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Set the course for education

SPEAK OUT ON YEAR 2000

by Ken Novakowski

This special edition of the *Teacher* newsmagazine has been prepared to help you examine the provincial proposals for educational change, and to help you contribute to the response of the teaching profession to the proposed changes.

The changes introduced in the new School Act, Policy Directions, the Year 2000 Curriculum Framework document, and the Working Plan for Implementation, taken together, represent the most sweeping changes to any public education system in any jurisdiction. These plans propose to change what we teach and how we teach it; they propose to change the structure of our schools, and the educational path of our students.

Also, there are few "answers" to many of the questions raised by teachers, parents, and trustees about how implementation will take place, about how changes will be funded, about fundamental issues like class size.

The BCTF - the professional voice of teachers - knows two important things about change: changes in education happen when teachers make them happen, and the collective wisdom of the teaching profession is an opinion worth heeding.

Therefore we have resisted the government's hurried timeline, working instead to promote the widest possible discussion among teachers about the implications of these proposals. Federation staff and associates have worked with school staffs, LSAs, PSAs, local associations, and parent-teacher groups to study and discuss the proposals. The BCTF has funded pilot projects to assist teachers in examining key issues. We are working towards consensus; identifying ideas

which should be supported, ideas which require greater study, and ideas that deserve to be rejected. We are studying both content and process. We are looking for consistency, sound research support, and practical evidence of success.

In short, we are assuming our responsibility as professionals to act as advocates for the public education system. We will introduce changes we are convinced are beneficial to our students, and we will resist changes that threaten the system or offer no improvement over current practice.

The BCTF will continue to speak for quality public education. Our message to parents is, "Join with us as we seek proper piloting of new ideas, as we press for reasonable timelines. Don't let your children become the subjects of a grand experiment."

To trustees we say, "Be open to collaborative approaches at the district level. Continue to work with us to ensure the professional roles and rights of teachers are maintained, through bargaining, through local policy."



To other education groups, "We are prepared to continue meeting with you, working with you, and seeking common ground in our approaches to government."

And, of course, we will report to government teachers' specific responses to the details of the proposed changes. But we have a general message, too. "Educational change in this province is not going to happen without teachers. We support change that means improvement. But we insist on being treated as professionals demonstrated by adherence to the principles of implementation adopted by our profession, by real consultative processes at the provincial and local levels, by adequate resources to meet current demands, and by sufficient time and resources to implement change successfully."

Help us develop the BCTF response to the government's proposals. Help us to design a school system that will realize our vision for public education.

Ken Novakowski

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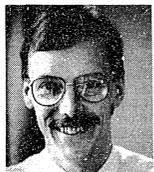
Please read this special issue of the Teacher and participate in the process of developing a teacher view on educational change.

Speaking personally on the Year 2000



Christine Debruin
Prince George

The ministry's new energized attitude for education is definitely exciting, and I hope to retain an open mind. However, the proposed intermediate program does raise many concerns. Of most concern to me is facilitating the structure of the integrated curriculum. I hope the ministry and the public are prepared to fully support the costs associated with making the resources available.



Tom Morton
Vancouver

I like many of the principles of the Year 2000 document: locally developed courses, co-operative learning, gender equity, respect for various cultures, and more. However, the proof is in the pudding — how these principles are carefully implemented with teachers as partners in the changes. From this perspective, the Year 2000 is not one pudding, but many different ones, sweet ingredients mixed with the nutty, that are being given without cookbooks to cooks already busy serving discriminating students. With reform cooked up in this helter skelter, lickety-split manner, the ministry may alienate people from the principles.

Phil Rexin
Chase

Our schools have failed the First People. We are challenged to help native communities develop programs that awaken self-esteem, stimulate accomplishment, and empower students to realize their potential.

Racism and ignorance must be fought. We are challenged to nurture multiculturalism by implementing humanity units that encourage dignity, tolerance, compassion, and civic responsibility.

Should we accept these challenges to create a more humane education system? Yes, but with caution and pragmatism.

Vancouver school trustee, Anne Beer says, "This whole Year 2000 is just one big untested experiment — if it doesn't work, it will be the students who suffer most."

— *The Vancouver Courier*, December 3, 1989, page 10. Brian Turcott.

Cass Crest
Kelowna

I am delighted by the tremendous affirmation of the primacy of literature as a central tenet of the draft English-Language Arts Curriculum. Apart from that, most significant to me is the sheer quantity of change. I find many of the new directions marvellously exciting and encouraging, but I am overwhelmed by the sheer volume of material I am trying to comprehend and envision for my classroom. I need time to think and imagine.



David Porter
North Vancouver

What's worrying about the Year 2000 framework is not the notion of change. I think teachers will support change that they understand and that includes them as full partners in shaping its implementation. The anxiety arises from a feeling that the Year 2000 framework represents a top-down approach to change, a mechanistic model in which teachers are viewed simply as curriculum-delivery and data-collection agents in a system driven by economic values.



Geoff Davis
Duncan

For special-education/learning-assistance teachers, the ministry's proposed development of learner profiles for all students, which will be based on learning outcomes, may provide a beneficial congruence between the individualized remedial teaching of special education classes and the new curriculum in the regular classroom. The proposed, multi-aged skills based grouping could provide for increased integration opportunities for all special-needs children.



Jodi Esch
Sooke

I believe that the primary program as it is described in the Year 2000 document should liberate both teachers and children. There will be lots of freedom for decision making in the classroom. Innovative primary teachers have been using children's literature and manipulatives effectively in their teaching programs for many years. Now these effective methods are being encouraged; it is a healthy direction on the part of the ministry.

Marcia Toms
Vancouver

While I have serious philosophical concerns about some of the issues in the Year 2000 paper, a number of principles are progressive and exciting. Among these are emphases on the active participation of learners, on individual progress, on the social aspects of learning, on across-grade and across-curriculum integration, and on cultural awareness. As a feminist, I am also somewhat encouraged by a stated, long overdue, commitment to reinforcing gender equity. The actualization of the potential inherent in the document will clearly require vision and grass-roots activism of teachers.

Patti Coldicut
Vancouver

As a secondary school counsellor, I am very concerned about the transition from Intermediate 7 to Graduate 1. The Year 2000 paper states that after seven years at the intermediate level, students will be transferred to the graduate program. This statement does not seem to take into account the possible range of levels at which students may be operating — unless the intent is to stream students into one of the four graduate programs according to their success at the previous level. I think that 15 is far too early to force students to make career choices, especially if the choices are partially based on previous academic success in school. I believe that secondary education should be as flexible as possible, to allow students to change their career and post-secondary education plans and still be able to graduate.

Brenda Balahura
Castlegar

The most significant point in the Year 2000 paper is the reaffirmation of many of the strategies that teachers currently use.

The primary program gives voice to the philosophy, strategies, and techniques that have long prevailed in the primary years.

The intermediate program is less developed; that should give us the chance to include in it all that we now do so successfully.

The graduate program is the most controversial. The major thrust of trying to meet students' needs in a variety of ways is something that teachers strive for constantly. This is the part that we must focus on.

The principles that are espoused for learning and the learner are the ones that teachers have been advocating for many years. Teachers use these principles to develop programs that benefit children.

Karyl Mills,
B.C. Hospital/Homebound

In the new School Act, "home schooling" is a problem. A "student" is referred to as "enrolled," a "child" is referred to as "registered" throughout the act. A registered child does not have the same rights as an enrolled student. Interpret this carefully.

"Ask for clarification in your districts regarding board policy on 'home schooler'. Look at 'Appeals' Section 11, page 11 - boards should have appeal procedures laid down by Christmas. Ask the board's lawyer about legal stance on these issues before we attempt to interpret them ourselves."

— *Newsletter of the Hospital/Homebound PSA*, November 1989.

University of B.C. education professor Charles Ungerleider said that concern for the plan is greater at the intermediate and graduation (Grade 11 and 12) levels.

He said continuous progress may mean "youngsters can languish" and that the breakdown of subject areas or disciplinary boundaries will be "extremely demanding" for teachers and require enormous co-operation.

Of the entire plan, he said: "If the full promise is to be realized there will need to be considerable ecological and sociological reorganization of schools." He cautioned that a provincial tendency to link schooling with the health of the economy is "a bankrupt idea."

— *The Vancouver Courier*, December 3, 1989, p 7. Alison Appelbe.

Alayne Keough chairperson of the Vancouver's District Parent Representatives committee: While the Year 2000 document states that "streaming" — whereby secondary students are "locked into pathways that do not provide for re-entering the mainstream and which are usually designed to terminate the study of an academic subject" — will be abandoned, the parent groups fears that assessment at the intermediate level may direct students into a non-academic channel.

"There must be absolutely no streaming," Keough said. "We must be careful not to give students the message after Grade 10, that it's OK — they can drop out," she continued.

Keough said her group needs more time to examine the document and that further planning is necessary to ensure that other educational institutions, as well as business and labour institutions, are prepared for the change.

— *The Vancouver Courier*, December 3, 1989, p 8. Alison Appelbe.



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The super layperson's view of knowledge

DEPROFESSIONALIZING TEACHING

by David Denyer

At a recent meeting, I heard one of the lawyers responsible for drafting the new School Act speak of the legislation's redistributing power in favor of students, parents, government, and boards. Rather than enhance and complement the powers to be enjoyed by all interested parties, the legislators appear to have decided that what is gained by some must be lost by others. So while it may be true that enabling learners accurately captures, in small measure, some of the changes afoot, disabling teachers might just as easily take its place as our slogan.

What preoccupies me is the interplay among legislation and policy, curriculum, teaching, and the role of the teacher. Many assumptions as to the nature of knowledge, learning, and pedagogy in the Year 2000 document, if set within the context of the provisions of the new School Act, become troubling.

What I call the super layperson's view of knowledge seems to prevail. Knowledge is a seamless web artificially and arbitrarily broken by fusty academics into disciplines or subjects. If these subject boundaries ceased to exist, then surely all a learner need acquire is a set of so-called thinking and communications skills, which will provide ready access to, and understanding of, all that can be known. Within such a view, young people have experiences, untroubled by the demands inherent in a particular discipline and what it means to think mathematically, say, as opposed to thinking historically.

The legislative framework essentially de-professionalizes or de-skills teachers. Under such a system, a teacher

implements or arranges, more in the manner of a technician, an environment (with whatever limited resources are available) in which young people will presumably have profitable experiences, none of which will fragment the essential unitary nature of the cosmos. Such a teacher might be barely distinguishable from the assistants working alongside him/her implementing a program in accordance with unrestricted ministerial orders. Little wonder home schooling (assisted by a public school teacher when a parent demands it) becomes an alternative.

Should this picture appear too bleak, let me hasten to say that much in the Year 2000 document is worthy of and is receiving intensive study and development. In this process, we need to develop clarity of philosophical and organizational concepts. In my view, the development of the three programs should be conducted with full awareness of not only the Royal Commission report, mandate statement, the policy directions, and the Year 2000 document, but also the new School Act and Regulations in order to avoid constructing something that might facilitate the establishment of those undesirable ends for which the Act seems designed. Teaching and the initiation of the young into cherished and well-established forms of knowledge and worth-while activities should be accorded dignity and respect. Change must proceed, with regard to those very principles our federation has adopted and not on the basis of temporary political idealism.

David Denyer teaches in Cowichan and is a member of the Intermediate Steering Committee.

What's required for success?

CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION, DECISION-MAKING, RESOURCES

by Flo Reid

As I study the Year 2000 intermediate program of critical concern to me is how this proposal will work practically. What changes will have to occur?

This list of changes is not intended to be complete, but rather, to stimulate discussion.

Teacher in-service education

The ministry must be prepared to commit extensive financial resources for appropriate in-service education to help teachers develop the skills necessary for specific changes and to provide the psychological safety net for teachers during the process of change. One shot won't do it. Intensive, extensive staff development throughout the planning and implementation must be the foundation on which the change is built.

School-based decision making

This is the foundation for successful implementation. The collective wisdom of classroom teachers, the local school board, administrative officers, and parent representatives should be employed in the early stages of planning for implementation. The following steps are essential: initial study, response to policy, planning, pilot projects, evaluation/modifications, and implementation.

Facilitating personnel

Additional teaching personnel are critical to support the program. In the transition period it will be necessary to identify teachers willing to take lead roles in modelling the changes. Their role becomes one of advising, encouraging, modelling, monitoring, and assisting in making modifications to the program to increase effectiveness.

Team teaching

Curriculum organized around "strands" and based on the concept of integration demands that teachers work together to co-ordinate, organize, and to plan course material. It further demands that daily preparation and planning time be built into the timetable.

Curriculum and learning resources

An extensive diversity of learning materials must be available to support the shift away from lock-step programs. Additional learning centres will need to be set up to provide for student-centred needs and interests. Access to computers, word processors, and to networking will contribute to the success of the program.

Organization of students

Staff decisions will have to be made about grouping for instruction; will groups be multiaged, how large or how small will class sizes need to be, when will we use peer-tutoring, or a lecture format? The movement away from the traditional timetable will mean redesigning course materials, to accommodate the possibility of extended periods of time to pursue interests, in-depth learning experiences, survey courses.

If teachers are supported to make the conceptual shift to the philosophical aims of the program, are actively involved in the processes of implementation, and are afforded the time and resources to explore fully the implications for change, then the intermediate program has a chance. Let's make sure that this time educational policy changes are implemented with more care and thought than in the past.

Flo Reid is an intermediate teacher and president of the Cranbrook District Teachers' Association.

PSA leaders discuss principles of change

The PSA Council meeting on November 23, 1989 discussed issues arising from the Year 2000 paper and arrived at consensus statements of two types: statements that would apply to any change, listed below as philosophical approaches to changes and practical requirements for change, and statements which apply specifically to the government's current proposals.

Philosophical approaches to changes

- clarity is necessary
- changes should be evolutionary not revolutionary
- change should respect diversity
- change should recognize the value of current practice
- the change process should provide for good communication
- proposals for change should be internally consistent
- proposals for change should recognize practicality

Practical requirements for change

- adequate timelines
- appropriate class size/composition and teacher workload
- commitment of adequate resources
- adequate teacher pre-service and in-service education
- functional models
- planned transitions
- appropriateness for a variety of school settings

Applying these principles to the government's proposals, we are certain that...

1. The mandate is inappropriate.
2. Class loads (size and composition) must go down.
3. Timelines must be longer and locally determined.
4. We need more teacher involvement in pre-planning.
5. We need more resources.
6. We need more research, clarification (e.g., around integration).
7. The evaluation proposals are inconsistent with the goals.
8. There is inconsistency between the programs (primary-intermediate-graduation).
9. Gender equity and multiculturalism are addressed theoretically; the practical support is not there.
10. There is not enough time or money for the in-service education required.
11. The proposals do not recognize the realities of rural/small/remote schools.
12. ESL funding is inadequate.
13. First nations education requires more research, clarification, resources, and consultation.
14. 100 hours of work experience for every student is not practical.
15. We are opposed to the centralized collection of student evaluation data.
16. We need pilots before system-wide change.
17. We need increased support services at the school level to meet the needs of all students.
18. We need support systems for teachers throughout the changes.

... GRINDSTONE'S BEEN WORKING HARD TO BECOME EVERYTHING THE MINISTRY EXPECTS WELL AHEAD OF THE IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINES.



Executive Committee recommends positions on key issues

The Executive Committee has developed the following motions outlining draft position statements on education policy. These motions will form the basis of the debate on education policy issues in local associations in January and at the expanded Representative Assembly, January 26-27, 1990.

Preamble

9.A.18 - That the BCTF advocate and support planned and responsible approaches to the implementation of change in education policies and practices. Specifically, implementation should adhere to the following principles:

- Centrality of teaching.** The implementation recognizes teachers as the key agents of educational change. The plan respects teachers as self-directed professionals committed to improving education policies and practices.
- Clarity.** Before the implementation begins, teachers, both individually and collectively, are clear about the concept, the value, and the process of change.
 - Conceptual clarity - teachers understand the proposed change and how it differs from their current practice.
 - Value clarity - teachers are convinced that the change offers an improvement over current practice.
 - Procedural clarity - teachers understand the steps to be taken during the implementation.
- Resources.** There are adequate and appropriate resources to support the implementation. Teachers identify their own resource needs. Provisions are made for physical resources - facilities, equipment, materials; organizational resources - workload, class size, class composition; professional support - coaching, training, in-service.
- Time.** There is adequate time for each phase of the implementation. Teachers have enough lead time to achieve conceptual, value, and procedural clarity. They have additional time during the implementation process to access, modify, solve unanticipated problems. They have time to evaluate, share, and report what they have learned.
- Professional autonomy.** The implementation recognizes the diverse talents, interests, and experiences of teachers. Teachers can adapt and implement the plan in a variety of ways.

- Professional development.** The professional development of teachers is recognized as a key element of the implementation. The nature and timing of the professional development specific to any implementation are determined by teachers in the context of their ongoing personal and professional growth.
- Empowerment.** The implementation increases the confidence, vitality, and feeling of influence of both students and teachers.
- Involvement and communication.** The implementation provides for the involvement of teachers, parents, students, trustees, district and ministry staff in ways that foster ownership and commitment.
- Diversity.** The implementation acknowledges the uniqueness of communities, school districts, and schools, and the diverse needs and expectations of parents and students. The process is flexible enough to accommodate these differences.
- Fidelity.** Criteria for measuring the success of the implementation are determined before the process begins. Participants agree that these measures will be the basis for the evaluation of the implementation.

(89 AGM, pp. 15-15)

A. The mandate

That the following education policy position statements on the mandate be recommended to the expanded Representative Assembly on January 26-27, 1990:

- The mandate for public education should include fostering the "growth and development of every individual, to the end that he/she will become and be a self-reliant, self-disciplined, participating member with a sense of social responsibility within a democratic society."
- Provincial educational goals should be directed towards ensuring:
 - for each student the opportunity for successful participation and for the enhancement of his/her self-esteem regardless of aptitude or background;
 - equal opportunity for all regardless of learning disabilities or abilities, or interests and aspirations;
 - protection from discrimination on the basis of place of birth, place of residence, gender, age, race, religion, socio-economic status, or sexual orientation;
 - that action be taken to reverse the effects of past discrimination.
- There should be an exploration of a diversity of models, in order to provide equitable educational opportunities for First Nations' students.

B. Rights and roles of teachers

That the following education policy statements on the rights and roles of teachers be recommended to the expanded Representative Assembly on January 26-27, 1990:

- Section 182(2) of the School Act on Minister's Orders should be rescinded as it is undemocratic and erodes the professional autonomy of teachers.
- There should be due process for teachers when their decisions are being appealed, including appropriate consultation with the teacher involved, the right of teacher appeal, and protection with respect to the inclusion of information in teacher evaluation reports, personnel files and communication with the College of Teachers.
- The Royal Commission recommendation 6.11 (that the ministry provide funding through school boards for the BCTF to initiate relevant programs of professional development) should be implemented.
- Teachers' assistants and other auxiliary personnel should not be used to design, supervise or assess educational programs or to provide instruction to individual students or groups of students.
- Education services should not be contracted out.
- Hiring policies should be developed to ensure that the teaching force reflects the diversity of society by recruiting members of under-represented groups into the profession.

C. Curriculum

That the following education policy position statements on curriculum be recommended to the expanded Representative Assembly on January 26-27, 1990:

- (a) A Provincial Curriculum Advisory Committee should be created and should include a majority of teachers appointed by the BCTF, as well as representatives of other stakeholder groups.
 - No significant changes to provincial programs or curricula should be made without the agreement of the Provincial Advisory Curriculum Committee.
- Issues of social responsibility, inclusive of a global education perspective, should be woven into the entire curriculum.
- Dual entry to Kindergarten should be delayed until further study, through such methods as pilot projects, has proven it to be an educationally sound and beneficial concept.
- Implementation of all-day Kindergarten should be deferred pending wider consultation with the Primary PSA, First Nations groups, those representing diverse ethnocultural communities and special-needs children.

- The means by which continuous progress is implemented in the primary program should be determined by teachers at the school level.
- The responsibility for determining student movement in the continuous progress model in the primary program should be the responsibility of the classroom teacher.
- Integration of subjects should not occur until there is clarity about the concept and agreement on its value.
- The degree and type of curriculum integration should be determined by teachers at the school level.
- Continuous progress in the proposed intermediate program should not be implemented until there is clarity about the concept and agreement on its value and consistency with the primary and graduation programs.
- Compulsory French as a Second Language in the proposed intermediate program should not be implemented pending wider consultation with First Nations groups and those representing diverse ethnocultural communities.
- The study of a First Nations language should be an option for students in the proposed intermediate and graduation programs.
- Decisions about how children are grouped for instruction should take availability of resources into account and should be made by teachers at the school level.
- Meaningful work experience should be an option but not compulsory for all students.
- The number of compulsory courses should be decreased, not increased.
- New graduation requirements should not apply to students entering Grade 11 in September 1990.
- The streaming inherent in the three program options proposed for the graduation program should be eliminated.
- Any decisions about a student challenging a course should be made by teachers in consultation with the student and his/her parents.
- First Nations history and culture should be embedded in the curriculum for all students at all levels.
- Curricular programs and learning outcomes should be designed to help students gain an awareness of our pluralistic society as well as an understanding of the many important contributions made to our civilization by minority and ethnic groups.
- There should be a labor education component in the provincial curriculum.
- There should be gender equity in all aspects of education including curriculum, counselling, and co-educational courses and programs.
- A combination of the simultaneous introduction of curricular integration, modular organization of courses, expanded testing, course challenges and reduced time allotments for subject areas may have the cumulative effect of lowering the intellectual content and the opportunity for social development, reducing the quality of education for students. Thus, before any or all elements are adopted on a system-wide basis:

- each of the major elements of reorganization should be piloted individually;
- all proposed elements should be piloted as a group;
- evaluation of the pilots should take place by the Provincial Advisory Curriculum Committee;
- the Provincial Advisory Curriculum Committee should recommend adoption.

D. Student assessment and system accountability

That the following education policy position statements on student assessment and system accountability be recommended to the expanded Representative Assembly on January 26-27, 1990:

- The prime appropriate role of assessment and evaluation is to support learning.
 - School boards should not be required to fund the cost of a new provincial mandate through further increases of local taxes on homeowners.
 - All classes of non-residential property should be returned to local school board jurisdiction for purposes of raising local property tax revenue.
- The Ministry of Education should provide adequate resources, facilities, personnel and funding for in-service to enable effective mainstreaming of special needs students into the classroom.
- That public education funds should be used only for public education. Public funds should not be provided directly or indirectly, to private schools, denominational or otherwise.
 - normative or criterion-referenced assessment;
 - the role of formative and summative evaluation;
 - grades and grading practices;
 - "authentic assessment" practices;
 - provincial examinations.
- Student assessment practices and systems should provide for:
 - time for the teacher to collect information and for record keeping, analysis and collegial consultation;
 - additional time for formal and informal reporting to parents;
 - a realistic teacher workload;
 - teacher training on alternative assessment techniques;
 - appropriate facilities and resources;
 - opportunities for parent education about curriculum, assessment and evaluation processes;
 - time for parent-teacher conference.
- There should be no centralized, provincial system for the collection of individual student achievement data.
- There should be no centralized provincial system for collecting demographic data on individual students.
- The uses of technology for assessment practices should be determined by teachers at the school level. Research, evaluation and training should be in place prior to the introduction of such technology.
- Authentic, democratic accountability systems should centre on goals set by teachers, parents and students in the context of the school community.

E. Funding

That the following education policy position statements on funding be recommended to the expanded Representative Assembly on January 26-27, 1990:

- The provincial government should increase its financial support to public education to reflect the fact that:
 - the system is underfunded to achieve the current expectations;
 - the proposed changes will require more resources than current levels;
 - the transition to a new system will require additional, special resources;
 - substantial additional resources are required for gender equity, multicultural education, race relations, First Nations education, English as a Second Language and special education.
- (a) School boards should not be required to fund the cost of a new provincial mandate through further increases of local taxes on homeowners.
 - All classes of non-residential property should be returned to local school board jurisdiction for purposes of raising local property tax revenue.
- The Ministry of Education should provide adequate resources, facilities, personnel and funding for in-service to enable effective mainstreaming of special needs students into the classroom.
- That public education funds should be used only for public education. Public funds should not be provided directly or indirectly, to private schools, denominational or otherwise.

Notes

Timeline leads to AGM decision

- Sept. - Nov. Local association and PSA discussions
 Nov. 23 PSA Council meeting
 Nov. 27 Position formulation workshop
 Dec. 1-2 Executive Committee meeting adopts position statements as recommendations to RA
 Dec. 7 Local association presidents' meeting
 Dec. - Jan. Local Association and PSAs debate proposed BCTF positions
 Jan. 8 Special issue of newsmagazine
 January Local association general meetings
 Jan. 26-27 Expanded RA adopts positions to recommend to the AGM
 February Executive Committee prepares action recommendations for AGM
 Mar. 18-21 AGM confirms positions and deals with action motions

Check your chance of success

by Steve Ranta

The education ministry's booklet entitled *School District Planning of Curriculum Implementation* is intended to be a guide for AOs who wish to facilitate curriculum changes. It contains advice based on the experience of B.C. educators and on studies done at universities in B.C. and elsewhere. According to this ministry booklet, the following factors facilitate implementing new curricula. Check the ones you think hold true in the case of the proposed curricula.

- The intensions of the new curriculum are clearly stated and understood.
 - Teachers have trust in the curriculum's major advocates and share their implicit beliefs.
 - Teachers believe that the change will result in educational benefits.
 - Teachers perceive that past implementations were well planned and supported.
 - Teachers are not cynical about the adequacy of promised resources and materials.
 - Teachers believe that decision making has been open and honest.
 - The change has not been "sprung" on teachers without adequate explanation.
 - Teachers are involved in all stages of the implementation, including planning.
 - Senior administrators at the provincial level understand the realities of change.
 - The allotted time and resources show that senior administrators are serious.
 - Teachers have extra time to meet the demands of planning.
 - Teachers have the energy to deal with increased workloads and classroom insecurity.
 - Teachers will accept risks to current programs that are working well.
 - Timelines are long enough to avoid teacher frustration, apathy, and burnout.
 - The change is limited in scope to ensure that overload and confusion are avoided.
 - Financial resources allow sufficient substitute coverage for teacher release time.
 - Teachers will give up their control over Pro-D to allow principals to schedule Pro-D activities to meet the curriculum implementation schedule.
 - Teachers will attend Saturday sessions and summer institutes or teach longer on most days in order to have some afternoons to meet about curriculum implementation.
 - The basis for the change is careful research, not political considerations.
 - Teachers will receive recognition for their efforts.
- Unless most teachers put a check in each of the above blanks, the change to any new curriculum will be difficult, if not impossible. But the change proposed for the B.C. school system is the most sudden and wide-ranging ever attempted in North America. Why is it being rushed through under such difficult conditions?

Steve Ranta is a music teacher in Maple Ridge.
 Source: *Quesnel District Teachers' Association Newsletter*, November 21, 1989.

Steering committee reps report on issues, process

Primary



by Carol Johns

For the past ten months teachers in B.C. may have felt their teaching principles were being threatened. It concerns the implementation of the primary program and the *Year 2000*.

The fundamental issues of class size and class composition, professional development, adequate funding and resources, time, and assessment and evaluation have been given only superficial lip service because that is what "consultation" as a "stakeholder" really means at the ministry level. These issues are not yet being addressed in any meaningful, substantive way. The ministry seems to be on the fast track, giving us little opportunity to respond and reflect on what will be effective in our schools.

The responsibility falls upon the teaching profession and classroom teachers to demand that these issues be addressed.

The principles that are in danger of being sacrificed in the guise of progressive change are:

1. Teacher autonomy

The recognition of teachers as the key to educational change and a respect for the diverse talents, interests, and experiences of teachers. Teachers are not technicians. Our training and our day-to-day experiences with children provide the base for restructuring the education system.

We gave a very clear message to the ministry that dual entry should be delayed until it has been proven to be an educationally sound and beneficial concept (a sound criteria for any major change). The School Act makes dual entry mandatory and is a clear statement that our concerns have been ignored. This one issue will have a far-reaching impact throughout the system.

2. Working and learning conditions

In a program of continuous learning, it is essential that teachers have small class sizes to facilitate interaction between teacher and student. The ministry says class size is a school district problem, but school districts do not have the necessary funds to address it.

With greater attention on the individual learner, teachers need time to observe, record, assess, and plan appropriate programs to meet these individual needs.

We'll need resources to allow for flexibility and a variety of approaches. There should be a variety of models which teachers can choose from and no one model such as "multiage" grouping should be mandated. Teachers need the same consideration we give our learners in allowing for individual differences.

3. Professional development

Another key element in implementing any change is professional development.

This must be determined by teachers themselves, and must recognize their diversity, different interest areas, and training needs.

4. Funding

Both the process and the content will require additional resources, these resources must be identified by teachers.

5. Time

Time must be provided to allow for implementation in order to follow the principles of implementation that we identified as essential at our 1989 AGM.

Our continual request for time has been ignored.

As teachers, we struggled to maintain educational quality in the restraint years, and now we face an even greater challenge in recovery and restructuring. Our role as child advocates is critical and must not be abdicated. Involve your colleagues, local association, PSAs, school board, parents, and the community in eliminating the deficiencies inherent in the implementation. Let's truly "enable" our learners and the education system as we go forward into the 21st century!

Carol Johns is co-chairperson of the Primary Steering Committee. She has years of experience as a Kindergarten Primary teacher, and currently teaches in Cranbrook.

Primary committee members

Sophia Jeffrey, Carol Johns, Cheryl MacDonald, Doreen Young (B.C. Teachers' Federation); Jill Hamacher, Heather Hannaford (B.C. School Trustees Association); John Hogarth, Mary Lyons (B.C. Association of School Superintendents); Alick Patterson, Andy Stewart-Hill (B.C. Association of School District Secretary-Treasurers); Marion Rumble, Dale Slogar (B.C. Principals & Vice-principals' Association).

Intermediate



by Candice Morgan

When the Intermediate Steering Committee was appointed in July 1989, to oversee the changes proposed by the Royal Commission for the intermediate years, the *Year 2000* paper was not yet published. Its release provoked confusion and uncertainty throughout the system and made the job of the committee much more challenging. Now it is impossible to consider the seven-year sequential intermediate program separately from the *Year 2000* document.

At the first meeting in October, members of the Steering Committee had – and still have – fundamental questions about the ethics of developing a program, while the ministry's "draft" vision of that program is still out in the field for response. The ministry personnel responsible for sticking to the timelines insist that both the working and steering committees have to anticipate the field's concerns and get on with developing an intermediate document in order to keep the momentum going. Such a document would assure the many worried teachers and administrators who are tying up the ministry phone lines, trying to get answers to questions provoked by the *Year 2000* paper.

In addition, a project team, made up of teachers, administrators, and one director of instruction has been seconded for two years. Their initial task is to develop a draft of a foundation document, similar to the primary document released last May. It will outline the vision and goals of the proposed program, highlight exactly what the proposed changes are, and include position statements on many of the concepts introduced in the *Year 2000* that are open to interpretation and require clarification, for example, continuous learning, active learning, integration, assessment, and evaluation. The foundation document is scheduled to be out to the field in late May or June 1990. Teachers will have until at least December to read and respond to it. (Sound familiar?) While awaiting particular responses to the foundation document, the project team will continue to work on drafts of curriculum documents to support the program.

There has been debate from the outset about the role of the steering committee. (It seems that we have benefited from the problems experienced by the Primary Steering Committee, as processes and procedures they requested have been in place for us since the beginning.) We maintain that we should steer the process of the development of the program. Ministry personnel have defined "steering" in a more conditional sense by stressing that our role is to advise the minister. We have been warned that he is free to heed or ignore our advice as he chooses. However, with everyone from the minister down espousing the fact that teachers will be the ones to implement the changes...it will be made or broken in the classrooms; most members of the steering committee agree that our advice – the advice of those working in the field must not be ignored.

Solutions to other problems with the process are slowly evolving. BCTF members on the steering committee are working with federation staff to design efficient networks to create a two-way flow of information between representatives on the steering committee and local association presidents, PSA presidents, and teacher representatives from schools where some aspects of the proposed changes are already in place. We want those concerned in the field to be in touch, and we want to communicate issues, concerns, and teacher suggestions effectively to project team members.

Consensus is emerging on a number of issues. Most agree that the timelines are too demanding and provide little time for meaningful participation by teachers.

The ministry insists that the new

School Act places the responsibility for providing time for district-level discussions squarely on the shoulders of the local school board. However, some of us have asked that in the midst of the current media campaign, the ministry take a leadership role in informing the public that time taken by teachers to study, plan, discuss, and respond to suggested system changes is essential if real change is to occur.

The concern most frequently expressed is the overall lack of conceptual clarity in the intermediate and graduation programs. Many point out that the intermediate program spans too large an age range. What exactly is integration? How will continuous progress evolve in order to provide a workable transition to the graduation program? Will assessment and evaluation measures, which at this point do not appear to match the learner focus central to the program, be changed?

Concerns have also been expressed about a whole range of implementation issues: workload and staffing implications, training and in-service education, timelines (already mentioned), existing school organizational structures, the pace of change, and facilities requirements. The steering committee's first recommendation to the Educational Advisory Council (EAC) stressed the need to plan for the significant budget necessary to implement these system-wide changes.

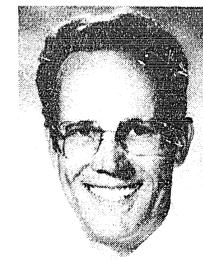
The steering committee would like to urge you to respond to the *Year 2000* paper. The time spent on written responses will make a difference. It will help us in the development of a relevant/workable program.

Candice Morgan is a BCTF representative on the Intermediate Steering Committee. She is currently a teacher-librarian at Parksville Middle School, Qualicum.

Intermediate committee members

David Denyer, Ken Johnson, Candice Morgan, Sally Marr (B.C. Teachers' Federation); Hoberly Hove, John Husdon (B.C. Principals & Vice-principals' Association); Edna Cooper, Dick Williams (B.C. School Trustees Association); Ross Ingram, Tim Klotz (B.C. Association of School District Secretary-Treasurers); Victor Mowbray, Terry Wayling (B.C. Association of School Superintendents); Roland Case (SFU).

Graduation



by Dale Gregory

If you have read the graduation section of the *Year 2000* document, you probably have many of the same concerns I do. Lack of prerequisites to get into the program, integration of diverse subjects (the elimination of some core subjects and the addition of new ones), work experience, the "streaming" aspect of the career and exploration programs, challenging of courses, the fast-tracking of the responses and implementation, and the major differences between the Sullivan report and the *Year 2000* document are some.

The first meeting of the Graduation Steering Committee was held on October 2-3. Even at that early stage, concerns were raised by the representatives of the stakeholder groups.

The program team listened to our concerns and prepared a number of draft papers for our second meeting in late November. They suggested that the STEM strand be changed with a science course in the common curriculum, and mathematics placed in the university and career programs as a required course. They also suggested that the work experience program be changed to include modules of 25 hours in the school on career skills and career study, leaving only two 25-hour modules of work in the community called career placement. They also suggested that the career placement modules could be challenged by students who currently have, or have had jobs that fit the specific learning outcomes of the program.

Steering committee members now had a chance to react to the whole *Year 2000* document and the new "draft" suggestions by the program team. A consensus model was developed and the committee raised the following concerns:

- Lack of prerequisites to the graduation program.
- Reduction from 120 to 100 hours in course time.
- Major changes between the Sullivan report and the *Year 2000* document.
- Module of 25 hours in school organization and workplace organization.
- Possible loss of some skills (numeracy and literacy) and the need for new skills (computer).
- Community needs and availability of jobs for work experience.

The committee also felt that the fine arts and possibly the practical arts aspect of the common curriculum should be reconsidered if they are required in the intermediate program. They felt that physical education should be part of the common curriculum, and that a mathematics course should also be there or added to the exploration program as a required course. The second option would mean three mathematics courses, one for each program.

The committee also took some strong positions on the future process and resulting programs.

1. The *Year 2000* program should be an evolutionary process, developed using pilot projects and be open to change.
2. Delivery of content material, support services, timetabling school organization and support services should all be learner focused and school based.
3. The roles of the other ministries and the community need to be defined because of the expectations of the education system.
4. The students' needs are more important than the system's needs regarding the organization, placement, and evaluation of the work experience component.

It is vital that individuals, schools, local associations, LSAs, and PSAs who have not already responded to the ministry, do so by the deadline of January 23. I am still optimistic that teachers' concerns and suggestions will be listened to. Only time will tell.

Dale Gregory is co-chairperson of the Graduation Steering Committee and a secondary teacher in Coquitlam.

Graduation committee members

Alma Williams, Dale Gregory, Paul Colquhoun, Graham Gair (B.C. Teachers' Federation); John Smith (B.C. Chamber of Commerce); Keith Gray (Business Council of B.C.); Ali Hoshizaki (B.C. Association of Colleges); Don Murray, Terry Killohoun (B.C. Association of School District Secretary-Treasurers); A. Taylor, Vic Martin (B.C. Association of School Superintendents); Sharon Ballinger, Bruce Mitchell (B.C. Principals & Vice-principals' Association); Gwen Chute, Elizabeth Shannon (B.C. School Trustees Association); David Rice (Canadian Labour Congress); Olav Slaymaker, James Sherrill (universities)

MODULAR TIMETABLING AN OBSTACLE TO CONTINUOUS PROGRESS

by Lisa Duprey

One of the daunting suggestions in the *Year 2000* document is modular timetabling. There is no doubt that the movement away from the traditional rotating timetable has been under discussion for some time – long before the Royal Commission in fact – but the questions about it are even more perplexing when attached to the curriculum model in the white paper.

The paper describes as its goal a curriculum that is "developmentally appropriate and sequential, allows for continuous progress, provides for self direction and is individualized as much as possible." School organization to deliver that curriculum at the upper intermediate level poses problems that are interesting, to say the least.

The paper suggests the organization of instruction into units of 10 to 25 classroom hours, with "core," "assistance," and "enrichment" units available for each module of the curriculum. On a standard "5 by 8" timetable, students will be programmed to study between 40 and 50 units rather than eight courses. There will be a shift away from the traditional rotating timetable to one in which students

may study a humanities unit for two weeks, then move on to detailed study of another strand.

How will this work? If the curriculum is designed to be "sequential" with "continuous progress," what happens to the student who is unsuccessful in completing the two-week humanities unit? Will it be possible to repeat the unit before moving on to the next unit in the sequence? The implication that units will have to be available for repetition raises additional organizational problems.

Concern regarding resource materials results from our past experience of curriculum revision rather than from the white paper itself. Clearly the program will prove unworkable if the resource materials to support it are not at hand in advance of the implementation date. How often in the past have the resource materials arrived a year or two after the implementation date of a new program? Can the ministry deliver resources for curriculum changes as sweeping as those outlined in the *Year 2000* document within the mandated 1993 timeline?

We must be careful not to reject valid and supportable changes simply because they present logistical problems. As professionals, we are obliged to overcome obstacles in the interests of our students. The questions here are, "Are the changes in the best interests of our students?" and, "Are these obstacles insurmountable?"

Lisa Duprey teaches special education in Vancouver.

PRIMARY PROGRAM MODEL NOT UNIVERSALLY APPLICABLE

by Don Briard

Teachers making even a cursory examination of the *Year 2000* document quickly recognize its dramatic and disturbing contradictions. No contradiction is more glaring than that between the curriculum model

"A learner focused curriculum is developmentally appropriate and sequential, allows for continuous progress, provides for self direction, and is individualized as much as possible" and the mechanics of transfer from the intermediate to the graduation program:

"Students who have completed seven years of study in the intermediate program will automatically be registered in the graduation program."

Obviously "automatic" registration after seven years in the program is in marked contrast with curriculum that is "developmentally appropriate" and "continuous." The problems that would be created by the implementation of such contradictory policies are virtually insoluble.

Students who have progressed through the primary and intermediate programs on a continuous-progress model face a sudden and potentially traumatic arrival in the graduation program, regardless of their readiness for Graduation Level I courses.

The solution offered by the white paper is the simple, rather simplistic, statement that "there will be no prerequisites for level I courses." There is no suggestion as to how curricula can be designed to provide meaningful content at the senior secondary level in the absence of a common knowledge base on the part of the

students. The likelihood of collapsing academic standards throughout the graduation program is real.

The potential for collapse is also inherent in the humanities time allocation for the minimum graduation requirement. Current timetable models give students with approximately 360 hours in English 11 and 12 and Social Studies 11. In the new design the courses are replaced by 200 hours of Humanities I and II. In the light of recent criticism of the skills of secondary school graduates, this seems a surprising proposal.

The provision for students to "challenge" courses and "obtain credit based on demonstrable achievement outside of the school" also has the potential to diminish academic standards and, therefore, the ability of B.C. students to succeed in their post-secondary endeavors. Decisions on challenge and advanced credit may vary widely across the province. Different teachers will have different standards for challenges. Different principals will have different standards for "demonstrable achievement." If standards erode as a result, what will be the impact on the credibility of public education?

The white paper seems to have taken the widely-accepted primary program instructional model and applied it throughout the remainder of the public school system. Rather than maintain a logically consistent approach to continuous progress, however, the ministry has recognized that the open-endedness of continuous progress has costs, both in dollars and in negative parental opinion, which might develop if students spend more years in school. The result of that recognition has been the graduation model, which may prove expedient, but educationally bankrupt.

Don Briard is president of the Vancouver Secondary Teachers' Association.

Overheard



"What is expected, is inspected."
"I went to a regional meeting and I was Mort-ified."
"I feel like I've been strand-ed"
"We're not free, but we do come cheap."
"Canadian Airlines doesn't provide in-service education for its pilots after a six-hour flight."
"I used to teach *Who Has Seen the Wind* and *Breaking Smith's Quarterhorse*. Now, with integration, I'll teach *Who Has Seen Smith's Quarterhorse Breaking Wind!*"

"When I think of a system-wide change, I think of the metric system."
"I think these curriculum changes will be more significant in the lives of teachers than Bills 19 and 20."
"Whether you see something as a challenge or a problem depends to a large extent on whether you are the person who has to solve it."
"We can make it work if we give up family, social, and recreational lives!"

Specialization or integration — a complex question

RENAISSANCE TEACHERS REQUIRED *by Kit Krieger*

Anyone who knows me well will find it laughable that I put forward an argument in support of the proposal to integrate curriculum historically divided into discrete disciplines. I am the quintessential specialist - urbanite extraordinaire. When my muffler goes, lawn grows, washer rattles, computer crashes, seams unravel, taxes come due, or throat turns blue, I turn to other specialists.

I purchase the services of specialists with capital earned plying my craft as a social studies teacher. More accurately, I am a history teacher with a rather narrow range of competence and interest in British medieval history. To be perfectly honest, I wing it when it comes to anything other than the second quarter of the third decade of the 14th century. In short, my name seldom comes up in the search for the modern Renaissance person.

The Year 2000 rationale for integration barely scratches the surface of the case for integration. Integration at the primary level is viewed as increasing flexibility in

organizing learning activities. The organization of curriculum into four explicit strands in the intermediate and graduation programs is proposed as a logical extension of the primary curriculum.

In *Legacy for Learners*, the Royal Commission stated that the articulation of curriculum, particularly at the secondary level, contributes to "curriculum overload" and to the divorce between school and the real world.

The segregation of knowledge into discrete disciplines is entirely artificial. It emerged four centuries ago in response to the proliferation of knowledge resulting from the invention of printing. Intellectual specialization paralleled the division of labour in market economies to stimulate production. The legacy of this significant turning point in western civilization is a human species on the brink of extinction.

The progress of intellectual specialization is evident in the evolution of science over the last three centuries. Isaac Newton called himself a natural philosopher,

recognizing the interrelationship between the physical and the metaphysical, between the objective and the subjective. By the 19th century, people engaged in the study of nature were called scientists, suggesting an exclusively rational-empirical bias. Soon after, the terms *physicist*, *biologist*, or *chemist* indicated a concern for only particular natural phenomena. Today, these terms identify the dabbling amateur, for even *nuclear physicist* has given way to *subatomic particle nuclear physicist*. The knowledge explosion promises to create further subdivisions.

There is no place for such specialization in public school curriculum. Specialization values efficiency and quantity; integration values effectiveness and quality. An integrated curriculum requires that students and teachers be aware that people and ideas do not function independently, but that communities and systems are typically interrelated and interdependent.

Knowledge divided into distinct disciplines, taught by teachers whose interest and expertise are narrow, and who work in isolation from those in other disciplines, sends a powerful message to students.

Students in public schools must be

taught to read, think, and act across disciplines. They must understand the social implications of science, the value system that underlies science, the economics of art, and the ethics of economics.

The greatest danger of specialization is that it fosters powerlessness. Specialists feel competent only in their chosen fields. Specialists are tiny cogs in big machines, unable to see how their narrow enterprise contributes to wider events. Responsibility is assumed only for those things that occur within a narrow domain.

With complex activities divided into many separate functions, none assumes responsibility for the big picture. The social responsibility of the specialist was best summed up by Adolph Eichmann, the bureaucratic functionary executed for his role in the murder of 400,000 Hungarian Jews. When asked whether he felt responsible for the fate of the victims, Eichmann protested that he had done nothing but sign papers. He was no more responsible, he pleaded, than the individual who built the tracks on which ran the trains to Auschwitz.

Kit Krieger is a secondary social studies teacher currently on staff of the BCTF.

WHAT'S THE CAUSE OF THIS REBELLION? *by Geoff Hargreaves*

"You're kidding me," I said when they told me that they were going to integrate English with geography, history, moral hygiene, and maybe eugenics.

"No, we're not kidding you," they said with grim-glum faces.

"They must have a secret source of wisdom," I decided and scuttled off to the library. Unknown to me, I felt sure, behind my heedless, subject-specific back, a golden mountain of research on the values of integrated studies had been accumulating.

But I found only one little, little-regarded molehill. A few years back, an American academic had speculated boldly on the virtues of combining English with history and math. And how boldly!

Instead of having students cabined, cribbed, and confined to study the storyline of *Macbeth* (no mean feat in

itself these days, as you probably know), he wanted the students to dig into the conceptual substructure of the whole thing, not merely to do but to be aware of their doing, comparing, contrasting, and evaluating facets of this activity and correlating them with their historical and mathematical interests.

I was impressed. Suddenly I realized where I'd been falling short. Now when a student looks at me with an apathy born of inadequacy because I've asked him to state in his own words why *Macbeth* at one point hesitates to kill Duncan, I try to spark his interest with a relevant, topical question about the methodological principles that govern his literary inquiries.

And what ripe fruit this has already borne! One student recently told me that a first step of inquiry may be to open the book. (The second and third steps I'll withhold until I secure my academic rep-

utation by publishing them in a Harvard journal.)

But our American cousin proved still more ambitious. He wanted students to extend their investigations into the presuppositions of other subjects as well and then go on to synthesize them all. Dependence, he suggested, would be a good unifying theme.

I've struggled to imagine a final-exam question for such a course: Examine dependence with reference to the dramatic structures in *Macbeth*, tribal societies in Papua, New Guinea, and linear simultaneous equations.

The degree of abstraction is breathtaking. After even a semi-successful shot at such an exam, students could proceed directly to grad school at McGill. Or possibly into the silence of a Cistercian monastery, for the chances of glimpsing the face of God at such an elevated level of abstraction are considerable, and little more could ever be said that wasn't just trivially true.

So, if they're not kidding me, and they're not relying on an authenticated

body of research, what's behind it all?

At times, I've thought, maybe they don't like English literature; they distrust the freedom of the literary imagination. So they've decided to restrain it, minimizing its impact — the way you can tame a rogue elephant by harnessing it between two already domesticated animals, all under the guise of advancing social utility.

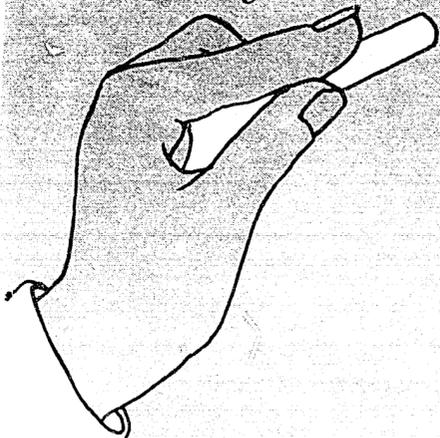
Or maybe they're bored and desperate. In *Rebel Without a Cause*, Jim pauses for a moment on the cliff-top to ask Buzz why they are going to chicken-run two cars over the cliff. "We've got to do something!" answers Buzz.

And that's where I am right now in my thinking. There's a sense of malaise in education. We don't want to spend any more time and money investigating its root causes and remedies, but we've got to do something. Something big. Something fast. Later on, we can mop up the mess at the foot of the cliff.

Geoff Hargreaves is an English teacher in Duncan.

Passion for the subject leaves its mark

by Ray Worley



One foot was bare. A sodden shoe and a limp sock festooned the radiator. We stared, wide-eyed 13-year-olds, fascinated by the eccentricity of the gesture. He launched into the lesson, seemingly oblivious to our amazement. We said nothing. It was that sort of school. Our English teacher, shoeless in Gaza. Another episode with which to regale our friends, already envious because we, the lucky ones, were in this class.

More than 30 years have passed but the memory of my first high school English teacher has not faded. I remember his unconventional flair, his panache, his high expectations, but above all his obvious delight in his subject area. "Spud" inspired his students.

Spud came to mind again during the

ministry's seminar on the Year 2000. The guest speaker paused from extolling "the most ambitious adventure in education on the planet" to acknowledge the value of a teacher with "a passion for a subject." He mentioned Nobel prize winners, many of them outstanding teachers, whose achievements were attributable to their passion for a particular academic discipline. He even allowed that secondary school teachers who have a deep commitment to a particular subject area should not be condemned for it.

I was relieved, but surprised. So much of the justification for the proposed intermediate program has been based on the glib premise that secondary teachers are cast as the villains, transforming eager learners into sullen drop-outs by their insistence on teaching subjects instead of students. These are the teachers, it is suggested, who are the barriers to progress. These specialists must be in-serviced into generalists or de-serviced into retirement. Salvation lies in integration. Or, put another way, by the ministry's expert: "We will look into the hearts, eyes, and souls

of the children we teach and find our material there."

Spud was an unabashed specialist. He taught all grades, all abilities, but only English. He communicated to all his students what great teachers have always transmitted — their love affair with an academic discipline. Their gift is the ability to bring alive in students a little of that same passion, so that, long after the last fact fades from recollection, the memory persists of a commitment, an enthusiasm, a way of approaching a piece of our experience which can illuminate our lives.

Most of us can remember at least one such teacher and can recognize them amongst our colleagues. We should sound a cautionary note amidst the clamour for the homogenization of teachers in secondary schools. We must ensure that the students of the 21st century are not deprived of the unique educational experience which only the dedicated specialist can provide.

Ray Worley is first vice-president of the BCTF.

Teacher

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Good teachers, good conditions

BARGAINING FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

by Lynne Sinclair

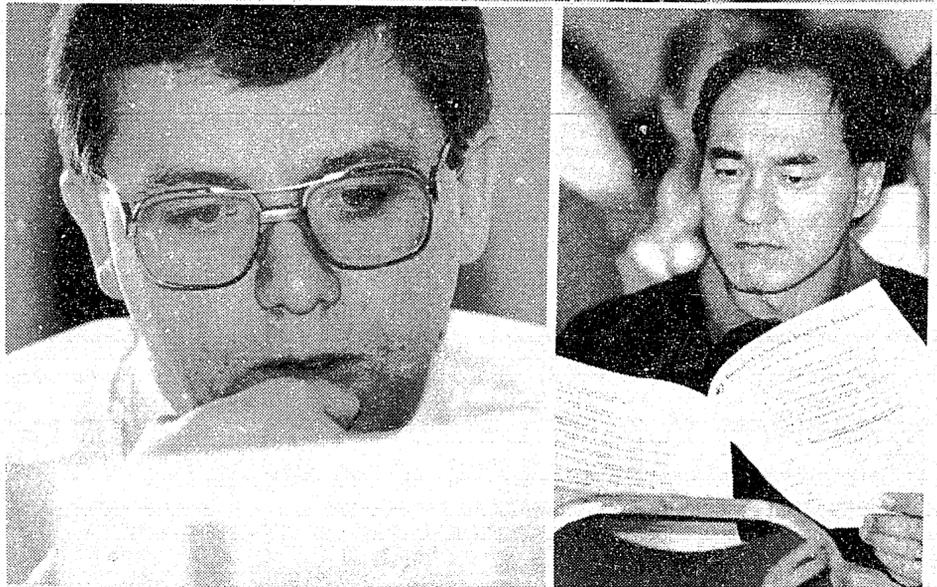
Good teachers and good working conditions are the two essential ingredients for improving schools. So said Michael Fullan, University of Toronto dean of education, at a fall conference on education. Fullan, who has studied and written widely on innovation and school improvement (BCTF's principles of implementation are largely based on his work), insists that good education is the result of the selection of good teachers and administrators, and the provision of working conditions "under which those people flourish."

Strong foundation established

Creating conditions under which people flourish is the purpose of bargaining. In our first round, we established strong collective agreements, effective leadership, and member understanding and support of objectives. Improved working and learning conditions, increased confidence in our ability to organize, pride in our "union of professionals," and respect from our communities and other trade unionists are among the legacies of that effort. Last year, our energy turned to educating ourselves about the meaning of the contract, filing and processing grievances, and reinterpreting clauses in light of the new School Act. Now, we look ahead.

Bargainers prepare for round two

Local association presidents and bargaining chairpersons of all 75 locals were joined by BCTF committee representatives at the Delta Airport Inn on December 8-9, 1989 for the third provincial bargaining conference. They met to discuss and ratify BCTF bargaining goals and objectives and to determine strategy for the upcoming round of negotiations.



Local bargaining resumes this Spring. (Clockwise from top) Greta Hare (Maple Ridge), Eugene Miyoshi (Penticton), and Chris Johns (Cranbrook) join other local association leaders at the provincial bargaining planning conference held in December 1989.

Tim Pelling photos

Small groups discussed a draft objectives/strategy paper. The Bargaining Committee met to incorporate amendments, additions, and deletions, then the revised paper was reviewed. This process was the culmination of local discussions and regional meetings and varied input into the bargaining objectives and strategy.

Here are highlights of the recommendations:

- one-year collective agreements.
- common end dates of June 30, 1991.
- additional BCTF bargaining staff to assist locals.
- membership support and involvement.
- communication action plans.
- opening no later than April 1, 1990.
- provincial and zonal co-ordination of items on the table and of job actions.

The government's *Year 2000* document precipitated many not so new bargaining objectives whose achievement at the table

are now even more vital to teachers and students:

- firm-class size limits, including multigraded primary classes and classes containing mainstreamed students.
 - adequate preparation time.
 - administrative time to prepare report cards, meet with other teachers, communicate regularly with parents, etc.
 - full professional autonomy, including autonomy in methodology of teaching and assessment of students' progress.
- The new School Act, referred to by some as teachers' "Bill 21" (in addition to the infamous Bills 19 and 20), generated some contractual inclusions that are crucial to teacher tenure and welfare:
- just and reasonable cause for all discipline, suspensions, and dismissals.
 - hours of instruction.

See "Bargaining" page 3

Readers write

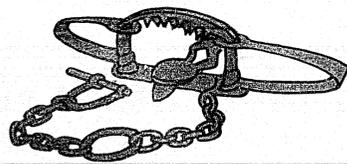
Curtail alcohol at teacher functions

I was pleased to see an article in your October issue stating that teachers are making an effort to curtail alcohol and drug abuse among students.

When my husband began his teaching career, I was surprised to note that every social function arranged by teachers for teachers featured alcohol. This took place in a large city, and I thought, possibly in such populated areas, the students would be unaware of the teachers' habits. Then we moved to a much smaller centre where the same alcohol-oriented functions were commonplace.

My question is this: "How do teachers expect to be able to put forth a program of the kind presented in the above article when they think nothing of having liquor at their social affairs, frequenting pubs, etc.?" It's the parallel of a bank robber with a big sack of cash on his back telling a young person on his way in to rob a bank, "Be honest — don't steal." I think students' attitudes toward drugs and alcohol would improve if teachers began to think about the influence they themselves have on their students.

Sylvia Williams
Summerland



Recognizing the bias in Project Wild

We wish to make prospective teachers of *Project Wild*, a program promoted by the B.C. government, aware of biases and inaccuracies in promotional and course materials. The American edition of *Project Wild*, on which the Canadian version is based, has been heavily criticized by U.S. animal-protection groups.

Many of the biases and inaccuracies are difficult to recognize without a solid understanding of the ecological principles of wildlife population dynamics. Others are more obvious: referring to wild animals as "a natural resource" to be "harvested" and encouraging students to design an "appropriate" zoo enclosure for polar bears.

While workshops encourage teaching students to make informed decisions through an unbiased, objective approach to *Project Wild*, government literature such as "Wolf Management in British Columbia," which attempts to justify the killing of wolves by shooting and poisoning them, accompanies the manual. Another booklet "Wildlife Management in British Columbia" informs us of the "harvesting" of moose calves for the benefit of recreational hunters and suggests that leghold traps are humane.

The extent to which *Project Wild* serves the aims of humane education and fosters respect for wildlife and the environment ultimately depends on the attitudes of the individual classroom teacher.

We encourage prospective teachers of the program to obtain "balancing" materials from non-government agencies concerned with the protection of wildlife and the environment for non-monetary reasons. An excellent resource is *A Humane Teaching Guide for Project Wild*, published by the National Association for the Advancement of Humane Education, Box 362, East Haddam, CT 06423, U.S.A. **Ingrid Pollak**
President, Vancouver Humane Society

Newsmagazine useful and practical

I thoroughly enjoyed reading the October and November/December 1989 issues of *Teacher*.

By combining a variety of articles of general interest and practical use, you have made *Teacher* a very useful, interesting, and practical newsmagazine. **Balwant Sanghera**
Lillooet

Christmas overlooked

On the last page of your November/December 1989 issue, I found the article "Festive Celebrations," which in itself is most acceptable. I have no difficulty in accepting the fact that there is a diversity of religions throughout the world and particularly in Canada. I did, however, find it offensive that nowhere in *Teacher* was there a mention or recognition of the Christian celebration of Christmas. I do not refer to the commercial version. In spite of the efforts of many organizations such as the BCTF, Christianity is still a live religion preaching, "Peace on earth and goodwill toward men." I do not know of a more worthy message than this!

I now wish to let you know that I found the Remembrance Day item in the October issue completely lacking in the meaning of that day. I wondered what the two tapes mentioned and their contents, including a dream showing a BCTF banner being carried in a peace parade, had to do with Remembrance Day. The message of Remembrance Day is as simple as the message of Christmas. No matter how you or anyone else tries, you will never alter the fact that 100,000 young Canadians gave up their lives so we can live in a free country, probably the free country of the world. This is the message! **Nelson McInnis**
Royston

We goofed

In the last paragraph of Iain Martin's letter printed in our November/December issue, the word *foxes* should have been *forces*. The paragraph should read:

"I hope the forces in the BCTF that have fought to keep policy 42.09 will see the good sense in removing this clause at the 1990 AGM, before it is too late."

Our apologies to Mr. Martin.

Health hazards in schools

A reader replies on smoking

While much is said about eliminating drugs from our students' lives, little is done to protect them from the drug most abused by school children that kills the greatest number of Canadians: tobacco. We take pains to avoid mentioning it, as in the item "Is teaching hazardous to your health?" in *Teacher*, Vol. 1, No. 5. The catalogued list of "occupational health and safety hazards for teachers and students" omits tobacco fumes. Is the writer so naive as to assume that smoking no longer occurs in the school setting?

Reticence about the detrimental effects of smoking may result from fear of offending adult smokers in the community. But why should this be? We all know that some parents have drinking problems, some use marijuana, and some eschew seatbelts, but that doesn't stop us from warning our students about alcohol abuse, pot smoking, or unsafe driving.

Considering the vast number of nicotine addicts among school children and the promotional clout of the tobacco trade, which depends on turning today's children into tomorrow's smokers, how can we turn a blind eye to the spread of this drug?

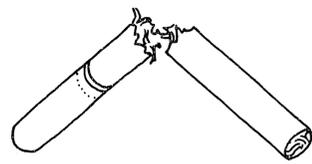
Please don't tell me, "It's legal." So is alcohol. The primary thrust of anti-drug programs should be care and respect for one's body, not just blind adherence to law. If marijuana were decriminalized tomorrow, would we cease to warn children about its dangers?

As long as powerful corporations have a vested interest in promoting tobacco as an integral part of Canadian culture, it behooves us to be equally aggressive in promoting healthful lifestyles. I have been a substitute for enough years to see some of my former primary pupils turn up as habitual smokers at the secondary level. Somehow, despite the laudable focus on respect for the environment, we are failing to convey sufficiently the idea that one's environment begins inside one's

body. To paraphrase Whitney Houston, one of the more wholesome teen icons, "Learning to respect yourself — it's the greatest respect of all."

I would like to see our federation do more and say more to keep tobacco, like any other drug, away from our schools, and to keep children free from the habit.

Nick Sullivan is a substitute teacher in the Comox School District.



The PAL smoking prevention program

"Break Free" is the youth theme of the National Program to Reduce Smoking, a collaborative prevention and cessation effort of provincial Health Departments, Health and Welfare Canada, and professional and voluntary health organizations. Its aim is to create a new generation of non-smokers by bringing today's young people through adolescence smoke-free.

Using this Peer-Assisted Learning resource (PAL) your schools can help students remain non-smokers. Today's 11- and 12-year-olds don't need someone else to tell them smoking is a bad idea. Together, they can come up with good reasons not to smoke.

In field tests, evaluators found consistent evidence that, when taught as designed, PAL can prevent students from starting to smoke. The program consists of six core and two optional lessons scheduled over four weeks. The lessons include the smoking issue, starting and quitting, social pressures, saying "No thanks," tobacco advertising, smoking, and others.

For more information on this program, contact Health Promotion Directorate, Health and Welfare Canada, 4th floor, Jeanne Mance Building, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, ON K1A 1B4.

Teacher

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Bargaining from page 1

- no contracting out.
- teachers' assistants restricted to non-teaching duties.
- a work year that falls between the Tuesday after Labour Day and the last Friday in June.

Other recommended objectives are a salary increase with built-in protection from the proposed GST; full salary, benefits, and tenure for substitute teachers; and teacher control over the selection and operation of staff committees.

Maureen McPherson, Cowichan, Peter Owens, Langley, and Chris Johns, Cranbrook served as panelists speaking on "The Key to Successes of Local Bargaining." All emphasized the need for membership involvement, good communication, and organization. The three panelists, whose locals struck last year, stated that the job action strengthened membership resolve, enhanced the effectiveness of their locals, and ensured the enforcement of their collective agreements.

In the keynote address Professor Marjorie Cohen of Simon Fraser University, spoke on the devastating effects of free trade and the proposed goods and service tax (see page 13).

Adrienne Peacock, bargaining chairperson for the Douglas College Instructors' Association, reported on the results of their recent strike.

"Membership involvement and support



Joan Robb, president of the Sunshine Coast Teachers' Association, paid tribute to George North, director of the Bargaining and Member Services division for his pioneer work in class size.

are the key to any bargaining success," she emphasized. "We gained job security for our temporary appointments, parity with public school teachers, and instructor-established class size limits for courses."

Midway through the final plenary, the participants rose in tribute to George North, director of the Bargaining and Member Services Division. Recently returned from a long illness, George was presented with gifts and praise. Joan Robb, president of Sunshine Coast Teachers' Association, presented a dozen long-stemmed roses and told the conference, "George North is primarily responsible, through his work in the old BCTF Learning Conditions Division, for our gains in

BCTF bargaining goals 1990

1. To restore and expand rights lost through recent School Act amendments.
2. To achieve contractual provisions that recognize the professional rights of teachers.
3. To attract and retain qualified teachers.
4. To secure improved personnel rights in collective agreements.
5. To secure the necessary learning/teaching conditions, and resources to enable public education to meet the needs and rights of all children in a rapidly changing society.
6. To improve the economic status of all teachers.
7. To strengthen union rights and to ensure the integrity of the bargaining unit.
8. To achieve contract clauses that redress inequities for women.

A Delta teacher in Japan

KONICHIWA, EH?



by Diana Patterson

After six months in Japan, I have so much to tell you, teachers of B.C., that I hardly know where to begin.

First of all, I bring greetings from the hard-working teachers of Sagami-hara, the city in which I am teaching. They are eager to have close and constant contacts with Canadian teachers, and I have offered at least to start this process. I have already given my own BCTF pin to the president of the Lady Teachers' Union in Sagami-hara, and she is delighted with it. Now I will tell you a few of the reasons why you should all treasure your union of professionals for giving you, and guarding for you, the status, rights, and benefits you enjoy today.

In Japan, teachers work from 08:00 until 18:00 or later...with very few exceptions. In addition, they often work week-ends. Their summer vacation is short because they must attend many meetings, seminars, etc., and must also supervise

sports such as baseball and swimming during the summer break. A ten-day holiday is the longest any of them take.

In the classroom, they face big numbers. We are talking about 38 students for Grade 7 and up to 52 for Grade 9. Just think about marking 52 Grade 9 notebooks, paragraphs, or tests (no automatic marking, either). And these poor souls have seven classes each. In addition, teachers move from class to class while students sit in their homerooms and socialize. The homeroom teacher eats with his/her class every day. If a student becomes ill or misbehaves, the homeroom teacher is yanked out of his/her regular class and told to take care of the child. There are substitute teachers only for long-term absences for pregnancy, etc., so if a teacher is away for any reason, other teachers cover the classes, or the class just sits there, told to do homework or whatever. At times, unattended classes make it very hard for the rest of us to teach.

Promotion from one grade level to the next is automatic. Many students go directly to work after Grade 9. Jobs are available here for junior high "graduates." There are no detentions to make up assignments or to atone for bad behavior, and seating plans are seldom changed to part "chatty" classmates.

Japanese teachers are saints. They have great humor and are always laughing and joking in the teachers' room, a big place full of teacher desks, where teachers meet each other, eat, answer the phones (no secretaries do this) and do marking. There is no private staffroom, with a quiet area for marking or prep.

The children are just like ours. They both delight and frustrate their teachers. Just today, October 5, at the end of a Grade 9 class, the students, without prodding from their teacher, warmly thanked and applauded me. We had been sharing our love of baseball and expressing our mutual wish that the Tokyo (Yomiuri)

Giants win the big championship series against the Lions (Seibu). Many similar experiences make my job as an assistant English teacher here worthwhile. I talk about how different things are in Canada, but I also tell these children that Canadian children are the same as they are. The world is far too small to let a few thousand kilometres and a different language keep our two Pacific Rim nations apart.

I am being very well-looked-after by the City Board of Education. Their wish to have the best English language program in Japan will soon come true if they continue to insist that only the best effort be put forward by Japanese English teachers and foreign native English speakers alike.

In Japan, teachers work from 08:00 until 18:00 or later... in the classroom, they face big numbers... about 38 students for Grade 7 and up to 52 for Grade 9.

Mr. Shimotori is the head of the English program in this city — our boss. He responds to our every request, complaint, and cry immediately, with endless patience and concern. Mr. Uchida is the city clerk who deals with any matter concerning money. He arranges bank accounts, plane tickets, bill payments, travel allowances, dryer repairs, etc., and he never seems to get home to his lovely wife and little son. I keep telling him that he needs at least two secretaries.

class size. He was a strong influence in the achievement of learning conditions contracts like Surrey's. We owe him more than we can ever repay."

People left the conference exhausted, yet replenished — ready to meet the challenge in the spring, united in their cause to enhance the quality of education and protect teacher welfare by achieving BCTF bargaining objectives. As one participant said, "I've never seen so much positive energy at a BCTF conference — we are going to succeed, once again."

Lynne Sinclair is an assistant director in the BCTF's Bargaining Division.

I have had many great enkis (parties) to welcome me and to say good bye (I have had four school visits so far). I also have boxes of delightful gifts from students and staff members of all four junior high schools, plus two elementary schools. These range from towels and soaps to classic clay dolls and "no drama" masks.

I have great admiration and concern for these people. They need our help in order to chart a path for the future of education in Japan. Already, I have forwarded to the local union all information on our BCTF. In addition, Mr. Shimotori has asked for, and received, information on the Delta school system. I am sure that he would appreciate similar information on other districts in the province. Working and learning conditions, professional development, wages and benefits — all need to be addressed.

Consider taking a year to help the English program in Japan. We need more experienced Canadian teachers here. My year will end on March 31, 1990. I would like to find a person to replace me in Sagami-hara for April 1, 1990. If you are an English teacher, single, and ready to see the most beautiful country outside of Canada, start thinking about it now. Some of the benefits include: a free apartment, fully furnished and outfitted, including washer and dryer; travel allowance between school or city office and home; proximity to some of the most famous and beautiful historic and artistic sites in the world; the opportunity to learn another language; the certainty that you will make many good friends for life; and the certainty that you will be a better teacher when you return to Canada. Please write to me for further information. Sayonara! Diana M. Patterson, 2-11-15 Chuo, Sagami-hara-Shi, Kanagawa-Ken, 229, Japan.

Diana Patterson is a Delta teacher on leave to teach English in Japan.

No yawns at Native Indian Education Conference

by Leslie Savage

I've attended a lot of education conferences in my time. Teachers, enjoying the respite from the classroom, usually chuckle and applaud while some pundit belittles schools and teaching, getting away with harangue and insult only because the audience is starved for any exchange with a nimble mind. Later, the content of the opening address, along with workshops earnestly prepared and attended, can be conveniently forgotten. Ho hum.

Refreshing is therefore the word that best describes the Native Indian Education Conference held in Richmond, November 15-16, 1989. There wasn't a whole lot of laughter, and the battle lines were not always clear, but the atmosphere was one of gritty urgency, and the predominant sentiment was one of commitment.

This commitment was graphically demonstrated when Nathan Matthew, a consultant for the First Nations Congress Educational Secretariat, in the midst of his Friday-morning address to the conference, asked the delegates for a show of good faith and dedication to the cause of native education. The entire audience rose as one. It sounds corny, but it happened.

Earlier, Matthew had told the breakfast joke about ham and eggs. "The chicken is involved," the story goes, "but the pig is committed." Matthew insisted, "I'm the pig, I'm in this for the long run."

The commitment is to shared responsibility for creating excellent educational conditions — not just opportunities — for native children and youth.

"Compromise is what an aboriginal person lives with from the day of birth," Matthew said. "We need ideas. But we need them not just in here but out there. We cannot do it alone anymore."

The B.C. government, through the Ministry of Education's Native Education Branch, is also committed. The new School Act (Bill 67), brings possibilities of changes in the governance and delivery of schooling for native children.

In his opening speech at the conference, Native Education Branch Director Rick Connolly quoted Section 5(3) of the 1989 School Act, which allows the language of instruction to be a native (as well as any other) language. One of the problems of implementing native-language courses or programs is the lack of teachers. In many communities, the best command of language is that of elders who have limited formal schooling and no certification as teachers. This issue is addressed in Section 18(1.2) of the School Act, under which school boards may employ persons other than teachers to carry out classroom duties, under the general supervision of another teacher or an administrative officer of the board such as a principal or vice-principal.

Clearly, as Connolly noted in his opening remarks, Section 18 is a controversial

part of the Act. If B.C. native children are to receive instruction in their own languages, then the priority is to get instructors with expertise into the classroom, credentials or no. Some people, however, are worried that allowing school boards to use teachers' assistants rather than teachers for language instruction will be the thin edge of the wedge in the grad-

"Compromise is what an aboriginal person lives with from the day of birth. We need ideas. But we need them not just in here but out there. We cannot do it alone anymore."

Nathan Matthew, First Nations Congress Educational Secretariat.

ual undercutting of B.C.'s high standard of teacher qualifications. While Connolly maintains that "it has never been the ministry's intent to replace the classroom teacher," the Act allows for just such a replacement in order to "enable the elders to get into the classroom and teach the children the languages." The same argument could be made for some aspects of the Indian Studies Program. Connolly told the conference that under the new legislation, "running a trapline can be integrated into a Native Studies Program, and students can get credit for it the same way as for French or shops."

Other changes in the B.C. School Act pertain to the governance of schooling. Section 8(1) allows every school board to

establish parents' advisory councils to advise the board. Section 104(2.3) allows school boards to make contracts with the Government of Canada and with band councils. "Hopefully," Connolly said, "within two to three years, the Master Tuition Agreement will dissolve." What he did not spell out, however, are the government's expectations for funding programs costing more than the federal government may be prepared to pay.

These sections indicate the provincial government's willingness to move toward more independent schools for natives as well as non-natives. It's a move that native representatives may applaud as enabling legislation for native control of native schools.

But the difficulties potential in the native control of native schools issue is almost as great as the actual difficulties that have resulted from white control of native schools over the last 100 years. Who pays, why, and for what — accountability — is one area of difficulty. What programs, courses, books, materials, and equipment will native schools require, and who will develop these in ways consistent with good pedagogy, for native youth in cross-cultural settings — curriculum and instruction? What is good pedagogy in such a setting? Can native students best learn who they are and where they come from in native schools? How will they chart the path to where they are going — student access to employment and post-secondary education? Will native schools hire non-native teachers, and if not, what will happen to their jobs? These are difficult issues for all concerned. On them depends the future of native communities, which are only beginning to recover from the legacy of pain left by five generations of residential schooling.

The impact of residential schooling was brought home to me in a workshop given by Joan Gentles and Jean Williams. The topic was native awareness. Gentles is a native-education consultant with School District 27 (Williams Lake). She is an ex-

rodeo rider who now acts as a rodeo judge and gives seminars to others who want the same job. She introduced Jean Williams as a speaker whose life story has something to say about native awareness. I was sceptical, as we went around the packed room, introducing ourselves from cramped cross-legged positions. But listening to Jean Williams's story about being sent away to a residential school as a child, watching her hold a stone and a feather for strength and for courage, I could not help but be moved.

It occurred to me while hearing her story that the language of self-worth has a different connotation in a native context than in white North America. The rebuilding of self-esteem by native survivors of the residential school system starts with grief and works through stages of healing that must counter not a single experience or that of one age group, but a legacy of childhood trauma, shattered family life, parental anguish, and personal loss that spans four and sometimes five genera-

The rebuilding of self-esteem by native survivors of the residential school system starts with grief and works through stages of healing.

tions. Native awareness is one response to the cultural annihilation of a deliberately destructive educational practice carried out by a dominant society for explicit assimilative purposes.

The walls in the seminar room were covered with large white sheets of paper, roughly printed with messages. One that Joan Gentles did not point to was this:

"Allow yourself to practise being the way you would like to be. Disallow the labels you may have adopted in the past. Practise the behaviors you wish to own."

Another was about "incorporating into one's view the messages sent by the most important figures in one's life." In this context, self-worth is not an isolating or even particularly individualistic concept, but one tied to others and to a community.

Stuff like this points to one of the strongest arguments *against* native control of native schools, or any other aspect of the segregationist philosophy — from the non-native perspective: *We all* need such wisdom. As post-war state alliances crumble, as politics becomes daily more farcical, and as environmental concerns move to the forefront of the human agenda, there is an urgency about making educational changes that will allow future generations to cope with the maelstrom. Nathan Matthew's eloquent cry that native educators need ideas and need them out there as well as in here, equally well describes mainstream education.

It was not a ho hum conference.

Leslie Savage is a college instructor and freelance writer.

Listen to the troops

Everyone has ideas on how best to educate children:

Give them more freedom. Give them less. Make them learn the basics. Let them learn what they want.

Teach them as their parents were taught. Teach them differently. Never mind teaching them basic math. Teach them how to use a calculator.

There are no easy answers to the question of how best to teach children the skills they will need to survive, how to impart the information they will need. People can't agree on what skills are needed or what information is required. That makes education challenging — for parents, for students, and for teachers. It also makes education an attractive target for politicians. "We know how to educate your child better." A sure vote-getter. "We are going to update our education system to match the rapidly changing society we live in."

Politicians are always tinkering with the education system. In itself, that's not wrong. But what is worrisome is that the tinkering often seems to be spawned by the thoughts of people who are sitting in offices in Victoria — people who aren't getting their hands coated in chalk dust or spending evenings marking tests.

The call for dramatic change doesn't often come from the people in front of the classroom. Those people want a bigger army of educators, better materials, more time to organize lessons. That, they say, will bring your children a better education.

The government's response is ungraded primary. A position paper that would do away with traditional subjects and lump them into four "paths." Sometimes, it seems like change for the sake of change, with little attention to the real needs of the classroom.

We trust teachers with our children's futures. We let them interpret the world to our offspring, allow them to give our children direction on how to respond to a life that is confusing, at times chaotic, and always changing. Our trust is seldom misplaced.

But the teachers don't have as much say in education policy as they should. When they want changes in the system, they often have to present them as part of labour negotiations. Those negotiations occur at the local level.

Even if local school boards agree to institutionalize input, there's nothing to say that input will ever be considered at the provincial level, whence these dramatic changes seem to emanate.

The government has distanced itself from the troops — that makes it easier to decide on change. But more than one general has learned that if you want to lose a war, listen to the officers in headquarters and ignore the non-coms in the front lines.

If we're going to change things, let the first changes be directed by those who are fighting the war on ignorance in the classroom. That's where the contest will be decided.

Source: *Western Weekend*, Penticton, October 13, 1989.

In brief

• Athletic injuries take the thrill out of victory

Education Leader, December 8, 1989, reports findings of a three-year study by the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA): As many as one in five secondary school athletes suffers at least one sports-related injury annually. Football led 5-to-1 in overall injuries, followed by wrestling, girls' basketball, and boys' basketball. Injuries are more likely to occur in practices than in games, and they are more likely to occur as a result of fatigue in a long activity session. The report makes a number of suggestions to reduce the number of injuries: off-season training; practice sessions a maximum of two hours; mandatory fluid breaks every 45 minutes; safety equipment including mouth guards and shin guards; special exercises to strengthen injury-prone knees, ankles, and feet; and certification of coaches in first aid and CPR.

The complete *Injury Report: High School Sports*, is available from John LeGear, Timothy Communications, P.O. Box 3548, Oak Park, IL, 60303.

• Individualized instruction motivates at-risk students

According to a study of low-achieving secondary school math students, the form of instruction can influence whether or not the at-risk student remains in school. Students who received instruction packets geared to their individual learning needs twice a week were more likely than the control group to "tough it out." Students who received regular formal instruction were more apt to drop math altogether. While standardized test scores for the experimental group were not significantly different, the students on the individualized programs finished more assignments, understood the work better, and remained on task longer than did the control group, according to the report in *School Psychology Review*, Vol. 28, No. 3.

• Teachers for peace honored

The peace associates of the BCTF were recently honored at Global Outreach '89, where they were presented with a Peace Initiative award. The award recognizes local efforts in promoting peace.

Particular reference was made to the peace associates' involvement in developing Do-It-Yourself Workshop #1: Children's Fears in a Nuclear Age (this resource, was developed by Beverly Davis (Saarnich), funded through a BCTF special grant to PSAs, and distributed to all B.C. Teachers for Peace Education members, is now available from the BCTF Lesson Aids Service) and developing a global-education curriculum, now in place in the Sunshine Coast School District. For further information about this curriculum, contact Fran Jovick at 987-2654 or 886-9971.

The award was presented by White Rock Mayor Gordon Hogg and Global Outreach Committee member Gladys Muir. Barbara Cooper (Surrey) accepted the award on behalf of her BCTF colleagues.

• Leadership-in-education awards

Reader's Digest will award more than \$200,000 to outstanding elementary and secondary school teachers and principals to honor leaders in Canadian education.

Leadership-in-education awards will be given annually to seven educators or teams who are making extraordinary contributions to society through their work with students in classrooms and schools.

Individual winners or teams each will receive \$5,000, with an additional \$5,000 going to their schools to support the activities that earned these educators national recognition.

Reader's Digest President Ralph Hancox said, "The teachers we seek to honor are the unsung heroes of our education system — educators whose accomplishments are an inspiration to us all and whose commitment to students transcends the classroom and the school."

The deadline for entries is February 28, 1990. Contact *Reader's Digest* Leadership in Education Awards, c/o Bonnie Venton Ross, 215 Redfern Avenue, Westmount, PQ H3Z 2V9.

• What are human rights? Let's talk . . .

A human rights education program has been designed for elementary Grades 4-6. This program aims to provide knowledge about human rights concepts, issues, and major legal documents and mechanisms of protection, foster attitudes of tolerance, respect, and empathy inherent to human rights, and develop an awareness of the ways and means by which human rights can be applied to the daily lives of individuals.

Contact Shirley Sarna, Education Programs Director, Canadian Human Rights Foundation, B301-3465 Côte des Neiges Road, Montreal, PQ H3H 1T7.

• Non-sexist language in the classroom

Words can make women disappear. Thus warns a pamphlet on the use of non-sexist language in the classroom produced by the Canadian Federation of Students.

Consider these: Dear Sirs • man to man • manpower • craftsman • working men • the thinking man • the man in the street • fellow countrymen • the history of mankind • one-man show • man in his wisdom • statesman • forefathers • masterful • masterpiece • old masters • the brotherhood of man • Liberty Equality Fraternity • sons of free men • faith of our fathers • God the father • God the son • yours fraternally • amen.

The pamphlet provides many alternative words and structures to remove gender bias from language. Copies are available from the CFS office, 102-1080 West 7th Avenue, Vancouver, BC, V6H 1B3, 733-1880.

Also check your bookstore for the *Nonsexist Word Finder Dictionary of Gender-Free Language*, Beacon Hill Press, \$14.50.

• Teenage-stress video

Are today's teenagers prepared to lead us into the next century? Will they be able to balance the pressures of home and the workplace? What can be done to control teenage stress, which often manifests itself in alcohol and drug abuse, pregnancy, and depression?

In its most recent half-hour television special, "Pressure Cooked Kids: On a Collision Course with the 21st Century," Ivanhoe Communications, Inc. addresses the pressures teenagers face today. The program provides viewers advice on how to teach teenagers ways to handle stress in their early years so that they can become productive members of society.

The video, available in 1/2" VHS, can be purchased by schools for \$75. Contact Bette BonFleur, President, Ivanhoe Communications, Inc., P.O. Box 865, Orlando, FL 32802 U.S.A.

• Get youngsters to read

With stiff competition from television and other distractions, reading rarely has priority in the home, a reality that can put school-age children at a serious disadvantage. A recent article by a New Jersey librarian in *Guideposts* magazine offers the following tips to parents: — Be a reader yourself. Children learn by imitation. Whenever you're reading a novel or scanning a newspaper, your interest will show that reading is worthwhile. Read, and make sure your children see you.

— Read to your children. Nothing compares with snuggling up in a parent's lap to hear an enchanting story. Reading aloud need not be limited to pre-readers; read aloud even if you think your children have outgrown it.

— Lead, but don't push. Reading should be a pleasure, not a chore. Be aware of your children's abilities, and cultivate their interest by reading from picture books while praising them for new words they pick out.

— Look for reading opportunities. When your children have questions about the world around them, look up the answers in books. The sense of discovery through books can be exhilarating for children and adults alike.

— Tie books into other available media. Direct your children's television viewing toward book-oriented programs and videotapes based on books, then make the featured books available. When buying toys or clothing, look for book-related themes.

Teachers and librarians can do much to stimulate the love of reading in children, but the real work lies in the home. Take the challenge, and raise a reader!

• Grants for teacher research on literacy

The Canadian Teachers' Federation has received special funding from the National Literacy Secretariat of the Department of the Secretary of State to provide grants for teacher research on literacy. The grants are to be awarded during 1990, International Literacy Year. The \$2,500 grants are intended to defray costs of carrying out small-scale classroom and community-oriented research projects by teachers, or small teams of teachers, elementary or secondary. Grants will be awarded in each province or territory.

The intention of the grants is to permit teachers to reflect on current practices in schools and to draw on their professional knowledge and classroom insights to suggest or explore ways of helping students attain higher levels of literacy.

The deadline for applications is March 30, 1990.

Application forms and instructions are available from the BCTF or from the Canadian Teachers' Federation, 110 Argyle Avenue, Ottawa, ON K2P 1B4.

• British Columbia's young people can talk to scientists

Scientists in the Schools is a program designed to encourage students to consider careers in science and technology. In this school year, the program will continue to focus on communities with little exposure to science and technology.

Volunteers with masters or doctoral degrees in science or technology and technologists, will visit classrooms across B.C. offering hands-on science experiences and talking to students.

The program is administered by Science World and funded by the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training, and Technology. Science World British Columbia is a non-profit, self-supporting organization dedicated to the understanding and appreciation of science and technology through participatory educational experiences.

Contact Roger Renner, Science World, 1455 Quebec Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 3Z7, (604) 687-8414, Fax (604) 682-2923.



Can public schools or native-controlled schools provide the best education for native children? As we approach the next century, this is one of the central questions facing educators.

Tim Petting photo



by David Suzuki

People tell me over and over that they've got the message: they know the environment is in trouble and that we are all part of the problem. But they are often overwhelmed and feel helpless or insignificant.

Yet not doing anything is essentially a cop-out. So what can one person do? It is true that each of us contributes a trivial amount to the totality that has created the environmental crisis. But it is equally true that 10 or 100 people deliberately acting in an environmentally friendly way begins to add up.

If we escalate that number by thousands all across the country, it can become a powerful movement. Individual action is amplified by its effects on children, friends, business, and government. The collective impact of individual action creates power.

It would take pages to list all of the things individuals can do.

Almost 2,000 environmental groups across Canada can provide information on anything from herbicide spraying in school grounds to destruction of tropical rainforests. You can get a list of the groups from the federal or provincial environmental networks by contacting any of the environment departments.

Most of those citizens' groups are formed around a small nucleus of incredibly dedicated people who operate on a shoestring. They are a source of inspiration and they need help of any kind. Get involved with one.

From an environmental perspective, soil, water, and air are the very stuff of life, and our total surroundings represent our true home. We wouldn't load up our houses, water taps, food, and air with poisons, so why do we do it to the outside environment?

Don't pour leftover chemicals down drains or carelessly spray poisons. Dispose of chemical leftovers (cleaning fluids, paint, and solvents, etc.) properly. If there are not adequate facilities for disposal in your community, there's a good project to start — there should be one.

Gardeners can get a book by Carol Ruin called *How to Get Your Lawn and Garden Off Drugs*. It costs \$12.95 and can be ordered from Friends of the Earth.

Our homes must be more energy efficient. Fluorescent lightbulbs for example use a sixth of the energy of incandescents.

10 or 100 people deliberately acting in an environmentally friendly way begins to add up... the collective impact of individual action creates power.

The burning of fossil fuels has to be drastically reduced, so don't drive short distances if you can walk or bicycle and take public transit where possible.

Our eating habits have changed. Meat, especially beef, is an expensive way to get protein, and it is the basis for environmental damage. Beef in some hamburger chains comes from cows raised where tropical rainforest was cleared. It takes over 15 pounds of grain to make one pound of beef, and cows also belch methane, a powerful greenhouse gas.

Even a 10% reduction in beef consumption in North America would free a massive amount of grain for food, reduce environmental degradation, and improve our health.

Our concepts of what is attractive or worthwhile are learned, so we can modify our ideas of style and esthetics to include durability and quality. Instead of stressing something as arbitrary and temporary as fashion, we can take pride in clothing that will last for years.

Recycling is a necessity of life, and no politician can say he/she is serious about the environment if this is not one of his/her most urgent priorities. We should be embarked on crash programs across the country to recycle 60% to 70% of our waste within the next five years.

We should be composting organic matter whenever we can and all municipalities should be working on plans to use sewage as a resource for fertilizer. It is sadly symbolic that on both coasts, the provincial capitals of Victoria and Halifax continue to pour raw sewage into the oceans.

North Americans use twice as much packaging as do Europeans and Japanese. Be vocal in your objections to unnecessary packing in hardware stores, drug stores and supermarkets.

In eating places, we don't need individual packages for sugar, cream, ketchup, butter, straws, etc. Protest. Object loudly to the energy waste of open refrigeration in supermarkets. We should be looking to eliminate styrofoam products which can last for centuries yet are used fleetingly and discarded.

All of us have enormous power as voters. Politicians pay attention to letters, telegrams, and phone calls. Demand that every candidate for municipal, provincial and federal office have well-thought-out environmental programs.

We are engaged in an all-out war to save this planet, and that means everyone of us must contribute. If we spread the word, our insignificant individual acts will add up to a solution.

David Suzuki is a scientist, writer, and broadcaster with special interest in the environment.

Source: *Toronto Star*, September 2, 1989. Reprinted with permission.

when proven innocent

SEXUAL ALLEGATIONS DEVASTATING

by Ralph Sundby

Sexual allegations against innocent teachers don't occur frequently, but when they do, their effect is devastating. The handful of teachers falsely accused of sexual offences against children contend that even full restoration has not restored their shattered careers.

Once doubt has been planted, parents and authorities are often unable to erase from their minds the possibility that children are at risk. In a climate highly sensitized by numerous disclosures of shocking sexual abuse by adults in positions of trust, the reaction is understandable. But the enormous injustice inflicted on innocent persons cannot be rationalized away.

Citing cases of anguish and suffering by the falsely accused and their families, two locals have asked the B.C. Teachers' Federation to explore ways of protecting against the hazard and ways of supporting those affected. At a recent meeting, the Executive Committee wrestled with the critical question of balance in deciding how far the BCTF can go in addressing this problem. It is felt by many that the federation cannot assume so protective a stance that people will fear to report reasonable suspicions of abuse.

Under no circumstance can the issue of sexual abuse be returned to the closet of silence and denial from which it has just recently been removed. On the other hand, the enormously damaging effect of false reports can't be ignored.

Current situation complicated

One difficulty is that a large majority of reports are founded, and the rate of conviction is high when charges are laid. The benefit of doubt runs in favor of complainants. A second difficulty is how long it takes to dispose of a case. The longer doubt remains, the greater and longer lasting the damage. Having potential for preventing false allegations are the responsibility and accuracy with which individuals assess suspicions before reporting and the sophistication and discretion with which authorities handle allegations.

Consider the possible situations that give rise to false allegations:

1. A vindictive lie may be told by an individual or group bent on gaining revenge for discipline or other action seen as unjust.
 2. A child who may have been overly sensitized by protective adults and who may lack adequate ability to make the necessary discriminations misinterprets an innocent or accidental touching.
 3. A child who is being abused by a closely-related adult, whom the child does not have the emotional capacity to acknowledge as an abuser, displaces blame.
 4. A somewhat unstable youngster who is inclined toward fantasy develops a fixation on a particular teacher.
 5. A person has different standards (sometimes culturally based) regarding what are normal and positive forms and degrees of touching. (These might also include misunderstanding of definitions of sexual harassment.)
- Allegations fall into a range of categories from visual (looking, showing) to verbal (jokes, remarks) to various degrees of touching, up to and including sexual acts. The Criminal Code's distinguishing of actions by "purpose" gives rise to individual interpretation of an action. It is a criminal act when a person in a position of trust or authority touches, invites, counsels or incites "for sexual purpose."

Prevention of false claims

Finer discrimination is necessary to enable children to identify and report abusive behavior more accurately and responsibly. Parents and teachers are in the best position to develop these abilities, which are easier to state than to teach. Too much teaching can itself create paranoia, which gives rise to unjustified reports. Thus the quality of awareness programs is very important.

Sophisticated early scrutiny by recipients of complaints is critical if false claims are to be prevented from harming innocent teachers. This requires development of expertise and use of good judgment by the Prosecutor's office, Ministry of Social Services and Housing personnel, police, and school district administrators.

Based on submissions from the Alberta Teachers' Association, the Canadian Teachers' Federation adopted a policy calling for a ban on publication of names of alleged teacher sexual offenders until a conviction is made. While supportive of such a ban, some victims of false allegations argue that word of mouth is just as destructive and would not be prevented by the ban.

Ontario teachers have threatened damage suits as a means of dealing with false

charges. The BCTF has demonstrated it is prepared to look at supporting teachers where legal counteraction seems appropriate, but satisfaction may be difficult to achieve through such action. Citizens are obliged by law to report reasonable beliefs that a child needs protection. Authorities must investigate and act. So long as all have acted without malice or serious negligence, a suit would not likely succeed. Some say counteraction would simply bring additional publicity and prolong a painful experience.

There are no easy answers to this problem, but preventative measures are a good place to start. No one wishes to create a climate of undue caution, but teachers ought to ensure that their conduct is above question and that some basic precautions are taken.

Basic precautions

Wherever possible and reasonable, avoid being alone with a student in a private setting not easily open to view by others. This is especially important where a student shows signs of emotional problems or tends to react to discipline with hostility or retaliation.

A ban on physical contact is neither realistic nor desirable. Acceptable forms of touching can contribute greatly to learning and development. But fine-tune your discretion always asking why and how the touching is being done. Avoid any direct or indirect contact that can be alleged to be for sexual gratification. Also avoid any form of physical "correction" or discipline. The position of trust and the teacher-student power difference carry with them an enormous responsibility for the nature and quality of interactions which take place.

In your communications with students, avoid inappropriate levels of personal disclosure or questioning on private matters. Such exchanges are open to interpretation and question as to motive.

Document and report unusual incidents with students that give rise to a fear that false allegations may be forthcoming. Report to the administration any direct threat to "get even."

Some allegations have revolved around a teacher's looking at students or parts of their bodies in a manner suggesting sexual interest. Others have involved off-color jokes, suggestive comments, or questions asked of students deemed too personal. Pleas of misinterpretation or "only joking" may be inadequate defenses after the whistle has been blown. Mature judgment is necessary in guarding against giving

impressions that may provoke allegations of serious misconduct.

Faced with false allegations, seek union or legal advice immediately. What that advice will depend entirely on the circumstances of each case. While a high degree of co-operation may be necessary in detecting false allegations early, such co-operation should not be unqualified. The shock of unfounded accusations does not leave a teacher in the best state of mind to deal with the questioning that inevitably follows.

Teachers tend to think false accusations are a mishap that befall others. Such may not be the case, as a few can painfully attest. Reasonable precautions are prudent.

Ralph Sundby is a staff person in the BCTF Bargaining and Member Services Division. He has extensive experience in teacher personnel matters.

Can you read your own writing? Can anyone else?

Robert Gunning offers his *fog index* to determine the readability of a passage. Follow these steps:

1. Take a sample of at least 100 words. Determine the average number of words per sentence. Treat independent clauses as separate sentences.
2. Count the number of polysyllables (words of three syllables or more) per 100 words. Omit from this count all capitalized words, combinations of short easy words like *sunrise* or *forever*, and verbs made into three syllables by adding *es* or *ed*.
3. Add the average number of words per sentence to the polysyllable count and multiply the sum by 0.4. Ignore digits after the decimal point; that is, if the answer is 9.7 round off the fog index to 9. Because few readers have more than 17 years of schooling, any passage that tests higher than 17 has a fog index of 17+. Most newspapers are written in the fog index range of 6 to 10.

Source: 1988 convention of the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education.



Being the first link to the BCTF is no small job for the federation's telephone switchboard operators, Dorothy Robinson (left) and Marilyn Hooper (right). Approximately 2,500 calls are received in an average week from students, teachers, and the general public. In addition, the BCTF has an active electronic messaging and teleconferencing system. The BCTF's toll-free number is 1-800-663-9163.

Alistair Eagle photo

Executive
AGS OF
DEVELOP
KAPLAN
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SUNSHINE

- The Ministry of Education will be petitioned to extend its counselling services to cover exonerated victims and their families.
- Proposals are to be developed to enable locals (with BCTF help) to set up "buddy systems" between individuals and/or families and to utilize community agencies for the purpose of moral and practical support.
- The CTF is to be asked to investigate possible federal government funding and/or other support for teachers falsely accused.
- Bargainers will be asked to consider contract language that would provide necessary resources for programs of support.

Executive Committee Minutes,
October 12 and 14, 1989.

The royal road to learners?

MINISTRY BRIEFS ADMINISTRATORS ON YEAR 2000

By the time you read this, just about every school administrator in the province will have attended a two-day conference on the proposed changes to the B.C. education system featured in the ministry's document *Year 2000, A Curriculum and Assessment Framework for the Future*. Conferences have been held in Harrison, Prince George, Victoria, Cranbrook, Kamloops, and Vancouver. We asked our veteran columnist, Jim Bowman, to report on one of those regional meetings.

by Jim Bowman

moseyed into Kamloops up the Coquihalla trail and, as usual, had a lane to myself. I think mine was paved with the 1985 education budget, but that's just a guess, because the signposts on the Coquihalla feature the names of tragedies scripted by Bill Shakespeare, not Bill Bennett.

Well folks, you are not going to believe this, but it's hallelujah time in B.C. As you know, I've been reporting on the activities of the ministry for a long time, and it's mostly been doom, gloom, and dire predictions. Well, not any more. Happy days are here again. The ministry has gone high-tech Chautauqua on us with slide shows and tapes and videos and strolling players and singers belting out the "Top 20" and lapel badges and balloons and even a keynote speaker who must have been in mothballs since the swinging sixties.

The show was entitled "Leaders Enabling Learners: The Beginning of Change," and its purpose was to examine the ministry's Year 2000 document. There must have been four or five hundred people in attendance, mostly school administrators and district staff, but there were some parents, teachers, and trustees, in about the same proportion as yeast to flour in a loaf of bread.

I hadn't been there long before I realized that the editor had sent a reporter from the wrong generation. It's not just that my faculties are failing — an obliging principal lent me his binoculars so that I could see the overheads — but I'm afraid I couldn't identify any of the singers. And when, to break the ice with my neighbor, I murmured, "Caruso it aint," and he said, "Who's Caruso?" I knew it was time I were stuffed back into the Jurassic with the other fossils.

Despite my shortcomings as an avant-garde commentator, let me try to weave you a tapestry out of the threads of those two days.

The first thread is, of course, the content, the ministry's paper on curriculum and assessment. We were presented with the overall changes in curriculum and specific commentary on the plans for the primary, intermediate, and graduation programs. All that was set in the context of change — the roots of change, the pace of change, and the face of change. In short, the ministry was saying in its presentations, "This is what we are planning to do in this rapidly changing world."

In the small-group sessions, they were asking what we thought about what they were planning to do. The acid test of their intentions will be whether the reactions they receive will cause them to modify their plans in any other than purely cosmetic fashion. And there were some major concerns: the system of evaluation, the implementation timelines, the resources available for professional development, and the matter of work experience in the graduation requirements.

But let me not cavil just yet, for how refreshing it is after a decade of dogma to have a chance to examine the ministry's wares spread around the bazaar where we can finger them, exclaim over their virtues and flaws, and perhaps influence what is sold.

Let me go to the second thread, the process. And I'm not talking about the process of the meeting itself but the process of implementing change, of bringing it off the drafting boards and the internal environment of the ministry and into the market place. And the hierarchical process they are proceeding with, though entirely predictable, is entirely wrong. Not that there is necessarily a right process; changes in educational practices are enormously difficult to achieve, whatever method is used. But trying to do things through the formal bureaucratic setting in which most present day school systems are embalmied is, according to the literature, a method offering little prospect of success.

Now before all you egalitarians, not already booted and spurred, mount your high horses and tilt your lances at the ministry's windmills, keep in mind that the method it has adopted is indeed predictable, for the world our public servants inhabit is hierarchical in the extreme. When they look out of their Victorian windows at the darkling plain, they know you are there slogging away in your clapboard classrooms, but they see superintendents and principals and all those who, like themselves, represent management.

So, perhaps they can be forgiven if they first of all want to get their own team on side. *But isn't it ironic that they themselves haven't done what they will eventually be forced to ask many of you to do, and that is to shift from the traditional grounds you stand on (your values, your habits, your teaching practices) and do something quite different, if these*

plans are to stand a chance of being implemented.

For they know, and everyone at the meeting knew — and many of them said so — *that teachers implement change*. You have to remember that most of those who attended are teachers, albeit wearing different hats. That dumb legislation a couple of years ago took away their membership, not their marbles. So it was inevitable that they would wonder, after a video-tape or two, "Where are the teachers?"

Yet far stronger than that overt sort of comment, were the words of the various speakers, which make up the third and strongest thread in my cloth. And once I'd forgiven the ministry for its hierarchical transgressions, I was very receptive to the message that came through.

From the introductory remarks of the MC, an accomplished ringmaster named Harold Rourke, superintendent in Vernon: "People have to believe in what they are doing."

"Hallelujah," I shouted inside the thick Bowman skull. More reforms have been scuppered by the faddists and those who will jump on any passing ship or by people getting involved because they have been told to do so, not because they are committed.

From my old friend Jack Fleming, assistant deputy minister: "It will do us no good if we look clever and nothing happens at the classroom level. It will have

The acid test of the government's intentions will be whether the reactions it receives to the Year 2000 will cause it to modify its plans in any other than purely cosmetic fashion.

been a waste of time."

"Hallelujah!" I sang again.

And before the notes settled, Jack went on to say, "The ministry will do whatever it can to bring about the effective implementation of the Royal Commission." Now that is an interesting pledge.

And there was a posse of superintendents on video. By God, they were well dressed. Wasn't that another old acquaintance, Cliff Smith, late of the cheese capital, now basking on the Sunshine Coast? And good for Cliff as he moved very close to the heart of things. He's wondering how to emancipate teachers, how to become "more and more facilitative and

less and less directive." He talked about the courage that people need to take risks and whether supervisors have the strength to support those who must take risks in order to implement change.

And another loud hallelujah, not just inside my head that time but from the audience, as panelist John Wiens, South Cariboo superintendent, challenged the system of evaluation. "We use tired old measures" and "outmoded instruments," he said. And as the applause died away, I wondered if we were attending the wake of the formidable structure of evaluation built by the ministry. The ministry must know as well as the rest of us that you can't walk down both sides of the street in opposite directions at the same time.

Then there was the keynote speaker, a fellow called Bob Samples, from Colorado. The heart of his speech described the difference between non-adaptive and adaptive change. Non-adaptive change is imposed and is characterized by homogeneity, dependency, and competition. Adaptive change is emergent, grows out of a context, and is characterized by diversity, co-operation, and self-regulation. Samples maintained that the Royal Commission report is a plea for adaptive change, and he expressed great hope for the possibilities inherent in what is happening in B.C.

It was pretty mind boggling to hear this stuff from a ministry sponsored speaker. Pat McGeer, Brian (CN) Smith, and Jolly Jack Heinrich would have had apoplexy on the spot.

The highlight of the conference came, not with the keynote speaker, but when John Wiens raised the intellectual level of the debate a notch or two above *Maclean's* and *Newsweek* by saying that he had been rereading Erich Fromm's *Escape from Freedom*. The thesis is that we first welcome freedom and then get scared by it and march into the next leader's hands. Then he made this the dominant thread for me by saying that "learners and classroom teachers will have to become empowered" and thus capable of dealing with freedom. And then, bless him; for, he said that he was "not sure how we are going to do that." I say, "bless him," because in my lifetime we've had a bellyful of people giving us the right answers, and struggling with the right questions is surely what education is all about.

So you teachers should look to the future with confidence, not apprehension. You are in the catbird seat with these momentous changes now being kicked around by others. Somehow the ministry has to figure out ways, not merely to get you involved in the process, but to have you expropriate that process and make it your own. Otherwise we will soon be echoing the words of Philip Jackson, who noted that the U.S.A. in the '60s and early '70s "lived through a spirit of reform that did not materialize."

Whatever ways the ministry chooses, good or bad, right or wrong, take things over anyway. Some of these proposed reforms are too important for kids' learn-

ing and the freeing of professional practices to be left to the mercies of those who, whatever their positions, are not ultimately the agents of change. In your school, where the action really begins, if you and your colleagues agree with these reforms, insist on some appropriate provision of time and resources to help you implement them. Not that things will ever work out the way the ministry has planned them, or the Royal Commission recommended them, or anyone else for that matter who might like to impose their vision on the complex human business of schooling.

Anyone who really thinks that the universe unfolds in predictable ways should stick to Sunday-morning TV and the rabid evangelists, who do have all the answers. *And it doesn't matter a damn whether they work out or how they work out as long as the system is freed up so that teachers can take risks on behalf of children and get the kind of support that that sort of behavior deserves from sympathetic administrators and a flexible, resourceful ministry.*

So you teachers should look to the future with confidence, not apprehension . . . Somehow the ministry has to figure out ways, not merely to get you involved in the process, but to have you make the process your own.

I would describe the outlook of the Kamloops participants as optimism tempered by scepticism. They were ready for some creative and constructive endeavors but, like the rest of us, they've lived through some volatile times in education in B.C. Most of them weren't as close to the political scene as I perceive was, so my outlook could be described as scepticism tempered by optimism; for whatever protestations the minister may make to the contrary, his government's conversion to the merits of enlightened public education is as recent, and probably as ephemeral, as its conversion to the cause of the environment. But for the present at least, the ministry appears to be displaying an openness, a candor, and a desire to make real reforms on which teachers ought to capitalize.

I made the mistake, when driving home, of abandoning the empty spaces of the Coquihalla for Cache Creek and the Fraser Canyon, braving darkness, rock scaling, fog, accidents, and wall-to-wall trucks. Yes, trucks, trucks, and yet more trucks all barreling along this dangerous and outmoded highway. I hope some ministry officials made the same round trip I did, because they could hardly have failed to note the parallel: You can design a beautiful highway, build it in that image, even pay for it twice over, but you can't make people drive on it if they don't think it's in their best interests to do so.

Jim Bowman is a retired educator who worked as a consultant for the Royal Commission and, formerly served as a BCTF staff person.

The National Film Board

THE "EYES OF CANADA" FOR 50 YEARS

The National Film Board has proudly fulfilled founder John Grierson's mandate: to interpret Canada to Canadians and to other nations. For fifty years, it has completed more than 17,000 productions, 6,500 of them originals; its films and filmmakers have won more than 3,000 awards. By establishing regional productions and distribution centres, the NFB has provided Canadians with a balanced, yet vivid, cinematic mirror of their nation. With its products translated into 60 languages and distributed in 80 countries, it has also provided the first glimpse of Canada's social and cultural identity for many of the world's citizens.

While its products deserve acclaim, the NFB has been in a class by itself because its structure, and its process.

Not your ordinary bureaucracy
Studio A, the animation unit, was established in 1941 under the leadership of the late Norman McLaren. Quality, innovation, and diversity of style characterize the work of NFB's animators. McLaren's own Oscar-winning short *Neighbours* is described as the most eloquent argument for peace ever made. The film has been borrowed 106,000 times, and 2,500 prints have been sold around the world. The animation studio has won four of the NFB's eight Oscars.

In the 1960s, the NFB established the Challenge for Change/Société Nouvelle program, whose mandate was "to provoke social action in such fields as poverty, racial discrimination and other problems of contemporary society."

In 1974, the NFB established Studio D, the world's only all-women's filmmaking unit. Studio D has won three Oscars, it was proclaimed a National Treasure by the Canadian Institute for Women's Culture in 1985. The French Program's "Regards de Femmes" was created in 1986 to produce documentary films by women about women's issues and to give priority to women filmmakers with limited professional experience. Studio D has won acclaim for such powerful films as *Not a Love Story, If You Love This Planet*, and *To A Safer Place*.

Film in education

Nearly half the NFB's film and video bookings are for educational purposes. Short open-ended dramas designed to spark discussion are particularly popular. *Wednesday's Children* is a series of six such dramas, about adolescent alienation and delinquency; *No Address* is a discussion starter on social issues of native populations; *Discussions in Bioethics* helps students explore bioethical dilemmas.

Studio G is currently testing the concept of "interactive" video with the *Perspectives in Science* series, which includes interviews, charts, experiments, and dramatic vignettes to explore a number of social and environmental issues in science.

The Multi Media Studio in Montreal is dedicated to the production of audio-visual aids for schools and is the biggest



supplier of Canadian materials for Canadian children.

The NFB's educational role has always extended beyond the classroom, to community groups, cultural organizations, and labour groups. As part of its contribution to the war effort in the '40s, the NFB established 43 travelling circuits to show films in rural communities. It also co-operated with trade unions to make films available to the labour movement's educational network. One of Vancouver Centre's recent productions, *Feeling Yes, Feeling No*, helps to teach children about sexual abuse. Health and Welfare Canada advertised the video version in the family-allowance mailings and more than 10,000 Canadian families purchased it.

The future's not so bright

With such a history of excellent productions, and diversity of clientele, why doesn't the future of the NFB look rosy? Like many federal institutions, the film board has suffered from budget cuts, beginning as early as 1945. But the Mulroney government has imposed annual reductions, closed regional film libraries, reduced in-house production by 70%, reduced staff by 30% (to below World War II levels), contracted out technical services, and imposed a service charge on borrowers of 16 mm films and videos. NFB circulation statistics show a 20% decline in borrowing as a result of this fee.

In 1985, the Neilson Task Force studying government support for Canadian arts and culture recommended that the NFB budget be cut by \$20 million. But perhaps more significant is that under the Conservatives, the NFB has made a commitment to "produce films and videos of quality, which can compete in the marketplace."

Ironically, there's always been sufficient competition in the marketplace. The private sector has produced enough feature films, though not all meet the NFB's standards. There continues to be a shortage of quality films and learning materials that provoke action, or reflect Canada to Canadians.

The NFB is described as a "perennial pioneer" in education, research and development, regional access, and social action. *For pioneers, life never gets easier.*

The Growing Up Series

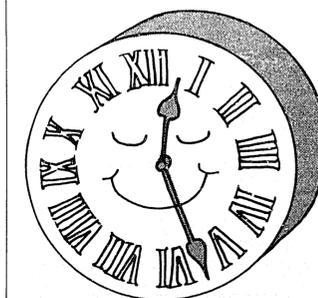
New from the NFB

Produced for 9- to 12-year-olds, this three-part series is designed to help young people develop skills to cope with the pressures of adolescence. Director Moira Simpson and Producer Jennifer Torrance, creators of the award winner *Feeling Yes, Feeling No*, base this series on the assumption that sexuality education encompasses the whole child, including his/her self-concept and body image. Live action sequences, animation, humor, and interactive decision-making make the series entertaining as well as informative. A teacher's guide accompanies the films.

Elaine Decker

Personally Speaking

Your lifestyle, your choice



Quality time

One month into the new year and already every space on your calendar is full? Worried about finding time to spend with your family? Here are some steps for regaining and retaining such time:

- First, take an inventory of the time available. Identify the time when family members' schedules overlap, whether that's in the morning before you leave for work or the period wedged between your arrival home and the children's bedtime.

- Once you identify this time, reserve it for the family. Don't wall yourself off in the kitchen or in front of the television set.

- If the block of time coincides with the dinner hour, make eating an event. Enlist the kids' help in preparation. Or eat out. Order a pizza. Pack a picnic. A meal can be simple and inexpensive, yet involve everyone.

- Also search out those small pockets of time you may have overlooked: when you are driving to the babysitter's, shopping for groceries, or running the bath water, put other concerns on hold. Let your children be your centre of attention.

- Treat weekends as a mini-vacation — not as catch-up time from the office. Plan a day trip or a short outing. If household chores or yardwork need to be done, make them family projects, followed by a movie or an ice-cream run.

- Shared activity, be it work or play, promotes conversation. The words you exchange with your children are your best gauge of quality time. If you had a tape recorder running during the course of the day, would it play back a string of nagging reminders centred on tasks, or would you hear more personal, thoughtful conversation?

- Quality time is too important to leave to chance.

Source: *The Fitness Group Newsletter*, September 1989.

How to save the world on school time

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT PROJECT TAKES OFF

by Susan Crichton and Henning von Krogh

If Monte Hummel could be bold enough to explain how to save the world, we felt that we might just be bold enough to try. In Nelson at the October "Get High on Nature Conference," Hummel, president of the World Wildlife Fund Canada, presented a keynote address laying out a foolproof approach to saving the world: "Speak up, speak up, speak up." He challenged the audience to speak up at the market place, at the ballot box, and to others. We have amended his formula to speak up to policy makers (the school board), to the corporate infrastructure (the secretary-treasurer who purchases materials), to other teachers (who implement policies and directly affect students), and to students (who become empowered to act).

We attended that conference as speakers invited by the conference project co-ordinator, Bob Harrington, our former principal. We were fortunate to work with Bob and he became our mentor. Our topic, "Global Awareness as a K-12 School Theme," reflected what we had been working on with our staff at Lucerne Elementary-Secondary School. Hummel further validated our role by declaring that now, during a time of environmental crisis, generalists need to come forward and "speak up" with local solutions to problems.

Since then, we have given two more workshops and have determined that the development of a philosophy is the key to action. A personal philosophy is essential, but when one magnifies the need for an agreed-upon philosophy among a varied group of trustees or teachers who must aim toward a common goal, it is invaluable and a key to success.

The establishment of a philosophy seems to require defining the term *environmental literacy*. With each workshop, we have clustered on this term and then have worked toward reaching consensus by establishing a working definition. Our staff has adopted the following definition:

Environmental literacy is a process by which individuals at any age develop an understanding of the interdependent relationship of all living things, communicate

that understanding and knowledge, and learn to act appropriately to sustain a healthy environment. This involves accepting the responsibility to make positive personal change in order to effect local and ultimately global change.

This definition will work for us because we have addressed our own needs and have not adopted a philosophy developed by someone else. Other groups will need to do the same. Once the philosophy is set, the process can begin in an integrated approach, as demonstrated in Figure 1.

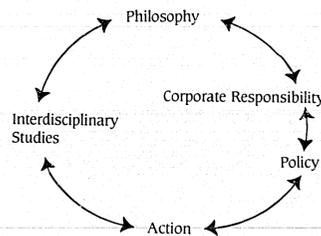


Figure 1: The path to action is an integrated process.

A critical realization for us was that school boards and schools are corporate entities. Although our district is one of the smallest in the province, it is a major employer and consumer in our area. We have a \$5.7 million budget that supports 821 students and employs 90 people in various capacities. Therefore, when we came across the Valdez Principles in the November *Audubon*, our direction became obvious.

Our board happened to be revising its environmental policy, and it invited us to a meeting. "Developing a sound environmental philosophy into policy and policy into action can happen only if we all participate in the process, and personally and corporately adopt the principle," stated Diane D'Angelo, school board chairperson, School District 10. As a result, SD 10's environmental policy will likely be a combination of the Valdez Principles and two major points from Milt McLaren, associate professor, Faculty of Education, SFU.

1. Environmental Education should be developed as a strand running through the curriculum across the years of public schooling for all students.

2. Environmental Education is an interdisciplinary field requiring that students examine human-environmental relations from the perspective of different disciplines or subject areas, such as science, social sciences, economics, politics, and fine arts.

Within any corporate structure, the employees are in the best position to sug-

gest changes. So it is with a school. Teachers are in a good position to see what is used and abused, and the *Canadian Green Consumer Guide* offers direct, Canadian solutions to everyday problems. Using this as a guide, we made up "The Very Green Policy Sheet," (Figure 2) which our staff worked through to determine a course of action it is prepared to follow. Each staff must address its own needs and concerns.

Environmental education is best addressed by an interdisciplinary approach. Rather than have a special day or a special set of materials developed for environmental concerns, we must integrate these issues into the existing curriculum. Each course and grade level has its own focus and environmental concern.

Results of the above process of implementing philosophy and developing policy will take many forms. Perhaps the most important will be changed attitudes toward everyday things. Individuals will become empowered to effect change within their own domains — be it a reduction in paper use or an effort to recycle bond paper that has been consumed and to integrate environmental education into the existing curriculum.

"Just 'cause you're saving the world, it doesn't mean you have to have a bad time," was written on the wall in a small cafe in rural China. We must learn to celebrate the small victories that these changes will bring. Big celebrations like the Nelson conference will, of course, bring about bigger changes. As our students who formed LIFE (Lucerne Individuals for the Environment) stated, "We might not have joined an environmental group if we had not attended the Nelson conference."

So, speak up, develop a philosophy, select a course of action, be positive, and celebrate the small victories.

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Henning von Krogh teaches science and computer science. Susan Crichton teaches senior English and elementary computer education and is the teacher-librarian at Lucerne Elementary-Secondary School, New Denver, B.C.

A very green policy sheet

Factors to consider	School plan	Factors to consider	School plan
Costing the earth Problems come in many forms; ozone depletion, the greenhouse effect, acid rain, deforestation, power pollution, garbage, water pollution, endangered species, animal welfare.		School grounds Produce a private ecosphere. Plant perennials to attract birds, provide color, and create a pleasant space. Daisies, cornflowers, poppies, chamomille, columbines, and asters will self-seed for a low maintenance landscape.	
Food and drink Canadian studies show that over 85% of all our exposure to poisonous chemicals comes from food. Consumers forced the ban on ALAR. There is a source for organic coffee, and Loblaw's does carry green products.		Waste The Federation of Canadian Municipalities has called for 50% reduction in packaging by 2000. One third of household garbage is packaging. Used oil, fine paper, aluminum, and glass are worth money. Pesticides, paints, batteries, rug shampoos, and photo-developing chemicals are hazardous wastes.	
Paper and materials Paper is a problem. Only one of the 40 mills in Canada can recycle newsprint. AT&T made \$190,000 on 3800 tons of recycled office paper. 16 Ontario schools recycled cans, bottles, and paper. The Ministry of Environment wants all schools to recycle by next year.		Transportation Transportation sources produce 64% of nitrogen oxides, 42% hydrocarbons, 58% carbon monoxide, 32% lead, 30% carbon dioxide, 76% benzene. Propane cuts carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon emissions by 90%, is 6 to 15% more efficient, and is easier on engines.	
Cleaners The average home uses about 45 aerosol sprays and another 24 non-aerosol cleaners yearly — what must an average school go through? Amway, Shaklee, and the Soap Factory all sell a line of environment friendly cleaning products.		Work and investment The Canadian Network for Ethical Investment in Victoria is a first growing group controlling 10% of Canadian pension funds. WHMIS supplies information to workers using dangerous materials. Affinity credit cards are available from both Bank of Montreal and Canada Trust — money to Ducks Unlimited or World Wildlife Federation.	
General school staff Most glues release solvents that increase air pollution. CFCs are a common material for carpet underlay and backing. Teekah and AFM Enterprises make non-toxic paint.		Travel and leisure 300 million people travel internationally each year. In 1988, Canadians took 105 million trips outside the country. In 1984, 17% toured the Third World. Tourism brought in over \$21 billion in 1987, more than 4% of our GNP. More than 21 million people visited our national parks in 1987.	

Figure 2: a very green policy sheet.

pate in developing the guidelines.

Subscribers to the Valdez Principles affirm that corporations and shareholders have a direct responsibility for the environment, and must conduct their business as responsible stewards of the Earth and seek profits only in ways that leave the world healthy and safe. Subscribing corporations pledge to make measurable progress in implementing these ten principles:

- **Protection of the biosphere** — minimize and eliminate emission of pollutants which cause environmental damage.
- **Sustainable use of natural resources** — insure sustainable use of land, water, and forests; conserve non-renewable resources through efficient use; protect biodiversity.
- **Reduction and disposal of waste** — recycle wherever possible; employ safe disposal methods.
- **Wise use of energy** — employ safe and sustainable energy sources; conserve and maximize energy efficiency of products.
- **Risk reduction** — minimize environmental, health, and safety risks.
- **Marketing of safe products and services** — sell products that minimize adverse environmental impacts; inform consumers of the impacts of products and services.

- **Damage compensation** — restore the environment from harm caused; provide compensation to persons adversely affected.
- **Disclosure** — disclose accidents and hazards; protect employees who report them.
- **Environmental directors and managers** — have at least one board member qualified to represent environmental interests; appoint a senior executive to be responsible for environmental affairs.
- **Assessment and annual audit** — conduct annual self evaluation to determine progress in implementing principles; create independent environmental-audit procedures.

Investors, consumers, and employees can influence corporate behavior by directing resources and energy to corporations that subscribe to the Valdez Principles. Environmental irresponsibility is bad for the planet. Many corporate leaders know that it is also bad for business. A society that applies the principles can affirm that fact.

Carmanah

THE ENTIRE VALLEY MUST BE SAVED

by Cliff Stainby

Environmentalists, loggers, and MacMillan Bloedel agree that the giant spruce trees in the Carmanah Valley must be saved. However, to save the spruce trees we must save all the trees in the valley.

Old growth ecosystems

Old-growth forests, like the Carmanah valley are a productive, diverse, integrated ecosystems. In B.C., few old growth valley-bottom ecosystems remain intact. On the west coast of Vancouver Island, for example, only two out of 81 such valleys are protected from logging (Western Canada Wilderness Committee).

Old growth forests reduce water runoff, reduce soil erosion, filter and purify water, and, through respiration, release tremendous amounts of water to the atmosphere, thus stabilizing humidity in the forest canopy.

Harvesting the forests on the sides of the valley will change growing conditions. Cutting the forest surrounding the spruce grove will create *edge effects* and *fragmentation*.

Edge effects

When the size of a forest is reduced, the amount of *forest edge* increases relative to the total area. Many species that previously lived in the forest interior are forced to move further into the forest and compete with species already there, while those that remain on the edge may experience increased competition from natural edge species. "Predation and parasitism have been shown to increase on the edge," says J.F. Franklin, chief ecologist of the U.S. Forest Service. As a result, populations of many species decline.

When some areas of a forest are harvested, the remaining forest is fragmented. Franklin says, "Fragmenting the population into small subunits increases the probability of extinction...from demographic effects, environmental effects, and long-term genetic effects." And, "In patches of between 1 and 20 square kilometres, a common size for reserves and parks in the tropics and elsewhere, 20% or more of the species disappear within 50 years...In regions where the natural habitat is highly fragmented, the rate of species loss is even greater."

Old growth forests provide diversity and stability

The lowest levels of diversity occur in the managed 80 year-rotation commercial forest.

Tim Schowalter, a forest entomologist at Oregon State University, states that "...old-growth systems are rather distinct in the complexity of their canopies and the forest floor and tend to maintain fairly stable conditions." For example, "...we found some 66 species of invertebrates (mainly insects) in the old growth, compared to only 15 in the young growth."

And, "What is not so readily recognized is that old-growth forests are also rich sources of predators that feed on problem insects. In fact, we rarely see outbreaks of insects in old-growth forests... In young-growth forests, there are fewer predators representing fewer species, so there is much more potential for pests to reach destructive populations."

Climate change threatens all our forests

The fall edition of *The Sciences* magazine points out that recent results from five major climatic models project that global temperatures will increase between four and ten degrees Fahrenheit. According to E.O. Wilson, U.S. winner of the National Medal of Science and biology professor at Harvard University, "The world biota is trapped as though in a vise. On one side, it is being swiftly reduced by deforestation. On the other, it is threatened by climatic warming brought on by the greenhouse effect." Our B.C. forests face both problems.

Normally changes in temperature of even one degree occur over thousands of years; now we are faced with changes of several degrees in a 100 years. Forest ecosystems are not mobile; they can't drive around to find suitable environments. Their existence is seriously threatened by climate change.

The depletion of ozone in the stratosphere also threatens our forests. Reduced ozone levels allows more ultra-violet radiation to reach the earth's surface, and increased ultra-violet radiation reduces photosynthesis. A reduction in photosynthesis means, among other things, reduced forest productivity.

Genetic diversity is essential for survival

Our forest ecosystems and our forest industry will survive only if enough surviving species contain the genetic material necessary to adapt to the changing environment. Thus, the more intact ecosystems, the more species, and the more individuals of each species we protect, the greater the chances our forests will survive. In Wilson's words, "Without diversity, there can be no selection (either natural or artificial) for organisms adapted to a particular habitat that then undergoes change."

Direction is clear for B.C.

B.C. forest's annual cut levels far exceed even the government's long term sustainable yield figures - figures which don't consider the potential effects of climate change and ozone depletion. Therefore, given the enormous implications of climate change and ozone depletion for B.C.'s forests, the government's timber supply analyses are worthless. The government, the professional foresters, the forest industry, and the forestry trade unions are all negligent in failing to insist on sensible harvesting levels and practices.

We must insist that the Carmanah Valley not be logged, that many key areas of old growth be preserved, and that an ecosystems approach to management that protects and enhances diversity be implemented.

Cliff Stainby is a researcher with the BCGEU and is a member of the NDP Green Caucus.

GST, FTA AND EDUCATION: IS THERE A CONNECTION?

by Harvey Weiner

Whatever your views on the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, and whether or not you believe Canadians were snookered by the deal, you would be hard pressed to avoid making the connections between the FTA and the proposed Goods and Services Tax. The connections include recent changes to the Unemployment Insurance Act and our interest-rate policy. They are all part of an economic package and strategy that significantly affect education and other social services in Canada.

The government agenda is privatization, competition, and survival of the fittest. Those who can will, and those who can't will fall by the wayside. The law of the jungle applies to both business and social services. The net is all encompassing. No one escapes. GST reform in this context is requisite for the successful implementation of the FTA. Why?

The GST and FTA are our most formidable challenges of the 21st century. Watch for your chance to vote on the GST.

Because most economists believe that free trade without federal-sales-tax reform would spell disaster for Canadian manufacturing.

Another contributing factor is Bank of Canada Governor John Crow's interest-rate policy, which is primarily designed to fight inflation. The combination puts manufacturers in double jeopardy. A Canadian dollar valued at about 85¢ U.S. hurts our productivity and competitiveness with the United States. Crow's policies, coupled with the present seriously flawed federal sales tax imposed at the manufacturer's level, discriminate against Canadian manufacturers in both domestic and export markets. Hence, most economists see the GST, even Wilson's truncated version, as a remedy for what would be an extreme disadvantage for Canadian manufacturers.

Flaws in the current system are well documented. Michael Wilson, in his June 18, 1989 discussion paper on sales-tax reform, claimed that the federal sales tax on domestically manufactured goods averaged 33% higher than the tax on imports. This situation would worsen with the removal of the tariff on imports under the FTA. Multinational firms could find it

The government agenda is privatization, competition, and survival of the fittest. Those who can will and those who can't will fall by the wayside. This law of the jungle applies to both business and social services.

more economical to shut down Canadian plants and meet Canadian market demands from plants south of the border. Canadians could also decide to move production abroad to take advantage of the

lower tax on imports. Such moves would have serious, if not disastrous, consequences for Canada. The Free Trade Agreement, therefore, locks the Mulroney government into the GST mode. The GST, in this context, becomes essential to implement the FTA. Changes in unemployment-insurance benefits and the disengagement of government from the financing of the plan, are additional elements of the package and strategy. Canadian labour must become leaner and meaner. In the U.S., employees work for a minimum of 20 weeks to qualify for unemployment insurance benefits, hence, we have part of the government rationale for amendments that increase the number of weeks required to receive Canadian unemployment insurance, and those that cut back the maximum amount of time benefits can be collected.

Government disengagement is evident in other spheres of activity. The neo-conservative view that less government is better government prevails. Federal privatization policies have resulted in the sale of 17 crown corporations since 1984. Air Canada, Teleglobe Canada, Canada Development Corporation, CN Hotels, Fishery Products International Limited,

and Canadair Limited are a few of the corporations divested to the private sector. More than 64,000 employees' jobs have been shifted to the private sector as a result of these sales. How many of these jobs remain is questionable. Canada Post is believed to be the next major government target.

It is likely that the most divisive issue in future federal/provincial economic relations will not be Meech Lake or GST. The issue will be cutbacks in federal transfer payments to the provinces. This is a crucial issue for Canadian educators.

What, you might ask, do the FTA and the GST have to do with social services programs? Why should we be concerned? Let's look at health services for a moment. Patients won't pay GST on medical services. However, hospitals, doctors, and laboratories will pay the new tax on services that they use, and they are forbidden to pass the cost on to consumers. Hospitals are now exempt from federal sales tax on services they buy, from laundry and kitchen services to administrative and consultative overhead costs. Under the GST, that would disappear. The possible consequences, according to the Canadian Medical Association, are dirty hospital linens, the closure of many private nursing homes, and businesses providing home care for the elderly. The businesses can pass the GST on to their customers, but many elderly patients on restricted incomes, unable to pay, will end up in hospital, presumably at far greater expense to the system.

Provinces will be hard pressed to make up the difference to avoid these problems and others, particularly when Bill C-33, which is to reduce the annual increase of financial support to provinces for health care, is scheduled to become law in 1990.

Can education escape this pattern? The government's proposed treatment of educational services exempts most from the

GST. This includes courses provided by either public or private non-profit elementary and secondary schools following the approved curriculum of their province, as well as all instruction for diploma or degree courses provided by publicly-funded colleges and universities.

What, then, do the FTA and the GST have to do with education? Why should teachers be concerned?

The evidence warranting concern is mounting. Many costs built into the GST system will sap already limited and often inadequate education resources. Moves to privatize some education services are also being discussed seriously in many quarters. These discussions have been transformed into action in some provinces. Post-secondary education programs in Saskatchewan and technical vocational programs in Quebec are two areas in which the trend to privatization is evident.

Furthermore, U.S. wages, working conditions, and benefits are generally inferior to those in Canada. U.S.-Canada comparisons are inevitable on these items, and such comparisons will apply to teachers as well. Privatization and cost efficiency will undoubtedly become major employer themes in future contract negotiations.

The most divisive issue in future federal/provincial economic relations likely will not be Meech Lake or the GST but cutbacks in federal transfer payments to the provinces. This is a crucial issue for Canadian educators. Transfer payments are required to maintain and improve the quality of education and other social services in most Canadian provinces. They are essential to providing equality of educational opportunity to every student. This year alone, Ottawa will pay out \$24 billion in federal tax revenue to provincial governments at the same time as it struggles to keep its own deficit under control. If payments are cut, provinces will be required to increase taxes to maintain and improve programs. Those unwilling to do so will have to reduce services.

The GST and the FTA are a complementary package. They go together like the horse and carriage. The absence of fairness, the impact on social services, including education, concern us as Canadians and, more specifically, as teachers. It is up to CTF and member organizations to exercise vigilance and leadership to ensure that good public school education does not go the way of the dinosaur. That is our most formidable challenge for the 21st century.

Harvey Weiner is the deputy secretary general of the Canadian Teachers' Federation. This article is based on a speech he gave to the Pro Canada Network Conference in October.

The dangers of a tax revolt

by Marjorie Cohen

With the prospect of the new goods and services tax we hear murmuring of a tax revolt.

The criticism of the tax receiving the most attention is that more taxes are not the solution to the government's debt problem. Rather, government should be cutting spending. We are going to hear a great deal more of this, and I fear it will gain public sympathy as people feel more and more burdened by heavy taxes.

Tax revolts can take different forms. The salt tax in India initiated the whole ousting of the British government. Taxation without representation in the American colonies inspired a revolution. Even the minor gasoline tax Joe Clark tried to impose was enough to bring down his government. We've recently seen women in Japan mobilize against the 3% sales tax.

But tax revolts can work another way. If government and business can convince people that the source of the problem is excessive government spending, there will be support for getting government out of programs it should be maintaining.

The natural target in a tax revolt will be social programs, which now account for over 45% of total government spending. I can imagine the ads the government would run on TV showing what portion of the Loonie goes toward maintaining expensive programs they will say most people don't really need.

The proposed goods and services tax is a highly regressive tax, and it certainly should be opposed. But the focus of opposition should be its unfairness — not government spending. Government spending is not out of control, as many would have us believe. The difference between government income and expenditures, not counting the cost of borrowing money, has produced a surplus since 1986. This year the government will take in \$12 billion more than it will spend on all of its programs and administration. The government's debt problems are not a result of overspending, but are a result of the huge amount of interest it must pay on the existing debt. Since it is the government that is keeping interest rates high, it is the government that is responsible for the growing debt problem.

The opposition to the Goods and Services Tax must focus on how government is raising money. The reductions in personal income taxes and corporate taxes and the shift to raising revenues through taxes on consumption hurt lower- and middle-income groups most. If a tax revolt focuses on government spending on social programs, the lower and middle-income groups will feel the effects of cutbacks in government spending.

Marjorie Cohen is a professor, Women's Studies, SFU.

Source: *Social Policy Issues Bulletin*, October 1989.

Canadian Teachers' Federation

CIDA cuts

CTF has protested the decision of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to reduce its 1989-90 commitment to the CTF International Development Assistance Program by \$318,000. President Kitty O'Callaghan said the cuts were "especially difficult to accommodate because many of the programs for the fiscal year were already implemented, or past the point of revision" when the reduction notice was received.

Canadian Office of Education

Following comments in the media by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney regarding Canadian educational standards and the need to generate excellence in education from coast to coast, O'Callaghan wrote to the prime minister, stating "While not necessarily sharing your views or conclusions on the issues identified, I would like to congratulate you for speaking out on the importance of education and the need for a national perspective on educational issues." She outlined the CTF policy, which favors the creation of a Canadian Office of Education.

Education for human rights

CTF represented Canadian teachers at an international seminar on Human Rights in Finland, a UNESCO planning meeting for the *Education for All* literacy conference scheduled to take place in Bangkok in March 1990, a meeting convened by the Department of the Secretary of State to study immersion programs for the '90s, a federal subcommittee studying awareness and understanding of the Canada Pension Plan, and the annual convention of the Canadian Education Association.

Copyright

CTF continues to pressure the federal government to table its long-awaited copyright legislation. Phase 2 legislation is expected to provide exemptions for teachers and others from strict adherence to copyright compliance, and CTF has been told its representatives will be consulted before the legislation is tabled in the House.

Canadian Council on Children and Youth

CTF continues to participate in a network of volunteers from non-governmental and professional organizations that follows government initiatives to combat child sexual abuse.

Literacy project

CTF's study of teachers and literacy is proceeding on schedule with initial interviews having been completed in October. Preliminary results of the study will be available for the CTF literacy conference in May 1990.

HEY MIKE!

YOU CAN TAKE YOUR 1% GST AND...

PLEASE FILL IN THE BLANK CREATIVELY AND SEND TO:

THE HONORABLE MICHAEL WILSON, HOUSE OF COMMONS,
ROOM 515-S, OTTAWA, ONTARIO K1A 0A6
(NO POSTAGE NECESSARY.)

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W.F.

CALM / ACPs



College of teachers

COUNCIL ELECTION RESULTS

Of the 18,804 eligible voters in six zones, 7822 cast ballots in the recent college council election.

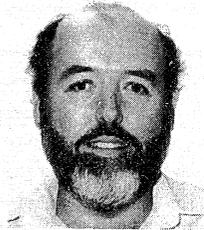
Four incumbents were re-elected to a two-year term: Wes Nickel (Okanagan), Jim Killeen (Vancouver), Debbie Gregg (Metro), and Colin Scott (North Central). Newly elected to the council are Wayne Wiens (South Coast) and Rod Sherrell (North Island).

Eight incumbents and one new councillor were acclaimed. Al Chapman (East Kootenay) joins returning members Bob Jackson (West Kootenay), Sheila Park (Central Mainland), Harvey Harrison (North), Greig Houlden (North Coast), Mike Campbell (Fraser Valley), Margaret Dixon (Delta/Richmond), Peter Ellis (Surrey), and Bill Broadley (South Island).

New councillors



Al Chapman
East Kootenay



Rod Sherrell
North Island



Wayne Wiens
South Coast

Schools without walls

A SHIFT TO COLLABORATION

by Kit Krieger

What does it mean to be a teacher in 1990? In 2010? In 2020? This question has preoccupied the work of the BCTF Task Force on Teaching Conditions and Professional Practice. In task-force discussions, the most consistent image of contemporary teaching that appears is that of the isolated worker. At all stages in their careers, teachers work in virtual isolation from colleagues. The isolation is both physical and psychological. The typical teacher works in cellular classrooms, often behind closed doors with a group of students referred to as "my" class. Uncertain of professional norms and able only to speculate on the practices of colleagues, teachers are reluctant to share their experiences, particularly their feelings of inadequacy, with others.

Professional days afford an occasional opportunity for teachers to work together. The collaborative nature of such days is often the source of great anxiety for teachers. Our daily experience at work does not prepare us to work co-operatively with our peers.

This individualistic and isolationist tradition may be about to change. The reform movement in the United States, known as restructuring, places great emphasis on promoting collaborative culture in schools. Some preparation time is set aside for teachers to plan collaboratively, and to reflect collectively on curriculum, assessment, school policy, and individual students.

The trend toward collaborative practice is based on the realization that teaching is an immensely complex and difficult task. Teachers use co-operative learning strategies because they understand that higher order thinking skills are developed through the interplay of competing ideas and perspectives when members of a group instruct each other. Teachers, like students, benefit from the support of colleagues. According to Stanford's Lee Schulman, "The act of teaching itself demands so much attention and energy that it is difficult for any teacher, especially when under some pressure, to monitor his/her own performance with great accuracy. Distortions of perception can and will occur, especially in the direction of consistency with prior expectations." Schulman proposes mentor teacher

programs, watching video and audio tapes, research, writing, and other opportunities for systematic exchanges of ideas.

Supportive conditions needed

The transition to a collaborative culture in schools is not easily achieved. The tradition of "going it alone" is strong, rooted in long practice and a strong professional ethic that sees each teacher assume personal responsibility for the students assigned to his/her care.

The typical teacher works in cellular classrooms, often behind closed doors with a group of students referred to as "my" class... This may be about to change.

A move toward collaborative practice must be accompanied by changes in the organization of school life for teachers. Time and opportunities for teachers to observe colleagues in the classroom must be expanded and made routine. Teachers must be relieved of the pressures to cover curriculum so that instruction emphasizes active and co-operative learning and critical thinking rather than mastery of course content. Above all, a climate of trust must be established to enable teachers to share successes and questions with supportive colleagues.

A recent study on the impact of increased preparation time for elementary teachers in Ontario (Hargreaves and Wignall, 1989) included a study of both traditional and collaborative schools. Increased preparation time did not mean increased collaboration. Teachers used extra time as they had used smaller amounts of prep time in the past; that is, to work alone on clerical and preparatory tasks.

More interesting, in the Hargreaves-Wignall study were the attitudes of teachers when asked if they wanted still more prep time. Teachers in the traditional schools expressed a desire for more prep time. Those in the collaborative schools were divided on the question. Apparently, if more prep time means more time spent working with other teachers, then maybe more time isn't necessary.

The Year 2000 curriculum framework proposes changes that will accelerate the development of collaborative cultures in B.C. schools. Grouping for continuous progress, integration, authentic assessment, and work-experience partnerships require that teachers work with colleagues. Teacher inexperience and resistance to professional collaboration could derail needed reform.

Collaborative practice is co-operative learning for teachers. I have absolutely no doubts about its value. I recently conducted a workshop on racism in textbooks for the BCTF's Program Against Racism. One activity had teachers work together in small groups to assess how narrative structures in social studies texts define ethnic relations. Each teacher in the group had something of value to impart to other members of the group. A teacher working alone could not replicate the variety and richness of this learning experience.

The successful introduction of collaborative practice in schools should be based on solid implementation principles. Value, conceptual, and procedural clarity on the nature and rationale for change are essential before proceeding. In-service education will be required to enable teachers to develop collaborative skills.

Above all, schools must recognize the value of collaboration. Blocks of planning and preparation time must be long enough to allow for meaningful work. Clerical, supervisory, and extra-curricular tasks will have to be done by others. When a teacher's day is made up of periods of instruction, professional collaboration, research, and reflection, teaching will take its rightful place alongside other professions.

Kit Krieger is the co-ordinator of the BCTF's staff rep training program.

Women's rights: still an issue

Among the most controversial, and subsequently the most extensively debated policies in our organization, are the following:

42.05: That the BCTF support the right of females regardless of age, marital status, income or geographical location to: (a) have access to a full range of information, counselling and medical services with respect to their health and well-being; (b) decide whether or when to have children.

(81 AGM, p. 17)

42.09: That the CTF should seek to have abortion removed from the Criminal Code of Canada.

(81 AGM, p. 33)

In fact, a major case for religious exemption from the BCTF has emerged with these policies as a focal point. The federation is appealing an IRC decision that granted membership exemption to two teachers who claimed these policies caused them spiritual turmoil.

Although these policies were first adopted almost 10 years ago, (and reaffirmed as recently as the 1989 AGM), little has been done by the BCTF since then to act on them. More recently, following the Supreme Court decision of January 1988 which removed abortion from the Criminal Code, some members have suggested that the need for these policies no longer exists.

However, developments such as the Chantal Daigle case last summer, and the government's introduction of legislation which recriminalizes abortion have caused the Executive Committee to undertake several actions in support of these policies. Specifically, we have:

(a) Attempted to work through the Canadian Teachers' Federation to persuade that body to oppose the recriminalization of abortion.
(b) Written to all B.C. MPs informing them of our policies.
(c) Urged local associations to conduct a lobby of their MPs on the issue.

— Ken Novakowski

The union horoscope

Aries (March 21-April 19):

Your leadership skills improve greatly. This would be a good time to run for the local union executive. You are on a roll and have great charisma, but keep an eye on your adversaries. New relationships will form.

Taurus (April 20-May 20):

Do whatever is necessary to protect your job. Management is going to use the Free Trade Deal to privatize your department. Invest wisely; buy into long-term health insurance.

Gemini (May 21-June 20):

Not a good time for creativity. If you wish to achieve results, stick with simple factual and technical problems. Management may be able to confuse you now. Seek Libras for help.

Cancer (June 21-July 22):

You know what you've done. Better find a good union rep, and legal counsel. Your future is on the line. It would be a good time to seek community support.

Leo (July 23-August 22):

You may actually get some backing and respect from your employer. Diversify your union interests. Volunteer for the union newsletter.

Virgo (August 23-September 22):

Your retroactive paycheque will soon arrive; watch finances carefully. Secret information is slid under your office door that you can copy and use for the union's good.

Libra (September 23-October 22):

A high time for intellectual activity. Your leadership abilities will come to the forefront, and you will be able to sort through management's propaganda. You may have to help fellow employees, especially Gemini's.

Scorpio (October 23-November 21):

Don't sign anything without professional advice. Read all job ads now. Be prepared for a move to the north. This is a time to coast and recoup.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21):

Keep an eye on your rights. Your employer may try to dictate new terms for you. Don't be manipulated. Read your union contract.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19):

An arbitration award should come down in your favor, but don't save the decision too much. Management will be slow to comply, and income tax will take most of the financial gains.

Aquarius (January 20-February 18):

Not a good time to become romantically involved with a co worker. It could be disruptive at work and cause a health and safety problem. Your clear-mindedness will assist with pay-equity issues.

Pisces (February 19-March 20):

Channel energies toward improving conditions at work. A health-and-safety issue could be in the forefront, but fellow workers will support you. Management will continue to irritate you.

Source: *OPSEU Communicator*, Ken Aicken
OPSEU Communications Course/CALM.

Income Security



Bill C-21 will cost teachers \$21 million in regular UI benefits

by Ken Smith

In a brief to the legislative committee on Bill C-21 (Unemployment Insurance Amendment Act), the Canadian Teachers' Federation indicated its opposition to some of the major features of the bill. These include the requirement that claimants work longer to qualify for smaller benefits over shorter periods, the withdrawal of the federal government as a financial partner in the UI fund, and the increased use of the fund for developmental purposes from which teachers as public sector professional employees are virtually excluded. At the same time, CTF expressed general approval for the new multi-tiered system of parental-leave benefits, the elimination of unfair restriction of benefits during labour disputes, and the extension of UI benefits for workers over 65 years of age. These latter changes will correct provisions in the current UI Act that violate the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The proposed legislation tabled in the spring increases the number of weeks of insurable earnings required to qualify for regular UI benefits. For maternity, adoption, and sickness benefits, the required number of weeks remains at 20.

The number of weeks of regular benefits will depend on the number of preceding weeks of work (weeks of insurable earnings) and the regional rate of unemployment. Currently, with 8% unemployment, a worker needs 12 weeks of insurable earnings to qualify for up to 43 weeks of benefits. Under the proposed rules, a worker will need 18 weeks of insurable earnings to qualify for up to 21 weeks of unemployment benefits.

While regular unemployment eligibility requirements go up and benefits decline, the proposed provisions for maternity, adoption, and sickness benefits are improved. Under current rules women may be eligible for up to 15 weeks for maternity, either parent may be eligible for up to 15 weeks for adoption, and worker may be eligible for up to 15 weeks for illness (if not covered by some other wage-loss-replacement plan). Currently these benefits may be combined to a maximum of 25 weeks. The proposed rules leave the maternity and sickness limits unchanged but alter the adoption rules (to be called parental benefits) to include caring for a newborn child (but with a

reduced limit of 10 weeks). This means that a woman could receive 15 weeks' maternity benefit and 10 weeks' parental, and since the combination limit will rise to 30 weeks, may claim up to five weeks' sickness benefit.

According to a recent study conducted by Global Economics Limited, *An Analysis of the Distributional Impact of the Proposed Unemployment Insurance Changes*, the total number of UI recipients will decline by about 155,000 in 1990, and the total decline in regular benefits will be \$1.5 billion, for a net after-tax loss of \$1.1 billion, somewhat higher than the federal government's estimate. Net losers will outnumber net gainers — those who benefit from the withdrawal of the repeater clause — by almost five to one. The average net loser's net loss will be \$1,486 in 1990 and, with the offsetting average gainer's net gain of \$414, the average net change in benefits will be a loss of \$487. The largest average net reductions in regular benefits will occur in provinces with the highest unemployment rates.

Of the 11 major occupations surveyed in the Global study, roughly 50,000 teacher recipients (at all levels of education) are expected to lose \$30 million in regular UI benefits in 1990 alone for a net loss (after taxes) of \$21 million. The estimated average net loss in UI benefits to the 16,700 teacher benefit recipients who will lose benefits (33% of all teacher benefit recipients) will be \$1,302, whereas the average net gain to the 3,600 teacher recipients who will gain as a result of elimination of the so-called repeater clause will be only \$192 for an average net loss in benefits for all 50,000 teacher UI recipients of \$419. Teachers are expected to have the second lowest average net decline in regular UI benefits because of the relatively low levels of unemployment among teachers.

The savings resulting from the tougher benefit rules are to be directed toward a number of training and retraining programs. Employers and employees will be funding the benefits programs and government contributions (some \$1.8 billion) will be directed toward training programs.

Ken Smith is the BCTF pensions co-ordinator.

Your pension statement: is it accurate?

All teachers should have received a pension statement from the Superannuation Commission in the fall of 1989.

Check the contribution and pensionable service amounts to ensure that they agree with your own records. It is your responsibility to ensure that these records are correct and to take appropriate action to correct any inaccuracies.

If you believe a discrepancy exists, correspond directly with the commission. If you encounter difficulties, then contact the BCTF.

Many people confuse the refund interest rate of 6% with the interest earnings of the fund. They are not the same. In the 12 months ending September 30, 1989, your pension fund earned 11.1% on market value, or 10.3% on book value. The refund interest rate is used in calculating the amount of money you would receive if you left the plan and took a refund of your contributions.

In a defined-benefit pension plan, such as the teacher pension plan, the amount of your contributions does not determine your pension. The factors used in calcu-

lating your pension are pensionable service, average full-time salary in the last five years of work, and your age at the time of retirement.

The statement of accrued pensionable service is a record of days worked for which contributions were made. Pensionable service is used to calculate your pension.

To be eligible for a pension under the age of 60, you need 100 contributory months of service; for a non-reduced pension between the ages of 55 and 60, you need 350 contributory months of service. Each month in which you make a pension contribution, no matter how little it is, counts as a contributory month. For example, a teacher who works half time all year would accrue ten contributory months of service and five pensionable months of service. Your contributory service is not listed on the pension statement.

BCTF Assistance Society vacancies

Ten BCTF members are needed to serve two-year terms as special members of the BCTF Assistance Society. Such members attend the annual general meeting and special general meetings of the society. At least four directors are elected from society special members. Applicants must be from the Lower Mainland.

Submit curriculum vitae forms to Berniece Stuart by February 2; appointments are scheduled for the February 9-10 Executive Committee meeting.

Pension reinstatement

As matters stand, all that can be done at present is being done by the Pensions Division of the BCTF. Here is an excerpt from the latest presentation to the powers that be.

6. That teachers be permitted to reinstate multiple refunds.

Comments:

6.1 Currently only one refunded service may be reinstated.

6.2 This would allow full recognition of all previous service and reduce the possible reliance on other social service programs such as GIS, and welfare.

6.3 With reduced vesting and lock-in, refunds and reinstatement will become a declining problem.

7. That the return to service requirement for reinstatement purposes be 5 years.

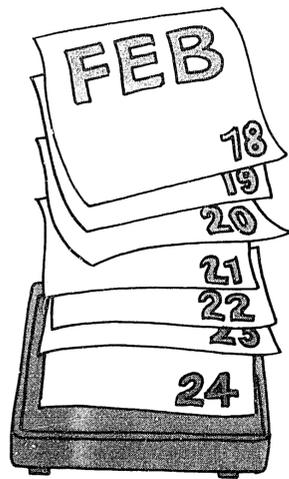
Comments:

7.1 The return requirement should be the same as the vesting requirement.

7.2 The return requirement for most other Canadian teachers is one year or less.

In the meantime I shall continue to work on my registry.

Tony Stander
Chilliwack



International Women's Day: March 8

"Feminist mythology": a wordsearch

Atwood
agenda
axis
action
affirmative
Abella
androgyny
autonomy
Alimuper
Alberta Five (2)
bread
Bagshaw
battery
Brooks
choice
cycle
Chile
coed
consensus
dreams
dare
dual roles (2)
Emily
empower
Finnbogadottir
film
feminism
gender
global
Goddess
Isis
herstory
invisible
image
Judith

Kain
literacy
Moraga
Murphy
misogyny
Mahuea
movement
mythography
network
NAC
person
roses
rights
sex bias (2)
sisterhood
socialize
status
solidarity
sorority
strength
Soweto
Seville
tunnel
trolita
vision
voice
woman
Ua Zit
Wolfe
wife
yin
yoga
Zeitgeist
Zanthippe
Zamani

K J U A S W E A T S H O P E R S O N S O Q R Y B
M O A Z A O I G I Y F E M I N I S M L X N A C R
I H Z G D M H E K S W J U P I T H E Y S L N A O
S N I N T E R N A T I O N A L F N R U A E D R O
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U E M M O V E M E N T F Z L G E N D E R O X G C
R C O N S E N S U S A Q R E T P X J O Y L N B E
P I S O L I D A R I T Y O R H C E T G L O B A L
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W F Z S R A C E I F I N N O G A T D O T T I R
E N E S L W E A R Y B J N M Y T H O G R A P H Y
R B D M O R A G A U T O N O M Y R C D R E A M S

International Women's Day began March 8, 1908, when women garment workers in New York marched in the street to demand an end to sweatshop working conditions. The terms and names used in the word search were chosen to reflect the global nature of women's struggles for equality and dignity.

Why women's studies? I'm glad you asked

by Monique Pongracic

Many people, females and males, teachers and students, inquire about my zeal as a student to implement women's studies in secondary schools: "Why are you so worried about women's studies? Women's problems were solved 10 years ago." This statement is common, but false. This is *not* the post-feminist era. Feminism strives to achieve equality and to better conditions for women in society; only when its goals are achieved can it be considered dead.

In secondary schools, equality has yet to be achieved. Evidence shows that young women receive less attention in the classroom than do young men; their texts are often gender-biased; their programs are underfunded compared with the more traditional male-oriented programs; and the general atmosphere in which they study and work oppresses them.

Casual observers are able to perceive

the biases that persist in B.C. secondary school classrooms. Male students often receive two thirds of a teacher's attention, both positive and negative. The most generous teacher usually finds that when he/she gives 40% of classroom time to females, male students are being ignored. Men feel this also and complain vehemently. Men usually lead discussions. Females rarely speak on their own initiative, and when they do, it is usually to speak to confirm a statement made by someone else. They interrupt discussions far less frequently than do males, hence lowering the level of their general participation.

Some progress has been made in classroom materials. Most language bias in texts has been eliminated according to Ministry of Education standards, yet sexism lingers in more subtle ways. History texts, for example, cover events that men have traditionally been a part of, but rarely detail traditional women's work. Furthermore, the persons generally responsible for approving course material and granting monies are men. If I count how many times I have heard administrators say there is money for new sports equipment (almost always benefiting men's sports), but there is none for women's studies, I would win a mathematics prize.

These factors serve to create an atmosphere within schools hostile to females. Concern for the women working and studying in such environments was the basis for a conference at SFU Harbour Centre, November 3, 4, and 5, 1989, called "Transforming Tomorrow: Women's Studies in Secondary Schools." The issues affecting females in the school system were discussed.

The most important of these issues was

actually, perhaps ironically, the simplest. Why should women's studies occur at the secondary instead of post-secondary level? Several young women currently attending secondary school spoke about their experiences. Only one word is needed to summarize these — alienation. They speak of a constant, sometimes blatant, sometimes subtle, alienation from their environments. It results from a lack of respect for females — our space and our identity. Their testimony also confirmed, for me, the need for women's studies as a cross-disciplinary field. Women's experiences cannot be contained hermetically within one class (although such a class can be a haven from the rest of education's inequalities); women's experiences are vast and should be viewed in context (e.g., historical events in a historical context). Of course, the ramifications of women's experiences are not limited to females.

Women's studies in secondary schools is an important basis for understanding ourselves. Certainly if we cannot understand who we are, we will never fully comprehend how our lives are affected by other factors, including studious activity. Remember also that many will not go on to post-secondary institutions where women's studies courses are generally offered. It is time to provide for young women in secondary education — to give them an understanding of where they come from, and where they can go.

That is the new bottom line.

Monique Pongracic is a secondary school student in Surrey and a feminist researcher active in both the feminist and global-education movements.

PD Calendar

FEBRUARY

February 8-10
The Middle Years, a conference for those working with students from 10 to 15 years of age, Hillside Middle School, West Vancouver. Howard Johnston and Al Arth are featured speakers. \$225. Contact Iris McIwain, c/o Hillside Middle School, 2295 Queens Avenue, West Vancouver, BC V7V 2Y5, 926-7534.

February 12-16
Basic Control Theory training, Victoria (includes Dr. William Glasser for February 16). Contact Marjorie Urquhart, 749-6636.

February 15
B.C. Primary Teachers' Association Share-In, Dawson Creek.

February 16
"Managing for Quality," Dr. William Glasser, Ramada Inn, Victoria. Contact Wendy Gedney, 477-1213.

February 16-17
"In the Mind's Eye," B.C. Art Teachers' Association annual conference, Burnaby Central Secondary School. Contact John White, c/o 5325 Kincaid Street, Burnaby, BC V5G 1W2, 299-0611.

February 16-17
Association of Canadian Teachers of the Hearing Impaired annual conference, Victoria Conference Centre. Contact Suzanne Bancroft, c/o Uplands School, 3461 Henderson Road, Victoria, BC V8P 5A8.

February 16-17
B.C. Music Educators' Association annual conference, Encore '90, Hotel Vancouver. Contact Bob Rankin, c/o North Vancouver SD, 721 Chesterfield, North Vancouver, BC V7M 2M5, 987-8141.

February 17
"Taking Effective Control of Your Life": understanding human behavior, Dr. William Glasser and Dr. John Banman, UBC. Contact David Burke, 538-3421.

February 17-21
Basic Control Theory Training, Dr. William Glasser, UBC. Contact Shelley Brierley, 536-4200.

February 22-23
Learning Assistance Teachers' Association AGM, Hotel Vancouver. "Co-operative Learning," by David Johnson. Contact Jennifer Blenkinsop, 2906 Argo Place, Burnaby, BC V3J 7G3, H: 421-4055, S: 939-9247.

February 23-24
Teachers of Home Economics Specialist Association conference, "What's Next? Home Economics in the '90s," Sheraton Landmark Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Wendy Roome, 4410 West 13th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6R 2V3, H: 224-1956.

February 23-25
Hospital/Homebound Provincial Specialist Association networking, Best Western, Port Coquitlam. \$90. Contact John Bell, 3530 Inverness Street, Port Coquitlam, BC V3B 5A3, H: 942-8691, S: 939-9201.

MARCH

March 1-3
Special Education Association conference, Victoria Conference Centre, Victoria. Contact Dennis Brammer, 40 King George Terrace, Victoria, BC V8S 2J9, H: 592-0425, S: 385-5774.

March 9
Physical Education Drive-in Workshop, 17:00-23:00, George P. Vanier Senior Secondary School, Courtenay. Keynote speaker: Chris Johnson. Contact Mike McComb, c/o Courtenay School Board Office, 607 Cumberland Road, Courtenay, BC V9N 7G5, 338-5583.

March 9
"Learning Together," West Kootenay Regional Conference, Nelson. Contact Patricia Dooley, 352-6669.

March 9-10
Fourth Annual Pacific Conference on Technology in Education and Rehabilitation, G.F. Strong Centre, Vancouver. Contact Sally Jones, c/o Kinsmen Rehabilitation Foundation, 2256 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6K 2N5, 736-8841.

March 15-17 CALGARY
Vistas: Windows for Change; Connection, Integration, Transition; ATACC '90, 8th Annual Conference of the Alberta Teachers' Association Computer Council, Palliser Hotel, Calgary. Contact Alan Howard, Haysboro School, 1123 87th Avenue S.W., Calgary, AB T2V 0W2, H: (403) 240-4334, S: (403) 259-5000.

March 15-17
TEAL '90: Building Bridges, 23rd annual conference of the Association of British Columbia Teachers of English as an Additional Language, Sheraton Landmark Hotel, Vancouver. Contact TEAL '90, Box 82344, Burnaby, BC V5C 5P8, 294-8325.

March 30

"Learning by Doing," a seminar for B.C. teachers on publishing in schools, SFU Harbour Centre. Teachers, designers, and publishers will present workshops and exchange experiences and ideas. Contact Eleanor O'Donnell, Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing, Simon Fraser University at Harbour Centre, 515 West H. Ave., Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 5K3, 291-5096 or 291-5100.

March 30-April 1
BCAMT Math Enrichment Camp, North Vancouver Outdoor School, Brackendale. Contact Ivan Johnson, c/o Schou Education Centre, 4041 Canada Way, Burnaby, BC V5G 1G6, 437-4511.

APRIL

April 1-4
Focus '90, Integration: A Shared Responsibility, the B.C. conference emphasizing a co-operative approach to integrating disabled children into regular school settings, Victoria Conference Centre, Victoria. Contact Barbara Smith, c/o Victor School, 2260 Victor Street, Victoria, BC V8R 4C5, 595-7511.

April 5-7 BILLINGS
National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Northwest Regional Conference, Holiday Inn Plaza, Billings, Montana. Contact Dick Adler, conference chair, English Department, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812, (406) 243-5231.

April 6
Provincial Intermediate Teachers' Association regional conference, Fraser Lake, Keynote: Dr. Roger Taylor. Contact Janice Tapp, Box 185, Fraser Lake, BC V0J 1S0.

April 6-7
Vancouver/Lower Mainland Regional Science Fair, Richmond Secondary School, 7171 Minoru Blvd., Richmond. Contact Science World, 1455 Quebec Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 5E7, 687-8414, fax: 682-2923.

April 6-8
"Environmental Education for the Year 2000" conference and workshops, North Vancouver Outdoor School. Contact Roger Hammill, Box 149, Errington, BC V0R 1V0, 248-5347.

April 18-21 SALT LAKE CITY
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Annual meeting, Salt Lake City, Utah. Contact Ian deGroot, c/o Sutherland Secondary School, 1860 Sutherland Avenue, North Vancouver, BC V7L 4C2, H: 980-6877, S: 985-5301.

April 20-21 TORONTO
York Region Primary Association Primarily Learning Conference, "Catch the Rainbow," Constellation Hotel, Toronto. Featured speakers: W.O. Mitchell, Steven Kellogg, \$190. Contact Linda Berg (416) 471-5775, or B. McNaughtan, Parkview Public School, 22 Fonhill Boulevard, Unionville, ON L3R 1V6.

April 25-27
B.C. School Counsellors' Association Conference '90, Capri Hotel, Kelowna. Contact Ron Ford, registrar, 715 Rutland Road, Kelowna, BC V1X 3B6, 765-2988.

April 26-28
B.C. Teacher-Librarians' Association conference and AGM, Island Hall, Parksville. Contact Marta Williamson, 2950 7th Avenue, Port Alberni, BC V9Y 2J4, H: 723-2520, S: 723-6251.

April 27-28
Catalyst '90 Conference, "Science in the Year 2000," sponsored by B.C. Science Teachers' Association and Faculty of Science, Simon Fraser University, at SFU. Some of the many topics are women in science, global ecology, space and earth science, elementary science, and technology and computers. Contact Lon Mandrake, 8526 117B Street, Delta, BC V4C 6G2, H: 591-5839, S: 591-6166.

April 28
Association Provinciale des Professeurs de l'Immersion et du Programme Cadre conference, (Lower Mainland location TBA). Contact Mario Cyr, c/o W.E. Kinivg Elementary School, 13266 70B Avenue, Surrey, BC V3W 8N1, H: 531-8885, S: 594-1135.

April 29-May 2
Nexus '90 — Education and the Law: A Plea for Partnership, a conference sponsored by EduServ and the Canadian Association for the Practical Study of Law in Education (CAPSLE), Vancouver. Contact CAPSLE, 1155 West 8th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6H 1C5, 736-1273, FAX 732-4559.

MAY

May 3-5
B.C. Business Education Association spring conference, "1990 and Beyond," Sheraton Landmark Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Royce Shook, c/o Queen Elizabeth Senior Secondary School, 9457 136th Street, Surrey, BC V3V 5W4, H: 467-3051, S: 588-1258.

May 5-6
Environmental Educators' Provincial Specialist Association Interior conference, Project WILD, McQueen Lake Environmental Centre, Kamloops. Contact Ernie Cordonier, 2510 Skeena Drive, Kamloops, BC V2E 1V5, H: 828-9495, S: 376-6224.

May 5-6

B.C. Teachers for Peace Education retreat, Gabriola Island. Contact Beverly Davis, 515 Obed Avenue, Victoria, BC V9A 1K6.

May 25-27
14th Annual B.C. Conference on the Teaching of Physical Education, University of Victoria. \$85; \$75 for PEPSA members.

JUNE

June 14-17 OTTAWA
Canadian Library Association conference, Contact Jane Cooney, CLA, 602-200 Elgin Street, Ottawa, ON V2P 1L5, (613) 232-9625, FAX (613) 563-9895, Envoy 100 CLAHQ.

JULY

July 1-4 CALGARY
Canadian Home Economics Association convention and annual general meeting, Calgary.

SEPTEMBER

September 22
"Fall Fiesta," B.C. Orff Chapter, Seaforth Elementary School, Burnaby. Contact Deborah Kerr, c/o Seaforth Elementary School, 7881 Government Street, Burnaby, BC V5A 2C9, H: 421-2240, S: 420-1214.

September 27-28
B.C. Rural Teachers' Association annual conference, Fort St. John. Contact Brian Fox, Box 6865, Fort St. John, BC V1J 4Y3, H: 785-9479.

September 27-29 SASKATOON
1990 Western Canadian Early Childhood Conference, "Building Bridges to the 21st Century," Saskatoon. Contact Lorraine Street, 1990 conference, Box 1563, Saskatoon, SK S7K 3R3.

September 29
LOMCIRA (Lower Mainland Council of the International Reading Association) fall conference, Hyatt Regency, Vancouver. Contact Shirley Choo, c/o Montroyal Elementary School, 5310 Sonora Drive, North Vancouver, BC V7R 3V8, H: 420-7967, S: 988-6377, or Merydth Kezar, 266-5581.

OCTOBER

October 11-13 PORTLAND
29th Northwest Mathematics Conference, Portland, Oregon. Contact Ian deGroot, c/o Sutherland Secondary School, 1860 Sutherland Avenue, North Vancouver, BC V7L 4C2, H: 980-6877, S: 985-5301.

October 19
Learning Assistance Teachers' Association regional conferences: Vancouver Island, Port Alberni. Contact Erica Schubart, c/o Redford Elementary School, 4841 Redford Street, Port Alberni, BC V9Y 3P3, H: 723-8282, S: 723-7212.

North, Dawson Creek. Contact Lesley Lahaye, 244 B Road, RR 1, Fort St. John, BC V1J 4M6, H: 785-1442, O: 785-6785.

Central, Kelowna. Contact Marie Giesbrecht, c/o Dorothea Walker Elementary School, 4346 Gordon Drive, Kelowna, BC V1W 1S5, H: 763-8750, S: 764-8181.

October 19
Math conference (for elementary and secondary school teachers), North Vancouver. Contact Ken Mayson, c/o Leo Marshall Curriculum Centre, 987-6667.

October 19
Third Annual Quality Daily Physical Education Conference, Douglas College, New Westminster. Contact Chris Johnson at the college.

October 19
Lower Mainland School Counsellors' conference.

October 19
B.C. Social Studies Teachers' Association conference, Coquitlam. Contact Bruce Kiloh, c/o Terry Fox Senior Secondary School, 3550 Wellington Street, Port Coquitlam, BC V3B 3Y5.

October 19-20
B.C. Primary Teachers' Association conference, Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre.

October 19-20
B.C. Business Education Association fall regional conferences.

NOVEMBER

November 4-5
Computer Using Educators of B.C. conference, Horizon '90, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Sharon Koshman, c/o Jarvis Elementary School, 7670 118th Street, Delta, BC V4C 0G8, H: 266-9916, S: 594-3481.

November 8-10
Congres de l'ACEPI '90, Hotel Vancouver and Hotel Meridien. Contact Lionel Dancauli, Winslow Centre, 1100B Winslow Avenue, Coquitlam, BC V3J 2G3.

1991

APRIL

April 28-May 1
Focus '91, "Integration: A Shared Responsibility," a conference emphasizing a co-operative approach toward the integration of children with disabilities into regular school settings, sponsored by Greater Victoria School District and the Ministry of Education, Special Programs Branch, Victoria Conference Centre. Contact Barbara Smith, c/o Victor School, 2260 Victor Street, Victoria, BC V8R 4C5.

Classified

Travel/Vacation
Gabriola Island. Cozy, neat, 2 bdrm. bungalow. Self contained with electricity and plumbing. Ideal winter hideaway with spectacular ocean view and convenient beach access. Daily, weekly, or monthly rates available. B. Kilbey, 2980 Nechako Drive, Prince George, BC V2M 3A8, Phone 562-6520.

Puerto Vallarta Mexico, 3 bdrm., 2 bath, condo. Teacher owned, tasteful, near beach, shopping, tennis, golf, pool, 1-743-5256 Mill Bay, 1-386-3495 Victoria.

Apartment in Spain. Furnished, 2 bedroom in sunny Malaga. Monthly rental. Phone 876-4383, write Annemarie Segura, 745 West 26th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Z 2E7.

Eastern Europe/USSR Travel. Specializing in travel and group tours to Russia and Eastern Europe. Contact East West Travel and Tour Corp., 3614-910 Mainland Street, Vancouver, BC V6A 1A9 (604) 687-3656, Fax (604) 687-3658.

Aegean Cruise, 4 days; archeological tour, 4 days; Athens and London. Organizers and leaders are teachers. July 6 - July 22, \$3045. More information, 271-2951.

Trans-Siberian USSR Tour. Travel via Japan to the USSR August 2-26, 1990. Escorted throughout by Soviet specialist. Information/brochure contact: East West Travel and Tour Corp., 3614 910 Mainland Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1A9

For Rent
Apartment rental short or long term. Comfortable, safe, sleeps 3, available most weekends (Thurs.-Sun.) and school/summer holidays. Sliding scale, references. Leave message 873-5389.

Six weeks free rent in exchange for house-sitting small farm an hour from UBC. Non-smokers. July-August. Call 530-9728.

Bed and Breakfast
Weatherhane Bed and Breakfast. Character home with seaviews near Government House (4 minutes to town). King/queen size beds with ensuite baths, down quilts and antique furnishings. Private living room with fireplace. Gourmet breakfast. Daily/weekly rates. Non smoking. John/Suzanne Cabeldu, 1633 Rockland Ave., Victoria, BC. V8S 1W6, 592-2568.

Miscellaneous
Need help with personal or public writing? Contact M.E. Aitken and Associates for immediate editorial help. Letters, resumes, reports refined/polished. "Ghost" writing services: journal/magazine articles for professional publication. Absolute privacy guaranteed. Write M.E. Aitken and Associates, 3184 Woodburn Ave., Victoria, BC V8P 5B7, phone (604) 595-7925.

Regina Teachers' College 1959-60. 30th Year Reunion. Regina, July 6, 7, & 8, 1990. Contact, R. Robillard, 2006 Cuning Crescent, Regina, SK S4V 0M8.

Explore art therapy as a career. Demonstration workshop by the Vancouver Art Therapy Institute. January 13, 1990. Phone 926-9381.

For Sale
EASELS for the primary Big Books. They are \$69.95 with a green, magnetic chalkboard. Brown chalkboard available for \$10 extra. They have a removable ledge to allow charts to be hung, with a tackboard on back. Send for information. Also available: magnifying glasses \$9.99 or 12/\$10, Pinatas \$9.95. Contact, Alder Distributing, 2599 - 160 Street, Surrey, BC V4B 4Z5. Phone: 536-7773.

Geography crossword. Poster size, 24"x36," over 850 clues to world's nations, cities, capitals, islands, etc. Educational and entertaining, \$4.75 each + postage or \$4 each for 5 or more + postage. Contact Marbrux Enterprises, 15-49 W. Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6J 1W6, phone 731-3416.

Help Wanted
Teacher/Educators, spend your summer working in the exciting field of international

student exchange. Co-ordinate a student homestay program in your community! Must be highly motivated with a good network of community contacts. Work July or August. Good compensation. Contact John Roberts 684-4144.

Public education opportunity. The Port of Vancouver is seeking an experienced teacher or public relations officer, with above average interpersonal skills, to operate its Public Education Services Program. This full-time position involves both on and off site activities in the promotion, scheduling, and presentation of verbal, A/V and print programs to local schools, community centres, and similar groups. Salary range \$34,000 to \$38,000. Written resumes, please. Director, Corporate Communications, Vancouver Port Corporation, 1900-200 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC V6C 2P9.

ATTENTION: TEACHER LIBRARIANS HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CANADA LIMITED

Kids Can Press

Houghton Mifflin Canada Limited and Kids Can Press are pleased to announce that Houghton Mifflin Canada has acquired the rights to promote and distribute the Kids Can Press line to elementary and secondary schools.

Kids Can Press is an award-winning publisher of Canadian children's books committed to publishing the best of Canadian fiction and non-fiction. This material is now available to you, direct from Houghton Mifflin.

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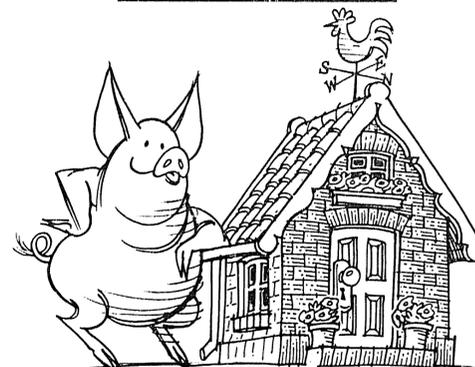
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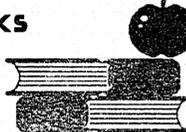
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Teacher empowerment: real or illusory?

by Audrey Kunkel

uch of what's called *teacher empowerment* is actually nothing more than camouflage that keeps intact the bureaucratic structure of schools, Carl Glickman said in Vancouver, November 17, 1989.

Real empowerment, he told a Delta-sponsored conference on enhancing school quality, means that teachers are involved as equals with administrators in making school-wide curriculum and instruction decisions.

It means teachers are equals with district officials in making district curriculum and instruction decisions. It does not mean they are used as advisors on someone else's decisions.

However, the University of Georgia professor said that's what happens all too often, and it undercuts the positive effects that real empowerment can have on school quality.

Empowerment is one of two main approaches to school reform that are currently touted.

"It says we don't have the answers, we have the questions, and local practitioners are going to be given the discretion and the flexibility to determine their own answers about how to improve education."

"The assumption is that local practitioners are not the problem; they're the solution, and all we have to do is provide enabling legislation and conditions that allow them to use their discretion."

That runs counter to the other approach, which sees academic excellence resulting from regulations. "Its assumption is that if we leave education to local practitioners, then we're probably going to screw up," Glickman noted. For its proponents, the answers to improving schools lie in "more tests, greater standardization and alignment of curriculum, more direct teaching, and a close evaluation of teachers on prescribed, uniform criteria."

However, research indicates that such an atmosphere is not conducive to the kind of motivation that school improvement requires.

Contrary to the popular idea that people can cause others to change, "the only way you can make someone work harder and smarter is if you have a gun or some power you can use over that person."

But, since there aren't enough guns or people to hold all the time on every classroom teacher, it's impossible to force them to change.

"People are going to work most of the time outside the view of you and others," he pointed out. Real motivation comes when people "have choice over the dimensions of their professional work and they have responsibility for enacting those choices to make knowledgeable decisions about their practice." That's when they'll work harder and smarter, he stressed.

There is also a misconception about

In all successful schools . . . people have common goals that they work on over time and that transcend their own individual classrooms.

Carl Glickman

who is the key actor in school improvement, Glickman said.

While it's commonly believed the school principal has that role, the principal doesn't even make the top three in a survey of teachers, principals, and central office staff.

They consistently pointed to teachers as the most critical people in changing their schools. Instructional lead teachers or assistant principals for instruction came



Trusting teachers as equal decision makers — as the solution not the problem — is key to "real" empowerment. Opportunities and assistance in working together must follow.

Kharen Hill photo

in second, while department heads in secondary schools ranked third.

That's the way it should be, Glickman asserted, saying it is "counter-productive to say there is one position that has to be all-wise, all-knowing, and capable of doing all things."

Principals, rather, should see themselves as leaders of instructional leaders and should facilitate others in that role, he said.

It's also an error to expect there to be a single definition of what makes schools effective or successful. Different schools have different priorities and their success depends on them delivering on what they value.

However, there is a characteristic that virtually all successful schools exhibit: the people in them have common goals that they work on over time and that transcend their own individual classrooms.

And, no matter how good they are seen to be, those people continue to seek improvement. "They take a critical look at themselves, not as a sign of weakness but as a sign of strength," he said.

Glickman indicated that several factors work against the kind of collective pressure that's needed to foster improvement. Among them are invisibility and isolation, he said.

Studies show that half the teachers surveyed who had more than 11 years of experience had never been observed or talked to about their work, other than in a summative, formal evaluation. Eighty

percent had never observed a peer in the same school, and few spent more than two minutes a day talking with their colleagues.

"How can you get collective action when people don't know what one another do?" Glickman asked.

Another factor is based in history — the one-roomed school. People still come to school with the understanding that what they do is within their own four walls and so, he said, "in many schools we have one-roomed schoolhouses repeated every three yards down the corridor."

And, while teachers have a lot of autonomy within their classroom, they have little involvement in instructional decisions that cut across classrooms and grades.

That means that when talk of empowerment begins, they get anxious. And, he said, it's a reasonable response since "it is not the norm under which schools have operated."

Glickman added that it is important not to "open the cages and push people out" before they are ready to be empowered. Rather, they must be allowed to let "the feathers grow back gradually before they can fly."

Audrey Kunkel is assistant editor of the Saskatchewan Bulletin, newsletter of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.

Source: Saskatchewan Bulletin, December 6, 1989.

Guarded optimism for the '90s

by Frances Bula

It was a decade that began and ended with a focus on education reform, but was shot through the middle by cannonballs of restraint and wildly zigzagging education policies.

1980 began with the province's new education minister, Brian Smith, promising to reform the School Act and find out what the public wanted from its schools.

President Al Blakey opened the B.C. Teachers' Federation 1980 convention by predicting a decade of renewed respect for teachers.

Within two years the teachers were organizing a political campaign against the Social Credit government because of what they saw as its attack on public education.

And for the next five years, schools, colleges, technical institutions, and universities felt themselves squeezed by impossible conditions as they tried to live within the significantly reduced budgets set by their ministries.

In an era many now think of as the dark age of education in B.C., school and university buildings deteriorated as main-

tenance budgets were put on a starvation diet.

Teachers were laid off, Bill Vander Zalm (then education minister) closed the schools for several days to balance the budget, and teachers joined the three-day general strike of 1983 to protest government restraint policies.

The members of two school boards — Vancouver and Cowichan — were fired after they turned in budgets over the ministry limit.

The size of classes increased, and college and university students were turned away in increasing numbers.

Parents who were able to, began fundraising aggressively for school equipment and supplies. University presidents did the same, adopting the techniques of private American universities in going after corporations and alumni for the money they needed for new buildings.

Money wasn't the only cloud hanging over the education system during the mid-'80s.

Secondary school examinations were re-introduced, to the dismay of many, amid government pronouncements that schools had to get back to basics. New graduation requirements came in, including a

compulsory consumer education course.

And one of the most notorious cases of sexual abuse in B.C. classrooms came to light in 1985 and 1986, as teacher and principal Robert Noyes was tried and convicted for abusing more than 30 children in several school districts.

Just as restraint was loosening its grip on the education system, the provincial government introduced new legislation that allowed teachers to unionize, removed compulsory membership in the B.C. Teachers' Federation, and created the College of Teachers, North America's first-ever teacher-controlled body for regulating certification of teachers.

The sense of oppression and turmoil began to subside in the last three years of the decade as money began to come back to the education system and ministers were appointed who proclaimed some faith in education.

The advanced education ministry started to provide some seed money for research and promised to match any money raised for building on campus.

It also promised to create 15,000 new spots for students in B.C.

The decade that began with the provincial government shutting down David

Thompson University in Nelson ended with its promise to create a new university in Prince George.

The school system's focus on financial devastation started to shift when the government appointed a royal commission on education in 1987. Lawyer Barry Sullivan, who died of cancer soon after the final report was presented, combined thousands of petitions, briefs, and hours of educators' research to recommend sweeping changes in the school system.

As the decade ends, everyone in the education system is consumed with debate and planning, and some controversy over how and whether to put all the suggested changes in place.

1990 will begin with B.C.'s first-ever January start of Kindergarten classes as children study in a new primary system in which there are no grades and students are supposed to learn at the pace that best suits them.

The new school system of the next decade is still, to many, an imprecise vision of education that is "focused on learners."

Frances Bula is the Sun education reporter.

Source: Vancouver Sun, December 13, 1989.