in area between the fields (in square metres) is numerically the same as the sum (in metres) of their perimeters.

A draw will be held on February 21, 2005 of all the correct answers to "One Woman Went to Mow".

Five winners will receive an ETFO sweat-shirt. The answer and the winners' names will appear in the next issue of *Voice*.

Send your answers to Jennifer Stewart at provincial office. Fax: 416-642-2424
Email: jstewart@etfo.org
Regular mail: Jennifer Stewart at the address on the masthead.

What is the total area she mows?

Solution to "The Magic Square"

The secret was much simpler than Nancy expected!

Having looked at the square on many previous occasions, she noticed that there were more 8s than 1s and more 7s than 2s.

Counting up each number, she found 1x1s, 2x2s, 2x3s, 4x4s, 5x5s, 6x6s, 6x7s and 7x8s. To make the pattern regular, Nancy therefore needed another 3, 7 and 8.

So the missing numbers are 3, 7 and 8!

Winners are:

Jacque Adain
Mike Anderson
Marilyn Cowbrough
Ruby Jacob
Barbara Jalsevac

Research study seeks participants

The validity of the Ontario Teacher Qualifying Test (OTQT): stakeholders' perspectives.

The study aims to:

- determine the extent to which OTQT contributes to teacher knowledge and competence
- make recommendations about pre-certificate evaluation.

Participants complete an on-line survey. There is an optional interview. Both are completely confidential.

For more information visit <http://leo.oise.utoronto.ca/surveys/otqt>; or contact John Portelli, jportelli@oise.utoronto.ca; Patrick Solomon, psolomon@edu.yorku.ca; or Donatille Mujawamariya, dmutawar@uottawa.ca

Funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



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OTF will continue [its work] to ensure that the reformed Ontario College of Teachers becomes an organization more acceptable to Ontario teachers.

Working to change how teachers are regulated



by Sharon Aloian

The mandate of the Ontario College of Teachers has been an ongoing and lively topic of discussion at the OTF.

At its last meeting of 2004, the OTF executive discussed how the mandate of the college could be changed to be more in keeping with the nature of a self-regulating body.

At that meeting the executive also discussed the future of the Ontario College of Teachers with the Minister of Education, Gerard Kennedy.

One of the commitments made by the Liberals during the election campaign last year was that they would reform the Ontario College of Teachers.

OTF and the federations have met several times since the election to discuss what results we would like to see from this reform.

The OTF position on the governing structure calls for:

- a clear majority of classroom teacher representatives on the governing council
- the removal of the designated positions
- an end to the practice of stratified voting

OTF would like to see the College of Teachers legislation amended in the following ways:

- removing the power to accredit teacher education programs – both in-service and pre-service
- removing any reference to renewing teach-

ing certificates

- limiting the power of the Registrar
- clarifying that the College of Teachers does not speak for teachers.

While it is OTF's position that the College of Teachers should be eliminated, the realistic view is that it will continue. Given that, the College of Teachers should be restricted to become a purely regulatory body that is in charge of entry to the profession and exit from the profession, following due process.

During the December meeting, the minister spoke of his desire to see the college as a "neutral" organization. He meant that Federation officers—both local and provincial—should be excluded from running for positions on the governing council.

Members of the OTF executive pressed their position that excluding anyone from seeking office was undemocratic.

OTF will continue the dialogue with the minister and his officials to ensure that the reformed Ontario College of Teachers becomes an organization more acceptable to Ontario teachers.

The discussion paper from the minister of education can be viewed at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/partnership/revitalizing.html. This paper also raises questions about the mandate of the college.

The paper detailing OTF's position is posted on the OTF website at www.otffeo.on.ca/en/policy_change/college.php. **V**

Sharon Aloian is the OTF Table Officer for ETFO.

February 7 - BELLEVILLE

Let's Connect the Dots...

Contact: Anne Rodrigue
ETFO Provincial office
416-962-3836/1-888-838-3836
arodrigue@etfo.org
www.etfo.ca

February 9-11 - TORONTO

...and still we rise

Fairmount Royal York Hotel
Contact: Kathleen Loftus
ETFO Provincial Office
416-962-3836/1-888-838-3836
kloftus@etfo.org
www.etfo.ca

February 9-11 - TORONTO

Leaders for Tomorrow

Fairmount Royal York Hotel
Contact: Kathleen Loftus
ETFO Provincial Office
416-962-3836/1-888-838-3836
kloftus@etfo.org
www.etfo.ca

March 8

International Women's Day (United Nations)

March 21

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (United Nations)

April 7-9 - TORONTO

Leaders for Tomorrow

Contact: Kathleen Loftus
ETFO Provincial Office
416-962-3836/1-888-838-3836
kloftus@etfo.org - www.etfo.ca

April 7-9 - TORONTO

The Ontario Association for
Supervision & Curriculum
Development (OASCD)
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of Teaching*
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Classroom Practice
For more information: www.ascd.ca

April 15-16 - TORONTO

Kaleidoscope

Hilton Toronto Airport Hotel
Contact: Lynn McClean
ETFO Provincial Office
416-962-3836/1-888-838-3836
lmcclean@etfo.org
www.etfo.ca

April 23 - WATERLOO

Teaching the Whole Child: Kindergarten Matters

Contact: Joan Littleford
ETFO Provincial Office
416-962-3836/1-888-838-3836
jlittleford@etfo.org
www.etfo.ca

Spring 2005

FSL Conference

Upper Canada Local Area
Contact: Jennifer Mitchell
ETFO Provincial Office
416-962-3836/1-888-838-3836
jmittchell@etfo.org
www.etfo.ca

May 4-6 - MISSISSAUGA

Better Learning Through IT

The Educational Computing
Organization of Ontario (ECCO)
Delta Meadowvale Resort &
Conference Centre
905-773-3981
www.ecco.org

May 6-7 - OAKVILLE

Connect 2005: For Teachers in Their First Year

Sheridan College
Contact: Jan Moxey
ETFO Provincial Office
416-962-3836/1-888-838-3836
jmoxey@etfo.org
www.etfo.ca

June 2005

ETFO Lecture Series

ETFO Provincial Office
416-962-3836/1-888-838-3836
Contact: Barbara Richter
brichter@etfo.org
or Mary Morison
mmorison@etfo.org
www.etfo.ca

February 1 Awards Deadline:

- ▶ Educational Support/Professional Support Person of the Year Award
- ▶ ETFO Local Website of the Year Award
- ▶ Honorary Life Membership
- ▶ Humanitarian Award for an ETFO Member
- ▶ Humanitarian Award for a Non-ETFO Member
- ▶ Innovative Projects on Behalf of Children Living in Poverty Award
- ▶ Local Leadership Award
- ▶ Newsletter Editor's Award – multi-sheet
- ▶ Newsletter Editor's Award – single sheet
- ▶ New Teacher Award
- ▶ Occasional Teacher of the Year Award
- ▶ Outstanding Bus Driver Award
- ▶ Outstanding Role Model for Women - Women's Program
- ▶ Women Working in Social Activism on Behalf of Women and Children - Women's Program

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- ▶ Negotiating skills for life
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APRIL 15, 16

Hilton Toronto Airport Hotel

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Or contact Lynn McClean at provincial office.

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TUESDAY EVENINGS:

April 5, 12, 19, 26

May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

June 7

LOCATION:

Aurora High School

155 Wellington Street West
Aurora, ON L4G 2P4

CONTACT:

Joan Littleford

ETFO PROVINCIAL OFFICE

416-962-3836 / 1-888-838-3836

jlittleford@etfo.org

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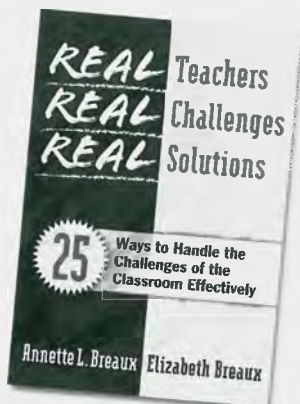
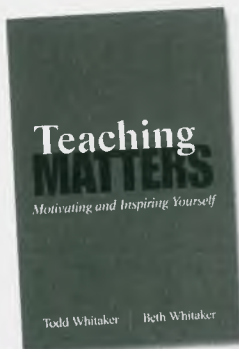
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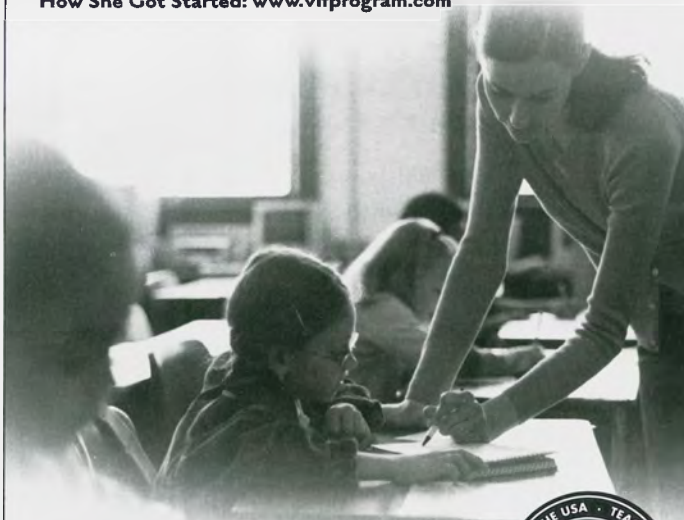
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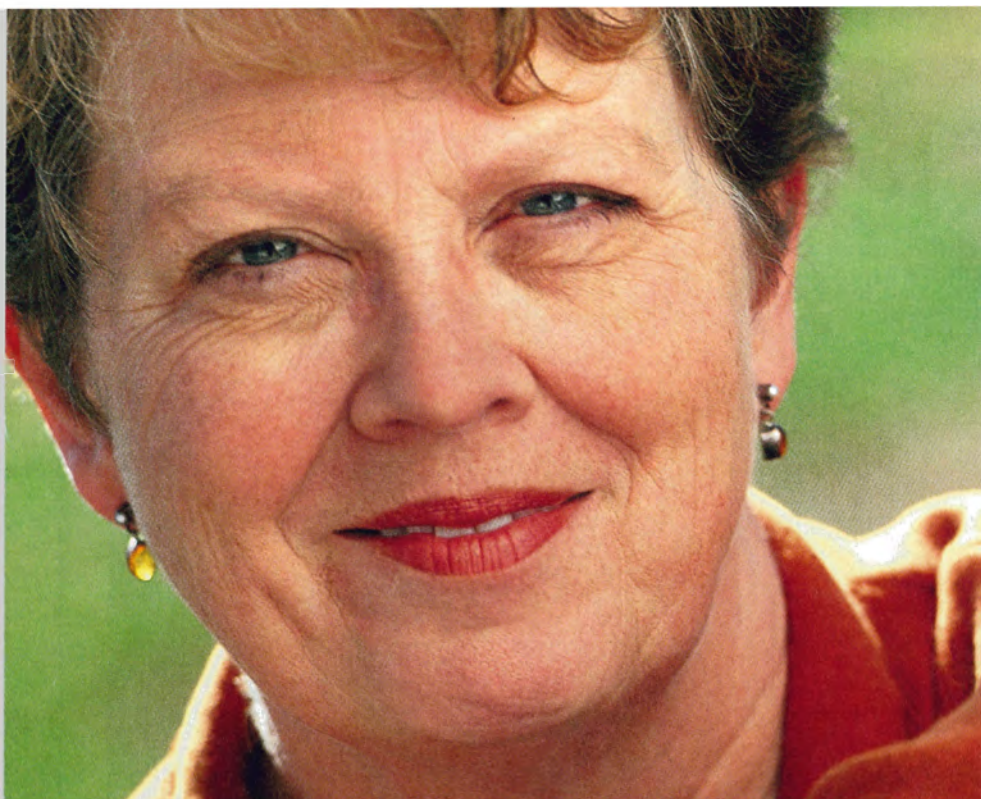
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