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Teacher

Inner-city funding provides more than hot lunch



A full-time youth and family worker meets with students in the problem-solving room at Tillicum Elementary School, Vancouver. Inner-city funding helps keep the school safe, welcoming, and nurturing.

by Gloria Roque

At Tillicum Elementary School in Vancouver, inner-city funding means a full-time youth and family worker (YFW), a student support worker (SSW), and some inner-city project teacher time.

Tillicum is a large K-4 annex of 185 students in the northeast corner of Vancouver. In 1999, the Tillicum staff decided to begin an Effective Behaviour Support program (EBS). We used reward tokens (Bee tickets) to reinforce positive behaviour and to teach students about the *Three Bees*: be safe, be polite, and be responsible. We had

Take care of yourself, take care of others, and take care of this place.

great success. However, we found that this sort of extrinsic motivation didn't result in generalized changes in behaviour outside the classroom. After three years, we decided to move from extrinsic motivators to intrinsic motivators.

Last summer, our YFW and some teaching staff went to a summer institute on social responsibility in Vancouver where we learned about the social responsibility program at Blakeburn Elementary School,

in Coquitlam. Impressed and inspired, we returned to Tillicum, where we adopted and adapted many of Blakeburn's ideas in order to move from EBS toward social responsibility.

In September 2002, we decided to go "cold turkey" with the Bee tickets. It was a bit rough at first, but we explained to the students and parents that we wanted to create a safe and friendly place where students could learn to make wise, independent choices—without Bee tickets. We adopted a new code of conduct: Take care of yourself, take care of others, and take care of this place. This fits quite well with the four objectives of social responsibility: solving problems in peaceful ways, being a good community citizen, standing up for other people, and respecting rights and responsibilities.

We have taken the common language, the skits, and the explicit teaching, which were the successful components of our EBS program, and we are now using them to support the performance standards for social responsibility. The common language has given us school-wide consistent strategies. We now have a "problem-solving room," open at recess and lunch, where the YFW, SSW, AC, and VP support the students and practise these new strategies to solve problems as they occur. Teaching staff appreciate this; they are now relieved of

the post-recess and post-lunch problem solving, which often runs into classroom time.

Since we began this fall, we have learned that our inner-city funded SSW, YFW, and inner-city project teacher time are all critical to the success of this program. Our YFW and SSW are able to do behaviour support through using the performance standards on social responsibility.

We are a community supporting one another in our journey toward social responsibility.

Our YFW also plays a key role at Tillicum as the facilitator of our peer helper "Superstars" program. Because we are an annex, the Tillicum Superstars are Grade 3 and 4 students. They are responsible for the outdoor equipment and our inside-day games, and for broadcasting a morning message to the school. They also emcee our weekly assemblies. They have proven to be great role models, and their leadership skills keep on growing under the leadership of our YFW. The Superstars also learn—and teach—about social responsibility by performing skits during assemblies and in the classrooms, making posters,

doing announcements, and taking care of others and our school.

For the past two years, the SSW has implemented a successful Roots of Empathy program. A baby and parent visit the classroom to share and discuss with the students the milestones of the baby's development. Roots of Empathy teaches human development and emotional literacy and nurtures growth of empathy.

All these activities and programs are in place because we have a committed, dedicated staff and administration. We are a community supporting one another in our journey toward social responsibility. Without our inner-city funding, and without our YFW, SSW, and our inner-city project teacher, our school would not be the safe, welcoming, and nurturing place that it is today.

Inner-city funding is more than just the hot-lunch program. At Tillicum, it also means behaviour and socio-emotional support, the Roots of Empathy program, student leadership, and academic support (small pull-out groups and in-class support).

Apprehensively, we are waiting to hear what will happen to our funding, what will happen to these key people in our learning community, and what will happen to our kids.

Gloria Roque teaches at Tillicum Elementary School, Vancouver.

President's message



Neil Worboys

Given the B.C. Liberals' approach to education, I am not surprised to hear Education Minister Christy Clark talking about increasing teacher supervision. Clark says parents want "to make sure there are clear standards for teacher performance and conduct." She said principals relegated to the position of "paper-clip guys" by collective agreements and school culture, should be in classrooms more often to ensure that quality teaching is taking place. Well, teachers at every level can give excellent examples of how and why that's not helpful. Tighter supervision linked to evaluation has never been shown to improve classroom teaching. The professional development that works best is developed and delivered by teachers in a collegial environment, not under the thinly veiled intimidation tactic Clark is proposing. The BCTF dedicates about 18% of the budget to professional development. Our peer support program, action research initiatives, and workshops help teachers be more effective in the classroom. We would like to expand those programs and other teacher-support activities. The recent PD needs assessment we conducted, which sought the views of 1,500 members, will help us evaluate and enhance our PD programs. We have been trying to persuade the government to work with us on professional issues and quality teaching, but the response at the official level has been muted. At the ministerial level, we are told that teachers shouldn't feel threatened by increased supervision because it's not meant to be negative. It seems to me that the minister is desperately attempting to deflect public attention from the underfunding crisis and the difficult realities in schools around this province. Well, we are not going to be deflected! Teachers have always played a key role in our own professional development and that of our colleagues. We will continue to do so, just as we'll continue to advocate for the classroom conditions and funding levels needed for quality teaching.

Neil

SFU helps immigrant teachers

The Professional Qualification Program is designed to orient a new Canadian or landed immigrant to re-enter the teaching profession, in British Columbia. It supports well-experienced teachers from India, Peru, Philippines, Yugoslavia, and other countries of the world. In addition, PQP explores issues on the philosophical and pedagogical areas of education in B.C. The Faculty of Education at SFU introduced the program, in collaboration with the B.C. College of Teachers. One of the goals of the PQP is to introduce teachers to the curriculum and give them support they need to familiarize them with the B.C. school system.

Helen Concepcion
SFU, helen_cx@hotmail.com

I am the BCTF

I invite all teachers to attend the BCTF AGM at least once during their teaching career. I am an old teacher, yet new in the public system. This year, I attended my second AGM. The first time, I went in order to know more about the public school system. The second time, I was prepared. Knowing that I had to do a lot of listening, I took along a drawing pad. I also volunteered to be a teller, which meant being up early to prepare for duties on election day. The BCTF is our union, advocating and encouraging professional development for us to continue delivering excellent public education. In a union of some 40,000, it is easy to feel disconnected and unimportant. That morning as teller, I saw how carefully each of us did our task of distributing and counting ballots. I saw how one vote changed the tide of events. That one vote could be from any of us. We may feel disenfranchised by having to go through our staff representative to get to our local associations and then to the BCTF, but this remote feeling vanished when I saw that each of us has a voice, each of us matters. It affirmed that, yes, I am the BCTF.

Thelma Valle-Serrano
Richmond

Need better newspapers

Teachers should help create a progressive newspaper. Besides the obscene concentration of media ownership in B.C., the media are moving farther to the right. All three major dailies have been critical of teachers recently. "Teachers' unions should stick to education" appeared in *The Vancouver Sun*. It started by suggesting a similarity between teachers and Jimmy Hoffa. It ended saying the BCTF AGM is "sticking its nose in where it doesn't belong" because it was to consider resolutions about the Romanow report and Kyoto but especially with a resolution to condemn the invasion of Iraq.

During the Vietnam War, it was standard practice for thousands of unions around the world to speak out. In B.C., perhaps our most famous labour martyr is Ginger Goodwin, who was killed for refusing to fight in World War I and telling others to do the same. (One of the first things the B.C. Liberal government did was remove signs commemorating Ginger Goodwin.) All teachers were going to do was send a letter to the Prime Minister. Yet somehow that was improper.

It is troubling enough that a newspaper sees it as improper, but what is most troubling is that dozens of teachers were taken in by their specious argument. Had teachers been able to read an alternative viewpoint, few would have agreed with that editorial.

Brian Lavery
Port Alberni

College has role in teacher education

Mike Lombardi's comments on the College of Teachers (*Teacher*, Jan./Feb. 2003) were both timely and accurate. The proposals of the deans of the faculties of education would have the effect of removing our professional control over entry into the profession. What is at stake is the ability to define what is a teacher and how a person becomes a teacher.

Program approval by the BCCT is a very effective and efficient expression of teacher professionalism. It allows the practising professionals to set the standards and criteria for teacher education. The recent legal battles with TWU confirmed strongly the right of the college to vet programs and set standards. It is that mandate that the deans object to.

The alternative, hinted at by Craig Bresett, would have the college out of such program approval. The result would be a close and expensive examination of all the applications by B.C. graduates for college certification. It would not decrease the amount of money that teachers would have to pay to the college. It would require more staff and a much greater expense.

In short, if the public interest is to be considered in the education and certification of teachers, there is only one body charged with that duty. And that body is discharging that duty efficiently and with the greatest of concern for the public and the professional good.

Dale Townsend
Salmon Arm

Affiliation costly

How ironic it feels to be writing to the BCTF *Teacher* knowing that by the time this is published we will have already voted for or against affiliation with the B.C. Federation of Labour. Having received such a biased account of this issue by the affiliation task force in the past two issues, I felt compelled to bring to the members attention the real cost of joining the BC Fed. This was also pertinent when looking at my January pay slip. Calculating the cost of the BCTF, COTA, and SIF de-

ductions, I find that I will be paying close to \$1,900 for these services in 2003.

The costs of affiliation were brought to the attention of COTA members in the January update bulletin. It states that in the first three years, the members of COTA could pay directly the sum of \$17,500 for each year. However, indirectly the members of the BCTF will pay \$300,000 for membership and \$155,000 for meetings per year to join the B.C. Federation of Labour.

If the three-year trial period is deemed successful, we as BCTF members will then be required to join the Canadian Labour Congress. That cost will be \$300,000 for membership per year and \$170,000 for meetings every three years and to COTA members, \$17,600 membership, \$19,200 meeting, and \$10,800 North Okanagan Labour Council. The total cost after four years, \$2,355,200, is astounding and certainly not justified, at least for the Central Okanagan Teachers' Association members. Now if my union dues of \$1,300 per year go down or stay the same after we join the BC Fed, then perhaps the members could accept the affiliation. I doubt very much that that will happen.

Sam Saprunoff
Kelowna

B.C. Dairy Foundation materials helpful

We are writing in response to the letter written by Craig Bresett (*Teacher*, Jan./Feb. 2003).

Bresett expresses his dissatisfaction regarding teachers of nutrition using educational materials produced by the B.C. Dairy Foundation. Bresett believes these educational products influence students and parents to buy dairy products. As members of the Teachers of Home Economics Specialist Association (THESA), we have used the B.C. Dairy Foundation educational resources for many years to facilitate the teaching of nutrition as a whole. The materials are used to teach about general nutrition, balanced eating from a variety of food sources, and reducing the risk of developing nutrition-related health problems.

Many elementary teachers are using or have used the Food Track program to enhance the learning of *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating*. The CD-Rom sampler that Bresett referred to in his letter is NOT about milk. The sampler is called 5-5-3-2. It is a fun and interactive program that enables students to learn about Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. It helps students to understand what a serving comprises in all four food groups. It does not highlight or exaggerate the role of any dairy products. Bresett is concerned that the B.C. Dairy Foundation is trying to sell products to children.

We are committed to presenting factual and researched information to our students. The foundation has been very supportive of teachers of nutrition and

through their hard work and effort, students have used interesting and interactive resources to learn about nutrition as a whole.

We recommend that individual teachers peruse the teaching materials and make their own decisions on how to teach nutrition.

Burnaby THESA members

Aboriginal lesson aid

I would like to warn teachers who have purchased a copy of the lesson aid entitled *Aboriginals of the Pacific Northwest Coast: A Cross-Curricular Activity Book* (*Teacher*, "10 New Lesson Aids," March 2003), by Denny and Neil Hughes about a number of serious concerns in the original edition.

For example, the anthropological names *Nootka* and *Kwakiutl* do not reflect the names First Nation people now use. *Nuu chah nulth* and *Kwa kwa ka'wakw* have been used for a number of years.

Another concern revolves around the theory of the Bering Land Bridge. This is portrayed as a "truth" and does not fully or respectfully acknowledge that First Nations had their own version as to their own origins. Each First Nation has its own stories. Furthermore, there are other theories regarding First Nation origins that are just as valid.

The illustrations throughout this document are often simplistic and do not reflect the sophisticated art of this coast.

Although a second edition of this lesson aid has made corrections from the first, I do not recommend this book until a complete consultation with First Nations educators has taken place.

Not to consult with First Nations is disrespectful and displays an arrogance that we should not accept.

Frank Conibear
Victoria

A sampling of responses to TOC call-out

This letter is in response to Patrick Schreck's article, "Fair call-out for TOCs" (*Teacher*, March 2003). I am not in full agreement with Patrick Schreck. He states that it isn't fair when TOCs have to sell themselves and compete with other TOCs. Didn't contract teachers have to compete with a multitude of applicants before they got accepted to their position? Furthermore, aren't contract teachers constantly "selling themselves" by trying to satisfy parents, students, and administrators? In addition, he states that call-outs should be based on seniority. To what degree? Would calling in a TOC with high seniority and no ability in French be considered "professional" if that TOC was asked to cover a French Immersion class?

Paul Sallmen
Coquitlam

I have been a TOC in a Lower Mainland school district for three years. For 10 years before that, I



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was a stay-at-home mother, and before that, I taught Grades 2 and 3 full time for eight years in a different Lower Mainland district. I love being a TOC! When I'm at work, my background comes through. As a result, several teachers in my district ask if I am available when they need a TOC.

I disagree strongly with the position that teachers, if they wish to, should not request a specific TOC. When teachers ask for a certain TOC, they do not say, "Don't send John, Ann, or Sue." They say, "Please see if so-and-so is available." I fail to see how requesting a specific TOC who has done work for them in the past can be seen as openly critiquing another TOC.

When you or your family needs to see a doctor, do you choose a different one from the phone book each time? You prefer to see the same professional each time, building a relationship with that person.

We, as teachers, ask that students, parents, colleagues, and administrators respect our judgment on decisions that we make every day. Why should we not respect the decision that a contract teacher may make regarding the TOC he or she would prefer for his or her class?

Jane Bant
West Vancouver

Patrick Schreck's article about TOC call-outs addresses the issues facing the TOC but does not deal with the resulting impact in the classroom. While I agree with each of his arguments, I was left wondering how a system based on "seniority or some other objective criterion" might affect students.

As it stands, the system allows for teachers to call-out the same TOC each time they need to be absent. This is beneficial for both the students and the TOC (not to mention the teacher). For the students, it provides continuity, which is especially important in the primary grades. For the TOC, it provides a less stressful day in that the routines of the school and classroom are known. Knowing the names of the children is also very beneficial for the TOC.

The isolation felt by many TOCs is significantly reduced when they are repeatedly called into the same school(s). Connections can be made with the students, parents, and staff.

A possible compromise between the present system and the changes called for by Schreck might involve all TOCs being assigned a certain school or schools.

They could then be called out in some objective manner that recognizes their professionalism, complies with the code of ethics, removes the competition but still provides continuity for the students and a sense of belonging for the TOC.

Stephanie Hall
Comox Valley

Patrick Schreck, in "Fair call-out for TOCs," calls for changes for the way TOCs are called to their assignments, and suggests that TOCs be assigned on the basis of seniority.

Schreck suggests that requesting one's TOC is an implied criticism of other TOCs. The Code of Ethics (section 5), however, does *not* say that a teacher will not make judgments about other teaching professionals. It merely states that if a teacher has issues with the way another teacher works, he or she must bring this up privately with the person in question *before* reporting to other colleagues or the admin. One classroom teacher telling another that "so-and-so did a good job" is surely acceptable, as is requesting that person. Saying that "so-and-so is useless," however, would probably qualify as a breach of ethics.

Teachers' being able to request TOCs is one of the ways we have of ensuring that our own professional judgment about what and *who* works, affects what happens in our classrooms.

Chris Stolz
Surrey

Editor's note: Letters have been edited for brevity.

\$200 million a year for top 8,000 earners

On his first day in office, Gordon Campbell made tax cuts that gave B.C.'s top 8,000 income earners, those making over \$250,000 per year, a combined benefit of \$200 million per year forever. By comparison, the "new" funds for education over the next three years are half as much as the tax cut that those 8,000 people receive in one year. The increase in the gas tax will not quite raise enough money to offset the annual tax cut for those 8,000 people. Every time you fill up, think of it as making a small donation to help those poor folks who receive \$200 million a year in benefits from the Campbell government.

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[StrategicThoughts.com](#)

Judicial Council decision

A hearing panel and a subsequent appeal panel of the Judicial Council have ruled that BCTF member Edmund Nielsen, of the Nelson District Teachers' Association, was guilty of a breach of the Code of Ethics as it relates to Procedure 44.04, which deals with the duty to comply with BCTF job-action strategy.

The hearing panel of the Judicial Council concluded that Edmund Nielsen was guilty of a breach by continuing, even after discussions with the local president, to participate in extra-curricular activities once legal job action (Phase 2) had commenced. Neilsen failed to acknowledge (1) the authority of the BCTF to call for a halt to member participation in extra-curricular activities, and (2) his responsibility as a member of the Federation to participate in such job action.

The concern that guided the hearing panel in finding cause against Neilsen was the fact that he knowingly, and with

clear intent, continued to participate in extra-curricular activities after job action had commenced.

Decisions of the hearing panel and appeal panel of the Judicial Council have resulted in the following penalties:

1. That a letter of reprimand be issued to Edmund Nielsen for repeated violations of the BCTF Job Action Plan.
2. That the right of Edmund Nielsen to hold office in the BCTF and in any subsidiary bodies including local associations be suspended for a period of one year commencing 31 days after the issuance of this report for repeated violations of the BCTF Job Action Plan.
3. That these findings be published in an appropriate issue of *Teacher* newsmagazine.
4. Edmund Nielsen is ordered to pay a levy in the amount of one day's gross pay.

This report is published pursuant to BCTF Procedure 31.C.08.

– Judicial Council



PETER OWENS PHOTO

Neil Worboys, BCTF president, presenting Linda Shuto with the G.A. Fergusson Memorial Award. The award is presented to a teacher who has earned the respect of colleagues and has made major contributions to public education. Shuto who began teaching in Burnaby in 1969, has earned the respect of parents, students, colleagues, employers, and her peers in activism in the BCTF, and in the broad educational community.

Reprinted from *The B.C. Catholic*

Education minister praises Catholic schools

B.C. Education Minister Christy Clark made history when she attended the 25th Annual Catholic Educators' Conference organized by the Catholic Independent Schools of the Vancouver Archdiocese.

Clark was the first education minister to visit the conference since its inception in 1978, the year after independent schools first received funding from the provincial government.

Clark addressed the approximately 1,200 Catholic school teachers with words of encouragement and thanks after the morning Mass at St. John Brebeuf Regional Secondary School in Abbotsford, the site of the conference. In her introduction, conference chairwoman [sic] Suzanne Dinwoodie recognized the education minister for her support of independent schools, which received an increase of \$4.7 million last year under Clark, while an increase of \$2.2 million is anticipated for the current year.

This was not the first time Clark has visited a Catholic school. In fall 2002 she visited

St. Francis Xavier Elementary School in Vancouver.

The minister announced that the next Catholic School that she would be visiting would be Archbishop Carney Regional Secondary in her home neighbourhood of Port Moody. "The quality of education that is provided at that school and the rest of the Catholic schools in British Columbia is absolutely without comparison. It is absolutely marvellous," she said.

"You should be very, very proud of what you do and the commitment that you bring to your work and the passion that you bring to instilling knowledge and faith in the children that you teach," the minister continued as she praised Catholic educators. As a member of the Anglican church, Clark said she was "among her own," describing her belief in faith and the importance of politicians having faith.

In evidence of her support for independent schools, the minister stated, "I want you to know that I consider Catholic schools and independent schools as full partners in our education system." In support of Catholic school governance she added,

"We (in the public system) have created Parent School Planning Councils in every public school and they are very much modelled on the Parish Councils (Education Committees) that you have used in the Catholic system for so very long.

"We've given public schools more financial autonomy, recognizing that it's worked for you," she said, referring to the local autonomy of Catholic schools.

In closing, Clark noted the spiritual theme of the conference. "You have chosen as your theme, 'Kindle the Fires of Hope and Joy,' a tremendously powerful set of words to guide you in your deliberations. As a new mother I look into my son's eyes and I feel hope and I feel so much joy, and I want to know that when I send my son to school his educators will feel the same way about him, and that's the gift that you as teachers bring to education: it's making sure that no child feels ordinary. That's a tremendous gift to every parent of the children you teach."

Source: *The B.C. Catholic*, March 10, 2003. Reprinted with permission.

LOOKING BACK

70 years ago

Whereas, in these troublous times we, as educationists, are deeply concerned by the many threatenings of wars that menace the future of the youth with whom we associate; and

Whereas, armament firms have been active in fomenting war scares, and in persuading their own countries to adopt warlike policies, and to increase their armaments;

Be it resolved that the British Columbia Teachers' Federation petition the Government of Canada to press, at the World Disarmament Conference, now in session, for the abolition of the private manufacture of arms and munitions.

The B.C. Teacher, April/May 1933

50 years ago

To go on to University is a mark of wealth, not of intelligence; indeed, it is the tragedy of education in democratic Canada

that our cleverest high school pupils can rarely afford to go on to University. Out of every 100 Canadian children starting in our elementary schools, only 34 remain throughout high school, only three of these enter University, and only one graduates. Who would say that that one is the cleverest of the entire hundred?

The B.C. Teacher, April 1953

30 years ago

Music can be used or abused for many purposes. It has been used many times in the past to recruit an army, to stir up religious emotions, to lend dignity to ceremonials or even to start a football game. It was said that Orpheus with his lyre could make trees bow down. I have seen many people in India charm snakes with music.

If music has so many faces, so many functions, so many values and is so much the part of the life of all cultures, why is it not much more part of education in school? Why are there more private

teachers of music than of any other subject?

The B.C. Teacher, April 1973

10 years ago

Mike Hayes, of Saanich, criticized the government for passing up two opportunities to restore taxation authority to local school boards. Hayes expressed outrage that he paid only \$172 last year in school taxes on his Victoria house, adding that if he were a senior citizen he would have paid no school taxes. Alleging that the NDP had made "eunuchs of local school boards," Hayes called for the return of taxation powers to trustees. (Education Minister) Hagen responded that taxation policy falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance and assured delegates that policy is under "active consideration" by her government.

Teacher, April 1993

Chris Bocking, Keating Elementary School, Saanich

Canadian teachers applaud recent ILO decision chastising B.C. government

In view of the decision rendered by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) has urged the British Columbia government to immediately return to the bargaining table with its teachers and to withdraw its regressive legislation. The ILO, a United Nations agency charged with monitoring and upholding international labour standards, sharply chastised the B.C. government for its treatment of public sector workers, including teachers.

Appalled by the dismissive remarks made by B.C. Premier Gordon Campbell in reaction to the ruling, CTF National President Doug Willard said, "Unless the B.C. government repeals the law declaring K-12 education an essential service and amends five other statutes to ensure working conditions are negotiated rather than

imposed, the province's reputation will be further tarnished in the eyes of the international community.

"On behalf of 240,000 teachers in Canada, CTF reiterates its call on the B.C. government to immediately rescind its draconian and archaic approach to labour relations."

"This is indicative of a government intent on being irresponsible and opposed to respecting workers' basic democratic rights."

"By dismissing the ILO conclusion, Premier Campbell has shown total contempt not

only to teachers but to workers from all walks of life, as well as the international community.

"The people of British Columbia did not elect a government that would embarrass them on the international front by failing to abide by the standards signed by Canada under the umbrella of the United Nations. We find his attitude and demeanor toward this issue preposterous and irresponsible.

"On behalf of 240,000 teachers in Canada, CTF reiterates its call on the B.C. government to immediately rescind its draconian and archaic approach to labour relations."

CTF is the federation of teacher organizations from across Canada, including the British Columbia Teachers' Federation.

Source: CTF News Service: Ottawa

Professional autonomy in the life of a teacher

by Anita Chapman

Most collective agreements contain professional-autonomy clauses. They say something like: "Teachers shall, within the bounds of prescribed curriculum, and consistent with effective educational practice, have individual professional autonomy in determining the methods of instruction, and the planning and presentation of course materials in the classes of pupils to which they are assigned." (Grand Forks)

Teachers had professional autonomy long before it was in collective agreements. Teachers have traditionally exercised professional autonomy, and there has been a long-standing societal understanding and expectation that teachers would exercise some degree of professional autonomy. There is something called the Socratic method because Socrates used an instructional approach different from other teachers of his era. More recently, teachers have exercised professional autonomy to develop and implement whole language, co-operative learning, and portfolio assessment. In fact, all the innovations in educational practice grow out of teachers' professional autonomy.

Sometimes, perhaps because of this long history, we take our professional autonomy for granted. This is unfortunate because professional autonomy is fundamental to both the quality of our working lives as teachers and our ability to be effective teachers.

The things we find most rewarding about teaching are things that you make professional choices about, choices that help a student learn, choices that make a difficult concept attainable, choices that make course work interesting and engaging for students.

Our professional autonomy makes it difficult for employers to impose things on us.

The right we have as teachers to make professional choices enables us to meet the diverse and changing needs of our students.

The world is changing rapidly. We could make a long list of changes—changes in demographics, changes in the global marketplace, changes in technology—and we despair of being able to predict the world our students will live in. We are on the brink of nanotechnology. There is a word for what is happening to human thought these days: *complexification*.

There is something exciting about all this complexification, but there is also something scary. And when people are scared, they want to simplify things—teach the basics, the three Rs, the core competencies, have provincial exams, national standards. They want to go back to simpler times, to a version of the 1950s that never existed. We have a word for what we see

when people are afraid of change, appropriately it's a simpler word than *complexification*, its *backlash*. We are living through a lot of change, so we should expect to see backlashes. Expect calls for simplicity, demands for rules; expect to hear some confused reasoning. My favourite in this regard is the reasoning of the business community, who are calling on schools to meet the needs of the economy by training workers at the same time that major corporations are getting rid of thousands and thousands of workers, most of whom did quite well in school—who are calling for more high-tech training at the same time they are creating more low-skilled, part-time, and poorly paid positions.

Teachers make hundreds, if not thousands, of decisions about such things every day they teach.

Our professional autonomy represents diversity and complexity, so we should expect some of the backlash to be aimed at it. Expect calls from parents, school-district management, the business community, maybe even some of our colleagues for us all to teach the same way. And expect to hear anger, because scared often looks like angry. Angry parents are sometimes just scared parents. But all the spelling tests and school uniforms will not stop change, will not guarantee that kids will be okay in a world of social upheaval, high unemployment, and AIDS.

Our professional autonomy makes it difficult for employers to impose things on us. At the bargaining table, the employer reps invariably referred to our professional autonomy as "unfettered." Well, they are wrong; our professional autonomy is "fettered"—there are constraints on professional autonomy. The clause language identifies two:

1. legislation, i.e., the School Act, Reg., and Minister's Orders, that prescribe curriculum, define reporting formats, and so on, and
2. effective educational practice.

Legislation takes precedence over collective agreements. We must teach to the prescribed learning outcomes in the curriculum, we must assess and evaluate student performance in relation to those, we must do three formal reports using written comments and/or letter grades and/or percentages, depending on the grade level we teach, and so on. But there is no legislation about how to teach to those outcomes or what assessment methodologies to use or what learning resources use. Teachers make hundreds, if not thousands, of decisions about such things every day they teach. You teach Pascal's triangle because it is in the prescribed curriculum, but you tell your students that it was discovered by the Chinese 300

Research documents the effects of cuts

by Charlie Naylor

BCTF Research is collecting data on the changes to special education and ESL services in Nanaimo and Coquitlam. Studying the changes occurring this year in the two districts is providing insight on the effect of the cuts on students and teachers. The initial key findings of the special education, learning assistance, ESL project include:

- Only the most severe student needs are being addressed as schools cannot meet more moderate/less severe cases with the available staffing and resources.
- There are fewer classroom teachers than the declining enrolment warrants, and with class-size increases, the classroom teacher's capacity to include all students is severely affected.
- Differences between schools in higher and lower socio-economic areas appear to be considerable. Many schools in lower socio-economic areas have higher concentrations of students with special needs, and they are having a much tougher time this year in meeting those needs.
- Substantially fewer students are being designated in high-incidence categories (8% fewer across the province), with corresponding reductions in services in many instances.
- Fewer students are able to access specialist support teachers for special education, learning assistance, and ESL because there are fewer teachers in those positions, and for many, time allocation in the specialist support positions has been reduced.
- Specialist support teachers' capacity to meet students' needs is significantly reduced because their caseloads have risen to alarming levels, and they are less able to support the work of classroom teachers.
- Because of cuts to specialist support staffing, many specialists are dealing with areas such as ESL/learning assistance and special education in one job package but have no training or experience in some areas of

specialization. This circumstance is reducing the quality of services to students.

- ESL and special education staffing cuts appear disproportionately greater than other cuts.
- Too many students with special needs are being placed in some secondary elective classes. That placement is reducing the capacity of teachers to meet their needs and forcing changes in pedagogical styles, which teachers consider inappropriate for the students in their classes.
- Audits have become counter-productive, increasing paperwork and reducing services to students. The focus on audit and accountability requirements is diverting resources away from delivering services to students.
- Both classroom and specialist support teachers are reporting high levels of stress because of the strain of meeting students' needs with fewer resources. Some specialist teachers are opting out of the role because the demands are too great. When those with considerable experience of specialist support work no longer perform such work, and when relatively inexperienced staff take over those positions, students are negatively affected.
- Decentralized decision-making is reducing the effectiveness of inclusion or ESL as sites are developing very different approaches with less consistency and reduced district support. In some cases, AOs may be making decisions that counter inclusionary policies and that reduce services to ESL students and/or to students with special needs.
- Collaborative planning and programming being reduced as

classroom teachers are increasingly reluctant to join a process that offers no support beyond the planning stage. A wide body of research suggests that collaborative planning and programming optimize educational experiences for both ESL students and for students with learning differences and special needs. Removing such collaboration therefore reduces the likelihood of optimum programs, and negatively affects both ESL students and students with special learning needs.

- Teachers are reporting an ethical dilemma; they believe that what is written in IEPs is, in many cases, not being implemented. The ethical dilemma is what to tell parents, when teachers also feel under pressure from school or district administrators to say that the IEP is being implemented as written.

What happens now?

Motions have been prepared for the BCTF Executive that stress the basic human rights of all students to an inclusive education system. Other motions stress that the current inclusionary system is in crisis and urgently requires increased and improved systemic support. The BCTF is also proposing to develop a range of practical supports and strategies for teachers as part of its focus on supporting the professional work of teachers.

The BCTF wants to hear from you if some of these findings are similar to your experience. We also want to hear from you about the directions we hope to take in support of both teachers and an inclusionary education system. Use any of the following to tell us if similar or different things are happening in your work and in your school.

Access the project's web conference at discuss.bctf.ca/board/education, cnaylor@bctf.ca, or mail your comments to Charlie Naylor, BCTF Research, 100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2

Charlie Naylor is a researcher in the BCTF's Research and Technology Division.



years before Pascal was born because you are sensitive to the cultural mix in your class or because you feel you should correct the Eurocentrism in the text or both. That’s professional autonomy.

Despite some of the pressures from parents, the business community, etc., the ministry has so far avoided mandating methodology. You will notice that columns 2 and 3 in the IRPs say “suggested instructional strategies” and “suggested assessment strategies,” reference sets are not mandated resources, etc. Learning resources are no longer prescribed; they are only recommended. School boards

The range of what is considered effective educational practice is very broad.

regularly mandate things that the ministry has only recommended, suggested, mentioned in passing, or is thinking about. Legislation is reasonably clear. Less so, the other constraint: effective educational practice. I envision an arbitration where the lawyers for both sides arrive with dozens of *Phi Delta Kappan* journals under their arms. The range of what is considered effective educational practice is very broad. This is good, as it gives individual teachers the room to exercise their unique personal styles and to meet the diverse needs of their students. But very broad doesn’t mean infinitely broad; there is, I believe, some agreement within our profession about what constitutes effective educational practice, such as:

- addressing the needs of each student
- tasks that are relevant, interesting, engaging, hands on
- positive interactions, respect, caring.

Professional autonomy isn’t ever a defence for ineffective teaching practice.

If a student, parent, colleague, or principal asks you why you made the choice you did in your teaching, never say “Because I have professional autonomy.” Say instead, “I thought it was best for the student because...” Professional autonomy is why you had choice, not why you

There is no defence of professional autonomy more effective, more powerful, than its thoughtful use day in and day out by 43,000 teachers.

made the choice you did. Most of the difference between one teacher’s effective practice and another teacher’s effective practice is in style, not substance. There are innumerable ways to show respect and caring. Effective practice is, above all, resourceful. There is no defence of professional autonomy more effective, more powerful, than its thoughtful use day in and day out by 43,000 teachers.

Anita Chapman is an assistant director in the BCTF’s Professional and Social Issues Division.

Coquitlam trustees approve district business company

by Kathleen Thomson

Coquitlam trustees approved the formation of a privatized School District No. 43 Business Company at its February 18 school board meeting, with three trustees opposed: Debra Burton, John Keryluk, and Julie Rogers. Voting in favour were: Gail Alty, Holly Butterfield (chair), Melissa Hyndes, Brian Robinson, Gerri Wallis, and Keith Watkins.

In addition, despite requests by CTA, CUPE, Council of Canadians, and Riverside Secondary School student presenters to allow for public consultation before a decision of this magnitude was finalized, Trustees Alty, Hyndes, Robinson, Wallis, and Watkins voted against consultation, thus ensuring it would not happen.

Here are some facts that teachers should be aware of:

- *Privatized endeavours approved.* The creation of the Business Company allows the board to proceed with its plans to establish a totally privatized International Education College at Winslow Centre (Continuing Ed will be moved to the closed Montgomery Elementary School). It also permits the board to proceed with plans to

privatize audiology and tutoring services, expand learning opportunities for a fee, and, in fact, engage in any number of business initiatives that subsidiary companies associated with the Board Business Company approve.

- *No public accountability:* Neither the legislation allowing such companies nor the policy governing the Coquitlam Business Company mandates any public accountability whatsoever. In fact, both the secretary-treasurer and the superintendent indicated to me that information on, for example, the company’s “business plans” or staffing for the proposed college would not necessarily be provided to partner groups. Superintendent Doerksen said that, as superintendent, she would not be permitted under company rules to provide the CTA president with any information on college staffing and that she could talk about the issue only in her role as a “director of School District No. 43 Business Company”!

This was perhaps the most disturbing announcement made during the trustees’ meeting. It would appear that, for the first time in the history of this district, the superintendent is not obliged to inform the CTA on something as basic as staffing.

- *Control of business decisions given over to subsidiary company directors.*

When pressed, the secretary-treasurer explained that real control of business decisions will not rest with the district business company; in truth, control will be in the hands of subsidiary companies with whom the business company will sign contracts. From this information, it can be concluded that the subsidiary companies are not accountable in any way to partner groups or the public interest at large. Simply put, this means that our school district’s business decisions will literally become the property of strangers who will not necessarily care about the ideals of public education.

- *Government relieved of responsibility to fund public education.* By approving the business company and privatized revenue generation, trustees have given government the message that it is no longer government’s responsibility to fund public education because private business ventures will take care of funding.

It is very sad—indeed, inexplicable—that trustees would not approve further consultation with partner groups. It is also unfortunate that the majority of trustees

were so woefully uninformed about the very real and well-documented dangers inherent in privatizing a public education system. Indeed, the secretary-treasurer responded to fears around the implications for future control and ownership of public education that NAFTA and free trade agreements threaten, with a supposedly reassuring and entirely superficial commentary of only one or two minutes. Presenters, including the CTA, felt overall that their appeals to trustees to delay a decision until such time as detailed information and genuine consultation could occur were regarded as merely a nuisance in the heedless march toward privatizing what has always been treasured as a public good.

Stay tuned for more information on the implications of School District No. 43 Business Company. Where will it get its assets? What about company liabilities? Who will ensure that business ventures are ethical?

Kathleen Thomson is president of the Coquitlam Teachers’ Association and member-at-large of the BCTF Executive Committee.

Source: *Coquitlam Teachers’ Association Newsletter*, #23, February 20, 2003.

Principles can protect students

by Jim McMurtry

The British Columbia School Act directs teachers to act in the best interests of students, so you can imagine my surprise when a parent from our school’s PAC stood up at a staff meeting and made a pitch for the students to sell entertainment booklets and chocolates, adding that teachers would be given a free booklet if we agreed to motivate our charges. In the Third World, this is known as graft, though the word used here was *incentive*.

There are many reasons why I shuddered at the thought of such a sale: the kids would be coerced or cajoled into it, it would take class time away from instruction, it would take some responsibility for funding schools away from the provincial government, and it would ask the many poor kids in my Surrey high school (designated “inner city”) to peddle booklets and chocolates to hard-pressed relatives and neighbours. Yet the free booklet bothered me most, for it is patently wrong for any teacher to draw pecuniary benefit from the work we assign students.

The expressed sentiment of my colleagues at the staff meeting was in stark contrast to my own. They deemed a free entertainment booklet worth close to \$50 to be persuasion enough to begin the sale. I began to wonder if we would be given our booklets in brown paper bags from the back of an unmarked van.

Found among the various addenda to the *School Act* are the Responsibilities of Students: “They have the responsibility to make the most of their opportunities, to respect the rights of others, and to co-operate with fellow students in the achievement of their goals.” (OIC 1280/89)

There is no reference to finding customers on behalf of private companies or one’s own school.

With respect to teachers, there is no direction in the Act to lead school sales of any kind. Yet the parent who spoke at the staff meeting—empowered by the Liberal government’s position that parents, as customers, are king—insisted that all teachers would have to participate to ensure the sale’s success. I felt like he was Brother Leon in Robert Cormier’s novel, *The Chocolate War*, readying himself to bring out the thugs to deal with the recalcitrant few.

One of the deleterious effects of partnerships between schools and private corporations is that educational principles are lost in the excitement. The English writer Somerset Maugham once quipped that “you can’t learn too soon that the most useful thing about a principle is that it can always be sacrificed to expediency.”

A case in point was a recent battle at nearby Sullivan Heights Secondary School in Surrey where parents were condemning a school board deal with Rogers AT&T to install a cellphone antenna over the part of the school called the Bell Theatre. (Soon even the washrooms will have corporate names.) The school was destined to earn \$180,000 over 15 years by having the cell antenna, though it was not certain whether the money would be deducted from revenue provided by the Surrey School District. At first, as little as 10% was to go to the school,



but the amount soon grew to 90% to quell dissident parental voices. Some students were set to benefit handsomely from an extra \$10,800 a year, whether it be the purchase of new computers or music equipment or the provision of sleeker team outfits. Of course, many students might not have benefitted at all, depending on how the money was dispersed.

What worried parents and, to an increasing extent, the students themselves, was the risk to the latter’s health. The board tried to quell any worries by inviting a local scientist to speak to concerned parents, but even their hand-picked expert (perhaps on loan from the tobacco lobby) was unprepared to state categorically that there would be no risk to the students from exposure to the newly fabricated cell tower and its magnetic field.

As my last house was close to power lines, I know intimately the fear of them people have. Houses that are beside power lines are much harder to sell, and their selling prices are invariably lower.

Like many environmental contaminants, power lines do not leave fingerprints on cancer victims or others with hard-to-explain illnesses. Yet medical suspicions have grown to the point where power lines are broadly judged to be undesir-

able. There are even medical warning signs now about the personal use of a cell phone.

Some of the upset parents at Sullivan Heights made reference to the case of the drug Thalidomide, which caused horrific birth defects in children whose mothers started taking the drug in 1957 to combat morning sickness. As the parents argued, the drug was thought to be safe when introduced.

If some of the students and staff at Sullivan were to have gotten sick over time, no one would have thought the \$10,800 was worth it, and the amount would have paled in comparison to the board’s court costs. At its regular meeting, on March 13, the Surrey School District decided to break its contract with Rogers AT&T, lauding the corporation for penalizing the board a mere \$15,000 for expenses to date. I sense that Rogers was more concerned with its corporate image than the health of Sullivan students.

The mother who led the charge against the cell antenna, Liz Walker, was elated by the decision. Most pleasing to her was that the school board listened to parents and teachers in the end. But it was a hard fight that began almost a year ago.

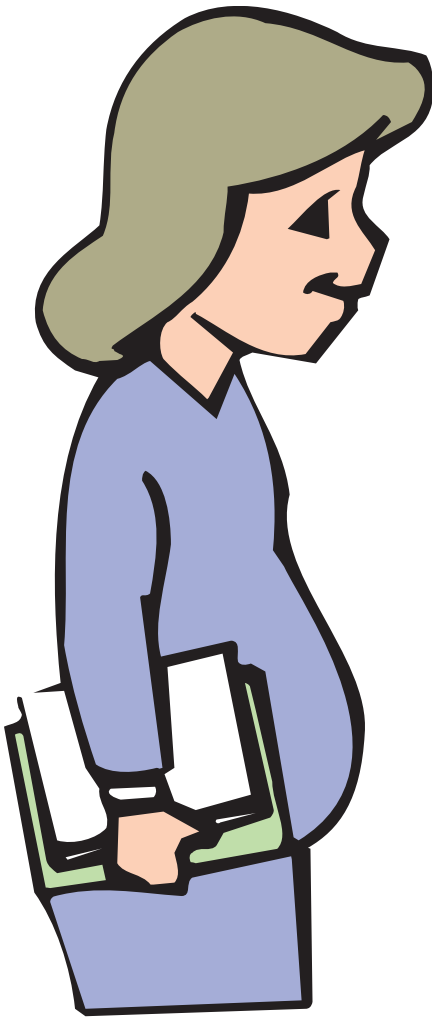
What both the booklet and chocolate sale at my school and the Sullivan Heights dispute signal is a lack of regard for educational principle. At my school, many principles may be “sacrificed to expediency.” In the Sullivan dispute, the educational principle most basic to schools, superseding learning itself, was for a time violated, that being the safety of school children. I worry about what will come next.

Jim McMurtry teaches at Princess Margaret Secondary School, Surrey.

Health & Safety

Are you pregnant? Do you have sickle-cell disease, chronic anemia, or immune system disorders? Are you just generally hungry for new information? Read this!

by Maureen L. MacDonald



Fifth Disease season is here

Fifth is a contagious childhood disease that causes a red rash on the face and body and is sometimes called “slapped-cheek syndrome.”

The problem arises

Early this February, the phone calls started coming to the health and safety department from local presidents and collective-agreement officers. Laurie Lenardon started the ball rolling. “There are three pregnant teachers in Chilliwack who have cases of Fifth Disease in their classes. Blood tests reveal that they are not immune. They are worried about their babies. If a pregnant woman gets the disease, the fetus is at risk for fetal anemia and death. Their doctors say that they should not risk exposure by going to those schools where the disease is known. They have refused unsafe work under WCB Reg. 3.12, but the school board and the WCB don’t recognize the situation as an “undue hazard.” The school board consulted with BCPSEA (B.C. Public Schools Employers’ Association), and it won’t reassign the teachers to safe sites because it doesn’t want to set a provincial precedent. The teachers are staying away from school anyway. What’s next?”

A catch-me-up conversation with the current VESTA president, Patricia Gudlaugson, was revealing. “In Vancouver, it isn’t an issue. I know pregnant teachers who were quietly and temporarily reassigned to schools that had no known cases of Fifth.” So much for Chilliwack’s setting a provincial precedent!

A quick search for “Fifth Disease and pregnancy” on the Internet disclosed more than enough information for me to understand why those pregnant teachers who didn’t have antibodies for Fifth were not willing to take the risk at their usual

assignments. Grievances were launched. WCB claims were filed.

Shortly thereafter, Paul Hutcheson was looking for BCTF advice to give a pregnant teacher in Victoria. And Chris Johns reported two worried pregnant teachers in Cranbrook. The count rose to seven pregnant teachers in Chilliwack with Fifth in their classes.

The pregnant teachers who had no immunity were treated differently by their employers. Two were reassigned. One was advised to take early maternity leave. One was told to stay off work and use her sick leave. One ran out of sick leave and applied for short-term coverage from the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan. One said she had no sick leave, and the board told her to stay home with pay. The teachers were not sick; they were trying to avoid getting sick.

The meeting

BCTF health and safety officer George Taylor and I met with three WCB officials on March 25th to discuss Fifth. Laurie Lenardon attended too, as the president with the most members of concern. The discussion was very enlightening. The WCB had finished an investigation February 17. The WCB now recognizes Fifth Disease as a known hazard for pregnant teachers whose blood tests reveal that they don’t have the antibodies to protect them. For pregnant, non-antibody teachers, Fifth Disease falls under the definition of “biohazardous material” in WCB Regulation 6.33. Therefore, said the WCB reps, the employer must develop and implement an Exposure Control Plan pursuant to Reg. 6.34.

The Exposure Control Plan is the responsibility of the employer. It is to separate the worker from the risk. It should be done in consultation with the

Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee. The WCB had talked to a rep of BCPSEA and told him of the risk to fetuses and that a plan needed to be made. BCPSEA is in regular contact with school boards.

The tricky part

Here it gets a bit tricky. The only members to whom the ruling regarding Fifth applies are the pregnant non-antibody teachers. (Teachers who are not pregnant, and pregnant teachers with antibodies for Fifth, are not involved in this ruling.) If the teacher is actually exposed to Fifth, WCB Reg. 3.12-“Refusal of unsafe work”—is in play. If the teacher has not yet been exposed but the employer knows of the potential risk, *Workers Compensation Act* Section 115—“General duties of employers”—applies. At least one teacher we know of was phoned at home by a school board official and told to stay away because a case of Fifth had been identified at her school. That’s an exposure control plan in operation. We don’t know who is paying for the absence, but sick leave should not be used for this purpose. The teacher is not sick and is available for safe work.

WCB officials promised to resend a memo to its regional officers stating that pregnant teachers without Fifth antibodies are at risk, clarifying that there is an undue hazard to these certain people, and reminding the officers that employers need an exposure control plan. The BCTF would be sent a copy of that memo, and perhaps a sample exposure-control plan. The documents have not yet arrived at our office.

The saga continues

If in doubt, contact your doctor and your local president.

Advice about Fifth Disease

1. Wash your hands often.

Instruct students to do the same. 2. Don’t share utensils and drinking containers. 3. If you are pregnant, ask your doctor for a blood test to determine if you are already immune. 4. If you are pregnant and don’t have the antibodies, alert your local president that you are at risk. 5. Although this article is about pregnancy and Fifth, you should also consult your doctor if you have a chronic red blood cell disorder or a compromised immune system.

Maureen L. MacDonald is a BCTF health and safety officer.

What is Fifth Disease?

- Fifth Disease is a viral infection that affects red blood cells.
- Its official name is *erythema infectiosum*.
- It is caused by human parvovirus B19.
- It usually occurs in children under age 10, but anyone can catch it.
- Maternal Parvovirus B19 infection can lead to serious complications for the fetus in up to 10% of pregnancies. About 50% of women are non-immune.

References

Ask for help at your library or try “Fifth Disease and pregnancy” in your favourite search engine.

Coming in a future issue

Lots of questions and not enough answers about school noise and voice dysfunction. If you have complaints, please tell your school Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee with a view to getting mitigation of noise and/or help such as a voice amplification system for yourself. Local presidents can call me for advice or to tell me success stories.

To be added to the occupational health & safety e-mail list, contact pwilson@bctf.ca or uburgess@bctf.ca.

Social responsibility in every classroom

by Carol Battaglio

In the March 2003 issue of *Teacher*, it is unfortunate that the article “BCTF and Safe Teen: An Antiviolence Alliance” appears on the back of the page with articles on “Politics in the classroom” (Foxx) and “Whose standards? Whose Values?” (Philpott). Unfortunate because we will all need to be on the same page before we can be successful with antibullying initiatives, however diligently we apply them.

Philpott hits the key issues with her concerns about the impossibility of trying to measure social responsibility in terms of skills, her concerns about whose values are to be accepted, and her concerns about our motivation for teaching the evaluation of social skills. Do teachers really know and practise social responsibility, or are we the authority determining what skills and values and behaviours are to predominate? Foxx is teaching social responsibility in action in her classroom. The students are learning about power dynamics and the processes of change. When does teaching social standards become indoctrination? Where do mutual respect and moral

development fit? Does teaching individuals social skills reach the core values and practices that allow, feed, and encourage bullying in our schools?

Workshops are great positive events with many positive outcomes, but they may not produce a real shift in awareness. Teaching antiviolence skills is not likely to address the systemic features of bullying. It may be like putting a Band-Aid on a cancerous sore. Research indicates that generally the most

It seems that “bully” is a role, not a person.

socially skilled students readily learn the new skills, but those with poor social skills—the ones we want to reach—don’t improve much. Something other than “skill levels” seems to prevent putting them into practice in real-life situations. Also, there is often an “us vs. them” confrontational implication in direct teaching of antiviolence social skills, an implication that “we the good” can win the battle against the “bad” bullies if we learn the right strategies. In real life, the bullying picture is much fuzzier and more complex.

The bully of today, it turns out, may be bullied tomorrow if he loses his/her place in the social hierarchy. On the other hand, the victim of today may get admitted into the “in-group” and the bullying stops, but starts on some other selected victim. In numerous interviews of adults and students, the overwhelming majority say they have been bullied at some time, and most of them admit they have also bullied others. The U.S. Secret Service did an extensive analysis of major bullying events and found, as in the case of the Columbine massacre, the bullies were long-time victims of bullying and harassment who finally decided to retaliate. Moreover, bullies tend to have good social skills, although victims tend not to. It seems that “bully” is a role, not a person. Bullying as a behaviour may be more a symptom of the hidden power structures of a classroom/school/community than evidence of lack of social skills. Teaching antiviolence strategies in a workshop is a good start, but if we truly want to eliminate bullying from our classroom, we need to change the nature of the interactions in the social context of the school, our way of relating to one another, not just focus on social skills of individuals.

The cartoon quip, “I have seen the enemy and he is us” expresses with only a touch of irony our embeddedness within our environment. We experience ourselves as separate from the world and different from others, partly because our perception is influenced by our language and past experiences. But the separation is an illusion. We identify self and other as distinct, as we identify bullies as separate from victims. But dualities are generally a distortion of reality. We are, in an essential sense, all connected. Bullies would not exist without victims, without a social context that supports both. The habit of self/other thinking hinders accurate perception and the pure motivation necessary

Bullies would not exist without victims, without a social context that supports both.

for genuinely socially responsible judgment and action. Effective training in social responsibility requires an interruption of our ingrained habit of interpreting the bullying experience dualistically. To interrupt ingrained habits requires an

integration of socially responsible practices within the structures of the classroom, as Philpott and Foxx have described. Students who attend a class where social responsibility is practised and democratic power processes demonstrated are probably less likely to bully or to allow themselves to be bullied—with or without direct instruction in specific anti-bullying strategies.

A culture of peace and respect in our schools cannot be constructed with a discrete program that fits into the currently politically correct antibullying mandate. Rather, such an ideal needs to become the lens through which all school and classroom management policies are viewed. I hope many students from the classrooms of Philpott and Foxx grow up to be teachers and politicians. In the meantime, maybe the BCTF can recruit these creative teachers—and some of the many others who are developing peaceful cultures in their classrooms—to teach teachers how to integrate principles of social responsibility within the everyday classroom.

Carol Battaglio is an elementary counsellor for Surrey School District, crobat@shaw.ca.

Aboriginal career day

by Jennifer Auld

The idea for an aboriginal career day in Zeballos, began when I attended a workshop hosted by the First Nations PSA in Harrison Hot Springs. Langley teacher Carel McDonald, presented a workshop on teaching Aboriginal issues using the media. She mentioned the career fair she had organized at her school. As social justice chair of my district, I was searching for a focus that would make a difference. The idea of honouring the talents and education of Canada's Aboriginal people sounded fabulous for our remote, mostly First Nations community, but funding was the obstacle.

Victoria Wells, elected member of council of the Ehattesaht First Nations (local to Zeballos) helped to overcome that obstacle when she mentioned a grant that is available. Not knowing how to start, I picked up the phone and called Carel McDonald in Langley and asked for her list of contacts. She did not give me a list of names and numbers; instead she said, "how about I drive to Zeballos and bring them all to you." After we obtained other funding from corporate grants, the school district, and local First Nations, the planning got into full swing.

McDonald corralled another Langley teacher, of Cree descent, Caroline Paulicelli, her daughter, BCIT student Tera MacDonald, Cree artist Jerry Whitehead, Boston Barr cultural presenter David Florence, and management consultant Matt Vickers. Victoria Wells invited many local First Nations presenters, and I cornered the rest. The career week was presented to students, most of whom are Nuu-Chah-Nulth, from March 10 to 12.

The week began with classroom workshops where teachers signed up for presenters for specific times and students were awed by the variety of backgrounds, talents, abilities, and activities our guests presented. A mural was created by Jerry Whitehead with his trademark Pow Wow dancers and contributions by students. Guests and organizers were honoured and fed at a potluck dinner with many traditional foods brought by local residents.

Twenty-five presenters came for the final day of celebration and learning. It began with Ehattesaht Hereditary Chief Kelly John opening, keynote by Matt Vickers, and sessions by local and out-of-town guests for the 100 students from Kindergarten to Grade 12. Adult guests and parents joined us, many of whom had never been in the school. The day ended with Vernon Price, storyteller from Quadra Island, dressing up students and teachers in regalia.

The nuts and bolts of organizing an Aboriginal Career Day come down to finding grants, submitting proposals, finding presenters, and organizing the schedule. The right tools are available from B.C. teachers. Carel MacDonald provided me with numerous samples from proposals to daily plans, schedules, and leave forms. Simply filling in the blanks made the task easy. Supplementary to those samples are now a few of my own. I encourage you, especially if you have First Nations students, to help dismantle stereotyping of aboriginal people by enriching students' contacts with Aboriginal people. An Aboriginal Career Day or week is just such a forum.

Jennifer Auld teaches at Zeballos Elementary Secondary School, Zeballos.



by Dan Blake

At the 2003 BCTF AGM the following recommendations were passed:

Recommendation 45 (as amended)

That a consultation process with members, locals, PSAs, and committees on the role and delivery of social justice in the BCTF be undertaken.

Recommendation 46

That the consultation with members regarding the role of social justice in the BCTF be conducted by the Social Justice Advisory Committee, such consultation to include a variety of methods of receiving input from members, with a report to the Executive Committee by December 2003.

The BCTF has a long and proud tradition of being in the vanguard of social movements in British Columbia. It's not really all that long ago that women teachers who became pregnant had to leave their teaching jobs. The provision of maternity leave was not granted

by forward-looking employers, but was the result of a hard-fought struggle by the BCTF and other unions.

In the early 1970s, the BCTF Status of Women Program came into being and was followed a couple of years later by the Program Against Racism (PAR). Both programs had a provincial advisory committee, a network of contacts, workshops, and a staff person to provide logistical support. A provincial Children's Rights Committee followed. In the mid-1990s, teachers brought the issues of homophobia and heterosexism to the attention of delegates at successive AGMs. For strategic reasons, teachers challenging homophobia and heterosexism in the public education system chose to form an organization outside the BCTF. The organization is Gay and Lesbian Educators of B.C., better known by the acronym, GALE-BC.

At the 1998 AGM, a motion was brought forward to take the existing *discrete* programs and bring them all together under one program *umbrella*, called the Social Justice Program. The hotly debated motion was passed by a narrow margin. The BCTF made a strong commitment to make the new structure for social justice work.

The new social justice structure has been in place five years. It's time to take stock. As you see from the recommendations passed at the 2003 AGM, the BCTF is committed to the

broadest possible discussion among the members about the direction of social justice work in the Federation. As well as clarifying our goals about directions for social justice, the consultation process will, we hope, renew and invigorate our commitment to social justice.

The Social Justice Advisory Committee is recommending to the Executive Committee at its April 10-12 meeting a wide range of consultation opportunities for members.

I hope you will take part in the discussions. The committee welcomes both formal and informal comments.

Send your comments to any of the committee members:

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cbrice@bctf.ca
giese@bctf.ca
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Dan Blake is an assistant director in the BCTF's Professional and Social Issues Division.



Il est temps de s'ouvrir les yeux !

En 2000, cent quatre vingt cinq gouvernements se sont engagés à garantir l'éducation pour tous les enfants d'ici 2015. Comment concilier cet engagement politique avec la pénurie du personnel enseignant largement répandue dans l'ensemble des pays industrialisés et encore plus dans les pays en développement ? Comment résoudre le problème de la parité homme-femme dans cette profession ? Comment combler les postes vacants avec un personnel qualifié ? Comment s'assurer que les écoles des quartiers déshérités aient accès à un enseignement de même qualité que celles des quartiers mieux nantis ? Voilà autant de questions à débattre maintenant afin d'éviter de se retrouver devant une situation de crise éducationnelle répandue aux quatre coins du monde.

Les raisons pour cette pénurie, on les connaît toutes mais on se doit de les répéter. D'abord, c'est la retraite par millions non seulement dans le secteur de l'éducation mais aussi dans l'ensemble de la société. L'Organisation de Coopération et de Développement Économiques (OCDE) indique que dans les vingt-cinq prochaines années, 25 millions de personnes prendront leur retraite dans les pays membres, alors que seuls 5 millions d'individus accèderont au marché du travail. Ensuite, il y a la croissance spectaculaire du taux de naissance dans des pays tels que les États-Unis et les Pays-Bas. S'ajoute à ce besoin de personnel dans les pays industrialisés, la demande accrue de pédagogues dans les pays en développement suite aux initiatives en faveur de la scolarisation des filles. Enfin, il y a les conditions de travail

exigeantes et fluctuantes, le bas niveau de salaire offert aux enseignantes et enseignants et la concurrence du secteur privé pour attirer les diplômées et diplômés à la sortie de l'université ou en poste d'enseignement.

Les gouvernements ont-ils la volonté d'éviter la pénurie ? En sont-ils capables ? Si non, les conseils scolaires, confrontés à un manque de personnel enseignant, se verront obligés d'engager des gens qui ne rencontrent pas le niveau de qualification exigé par les postes. Une autre solution en temps de crise, ce sera de débaucher des éducatrices et éducateurs étrangers. On n'a qu'à lire les pages de nos quotidiens pour en voir la preuve. Mis au pied du mur, nos gouvernements se verront dans l'obligation de trouver des moyens de persuader un personnel enseignant épuisé de retarder leur retraite. Et à quel succès peuvent-ils s'attendre lorsque les pédagogues se rappelleront la façon dont ils ont été traités lors des années de contraintes budgétaires ?

Améliorer le statut de la profession afin d'inciter plus de jeunes à considérer l'enseignement comme carrière, voilà un objectif que doit se donner tout gouvernement soucieux d'éviter de se retrouver dans une situation de pénurie. Des études aux Pays-Bas démontrent que de nombreux professionnels délaissent leur champ de travail ingrat et axé sur la productivité pour entreprendre une deuxième carrière dans laquelle ils espèrent trouver une satisfaction humaine. Pour plusieurs, cette carrière, c'est l'enseignement. Encore faudrait-il améliorer les salaires, les

conditions de travail et l'état appauvri des lieux.

Non seulement faut-il penser à attirer des gens vers la carrière enseignante, mais les responsables des dossiers de l'éducation doivent encourager les praticiennes et praticiens à y demeurer. Au Canada, on perd près de 25 % du nouveau personnel enseignant dans les cinq premières années ; aux États-Unis, selon une étude nationale diffusée en janvier 2003, le pourcentage de départ se chiffre à 46 %. Manque de soutien aux élèves en difficulté de cheminement, affectation dans des écoles ou des classes difficiles, emploi à temps partiel, tâche de remplacement, peu d'encadrement professionnel, en voilà des raisons pour les départs prématurés.

Plus de 60 millions d'enseignantes et d'enseignants se retrouvent dans des salles de classe partout dans le monde. Cette profession existe depuis le début des temps et est toujours en mouvance. L'enseignement exige de plus en plus d'investissement de temps et de soi ainsi qu'une adaptation constante à une société changeante. Les gouvernements, les syndicats, les organismes d'employeurs se doivent de la valoriser, de la rendre de nouveau attrayante et concurrentielle sur le marché de l'emploi. L'avenir de tous les citoyennes et citoyens de ce monde en dépend.

Synopsis

The shortage of teachers is an international problem that governments are reluctant to consider in their political agendas. Refusing to acknowledge the issue can have serious repercussions on the staffing of our classrooms.

— Paule Desgroseilliers



At the Aboriginal Career Day in Zeballos, Cree artist Jerry Whitehead creates a mural with student assistance, and storyteller Vernon Price entertains the whole group.

2003 ANNUAL GE

Every year, over 675 teachers from around the province are elected to attend the Annual General Meeting. Teachers meet for three days to debate issues, develop policy, and set the fee for BCTF. The level of democratic participation is much greater than that for any level of government. Teachers have over 675 representatives for 43,000 members to make decisions for their union. Compare this to having 79 MLAs in Victoria to represent 4 million people elected every three to five years.

Decisions made at this year's AGM include:

AGM recommends needs budgets

The 2003 Annual General Meeting decided that the BCTF and locals should urge school boards to:

- foster support for full funding of a strong and stable public education system through community dialogue, lobbying, and coalition work.
- build their needs budgets in active consultation with teachers, students, parents, support staff, and the community.
- submit needs budgets that reflect the real costs of education for all students.

The B.C. Liberals were elected on a promise to protect education. School boards should demonstrate to the government the real costs of protecting education. And government should provide schools with the resources to meet the needs of all students.

BCTF dues stay the same

The AGM set BCTF dues at the same level as this year.

SIP fee increases

The AGM approved an increase for the Salary Indemnity Plan. The fee will increase from 1.2% of salary to 2%. The costs of the plan have increased because of increased plan usage and decreased revenues from investments. The actuarial costs of running the plan are 2% of salary. The plan payments will be reviewed at next year's AGM.

Education minister lacks teachers' confidence

The AGM delegates voted no confidence in the Minister of Education and called for her resignation.

Teachers vote to affiliate

Almost 7,000 more teachers voted in 2003 than in 1996, and the outcome was the opposite of the 1996 result. Teachers voted to affiliate with the B.C. Federation of Labour by 58.1% to 41.9%.

The decision means we will join the 450,000 members of the B.C. Federation of Labour and help formulate its education policies. It also means we will have more direct help promoting and defending public education. Organized labour has always staunchly supported public education.

"Public education is the ultimate act of solidarity with the next generation." With those words and a gilt-framed certificate of affiliation, Jim Sinclair welcomed public school teachers as the newest members of the B.C. Federation of Labour.

Sinclair told AGM delegates he was deeply honoured to be president of the B.C. Federation of Labour when the teachers voted to join. In an eloquent keynote address, he outlined Labour's response to the "private good/public bad" mythology put forward by the provincial government. He described the B.C. Liberals' education policies as "an attack on the nature of democracy."

But Sinclair's message was one of hope. "I learned a lot travelling around the province to speak with teachers," he said. "In every community, I see a resilience, I experience a strength, and I get a sense that people are beginning to see we don't have to take it."

The 2003 Annual General Meeting decided that another membership vote will be held at the end of the three-year trial period.

Supportive videos available

Two videos to begin discussions about the funding we need for our schools and students are available to borrow from local offices. *Growing the Future: Parent Voices for Public Education* and *Before It's Too Late: A Conference on Funding Public Education in B.C.* were provided to each local at the AGM.

Vancouver parent volunteers who are concerned about the effects of underfunding on Vancouver schools produced *Growing the Future*. It has

parents speaking of their hopes and dreams for their children and their expectations for the provincial government. Those parents, many of whom voted for the government, make it clear that they expect the B.C. Liberals to live up to their promise to protect education.

Before It's Too Late is a 14-minute video with highlights from the January 2003 education funding conference sponsored by BCTF, CUPE, and B.C. Federation of Labour. It is a good discussion starter on how school boards and parents can lobby for proper funding rather than look for ways to cut services.

Charter for Public Education

The Charter for Public Education panel held hearings throughout B.C. in the fall and after the new year. It asked British Columbians what principles they expect to guide public education.

The principles espoused by the citizens of the province are inspiring. A copy of the charter is being sent to each school and PAC. Please read the charter, discuss it with your colleagues, and decide how its principles can be brought to life in your school. If we all agree on the kind of education it is important to offer our children, then the discussion can turn to what we have to do to make it happen.

The charter was endorsed by the 2003 AGM, and the meeting encouraged locals to endorse it as well.

A copy of the charter appears on the back page of this issue of *Teacher*.

— Peter Owens

I am glad I attended the AGM because...



Catharine Gilmour, Delta

I'm glad I attended, because now I've seen the work of the BCTF from the inside. In the past, I have observed and often supported our union in its directions, but I have at times questioned decisions made on my behalf.

I've taught for 20 years and this is my first experience at an AGM. I would recommend it to all teachers so that they can see the decision-making process in action.

It was encouraging to see the mandate from 60% of the delegates to strengthen all areas of professional development. I see this as a giant, positive step toward redefining public perception so that our union is seen as representing professionals who are informed and up-to-date—proof that the education of B.C.'s children is foremost in our minds.



Sheila Renyard, Surrey

As a new teacher and union representative, I was a reluctant delegate to this year's AGM. At the best of times, I struggle to understand the many details behind the very important issues we have been facing. I believed my intelligence and common sense would be obliterated by confusion and anxiety. My fears were unfounded. Delegates were friendly, supportive, and informative. The information came at me slowly through the debate on recommendations and resolutions, clarifying many issues for me. As a new teacher, I had many social opportunities to get to know other teachers around the province and to understand what teaching has become for them.

Finally, rather than exhausted by the debate, speeches, and socializing, I felt energized, supported, and much more confident in my role as a teacher, as a union representative, and as a delegate.

I want to be part of the process as teachers and union members find approaches and strategies to strengthen our positions as public educators. I also want to increase my knowledge regarding provincial issues that have arisen because of the dramatic funding cuts. In addition, the vote to join the B.C. Federation of Labour was a highlight for me. Listening to Jim Sinclair, president of the B.C. Federation of Labour, speak about the support that comes from all of our brothers and sisters throughout the province was inspiring for me and the other delegates at the AGM. He spoke about similar concerns that professionals in other occupations have experienced and the importance to stand together.

We also heard from Catherine Evans, a Vancouver parent who participated in the creation of the video, "Growing the Future," which focusses on the effects the educational cuts have had on parents and their children. She assured us that they would continue to support public education by reaching out to all people in the province.

Those speakers reinforced that we teachers are not alone in this struggle, but do have public support. That was heartening for me, as I often have felt isolated because of the negative reports on the radio, TV, and in the local papers. I am glad I attended the AGM, if only for the increased awareness of the actual public support we have in our present struggle.

The Surrey Teachers' Association was an immense help in preparing me for this AGM. After 14 hours of reviewing recommendations, resolutions, and BCTF policies and procedures, I felt more prepared to participate in the process.



Sarbrinder Lalli, Surrey

This AGM re-affirmed my faith in teachers as the most credible voice in the debate on public education. We talked about ensuring student safety in our classrooms, advocating, and developing strategies for improving working and learning conditions, and obtaining sufficient funding and resources to meet the needs of students while simultaneously re-affirming our belief that our schools and students should not be for sale or used for commercial purposes.

I left feeling energized and enthusiastic about the work teachers are doing to promote and protect public education.



Katherine Sinnott-May, Campbell River

As a new teacher, I felt it important to understand the process through which our union works. The AGM has provided insight to province-wide issues and concerns dealt with by the BCTF. Also, I have learned about the varied needs of teachers in B.C.



Graham Gomme, Shuswap

Attending this AGM opened my eyes to the policy process of our union. Knowing first hand the respect the delegates have toward the grassroots concerns of teachers confirms my assumption that the BCTF is one of the finest democratic bodies in the world. I truly enjoyed the open expression of ideas, similar or different, that were always conducted in a civil fashion.

This AGM provided inspiration for both new and experienced teachers. The mixture of generations, in informal and formal settings, shows the overwhelming commitment of teachers to their union.



PETER OWENS PHOTOS

Jim Sinclair, president of the BC Fed, presents Neil Worboys, BCTF president, with the certificate of affiliation. "Public Education is the ultimate act of solidarity with the next generation," said Sinclair.

GENERAL MEETING

Adult education programs provide an education safety net for all students

by Lynda Toews

At least three years after it was proposed, the Adult Education Task Force has completed its work. Most of the committee's recommendations were adopted at the Executive Committee level, but at least three recommendations were discussed at the BCTF Annual General Meeting this year, and they brought surprises for some people.

Through adult learning centres, night-school classes, and distance-education programs, hundreds of B.C. teachers are involved in adult education. The programs are funded separately from K-12

programs for under-19 students. They do not steal resources from children; rather, it is more often the case that funds are taken from adult programs to support programs for children.

The students pursue adult literacy, adult basic education, adult ESL, adult special education, GED, and adult secondary school completion. Adult education teachers modify and supplement their courses to meet the needs of their students, as do other teachers. Many times, learners achieve their goals before they finish a course: they find a job; they learn to read an equipment manual or to read a story to their young child.

One of the recommendations to the AGM suggested that such success be recognized for what it is—that it not be considered a failure, simply because the student did not complete the course. The student does not

receive credit for the course, unless he or she completes it. But if the teacher and the program are evaluated strictly on the basis of course completions, such successes are ignored. The system of audit now in place for adult ed programs does not recognize those successes, and funding is removed from programs that do not show an improved completion rate. The task force and the AGM agreed that all student success should be recognized, celebrated, and fostered.

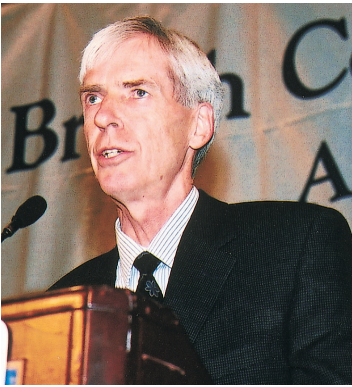
Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to an education. Is that a right with a "best before" date? Adult education programs guarantee that everyone get a second chance.

Lynda Toews is 2nd vice-president, Surrey Teachers' Association. lmtoews@shaw.ca



AGM delegates walk past the U.S. Consulate to support peace and oppose war. Flowers were left on the steps of the consulate.

Ontario academic warns B.C. not to follow the same path



Dr. Kenneth Leithwood, of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto warned against the education agenda that the governments in Ontario, Alberta, New Zealand, and England followed in the early 1990s.

The Schools We Need, a policy audit of the public school system in Ontario, by Kenneth Leithwood, Michael Fullan, and Nancy Watson, explores the consequences of that agenda at the end of "the most tumultuous decade in Ontario educational history."

The "Common Sense Revolution" of former premier Mike Harris ushered in what Leithwood called "a blizzard of change." The sheer volume of initiatives, including more demanding curriculum, new provincial testing, reduced resources, increased class sizes, less support for students with special needs and ESL requirements, and recertification requirements stalled the whole reform agenda and heightened

tensions between teachers and government.

"All of these policies were implemented in a way that is very hostile to the teaching profession," Leithwood said.

As he and the other OISE researchers were completing their work, Dr. Mordechai Rozanski issued his *Report of the Education Equality Task Force*. He recommended a preliminary increase of \$1.8 billion to revitalize what he called the "financially starved" school system.

"You really ought to change your lesson plans to business plans to get with the program," Leithwood quipped. He then outlined the seven key conditions that must be met to create the schools we need:

- Vision:** A strong public education system that produces excellence and meets the needs of a diverse student population.
- Governance:** Return discretion to districts and schools, while the province sets broad directions and monitors progress.
- Coherence:** A relatively small set of broadly coherent policies that are aligned with the vision.
- Evidence:** Policy and implementation should be informed by research evidence.
- Feedback mechanisms:** Government should take better advantage of the knowledge base around policy implementation and monitor progress.
- Support for teachers:** The province needs to collaborate with educators as genuine partners, not simply recipients of policy changes.
- Adequate and flexible funding:** Provincial funding for schools needs to reflect the real current costs, taking into account the different challenges in providing quality education in different geographic regions.

— Nancy Knickerbocker

What can B.C. learn from Ontario?



Chris Arcari, Langley

Dr. Kenneth Leithwood's description of Ontario's conservative educational reform pointed to many similarities with B.C.'s current neo-Liberal educational reform.

Initially, both provinces' reforms were met with outrage by public educators and with apparent indifference by parents, administrators, and trustees. In Ontario, it soon became evident that the so-called reform had many shortcomings, predicted at the outset by educators and later confirmed by the other stakeholders. Sound familiar?

Here in B.C. we are reeling from the attacks of Bills 27 and 28 as well as the continued underfunding of public education. However, we must be buoyed by Ontario's Rozanski report, which clearly points to many flaws in the Harris government's educational master plan. More important, the report also points to essential educational re-reform, including an infusion of \$2 billion into Ontario's public school system.

Leithwood gave credit to Ontario's teachers and parents for keeping the ideals of a quality and fully funded public

education system a political priority.

I hope B.C.'s teachers, individually, as local association members, and as members of the BCTF, continue to accept the responsibility of building coalitions that will work to slow down, stop, and turn around Campbell's run-away educational defunding train.

Two important lessons can be learned from Ontario's experience: we teachers can make a difference, and there is light at the end of the tunnel.



Sandra Davie, Prince George

I've heard that the so-called educational reforms in Ontario have jeopardized the education of a generation of students. We should be aware that the education of our children is threatened as B.C. heads down the Ontario path.

The lack of funding, the increase in class size, the loss of support services, and the closing of schools put the educational success of our students at risk. Crowding more students into a classroom means that the needs of all students cannot be met. When important interventions at an early age are missed, learning difficulties are likely to be perpetuated, and students are then denied their right to reach their full potential.

This is certainly a cost to the individual, but also a cost to society. By not ensuring that the

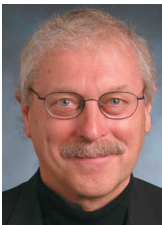
educational system is appropriately funded, the government, and all the educational partners who refuse to speak out against insufficient funding, will be responsible for depriving students of an appropriate education and creating an underclass of poorly served individuals who can only feel rejected by their society. We will undoubtedly find that the cost of managing this dissatisfied and disenfranchised underclass will be a greater cost in the long run.



Jeanie Lucas, Delta

It is important for B.C. teachers to learn about the Ontario government's attack on education. In spite of heroic efforts by well-educated, highly professional teachers, it appears that the government listens only to coalitions run by parents. It behooves us, therefore, to strengthen our ties with parent groups, PACs, and special-needs groups. Teachers who are parents should also consider becoming more vocal on PACs in their local schools. It is time to remind the government that the same people who voted them in can, and will, vote them out if they do not revise their under-researched slash-and-burn policies. It is time to consider the needs of our children. It is time to become active in coalitions that seek to encourage the government to correctly fund education.

2003-04 Executive Committee



Neil Worboys
President



Jinny Sims
1st Vice-president



Irene Lanzinger
2nd Vice-president



John Chisamore
Members-at-Large



Jim Iker
Members-at-Large



Kathryn Sihota
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Jill McCaffrey
Members-at-Large



George Popp
Members-at-Large



Kathleen Thomson
Members-at-Large

PART 3

Re-turning again: A continued in-dwelling amidst questions of student achievement

by Laura Wood Richter

Recently I had the privilege of spending the morning as a helper in a classroom with Grade 1s and 2s. Their morning revolved around rigorous engagement with literacy. Students were discussing language, they were writing, and they were reading. Children read to adults, and to each other, books they had chosen from within the classroom.

One little boy struggling with the text in the book whose content he had been drawn to, was supported by his student partner who listened and waited *each time* a challenging word was encountered before he asked if his help was wanted. Here one child sustained himself amidst struggle, persevering with difficult text while another offered such a depth of respect for both the child struggling and the value of the struggle he was engaged in.

And the teacher, who had nurtured and held open a space with a quality of tension beckoning such movement, had withdrawn—conferring in her presence, as she moved amongst students engaged in literature, an absence that allowed the students space for their unique experiences of what it means to become literate. And when this time was over and snack time had begun, students remained engaged with their books, some children continuing to read while others shared with children alongside them the book they had chosen to take home that night.

And how is student achievement to be measured in such a place? How are we to understand data here? Perhaps a re-turn to the root of measurement will situate us in a space helpful to our considerations. *Measurement* comes from the Greek, *metros* meaning the beat and rhythm of the earth.

Measurement of student achievement so grounded springs forth from an inner sense of quality that we all hold. This is a rigorous form of measurement informed by history and tradition while open to regeneration. It is neither a pedocentric “everything is good” nor a gericentric “it is only good if it can be made to be exactly the same as what has already come before.” And teacher and students work together to support movement such that greater levels of quality are the focus of rigor and scholarliness.

In a classroom valuing a qualitative understanding of student achievement, the teacher’s interest is deeply rooted in the students’ experiences of education. In such a classroom, we will find the teacher knowing how his/her students are doing. We will find him/her able to competently assess where his/her students stand in relation to signposts set out by the Ministry of Education outside the use of exams concerned with the one correct answer. The teacher’s ways of knowing about student achievement will be supported by a rigorous assessment of data concerned with student involvement in classroom activities.

Exams and assignments will be open-ended with a deep interest in where each student stands in his or her level of sophistication amidst curricular expectations, the student’s place of standing informing the pedagogue’s choices for continuing leadership. Student questions, responses, reading, writing, and drawings provide depths of insight into, not only the student’s standing in relation to signposts set forth by the Ministry of Education, but also the student’s experience of standing amidst these expectations. And an attunement to

students’ experiences guiding the movement in the classroom leads to a classroom responsive to the life it houses.

Qualitative data, rigorously collected and recorded by the teacher, can be expressed anecdotally. This is a complex form of data collection relying

In a classroom valuing a qualitative understanding of student achievement, the teacher’s interest is deeply rooted in the students’ experiences of education.

on a pedagogical attunement and watchfulness deeply concerned with the place where each student stands in-between the expectations set forth by the Ministry of Education, by the teacher, by the student, by the student’s family, and by the larger community. This is a subjective form of data collection honouring the teacher’s ability to stand pedagogically alert to his/her accountability to Ministry-mandated expectations together with an accountability to each of the irreducibly unique beings that he or she is entrusted to lead. In the words of David Jardine, “This is the balancing act of pedagogy: to retain the exquisiteness of this child’s life while at once cracking it open into the textures of the Earth.” (Wild Hearts, Silent Traces and the Journeys of Lament. Unpublished document.)

It is important here to draw attention to the reality that quantitative measures of student

achievement are also subjective measures, their subjectivity grounded in arbitrary choices made in their construction and in the evaluation of their results; processes of choosing which questions to ask (and which to leave out) and processes of determining how student responses will be rated and weighted are arbitrary choices made by human beings.

Teachers require support in adopting forms of measurement springing forth from responses to the unique particularities of this child in this time grounded in time-honoured understandings of quality and achievement. Such support requires an honouring of the risks teachers are willing to take in giving up the authoritarian stance that comes with only asking those questions for which we already know the answers. An emphasis on quantitative measures of student achievement undermines such an honouring.

This is not to say that we are not valuing the attainment of factual information and the learning of skills, but rather that facts and skills are best learned in contexts meaningful to the students and that they are not ends in themselves but rather the means for embarking on open-ended journeys, journeys that offer hope for the continued survival of human beings. It is to say that when we speak of student achievement in terms of reaching specific, measurable goals we are missing out much of what education is about and we must take care not to extinguish possibilities for vibrant movement, for a leading out, in our enthusiasm for quantitative data. We are called to be mindful that an enthusiasm for quantifiable education poses a risk of undermining experiences of quality education.

Laura Wood Richter is a former teacher whose children have just entered the school system.

Girls and the cuts

The Liberal cuts will have a devastating effect on girls and young women. With increasing poverty, a growing youth unemployment rate, and a \$6-an-hour starvation wage for workers during their first 500 hours of work, many girls will end up homeless and forced into the sex trade out of economic desperation.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development boasts that it has saved millions by taking fewer children into care. Minister Hogg also states that 65% of youth in care are from single-parent families. With this government’s brutal attack on single parents, some parents have had their cheques reduced by 18%, resulting in their kids’ living in worsened poverty conditions. If this government really wanted to help kids, it would raise parents’ welfare rate and recognize childrearing as legitimate work deserving a well-paid income.

The Liberals have also declared that only in dire circumstances will children 16 and over be taken into care. In 1991, Canada signed on to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The convention defines a child as a person up to 18 years old (Article 1); it says that children have the right to be protected from violence and abuse (Article 19) and that they should be provided with substitute care where necessary (Article 20). Although the government does have youth agreements that allow for 17- to 18-year-olds to receive approximately \$780 dollars a month for shelter and living expenses, with the ministry slashing its budget by 23%, it is probable that many 17- to 18-year-old girls who apply for this agreement will be turned down. Only in certain cases, if the ministry is shown that parents cannot provide for their children, can a youth receive adult welfare. The number of girls being sexually exploited will increase when girls are denied both adult welfare and youth agreements. This is very alarming considering the high number of women who are murdered and missing in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver alone. In addition to this, girls aged 19 and over must prove that they have been living independently for two years before they receive welfare.

Government has also cut youth employment programs, foster beds, and child protection services. Cuts to education and special needs programs will result in marginalized girls’ being unable to access schools.

Government has cut or closed youth custody centres. More young girls will be jailed outside their communities; the only secure custody centres for girls will be in Vancouver and Prince George. Staff cuts at correctional facilities have already resulted in girls’ facing approximately one hour more, per day, of lockdown.

All of those cuts will be detrimental to the lives of girls in this province. As a result of the cuts, more girls will be homeless, poverty stricken, and sexually exploited. I predict that more girls will also be under psychiatric care and institutionalized. In our fight back, we must reveal the true effects that the cuts will have on the lives and realities of marginalized girls in this province.

Source: Lisa Wulwick, *The Long Haul*, End Legislated Poverty.



Raging Women Conference

Fighting cutbacks to women's programs

by Karen Kilbride

The conference was held at the Maritime Labour Centre in Vancouver, February 28 and March 1. Women are targets of this government, and they are forming coalitions and alliances to fight back!

The Raging Women Conference brought together women who are community activists and union activists to strategize to stop government funding cuts that jeopardize a half century of progress for women's rights and security in B.C. Poor and disabled women are suffering the worst effects of the funding cuts.

The elimination of women's centres, the attacks on workers' rights and wages, the elimination of secure jobs for health-care workers, the cuts to social programs and welfare, the loss of childcare subsidies, the cuts to educational programs, the erosion of healthcare, the elimination of settlement programs for new immigrants, and the privatization of government services, will eventually touch the lives of all women in some way. The illegal actions to gut workers' contractual rights and benefits leave many women insecure, and worried about their futures.

The Raging Women Conference looked at the struggles of the women's movement and the future goals of women who are working in our communities to ensure equality and security for women and their families. BCTF Feminist Caucus members presented workshops on coalition building, media awareness, welfare rights, and strategies for direct political action. Commu-

nity activists challenged women in unions to use their political power to help individual women and community activists to organize and to support women who do not have "boardrooms" and the funding to meet.

"Women's centres are here to stay!" became the battle cry of the conference. We networked, shared strategies, and committed to take action together to save the gains women have made in employment rights, salaries, health and safety conditions, maternity benefits, education, and many others. We refuse to accept the cuts the Liberals are trying to force on women across the province. We realize that the cuts are a method to make women work for less. We will speak out against the cuts that leave women vulnerable and insecure.

As the conference ended, we agreed to support our sisters at the HEU who are facing layoffs and privatization in the care homes and hospitals where they work. We agreed to meet again and to share the strategies of resistance in our communities. We looked beyond the borders of B.C. as a motion was made that all the delegates speak out in favour of peace in Iraq and in Palestine.

The women of B.C. will not accept that government funding policies are an excuse to erase women's rights and hard-won gains to ensure equality in our society. We will use our collective voices, political power, and actions to resist.

Karen Kilbride teaches at Colebrook Elementary School, Surrey.

Girls' Day—March 8, 2003



Grade 6 girls in Dawson Creek participate in activities on International Women's Day designed to help them celebrate the possibilities available to them as they develop into young adults.

JOANNE DUECK PHOTOS

Girls who rock the world!

by Joanne Dueck

While outside temperatures were dipping to record lows on Saturday, March 8, inside at the Dawson Creek Public Health Unit, things were definitely beginning to warm up. It was International Women's Day and Dawson Creek's 4th annual Girls' Day Conference.

The Girls' Day Conference in Dawson Creek has become an annual event that celebrates being a girl with unique traits in the 21st century. The day is a celebration of individuality and inner strength. Grade 6 girls meet and speak with Grade 12 mentors, girls who've been there (peer pressure, media pressure, academic pressure, decisions, decisions, etc.) so recently themselves.

Girls can talk with others and prepare to leave their elementary-school niche and leap into middle-school life. Undoubtedly, the reassurance and advice of the Grade 12 volunteers is appreciated by the younger participants. The day's activities focussed on resilience, famous girls who rocked the world despite adverse conditions, coping with grief and loss, combatting negative self-talk or the grungies, and body image. The main goal of the day

is to help each girl celebrate herself and to appreciate others.

Some of the ways this year's participants predicted that they will rock the world:

- act in movies
- be a good role model
- be a nice person
- be a veterinarian
- become a Girls'-Day leader.
- become a great artist
- become a nurse
- become a singer
- become a teacher
- become a volunteer
- find a cure for multiple sclerosis and help people like my mom
- help older people be happy
- help people in need
- maintain world peace and stop wars
- make the world a better place by being a great citizen
- reach my goals
- save human lives
- save the lives of animals
- stop racism
- stop war.

Our Grade 12 volunteers from South Peace Secondary were excellent role models and mentors for the Grade 6 girls. They provided energizers and were discussion leaders.

We hope that September's activities and classes at Central Middle School will bring some of these girls together again!

Interested volunteers, along with very generous community support, have made the day possible. The Rotary Club of Dawson Creek has continued to provide for our nutritional needs on the day of the conference. As well, Sharon Smith, of Rainbow Studios, has given generously of her time, expertise, and supplies. Each of the participants receives a photographic portrait taken on the day of the conference. Supplies for our craft activity came from a local car dealership. The use of the Public Health Unit conference rooms is much appreciated.

The Girls' Day Committee is made up of Peace Country women who have a special place in their hearts for adolescent girls and their safe and happy transition to adulthood. Beverley Dunsmore, Joanne Dueck, Sue Haddow, Tabitha Logan, Amy MacDonald, Judi McGowan, Kay Moody, and Desiree Tucker, were this year's committee members.

Thank you, School District 59! The t-shirts produced by the entrepreneurship program and media arts programs, which each of the Grade 6 girls received, are wonderful.

Joanne Dueck teaches at Parkhill Elementary School, Dawson Creek.



Wellness in Powell River

by Gerry Brach

A recent employee-family-assistance-program-sponsored contest garnered widespread support in the many worksites throughout the Powell River School District. Employees were challenged to bike, jog, or walk for wellness, and they responded by accumulating more than 6,700 hours of participation! From the bus garage to every school, 260 employees took up the challenge and sought both traditional and unique ways of obtaining physical activity.

Worksites pulled together in a common cause that improved both staff morale and physical activity levels. By the end of the two-month contest, healthy exercise patterns had been established or strengthened. Some worksites are continuing the contest unofficially by setting staff exercise goals and

celebrating their successes.

All participants were winners, but the official winning site was Special Services, at the board office. The eight ultrafit exercise aficionados accumulated 368.5 hours of participation. Vernon Currie, Joan Buckett, Karen Hopkins, Rita John, Stephanie Keane, Mike Leahy, Theresa Verdiel, and Daphne Wilson received a \$150 gift basket prepared by Word of Mouth Catering students from Westview Learning Centre. All participants received a complimentary recreation-complex swim pass.

The hope of our EFAP committee was that employees would learn more about the many benefits of a wellness lifestyle. For more information about the wellness contest, go to sd47.bc.ca/staff/contest.html.

Gerry Brach is a home-hospital/special needs teacher in Powell River. gbrach@sd47.bc.ca.

10 New BCTF lesson aids

1 LA 9767—Soundbursts by Joi Freed-Garrod, 76 p. ©2001. Resource guide designed to help teachers introduce sound exploration to students using traditional and non-traditional sound sources, leading to the creation of sound pieces. Adaptable for a variety of age groups. This book includes lesson plans, background and resources list for musical concepts and skills to help teachers regardless of their skill level. Uses a variety of strategies to build music literacy and a holistic learning structure that may be used in other areas of the curriculum. K–12. **\$25.95**

2 LA 4016—Roman's Notes on DNA, Roman B. Romaniuk, 82 p. ©1997. This resource is written for anyone wanting to better understand the basic concepts of DNA, the genetic code, and protein synthesis. Includes memory tricks and mini-summaries, and a glossary of over 200 frequently used DNA-related terms. Grades 11–12. **\$16.95**

3 LA 2309—The Buddy System: Work It Out! Sue Malcolm and Dan Smith, 28 p. and audio CD ©2000. Includes an audio CD with 12 songs about positive behaviour and violence prevention, and the 28-page Buddy System Activity Book includes games, puzzles, art activities, and other interactive exercises plus the words and sheet music for all the songs on the CD. The CD was created from the author's experience in teaching the Second Step program—a violence-prevention curriculum that is used in B.C. schools. K–3. **\$20**

4 LA 9599 — Just Drifting Around, produced by Engaging Science, a joint venture of the H.R. Macmillan Space Centre, Science World BC and the Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre. 36 p. Rev. © 2001. This workshop/activity unit is a collection of hands-on curriculum-based activities with illustrations, diagrams, photos and instructions to help teachers get their students engaged in science. In this unit students travel through the cycles of rock, water and air. Through experiments students witness the creation of a cloud, model the hardening of sediment and become a scientist to solve a puzzle involving Earth characteristics and processes. K–7. **\$11**

5 LA 8618 — Teachin' Cheap: Using Bags, Sacks, Paper and Boxes in the Classroom by Creative Teaching Press, Inc., 114 p. ©1997. This resource offers innovative and practical ideas for inexpensive, simple-to-make projects for organizing and displaying children's work. These unique projects will liven up programs in language arts, math, social studies, and science, while showing off student work in new and creative ways. (Note that the book is published in the USA and may contain some US-based standards.) K–4. **\$13.95**

6 LA 2151 — Active Learning in the Digital Age Classroom by Ann Heide and Dale Henderson, 278 p. Rev. ©2001. This resource is the essential "how-to" technology integration resource. This book examines the revolutionary effects of information and communication technologies (ICT) on the environment of education and offers a broad range of suggestions, ideas, and advice on their use in a classroom. Includes practical, useful information on using ICT to enhance active learning, achieve desired curricular goals, increase classroom productivity, accommodate different learning styles, and assist students with special needs as well as tips on classroom set-up, equipment, and assessment/evaluation strategies. K–12. **\$34.95**

7 LA 9135, LA 9136, LA 9137—Grammar and Punctuation: Grade 4, Grade 5, Grade 6. Produced by Evan-Moor Educational Publishers 114p. and dual-platform CD-ROM ©2002. Includes rule charts, activity sheets, and a dual-platform CD-ROM with printable PDF of the book, a comprehensive review presented in a test format, a student record sheet, a reproducible student rulebook and an answer key. Grammar and punctuation rules are presented on 25 full-page charts, which can be made into transparencies or used with the animated, full-color charts on the CD-ROM. Practise the following

grammar and punctuation skills: kinds of sentences; simple and complete subjects and predicates; common, proper, singular, plural nouns; irregular plurals; using I and me correctly; possessive nouns and pronouns; pronouns and antecedents; kinds of verbs; subject-verb agreement; forming verb tenses; irregular verbs; adjectives; comparative and superlative adjectives; adverbs; prepositions; prepositional phrases; comma usage; quotation marks; and tricky word usage. (Published in the USA; may contain some US-based standards.) **\$19.95 each**

8 LA S34—Salmonids in the Classroom — Life Cycle Poster Produced by Fisheries and Oceans Canada, 46 cm x 91 cm poster, ©2002. This full-colour classroom poster helps children visualize both healthy habitat and some of the threats that salmon encounter on their long migrations to the ocean and home again. Detailed enlargements highlight and reinforce the stages of the Pacific Salmon life cycle. K–7. **\$15**

9 LA 4018—Barefoot Mapping Guidebook Produced by the Sierra Club of B.C. 20 p. 2002. Nine-step student activity guide that instructs students how to map local ecosystems. Mapping is a powerful tool for exploring and making real the many connections between a place and us. The guidebook outlines the steps to mapping—barefoot—local ecosystems. Through individual written activities, students will learn how to use a compass, determine distances, prepare base maps, interpret existing thematic maps, understand scale, determine how information is classified and mapped, and identify relevant conservation issues and strategies for youth. Activities are linked to Science 8, Social Studies 10, Geography 12, Biology 11, Forests 11 and First Nations 12. **\$12.95**

10 LA S67—Exploring the Seashore in British Columbia, Washington and Oregon: A Guide to Shorebirds and Intertidal Plants and Animals Gloria Snively 240 p. ©1978. This easy-to-use field guide enables anyone, from beginner to expert, to identify our seashore creatures. This field guide is concerned with the why as well as the what. Observation, understanding, and appreciation do lead, finally, to conservation. Includes a glossary of illustrated terms, and nine maps, 24 black-and-white photographs, 94 full-color photographs and 285 line drawings. Grades 12 and up. **\$12**

Check out the website for the B.C. Association of Learning Materials and Educational Representatives at www.bcalmer.ca/ for a source for contacts for many curriculum resources and information.

For a complete listing of over 900 BCTF Lesson Aids, consult the catalogue in your school library or the Lesson Aids online catalogue. bctf.ca/LessonAids

To order any of the above lesson aids, enclose a cheque payable to the BCTF or authorized purchase order to BCTF Lesson Aids Service 100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2. GST and postage/handling are included in the prices. Orders are sent by return mail.

Notice

BCTF Lesson Aids are primarily intended to provide support for teachers in the development and teaching of units and lessons. They are not "school materials" as described by the February 12, 2002, Representative Assembly. The RA motion covers the purchase of materials that should be the responsibility of a school district. Those would include materials used by students such as class sets of books, paper, drawing materials or other stationery supplies. Resources such as those provided by the Lesson Aids Service of the BCTF, which are of assistance to teachers in their preparation for teaching are not covered by the motion. We encourage members to continue to share materials, lesson aids, and resources with one another.

Teachers' Pension Plan deadlines for purchase of service

Do you still have past pension service time you'd like to purchase? A leave of absence perhaps, or maybe some non-contributory time? If so, the Teachers' Pension Plan has a few reminders. Here are those deadlines by purchase category:

Leave of absence: If your leave of absence ended on or before March 31, 2002, you have until March 31, 2007, or termination of active membership to apply to purchase your unpaid leave of absence, whichever is earlier. If your leave ended on or after April 1, 2002, you have five years from the day your leave ended or termination of current employment, whichever is earlier. The deadlines apply to members who have taken or will take maternity or parental leaves.

Non-contributory service: If you were an active plan member on March 31, 2002, you can apply to purchase non-contributory service on or before March 31, 2007, or termination of active membership, whichever is earlier. If you

became an active member on or after April 1, 2002, you have five years from the date you became an active member, or termination of your current employment, whichever is earlier. If you are purchasing TOC service, you may purchase the default of three months pensionable and seven months contributory service for each year, prorated for each part year, that the school district verifies you were on the TOC list.

Reinstatement: You may be able to purchase a reinstatement if you took your contributions out of the Teachers' Pension Plan. If you were an active member on March 31, 2002, you have until March 31, 2007, or termination of active membership to apply, whichever is earlier. If you became an active member on or after April 1, 2002, you have five years from the day you recommenced contributions to the plan or termination of current employment to apply, whichever is earlier.

Arrears: If you received your arrears notice on or before March 31, 2002, you have until March 31, 2007, or until the termination of active membership, to make an application to pay the arrears, whichever is

earlier. If you received your arrears notice on or after April 1, 2002, you have five years from the date you received your notice, or termination of current employment to apply, whichever is earlier.

If you are unclear on which purchase category you fall into, or if you have questions relating to the deadlines, please contact the Teachers' Pension Plan at 1-800-665-6770, or look on the web site at pensionsbc.ca.

New member benefit statement and pension estimator

You will notice this June that your personalized Member Benefit Statement looks a little different. We're hoping that the redesigned statement will be easier to understand. Along with the new statement, the plan is pleased to present the new personalized pension estimator on our web site at pensionsbc.ca.

As of July 2003, when you enter the required identifying information, the estimator will

Yours for the asking

Rick Hansen lesson plans online

Created for the Rick Hansen school program by a classroom teacher for Grades 4 to 8, these lesson plans are teacher-friendly, creative, and highly motivational for students. All eight plans are downloadable include teaching tips and lesson materials.

They help students understand key messages the Rick Hansen story has for youth, such as determination, courage, social responsibility, leadership, and the importance of teamwork.

The vision of the Rick Hansen School Program is a world in which youth are motivated and capable of making a difference in their communities. The lesson plans are practical and curriculum-linked in math, science, technology, physical education, social studies, drama, language arts, and personal planning, and they are easily adaptable for use as complete thematic units or stand-alone lessons. The lesson plans are available at rickhansen.org in the Rick Hansen School Program section.

Importance of early psychosis intervention

A first episode of psychosis can be very stressful for a young person. It usually also affects family and peers. Since the onset of schizophrenia most often occurs in the late teens or early 20s, it can adversely affect the person's developing sense of

self-identity as well as relationships, education goals, and career plans.

The B.C. Schizophrenia Society has several important programs that are successfully used in B.C. schools and universities:

- *Reaching Out: The Importance of Getting Help Early*—a 20-minute video and a manual that includes lesson plans, handouts, and overheads.
- A popular elementary school *Puppet Show*, aimed primarily at Grade 4s.
- *Kids in Control* is an excellent education and support program for children who have parents with mental illness.

For more information, contact the B.C. Schizophrenia Society, 201-6011 Westminster Highway, Richmond, BC V7C 4V4, 604-270-7861, f: 604-270-9861, bcss.prov@telus.net.

Youth road-safety education

Schools can help to prevent car crashes—the number one killer of youth in B.C. In 2001 alone, there were over 10,400 youth injured and 77 youth fatalities, 46 of these in crashes where speed was a contributing factor. While not all youth engage in unsafe driving practices, if you combine driver inexperience with even one other road or driving risk factor, the chance of a crash rises dramatically for youth.

No crash is an accident; crashes are a result of unsafe choices associated with driving and being a passenger in a vehicle.

It's critical to reach youth before they learn to drive or while they are new drivers. The C.A.R.S. BC (CounterAttack and RoadSense Society of B.C.) originated with a small group of teachers three years ago. The activities are developed and delivered by youth for youth. Empowering even a small group of teens to form a C.A.R.S. group is powerful.

For more information about C.A.R.S. BC and how your school can become involved in road-safety education, visit carsbc.org or contact Cherralee Roberts at 250-769-7343, croberts@sd23.bc.ca.

June is bike month

Take that dusty bike out of your garage and join thousands of cyclists across the province. Over the last 10 years, the number of students being driven to school has increased by nearly 100%.

Better Environmentally Sound Transportation (BEST) and Way to Go have been working in the public schools to challenge the notion that the privately owned automobile is the way to get to school. Bike month provides the perfect excuse to find out more about these organizations and the school programs they offer.

For information about BEST programs, go to best.bc.ca or phone 604-669-2860; and for information about Way to Go programs, visit waytogo.icbc.bc.ca, e-mail waytogo@telus.net, or phone 604-731-1511.

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Contacts

If you have any questions about purchasing service, or about the new estimator, contact the Teachers' Pension Plan at 1-800-665-6770, in Victoria at 250-953-3022, and in Vancouver at 604-660-4088. You can always e-mail us at TPP.PensionCorp@pensionsbc.ca. Application forms are available on the TPP web site.

As well, you may contact BCTF Income Security, 1-800-663-9163 or 604-871-1921, for assistance with your pension questions. E-mail alambert@bctf.ca, lwerkklund@bctf.ca, or dlauber@bctf.ca with your questions.

— Communications Branch,
Teachers' Pension Plan

88? Don't wait!

Teachers who have reached the age of 64 or the factor 88, age plus contributory service with the teachers or municipal pension plan, *may* voluntarily withdraw from the BCTF Salary Indemnity Plan: Long Term.

If you have reached age 65 or factor 90, you are no longer eligible for long-term benefits and *should* withdraw. It is necessary for you to apply to withdraw.

Send a completed form, available from Income Security, local presidents, or online at bctf.ca/pensions/salary/LT-WithdrawalForm.shtml to the BCTF Income Security Department.

Resources for teaching in time of war

The following link contains some valuable information about new resources to deal with bullying, violence, and the war in Iraq. Now that the war has started, teachers and students will need to talk about what is going on. The links will be helpful in giving teachers background and suggestions for how to approach the subject.

The list of sites dealing with the war in Iraq is especially helpful.

bctf.ca/info/WhatsNew/NewReportsMar2003.html

UN says B.C. is failing women

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women says Canada and British Columbia, in particular, are not living up to their international commitment to improve living conditions for women. The UN committee singled out the B.C. Liberal government for the disproportionate impact its cutbacks are having on women. It expressed concern that the federal government now transfers monies to the province without guarantees that the provincial government will provide the intended services.

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For travel and hotel accommodation please contact:

Julia Bucchiotti – Uniglobe Travel
1.800.665.8025 (Please refer to the "Light the Spirit Within" conference when calling)

For further information and to register for the conference please contact the LDAA:

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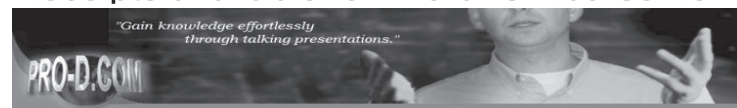
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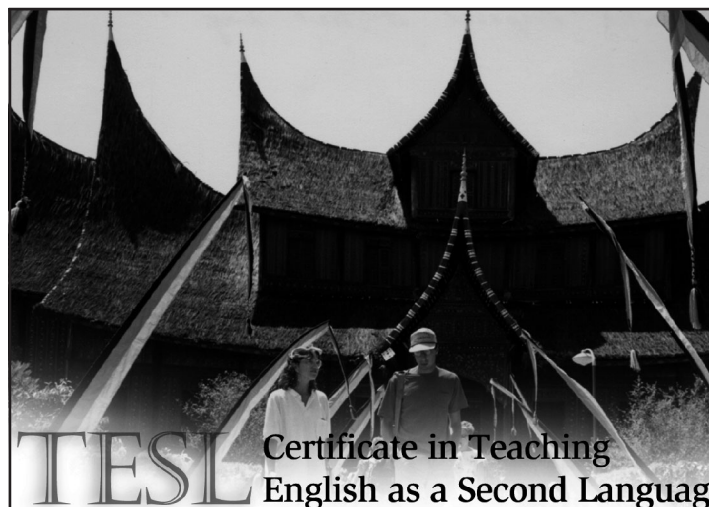
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WHISTLER CREEK. Tamarisk on Alpha Lake. 1 bd. condo sleeps 4, tennis, outdoor pool, F/P, sauna, tv/vcr, summer/winter rates. 604-327-3840, jchooge@axion.net

FRANCE 1 bd. close to Paris; 1 bd. Paris central; Provence house, all fully furn. 604-738-1876 or 604-298-3904, e-mail: iroland@axion.net

WHISTLER 1 bd. condo (Whistler Creekside) sleeps 4, F/P, hot tub, swimming pool, sauna. Kitchen fully equipped. Underground parking. Close to lift and stores. Call early to book and avoid disappointment. Call Jan at 604-530-0958.

TOFINO Chesterman Beach across the street. Cozy cottage, fully equip., avail. year-round, \$100/night (seasonal), \$80 off season. 604-581-3964.

WHISTLER Alta Lake, waterfront, 1 bd. condo, 1 km to village, sleeps 4, F/P, TV/VCR, summer/winter rates 604-298-2070.

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WHISTLER GETAWAY Pinecrest Estates, 5 bd. 1400 sq.ft. cabin. sauna, deck with BBQ, fully equip. kitchen. D/W, W/D, wood stove (wood provided). Rates from \$170/nt (seasonal). glush@shaw.ca or Jill or Gerry 604-936-3346.

WHISTLER Alta Lake Getaway. Enjoy this cozy townhouse on Alta Lake. Tranquility, only min. from the village. Sleeps 6, F/P, canoe. Call 604-941-7302. Visit www.members.shaw.ca/ruhl

HOME AWAY FROM HOME Beautiful Lake Okanagan view homes and spacious Apex Mountain ski cabin. Avail. by weekend or week. 250-494-0872.

WHISTLER condo, sleeps 4, views, close to village. All amenities. 604-943-9423.

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WHISTLER, Blueberry Hill. Nightly/wkly/ mthly. 1400 sq.ft. condo; 2 bd. plus loft; 2 bath. Sleeps 8+. Fully equipped kitchen; F/P; furnishings incl. 2 TV/VCRs, stereo, W/D; c/w linens, towels, etc. Adjacent to Whistler Golf Course. Near Valley Trail. 1 km to Whistler village or Alta Lake. Undergr. secure parking; hot tub; sauna. Cleaning at end of stay is incl. Call Jim 604-534-6839 or 604-530-9551.

MEXICO. Time to plan your winter vacation. We have many condos to choose from in sunny San Jose Del Cabo, Baja, Mexico. Call 011-52-624-1424428, if no answer leave message. Or e-mail mexican@prodigy.net.mx, also check web site www.mexi-cana.com

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SALTSPRING ISLAND. 3 bd. house, walk to Ganges town centre. \$250/wknd., \$350/long wknd, \$700/wk. beddisacre.tripod.co (no www needed), Jane 604-521-6455 (ext. 1)

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WHISTLER 1 bd. condo, Creekside area, Very affordable rates. Comfortably sleeps 4. Call 604-298-7477 or email jo-anne.hibbert@telus.com

QUALICUM BEACH, Vanc. Island. Dandelion Cottage offers a private holiday suite. 1 bd., full kitchen, quiet, peaceful surroundings, 1/2 blk. to sandy beach. 250-752-5127, e-mail: dndelion@macn.bc.ca

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SALTSPRING waterfront. 3 bd., 2300 sq.ft. fully equipped home. \$1200/wk. 604-942-7321, e-mail jmoliver@telus.net.

WHISTLER CREEK. 1 bd. condo, sleeps 4, fully furn., u/g parking, n/s, n/p, walk to lift, reasonable rates. Phone 604-988-1433.

GULF ISLAND Sunny retreat, 2 bd. & loft, fully equipped, N/S, 1 blk. from Dinner Bay Park. Call 604-264-1855, 604-838-5995.

CHILCOTIN-WILD HORSE COUNTRY. Lakefront log cabins in beautiful Nemaiah Valley. Excellent fishing & hiking. Cabins \$65/nt. or \$390/wk. Ph/Fax: 250-468-9948, www.konnilakesort.com

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BOWEN ISLAND Secluded Deep Bay waterfront cottage w/dock to N/S. Call Tanis 604-261-4576.

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GABRIOLA ISLAND near Whalebone Beach. 3 bd. waterfront, large sunny deck, easy steps to beach. Relax and enjoy panoramic ocean views and walks to nearby parks. N/S. \$600-\$700/wk. 604-261-0296, e-mail: colimm@primus.ca

TEACHER-LED BC history and culture all-inclusive tours to Barkerville and the backroads of BC. Please see Ramblin' Roads tours ad p13.

ROBERTS CREEK, Sunshine Coast, family-sized house for rent. July/Aug. Footsteps to beach. \$500/wk. \$1600/mo. 604-740-5844, mauel@dcnet.com

SALTSPRING ISLAND waterfront getaway. Reasonably priced accom. avail. from \$59/night. Quiet serenity, massage therapist on site trained in Thai massage and offering Thai spa treatments. E-mail: retreat@saltspring.com, phone 250-537-1219.

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WHISTLER luxurious Montebello, 3 bd. townhome, fully furn., gourmet kitchen, F/P, TV/VCR, W/D, air. Private hot tub, swimming pool, tennis. Walk to village. Call Elise 604-552-5980.

MEXICO XMAS Los Cabos. Baja Hotel unit, sleeps 4, Dec. 27-Jan 3/04 \$900. 604-522-1109

SAVARY ISLAND Deluxe ocean view home. Steps to level sandy beach. Avail. weekly June-Sept. \$900/wk. For pictures and details www.maracasmedia.com/savary or tel: 604-298-8419.

WHISTLER CREEK. 1 bd. condo, sleeps 4, fully furn., u/g parking. n/s, n/p, walk to lift, reasonable rates. Phone 604-988-1433.

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VANCOUVER Clean, bright, quiet, centrally located condos at Robson & Bute. 1 bd. \$75/dble, 2 bd. \$85/dble. Daily/weekly/monthly rate. 604-608-4268.

WHITE ROCK. Full ocean view, 2 blk from beach, well kept 1 bd. apt. fully furn. Private and very quiet. Avail. any time for short term stays. 604-536-3886, 604-538-5237.

HOUSE EXCHANGE Looking to exchange large Pentticon home with grand views for accom. on Vancouver Island or Kootenay Lake areas for kayaking and hiking. 1 to 2 wks in summer, 250-493-5750, saubin@summer.com

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VANCOUVER 2 bd. heritage house, 12th/Alma, superb view, clean, near UBC, beach, restaurants, bus, May 30-July 12 (or part of), \$550/wk., 604-222-7876.

VANCOUVER sublet, July 1/03-Sept. 1/04. 2 bd., 1 bath in shared, furnished heritage house. \$950. 604-254-2640, reinhart@vni.bc.ca

VICTORIA 3 bd. house for rent from Sept./03 or 10-mo. exchange for 2 bd. accom. in E. or N. Vancouver. Tel: 250-384-3086.

SUNSHINE COAST Going on sabbatical. Long-term home rental avail. from Aug. 1/03 to July 31/04. Comfortable 2-3 bd. fully furn. home in beautiful Roberts Creek, 20 min. to ferry. 1.5 ac. property within 1 to 5 min. of 4 different beaches. Giant spruce tree with nesting eagles alongside Flume Creek in backyard and treehouse for kids, sleeps 4. N/S. \$1050/mo. Ref. req. 604-885-0955 or dallain@sd46.bc.ca

VANCOUVER Great location, great family house, furn., 4 bd., 2 bath, family room, jungle gym, sun deck. N/S. Aug. 1-Aug. 25, \$2000, 604-708-4777.

VICTORIA 3 bd., 2 bath, nicely furn. home 5 min. to UVic by car. Beautiful garden, sundeck, BBQ, piano. Close to golf course, shopping. \$1500/mo. Avail. July 1 to Aug. 30. 250-386-6374. pdishaw@shaw.ca

BED AND BREAKFAST Port Moody, Water view, ensuite, on bus route, \$40/day. 604-936-9806.

VANCOUVER West End apartment facing Lost Lagoon, 20 min. to UBC, sublet furn. 2 bd. July 6-Aug. 3, \$1400, includes utilities, 604-662-4996.

VANCOUVER 2 bd. house for rent July 15/03 to June 30/04, fully furn., basement, deck, 3 blks from Skytrain, 2 blks from UBC bus. \$1000/mo. N/S, N/P, references, 604-435-9355, ginajean@intergate.ca

SUMMERLAND Studio suite with s/c bathroom, kitchenette, and F/P in log home, sleeps 4, min. from Okanagan beaches, Avail. for short-term stays, \$90/night or \$550/wk. E-mail for photos pepperdines@shaw.ca, 250-494-9809.

HOME EXCHANGE wanted in East Kootenays. 3 bd. home in Gr. Victoria avail. for 2 wks in July, dates to be mutually arranged. 3 bd. home on quiet cul de sac. Call Anne or Bill at 250-652-3658.

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VANCOUVER FALSE CREEK 2 bd., 2 bath, furn. condo, view, 2 sun decks, cable, high-speed connection, close to buses/Granville Market. N/S, N/P. 5 wks (June 29-Aug. 2) \$2900. 604-732-7444.

DOWNTOWN VICTORIA 2 bd. condo, summer rental. 250-382-6171, condominium4rent@yahoo.ca

WANTED house/apt sit for July, Victoria. Professional graduate female student. kmonroe@shaw.ca or call 250-503-6865.

SUMMER IN VANCOUVER Nr. 19th & Quebec St., 2 bd. furn. house plus 2 cats. N/S, N/P. Aug. 1-29. \$950. 604-873-1464.

WHITE ROCK house, some ocean view, avail. from June 29-Aug. 10, 3 bd., private backyard, \$2200/mo. 604-538-0528.

DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER sublet July-Aug. Exquisite heritage, 1 bd. Close to UBC, bus, beach, \$900/mo. Laurie 604-873-9575, lbrazzill@shaw.ca

MISSION Furn. heritage home, 4 bd., fenced half acre, h/wood floors, walk to West coast Express. \$1500/mo. Avail. Sept/03 to Jun/04. 604-820-0654, grieve@sfu.ca

BURNABY North, 1 bd., ground level in house, fully furn., clean, quiet, comfortable, sunroom, backyard, 10 min. walk to Skytrain, 25 min. to downtown, negotiable dates: July 6-Aug. 6, \$750.

SQUAMISH Beautiful 3 bd. house in Garibaldi Highlands for rent. \$1500/mo. 604-898-5654.

MISCELLANEOUS

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THEATRE ALBERTA announces: Dramaworks 2003, exciting professional development workshops for theatre educators and practitioners in Edmonton, July 4-13 and Artstrek 2003, a residential theatre program for teens with a passion for theatre in Red Deer, July 6-12 and July 13-20. For more information visit our web site, www.theatrealberta.com or phone 780-422-8162.

GRADUATES of Provincial Normal School, Victoria 1953. Golden Reunion June 17 to 19, 2003 in Victoria. To receive information, write to: Georgiana Evans, 5483 Chestnut Crescent, Delta, BC V4K 1J5 or e-mail: georgiana@seniorsbc.com

EXCHANGE NEW ZEALAND Come to beautiful Christchurch. Grade school teacher seeking exchange with Vancouver teacher for one year starting Sept. 03. Contact Julie, juliegallie@clear.net.nz

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PD CALENDAR

MAY

1-3 Vancouver. B.C. Studies Conference, British Columbia: Rethinking Ourselves, Liu Centre for the Study of Global Issues, UBC. Contact Jean Barman, Educational Studies, UBC, jean.barman@ubc.ca, or Robert McDonald, History, UBC, robertaj@interchange.ubc.ca, bcstudies.com.

1-3 Coquitlam. Middle Years Assn. of British Columbia (MyABC) conference for teachers, administrators, and parents. Contact Sean O'Reilly, SO'Reilly@sd43.bc.ca, sd43.bc.ca/myabc

2-3 Richmond. B.C. Science Teachers' Assn. Annual Conference, Catalyst 2003, Cambie Secondary. Contact Tim McCracken, 604-668-6430, tmccracken@richmond.sd38.bc.ca, or Karen Morley, 604-592-4221, morley_k@fc.sd36.bc.ca, bctf.ca/BCScTA/.

3 Vancouver. Investigating Our Practices: Sixth Annual Conference on Teacher Research/ Researching Teaching, Neville Scarfe Building, UBC. Contact Gaalen Erickson, 604-822-2867, gaalen.erickson@ubc.ca, or Judy Paley, 604-822-2733, judy.paley@ubc.ca, ocpe.educ.ubc.ca/wcs/c_investprac.html.

7-8 North Vancouver. Fast Forward Educational Media Showcase, bringing educational media buyers and sellers together, Capilano College Sportsplex. Group rates available. Contact Susan Weber (604) 323-5533, sweber@langara.bc.ca, langara.bc.ca/ffwd.

9-10 Burnaby. Computer-Using Educators of B.C. (CUEBC) Conference: Learning Online, with Dr. Rosina Smith, executive director of Alberta Online, and Murray Goldberg, Silicon Chalk, Metrotown Hilton. Join teachers from Alberta and Saskatchewan to share their experiences with online learning. Contact cuebchorizons.ca.

9-10 Kamloops. Rural and Small Schools Teachers Assn. Conference and AGM, UCC campus. Onsite heritage fair. Contact Dodie Eyer, ets@goldtrail.com.

10 Burnaby. B.C. Exchange Teachers' Assn. Information Seminar for people who are going on exchange, who have applied for exchange, or who are interested in national or international teacher exchanges, Schou Education Centre. Contact Patti Long, 604-738-2910, palong@telus.net.

15-17 Vancouver. Educators for Distributed Learning PSA (EDLPSPA) annual conference, Making It Work, teaching, training, and technology, with David Vogt, Rosina Smith, & David Feist, Scarfe Building, UBC. Contact Janet Delisle, jdeslisle@k12connect.ca, bctf.bc.ca/psas/BCEDLPSPA.

15-17 Burnaby. Canadian Down Syndrome Society (CDSS) annual national conference, Explore Beyond, Hilton Vancouver Metrotown. Educational techniques for people with Down syndrome. Contact Edwina Jeffrey 604-597-9639, edwina-jeffrey@shaw.ca, or Lynne Perreault 604-271-8170, lynneper@adsl.intergate.ca or lmddss.com.

JUNE

30-July 7 Quebec City. Institut de Français, UBC à Québec, French Bursary Program for Teachers. This French-immersion program is intended for all teachers and administrators interested in learning or improving their French language skills. B.C. teachers are eligible for funding for this institute. languages.cstudies.ubc.ca/quebec/language.programs@ubc.ca, or toll-free 1-866-528-7485.

JULY

5-14 Victoria. St. Michael's University School Summer Institute for Educators: Geographic Information System (GIS) and Technology and Education-inspiring, project-based workshops for intermediate- and senior-level teachers. Contact Lindsay Thierry, 250-370-6117, lthierry@smus.ca, smus.bc.ca/programmes/summer.

20-21 Edmonton. U-Otter-Read-It 2nd Summer Readers Theatre Conference: The Literate Child: Reading Beyond the Words. Contact U-Otter-Read-It, 780-962-9854, conference@uotter.com, uotter.com

20-25 Victoria. Teaching for Transformation, Lester B. Pearson College of the Pacific. A learning retreat for teachers on global education in the classroom. Contact Cynthia Mackenzie, 250-391-2477, cmackenzie@pearsoncollege.ca, pearsoncollege.ca/14t.

21-August 1 Prince George. Orton-Gillingham Multisensory Training, with Gloria Olafson, teaching students with learning difficulties. Eighty hours of instruction; nine hours of supervised practicum. Contact Learning Difficulties Centre of Northern B.C., 250-564-8011, richard.lidcentre@telus.net.

AUGUST

11-15 & 18-22 Maple Ridge. Science World's Loon Lake Science Camp for Teachers, Malcolm Knapp Research Forest. Participants receive a travel subsidy. Contact 1-800-363-1611 or direct 443-7552 or Caedmon Nash, Science World, 1455 Quebec Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 3Z7, 604-443-7440, cnash@scienceworld.bc.ca.

18-19 Burnaby. Literacy Connections: Learning for Life, for K-7 teachers, presented by Literacy Network, Burnaby Mountain School. \$225; five or more: \$200. Contact Judy Dixon, 604-530-4060, jdixon@sd35.bc.ca, thinklangley.com.

25-26 Vancouver. Social Responsibility Institute, Tillicum Elementary School. Contact Louise Leung or Barb McBride, 604-713-4716.

25-28 Langley. Heat Wave: Summer Institute 2003, 20 workshops, Milner Education Centre. Contact Judy Dixon, 604-530-4060, f: 604-530-5281, jdixon@sd35.bc.ca, thinklangley.com.

27 Langley. Grade 1 Conference 12 workshops, Milner Education Centre. \$95 includes lunch and handouts. Contact Judy Dixon, 604-530-4060, jdixon@sd35.bc.ca, thinklangley.com.

OCTOBER

23-24 Fort Langley. B.C. Teachers for Peace and Global Education (PAGE) Retreat Conference, Hope and Humor in Global Ed. Contact Pummy Kaur, pkaur@netrover.com.

23-24 Burnaby. Computer-Using Educators of B.C. (CUEBC) Horizons/B.C. Business Education Assn. (BCBEA) Joint Conference, Two Towers in Education, Metrotown Hilton. Specific software applications, learning online, effective use of existing technology, and innovations with technology, for all teachers. Contact cuebchorizons.ca.

23-25 Richmond. l'Assn. Provinciale des Professeurs d'Immersion et du Programme francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (APPICP), with ACPI, Français Nouvelle Vague à la mode du Pacifique, Executive Inn. Contact Anne Louise McFarland, almcfarland@shaw.ca, acpi.schedu.umon-treal.ca/coloque2003.

23-25 Whistler. B.C. Assn. of Mathematics Teachers (BCAMT) Northwest Math Conference, Mathematics: A Peak Experience. Contact Ian deGroot, idegroot@shaw.ca.

24 Vancouver. Joint Educators Against Racism (EAR) and English as a Second Language PSA (ESLPSA) Conference, A Kaleidoscope of Learning, John Oliver Secondary School. Contact Jo-Anne Preston, 250-337-5730, jo-anne.preston@crn.net, bctf.ca/psas/ESLPSA.

24 Learning Assistance Teachers' Assn. (LATA) Conference, with Deborah Butler, Teaching Learning Disabled Students. Contact Brenda Bell, bellbg@shaw.ca.

24 Richmond. B.C. Assn. of Teachers of Modern Languages (BCATML) Conference 2003, Learning Languages Opens Doors, Delta Vancouver Airport Hotel. Contact Dinah Lewis, 8438 East Boulevard, Vancouver, BC V6P 6N7, p/f: 604-732-7010, bctf.ca/bcatml.

Charter for Public Education

Public Education is a sacred trust. As a community we promise to prepare learners for a socially responsible life in a free and democratic society, to participate in a world which each generation will shape and build. We promise a public education system which provides learners with knowledge and wisdom, protects and nurtures their natural joy of learning, encourages them to become persons of character, strength and integrity, infuses them with hope and with spirit, and guides them to resolute and thoughtful action.

Everyone has the right to a free, quality public education.

Each first Nation has the right to be recognized and respected by those within the educational institutions located in their traditional territory.

"Education is as necessary as light. It should be as common as water and as free as the air."

—Egerton Ryerson, 1847

We promise:

To recognize that the learner is at the centre of public education.

To offer learners a broad-based education which includes aesthetic, artistic, cultural, emotional, social, intellectual, academic, physical and vocational development in order that they can find and follow their hopes, dreams and passions.

To nurture and value critical thinking so that learners are equipped to be reflective and analytical global citizens.

To respect, encourage and foster the learner's role as a full participant, together with others in the educational community, in developing their own goals, learning activities and curricula.

To create an environment in which each learner can reach their greatest potential, each learning style is affirmed, and the achievements of each learner are measured and assessed accordingly.

To provide a safe and respectful environment for life-long learning which celebrates diversity, embraces the physical, spiritual, emotional and intellectual integrity of each individual, recognizes and acknowledges differences and prevents discrimination in all of its forms.

We expect:

Government to be responsible for fully funding all aspects of a quality education.

The public education system to guarantee each First Nations learner the right to an education respectful of their history, language and culture.

Learners, parents, early childhood educators, teachers, support staff, administrators, school boards, post-secondary educators, the Government of British Columbia and communities to work in partnership to meet the needs of all learners.

Strong local democratic governance within the provincial education system.

Equitable access for communities to programs, resources, experiences and opportunities for learners, regardless of geographic location or socio-economic status.

These principles reflect the consensus heard during public hearings across British Columbia, Canada, 2002–03.

www.charter.published.ca

"Any weakening of universal public education can only be a weakening of the long-standing essential role of universal public education plays in making us a civilized democracy."

—John Ralston Saul, 2002

