

TEACHER

Newsmagazine of the BC Teachers' Federation

The campaign continues



As this issue goes to press we have just been handed the Labour Relations Board order to cease and desist from advising members not to administer the FSA tests and the membership, in a province-wide vote, has agreed under protest to comply. BCTF President Irene Lanzinger talked with Teacher Editor David Denyer and shares her views and feelings at this important juncture in our campaign.



Geoff Peters Photo

What do you think have been the significant achievements of this campaign?

I've actually been thinking quite a bit about this, because we've had a campaign on the FSA going for many years as lots of people know. The campaign has been centered on having parents withdraw their children from the test. That campaign was only taking us so far and our patience with government was running out. In saying that we weren't going to administer the test this year and having such a good vote—the 85% vote, which showed such a broad base of support—took the campaign to another level and convinced more school boards to support us. We've convinced more superintendents to support us. We've shifted the media in the debate considerably. We're seeing commentators in the media questioning government—they aren't in complete agreement with us to be sure and probably never will be. But I've done a lot of that media and noticed a difference. They get the damage the ranking does, pretty clearly now. We've seen commentators like Keith Baldrey say that the test is not useful and that this matter should be settled. We wouldn't have had that shift without taking a further step in the campaign. So I think we've seen a lot of success in shifting opinion... we will have many, many districts in which teachers will not administer the test this year because boards have decided they're going to honour teachers' professional autonomy and not force them to administer the test.

The minister claimed in a radio interview this morning that the door to further discussion is always open—has that been your experience?

My experience has been that the door to discussion with the minister is open, not wide, but the door to shifting the government on this issue is never open. That's the problem. They continue to support a test that they themselves admit has problems. We've had three successive ministers of education support our position on the rankings and do nothing about them, and we know that they can take care of that issue and they haven't. Now I heard, and I don't know whether this is true, that the minister said that we refused to continue discussions with them, and that is completely untrue, completely untrue. I was phoning the minister's office on the weekend and she did not return my calls—the deputy did, but she did not. So I think she is being untruthful about our willingness to discuss this matter with her. In fact, we proposed several solutions to the problem that she rejected over and over again.

What would you like to see happen now?

I would like to see the government say we agree it should be administered on a random-sample basis. I think that's what we would all like. We'd like to see the government come to their senses particularly in view of the support in the educational community from trustees, from superintendents, from principals and vice-principals, and from the retired teachers. I hope that they will be open to

discussions about making changes. There are significant problems with the way the test is administered—by everyone's admission—so they really have to take a look at that. I also know that teachers will continue the campaign. The strength of our members' support of this campaign is one of the big wins. There is no doubt in anybody's mind now that teachers are fully behind the campaign against the FSA. So I think that progress will happen as we continue with our campaign.

Do you have any personal regrets or disappointments over what has happened?

Of course I'm disappointed that we didn't convince the minister to go to our suggestion of random sampling.

We've seen teachers invest a lot in the campaign. I was talking to one yesterday, in Burnaby, and she said to me, "I even convinced my boyfriend who's a businessman and doesn't understand anything about the test." She has invested a lot of her time and energy this year. Now we're going to say comply with the LRB order under protest; we're being ordered by a court, and threatened with discipline. She sees that as a retreat and many teachers do. And I agree with them—but it is only a partial retreat. In these kinds of political campaigns, you always have to balance the victory you've gained so far against what you might gain or not gain from continuing. Those are the difficult decisions that we're faced with as an Executive Committee. I've been faced with them many times on the BCTF Executive and all you can do

at the time is say I'm going to make the decision that I think is best for members. I regret that we didn't achieve not administering the test at all but as I said before I think we've made significant gains. I regret that some teachers who put their heart and soul into the campaign didn't get everything they wanted out of it. As teachers we sometimes think we're going to take this tough stand and we're going to win it all. We don't win it all. But we do make progress. You have to see it in that light. I think that those of us who've been around through many, many political campaigns with the Federation can see the progress we've made.

What message would you like to send to the membership at this point?

We have an amazing group of teachers in BC. They have a lot of courage and we have such a long history of being willing to take a very strong stand based on our beliefs. That culture and willingness of teachers in BC to take strong action is founded in their deep professional concern and is something that we can all be very proud of. It's the culture we want to bring young teachers into because we've been tremendously successful at having our voices heard on issues that are very important in public education over the years. I have full confidence that that will continue.

Many teachers have put a lot of hours and a lot of work into this campaign and if I had the chance I would thank every one of them.

On the inside

Contributors to this edition continue to stress the importance of attending to problems related to social inequality and poverty, regardless of economic mayhem and Olympic fever. Others speak of how these problems affect the classroom and hence what a teacher's work becomes. Meanwhile government and the employer turn a blind eye to these realities and continue to blithely indulge their addiction to accountability

systems, testing, and achievement as though nothing else matters. Various articles highlight this lack of connection between policy and the real world. For those of you who managed to slog your way through last month's crossword the solution can be found on page 16.

In contrast, a photography educator has sent us some wonderful examples of student work featured throughout this issue that shows the creative spirit is alive and well.

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President's message



Irene Lanzinger

Across the province, one of the largest and most important arbitrations in our history is taking place in a variety of locations. It is an arbitration to hear all of the class size and composition grievances from the 2006-07 and 2007-08 school years. I have had the opportunity to attend the first day in each of the two locations so far. The members who have testified have been eloquent and courageous. They have clearly articulated the situation they face as dedicated, concerned professionals who are unable to satisfy the standards they set for themselves

because of their work load. They have spoken passionately about their concern for student learning and the impact of oversize classes and lack of support on that learning.

One of the teachers testifying was a first-year secondary teacher and began the year as a TOC. Let's call her Anne. She got a job in a semestered secondary school about two weeks into the school year. She had four different courses to prepare for with no preparation time. She taught in four different rooms. The class she was testifying about was a Social Studies 9 class. It had 29

students and 8 students with special needs. These students had very significant learning and behaviour problems. There is no way to describe this class except to say that it was a class for students with special needs embedded into a regular class.

The stories of teachers at the hearing are disturbing at so many levels. While Anne's story is a dramatic example, she is not alone. Many other teachers face appalling situations. They are the real face of the lack of resources and underfunding of public education we

so often talk about.

But here's what really bothers me. Principals and superintendents are sitting on the other side of that arbitration table and claiming that Anne's class situation is educationally sound. How could they possibly justify that position? The rationale for Anne's class was "timetable constraints." Clearly they can't provide a valid educational rationale and do not have the courage to speak out and stand up for what they believe in. Thank goodness, our members have that courage.

Readers write

It's called a report card

I love my job. I've had other jobs, from waitressing, to bookkeeping, to owning and running my own business, but there's something about teaching kids that keeps me excited about work every day.

Like all teachers, I have many questions about the best ways to help my students learn. So I do a lot of reading, collaborating with colleagues, workshops/coursework, and especially a lot of work right in my classroom, trying teaching strategies that will meet the diverse needs of each student.

And yes, in my classroom assessment takes place daily—aneccdotal records, checklists, observations, quizzes, tests, self/peer evaluations, conferences, interviews, and marking of various assignments, usually criterion-based.

So why do I feel so strongly about not supporting the FSA (Foundation Skills Assessment) tests? The reason is simply that they are not helping students to learn.

Each teacher, from Kindergarten through Grade 12 assesses students on an ongoing basis. This data/information we collect guides our teaching, identifying areas we need to focus upon, areas we need to reteach, areas we need to find better ways to reach our learners. In short, our assessments are an essential part of the learning process.

Unfortunately, the FSAs do not provide teachers with useful information. If a teacher needed to administer an FSA in February to find out how their students were doing, it would be far too late to use the data to develop ways to improve learning in that school year.

The most well known use of FSA results is for the Fraser Institute (an organization that has nothing to do with improving learning) to rank our schools. Worse still, learners in schools with low rankings (who work just as hard as students in the higher ranked schools) are NOT

given more supports so that their learning will be enhanced. In fact, lower rankings leads to lower self-esteem, which we all know is not good for learning.

Time is precious. Our school days are full of many worthy subjects that my generation never had at school—technology, career planning, social responsibility, daily physical activity, French. Spending the five to eight hours it takes to administer FSAs is not good use of student time; at least not until the FSA data is used to help students.

Teachers are not against assessment. If the public needs transparency and accountability regarding how BC students are doing, they have access to thousands of hours of assessment data at least three times a year. That data is called report cards.

Jennie Boulanger
Burnaby

Correction

I was incorrectly described as a TOC in Vancouver in the Jan./Feb. 2009 *Teacher*. I teach at Guildford Park Secondary School in Surrey.

Susanna Allevato Quail
Surrey

Warm feet, warm hearts

As part of our social responsibility goals, we encourage service activities for our students. We help a family in Guatemala as well as undertaking other service projects each year. This past December, we held our 2nd annual sock hop at Nanoose Bay Elementary School. Children were asked to bring a pair of new socks suitable for babies, children, or adults. Although we are a small school, we collected over 200 pairs. Parents, children, and staff had a great time dancing, and our whole school community felt good about helping others. The socks were donated to local families as well as a shelter.

I read recently that Our Place in Victoria is in great need of socks for the homeless who use their

services. I'm sure there are many organizations all over the province who would welcome sock donations, and our own schools have kids who need them too. When your feet are cold, everything is cold.

I thought other teachers might be interested in hosting their own "bring socks sock hop."

Virginia Brucker
Qualicum

Health and safety

"They tested the air and said everything was fine."

"Did you get a copy of the results?"

"No."

"What kind of testing did they do?"

"I don't know."

"When did they do the testing?"

"I don't know."

"Who did the testing?"

"I don't know."

I have had variations of this conversation in speaking with many locals throughout BC. Under the *Workers Compensation Act*, workers have the right to know and the right to participate. This means that when the site-based committee recommends that schools or classrooms have indoor air quality testing, the workers get to request specific tests, participate when the actual testing takes place, and receive a copy of the test results. These results then are reviewed by the site-based committee with further recommendations made if necessary.

If you have any questions regarding your rights, please contact me. Yours in health and safety.

Karen Langenmaier, BCTF Health & Safety officer, klangenmaier@bctf.ca.

Testing obsession challenged

By David Denyer

A recent working paper entitled "Raising education achievement and breaking the cycle of inequality in the United Kingdom" has just been released by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Even though the education system in the UK is swamped to a greater degree than ours with "targets" and "benchmarks" and heavy duty testing, the observations and conclusions are instructive as BC continues to head down a similar road.

School choice is acknowledged to work only with a "well-informed and confident clientele" and that, along with other reasons, places children from lower socio-economic backgrounds at a disadvantage. "An emphasis on competition between schools also goes hand in hand with an emphasis on testing and targets."

Coupled with insufficient and inefficient funding, the system conspires to perpetuate inequality and does nothing to improve the quality of education.

In addition, other concerns are raised relating to the prevalence of testing, such as the risk that children are being "taught to the test" and that the focus on core subjects is leading to a narrower curriculum.

Coupled with insufficient and inefficient funding, the system conspires to perpetuate inequality and does nothing to improve the quality of education.

Recommendations centre on increasing support to early childhood education and addressing social and economic inequities through increased funding to be allocated where needed.

Featured in a prominent position in the report is an item entitled "Lessons from Finland: The role of societal values." Since the BCTF has in the past also referred to Finland as having an education system that we in BC would do well to emulate, the report is reproduced below.

"Reduce the focus on testing and targets, and put more focus on supporting weak students and schools."

"Lessons from Finland: The role of societal values"

"Much of the Finnish success in education performance—Finland consistently performs the best in the PISA (OECD Programme for International Student Assessment) tests—can be attributed to Finland's equality approach in comprehensive education, where standards are raised by lifting the many rather than by pushing a privileged few. There is no streaming in the system

and the small variance in the PISA results can be traced back to the use of four different levels of potential intervention when pupils fall behind—by the teacher, school assistants, the special needs teacher, and the multidisciplinary teams including for example, a psychologist, a social worker, or someone from public housing services. Other factors that are considered to have a positive influence are the small size of schools, thorough teacher training, and low mobility of teachers and students (OECD, 2005b).

"Interestingly, and unlike the United Kingdom, Finland places no emphasis on individual testing or measurement-driven accountability. Rather, as discussed in a recent case study report of Finnish School Leadership (Pont, Nusche and Hopkins, 2008) the high performance of Finnish schools is attributed to a strong commitment to, and widespread culture of, learning in school and society more widely. This culture of learning is reflected in the pervasive and increasing attention that educators pay to self-evaluation as a way to improve their schools. It is also supported by Finnish society, which has a high regard for education and for teachers; indeed, entry into teaching is demanding and highly competitive, with only 1 in 10 applicants being admitted. The public also supports the goal of the education system for there to be "no social exclusion... so that nobody is forgotten." For schools suffering from failure and difficulty, the local authority tends not to focus on removing staff, exerting control, or imposing interventions but instead asks "What has gone wrong? How can we help the school?" The Finnish system does not advocate competitive choice between schools or order its schools in public performance rankings. The philosophy of Finnish school leadership training providers is that 'all schools must be good enough and there is no reason to have elite schools and bad schools.'

"Given the important role of Finland's distinctive social values that underpin the school system, it is not clear how easily Finland's exceptional educational performance could be transferred to other countries, such as the United Kingdom. In this respect, one of the key lessons from Finland for other countries may be that successful and sustainable education reform cannot be undertaken alone but is directly linked to widespread social and economic reform."

—ECO/WKP(2008)41

For the full working paper, go to <http://tinyurl.com/dxfmoq>.

David Denyer is assistant director, BCTF Communications & Campaigns Division and editor of *Teacher* News magazine.

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Part 2

Lack of government action places BC children at higher risk of living in poverty

By Margaret White

Educators in British Columbia, more than any other province are facing the challenge of how best to support children to overcome educational barriers associated with poverty. In 2006, BC (21.9% of children) recorded the highest before-tax-child-poverty rate in Canada (15.8% of children) for the fifth year in a row, according to First Call BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition's 2008 Child Poverty Report Card.

High child-poverty rates persisted during a time of economic prosperity. BC experienced strong economic growth in recent years, accompanied by large budget surpluses. BC's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by 4.4% in 2005 and 2006, according to a Ministry of Finance report. Yet, the response of the BC government to the economic struggles families were facing was not sufficient to bring about a meaningful reduction in the child-poverty rate.

Other provinces have acted

Perhaps most disturbing is how poorly BC fares in its efforts to reduce child and family poverty, compared to other provinces. First Call's 2008 Report Card on Child-Poverty shows that government transfers in BC reduced the child poverty rate by 7.1% in 2006. In other words, without government transfers, the proportion of children living in poverty in BC families would have been 29%. Some progress was made but not enough. BC child-poverty rates remained the highest in the country.

Perhaps this is because BC did the least to reduce the child-poverty rate in 2006 compared to all other provinces. Several provinces made remarkable progress in reducing child-poverty rates with government transfers, including Newfoundland and Labrador (-21.8%), New Brunswick (-15.0%), Prince Edward Island (-15.8%), and Quebec (-13.5%).

Quebec chose a "family-friendly" approach, implementing a comprehensive framework of policies to address the underlying causes of family poverty. These are described in detail by Catherine Krull of Queen's University in a 2007 article in the *Canadian Review of Social Policy*. The Quebec approach seeks to reduce family poverty while supporting families to balance work and family responsibilities. To achieve this goal, Quebec provided parents with universal access to affordable childcare, expanded maternity and parental leave programs, and consolidated and increased income supports/benefits for one- and two-parent families. Working parents are also eligible for

up to 10-days leave per year for childcare.

Using the Market Basket Measure, which is sensitive to provincial differences in cost of living, a recent Statistics Canada report on low-income children revealed the probability of a child being low-income in Quebec in 2004 was 8% compared to 23% for children in BC. The Quebec example shows the rest of Canada that it is within our means and a reasonable expectation to make significant progress in improving the economic well-being of the poorest families in the country.

Educational vulnerability increases

The effects of persistent high poverty rates in BC will be felt in the education system for years to come. It is well documented in the research literature that students living in poverty have less favourable educational outcomes than students whose families have more resources to draw upon.

Recent research shows that the vulnerability of young children entering public school increased during recent years. The Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) assesses the vulnerability of Kindergarten students on a number of indicators, using the Early Development Instrument. This instrument measures several dimensions of early childhood development including physical, social, and emotional well-being, cognitive/language skills, and communication skills/general knowledge. HELP researchers recently reported on a comparison of two periods in which these measures were taken—2001 to 2004 and 2004 to 2007, which showed that the percentage of children vulnerable on any scale increased in 26 school districts and decreased in 7 school districts between the two periods of data collection.

Improving the economic well-being of children and families

There is growing support across the country for governments to take action to reduce poverty.

According to an October 2008 poll commissioned by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and conducted by Environics, 87% of British Columbians say the prime minister and premiers need to set concrete targets and timelines to reduce poverty and measure their progress.

The Canadian Council on Social Development's *Growing Up in North America: The Economic Well-Being of Children in Canada, the United States, and Mexico* outlines a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy for low-income families in Canada. Recommendations include a mix of social and labour policy to provide income supports to alleviate and prevent child and family poverty, adjustment assistance programs to families affected by economic dislocation, and access to affordable housing and quality childcare. Reform of labour market

policy is also needed to encourage the growth of better quality jobs as well as policies to improve access to education and health services.

Campaign 2000, a non-partisan, cross-Canada coalition of over 120 national, provincial, and community organizations calculate that an increase of maximum national child benefit from \$3,271 to \$5,100 per child is necessary to achieve a significant poverty reduction. Their 2008 report also recommends the Canadian government expand eligibility for Employment Insurance, increase federal work tax credits to \$2,400 per year, increase the federal minimum wage to \$10 per hour, implement a national housing plan with substantial funding for social housing, provide affordable and accessible early childhood education and care, develop an equity plan to address barriers to achieving equal opportunity for all children, and implement a specific poverty reduction strategy for Aboriginal families.

In December 2008, the BC Office of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives released their report—*A Poverty Reduction Plan for BC*. Recommendations include improved access and levels of income support for non-employed individuals, improvements to the minimum wage and restoration of employment standards protection, focusing efforts on groups most vulnerable to poverty, immediate expansion of affordable housing, universally funded childcare, an increase in funding for post-secondary training for low-income individuals, and an expansion of home care support and residential care services. The report suggests concrete targets and timelines for implementing each of these recommendations.

Well-funded education plan is needed

An essential component of a poverty reduction strategy is to develop a well-funded education plan for how best to support all students including the growing number of vulnerable children entering the BC school system.

Educational policy needs to be responsive to the needs of all vulnerable students. Dr. Clyde Hertzman and Dr. Lori Irwin recommend universal access to programs to address the early learning needs of vulnerable students in BC, based on their research with the Human Early Learning Partnership in developing community-based population-level outcome measures of early child development. They caution that "While the highest risk

of vulnerability is found in the poorest neighbourhoods, the largest number of children with developmental vulnerabilities is spread across middle-class neighbourhoods."

Researchers Benjamin Levin and J. Anthony Riffel examined ways in which poverty is understood in school systems and the ways in which schools respond to poverty. They note that while educators cannot solve poverty, there is much that can be done to support students. Potential solutions include whole school instructional approaches, schools working closely with parents and the broader community (e.g., community liaison workers), clothing and nutritional programs, the elimination of school fees, early learning programs, and community and economic development.

Levin and Riffel concluded that with the exception of some urban areas, few school districts have advocacy groups to effectively lobby on issues related to poverty and education. Without this political pressure, school districts and provincial governments have not made poverty a priority issue, because policy-makers either do not perceive it as their problem, or do not believe they can do anything about it. In an era of funding cutbacks, urban schools have increasingly had to defend funding for inner city programs.

Brownell and colleagues with the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy, make a number of recommendations arising from their population-based research in Manitoba on socio-economic status and educational outcomes. They recommend a social program design be universal with a need-based focus and include early childhood programs, quality childcare, parenting programs, early school years intervention programs, as well as programs to address the gender gap and prevent withdrawal from secondary education.

Joseph Flessa's literature review on poverty and education for the Elementary Teachers' Federation of

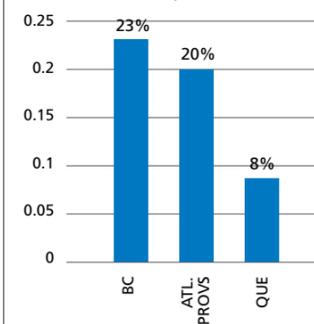
Ontario, in 2007, evaluates existing responses and potential solutions to address poverty and education concerns. He cautions that while schools support the concept of school-community connections, most have difficulty moving to "concrete policies and practices that make real connections between schools and homes." This is, in part, due to an unacknowledged difference in expectations, values, and socio-economic position between predominantly middle-class educational institutions and the community that they are seeking to make connections with. He argues that the deficit framework that has historically defined educational policy creates an adversarial relationship between school and community, and needs to be challenged for meaningful progress to take place.

With commitment and a well-thought-out strategy, governments can make a difference in improving the economic well-being of families. Educators can and do make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children but need resources and sound educational policy to do so. It is long past time for the provincial government to heed the call to develop and implement a poverty reduction strategy, following the lead of more progressive provinces in Canada.

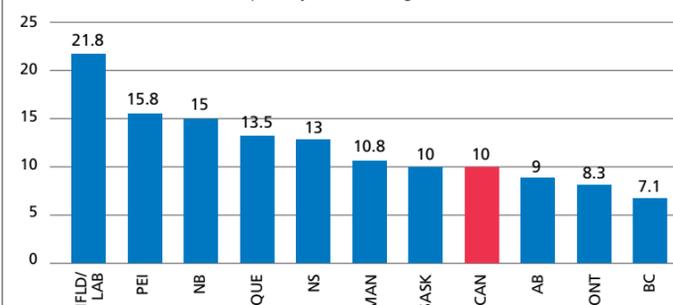
Margaret White is a researcher, BCTF Research and Technology Division.

References available upon request.

Probability of children being in a low-income situation: Market Basket Measure - Selected provinces (2004)



Percent reduction in the child poverty rate due to government transfers: 2006



Looking back

70 years ago

Those responsible for the education of youth in a democratic country are in a special sense the custodians of human freedom. It is theirs to train up a generation that values its heritage; it is theirs to see where and how that heritage is endangered; it is theirs to be studying earnestly how it may be strengthened; and particularly it is theirs to stand shoulder to shoulder for the protection of freedom of thought and speech. Teaching is no job for the intellectually invertebrate and emasculate.

— March 1939, *The BC Teacher*

50 years ago

Why do so many adults look back on their high school encounter with French as a grisly experience? One reason could surely be the identification of language study with the memorization and application of grammar rules, and the exceptions to the rules, and the exceptions to the exceptions. Too often this was the

only activity that was emphasized in the French classroom. Oral usage, and the discovery of a different culture, were frequently neglected or completely ignored.

— March 1959, *The BC Teacher*

30 years ago

In secondary schools, increasingly, students are finding that with the academic pressure and the quest for taking pre-university requisites they cannot fit arts courses into their timetables. I'm concerned that this "back to basic" kind of education in the present context of an economic recession is causing parents to look upon education more as job training. Job training is just one aspect of schooling. UBC, for instance, has raised its course requirements, and by 1981 students will have to have taken certain prescribed courses. The arts are conspicuously absent from this prescribed list. The sad thing is that even students who do not plan to attend university are falling in line

by adhering to university entrance requirements.

—March/April 1979, *The BC Teacher*

10 years ago

The BCPVA report attacking the provincial collective agreement says administrative officers saw virtually no benefit from more than 1,200 new teachers the agreement provides schools over the next three years. Not one defended the value of small classes in the primary grades. B.C.'s administrators have positioned themselves on the wrong side of the fence on this issue. They spurn much-needed resources for classrooms in favour of increased managerial prerogatives, prerogatives they defend in the name of "flexibility." Teachers know all too well that flexibility is a euphemism for yet another student in an overcrowded and inclusive classroom.

— March 1999

Teacher newsmagazine

Chris Boeking, Keating Elementary School, Saanich

Olympic budget puts paid to all-day Kindergarten



By Noel Herron

If anyone doubts the imminent demise of the emergence of a province-wide all-day Kindergarten program in BC in the near future, think again.

The emergence of an apparently insatiable Olympic appetite for taxpayer money coupled with the recent release of several bogus Olympic budgets, points to not just a postponement, but the demise of key education initiatives, among them universal all-day Kindergarten.

To think otherwise flies in the face of reality.

It's not just the rushed January convening of a special session of the provincial legislature in Victoria to bail out the billion dollar Olympic Village boondoggle, but the upcoming gathering storm around the hidden Olympic security budget that could also top a million, eliminating any pretence of the availability of sufficient provincial funds in Victoria for essential early childhood programs.

Ironically, the Vancouver Olympic Committee and the International Olympic Committee have excluded the highly regarded humanitarian organization *Right to Play* from operating from the Vancouver Olympic Village site as it did in previous Olympics.

Right to Play uses sports and play programs to improve health, develop life skills, and foster peace for children and communities in some of the world's most disadvantaged countries.

On top of the Olympic Village's potentially heavy debt, this further tarnishes the iconic status of this controversial site.

However, it was the late January

front-page analysis by *The Vancouver Sun*, pegging the overall Olympic debt at a massive \$6 billion (and counting), that puts paid to any remaining hope for the implementation of universal all-day Kindergarten in all of BC's 59 school districts in the near future.

Shamefully, it has now emerged that both Canadian and BC taxpayers have been either hoodwinked or lied to—in this case, both—by politicians at all levels (municipal, provincial, and federal) in the lead up to next year's ballyhooed Olympic sports extravaganza.

For the past three years, provincial politicians have shamelessly promised action on the early childhood file. There has been no let up on the hype and spin from the Ministry of Education on this topic.

Yes, parents were told we are going to have great early childhood programs in BC, and make no mistake about it, they will be some of the best in Canada. The provincial government pleaded that it needed a little more time to "get it right," and then, as our education minister boasted, "We are going to lead the way."

The BC Liberals' 2007 Speech from the Throne belatedly conceded that "currently approximately 25% of children (in BC) are not ready to learn when they enter Kindergarten."

Vague and over-the-top promises followed this speech, such as Shirley Bond's assertion that by the year 2012, BC will have, (get this), "pre-Kindergarten classes for three-year-olds" when at the same time the prospects for all-day Kindergarten for five-year-olds, as the minister well knew, were rapidly disappearing over BC's financial

horizon.

However, that did not prevent Bond from claiming that currently, "BC leads the country in early childhood education" when in reality, according to most analysts, BC is close to being dead last.

Even more outrageous, after five years of leading Canada in child poverty stats, Premier Campbell, with a straight face, in an end-of-year television interview stated that children still remained his top priority. Opposition critics lost no time in deriding the premier for his once-a-month-priority-proclivity on this and other topics.

Victoria, over the past few years, has not only created, but carefully cultivated enormous and patently false, expectations in the early childhood arena. The media messaging on this was as unrelentless as it was bogus.

Many parents of preschoolers were looking forward to all-day programs for their five-year-olds next September only to realize that they have now been left with empty promises and dashed expectations.

But as provincial budget time approached in February with the chance of very little funds, or no funds, available in Victoria's coffers, Shirley Bond in mid-November started warning parents that all-day Kindergarten would not start soon.

Pleading that the provincial plan requires additional in-depth study before it reaches the approval stage, it is clear that the provincial Early Childhood Agency's province-wide "consultation" plan was yet another stalling tactic to disguise the lack of meaningful action by the BC Liberals. (To put the minister's weak plea in perspective, the Vancouver Board of Education has run all-day Kindergarten classes for over two

decades in many of its schools.)

With over 3,000 responses being submitted to the Early Childhood Agency, the report, long past its due date is, being viewed, according to some critics, as a provincial participation put-on similar to the now famous Liberals' "dialogue" on health two years ago.

The Early Childhood Agency's official report, slated to be released in mid-December, appears to have been delayed indefinitely—no doubt in a belated attempt to give some heft to the Liberal's May election platform on early education. (Look for a plethora of early childhood promises in this document.)

The studied absence by the provincial Liberals from the January First Call Coalition Child and Youth Issues Forum (a provincial advocacy organization representing over 80 affiliated groups) when the other two provincial parties, Green and NDP were present, speaks volumes about the government's unwillingness to discuss its early childhood agenda. (See First Call's position on early childhood programs.)

As the situation now stands, thousands of needy preschoolers will continue to be left behind as Victoria's current restrictive and discriminatory entrance requirements for all-day Kindergarten hold sway.

Increasingly, these children will fall behind their peers as they move from primary into intermediate grades and consequently they will be denied access to the educational opportunities they deserve.

All-day Kindergarten would, based on research and practice, usher in a new era and a genuine strong start for between 7,000 to 10,000 five-year-olds annually. Each year that slips by without province-wide implementation means that thousands of these kids will continue to fall behind.

Who are these children? In a sense, they represent the "forgotten" early childhood kids who struggle for the first three or four years of their elementary schooling. They are a diverse group: children of the working poor; inner-city kids; minority-language students; children who for many reasons do not receive the rich preliteracy experience with the hands-on interactions that all children relish; and the so-called "grey area" students who do not fall into specific provincial categories that

would enable them to receive the early intervention boost they need.

Where does all of this leave us on the eve of a provincial election?

What we have seen over the past three years is a dubious collage of early childhood images—photo-ops for various provincial ministers making announcements, title changes for school boards, book handouts for preschool parents, and misnamed and misleading drop-in programs, masquerading as Head Start programs for a smattering of preschoolers across the province. (Incidentally, the Obama administration, as part of its new long-term stimulus package, plans to add \$1 to \$2 billion to its highly successful nationwide Head Start Program.) All of these elements have one thing in common—superficiality—as the BC Liberals craft a political image for preschool years that fails to match their actions.

We will let our credibility challenged education minister, Shirley Bond, have the last word: "We remain committed to an aggressive early learning agenda in this province," the minister has flatly stated when asked about the repeated delays and foot dragging in delivering solid early childhood initiatives.

If you believe that statement, I have a bridge to sell you.

Noel Herron is a former teacher and Vancouver school trustee.

First Call's position on all-day/early Kindergarten programs

First Call feels that expanded Kindergarten has the potential to serve children and families well if it is properly implemented.

Proper implementation would include:

- inclusive and play-based programming.
- staff who are trained in early childhood care and education.
- ability to meet the needs of working families.
- universal access.
- inclusion of parents as knowledgeable partners in relation to service providers.
- maintenance of current childcare licensing ratio and space requirements in any school-based programs for younger children.

For the full document go to: www.firstcallbc.org/earlyChildhood-WhatsNew.html

Taking the heart out of the Olympics

Is an uncritical view of the games the best we can do for our students?

By Paul Demers

Situated between Vancouver and Whistler, Squamish is at the heart of the 2010 Olympics. Well, we were at one time; we even had banners lining our streets proclaiming us "the Heart of 2010."

Before Vancouver won the Olympic bid, VANOC was elated to have Squamish as cheerleader. Our "Heart of 2010" banners were strung along the Sea-to-Sky Highway to show IOC members that our community—and the people of BC—supported the bid. It worked. We were all so happy.

Then things changed. About a year after getting the bid, Squamish received word from VANOC that the "Heart of 2010" slogan was a copyright infringement; the banners would have to come down. This was shortly after the Olympia Pizza

fiasco in Vancouver. Since that time, VANOC and the IOC have continued to enforce their heavy-handed and mean-spirited copyright and sponsor protection efforts.

Recently, a Squamish mother took her daughter to the Callaghan Valley cross-country centre to rent her some skis and send her out for a

As a teacher stuck right in the middle of the Olympic Dream, I'm beginning to have real concerns about my relationship with the Games.

day on the trails, but she only had a Mastercard and the Callaghan is an Olympic site. Because Visa is the Olympic sponsor—and Mastercard is not—she was unable to rent the equipment to have her daughter ski. So although the Callaghan is a taxpayer-funded facility, British Columbians without Visa cards can't use it because of a corporate sponsorship agreement. Something is terribly wrong with this picture.

I think that most of us try not to

be cynical about the Olympics—it is one of the few events that brings the world together in celebration—but news on January 22 that the IOC has banished "Right to Play" from all Olympic venues stopped me in my tracks. "Right to Play" is a Toronto-based non-profit that uses sports and play programs with disadvantaged youth in third-world nations to improve health, develop life skills, and foster peace. The organization, which was created by Olympic athletes at the Lillehammer Olympic, has grown steadily and maintained a stellar reputation around the world.

So why would the Olympic movement cut ties with this organization? Simple: money. "Right to Play" is sponsored by Mitsubishi and GM is the official Olympic sponsor. VANOC had opened this hornet's nest in October 2008 with a ruling that "Right to Play" wouldn't be permitted in the athlete's village. Public outrage forced VANOC to backtrack, and it appears that they left the IOC to finish the job.

As a teacher stuck right in the middle of the Olympic Dream, I'm beginning to have real concerns

about my relationship with the Games. Our school board is an uncritical supporter of the Olympics and actively encourages teachers and students to get involved, even offering "2010 Olympic Workshops" with classroom and school activities to teachers. We've also had assemblies in which our secondary school students were being recruited to volunteer during the Games.

It's incumbent upon us as educators not only to cheer for Canada, but also to jeer when the principles of "Swifter, Higher, Stronger" are more represented in corporate greed than in athletic prowess.

But I wonder about the ethics of getting too close to what has to be seen as a corporate organization. In this sense, the Olympics is not unlike *Pepsi* and *Nike*, and we would never allow our students or our curriculum to be compromised

to promote those corporate agendas. So what is different about the Olympics? Why feel that we have to jump on board the bandwagon?

I suspect we all hope that the Olympics maintain some of the ideals espoused by its founder, Pierre de Coubertin. I think that despite the evidence, we've come to see the Olympics as unsullied by money and greed. Somehow above it all. But it's impossible to ignore the facts.

For teachers and students in BC, however, these Olympics can offer the opportunity to examine the Games and to test some of our assumptions. I believe the Olympics provide us with the chance to critically examine the role of corporate structure in sport and entertainment. We should explore government's role in the Olympics. It's incumbent upon us as educators not only to cheer for Canada, but also to jeer when the principles of "Swifter, Higher, Stronger" are more represented in corporate greed than in athletic prowess.

It's not enough to be the "heart of 2010," we can and should also provide some thought about ethical issues around the Olympics for our students.

Paul Demers teaches at Howe Sound Secondary School, Squamish.

New SFU Masters in teacher union/professional organization leadership

Leadership in education comes from the classroom and the union, not just from those in formal positions of leadership. A new SFU program is aimed at teachers interested in their leadership development through an MEd in Teacher Union/Professional Organization Leadership.

This will be a cohort program running from September 2009 through summer 2011. The courses during the school year meet on Friday evening and all day Saturday, about every second week. Courses will also be offered in the summer of 2010 and 2011.

This program is directed to those who want to enter into reflection, research, and dialogue about leadership with a focus on union and related work. It will focus on applying organizational, leadership, and educational theories to issues of practice.

Participants will have the opportunity to incorporate the acquisition of knowledge and skills in their day-to-day work, and to have their

experiences incorporated into course work.

Two members of the BCTF Research Department will teach in the program. Larry Kuehn (EdD) will offer the initial course on "Contemporary Issues in the Leadership of Teacher Union/Professional Organizations." Charlie Naylor (PhD) will offer a course called "Building Leadership with Community in a Globalized World." Other courses will be taught by SFU faculty.

This program may be of particular interest to current teacher leaders and those interested in becoming more active in leadership, such as local and provincial committee members, school union reps, and PSA activists.

Applicants must meet the SFU requirements for admission to Graduate Studies. The deadline is March 15, 2009.

Information about the program and application process can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/bv7tg6>.

—Larry Kuehn



Salmon Arm Secondary School photographers: (Top) Kaitlin Howarth—Autumn Leaves and Callum Nord—Pouring Light.

Teach in the USA

By Sharon Parker

"Teach in the USA" read the ad in the *Teacher* newsmagazine. Don't ask me why but after a 30-year career in the BC education system as a teacher and administrator, I thought that teaching in the USA would be a viable alternative to retirement. How wrong I turned out to be. With my early retirement cheque in the bank I answered the ad. I was ripe for adventure.

I had investigated exchange teaching and attended the BCTF seminars. Excellent preparation. But I had no teaching position to exchange—I was retired. So there I was, at a seminar in Vancouver hosted by Visiting International Faculty, the recruiters who had placed the ad. The information I got was addictive. I filled out the

The school is well equipped by BC standards. Each class has a Smartboard, tv, video, lots of books and supplies.

application forms, got my fingerprints done, submitted sample lesson plans, and returned months later for an interview. What was compelling me to submit to this torture at the end of a successful career? Adrenalin flowed when I heard about warm winters, small classes, and my highly desirable credential...special ed.

I accepted a position, teaching a special class of 10 students with a mixture of learning disabilities. So it was with enthusiasm and ignorance that my husband and I traveled across America, almost as far as we could go. We had a ¾ ton truck, towing a 31 foot rv. What were we thinking? We were going to South Carolina to Cross Elementary School near Charleston. Where? Honestly, I had to get a map. Think Florida, go north for two states, ah...on the Atlantic Coast. There it was! And what an adventure we had!

My husband is a retired English teacher so he was the perfect support. And support I did need. I had no idea the amount of work I would need to do to adequately teach my students. The school is rural, 500 students, 90% African-American and 90% poor. My students would write the high-



stakes tests that American students complete each spring. The school is well equipped by BC standards. Each class has a Smartboard, tv, video, lots of books and supplies. All my colleagues are certified, most with masters degrees and many with doctorates. So what's wrong with this picture?

Let me describe my typical day. School starts with breakfast in the classroom at 7:00 a.m., so I have to be up by 5:30 a.m. and on the road by 6:20 a.m. After breakfast our instructional day begins and we go through to 11:00 a.m., then I eat lunch with my students in the cafeteria. After lunch the paraprofessional attached to my class takes them for recess and I have an hour for teacher preparation, meetings, and individual lessons to students. Then the students return until dismissal time at 2:00 p.m. Compare a 5-hour instructional day to a 6.5-hour instructional day, five days a week. The students in our school work very hard for all those hours, then they are expected to complete homework at home every night. So though I may pass for an industrious educator, let me assure you that my students are even more hardworking and put in longer hours.

And the rewards of this venture have me spouting superlatives. Retired superlatives. I was surprised that the salaries in some states are not even close to BC salaries. So it wasn't money that was fab. Let me tell you. My students come to school every day, homework completed, prepared to work. Their parents value education as their child's ticket to a better life. If I phone parents with a concern I can bet on the response. "Thank you for

calling, teacher. We'll make this right (whatever the concern) or I'll come down to the school house, and I'll deal with my kid." Of course, there's one exception in every class...but it's only one, not ten. When I discipline a student the administrators support me. Our school subscribes to a positive behaviour model of discipline. Our school usually does well in our state's high-stakes tests, but we have our struggles.

My students come to school every day, homework completed, prepared to work.

I am returning to BC this summer because of visa restrictions. I am returning contented. I worked hard for six years and leave behind a great school and staff. My commitment to the school and US education has earned me a soft cushion on the couch. I don't have to cook...my husband cooks great meals. Hey, he golfs everyday. They swap recipes out there, don't they? We toured the southern US and visited New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Miami, and Chicago. We learned about Afro-American culture in the Deep South. We met hundreds of international teachers from around the world through Visiting International Faculty. We slipped out of our comfort zone and did have an adventure. I recall that ad again—Teach in the USA. The latest copy of *Teacher* had another one—Teach in China...

Sharon Parker is returning from six years as a special education teacher in South Carolina.

What's a PIRC?

By Geoff Peters

There's a new acronym in education: PIRC and it's coming to your district! It stands for Parent Information Resource Co-ordinator.

So what are they? And what will they mean for your community?

PIRCs are about 100 parents from most school districts in BC who have learned leadership, adult education, team building, and public-speaking skills. A key component of the program was knowledge about the roles, responsibilities, and expectations for all stakeholder groups in the public education system. The program was sponsored by BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC), and the course, which required travel to Vancouver over many weekends, was designed in partnership with the BC Educational Leadership Council (BCELC). BCTF was one of the education stakeholder groups on the advisory group overseeing the program. Parents attended SPLSS (Supporting Parent Leadership Seminar Series) over a 15-month period which ended in November 2008. PIRCs will use their

newly developed skills and knowledge with local school Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) and District Parent Advisory Councils (DPACs).

We asked Ron Broda, president of the BCCPAC, about the program's origins. "We saw that leadership succession was an issue that PACs shared with other organizations like the BC Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association. They were benefiting from a leadership series co-ordinated by BCELC. Our Past-President Kim Howland and then 2nd Vice-President Lori Tedrick had worked with the BCPVPA in presenting a session on parent involvement to their Summer Short Course for newly appointed principals and vice-principals. They were also aware of a leadership seminar series developed by BCELC for principals and thought we could create something similar. There was a great need to communicate reliable, valid, and credible information and knowledge to the average parent. Some PACs were very effective while others were focusing their efforts in other areas such as fundraising."

PIRCs are already working in their districts, making their boards of education, PACs, and DPACs aware of the workshops, support, and advice they can offer. Broda is very proud and feels SPLSS has been very successful. "It has been a pleasure watching the transformation in the participants. They brought a wide range of agendas and preconceived notions. They have gained great confidence in our public education system and know how high-performing our system really is. Including more visible minority parents and Aboriginal parents to reach out and include more of their own communities in PACs is a huge success. They have developed leadership and speaking skills, know about adult learning styles, and how to make presentations and communicate clearly. I know this has increased their empathy for teachers and the work teachers do."

PIRCs will be co-ordinated and supported by Teresa Augustine out of the BCCPAC office in Burnaby.

Geoff Peters is an assistant director, BCTF Communications and Campaigns Division.

March 8: Moving society forward through women's equality

By Jane Turner

For over 60 years, she kept a secret. Her 50-year-old son did not find out about it until this year. She told him when she decided to go to Shanghai and speak to Dr. Su, the region's leading researcher into Japanese war crimes against the Chinese people during the Asia-Pacific war. Madam Tan needed her son to translate for her. Her dialect was such that only her family and the local villagers would understand her. So, bravely, she revealed the secret that for so long had been buried deep within her soul.

As a young girl she had tried to hide in southern China to avoid being kidnapped by the Japanese Imperial Army. One day her luck ran out and she was discovered, taken by the army, and sent to what has been euphemistically called a "comfort station." At age 15 she was systematically raped by Japanese soldiers who wanted to avail themselves of her 'comfort.' After the war, she returned to her home, looking for some kind of penalty to be delivered to her abductors and rapists. Instead, she was called a prostitute and blamed for her time as a military sexual slave of the Japanese army.

The Japanese government has never formally apologized to the thousands of women who were forced into sexual slavery...

To this day, no international condemnation has been handed out to the Japanese government and the actions of its army during the Asia Pacific war. The Japanese government has never formally apologized to the thousands of women who were forced into sexual slavery, nor has there been any restitution for the lost years, the inability to bear children, and the social ostracism that resulted because these women became part of the spoils of war.

I was part of a group of Canadian teachers who went to China and Korea in the summer of 2008 to hear the stories of the survivors of the Asia Pacific war, which extended from 1931 to 1945. During our two-week trip, the nameless, faceless aggregate, 'women,' became as real to us as our own friends, neighbours, and families. We were privileged to hear the first-hand accounts of women and men abused, traumatized, and forever hurt by the atrocities of the Japanese Imperial Army.

Organized by the Canada and BC Association for Learning and Preserving the History of World War II in Asia, (ALPHA), our opportunity to listen to the testimony of women, Chinese and Korean, who were

forced into military sexual slavery and men who were the victims of biological warfare and forced slave labour, made the horrors of war very real and personal. I began to understand how important it was for them and the rest of the world to hear the Japanese government admit wrong-doing and apologize for their atrocities.

All of this happened so long ago. It may be difficult to understand why networks of people around the world are working to achieve restitution for crimes committed decades earlier. Perhaps *The Vancouver Sun* editorial of November 11, 2008, gives us part of the answer.

The editorial was titled, "When women are the battlefield." It described the current conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where, "Some (women) have been raped with gun barrels and sticks and knives. Some have been raped by dozens of men in a single day... There are hundreds of thousands of them. Women are the battlefield in the Congo's long, recurrent civil war. Rape is a cheap and effective weapon in that war, because it fractures families and communities, spreads disease, and humiliates the men who watch, at gunpoint, as their wives, mothers, daughters, and sisters are raped."

We have not learned from the lessons of the past—abusing women as part of an overall war strategy. No, that's wrong. These lessons have been learned too well and refined to a disgraceful degree. The Japanese army kept women as military sexual slaves and used them as medical guinea pigs for cruel and bizarre experiments. Instead of learning that armies cannot rape and mutilate women because they will be held to account when the war is over, it seems that the lesson history teaches is that abuse of women is a part of warfare, something that governments and their military can and do get away with.

March 8 celebrates International Women's day. On this March 8, let's remember and celebrate the contributions women have made to society along with pledging to help stop the atrocities perpetrated by armies against female civilians. Whether it's supporting Canada ALPHA in its pursuit to have the Japanese government acknowledge the atrocities of the Asia Pacific war or going to the vdjay.org, website to buy handbags made by women in the Congo's hospitals who are recovering from sexual violence and learning to support themselves by sewing or doing crafts.

Let's support the women who have paid too high a price.

Jane Turner is an assistant director, BCTF Professional and Social Issues Division.



Public education is repeating history

By Henry Armstrong

Public schools in British Columbia may well reflect the negative impact of political wars. There are two major events worthy of note in these wars: Expo 86 and Olympics 2010. When governments undertake costly megaprojects, investments in education and healthcare are the first political sacrifices.

Real funding of public schools was reduced annually, and three times in one year, preceding Expo. The morale of public school staff was reaching new lows. In an effort to counter the negative impact of the political wars, the school boards of the province acted to inject some creative and positive forces by sponsoring a World Congress on Education and Technology to run with Expo 86. In May 1986, educators and technologists from 57 nations came together at BC Place.

India has moved from the role of learner to that of teacher, and is providing the software for Singapore to teach math and science.

This was accomplished without the invited support of politicians or the managers of Expo. Their apathy can be explained only as North American arrogance and delusions of superiority. After all, we were world leaders; what could we gain from such an undertaking?

I had the privilege of leading a staff of professionals to plan and market the congress. We created a blue-ribbon panel of international educators and technologists to participate. Many of us learned humility from this experience.

Australia was leading the world in the use of technology to level the playing field of learning for students who were physically challenged. It was ahead in many other areas of developing software for effective learning. The United Kingdom was providing leadership in educating software programmers and was sending its professors to teach in India. European universities were able to add resources for the Congress. Japan provided analyses for the critical evaluation of

applications for teaching. Northern Europe was a generation ahead of us in wireless technology.

When we update this international evaluation in 2008 we find some challenging truths. India has moved from the role of learner to that of teacher, and is providing the software for Singapore to teach math and science. South American countries now are appearing on the landscape. Uruguay has accepted a charitable offer to provide laptops to all students. Venezuela has recognized that teaching of the arts is necessary for learning creative skills, and is providing massive funding for musical instruments.

Recently, a large orchestra of Venezuelan students gave an outstanding performance at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

Meantime, back in BC, political myths of equal opportunity are being exploded every day.

- Reductions continue in real classroom funding.
 - Parents have to fund what is provided free to all public school students in South America.
 - The quantity and quality of classroom supplies depends on the fundraising abilities of parent groups.
 - Class sizes are in breach of the spirit of legislation that was imposed following the last teachers' strike.
 - Our pre-Olympic classrooms have deteriorated more since the classrooms doldrums of Expo 86.
 - Many educators are retiring on the first day they are eligible to receive reduced pensions. Politicians on both extremes, continue to take their toll.
 - Students are not allowed to bring laptop computers into some schools' classrooms because "this would give rich kids an unfair advantage." Yet, a music program is provided in the same schools for rich kids who can afford to buy instruments.
 - In some schools where parents have bought classroom computers, the school board has removed them because, "the school board could not afford to buy computers for all classrooms."
- Excitable politicians continue to raise irrelevant issues and have started a new war on teachers demanding they teach to tests. Yet, they are unaware of, or choose to

ignore, the exciting work of our teachers.

Our hopes for the future lie with teachers who can ignore the politics and continue with the rewarding processes of learning. Some are using technology and trying to overcome the disadvantages of

Venezuela has recognized that teaching of the arts is necessary for learning creative skills, and is providing massive funding for musical instruments.

overcrowded classrooms. Some are using technology to meet the changing abilities and motivations of a shifting mix of student needs.

- Students at Grade 3 reading levels are using computers to write tests on Grade 7 science texts.
- A student suffering from advanced Cerebral Palsy, who can only answer questions by raising or lowering her eyes, is able to use a computer using the technology that we learned from the Australians in 1986.

Parents, teachers, and those who represent them must develop the political will to sanction those who use the media to damage our public schools and the children they serve. Should we fail, our children and grandchildren will be disadvantaged severely in our global village.

Dr. Henry Armstrong is retired executive director, BC School Trustees Association (1973-90), executive director, World congress on Education and Technology (1983-86).

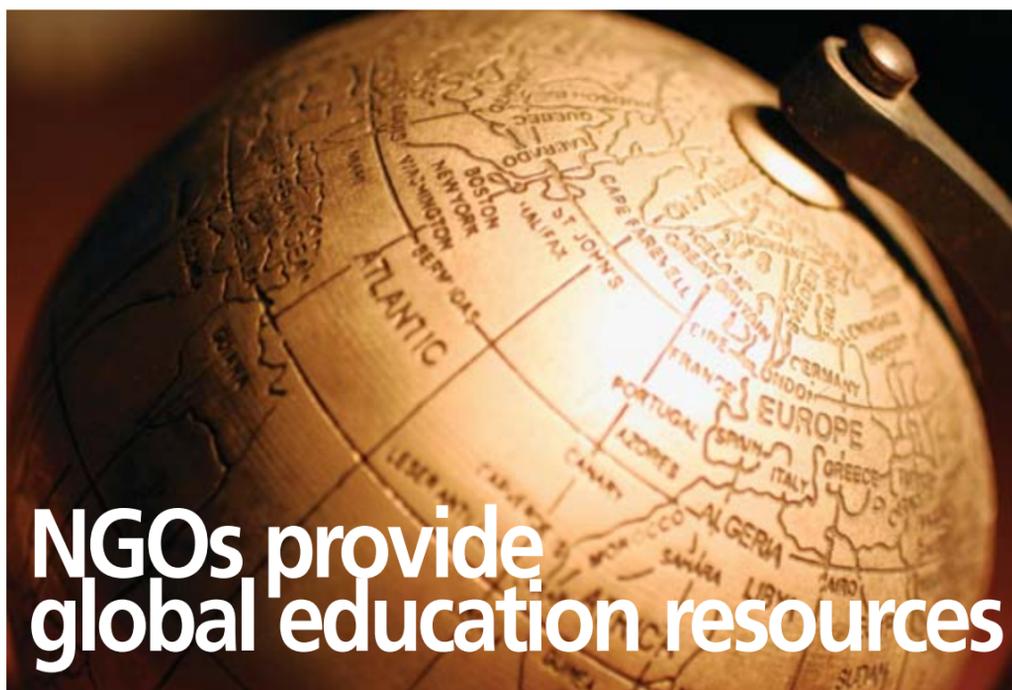
Quote

"Focusing on process and training in education, and teaching to the test, generates a plethora of poorly educated individuals, some of whom then become dull, unimaginative bureaucrats, posing as educators, poised to mis-educate the next generation".

— Tim Birkhead, behavioural ecologist, Sheffield University



Former comfort woman survivor Madam Tan Yu-Hua.



NGOs provide global education resources

By Heather Turnbull

International Development Week (IDW) February 1–7, 2009 highlighted and illustrated the work of Canada's development community. For teachers, the IDW offers a ready-made opportunity to help students and the broader school community to focus on global issues and to get involved. IDW provides a great opportunity to:

- increase the awareness of the role Canadians play in international development.
- learn more about life in developing countries.
- be inspired and find out how to become global citizens, actively involved in international development.

The BC Council for International Co-operation is a coalition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating locally and globally, to reduce global poverty and achieve sustainable human development. BCCIC highlights global education initiatives, including specific projects, workshops, and resources that NGOs have developed for BC schools and educators. Many NGOs are building partnerships with teachers and schools and implementing projects that deepen students' understanding of what it means to be a global citizen.

VIDEA

Victoria International Development Education Association (VIDEA) has worked to inform and inspire youth, students, and teachers for close to 30 years. VIDEA is excited to announce a new series of free interactive workshops that take a participatory approach to bringing global issues into the classroom. All workshops are designed to inspire and empower students and teachers with the knowledge and resources to further explore the issues and get involved outside the classroom setting. Upcoming workshops are free and topics include Education for All, Migrant Labour, Ethical Consumption and the Chocolate Trade, and Colonialism, Power and the Global Economy. In addition, VIDEA's website, www.vida.ca, provides learning resources on topics relating to community development, the environment, and free trade.

Global Stewardship

The Global Stewardship Program at Capilano University is delivering a series of workshops at secondary schools designed to engage students with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. A final conference is scheduled for May 2009. All secondary school students in Grade 11 or 12 are invited to enter the You Too Video, Audio Podcast, or PowerPoint contest, in which there is a total of \$1,000 in prizes. Winning entries

will be highlighted at the conference. The deadline is February 20, and details can be found at www.capilano.ca/globalstewardship.

Seva Canada

Seva Canada is an international eye-care charity with programs in Nepal, Tibet, India, Tanzania, Egypt, Cambodia, and Guatemala. As part of its public outreach, Seva offers a live, multimedia adaptation of Tolstoy's *The Three Questions*, for Grades 3 to 6. A young prince discovers the importance of kindness and forgiveness through his quest for the answers to three questions. Information about blindness, its causes, and prevention is an optional part of the presentation, to connect the concept of kindness and social responsibility with Seva's international development work. A resource manual, *Active Citizenship*, developed by Seva, is available and provides lesson plans for students to create and develop their own service projects. Contact Paula Ford at paula@seva.ca.

Partners for prosperity

Partners for Prosperity (PPP), a Shawnigan Lake NGO, has been building bridges of understanding and shared learning with students in the Cowichan Valley and surrounding districts. PPP is able to assist teachers and school districts in developing and locating programs and resources to meet their needs in the areas of youth leadership, cross-cultural understanding, food security, and community capacity building through their network of over 100 projects locally and internationally. Contact Barb Kruger at partners@mgvinc.com.

African community technical services

Over the last three years, African Community Technical Services (ACTS) has supported the development of global awareness, citizenship, and social responsibility with over 200 children at E.S. Richards Elementary School in Mission. ACTS has played a significant role in bringing fresh water to rural villages in Uganda for 20 years and ACTS staff and volunteers have used this knowledge to form a school club for students that is twinned with a village school in Uganda. Through slideshows, artifacts, and demonstration activities, ACTS has discussed issues in education, health, water, and sanitation. Hundreds of letters, valentines, and art work have passed back and forth between communities. Currently ACTS is distributing student-purchased malaria nets in Ugandan villages. ACTS looks forward to assisting other schools with global awareness initiatives. Contact Richard Roberts at roberts@acts.ca.

Trans Himalayan aid society

The Trans Himalayan Aid Society (TRAS) is a small Vancouver-based

NGO, which supports health and education for children and youth in the Himalayan regions of India, Nepal, and Tibet. TRAS work has been supported both by schools and students interested in finding ways to help children in poorer parts of the world. Over the past five years, students at Argyle Secondary School, in North Vancouver, have raised funds to support a vocational training program in Nepal for the destitute and the street children. Inspired by student action, the student council at North Van's Sutherland Secondary School took up the same challenge three years ago. Both student groups have raised substantial funds for projects. TRAS supports students' efforts with talks, slideshows, displays, pamphlets, newsletters, and letters from the field. TRAS is amazed by the students' enthusiasm and is looking for other schools to get involved. Contact tras@portal.ca.

Global studies program

The Global Studies Program at Vancouver Island University and Global Village Nanaimo, an independent non-profit society engaged in fair trade, currently sponsor a public speaker series. In this series, NGOs describe their involvement in finding solutions and giving renewed hope in various parts of the world. According to Dr. Catherine Schittecatte, chair of both Political Science and the Global Studies Program and also Global Studies internship co-ordinator, "Not only do these speakers contribute their direct and personal experiences in various parts of the world, but they provide students with a sentiment of empowerment when exposed to the feasibility of the very constructive and positive work that these speakers have undertaken with marked results." Speakers not only complement classroom material with real life experiences but they open students' eyes to the possibilities of their own involvement in post-graduate careers. For information on this series, contact Samantha Letourneau at gvnaimo@gmail.com.

BCCIC is committed to international co-operation by supporting the work of our members and by promoting and mobilizing British Columbians as active global citizens. BCCIC's work is undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Contact BCCIC for information on member organizations' work both locally and globally at info@bccic.ca, or to learn about IDW activities across BC and Canada please visit CIDA's website: www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/IDW.

Heather Turnbull is program officer for BC Council for International Co-operation.

Book review

The Secret Lives of Saints: Child Brides and Lost Boys in a Polygamist Mormon Sect

By Janet Nicol

The Secret Lives of Saints, (Daphne Bramham, Random House Canada, Toronto, 2008. 445 pp \$32.95 cloth) reveals disturbing truths about a fundamentalist Mormon sect in Bountiful, a community of more than 1,200 people in south-eastern British Columbia. Author Daphne Bramham has frequently expounded on injustices committed toward its residents in her *Vancouver Sun* columns. Now her book offers the big picture, delivering a compelling story dominated with villains, victims, and apathetic observers.

Much of Bramham's evidence of wrong-doings is based on testimonies of former residents. She also uses the words of Winston Blackmore, an expelled bishop who continues to lead a faction of sect members, to prove leadership at Bountiful is anything but saintly. Descriptions of similar activities of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (FLDS) in Utah, Arizona, and Texas are detailed. (The FLDS is not to be confused with mainstream Mormons who oppose multiple marriages.) Bramham repeatedly illustrates how British Columbians are reluctant to protest the Mormon sect's harmful impact on its women and children, despite the fact polygamy has been illegal since 1890.

Two independent schools at Bountiful—funded by BC taxpayers to the tune of \$800,000 annually—enroll an estimated 400 students. Citing annual government inspector reports, the author notes Bountiful Elementary and Secondary School (BESS) has operated in the past with only three out of ten teaching staff holding BC College of Teachers' certifications.

Bramham compares these human rights violations to that of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Blackmore founded Mormon Hills in 2001 and named himself superintendent. But few students from either school graduate from Grade 12. Drop-out rates are high and occur early—girls leave to enter "assigned" marriages as young as 14, and boys, as early as Grade 8, to work in low-wage jobs. Many boys are also cast out of Bountiful by church elders to decrease the ratio of grooms to brides.

The schools profess to follow BC curriculum, yet Bramham argues subject content is distorted or ignored. Religious doctrine prevails on posters, exam questions, and video-taped songs and sermons. Domestic skills are emphasized for female students. A few "trusted" females are encouraged to become nurses, teachers, and midwives so the community can be self-sufficient. All classroom learners are kept insulated from, and in contempt of, the "outside" world.

Bramham compares these human rights violations to that of the Taliban in Afghanistan. She asks: "How is it that two nations, so clear-sighted in recognizing human rights atrocities in other countries and so fearless in taking on tyrannical rulers on the other side of the world, have been so blind to the human rights violations committed against their own women and children?"

Fundamentalist Mormons first settled in the area in the late 1940s. Over the ensuing years, opportunities to take legal action occurred, Bramham observes, including in the 1990s. But provincial NDP Minister Penny Priddy was unable to convince her cabinet colleagues to lay charges against Bountiful's leaders. "Bountiful is like a sleeping snake," she told the author. "Everybody takes a stick and pokes at it once in a while." Priddy cites apathy as the single biggest reason for government inaction.

Four years ago, the BC Teachers' Federation joined the protest, delivering a petition of teachers' signatures to the Liberal government. Meantime, BC Attorney General Wally Oppal ordered a two-

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year RCMP investigation and two independent inquiries. And now he has appointed special prosecutor Terrance Robertson to head a third investigation. Another key breakthrough came in November 2007, when FLDS "prophet" Warren Jeffs was tried and sentenced by an American court to 10 years in prison on two counts of rape as an accomplice. (Jeffs had assigned the marriage of a 14-year-old girl to a 19-year-old male.)

Because of growing public condemnation, Blackmore may be loosening his hold on his multiple wives, children, and followers. Recently he hired three certified teachers at Mormon Hills and he is improving academic standards, according to Audrey Vance, a Creston resident and former school trustee. Vance is one of a dozen members of "Altering Destiny Through Education."

"Last year 10 of Winston's students graduated from Homelinks," Vance said in a telephone interview. (Homelinks is a public education program in Creston.) Vance's group supports education for Bountiful's youth, believing learning can be a path out.

In a telephone interview, Bramham says sect elders only want their members to be "minimally educated." They want the children to have the basics—reading, writing, and math," she says. Beyond this, leaders discourage higher learning for young people because they are only going to face a life of domestic or manual work. "This also makes it harder to escape," Bramham adds.

Bramham thinks the *Independent School Act* needs to be re-written. "Teachers need to meet the basic professional requirements," she says, "and safeguards to the curriculum need to be added so inspectors have tools to maintain standards."

But while the wheels of reform and investigation grind slowly, the leaders of Bountiful continue to assign child brides to older men and exploit or "throw away" boys. Airing the "secrets" of the saints, as Bramham does in this book, is a convincing and compassionate step toward change in our own backyard.

Janet Nicol teaches at Killamey Secondary School, Vancouver.

AGM 2009 Agenda

March 14–17, 2009

FIRST SESSION

March 14, Saturday evening

7:00 p.m.

Welcome

First Nations recognition

Preliminaries:

- Adoption of chairpersons, scrutineers, tellers, resolutions committee
- Chairpersons' orientation session
- Introduction of ombudspersons
- Adoption of agenda
- Adoption of 2008 AGM Minutes
- Stewardship Report on 2008 AGM

President's report
Irene Lanzinger

Greetings/Comments

BC Federation of Labour
Jim Sinclair, president

Canadian Union of Public Employees, BC Division
Barry O'Neill, president

BC School Trustees Association
Connie Denesiuk, president

Constitution and By-laws
– Recommendations 2–4
– Resolution 101

9:00 p.m.

Election statements from candidates for table-officer positions. Questions and answers for candidates running for table-officer positions.

Call for nominations

10:00 p.m.

Adjourn

SECOND SESSION

March 15, Sunday morning

9:00 a.m.

Leadership Report

– Recommendation 1

Constitution and By-laws (*continued*)

– Recommendations 2–4
– Resolution 101

Annual General Meeting

– Recommendation 8
– Resolutions 102–106

Aboriginal Education

– Recommendations 5–7

Education Finance

– Resolutions 136–137

12:10 p.m.

College of Teachers' report
Richard Walker, college council chairperson
– Resolution 135

12:30 p.m.—Lunch

THIRD SESSION

March 15, Sunday afternoon

2:00 p.m.

Education Policy
– Recommendations 12–16
– Resolutions 138–145

Professional Development
– Resolutions 189–192

Induction Ceremonies, Awards
– Resolution 161

International Solidarity
– Resolutions 162–163

Teacher Exchange
– Resolution 203

4:00 p.m.

Report of the Executive Director
Ken Novakowski

4:30 p.m.

Election statements from candidates for member-at-large positions. Questions and answers for candidates running for member-at-large.

Call for Nominations

5:30 p.m.

Adjourn

FOURTH SESSION

March 16, Monday morning

9:00 a.m.

Keynote Address: Joy MacPhail

9:45 a.m.

Bargaining

– Report
– Recommendations 9–11
– Resolutions 107–133

12:30 p.m. Lunch

FIFTH SESSION

March 16, Monday afternoon

2:00 p.m.

Pensions
Doug Pearce

2:30 p.m.

Pensions
– Recommendations 25–26
– Resolutions 179–188

3:45 p.m.

Health, Welfare, and Safety of Teachers
– Recommendation 24
– Resolutions 154–160

School Buildings, Grounds, and Facilities
– Resolutions 196–199

4:45 p.m.
Technology

– Resolutions 205–207

5:25 p.m.

Final call for nominations

5:30 p.m.

Adjourn

SIXTH SESSION

March 16, Monday evening

7:30 p.m.

Organization of the BCTF
– Resolutions 165–178

Legal Services/Contract Enforcement
– Resolution 164

CLC/BC Federation of Labour
– Resolution 134

9:30 p.m.

Adjourn

SEVENTH SESSION

March 17, Tuesday morning

8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

BALLOT DISTRIBUTION

For one hour, the election tellers will distribute ballots, one pad for each voting card, in the Prince of Wales Room (on the convention level). Each delegation is asked to assist by appointing one of its members to present all the delegation's cards, (including the LR cards) and to receive all its ballots individually.

Executive Committee members should each pick up their own ballots.

No ballots will be distributed after the session has begun.

AGM Standing Rule 12.2 specifies that ballots will be given out only at the place and times specified on the agenda.

9:00 a.m.

Elections

Professional Ethics, Rights, and Standards
– Recommendations 27–34

Teachers Teaching on Call
– Resolution 204

Social Justice
– Resolutions 200–202

Public Affairs
– Recommendations 35–37
– Resolutions 193–195

12:15 p.m.

Committee Reports—Questions

12:30 p.m.

Lunch

EIGHTH SESSION

March 17, Tuesday afternoon

2:00 p.m.

Finance

Comments from the treasurer
– Recommendations 17–23
– Resolutions 146–153

4:00 p.m.

Awards, Honorary membership, Recognition of retiring activists
Unfinished Business

5:30 p.m.

Dinner

7:30 p.m.

Unfinished Business

Late Resolutions

New Resolutions

New Business

9:15 p.m.

Closing Courtesy Motion

9:30 p.m.

Adjourn

Please note: Evening sessions may be scheduled if required.

Special resolutions

Notice is hereby given in respect of the following Special Resolutions with or without amendment, which may be considered by the 2009 AGM:

Recommendation 2

That By-law 7.2 be amended by adding a new sentence: "When a Judicial Council member resigns from or otherwise leaves the Judicial Council, the member's appointment to Judicial Council may continue with approval from a full-time table officer solely for the purpose of completing ongoing proceedings."

Recommendation 3

That By-law 7.3 be amended to add, "Should a member of a panel be unable to continue, the work of the panel on a particular matter may continue to completion at the discretion of the Judicial Council chairperson."

Recommendation 4

That the following new words be added to By-law 7.6—comma after Hearing Panel, "or may refer the complaint back to a Hearing Panel for reconsideration in accordance with the Appeal Panel's findings."

Resolution 101—Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association

Amendment to By-law 5.19:

The Executive Committee shall be empowered to grant legal aid *and/or actual legal costs* to any member. The Executive Committee may by policy delegate to the president, the executive director, or a specified member of the administrative staff the power, subject to review by the Executive Committee, to grant or refuse legal aid *and/or legal costs* to members pursuant to policies adopted by the Federation in respect of *qualifying for* legal aid. An active member dissatisfied with the decision of the president, executive director and/or designated administrative staff member may, within 60 days of the receipt of the decision, appeal that decision to the Executive Committee by notifying the executive director of such appeal in writing. The decision of the Executive Committee in respect of a request for legal aid *and/or reimbursement of legal costs* shall be final and binding and, notwithstanding any other provision in these by-laws, there shall be no appeal of a decision of the Executive Committee to the Representative Committee, the Annual General Meeting, or the Judicial Council in respect of a member's request for reimbursement of legal costs.

Resolution 102—Okanagan Skaha Teachers' Union

That the AGM remove all decision-making power regarding the wording, placement, and design of BCTF advertising, excluding costs, from the agenda of the BCTF Annual General Meeting, with final approval being left with the Executive Committee of the BCTF.

Resolution 104—Cowichan District Teachers' Association

That the Standing Rules of Order used at the BCTF AGM be amended to read: "That a two-thirds majority be required for any AGM motion that calls for a binding, province-wide vote of the membership to partake in a collective action."

Resolution 105—Cowichan District Teachers' Association

That the Standing Rules of Order used at the BCTF AGM be amended to read: "That BCTF legal opinion be provided to the delegation prior to voting on any AGM motion that calls for a binding, province-wide vote of the membership to partake in a collective action."

Resolution 106—Cowichan District Teachers' Association

That the Standing Rules of Order used at the BCTF AGM be amended to read: "That any vote on any AGM motion that calls for a binding, province-wide vote of the membership to partake in a collective action, be a timed item of a minimum of 1 (one) hour, or until there are no more speakers."

Candidates for Executive Committee

For President



Irene Lanzinger

There is good news and bad news for teachers in BC. The bad news is that we continue to face very significant challenges. We have a government that is determined to undermine public education by underfunding, over-emphasizing standardized testing, and privatizing public services.

Many teachers feel they are failing to meet the needs of students due to large classes and lack of support for students with special needs. Our schools desperately need greater numbers of non-enrolling teachers who

provide critical services to classrooms. The Learning Round Table has produced plenty of data but not a single additional teacher to improve learning conditions.

Here's the good news. Teachers in this province have the highest professional standards combined with a willingness to join in courageous and often risky campaigns to defend those standards. We are determined to use every avenue to make improvements that strengthen our ability to meet the needs of our students, advance the welfare of the

teaching profession, and build a more socially just society. With our strength and unity, our unfailing advocacy and our many campaigns we are making steady progress on turning the bad news into good news for students, teachers, and public education.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF: President (2 yrs.), 1st Vice-president (3 yrs.), BCTF 2nd Vice-president (3), Co-chief Negotiator Bargaining Team (2000-02), Advisory Council of local presidents (3), AGM delegate (14), Summer conference (14), Job

action planning committee, LR (1), (alternate) (5).

Local: President (3), Vice-president (2), Member-at-large (2), Staff rep (2), Bargaining Committee (2), Status of Women Committee (2).

Teaching: Secondary (9 yrs.), Elementary (4 yrs.).

Education: B.Sc. (UBC), Teacher Training (UBC), M.Sc (SFU)

For First Vice-President



Susan Lambert

In the fall I was privileged to witness the testimony of several young teachers at our Bill 33 class size and composition grievance. They spoke of large classes with 8, 12, even 15 students with IEPs and the struggle of teaching in such conditions. They described workloads that compromised instruction and learning. Their dedication to the profession and their students was unequivocal. And yet each of these classes had been certified as educationally sound by administrators constrained by the scarce resources available.

This year even more classes

exceed the inadequate limits of Bill 33.

Underfunding combined with the accountability or achievement policies (the focus on standardization, the census administration of the FSAs, the drive toward higher test scores to the detriment of a rich and broad curriculum) have resulted in the undermining of public confidence in the system. Public policies that both underfund and undermine are policies that value private alternatives over public education.

As a collective we are passionate about the value of public education in building a vibrant democracy and

a just society. I am honoured to run again for the position of First Vice-President. I will try my best to insure that we remain strong advocates for teachers, for students and for public education.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF 1st Vice-president (2 yrs.), BCTF 2nd Vice-president (3 yrs.), BCTF Executive member-at-large (1 yr.); AGM delegate (22), Task Force on the Code of Ethics, Trainer/facilitator in Namibia (8 sessions) and South Africa (1 session), Staff Rep Trainer (5), WOW facilitator, Summer Conference participant and workshop presenter, BCTF OSD/PD Administrative Staff (4), Federation

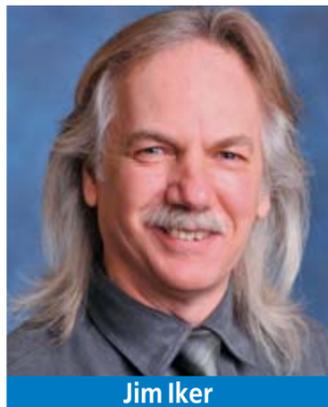
Appeals Board (2).

Local: (Prince Rupert): Staff Rep (4), S/W Cttee. (1), Program Against Racism Chair (2), Bargaining Cttee. (1); Communications Officer (2), Labour Liaison Officer (3). (Burnaby): Vice President (2), LR (4), Leave of Absence Cttee. (2), Grade 7 Girls' Conference (1), BTA Scholarship Cttee. (2), Job Action Cttee. (1).

Teaching: 23 years—intermediate, teacher-librarian, learning assistance, gifted education, special needs resource.

Education: Honors English BA (SFU), PDP (SFU), Teacher-Librarian Diploma (UBC).

For Second Vice-President



Jim Iker

Our passion to defend public education is driven by our daily work in our classrooms, locals and Federation.

Engaging members, new and experienced, and supporting all locals is critical for a strong, effective BCTF. Together we make a difference. It is critical we:

- advocate for increased funding to ensure success for every student, improve working and learning conditions and stop privatization.
- bargain firm class size/composition limits including multiage/grade classes, support for students with special needs and non-enrolling teacher caseloads.

- actively involve members in preparation for the next round of bargaining to improve working conditions, salaries, benefits, pensions and prep time.
- continue to press for full, free, local collective bargaining.
- continue to exercise our professional autonomy and resist the externally mandated testing agenda.
- strengthen professional development and professional support for members.
- engage in education and public policy.
- exercise our freedom of expression rights.

- strengthen our social justice networks and advocate for greater equity in our schools and communities.

I believe in leadership that is built on democratic processes, seeks and listens to members and provides proactive and co-ordinated strategies.

I bring you my experience and energy as your 2nd Vice President and value the opportunity to continue working on your behalf.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF 2nd Vice-president (2 yr.), Member-at-Large (5), Prov. Bargaining Team 2006, Learning Roundtable (4), Social Justice Review Cttee. (1), CTF AGM Delegate (4 yrs.), Bargaining Mobilization Cttee.

Chair (1), Prov. Bargaining Team, 1st 2 rounds of Prov. Bargaining, GR/LR (12), AGM delegate (19), Local Presidents' Advisory Cttee. (2), Chair (1), BCTF Interim Bargaining Structures Cttee., Legislative Adv. Cttee./team, Staff Rep Training, Summer Conference Participant (25). *Local:* President (15), Bargaining Chair (2), Chief Negotiator, Local Bargaining (all 3 rounds), Bargaining Cttee. WLC Chair (2), Staff rep, District Health And Safety Rep (4), EAP District Cttee. (14), *Teaching:* 29 yrs. (full and part time) K/2/3/4/ 6/7, Learning Assistance, Counselling, Special Ed. *Education:* Honours BA McMaster, B.Ed Dalhousie, Various Counselling Courses UVIC.

For Member-at-Large



Rebecca Blair

I am so proud to be a teacher. By exercising professional autonomy we have addressed the misuse of standardized testing. We have identified the attempt to destabilize public education—and through international relationships deepened our awareness and understanding of the global attacks on education.

However, changes are needed in our classrooms—class size and composition remain a primary concern for members of the BCTF. More of our students are living in poverty, and teachers are struggling

to balance initiatives such as DPA, healthy school initiatives, as well as changes to curriculum. Despite these challenges, teachers continue every day to address social justice issues and to ensure professional growth. We create caring environments and provide the support and leadership needed to ensure that the students we teach today enrich our future society.

My activism stems from a sincere belief that improvements for teachers translates into improvements for our students. I bring a strong work ethic, a determined

nature, and a desire to ensure that the changes we need in our classrooms are enacted. My first term as a member of your executive has been both challenging and fulfilling—and I appreciate the opportunity to bring your voice again to the table.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* Executive Member at Large, Health and Safety Advisory Committee, Health and Safety Trainer, LR, AGM Delegate, BCFed Health and Safety Committee, BCFed Human Rights Committee.

Local: President, Vice President, Bargaining Chair, District Joint Health and Safety Committee Rep, Site Safety Rep/Co Chair of Committee, Staff Rep, Status of Women Rep.

Teaching: Elementary, Secondary, Special Ed., Adult Ed., (34 years). *Education:* B.Ed., MAAS



Gail Chaddock-Costello

It has been a busy year for all of us, full of hard work, campaigns, elections and some great successes. Many locals were thrilled to have elected 'teacher friendly' Trustees and this has had a positive effect on the reaction of School Boards to our provincial FSA campaign. We have and are continuing to make education a 'vote determining issue' at the local and provincial levels. Our ingenuity will be tested as we strive to keep our educational issues at the forefront of the public consciousness once Campbell's 'gag order' takes effect February 13. I have no doubts regarding our

success—teachers united for a common cause are a formidable force.

The Bill 33 arbitrations and the courageous stands of our classroom teachers speak to our determination to make class size and composition, safe, supportive working environments and reasonable workloads bargaining issues locally and provincially. We have a long history of political activism and I am proud to be a part of our stand against accountability and for teachers' professional autonomy.

My initiative, leadership and energy have been put to good use

this year and I look forward to the privilege of continuing to serve as your Member at Large.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* BCTF Member at Large, PSA Task Force, EC representative on CASJ, Regional SJ Conference Organizer, South Island Zone Rep. Public Education Conferences (2) delegate and presenter; BCTF Parent Presenter; delegate to FLI, Zone Meetings, Summer Conference - presenter/08, AGM; BC Fed Conference, New Teachers' Conference and Cross Currents - presenter; BCTF spokesperson for special education (4 radio shows); International Special Education Review Team (NS to England). *Local:* 1st VP, 2nd VP (2), Langley's Community Forum, organizer/panelist, Professional Development (10);

Educational Change (1); Working and Learning Conditions (2); Chief Spokesperson, Steering Committee Langley Special Education Inquiry; delegate to B.C. Fed Conventions and NW&District Labour Council; Budget Committee (3), Bargaining Committee (2), Building Committee (3) Constitution Committee; Professional Development Committee, school based (15); Staff Representative (10) *Teaching:* 30 years in special education, elementary and secondary, adult education/continuing education (2), adjunct professor, University of San Diego, practicum evaluator, education students (2) *Education:* BA, B.Ed. St. Mary's University (Summa Cum Laude), NS, M.Ed. Mount Saint Vincent University, NS, Doctoral courses completed for Educational Leadership, dissertation pending, University of San Diego.

For Member-at-Large



Jerry Fast

British Columbia is recognized internationally as having one of the best public education systems in the world, and while our teachers are committed to and strive for continuous improvement, the BCTF must negotiate working and learning conditions with a government which has systematically and chronically underfunded that system. We must strengthen our campaigns in support of public education and build on our broad public support for teacher professionalism, and meaningful and purposeful accountability. We

must work to achieve functional and responsive bargaining structures at both the provincial and local levels to effectively address, amongst many others, the critical issues of class size and support for students with special needs. Equally important, we must elevate the profile of the BCTF by making the BCTF more relevant to the day to day working lives of our teachers at the school level through professional development and teacher wellness programs.

These are very challenging economic times which will make it

much more difficult for teachers' voices to be heard.

I am committed to working with all members of the Executive Committee to strengthen our voice and achieve our goals in support of public education. I ask for your support.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* Local Rep (2 years), AGM Delegate (4 years), BC Fed Delegate (4 years), LEC Coordinator (2 campaigns).

Local: SCC Chair (2 years), Staff Rep (8 years), Local Executive Member-at-Large (4 years), Working Conditions Officer (2 years), Vice-President (2 years), Bargaining Chair (2 years)

Teaching: Grade 6-7 (12 years)
Education: BA.Hons. (Economics), University of Manitoba; MA, University of Manitoba; B.Ed., UBC.



Rick Guenther

Teaching is not the easiest of professions. Serving the intellectual and social needs of students in their multitudes, each of whom brings a unique set of life experiences to the classroom, is a challenge to a saint. Innumerable professional decisions, requiring both academic and artistic expertise, fill each teacher's workday and each teacher's lesson construction and delivery will be unique. The professional autonomy and working conditions necessary for effective teaching require our union to defend and improve contractual rights and to enhance

the status of our profession. We need a union characterized by well-reasoned strategic thinking and planning, based on not just immediate ideological needs but the real needs of working teachers. When we contemplate actions to address issues, we need strategies that are mindful of consequences to both individual teachers and the BCTF as a whole, that are well informed, that are principled, and that respect the diverse perspectives of teachers. And, our strategies must be informed by fundamental principles of social justice, such as

equity, fairness, and acceptance. Social justice consists not only of formal programs that address specific examples of social injustice but also of the fabric through which we weave curriculum in our professional practice. And similarly, social justice principles should be implicit in our union practice.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* Judicial Council (2005-present); Task Force on Privatization (2004-05); Various Ministry of Education curriculum committees.

Local: Abbotsford District Teachers' Association (Local 34) President

(2007-current); Vice-President, LR, Bargaining Chair, Strike Coordinator, District Health & Safety Committee.

Peace River South Teachers' Association (Local 59) President (1982-84).

Teaching: Secondary science and mathematics

Education: M.Ed. SFU; B.Sc. (Geophysics) UBC



Glen Hansman

Teachers' goals are broad and varied, and so must be the Federation and its members' approaches to achieving these goals. We must allow for as many opportunities for members to create change that is meaningful to them, and engage the stakeholders of their communities. We must defend members' rights, and take every opportunity to bargain directly with our school boards to improve working and learning conditions. We must work toward our goals by legal means, by political means, by public relations means, by support-

ing professional growth, by reclaiming local bargaining, by seeking the restoration of stripped language and entire collective agreements that have been legislated away, by maintaining a dialogue with other provincial bodies, and by supporting collective action by our members. It is necessary that the Federation employ all of these approaches simultaneously to make improvements for our members, for our students, and for public education.

The Federation also needs to follow-through on decisions made,

and take steps to change with the membership and its newer members' modes of engagement as we move into a new decade. I am committed to working carefully and respectfully with you to achieve our goals, and I would be honoured to serve as member-at-large.

EXPERIENCE:

Provincial: Teacher Newsmagazine Advisory Committee (2 years), Social Justice Review Steering Committee, AGM delegate (5 years), Summer conference (5 years), Bargaining training, LR (alternate) (3 years).

Local: President (2 years), Vice-President (1 year), Local Bargaining Committee and Collective Agreement preparation, Communications chair (2 years), Pride Committee co-chair (1 year), Strike Co-ordinating Committee (2005), Local Election Contact (2005 & 2008-09), Staff Rep (2 years).

Teaching: District-level antihomophobia consultant (2 years), Elementary (5 years), Secondary (1 year).

Education: MA (UBC), B.Ed. (McGill), BA (Carleton).



Chris King

I am very proud of the work that the Federation has done with professional development. I believe that we need to build on these successes to meet the current needs of all our members, new and experienced, as we face the challenges brought about by the influx of new technologies, increased amounts of educational research, and the diversity of the learning needs of the students we teach.

No one can deny the commitment of the Federation to the issues of social justice. Social justice work is

not only about events, but also a way of living. As a Federation, we need to ensure that the values and beliefs that are the foundation of social justice become the way we teach and interact in our classrooms and schools.

I have always been impressed with the opportunities for members to have a voice in the decisions of the Federation. As we enter the next bargaining round, we need to be aware of the demographics of our membership to ensure that our new and experienced teachers are strong advocates with their own unique

perspectives and beliefs. It is through the cacophony of ideas that we build an ever stronger union.

EXPERIENCE:

Provincial: Committee for Action in Social Justice (2 yrs, 1 yr co-chair) BCTF facilitator for SURTs, Teacher Wellness, Classroom Issues, Strengthening Teaching, Presentations for Parents; Workshops for School Staffs (6 years); Presenter at a variety of local and school based PD days; Several ad hoc committees creating BCTF workshops and policy; CTA Local Representative

(3 years) FLI presenter, Summer Conference presenter.

Local: CTA 1st VP (1 year), CTA 2nd VP and PD Chair (6 years) Founder of: CTA Leadership Series, Encompass Conference, BC Society for Social Responsibility and Collaborative Learning Environments and Spirit of Secondary Conference.

Teaching: Secondary, Junior Secondary, Middle School, and Elementary

Education: MEd(UBC) BA(UPEI)



Jill McCaffery

Our unity and resolve have been effective. We have exposed the government's privatization agenda. Together we have taken courageous stands in asserting our rights to protect our profession and public education. As a democratic, member-driven union our strength and success lies in our teachers, their commitment to students, and to public education. Their needs must be our priority! As we look to our future we must re-position ourselves by:

- engaging members and new activists through technology, training, and professional opportunities.

- enhancing the professional voice of teachers by developing opportunities for meaningful, accessible, collaborative, professional development, inquiry, and mentorship.
- advocating for full and fair funding to improve classroom conditions.
- supporting locals and members in bargaining and preparations for 2011 including local initiatives, contract and grievance work.
- supporting, sustaining, and building social justice networks and action groups.

My experiences on the BCTF executive and as a community activist teach me that to achieve our objectives we must be political and

professional. Teachers are the credible voice of education and will not be silenced. The public welcomes, and indeed expects, our informed advocacy.

I offer my passion, continued commitment to and a strong voice for all BCTF members. I listen, I advocate, I act.

EXPERIENCE:

National: Canadian Labour Congress Delegate (1) *Provincial:* BCTF Executive member-at-large (6), BCTF Support Staff Bargaining Team (2), BC Federation of Labour Delegate (5), BC Federation of Labour Resolutions Committee (3), BC Federation of Labour Community and Social Action Committee (1), BCTF Staff

Pension Plan Committee (2), BCTF Professional and Social Issues Committee Liaison (1), BCTF Health and Safety Committee Liaison (1), THESA Curriculum Chair (2). *Local:* President (6), Vice-President (3), Bargaining Committee (7), Staff Rep (3), AGM (13), Social Justice (1), Health and Safety (3), Summer Conference (12). *Community:* Founding Member and Community Activist with Oceanside Coalition for Strong Communities (7). *Teaching:* UBC Summer Session Instructor (1), Middle and Secondary Home Economics and Humanities both local and international (27). *Education:* MA, UBC; Curriculum and Instruction, Home Economics; Concentration Home Economics, UBC; PDP, SFU; BA Honours, SFU.

EXPERIENCE: *Provincial:* Attended FLI, BC Fed delegate, AGM (15 yrs.), countless summer institutes. *Local:* President, 1st Vice-president, Local Representative, Bargaining chair, Gender Equity chair, ProD chair, Social Justice chair, rep to DPAC, staff rep. *Teaching:* 22 years of intermediate classroom experience.



Teri Mooring

A wide range of teachers' ideas and opinions must be represented at the Executive Committee. Diverse views must be heard, consensus sought, and balanced decisions endorsed. I bring a fresh and distinctive voice to the table as an experienced teacher and president of a northern district.

Our highest priority must be enhancement of teachers' rights and well-being. Teachers' state clearly their foremost concern is improvement in class size and composition. We therefore need to join with other groups including

parents to advocate for improved student learning conditions and hold government accountable.

Equally, we must strengthen teachers' bargaining rights. It is vital we get a current Collective Agreement into the hands of every teacher. We must expand the mid contract modification process and prepare for the next round of bargaining to regain our working conditions and increase benefits.

The BCTF needs to support new teachers. A focus on professional development and professional autonomy is needed.

Teachers' commitment to social justice in classrooms results in miracles every day as they manage diverse student backgrounds. We need to focus the public on our professional expertise in public education and our commitment to building healthier communities.

For Member-at-Large



Christine Stewart

My traditional name is *Galksi' Gibaykwhl Sook'* – Wilps Ksim Xsaan and I am from the Nisga'a Nation.

I believe in the BCTF and the democratic principles of our union.

I believe we have together made a great difference for equity seeking groups, in particular Aboriginal Children in BC public schools. We have a lot of work ahead and I believe the four years in service to the members has prepared me well to be a strong advocate for our profession and the children and families we work for and with.

No where else in the world is

there an organization as democratic and professional as ours.

I believe my experience working with the AEAC and building a network of 60 Local Contacts for Aboriginal Education, and the work with Education Partners, Deans of Education and various advocacy groups has enriched my experience and groomed me for a member at large post to serve you.

EXPERIENCE:

Provincial: BCTF, PSA President Aboriginal Education Association, WLCB Committee member, VTF member working on our Letter of Understanding: Employment Equity for Aboriginal Teachers, SURT trainer and presenter, Summer Institute trainer and participant, BCTF AGM participant since 1998, CTF Aboriginal Standing Committee (1 year), Summer Conference participant and Aboriginal Leadership since 1998. *Local:* VSTA (4 years) VESTA (1.5 years) VSTA Staff Rep (1 year) VSTA Co-chair

School professional development rep (1 year), VSTA Gender Equity Rep (3 years).

BCTF Staff PSID Aboriginal Education: 2004 to 2008

Teaching: I have taught in both Secondary and Elementary and as an instructor for both at SFU and UBC Faculty of Education courses, and have worked as a research assistant.

Education: BA SFU, Joint Major in Women's Studies and Psychology, PDP K to 12 Diversity Module, MA Education SFU, Diploma in Guidance Counsellor UBC in progress.

Provincial grievance update

By George Popp

Provincial grievances are grievances initiated by us in response to a widespread problem violation of provincial articles in the collective agreement or of Legislative provisions such as the *Employment Standards Act*, the *Labour Code*, or the *School Act* and regulations. Most are issues of general principle (or in grievance-speak—grievances of general application) on which the parties have differing positions and which require a formal resolution procedure to clarify the rules. If the parties can't come to an agreement themselves, then a third party, usually an arbitrator or mediator is called in to provide a ruling, which then becomes part of the contractual record. In the larger picture, such rulings also become part of the legal framework in labour relations around the province and the rest of Canada.

Provincial grievances may also arise where there are a number of local grievances, which involve identical or similar issues in collective agreements, as has happened with class sizes and compositions around the province.

The following issues are presently in the provincial grievance process. We will focus this column on the class size and class composition grievance in the March issue of *Teacher*.

Student codes of conduct

In 2007, the Ministry of Education ordered Boards of Education to develop codes of student conduct with specific references to the antidiscriminatory requirements of the *Human Rights Code*, in *Ministerial Order 276/07*. After requesting information from the boards and the Ministry of Education it appears that few if any boards have actually complied with the order.

As some of our members, as well as many of our students, could be impacted by discriminatory (racist, sexist, antigay to name a few) behaviours on the part of students, the Federation has launched a grievance as a way of formally ensuring that boards carry out their duties in a more expeditious manner. We anticipate meeting with the employer in the very near future.

Teachers' rights to freedom of expression

In a landmark ruling, Arbitrator Don Munroe ruled that teachers had the right to communicate their opinion on provincial educational concerns to parents. The BC Court of Appeals has upheld and extended Munroe's ruling and the Supreme Court of Canada refused to hear an appeal of the BC Court of Appeals decision.

Subsequently in ruling about distribution of FSA material through students, John Kinzie ruled that only inaccuracies in materials sent through students should allow boards to object to their distribution. Further, Kinzie ruled that preventing the distribution of such materials infringed on teachers' constitutional rights to freedom of expression.

Recently BCPSEA has sent a paper to boards encouraging them to prohibit distribution of any teacher materials that deal with controversial provincial issues unless the board has approved them.

In issuing such broad prohibitions, boards are flouting the rulings by Munroe, the BC Court of Appeals, and Kinzie. Consequently we have had to launch yet another grievance at the provincial level to protect our right to freedom of expression.

Fee for job application

The *Employment Standards Act* prohibits employers from requiring job applicants to pay a fee to apply for employment. The Boards of Education around the province have created a website where they post available teaching positions. However, to apply to a particular district, a teacher is charged a \$10 fee.

The BCTF feels this is a clear contravention of the *Employment Standards Act* and having failed to convince the employer of this fact, has initiated a grievance to have the fee removed.



Date of pay increase

In our 2006-11 Collective Agreements, teachers' salaries increase as of July 1 of each year. As a result, any work that occurs subsequent to that date is to be at the new pay rate. It has come to our attention that that has not happened in a number of districts. The Federation has initiated a provincial grievance to ensure that teachers are paid according to the collective agreement provisions.

George Popp is an assistant director, BCTF Collective Agreement and Protective Services Division.

By Larry Kuehn

The promise of the software company that created BCeSIS is "Creating more time for teaching." Unfortunately, the experience of most teachers forced to use the program is just the opposite.

BCeSIS is the centralized-data project initiated by the Ministry of Education to collect data on all the nearly 600,000 students in BC public and private schools. The software for BCeSIS was bought from AAL, an Ontario corporation whose main client base is in the US.

The US focus of its sales is indicated in its website promotion that eSIS is "designed to fully support the *No Child Left Behind Act* and data-driven decision-making." (www.aalsolutions.com).

A recent survey of teachers in one BC school district about their experiences with BCeSIS produced reports of a litany of problems. Sometimes difficulties are acceptable—if they contribute to the quality of education and produce a richer experience for students. Unfortunately, according to the surveyed teachers, BCeSIS produces few positive returns.

While the survey was conducted in one school district only, the results seem to reflect the experiences of teachers around the province.

A recent survey of teachers in one BC school district about their experiences with BCeSIS produced reports of a litany of problems.

Kevin Ault is a Chilliwack teacher who decided to try to find out if colleagues in his district were facing the same frustrations he was with BCeSIS. He developed a survey as a university project.

If BCeSIS actually provided more time for teaching, most teachers would probably put up with some of the frustrations of learning the new program—clunky software and interminable waits watching the hourglass. They might think that \$80 million in provincial expenditure and many millions more to come was worth it—if the program meant they had more time with students.

However, that is not the experience reported in the survey. When asked whether "Using BCeSIS gives

me more time for my students," 80% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Only 3% agreed and 1% strongly agreed that they had more time for their students.

Similarly, 74% disagreed that "BCeSIS has made a significant contribution to student education in BC." Only 8% agreed.

They might think that \$80 million in provincial expenditure and many millions more to come was worth it—if the program meant they had more time with students.

The frustration of teachers was reflected in the answer to whether BCeSIS has increased work stress; 61% said it had increased stress moderately or significantly, only 14% said not at all.

One of the survey respondents described the impact of BCeSIS on teachers and students: "Teachers arrive at school with a certain number of kilojoules of energy. If they have to spend all this energy just trying to enter some marks or perform their responsibilities to this poorly performing software, this will directly subtract from the amount of energy they have for their students." Some users did find some positive elements to the program, particularly to what it was supposed to do. Having a single, provincial database should make it easier to transfer information when students change schools. Because it is web-based, it should be possible to access it from home as well as school.

For most, however, the common complaint is that the system is not user-friendly and is slow, slow, slow, especially when lots of people are using the system. This is particularly a problem during times of high demand, such as report-card time.

One respondent described providing such a bad program to teachers as "highly disrespectful of our profession as we are so pressed for time." The teacher then said, "I think if this happened to our premier's computer, he would soon upgrade the server."

Program crashes are also a pain, often requiring re-entry of information.

One coping mechanism for some teachers has been to use another marks program to keep daily records, then just entering report-card marks in BCeSIS.

Kevin Ault carried out the survey to provide information to the BCTF and to the Ministry of Education. He

BCeSIS: \$80 million and more of frustration

hopes that the message will get through that BCeSIS is an impediment to education and that something has to be done to fix the problems.

Has spending \$80 million on BCeSIS—and growing—a good way to use taxpayer money? Only 1% of those surveyed said, "I strongly agree."

Larry Kuehn is director of the BCTF's Research and Technology Division.

Do you have a story about BCeSIS that you think the BCTF should know about? If so, write to lkuehn@bctf.ca.

For most, however, the common complaint is that the system is not user-friendly and is slow, slow, slow, especially when lots of people are using the system. This is particularly a problem during times of high demand, such as report-card time.





The question no educator wants to ask

By Jim McMurtry

Girls, are you spending your adolescence breathing through cloth or hiding your hair and skin by choice and without fear of being shunned or abused?

Canadian comedian Russell Peters' most famous line, known to countless school children, is delivered when he imitates his immigrant father: "Somebody's going to get a beat real bad!" Many students are routinely beaten by their parents, including some of my own students who tell me they will get hit if they bring home a bad report card or get into trouble. I have come across girls who have improperly set bones that were broken by fathers who made sure their child would not tell anyone at the time of the injury, and who

Yet our schools should not, under the pretence of multiculturalism or religious freedom, turn a blind eye to children being bullied by their parents, or guilefully wait until there are visible marks, or a child strong enough to turn in a family member.

found a doctor willing to keep silent. One student was forcibly shipped to India to marry a person unknown to her after being caught with a boyfriend here. A friend in university was fully disowned by family members for dating someone outside of her cultural group. I suppose this is one of the constants of human history: that parents punish children who stray from the path set out for them. Yet our schools should not, under the pretence of multiculturalism or religious freedom, turn a blind eye to children being bullied by their parents, or guilefully wait until there are visible marks, or a child strong enough to turn in a family member.

Aqsa Parvez, the Mississauga teenager strangled to death by her father in December 2007 for apparently refusing to wear the hijab (the traditional Islamic headscarf for women), is an extreme case of a parent feeling entitled to inculcate his cultural and religious values in his daughter. In some of the schools in Surrey where I work, there are many girls wearing the hijab, some with faces veiled. The response in France to this trend was an official ban on all religious symbols in schools. The Canadian approach is to allow such practices, whether the child wears a hijab or turban or misses school for prayer.

Our lawmakers have affirmed "freedom of religion" in *The Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, but have not extended the principle of "freedom from religion" to young people in zealous households. My objection is to teenagers being forced to dress or behave in ways that conflict with their own desires, as with Aqsa's desire to dress like other Canadian girls. How can we pretend to care about the students we teach when we are afraid to even ask them if the hijab or turban is worn under threat of physical abuse?

The Muslim edict for women to cover themselves comes from Muhammad's interest in hiding his wives from the wistful eyes of other men. The Sikh turban is worn by a baptised Sikh man whose uncut hair is an expression of faith. Christian modesty extends further into the past, and it is only recently that girls have been able to wear clothes of choice, as long as they adequately cover private parts. My mother was prevented from wearing jeans to her public school in the late 1950s, so dress restrictions are not specific to only some cultures. Yet times have changed to the point where older children in the Western world are, more or less, free to dress as they would like, except in some immigrant households or fundamentalist Christian homes.

Patricia Savola asks in her letter to *Teacher* ("Human rights trump cultural rights," September 2008), "Since when do fathers have the right to decide the religious practises of their daughters?" One could also question a parent's right to spank, to home school, and to indoctrinate a child about abortion, homosexuality, creationism, or any other contentious matter. It seems,

My objection is to teenagers being forced to dress or behave in ways that conflict with their own desires, as with Aqsa's desire to dress like other Canadian girls.

in answer to Savola's pertinent question, that a parent does have this right. So here I am, as a teacher, educating students in the traditional sense of the term ("leading out" from the Latin *educare*), teaching them to be what they want to be and stand up for themselves, like Rosa Parks, while boys come to school in turbans and girls in the abaya, headscarf, and veil. I hope Savola's message rings loud—that human rights trump cultural rights every time—though the message does not yet ring true.

Jim McMurtry teaches at Fraser Heights Secondary School, Surrey.

Profiteers collect billions from No Child Left Behind

The architect of *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB), President Bush's first senior education advisor, Sandy Kress, has turned the program, which has consistently proven disastrous in the realm of education, into a huge success in the realm of corporate profiteering. After ushering NCLB through the US House of Representatives in 2001 with no public hearings, Kress went from lawmaker—turning on spigots of federal funds—to lobbyist, tapping into those billions of dollars in federal funds for private investors well connected to the Bush administration.

A statute that once promised equal access to public education to millions of American children now instead promises billions of dollars in profits to corporate clients through dubious processes of testing and assessment and "supplemental educational services." NCLB—the Business Roundtable's revision of Lyndon Johnson's *Education and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA)—created a "high-stakes testing" system through which the private sector could siphon federal education funds. The result has been windfall corporate profit. What was once a cottage industry has become a corporate giant. "Millions of dollars are being spent," says

A statute that once promised equal access to public education to millions of American children now instead promises billions of dollars in profits to corporate clients through dubious processes of testing and assessment and "supplemental educational services."

Jack Jennings, director of the Center on Education Policy, "and nobody knows what's happening."

The wedding of big business and education benefits not only the interests of the Business Roundtable, a consortium of over 300 CEOs, but countless Bush family loyalists. Sandy Kress, chief architect of NCLB; Harold McGraw III, textbook publisher; Bill Bennett, former Reagan education secretary; and Neil Bush, the president's youngest brother, have all cashed in on the roundtable's successful national implementation of "outcome-

based education." NCLB's mandated system of state standards, state tests, and school sanctions has together transformed our public school system into a for-profit frenzy.

Kress, former president of the Dallas School Board, began "A Draft Position for George W. Bush on K-12 Education" as early as 1999. Working successfully with then-Governor Bush in Texas for years, the Democrat bolstered bipartisan support behind the compassionate marketing promise to "leave no child behind" through the adoption of high-stake standards measuring school performance. Signed into law in early 2002, NCLB dramatically extended the federal role in public education, mandating annual testing of children in Grades 3 to 8, providing tutoring for children in persistently failing schools, and setting a 12-year timetable for closing chronic gaps in student achievement. Having then crafted the legislation, Kress transitioned from public servant to corporate lobbyist, guiding clients to the trough of federal funds. By 2005, he had made upwards of \$4 million from lobbying contracts.

While the Business Roundtable maintains that the high-stakes tests administered nationwide hold schools accountable to "Adequate Yearly Progress," NCLB has instead benefited the testing industry in the amount of between \$1.9 and \$5.3 billion a year. NCLB requires states to produce "interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports," all of which are provided at a price by members of the industry. Among these are the top four or five players in the textbook market, including the big three—McGraw-Hill, Houghton-Mifflin, and Harcourt General—who have, since the passage of NCLB, come to dominate the testing market. Identified by Wall Street analysts in the wake of the 2000 election as "Bush stocks," all three represent owners like Harold McGraw III, who has longstanding ties to the Bush administration and the lobbying efforts of Sandy Kress.

Other Kress clients, including Ignite! Learning, a company headed by Neil Bush, and K12 Inc., a for-profit enterprise owned by Bill Bennett, tailored themselves to vie for NCLB dollars.

Under NCLB, as school districts receive federal funding they are required by law to hold 20% of those funds aside, anticipating that its schools will fail to meet its Annual Yearly Progress formula. When that

Signed into law in early 2002, NCLB dramatically extended the federal role in public education, mandating annual testing of children in Grades 3 to 8, providing tutoring for children in persistently failing schools, and setting a 12-year timetable for closing chronic gaps in student achievement.

"failure" is certified by test scores, the district is required to use those set-aside federal funds to pay supplemental education service (SES) providers.

Ignite! has placed products in 40 US school districts, and K12 offers a menu of services "as an option to traditional brick-and-mortar schools," including computer-based "virtual academies," that have qualified for over \$4 million in federal grants. Under NCLB, supplemental educational services, whose results are being increasingly challenged, reap \$2 billion annually.

Nationally, there are over 1,800 approved providers of supplemental educational services, but little in the way of regulation. To the contrary, Michael Petrilli, former member of the Department of Education, purports, "We want as little regulation as possible so the market can be as vibrant as possible." To that end, Kress is currently lobbying on behalf of another bipartisan coalition to win re-authorization of NCLB for another six years.

Source: *Diatribune and Daily Kos*, March, 30, 2007. Author: Mandevilla; Researchers: Alan Scher and Sam Burchard; Faculty Evaluator: Karen Grady, PhD.





Clockwise from top left: Sarah Fox—Wonderland, Travis Goodridge—Fungus, Teddy Brock—Metal Flowers, Maggie Shykula—Winter Orchard, Kelsie Grant—Eagles Perch, Salmon Arm Secondary School.

Being a teacher

By Greg Murray

Teaching in the public school system today is radically different than it was even five years ago. In the general climate of huge underfunding, teachers have to rely on their experience and collegial support in order to succeed as educators.

The numbers are clear. We have 4,200 classes reporting more than three IEP's during the 2007–08 school year. Some of these are students who have received professional testing and have gone through the hoops to receive additional funding. Some are students who receive a designation but have not gone through the testing procedure.

Some are, simply, “unidentified” although they have specific learning problems, are disruptive to the classroom in a myriad of ways, or cannot function successfully in a “normal class environment.”

These conditions are not specifically related to any one school district but are a reflection of the provincial educational environment. When you go to school and face your new class, you will likely face a class like this.

As a teacher with over 30 years experience, I find my own resources are certainly taxed at times. I have survived this long because my own teaching philosophy has allowed me to turn off the discussion and concentrate on my class. My own class makeup reflects a lot of single parents, some of whom are doing their best to support their kids at school, others have fallen behind in support and rely on the school system to provide the supplies or other items that are needed.

I have students coming to school

without coats (during the winter), without breakfast or lunch, without school supplies or adequate sleep. They come with broken eye glasses, or squinting because they need glasses and cannot see the board. Many come with minimal skills, some are not able to spell their names correctly when creating name tags.

In this environment, I am expected to arrive in the morning and provide the needed educational impetus to “turn them around”—to

As a teacher with over 30 years experience, I find my own resources are certainly taxed at times.

provide the skills and desire to be a successful and fully functioning academic in today's working world.

Our school district is \$900,000 short at the beginning of this fiscal year. Not a lot of money for some of the larger districts but, for us, this means more “tightening of budgets” and “making do with less.” I am using the quotation marks liberally as these are phrases I have heard often and which are becoming more synonymous with the expectations of my dearly loved, chosen profession. I find that, as teachers we “cover” areas of weakness, and these activities become expected over time. This is a very strange philosophy.

Even my own children who have gone through the public school system, all in my own class at one time or another, reel at the information they receive about today's classroom structures. Their own comments range from “How could we have dealt with that?” to “We would never have had to deal with

that situation when we were in school!”

Teachers are a very conscientious lot. Last year, I paid out \$975 from my own pocket to provide materials for my classroom that I thought were needed to enhance the programs. This included cakes for birthdays, stickers for good writing but also dry ice for science class. These are not frivolous expenditures but provide the interest and drive to continue needed studies. Time after time, I am told there is no money available.

I bring the money up at the countless meetings we attend over the year and inevitably get nodding heads from colleagues as I describe the amounts that teachers spend on their own classes every year. At the Summer Leadership Conference in Kamloops this summer, I suggested that we do a provincial poll to get a better idea of the exact numbers involved. Teachers are supplying millions of dollars to support a drastically underfunded system. I hope that this poll will happen.

Again, at the leadership conference, I attended a district budget workshop. Despite calculators and team members helping out, we could not get the same figures that the government had supplied for our district budget this coming year. Our numbers were always more than the printed numbers. This was using their formulas.

When I have asked our local board members how the formulas work, several of them have thrown their hands up and said, “I wish I knew.” Even special education departments explain that the money received goes into a general fund and can be used with all students, not specifically the students who generated the funds. This means

that the kids who were tested and given the money may not get the funded services if another student shows a greater need. What a strange system.

The teachers who are supplementing their school budgets will eventually get tired of doing so and stop. Frustration can sometimes lead to the teacher leaving the system before their time is up. The huge numbers of retirees over the last few years are a good indication that this is not that far off the mark. We should be scrambling to keep these teachers in the system. These are the experienced teachers who can bring so much knowledge to those who are beginning a career. To all of those potential retirees out there, take a beginning teacher under your wing and give her or him the tools to make her or his career as meaningful and as rewarding as yours, hopefully, has been.

To all of those potential retirees out there, take a beginning teacher under your wing and give her or him the tools to make her or his career as meaningful and as rewarding as yours, hopefully, has been.

Even with the underfunding, the empty political rhetoric (teachers have no friends in any government), and the constant uphill battle to even maintain present services, the teaching profession is the most rewarding on earth. There is not another job out there where you can educate a young person to be self-reliant, empower them to realize their own potential, take the horrible life events that some have

had to deal with and give them a new start, and make a real difference.

I know that on the first day of school, I will face my new class, look into their bright expectant eyes and realize that I will still “cover”—it is in my nature. I will bring food, make lunches, get paper and pencils, and give them what they need, simply because they need it. It is the nature of teaching. It is the nature of caring for the young human beings that place their hopes in me. For some, I am the only hope.

As my own teaching career winds down, I impart this to the new teachers—don't let the bureaucrats get you down. At my house, I have a special cupboard (actually several cupboards now) where I store the mementos of past years from the students who said, “You are the best teacher I have ever had.” and, “Thank you for making a difference in my life.” There are cards and objects that reflect the good wishes. The really special ones are those that the students took time to make themselves. (I finally moved all of the coffee cups to a separate box to make room.) There are letters from students who I taught years ago that say thank you.

Anytime I feel down, I go to that cupboard and remind myself that what I am doing is life changing and very meaningful. It reminds me that nothing out there can dissuade me from my true calling, my *raison d'être*—my reason for being.

As I look into the new faces and realize I am teaching the third generation of kids I taught when I started teaching, I feel complete. My life is worthwhile. I am a teacher.

Greg Murray teaches at Eagle View Elementary School, Port Hardy.

Breaking the texting code



By Bruce Hunter

It started with a noon-hour conversation in the staffroom. Monty, the new Grade 11 English teacher, was lamenting the clandestine use of text messaging in his classroom. "As soon as I turn my back, they're on their crackberries texting one another. Whenever I catch one of them I can't even read what they've written. I can't even rant or I'll appear the next day on YouTube."

Nadia, the art teacher, looked at him thoughtfully. "You are feeling left out of their learning process?" "No, they are opting out of my learning process." He heard his own words, then quickly added, "I mean the process of teaching the content of my English course." Again he heard his own words, and raised his voice. "I mean, I'm teaching it but they're not learning it." Finally, under the weight of his own words, he stopped and said, "What about those Canucks, eh?"

When the laughter subsided, Maggie, who taught keyboarding

and office skills, took a sip of her tea and, said, "Monty, Monty, don't fight it. There is lots of learning

As soon as I turn my back, they're on their crackberries texting one another. Whenever I catch one of them, I can't even read what they've written.

happening in your classroom, in spite of you. Take control. Explain why we have rules about cellphones. Then get their cellphone numbers by informing them that test results will be texted to them individually. Now you have control. Then you start assigning their homework through batch text mail. You can send hints that you may even begin to send a new textbook to them a page at a time. After all, it's a textbook. Why not text the book?" She paused to sip her tea. The staffroom had gone quiet. She had an audience.

Monty was intrigued, "That would

break their parents' budget. They have to pay for every text message."

"Education isn't cheap. Besides, most of them are on the single rate plan."

"But I don't know how to text. I don't know how to read it and I don't know how to write it."

Maggie, who was also a drama teacher, delivered her punch line. "Texting is simply speed reading and speed writing. You don't have to spend any time learning this so-called new language. Let your computer do the writing."

"Yeah, right. I only use my computer for e-mail, word processing, and report cards."

"That's all you need." She went over to one of the two staffroom computers, picked up the latest *Teacher* newsmagazine from the table and handed it to Monty.

"Pick a page at random and dictate a paragraph to me."

Monty read from page one with a flourish and, in his best talking-head voice read:

"The endless stream of directives is drowning us. We no longer have

the time to be the reflective practitioners we yearn to be. In fact with provincial tests driving both the endless data-gathering and mandating an ever-narrower and

Texting is simply speed writing and speed reading. You don't have to spend any time learning this so-called new language.

more superficial curriculum, we find that this government does not want teachers as autonomous professionals thinking too much about how they teach and how to tailor instruction to individual students."

"Hoo, that's subversive. Where did you get that from?" That was Alan, our principal. Monty held up the offending publication. Alan said, "We're getting rather strident aren't we?" Monique, who taught Spanish, shouldered Alan playfully and said, "What do you mean, We?"

Alan sighed. "Ok, ok. Show us how to text, Maggie. We have 15 minutes."

Maggie, who loved to teach, put on her voice, modulated, consonants articulated.

"Here is how it's done. Highlight the paragraph. You do this all the time; simply depress Control, push C and release. Now go top left and pull down Edit, choose Find and then ask it to find e. That's right: "e" no period or quotation marks. Then go to Replace With and leave it blank. Finally choose Replace All. You've just told your machine to take that highlighted paragraph and remove all e's. You'll get this."

We looked at the screen.

The endless stream of directives is drowning us. We no longer have the time to be the reflective practitioners we yearn to be. In fact with provincial tests driving both the endless data-gathering and mandating an ever-narrower and more superficial curriculum, we find that this government does not want teachers as autonomous professionals thinking too much about how they

tach and how to tailor instruction to individual students.

Maggie waited while the teachers moved forward to read the screen. She edited it quickly, replacing the occasional "e" for clarity.

Monty said, "You want subversive, Alan. This is subversive."

Maggie highlighted the text again. "Let's take out the o's. Now you'll have to really speed-read this or you'll lose it." She repeated the process and removed the o's.

The endless stream of directives is drowning us. We no longer have the time to be the reflective practitioners we yearn to be. In fact with provincial tests driving both the endless data-gathering and mandating an ever-narrower and more superficial curriculum, we find that this government does not want teachers as autonomous professionals thinking too much about how they teach and how to tailor instruction to individual students.

Again she did a fast edit while we gawked at the text.

"I feel like I'm reading some kid's private diary," Alan said with awe.

"Sprinkle that with emoticons and it might work."

As Maggie was logging off and turning off the computer she said, "So far you've removed only two vowels. You can remove more but you may slow down and frustrate your reader."

Monty made a show of looking at his watch. Well Alan, you now have the code. The war is over. The cellular army has been disenvowelled.

Monty made a show of looking at his watch. "Well Alan, you now have the code. The war is over. The cellular army has been disenvowelled."

Amidst groans the staffroom began to empty, Alan cupped his right ear and bowed to Maggie. "Maggie, I give you the cellular salute and thank you from the top of my heart."

He was now a man with a mission.

Bruce Hunter is a retired teacher, Nelson, BC.

Techy tidbits

Facebook to catch the criminals

A Toronto cop has another approach to crime and kids—network with them on Facebook. Scott Mills says "I could prevent violence more from my desk than I could driving around to schools. Just by being out there, engaging with kids online you build relationships."

When a teenaged girl died from a knife stab last January, Toronto police used messages left on a Facebook tribute page to let students know how to provide anonymous tips. They reported that the phone lines lit up.

The Ontario police college is planning to offer a course on how to use social networking sites as a tool to prevent violence.

Give cellphones to those New York kids

According to the *New York Times*, the New York City Department of education "is considering a proposal to give all students free cellphones, which would use text messages produced by an advertising agency, Droga 5, to promote achievement. The plan includes sponsorship opportunities for cellphone makers, service providers, and other marketers."

This is a student-motivation

proposal by a Harvard economist, Roland Fryer, who is working as a consultant to the city schools. Besides getting the phone, students would earn extra free minutes if they do well in school. Students would be unable to make calls during school hours. No parent complaints about free cellphones were reported.

Korean students rescued from addiction

Korea is the country that is the most heavily connected to the Internet, with nearly everyone having broadband connections. A social networking site called *Cyworld* includes 85% of Korean Internet users. A consequence of ubiquity, a child psychiatrist in Seoul claims, is that up to 30% of South Koreans under the age of 18 (mostly males) are at risk of Internet addiction.

The government has created 140 Internet-addiction counselling centres and 100 hospitals have set up treatment centres, according to the *New York Times*. Researchers have created a checklist that helps diagnose the severity of addiction.

An "Internet Rescue Camp" has been created for some of the most severely affected. Participants are denied all access to computers and limited to one hour on their cellphone, to keep them from

playing online games. Campers have to be kept under surveillance at all times, even when they are supposed to be asleep to keep them from trying to satisfy their craving. The key philosophy of the camp is to provide an experience of a life-style without the Internet, something unknown to Korean children.

One of the students at a camp said it was working for him—"From now on, maybe I'll just spend five hours a day online."

Students claim copyright and demand more than \$200,000 for each essay

In the struggle against plagiarism, more than 7,000 educational institutions use the services of turnitin.com. The company that runs it says they get more than 100,000 papers each day and more than 40 million student papers are in its archive. The company claims that more than 50% of plagiarism is from copying the work of other students.

Four high school students have turned the tables, saying in a legal suit that turnitin.com is infringing on the copyright of the students because their papers uploaded to the site are saved and these archived papers are searched as part of identifying copying. The students are seeking \$900,000 in

damages.

The company's defense is that the students agreed to release the company from liability by checking a box to that affect when submitting a paper. Of course, if the teacher requires that all papers be submitted to turnitin.com, the students' only other choice than to check the box is to fail.

Tutoring from a distance

The *No Child Left Behind* law in the US requires that school districts provide free tutoring if large numbers of students are underperforming. While teachers must have a certificate to teach, tutors hired by private tutoring companies don't have to meet any qualification requirements.

One state alone, Massachusetts, spent over \$21 million over three years, with no way of knowing whether the tutoring does any good. While much of the tutoring is done at centres convenient to shopping malls, some of it is being done over the Internet.

The US chains, such as Sylvan, offer Internet tutoring for about \$50 an hour. Their prices, though, are being undercut by online tutoring from India. With highly qualified people in large numbers, but low wages, several companies have set up shop to provide online tutoring. Indian entrepreneur Krishna Ganesh

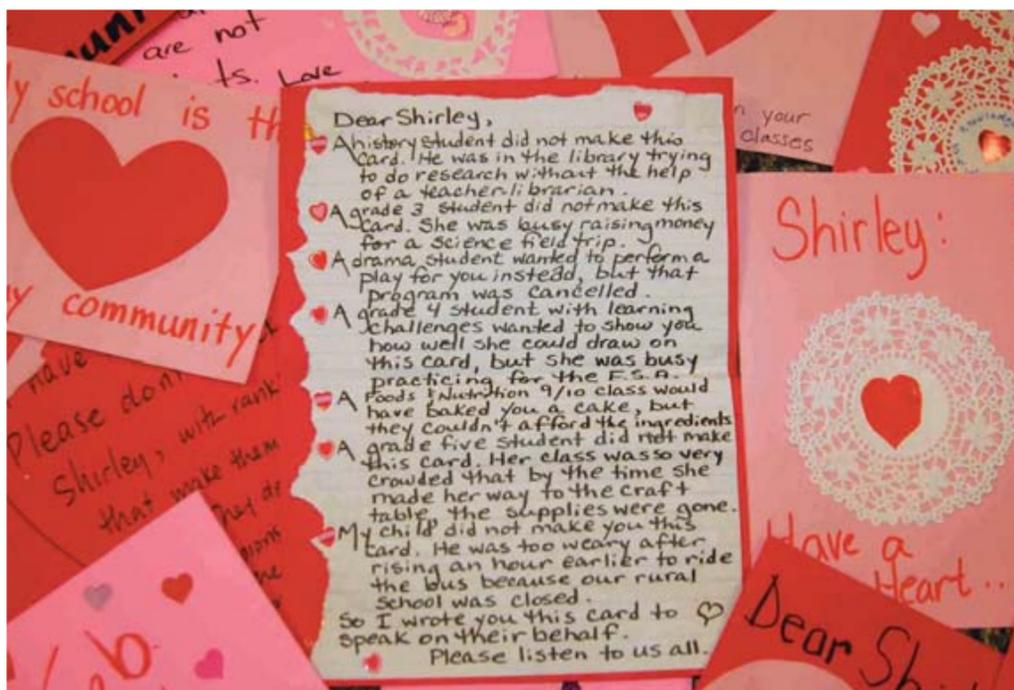
has started a service that charges a flat \$99 a month with as many 45-minute sessions as the student organized. He told the *New York Times* that "our vision is to be part of the monthly budget of one million families."



Read a story to your great-great-grandkids—gravely

The virtual human interaction lab at Stanford University has created three-dimensional digitized models customized with people's facial characteristics and mannerisms. According to the *Mail and Guardian*, the lab director, Jeremy Bailenson, says "you can make a digital version of you that is animated so your grandkids' grandkids could put on a helmet and you can read them a story from the grave."

—Larry Kuehn



Shirley's Valentines—heartfelt, loving, tasteful, and creative. Valentine cards were sent to Minister of Education Shirley Bond.

Social activists: The next generation

By Jan Thorsen

They are the largest network of children helping children through education in the world.

They have built more than 450 schools, provided education to over 40,000 children every day, and have helped 505,000 families obtain access to medical care. When you phone their office, they answer their phones with “we are the generation we have been waiting for.”

They are the Free the Children organization, and like their founder, Craig Kielburger, are well-known throughout the BCTF. For those of you who don't know of Free the Children's history, it was founded when 12-year-old Craig Kielburger read of the murder of Iqbal Masih, a 12-year-old carpet factory labourer who had spoken out against child labour. Kielburger was shocked. When he brought the article to school to show his class, he was inspired to create an organization that would help children around the world. And the rest, as they say, is history.

But as we all know, any well-run organization is also the sum of its parts. And the parts that comprise Free the Children include their tireless workers. Meet Shelby Pearce and Matthew Cimone.

Pearce is an 18-year-old from a small town in southern Ontario. She got involved when Free the Children gave a presentation to the students at her secondary school. She was struck by the enthusiasm of the presenters and the lure of the “me-to-we” message that encourages youth to make a difference. After graduation, she joined the Leaders Today team with a passion for inspiring youth citizenship around the world.

Cimone, a 26-year-old from Thunderbay, Ontario, joined the Leaders Today with a dream of encouraging young people to ask the hard questions about poverty and injustice. His passion for social justice arose from trips to Uganda and Sierra Leone where he witnessed the ravages of civil war. While in Africa, he was profoundly touched by the courageous stories of the people he met who continued

to work for a just society despite daunting odds.

As a team, Cimone and Pearce have crisscrossed Canada and parts of the United States as part of the “Millennium in Motion Youth Speaking and Leadership Tour” that promotes the UN millennium development goals.

Teachers instinctively know that the ideas of social justice that Free the Children impart go beyond Christmas food hampers, teaching a

Teachers instinctively know that the ideas of social justice that Free the Children impart go beyond Christmas food hampers, teaching a virtues lesson, or collecting pennies for various causes.

virtues lesson, or collecting pennies for various causes. While these activities are laudable, they need to go beyond the scope of isolated events and become imbedded in the social justice fabric as a conscious political act that embodies all that we do in and out of the classroom.

The British Columbia Teachers' Federation for Action on Social Justice (CASJ) has developed a “lens that applies social justice theory to social justice work in our union to help guide policy, plan actions, and frame resources for social change with maximum impact.” The CASJ social justice lens has four distinct yet supportive and interactive sections:

- Access—all facets of society open to all
- Agency—the intention to effect change
- Advocacy—skills that effect change
- Solidarity action—collectively working for change

At the core of this social justice lens is the need for the efforts of social activists to result in systematic changes leading to an equitable society.

During a panel discussion at the recent social justice conference held in Vancouver, Dr. Paul Shaker, dean of education at SFU, outlined that the teaching profession is a “great reservoir of social liberal thought” and so we must be “conscious of

the notion of citizenship and civic responsibility.” Social justice is liberating to the person who does it, and as teachers we have opportunities to reinforce the notions of getting outside of ourselves and spur our students on to a “path of enlightened self-interest and realization.” Lofty goals perhaps, but haven't we teachers always wanted the best for our students?

In Nanaimo, we have been very fortunate to be the beneficiaries of Free the Children outreach programs. Close to 500 secondary school and elementary student leaders have participated in leadership training workshops. The message that is given to our young student leaders is not complicated.

- Work together.
- Start small.
- Channel your own interest and passion into positive action.
- Students are never too young to contribute and make a difference locally or globally.

I have heard Mathew Cimone's and Shelby Pearce's speeches many times. While they are talking, I look at the audience and observe their rapt attention. The swarms of eager students who gather around them after their presentations are a testament to the empathy of youth and the desire to join with others for social change.

On a personal level, these student leaders' energy and commitment have touched my heart. They have given me a sense of renewed hope that the seeds planted by BCTF social justice activists throughout the years found fertile ground. Their legacy of hope and courage will long be felt in the Nanaimo/Ladysmith district. They have shown me that indeed, this is the generation we have been waiting for.

Millennium youth tour would not have been possible without the generous donation from the National Bank of Canada and the Canadian International Development Agency.

Jan Thorsen is a gifted/enrichment resource teacher, Nanaimo.

For more information go to: www.freethechildren.com/index.php

BCTF Advantage

Life happens, be prepared

Part of the excitement of leaving on a long-awaited vacation is the anticipation of what your travels will bring. You may meet new, lifelong friends, discover the most surprising bargains, or observe exciting traditions. Whether it's novel food experiences or exhilarating new sights, anything can happen while you're away.

But not every surprise is a pleasant one.

For example, if you were to become ill while travelling, or worse still, have an unexpected accident, it could cost you your financial security. Then think of what may happen if an out-of-the-ordinary emergency occurred.

Most of us don't like to think of these things, let alone expect them to happen. But, they do. Take a look at some recent medical emergencies that occurred, which nobody could ever have anticipated.

- A retired man was horseback riding in Germany. His horse was scared by an electric fence. This spooked some cows in a nearby field, which then scared other horses; this resulted in several riders falling off their horses. The retired man injured his arm and head. Claim amount: Approximately \$7,500.

- While hunting in Australia, a man in his 20s tripped on a trap and fell in a hole. He fractured his jaw and required surgery. Claim amount: Approximately \$7,000.

- A man in his 20s was bitten by a shark while swimming in Hawaii. This resulted in open wounds on his hip and thighs, landing him a three-day hospital stay. Claim amount: Approximately \$35,000.

- A 20-year old man had a skiing accident during a trip to Japan. His fall resulted in fractures, ligament damage, and a broken limb. Claim amount: Approximately \$24,000.

We all know how it works—whether you're ready for it or not, life happens. If you're not prepared, it could cost you thousands of dollars. It's best to expect the unexpected by purchasing the right travel medical insurance before you leave.

Travel medical insurance basics

Many British Columbians are surprised to learn that their provincial healthcare coverage may not provide full coverage in other parts of Canada and could leave them without any medical

insurance if they are travelling in the United States or another foreign country.

Why do I need travel insurance?

Today's medical costs are very high—especially when you are travelling out of province. An unforeseen illness or accident while travelling (even if you're just crossing the border for a few hours or a few days) can put you and your family in dire financial straits.

If you are forced to reschedule, delay, or cancel a trip, travel insurance can also cover the cost of cancelled flights, rebooking travel, or coming home early.

What should I look for in travel insurance?

1. Travel Medical Insurance – to cover the costs of medical emergencies while travelling.

These costs include:

- Emergency medical treatment
- Hospital expenses
- Doctor bills not paid by BC Medical
- Ambulance service
- Prescription drugs
- Emergency dental treatment

2. Trip Cancellation/Trip

Interruption insurance—to reimburse non-refundable prepaid travel costs if your trip is cancelled before you leave or interrupted after your trip has begun.

What type of plan do I need?

- If you only travel outside of BC once or twice a year, a single trip plan is easy and economical.
- If you travel more than twice a year, your best value may be a multi-trip policy for the whole year.

What should I know before I buy travel insurance?

You should find out how much medical coverage for travel you have in your healthcare insurance plan including any employee health benefit plan. Then you need to consider how much travelling you'll be doing, how you'll be travelling, and where you'll be going. A one-time cruise in the Mediterranean will require different coverage than frequent weekend trips to Washington State.

Discuss your travel plans with your BCAA insurance agent and choose the option that fits your needs.

Information provided courtesy of the BCTF Advantage Program.

For more information about the new customized travel insurance program for teachers, please click on www.bctfadvantage.ca or call 1-877-778-8717.



Student photographer Travis Goodridge—Waterfall, Salmon Arm Secondary School.

New BCTF lesson aids

1 LA 9937—Evolving Practices: Meeting the Needs of All Students by the Learning Assistance Teachers' Association, 84 p. ©2008. *Vital Link* (Fall 2008) features articles on the changes teachers go through throughout their careers in relation to evolving practices that meet the challenges of student changes and emerging needs. A featured article is on incorporating the principles of Universal Design for Learning as one way of evolving the practice of teaching. Also included with this LATA journal is the brochure "Student Grade Retention: What Does the Research Tell Us?" Grades K-12. \$15

2 LA 4083—Science 8: Science Activities for the Holistic Learner by David Hague and Moira Rockwell, Rev. ©2008. This CD ROM, readable on both Macintosh and Windows computers, is designed to enhance and enrich the teacher's own resources for teaching many concepts in science, and it aims to simplify science concepts. This revised edition of the CD Rom (Science Activities for the Visual and Spatial Learner) illustrates Science 8 concepts in a simplified easy-to-understand manner. Over 250 pages of classroom-ready and field-tested activities are aligned to and cover the new Science 8 achievement indicators. The activities are student-centered resources for everyday classroom use and take the form of graphic organizers: nested circle diagrams, concept maps, cut and paste activities, lab activities, flow charts, charts, graphs, compilation diagrams, and dichotomous keys. All files are in PDF file format. \$56

3 LA 4084—Science 9: Science Activities for the Holistic Learner by David Hague and Moira Rockwell, Rev. ©2008. This CD ROM, readable on both Macintosh and Windows computers, is designed to enhance and enrich the teacher's own resources for teaching many concepts in science, and it aims to simplify science concepts. This revised edition of the popular CD Rom (Science Activities for the Visual and Spatial Learner) illustrates Science 9 concepts in a simplified easy to understand manner. Over 250 pages of classroom-ready and field-tested activities, that are aligned to and cover the new Science 9 achievement indicators. The activities are student centered resources for everyday classroom use and take the form of graphic organizers: concept maps, cut and paste activities, lab activities, flow charts, charts, graphs, and compilation charts. Files are in PDF format. \$56

4 LA 9985—Brain Wellness: The Secrets for Longevity by Gary Anaka, 216 p. ©2008. This self-help guide reveals the secrets of brain wellness. The author is a brain-based learning facilitator, a learning assistance teacher, and a brain coach. The guide outlines easy-to-understand ideas and practical information to discover why the brain ages, the basic biological needs of the brain, how nutrition can boost mental powers, why the brain has to be exercised, and how to make plasticity work for the brain every day. Includes what brain killers to avoid, brain boosting activities for life and brain compatible lifestyle strategies, critical requirements for expanding brain power,

lowering stress and moving ahead, and simple and inexpensive ways to avoid brain aging. \$23.95

5 LA 8623—Visual Arts: Vincent Van Gogh by Dianne Varty, 55 p. ©2007. This illustrated resource book includes hands-on activities and templates for a CPR train ride, a three-dimensional map of Canada, a provincial brochure, a newspaper, and a study of Canadian Aboriginal peoples. Grades 2-3. \$6.95

6 LA 8097—Activities for Everyday Words: Grades 1-3 by Dianne Varty, 67 p. ©2008. This unit includes blackline masters with a variety of illustrated pages of daily words, math words, science words, nouns, and extra cards for use with Grades 1 to 3 students. The pages can be copied back to back on card stock or regular paper and laminated for word game use. Included are how to use suggestions for flash cards, memory game, and go fish. \$6.75

7 LA 9187—Spreading the Word 4 by CBC Television, 115-minute DVD, ©2008. This DVD-formatted video is an educational initiative of the Vancouver International Readers and Writers Festival. The content contains readings and discussions by Canadian and international authors for audiences from Grades 3 to 12, which were taped live at the 2007 Vancouver International Writer and Readers Festival. The video content is connected to curriculum at indicated grade levels and includes a study guide for each event. In the segment "From Your Backyard to Antarctica" for Grades 3 to 7, biologist and wildlife educator Evelyn Daigle visits penguin colonies in Antarctica. Award winning

children's author Margriet Ruurs explores wildlife in our backyards from bats and mice to skunks and hummingbirds. In the segment "Stand Up for Change" for Grades 8 to 12, Severn Cullis-Suzuki shares the stage with young activists Ginger Gosnell-Myers, Tim Harvey, D. Simon Jackson, and Lyndsay Poaps. They discuss how they started out and what other young people can do. Grades 3-12. \$3

8 LA 9207—Tall Ships: Teachers' Resource Guide by the Victoria Tall Ships Society, ©2008. This guide was first created in 2005 by a group of Victoria teachers and updated in 2008 for the June 2008 Victoria Tall Ship Festival. The resource is in CD format containing live links and is organized into chapters and themes, including: the history of tall ships, the first global explorers, reasons for exploration, north west coast explorers, early maritime development in BC, tall ship basics—kinds of ships, why they move, knots; life at sea—food, discipline, accommodation, signal flags; navigation—finding one's way, tides, compass, starts, GPS; dangers at sea—pirates, hazards, and shipwrecks. The guide is designed to provide hands-on activities for Grades 4 to 8 students and is relevant to social studies, science, language arts, and music classes. Many of the activities provide excellent enrichment and extensions opportunities. Grades 4-8. \$3

9 LA 8524—Boglin Gets Lost by Pamela Findling and Nicole Skutelnik, 56 p. ©2007. This illustrated story and activity book was written to entertain and educate children about the wonders of bogs and the plants and animals that live there and to

educate about the importance of peatlands, especially Burns Bog in Delta, British Columbia. The story centres around Boglin Bear and his adventures in the bog. This book is published by the Burns Bog Conservation Society. Grades 1-3. \$15.95

10 LA 8525—Boglin and the Birthday Party by Pamela Findling and Nicole Skutelnik, 50 p. ©2007. This illustrated resource book was written to entertain and educate children about the wonders of bogs and the plants and animals that live there and to educate about the importance of peatlands, especially Burns Bog in Delta, British Columbia. The story centres around Boglin Bear and a follow-up to his adventures in the bog in "Boglin Gets Lost" book, LA 8524. This book is published by the Burns Bog Conservation Society. Grades 1-3. \$15.95

More curriculum resources and information are available at www.bcalmer.ca.

To order the above lesson aids, enclose a cheque payable to the BCTF or authorized PO to BCTF Lesson Aids Service, 100-550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2 or call 604-871-2180, toll free 1-800-663-9163, ext. 2180, with a Visa or Mastercard. GST, postage/handling are included in prices. Orders sent by return mail. Lesson Aids office and display room hours: 9-5 p.m. Mon. to Fri. from Sept. to June; 9-5 p.m. Tues. to Fri. during July and Aug.; 9-12 p.m. on Sat. during Sept., Oct., Jan., and Feb. bctf.ca/LessonAids.

Yours for the asking

Power of Peace awards

The YMCA of Greater Vancouver invites you to attend the Power of Peace awards on May 1, 2009, at the Centre in Vancouver for Performing Arts. Our keynote speaker is Lieutenant General Romeo Dallaire (Ret), and various musical and dance performers will join us in celebrating the peacemakers among us. YMCA peace medals are awarded to a wide range of local individuals and organizations who are working to strengthen our communities by promoting peaceful solutions to violence, conflict, discrimination, and injustice. Through their actions, the winners have had a significant impact on the lives of others, either locally or

elsewhere in the world, without any special resources or recognition.

- **Local Peacemaker:** Open to individuals of any age and groups working in their own community for equality, justice, and peace.
- **International Peacemaker:** Open to individuals of any age and groups working with an international community for a world based on equality, justice, and peace.
- **Young Peacemaker:** Open to individuals 18 years of age or younger or youth groups working locally or globally for equality, justice, and peace.
- **Emerging Leader Peacemaker:** Open to individuals and groups between 19 and 30 years of age working locally or globally for

equality, justice, and peace.

Contact Stacey Gheysen, stacey.gheysen@vanymca.org for more information about nominating an award winner or attending this event. Subsidized tickets are available for groups of youth.

Up with Hope

The Environmental Youth Alliance (EYA) invites you to be a part of the 2009 "Up with Hope" campaign, the second round of a monumental project that seeks to work with some of the poorest regions of East Africa in building sustainable businesses. The mission of this project is to create awareness of the living conditions of youth in developing countries and to provide the initial start-up capital to build recycling centres and sanitation blocks in the slums of Nairobi, Kenya. These facilities will be run by the local youth who are tackling the serious waste control problems in their neighbourhoods. EYA is looking to partner up schools from the Lower Mainland with primary schools from the slums of Nairobi. We would like to foster a global connection between youth across the globe through penpal programs using various media including hand-written letters, e-mails, and video.

Please take a moment to see for yourself last year's results in Kibera, Nairobi featured on CBC's The National at <http://tinyurl.com/49nqu3>.

If you are interested in participating in this year's Up with Hope program, contact Justin Sekiguchi at Justin@eya.ca or by phone 778-885-4020.

The Canadian Reader

The Canadian Reader, is put out monthly by LesPlan Educational Services, who many of your

members will know by our high-quality What in The World? current events resource. *The Canadian Reader* is aimed at Grades 3-5 students and is available in English and in French. It combines Canadian current events and issues with geography to expand students' knowledge of Canada while enhancing their ability to read and understand informational text. Published eight times during the school year, each issue focuses on one of six key reading comprehension strategies, news stories, literacy-based lesson plans, ready-to-use graphic organizers and rubrics, a non-fiction comic strip, an informational cartoon strip, and a map assignment that focuses on a region of Canada.

For more information: <http://tinyurl.com/3wb6jo>

Middle East studies

Researchers at SFU are conducting a review of curriculum related to Middle East studies. Your comments will guide the development of curricular and pedagogical supports. When at least three responses are recorded, the project will donate curriculum materials related to the Middle East to your school's library.

For more information, contact: Nisha Parhar—nparhar@sfu.ca. To

complete the anonymous survey: <http://websurvey.sfu.ca/survey/22082995>.

For details about this review, contact the researchers: Dr. Ozlem Sensoy, Faculty of Education at SFU—ozlem@sfu.ca or Dr. Tamir Moustafa, School for International Studies at SFU—tmoustafa@sfu.ca.

Crossword solution from Jan./Feb. *Teacher*, p.17

1	B	O	D	O		5	O	R	G	I	E	S		11	S	A	P					
14	I	N	E	P	T		16	I	P	A	N	E	M	A		17	T	P	U			
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21	G	O	I	N	P		22	E	A	C	E		23	R		24	U	P	E	E		
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47	G	L	E	E		48	C		49	L	U	B		50	S	M	O	K	A	B	L	E
52	M	C	I	N	N	Y			53	M	A	B			54	K		I	L	T		
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59	A	C	D	C			63	S	S	E		64	A	E	R		65	I	E			
67	L	O	S	E		68	R	S	O	F		69	F	S	A		70	S	D	S		
72	P	A	G	E	O				73	G	R	I	E	V		75	A	N	C	E		
76	I	R	A			77	B	A	R	G	A	I	N		81	E	S	T	O	P		
82	N	S	M			83	O	C	T	A	G	O	N		84	S	A	I	N	T		
85	E	E	E			86	T	H	O	L	E	S			87	P	N	E	S			

www.examdividers.com

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Teachers' Pension Plan

YOUR basic pension IS secure

In September 2008, the *Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan* announced changes to the cost-of-living adjustments to pensions in pay beginning January 1, 2010, and in late January 2009, the *BC College Pension Plan* announced changes to the cost-of-living adjustments to pensions in pay beginning January 1, 2011. You can read about these changes at the respective websites: tpp.pensionsbc.ca, cpp.pensionsbc.ca.

What decisions and actions are being made with respect to our *BC Teachers' Pension Plan*?

First, keep in mind that the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, the BC College Pension Plan, and the BC Teachers' Pension are all separate and individual plans.

The Teachers' Pension Board of Trustees issued a *Communiqué* on January 26, 2009, to reassure members that no changes to the current post-retirement benefits are being made at this time and to also remind members that the board is

facing similar funding challenges in terms of the retiree cost-of-living adjustments and the group-health benefits.

Basic pension payments (including cost-of-living adjustments already granted) are secure and are not affected by funding challenges. The board monitors the financial health of the account from which the basic pension is paid and can increase contribution rates if more money is needed in that account as determined by an actuarial valuation. That is how the board can guarantee basic pension payments.

The board cannot make the same promise for future cost-of-living adjustments and subsidized group-health-benefit premiums because the funding arrangements are different. Cost-of-living adjustments are paid from the Inflation Adjustment Account (IAA), while retiree group-health benefits are paid from a portion of the employer contributions to that same account.

The board does not have the authority to increase contributions to the IAA to pay for cost of living adjustments to pensions in pay and group benefits. Only the plan

partners—the BCTF and the BC government—could negotiate an increase to member and employer contributions to the IAA. The board is concerned that the current IAA funding arrangement will make it impossible for the plan to provide future cost-of-living adjustments to pensions in pay and group-health benefits at the current level. The funds in the IAA are shrinking because the ratio of active members to retirees is declining, retirees are living longer, healthcare costs are rising, and investment earnings in the account have been reduced by the recent market downturn.

This is a complex issue and the board is considering its options, including regular consultations with the plan partners. The most recent meeting with the plan partners was January 26, 2009.

To stay tuned with updates on this issue, go to the *What's New?* section on the home page of the plan's website: tpp.pensionsbc.ca. Members can also write to the plan if they have questions or comments, or telephone the plan's information line, 1-877-356-8771.

Pension seminars

Thinking about retirement

If you are within five years of retirement, this free seminar, jointly presented by BCTF staff and BC Pension Corporation staff, is for you.

Your Pension/Your Future

Your pension benefits will be explained to you in plain language to help you understand how choices/decisions you make today can impact your pension income in the future.

Upcoming dates

Williams Lake—March 5
Prince George—March 7
Squamish—March 26
North Vancouver—March 28
Nelson—April 2
Cranbrook—April 4
Kelowna—April 18
Terrace—April 25
Prince George—April 30
Surrey—May 2
Abbotsford—May 9

Preregistration is required: online at tpp.pensionsbc.ca; e-mail tppseminars@pensionsbc.ca; phone: 250-356-2466; toll-free 1-877-558-5574.

There's more to it than the money

The BC Retired Teachers' Association has developed a workshop for those of you about to retire.

The workshop is designed to compliment the Teachers' Pension Plan/BCTF Pension Seminar, but with limited class size to facilitate sharing and learning. It's a workshop—not a seminar.

Attend a pension seminar and you will realize that "there's more to it than money" and who better to share experiences with you than retired teachers?

Retirement living brings with it life-altering situations and a wide variety of choices, some financial, some legal, and all connected with life-style.

If a pension seminar is coming to your area, ask the BCTF local president to contact the BCRTA to book this highly acclaimed follow-up workshop.

BCRTA contact information: Website: www.bcrta.ca. Telephone 604-871-2265; toll-free 1-877-683-2243.

Evidence-based research at your fingertips



Foundations for Literacy:
An Evidence-based Toolkit for the Effective Reading and Writing Teacher

Foundations for Literacy is a resource designed to help pre-service and in-service teachers, administrators and policymakers review what is known about development of reading and writing skills, identify what needs to be taught and how it can be taught to ensure that all children succeed.

The kit highlights the best in research knowledge from Grades K-6.

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For more information visit www.cllrnet.ca



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Curriculum & Instruction: Numeracy – Prince George
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Educational Leadership: Teacher Union / Professional Organization – SFU Surrey
Curriculum & Instruction: French Education

French info: http://www.sfu.ca/baff-offa/educfr/maitrise/region_e.htm

Doctor of Education Degree (EdD)

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Educational Leadership: Post-Secondary – SFU Surrey

UBC Museum of Anthropology

First Nations Outreach Kits & Online Resources



Residential School Kit: explore the history and legacy of Aboriginal Residential Schools. Kit includes primary documents, lessons and a research guide.

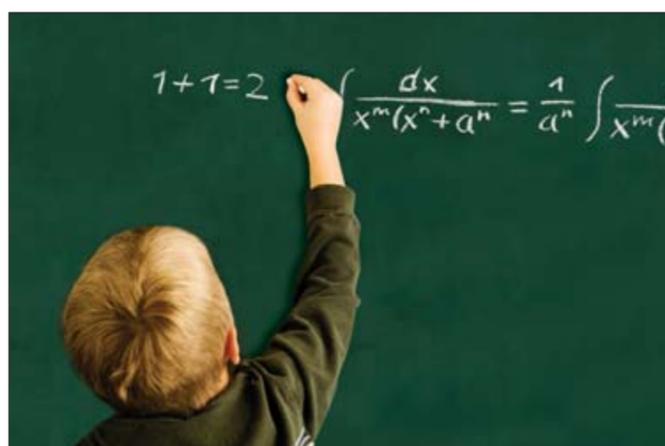
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PD Calendar

FEBRUARY 2009

27-28 Richmond. 12th annual New Teachers' Conference. Professional development opportunity designed specifically for new teachers, those in their first five years of teaching, and for student teachers. Radisson Hotel Vancouver Airport, 8181 Cambie Road. Registration online bctf.ca/NewTeachersConference2009.aspx

MARCH 2009

6 Prince George. Educational Spring Fling: 5th North Central Zone Conference. Featuring: Ian Jukes (keynote & presenter,) Adrienne Gear, and Gary Anaka. Excellent variety of workshops for all grades and subject areas. Venue: Prince George Senior Secondary School. Brochure and presenter information will be available December 2008 at, www.bctf.ca/NorthCentralZone. Contact Deb Vandal at dvandal@sd57.bc.ca or 250-562-7214

7-8 Delta. Therapy and Choice Theory training. For registration forms and prerequisites call Educere Consulting at 604-946-1967 or djclifton@dccnet.com

12-13 Vancouver. Special Education Association's 34th annual Crosscurrents Conference will be held at the Westin Bayshore Hotel. Keynote: Martin Brokenleg, Circle of Courage. Online information/registration: www.bctf.ca/sea Contact person: sfewster@telus.net

28 Surrey. The Adult Educators' (AEPSA) "Meeting Adult Students Needs" conference will be held at the Surrey Conference Centre. Contact Victor Guenther, AE president: victoriojameseducation@hotmail.com

APRIL 2009

3-5 Delta. Basic Intensive Week Training in Glasser's Choice Theory and Lead Management. Learn how knowing internal motivation theory can take the stress out of any classroom, administrative, or personal problem and help you to be creatively part of the solution. Call Daphni at Educere 604-946-1967 or djclifton@dccnet.com

4-5 UBC Campus. French and Spanish Immersion Weekend. \$350 includes tuition, three meals, and cultural evening. Accommodation is extra and is available on campus in the West Coast Suites. Teachers can use their Tuition Fee Certificate toward the tuition fee. Toll-free 1-866-528-7485 or see www.frenchcentre.ubc.ca/UBCweekend.pdf

15 Vancouver. BC Teachers for Peace forum "Education and Politics for a better world." MC: Mark Kelley, CBC news journalist, Speakers: Dr. (E)Manuel Rozental, human/indigenous rights activist, Adriane Carr, federal Green Party deputy leader, Clarence Thomas, longshoreman, closed US ports to protest war, Dr. Patricia Vickers, First Nations ethno-consultant (ancestral law, conflict resolution, mediation practices for positive change), Simon Child, youth recipient of Ghandi award. Langara College Newbury Theatre, Vancouver. 7:00-9:00 p.m. BCTF members \$25 includes a PAGE PSA membership; students, entiors and TTOCs \$10; current PAGE PSA members free. Contact Susan Ruzic sruzic@bctf.ca or Roz Johns, rjohns@bctf.ca

16-18 Coquitlam. Coquitlam Encompass Conference, 2009 Celebrating Social Justice to Creating Safe and Caring Schools and Communities. Keynote Speakers Dr. Donna Beegle, Kathy Lynn. Featured Speakers: Dr. Kim Schonert-Reichl, Dr. Shelly Hymel, Dr. Lee Brown, David Bouchard, Ivan Coyote, Katy Hutchinson, Eekwol and a host of others. Registration info available Feb. 2009. Contact Chris King at pd43@bctf.ca or 604-936-9971.

18-19 Delta. Basic Intensive Week Training in Glasser's Choice Theory and Lead Management. Learn how knowing internal motivation theory can take the stress out of any classroom, administrative, or personal problem and help you to be creatively part of the solution. Call Daphni at Educere 604-946-1967 or djclifton@dccnet.com

24 Whistler. PITA's Supporting Struggling Students in Literacy and Math. Third annual. Learn practical strategies to support all students. Sessions focused for intermediate classroom teachers, and learning assistance. To sign up to receive more details go to www.pita.ca or contact Ray Myrtle president@pita.ca

29-30 North Vancouver. Capilano University. At Fast Forward Media Showcase you can preview the latest educational videos from 15 or more prominent Canadian distributors and several independent Canadian filmmakers. Attend sessions on the hottest topics in media today such as video streaming. To register or get more info visit www.langara.bc.ca/ffwd

30 Abbotsford. PITA's Year of Professional Support program for early career teachers. Workshop, Evaluation, & Celebration. Why prepare alone? Workshops to help you be more prepared and confident as you begin teaching. We provide practical strategies, 'ready to go' materials and web-based help. These workshops illustrate good teaching and strategies that are useful to all teachers. To sign up to receive more details go to www.pita.ca or contact Ray Myrtle president@pita.ca.

MAY 2009

2 Vancouver. Investigating Our Practices 2009 12th annual conference. Teachers from different educational contexts convene at UBC to share their investigations, understandings and questions. Deadline for proposals March 6, 2009. Registration fee \$25 (\$15 for students.) Lunch and refreshments included. Scarfe Education Building 2125 Main Mall UBC. Judy Paley, 604-822-2733, judy.paley@ubc.ca or visit epl.educ.ubc.ca/workshops.

2-3 Kelowna. The Cove Lakeside Resort. UBCO offers a French and Spanish Immersion Weekend. \$350 includes tuition and three meals. Accommodation at the resort is extra. Teachers can use their Tuition Fee Certificate toward the tuition fee. Call 250-807-8177 or see www.ubc.ca/okanagan/continuingstudies

3-6 Winnipeg. DreamCatching 2009: Hands-on Workshops in Math and Science for Teachers of Aboriginal Students Theme: Connecting the Dots: Building a Pathway to Career Awareness through Excellence in Math and Science held at the University of Manitoba for more info visit www.dream-catching.com. Student rates are available.

Future October PSA days
BCTF procedure statement 30.A.14: That for the purposes of a province-wide PSA day, the BCTF supports the third Friday in October as the day on which all districts hold a professional day, except in years in which Thanksgiving Monday falls in the same week, in which case the fourth Friday would be the designated day.
2009-10: October 23, 2009
2010-11: October 22, 2010
2011-12: October 21, 2011
2012-13: October 19, 2012
2013-14: October 25, 2013
2014-15: October 24, 2014
2015-16: October 23, 2015

PSA PD Day
October 23, 2009
PD Calendar website: bctf.ca/ProfessionalDevelopment.aspx
Additions/changes: msteele@bctf.ca

Photo educators: We need to talk!

By Brent Chudiak

Photo educators exist in a vacuum. We rarely communicate or collaborate. We can't even find each other. We're like a species going extinct. As a result, we don't know who we are and we certainly can't answer the question as to where we are going. Our only common ground is that we all share a passion for the visual image. We strive to create that same passion in our students and foster the development of critical thinking skills. Unfortunately, we tend to do it in isolation, without a PSA or even a photo educators' community. Maybe we photo educators need to talk?

The reason I say, "We might not know who we are" comes from my own experiences. I started teaching photography in a portable with a budget of \$300 and three blocks of 30 students each. I think I was in the art department at the time. I soon realized that I had to go to

where the money was. Over the next seven years I changed from art to applied skills to communications/journalism and back—wherever I could get the most money to run my photography program and buy more equipment. I even remember jumping on the dual-credit bandwagon.

Unfortunately, this diversity leads to communication and collaboration difficulties. Ask the BCTF for a list of teachers who teach photography in the province. Ask the College of Teachers for the same list. No one knows. The best suggestion was to contact each school district and ask them to pass on a message to the people who teach photography, and good luck to you. It shouldn't matter whether you teach photography through art, applied skills, or journalism; we need to come together and communicate.

I don't know where I'm going in photography but it's fun to look back to where I've been. My first

photography class was in a portable, the washroom was our darkroom. Seven years later I had seven blocks of students, a 2,400-square-foot studio, and a 10-enlarger darkroom. Now, 10 years after that, I have a 30-station

I'm starting a voluntary database of photo educators in the province. Write, e-mail, or call me; I'll add you to the list. Ultimately, I would like to see a regular photo educators' newsletter and even host a photo educators' conference here in Salmon Arm next fall.

computer lab, a small 5-light studio in the middle of the computer lab and digital SLR cameras.

Did I make a conscious decision to switch from traditional to digital? Heck no! I just changed from one school district to another and

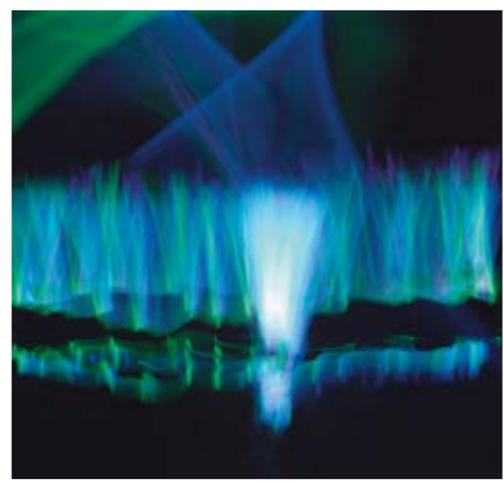
wanted to continue to teach photography. I had to start the program from scratch and the cheapest way to convince the administration to let me introduce photography to the curriculum was by going digital. The program has grown to six blocks and 180 students a year and I still ask myself if I miss traditional darkroom photography. Then I remember my goals, to create and nurture a love of the visual image and to teach critical thinking. Yes, I can do that in a digital lab but I still miss the darkroom.

How about you? Do you ask yourself if traditional or digital is the best way to go? Would the students' needs be best served by a transition to digital since that may be all they have access to for the rest of their lives? Don't get me wrong, I'm not advocating one program over the other. After all, should it matter whether our programs are traditional or digital if we can accomplish the same goals?

I remember back in 1997 attending a photo educators' conference in Toronto. We asked ourselves those very same questions. Ten years later, I'm still asking those questions. I also ask myself why we, here in British Columbia, can't have those same photo educators' conferences that happen back East.

I'm starting a voluntary database of photo educators in the province. Write, e-mail, or call me; I'll add you to the list. Ultimately, I would like to see a regular photo educators' newsletter and even host a photo educators' conference here in Salmon Arm next fall. Through organization and communication, we can really make our programs successful. We certainly should be able to answer the questions of who we are and where we are going!

Brent Chudiak is a photography instructor, Salmon Arm Secondary School, Salmon Arm.
E-mail: bchudiak@sd83.bc.ca,
Phone: s: 250-832-2188,
h: 250-835-0046.



Student photographers, Salmon Arm Secondary School (clockwise from top left): Jeff Mayhew—Spiral Stairs, Ginny Reading—Fruit, Jessica Calin—Bumblebee Parrot, Isaac Holmes—Light Sculpture and Adrienne, Travis Goodridge—On My Way.

The student photos printed in this issue of *Teacher* are for sale—50% of the profit goes directly to the student and the other 50% goes to the photography program. For more information, contact Brent Chudiak.