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EDUCATION FUNDING REVIEW

Funding the future: worth the effort

by Mavis Lowry and Kit Krieger

Public education is a constant interplay of countless forces. Classroom teachers' primary concern is the immediate and short-term. Teachers must choose which lessons to teach, which objectives to define, which resources to select, which questions to ask, what responses to give to student behavior. Education policy makers' focus is on the long-term. Their task is to establish policies, structures, and systems that support teachers' day-to-day activities. Both teachers and policy makers define public education. Their efforts create the vision that will guide education and influence society for decades to come. On rare occasions, a single event contributes significantly to the future of education. Such an event is more than a piece of a complex puzzle; it changes the puzzle's template. It is the royal commission, the Year 2000 program, and the mandate statement for public education. The provincial government's current review of education funding is a major enterprise that will also have system-wide effects for generations. The review will establish the balance between central and local control of schools. It will determine whether British Columbia will maintain one of the world's most successful systems of universal public education. The provincial government appointed a panel of four experts to propose options for funding public schools in B.C. The panel, after gaining input from various interest groups, organizations, and individuals, will submit recommendations to government by the end of this calendar year.

The funding review is timely. As the New Democratic Party often noted when in opposition, the current funding system is inadequate. B.C. remains below the national average in commitment to public education. The BCTF was unfortunately not included among the major constituents in the review. We do have one representative on the education funding advisory committee and will assist locals in making presentations to the panel's regional hearings. BCTF representation will address the following principles upon which any new funding system must be based.

Local control of education

Strong, responsible, autonomous school boards are essential to sustain the public school system. Such autonomy must include the right to set budgets, bargain with employees, and raise funds to provide programs that address the unique needs of the community. Local autonomy and quality education have been severely affected by referendum legislation. In the last year that school boards were free to tax local residents without resorting to referendum (1989-90), boards raised an additional \$240 million for public schools. In 1991-92, not one dollar was raised beyond money provided in the fiscal framework.

Local accountability for local schools

Many representations to the review panel call for central decision making by the provincial government to ensure accountability. School boards are accountable in the most effective system of

accountability our society has yet devised: they must face their local electorate every three years.

Equity and access

The role of government is to ensure that every student is guaranteed a basic, quality education. Any proposed funding model must avoid an American-style disparity among districts. Allowing school boards to set supplementary budgets on top of the basic program builds in a capacity for innovation and improvement in the system without compromising equity. Adequate resources are necessary for students with special needs. Public funds should be devoted to the public school system and not to private schools.

Stability

B.C.'s public school system has been buffeted by numerous storms over the past decade: restraint, referendum legislation, Bills 11, 19, 20, and 82, Year 2000 and.... Any new funding system must ensure stability so that teachers, trustees, administrators, and the ministry can tend to their vital roles in delivering quality education for children. Stability means we must have a funding system that gives school boards resources early in their planning cycle. Stability means that funding must compensate for population growth, diverse student population, changing curriculum and methodologies, technological change, and outdated facilities.

The funding review is taking place in an uncertain climate. The lingering recession and ongoing structural changes in the economy cause many, including those in government, to focus more on the cost than on the value of education. Throughout the review, the BCTF will be a forceful advocate for children and for the value of adequately funded, locally controlled schools that meet the needs of a diverse student population. A classroom teacher once made a presentation to a local school board at budget time. The teacher told the local trustees that any public school system is expensive to operate. But, he said, the difference in cost between a mediocre and a first-rate system is quite small.

Mavis Lowry and Kit Krieger are assistant directors in the BCTF's Organization Support Division.

Tired of librarian-bashing

I enjoy my copies of *Teacher*, and this letter is definitely a first for me. Never before have I been goaded to protest retired teacher- (or librarian-) bashing (*Teacher*, May/June '92, "Teacher-librarians shelve keeper of the books image"). Maybe the system is being bashed, but we retired teachers worked within that system, and we bear the brunt of such criticism.

"In the past, librarians almost owned the books. Libraries were their domain—they now enhance the learning process. They help students get to the materials quickly. They help us with resources." More power to them! I am most happy about and supportive of their work. Keep it up, and enhance it further, but don't build your reputation by selling us short.

I am fortunate to have worked with teachers who were visionary and innovative—not all, but many. I was the librarian-resource person—not just the keeper of the books. Teachers knew they could send pupils to the library for reading material and research. They trusted me to draw on my teaching experience to guide a pupil to material at his/her reading (not grade) level. In researching, our motto was "I don't pretend to know all the answers, but I can certainly help you to find most of them."

We had a visionary principal who encouraged his staff, supported them, gave them scope, and wangled his budget, much

smaller than today's, to provide as much help as possible.

I admire what many teachers and librarians are doing today, but don't write us old-timers off. We laid the foundations upon which you are building.

Vi Herrewig
Campbell River

Ending grants to independent schools no solution

The letter in the last issue of *Teacher* from the General Gordon School Committee, calling for "an end to public funding of private schools," shows a serious lack of understanding of the situation.

Ending public funding of independent schools (it is no longer appropriate to call them private schools) would result in most of these schools, having to close, putting the public schools under enormous pressure to absorb their pupils, at double the cost to the taxpayers. Independent schools, following the B.C. curriculum, perform a most valuable public service at less than half the cost (per pupil) of the public schools. This observation is not a criticism of public schools, with which I am proud to have been professionally associated for over 30 years.

The standard of education in most independent schools is as high as it is in the public schools. Most independent schools accept and educate the same broad spectrum of students the public schools do. Moreover, a number of special independent schools serve the needs of the severely handicapped. Of the nearly 300 independent schools in B.C., only 11 are academically selective, and most of those have large scholarship and bursary funds. One such well-known school on Vancouver Island annually awards much more in scholarships and bursaries than it receives in government grants.

Letters to "Readers write" may be edited for reasons of legality, taste, brevity, and clarity. To be considered for publication, they must be not more than 150 to 200 words, signed, and include a contact number for verification.

Serious misconceptions still exist about B.C.'s independent schools. The money saved by subsidizing those schools, at less than half the per pupil cost of financing the public schools, means that more taxpayers' money is effective in providing the facilities, equipment, and salaries of the public schools than would otherwise be the case.

A totally socialized education system, monopolizing taxpayers' money, is more appropriate for a communist country such as China than for a democracy such as ours. Canada and most western democracies value diversity-within-unity and efforts to provide freedom of choice in education without inflicting an economic penalty on taxpaying independent-school parents. The Sullivan Royal Commission gave its support to this view. We don't have perfect freedom of choice and equity in education in B.C., but we come closer than most other provinces in Canada. We should be thankful.

Les Bullen
Courtenay

School/home communication — key to involvement

I am writing in reference to your speaking personally article, April 1992, "What do you expect from the parents of your students?"

I found the comments in the article to be philosophical and idealistic. Our community has a high percent of dual-income families and single parents. The chance for parental involvement in the classroom is minimal. Therefore, I ask myself, have I been effectively communicating with my students' parents, to allow them to be informed and then participate? Am I, or the school, giving sufficient notice of activities, events, or changes to procedure? Am I

keeping parents informed about the curriculum or unit being taught? They may have some information/materials to share. Is the school allowing the parents to see just how many wonderful activities, performances, and learning situations teachers are dedicating themselves to?

This September my students will take a more active role in communicating between the classroom/school and home. I will encourage my students' parents to volunteer time in the class, but if they can't, then it is up to me to keep them involved throughout the year in other ways. Perhaps a solution to be considered is communication—master key to involvement.

Kim Tofte
Fort Nelson

Tips for a master's thesis

Professor Belanger's article (*Teacher*, May/June 1992) was very interesting. Having recently "home-brewed" a master's thesis, I share some practicalities with readers.

■ Before starting, see what help the local college can be, it can probably get stuff from UVic, but UBC is expensive.

■ Make sure your computer has at least 5MB memory strictly for your research.

■ Before starting the research, take advanced essay writing, introduction to research in education, introduction to statistics in education, review of research in educational methods.

■ Choose a specific topic, and ask the department advisor's help to find a professor to supervise your work.

■ Get to work immediately; the university will probably give you five years, but the time will go quickly.

■ Beware of burnout. After a day's teaching, you'll have little time or energy to analyze and write up research.

■ Beware of staff relations; too often, the researcher is perceived as a threat.

Belanger is right. Once you have completed your research, you will never look at your job or your colleagues in the same way again.

William Aspden
Powell River

Federation focus enters grey area

In your April 1992 issue, "Federation loses focus" Shay McAuley requested feedback.

I agree that the federation's educational focus has entered a grey area. The elected representatives need reiterated guidelines as to the specific educational concerns our organization should support.

I have willingly and blindly accepted decisions made by the federation on my behalf out of professional respect. It now disturbs me that issues concerning moral, social, and political values are being addressed on my behalf by the BCTF. I feel that my rights as an individual, my right to free speech, and my professional abilities have been ignored. Recently I was informed by an income-tax agency that I paid one of the highest union dues they had ever seen. I understand that public monies must be accounted for and open to discussion; that major decisions result from a quorum, not a selected few.

With all the layoffs and cutbacks in education today, the federation should apply our vocal/monetary support where it was originally intended; to continuously upgrade the education services we provide. Let us remain a united family of professionals working together for the children. Let us avoid the misconceptions and presumptuous grey area we have fallen into.

Lois McKay
Nisga'a

President Ray Worley.

The preceding is not an exhaustive list, and to each individual who receives and internally distributes the various and sundry missives, be it the school secretary or the staff rep, BCTF applauds you. We suggest that you treat yourself to lunch and toast the additional muscle mass you are developing in the name of communication.

Also remember: extending those small courtesies to your post person will ensure the uninterrupted flow of packages, tubes and boxes from the BCTF to your school. Then again, maybe large courtesies are in order.

Berniece Stuart is an administrative assistant in the BCTF's Organization Support Division.

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TQS policy change affects Quebec teachers

A recent amendment to policy by the Teacher Qualification Service (TQS) promises to end a long-standing discrimination against B.C. teachers educated in Quebec. Under the old policy, Quebecois teachers who completed secondary school in Quebec (Grade 11) prior to the existence of the Collège d'Enseignement Général et Professionnel (CEGEP) lost one year of post-secondary credit

for the purpose of category placement. Effective January 1, 1993, all Quebec teachers with university credits will be treated as if they had completed the CEGEP.

It is estimated that more than 1,000 B.C. teachers will be affected by this policy change. Details, including applications for assignment of a new TQS category, will be available through TQS or your local association president.

October: Women's history month

In August, Mary Collins, the minister responsible for the Status of Women, announced that October 1992 will be the first annual Women's History Month. This month was chosen because Person's Day is celebrated on October 18. Women's History Month aims to "foster an appreciation for the past and present

contributions of women in Canada—locally, regionally, and nationally—and to recognize the achievements of women as a vital part of our Canadian heritage." The opportunity exists for the inclusion of the history and achievements of women in all areas of the curriculum.

Bargaining is a benefit—even if you're not in the union

Twenty-one American states are known as right-to-work states. That means unions are prevented from negotiating union security provisions into contracts. You might think that only affects unionized workers. Turns out it affects everyone in the state.

The AFL-CIO did a study comparing quality of life measures in right-to-work states with those in free bargaining states. This chart shows the results.

	Right-to-work states %	Free-states %
People living at or below the poverty rate	15	12
Children with no health insurance	24	16
Unemployed receiving UI benefits	75	63
States at or above federal minimum wage rate	33	60
States at or below national average job fatality rate	14	67
States at or below national average infant mortality	43	67
States at or above national average expenditure per pupil in public schools	10	57

Source: CLC Social Policy & Legislative Report, Summer 1992.

What's up in your local?

North Vancouver

Women from 12 B.C. districts met in the Pemberton Valley in April for the 3rd annual North Vancouver Status of Women retreat. Networking, R and R, and workshops on such topics as financial planning, reflexology, journal writing, and the global status of women, filled their agenda. Victoria artist, Sheila Norgate, spoke on the theme "Nice girls, bad girls" illustrating her comments with slides of her work. Norgate's art is at times humorous, at times poignant, as it documents the struggles of a feminist becoming assertive and discovering heart.

Kelowna

A team of parents, teachers, and trustees are in the midst of planning a Local Education Change Forum for November. One day is designed along the lines of the successful provincial forums on educational change. It is an opportunity for all concerned to look at questions and set directions for educational change in Kelowna's schools.

Delta

The Delta Teachers' Association held its 4th annual executive retreat September 2-3 at the Coast Plaza hotel in Vancouver. President Jan Eastman said the retreat is an opportunity to build an effective team, celebrate our successes, and chart goals and strategies for the coming year. Eastman said that the retreat, which follows the BCTF Summer Leadership Conference, enables the local to link federation and local agendas. "We laughed our heads off but still got our work done," said Eastman in defense of charges that there was far too much fun during the two-day session.

Write to us

"What's up in your local?" is a column featuring leadership and innovation by teachers and their educational partners around B.C. Write, call, or Fax us your news, do "What's Up," *Teacher* newsmagazine.

—Kit Krieger



President Ray Worley and Lois Boone, Minister Responsible for Government Services.

Pension petitions

Petitions with 16,000 signatures supporting improvements to the teachers' pension plan were presented to government minister Lois Boone on June 23, 1992.

On handing over the petitions, Ray Worley urged the minister to take teacher demands seriously. "Teachers have been seeking changes for the past four years with little

or no government response," said Worley.

Boone indicated that the government is developing a policy framework for addressing the issues of pension benefits, funding, and fund investments. She hopes the policy will be in place by early fall and discussions can then take place.



"Rookie" local association leaders bone up on their new roles at BCTF summer training. (Shown here, left to right) Terry Green (Summerland), Alice Rees (Kelowna), Bev Gess (Vernon), Sue Palmer (Cariboo-Chilcotin), and Steven Lepoidevin (Princeton).

Teacher leaders hit books in August

Had Winston Churchill been a delegate to the 1992 BCTF Summer Leadership Conference, he might have remarked, "Never before has so much been done by so many for so long."

This year's summer conference lasted nine days and included three major components under the theme "Teacher Leadership at Work."

Summer conference began August 20 with a two-day gathering for local PD reps. Their focus was federation and local support to school-based professional development. This PD training featured the inauguration of an electronic conference that will link professional development leaders throughout the province. The PD training was

followed by a three-day smorgasbord in which delegates choose from an array of workshops in areas such as communications, education change, conflict resolution, and social responsibility. The more than 300 participants appreciated the variety and currency of the offerings.

This middle part of summer conference included a session for the 28 first-year local presidents. Their training was led by outgoing members of the Local Presidents' Advisory Committee and a number of BCTF staffers. A highlight of the rookie training was an R-rated skit, "A Night in the Life of a Local President," starring Heather McLeod (Stikine) as the president and Jamie Ross (Coquitlam) as her significant other.



It's raining mail from heaven! (The BCTF, that is)

by Berniece Stuart

If your Canada Post person is connecting the flare-up of that pesky hernia to the volume of mail coming from Burrard Street, please encourage the individual to keep that truss handy for the

next few weeks. There's probably still more to come.

Over the summer months, staff have been busy organizing for the fall mailings. A variety of posters have to be rolled and placed

into 1,700 mailing tubes (one per school). Documents have to be printed, collated, and sorted into bulk mailings on the basis of one copy per member, one copy per staffroom, five copies per staffroom, or any other number of permutations. Arrangements have to be made for the most efficient and cost-effective method of distributing the vast array of items.

We thought you might be interested in a bird's-eye view of the output from our mailroom to your school that occurs in early September.

Your staffroom walls will probably already be festooned with posters on a variety of topics—retirement seminars, membership in the Primary

PSA, fighting racism in your school, the National Co-operative Education Week, a committee poster entitled "Associates on Campus," the BCTF databank of teacher research, and of course, the BCTF wall calendar.

In addition, you will have already received, or will be receiving in the near future: the Lesson Aids catalog, PSA application forms, the Members' Guide to the BCTF and the BCTF pocket appointment calendar, the "Future of Canada" teaching resource unit, a B.C. Social Studies Teachers' bulletin, information on the Hilroy Award, a BCTF staff position vacancy and another BCTF committee vacancy poster, and a letter to all teachers from

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PART FOUR: BCTF
CODE OF ETHICSEthical duties to
the professional
union

by Ralph Sundby

B.C. teachers have a commendable record of loyalty to their professional union through numerous crises and threats to the federation.

That loyalty is one of several reasons Code of Ethics clauses 6 through 10 are the least used of the 10 code provisions. Those five statements are the rules that express what teachers have established as their duties to their federation and its locals. Through those clauses, teachers collectively:

- acknowledge the obligations of membership and the authority and responsibilities of the union.
- undertake to adhere to the collective agreement.
- commit themselves to act in a manner not prejudicial to job actions or other collective strategies.

- agree not to seek or accept positions declared in dispute.
- refrain from making statements in the name of the federation or locals without authorization.

Few complaints are lodged against members alleging

breaches of these rules. Only 5% of all ethics cases are based on these articles, which make up half the code. Loyalty is certainly a key reason. Another is simple necessity.

Teachers have had to stick together in the last couple of decades. In the face of frequent and concerted attacks from outside, solidarity is a necessary ethos. Strikes, action plans, publicity campaigns, and assorted other strategies are a way of life—a necessity to defend and foster the welfare of teachers and education in B.C.

A further reason for the high rate of compliance is the democratic nature of the organization. Serious strategic decisions are seldom taken without extensive debate. If teachers are loyal, they are also independent and diverse in their opinions. It is sometimes amazing that unified positions are actually achieved and difficult strategies undertaken. But debate and persuasion work. Participation produces commitment and understanding.

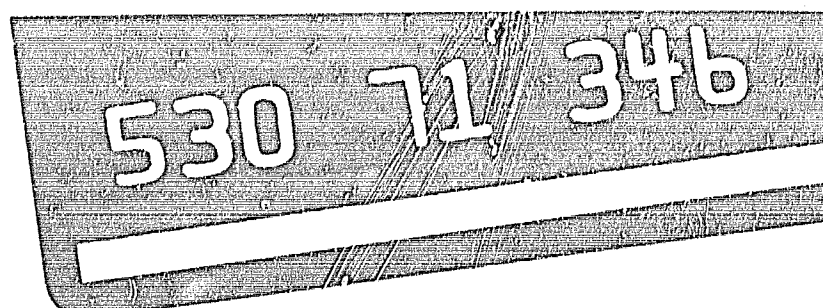
Honoring picket lines is one flashpoint in the tension between individual and group will. Teachers have, in the short time they've possessed the right to strike, a remarkable rate of participation (near 100%) with few picket-line problems. Locals have been delegated

the constitutional power (by the BCTF AGM) to impose fines or other penalties on picket-line violators. In the past two years, only one member has been fined by a local under this provision. In a similar period, two locals have initiated charges under clauses 6 and 8. In one situation, a member was found in violation and penalized. In the other, the complaint was subjected to extensive discussion and eventually resolved.

In a number of other cases formal charges were not undertaken, but the Code of Ethics provisions were used as a basis for discussion and eventual resolution. This is, of course, a constructive way of resolving an apparent breach where no significant harm was caused.

A basic element in clauses 6 to 10 is the tension that invariably arises between individual rights of free speech or action and the need for a significant degree of unity in group initiatives. This tension can never be resolved. Its reality must be recognized and taken into account. The degree to which decisions are arrived at democratically and then accepted is the degree to which this inevitable tension is resolved.

Ralph Sundby, a BCTF Bargaining staff person, supports the Judicial Committee.



What's your ID number?

In the age of computers, the collecting and use of information has become a significant issue. As a result, the Ministry of Education is proposing changes in the collection of information about the B.C. school system including: a unique ID number permanently assigned to each student; student transcripts produced by the school instead of the ministry; access to information legislation providing the right for every individual to examine personal files; and an electronic highway to move data.

To help it deal with these challenges, the ministry has created an information advisory committee, with representation from the BCTF and other groups involved in education. After a year's work, the committee has approved a plan for piloting a number of the proposed changes.

The ministry hopes to ensure that information useful to decision making is collected—and that time and

resources are not wasted by collecting information not of use.

The proposed unique student ID number is aimed at tracking participation in education and dropouts. The number would stay with a student, not just through elementary and secondary years, but on to post-secondary education as well.

Privacy is to be protected by the new freedom of information legislation. It will provide safeguards that information can be used only for the purpose for which it is collected. It will also allow individuals to see what information government has collected about them.

Before major changes are finally made to the ministry's information systems, the new approaches will be tested and evaluated for effectiveness as well as ensuring they meet the new legal requirements.

Welcome to the information age.

—Larry Kuehn

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE NEW BCTF PRESIDENT

Hello to Ray Worley



training school staff reps.

There are also many individual services, such as the Salary Indemnity Plan, retirement counselling, provision of legal aid and advice.

TEACHER: The equation goes "good-quality contracts, good-quality teachers, good-quality public education." Let's talk about the students for a minute. Do you have a sense of what students in our schools need, and how we as the teaching profession, a union of professionals, are addressing their needs?

WORLEY: When I think about my school days, I see that the world was more straightforward and simple than it is for students today. Students today are less certain about the world they will be inheriting. Students are also more demanding, more questioning of what happens in schools, which is good. Another encouraging sign among students is an increasing awareness of the global village and the environment.

As a union of professionals we address students' needs by working for conditions in the classroom that will enable teachers to meet those needs. That's why bargaining strong agreements is so important.

TEACHER: How did you get started in your leadership within the teachers' federation and at the local? What hooked you and got you going?

WORLEY: What got me involved from the first time I arrived in B.C. was the degree of commitment that I saw when I went to my first local general meeting. I was really impressed that the local teachers dealt directly with the board. I was hooked from the beginning.

After being a geographical representative, I became a member of the federation's Task Force on Bargaining and Professional Rights. That work helped to shape my vision of the BCTF as an organization speaking for all the concerns of the teachers. I saw that unionism and professionalism were complementary not contradictory.

I am committed to the belief that it is the individual teacher who makes the difference, the individual teacher who is the most important person in the school system, and the

individual member of the organization who is the most important component of our organization.

TEACHER: What keeps you motivated and committed to leadership in your teachers' organization?

WORLEY: A firm belief in the importance of a healthy public school system for a democratic society and the knowledge that teachers are the key people in the system. A strong teachers' organization is crucial to the health of the public-education system.

TEACHER: What do you see in terms of working with other organizations both in education and labour and across the country to strengthen the federation's work?

WORLEY: We have traditionally had a good working relationship with the parents' group. We will continue to work with groups like the trustees and the ministry. We will continue to liaise with unions, CUPE, and with other groups in education.

TEACHER: "Ray Worley, BCTF president..." what do you believe this role will bring?

WORLEY: I want to continue and expand on the practice that Ken Novakowski started of getting out into the schools and visiting and talking with teachers. My contact with the media will increase considerably. There'll be more meetings and even less off-duty time.

TEACHER: What kinds of things does Ray Worley like to do off-duty?

WORLEY: Hiking, cross-country skiing, camping, canoeing—I also like to read and listen to classical music in my "spare" time.

TEACHER: And your family? You have children.

WORLEY: Yes, we have a son who is currently teaching English in Japan. Our daughter is in Calgary working on her masters degree in biology. As a parent I admire the job my colleagues did in teaching my children.

TEACHER: What would you like teachers to know about your teaching background?

WORLEY: I have taught in four different countries. I have taught mainly English, social studies, history, and German.

TEACHER: Is there anything else you would like to say to the teachers in B.C.?

WORLEY: Get involved in our federation. Call or write on any topic. And all the best for a reward-ning school year in 1992-93.

Nancy Hinds, Teacher newsmagazine editor, interviews Ray Worley as he begins his year as BCTF president.

Opinion

LET'S TALK ABOUT RESTRAINTS...
AND TEACHERS

Good for the Soul

by Barbara Richter

The secret is out. We're in a time of serious economic difficulty. Whenever that happens, people seem compelled to blame someone or something for the troubled times—for plant closings, job losses, and the downward spiral of the Canadian dollar. Sometimes their choice of target is not based on fact or reason, it's just conveniently there.

If you've followed media reports lately, you've probably come to realize that teachers are now targets. Headlines proclaim that greedy teachers are not satisfied with having jobs and paycheques; they want more money, more decision-making rights, better working conditions...the litany continues. By the time you finish reading you probably think you're responsible not only for the recession but also for every social evil from diaper rash to the destruction of the rainforests. If no one has reassured you yet, we will. You are not singularly responsible for all of these problems.

Teachers are an altruistic and giving group of people. You give your time, your energy, even yourselves to students every day in classrooms across this province. When school boards heard about the limitation on transfer payments, where was the natural place for many of them to turn? To you, the teacher. They asked what more you could give. Being the socially conscious people that we are, we wanted to help, to share ideas on cost-saving measures. While we do need to think and act responsibly about all these problems, we also need to exercise some caution. If you're being asked by trustees, administrators, or even colleagues about how boards could cut costs, you need to think about how your suggestions might negatively affect other employees of your board, the rights you've worked so hard to achieve in your collective agreement, and even your colleagues across the province. If you are being

asked for input, you should be in contact with your local association president to ensure that your board is not getting a variety of contradictory and perhaps harmful messages.

We've talked about some media attitudes toward teachers, but it's also important to talk about your attitude about yourself. There probably isn't a community or family in this province that hasn't been affected by the recession. Those of us who are working do have responsibilities not only to each other but also to every other citizen in this province and across this country. You may bear a responsibility, but allow no one to ask you to bear guilt. If our education system disintegrates, our schools close, and our teachers lose jobs, then the future of our society is in jeopardy. In the midst of environmental, economic, constitutional, and international crises, you're one of the people who is making sure that this country has a future. Every time you help a child solve a problem, overcome a disability, or learn something new, you've made a little magic. You've helped create a brighter future for that child, and, in turn, you've helped ensure a future for our society.

Sometimes the thanks we get for that isn't reflected in the editorial pages of our major newspapers. Sometimes it's only reflected in the beaming smile of one grateful child. Wherever you get that thanks, never forget who you are and what you do. The next time someone approaches you and says, "Oh, so you're one of those teachers," don't withdraw and don't confront, but smile and proudly say, "Yes, I am."

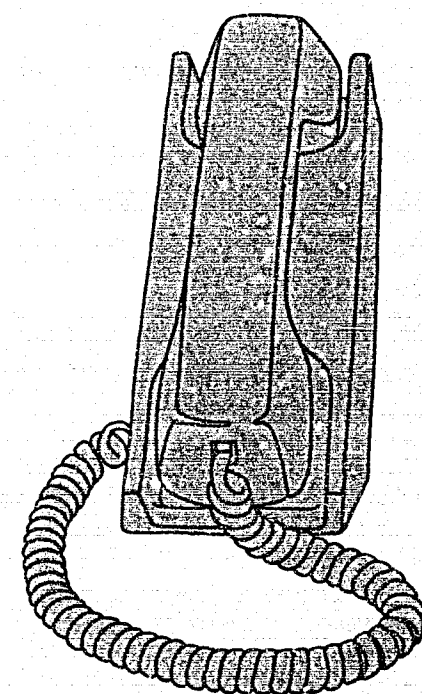
Barbara Richter, executive assistant, Federation of Women Teachers' Associations of Ontario, is editor of the Post Haste bulletin.

Source: POST HASTE, bulletin of the FWTAO, February 20, 1992, No. 12.

Take it to the top

Do you have some advice for the BCTF president—a question—a kudo? Take it right to the top. Phone Ray Worley directly at (604) 737-9517, or toll free 1-800-663-9163. Ray has set aside the first Monday of every month, from 08:00 to 09:00 to hear from members. Of course, he is also available at other times to work with members, local leaders, and provincial officials, but this Monday-morning listening hour is devoted to direct access.

Call your president on Monday, October 5.



Speaking Personally

What is your claim to fame
as a teacher?

I've decided to hedge my bets and claim not one but three reasons for the celebrity status. As a teacher-activist, I am often asked to create signs on the spur of the moment. It may appear relatively easy when I execute the assignment, but what isn't easy to see is the many hours I have spent getting to the point where I can dash off a sign. Teaching is like this. What appears flowing and natural has actually been honed as is any skill or craft.

I started practising calligraphy during my first year of teaching. Calligraphy classes were quietly exciting and filled with little joys of discovery. As I practised my assignments, I used the time to pause and reflect. This is very hard to do in a classroom that is going full tilt. I also savored the teaching situation in the calligraphy



course—no behavior or discipline problems as far as the eye could see.

My second claim to fame lies in the sound my feet produce when I walk down the hall. Many times I'll round a corner at school and someone

will exclaim, "Oh, I knew it was you. I could tell by your footsteps." These unsolicited testimonials occur regularly, so now I acknowledge the observation happily. My secret formula to being picked up by this radar is to create the right atmosphere. Wear hard-soled shoes, have a full day of classes, rank the dozen jobs that absolutely have to be done immediately, and finally, locate your classroom a healthy distance from the centre of the action.

The final ingredient of my trilogy of fame is my laughter. Birds don't stop singing at the sound of it, but I have been informed countless times, "I knew you were here. I heard you(r) laugh." Some people have even said, "I miss your laugh." Certainly in my teaching experience, there has always been plenty to laugh about. A colleague and I share a favorite saying, "Hey, we're laughing," to signal that things are going to be all right. Laughter is probably my favorite claim to fame.

Signs, footsteps, and laughter. Can true fame be far behind? I think not.

Linda Hoepfner
Delta

“Once more into the breach, dear friends, once more...”

Rising from the cheery companionship of the staffroom, I run a quick check on my equipment (keys, chalk, day-book, red pen, etc.) and rush to join the lineup at the photocopy. The dragon Ignorance has been running rampant of late. Why does it not flee in

terror? Does it not know I have six years experience, and a degree from UBC?

I love a challenge. Perhaps that is why I always seem to end up working with conduct-disordered students—the romance of the unsung hero. “Stormed at with shot and shell

Boldly they rode and well Into the jaws of death, into the mouth of...etc.”

So I struggle on, facing fear-some odds (class size and composition), supply lines threatened, allies uncertain. The light that guided me obscured by fog and mist (my mind). The dragon Ignorance devours the vital energy of the students (television commercials) and roars around the Lower Mainland spewing out



shopping malls and parking lots from its fiery gullet (the corporate agenda).

Wisps of mustard gas cling to my knees as I stealthily infiltrate no-man's land and arrive, at length, at my classroom. The students peer at me over the tops of the trenches, weapons temporarily concealed. They think I am the dragon.

“Good morning. Today we are going to study...”

My claim to fame? I'm a classroom teacher. Simon Truelove
Surrey



Surely you jest.

What is my claim to fame as a teacher? In my previous career as a brain surgeon, I developed the procedure now used universally to empower students. The Ministry of Education and the Year 2000 folks are trying to take the credit for that one; however, I was the pioneer of the procedure in a little known part of the east end of London. That, of course, was a gruelling process, and I used my spare time wisely to relieve the stress. My hobbies include calculating the number of angels that can balance on the head of a pin, walking the slippery pathway between the devil and the deep blue sea, and writing the definitive guide to keeping your sanity while the rest of the world goes crazy.

Yes, sometimes I feel as if I am losing it, but, as graduation time comes around again, I'll be there in the back of the auditorium, one of those dewy-eyed, proud teachers who really has no claim to fame, just the satisfaction of knowing that I have completed my job well.

Molly Halton
Lake Cowichan

I might wistfully assert that my fame or notoriety has been established through student-writing assignments on controversial issues, but the truth is less kind. Students generally remember me for my Jackson Pollack sense of color.

It all began with my tie collection.

For years, I tried to brighten gloomy days with loud, vibrant colors and designs hung about my neck. Even the most apathetic or sleepy student would wake up and take note. Sometimes with a gasp.

My administrators in a moment of enlightenment, or mad expediency, assigned me to teach art. I began exploring the realm of Van Gogh. Once through the portal I discovered (like all students) that reality is a convention that is continuously renegotiated and reconstituted. Questions arose. Can art portray reality? Can art provoke new reality? What is art? What is non-art? Negative art? Positive art?

All teaching can be a forum for critical reflection. What began for me as an affection for ties that bind and blind has spawned new opportunities.

Phil Rexin
Kamloops



TIPS FOR BEGINNING AND VETERAN TEACHERS

Creating that professional image

*People who can, teach!
Those who can't, go into some other less important line of work.*

— unknown

As a first-year teacher, you have no name recognition, no respectation, and no credibility. Think of it as a clean slate.

Your behavior and your interaction with all the groups that make up the school community will not only define your image, but also impact on the image of the profession as a whole.

Based on the findings of surveys such as the Metropolitan Life Survey of the American Teacher, Gallup polls of the Public's Attitude Toward the Public Schools, and studies on school/community relations, we know that:

- schools are more highly rated by those who know them best.
- parents and teachers think more parental involvement will improve education.
- students and newspapers are the top sources of information about what's going on in school.

The ideas that follow are time-tested positive inagemakers. As you read, let them sift through your own personality and knowledge about your own community. Choose those that will work for you or adapt the ideas for your own setting. In addition to these individual projects, do get involved in the community action programs your local association initiates.

• From the beginning, let parents know you believe a working partnership with them is best for students.

• Send messages home about what they can do to support learning. (Sixty-eight percent of the parents responding to the Metropolitan Life Survey listed newsletters as a good way to improve education by keeping parents informed.)

• Invent ways to give students practical experience with writing. Teach your students to write letters to members of the community, and then actually send them. The letters may relate specifics of a classroom project that ties in with a community organization activity or state an opinion about how young people might be persuaded to participate more fully in community affairs. The best lessons to be learned by students from such letterwriting are those of stating a suggestion tactfully and gracefully, writing with a positive tone, and making a point clearly and concisely.

• Carry your work around with you in a folder or a briefcase, almost everywhere you go—to the laundromat, to the barbershop, to the doctor's office. Grade papers under the hair dryer, or even while waiting for the bus. You may need every available moment to get your work done—but think of it as yet another chance to let the public know how much you enjoy it.

• In early November, send home a list of good books for parents to consider for holiday giving. List a few academic books, but include mostly books that are interesting or entertaining, and at the same time of literary or academic merit, as they relate to your teaching area. Also, if you can find one extra hour at the beginning of the school year, divide all your students' names into nine or ten lists according to the month of their birthdays. Then send home a book gift list the month before each student's birthday, making the distribution a first-of-the-month activity. In June, distribute book lists for those with birthdays in July, August, and September.

• See what happens when you assign an essay or paragraph on the topic, "The best thing about my school is . . ." After using samples of class entries in the classroom and discussing them for form and content, submit three or four of the most interesting ones to the local newspaper, expressing pride in these students' perception of their role as learners.

• Send home requests for a parent or grandparent to write down (in a space provided on the request sheet) a few words relating to a strong memory or an anecdote from their own lives in reference to the topic being studied in class.

• Everywhere you go—bowling, bridge club, shopping treks, and community events—refer with pride to the fact you are a teacher. Mention frustrations freely, but temper the discussions by relating how you are trying to have something done about such problems as alcohol and drug use in school; or uncontrolled, excessive absences from classes. Rather than sounding "gripy" or refusing to discuss your frustrations, let people know that as a professional, you are worried, but that you haven't given up trying to reach solutions and gain co-operation.

• Display your degrees and certificates. Every other professional has these documents framed and hanging on their office walls; you should too. Not only is it good for those times when parents visit your classroom, but think about the positive effect it has on your students.

• Let parents know about the success of their children in the classroom. If the only time parents hear from you about student progress is when there's a problem, they transfer those negative feelings to you.

• Send letters of welcome to new students. When students transfer during the year, they and their parents often have questions about how to fit in. You could put together a survival kit for new students that includes a map of the area (ask the BCAN), locations of favorite student hangouts,

dress code (or at least what's normal—ask a student to write this part), homework expectations, and a list of what has already been covered in each subject.

Source: Reprinted from *Tennessee Education Association First-Year Handbook*, 1992.

CTF supports landmark equality case

The Canadian Teachers' Federation is supporting landmark case on the equality of women. Called Persons Case II, it will complete the work of the historic Persons Case in 1929, which decided that women are legally persons and therefore eligible for appointment to the Senate of Canada. Governments have failed to appoint women to the Senate on an equal basis with men. Persons Case II seeks a court finding that the government cease this discrimination and make the appointments on an equal basis.

The Human Rights Institute of Canada, a non-government, non-profit research organization based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will seek a judgment that discrimination in appointments to public office is illegal under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the United Nations conventions that Canada has ratified.

The BCTF brought the case to the attention of CTF. The BCTF is a member of the Human Rights Institute, and it

advises the institute on the administration of the Hilda L. Cryderman Human Rights Research Fund, which was established to honor the first woman president of the BCTF.

Persons Case II will decide whether equality applies to the decision-making organs of government. Allan McDonald, president of CTF praised the institute for its initiative and emphasized the importance of the case in the development of a more just and equitable society.

The Human Rights Institute must raise funds for the case. Membership fees are \$25 (individual), \$50 (non-profit organizations), \$100 (corporations). It invites tax-deductible donations and memberships.

For information about Persons Case II and about the institute, contact Dr. Marguerite E. Ritchie, Q.C., president, Human Rights Institute of Canada, 303-246 Queen Street, Ottawa, ON K1P 5E4. Telephone (613) 232-2920, Fax (613) 232-3735.

Source: *Link*, CTF newsletter, vol. 16, no. 3, Feb.-Apr. '92.



"I knew condoms in the washrooms would only be the start of it. Student Council's voted to have video machines in there as well!"

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

4 not to miss

1

WestCAST '93

On March 3 to 6, 1993, at the Hotel Vancouver, the BCTF joins UBC and BCCT (College of Teachers) in hosting the annual conference of the Western Canadian Association for Student Teaching. "Teacher Education: The State of Our Art." The conference features education notables: Lee Shulman, Stanford University; Lorna Williams, First Nations education specialist from Vancouver School Board; BCTF Executive Director Elsie McMurphy. Organizers encourage proposals from teachers, student teachers, and teacher educators for workshops, round-table discussions, and papers addressing the general conference theme or sub-themes: on being a teacher, professional growth, teachers' professional knowledge, the ethical dimensions of teaching, the changing roles of the

teacher, and enhancing the status of teachers and the teaching profession.

Registration is \$135 before January 15, \$165 after; full-time students \$85 before January 15, \$100 after; daily registration rates \$60 for teachers, \$40 for full-time students. For information, contact Dr. Charles Ungerleider, Program Chairperson, WestCAST '93, Teacher Education Office, UBC, 2125 Main Mall, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1, Telephone 822-5244.

2

Conflict resolution for teachers

A BCTF conference from the continuing-education program, PD Division, on October 16 & 17 at the Coast Plaza at Stanley Park, 09:00 to

17:00 both days. Registration fee \$190 (includes GST), meals and accommodation extra. Featuring: Paula Temrick, human relations consultant, trainer for the Justice Institute of B.C.; Judy Sellner, Ph.D., relationship counsellor in private practice; BCTF conflict resolution associates and others. This conference will be helpful for teachers wishing to build more harmonious relationships and more collaborative, co-operative learning environments. Contact Barb Proulx, BCTF PD Division, 731-8121 or toll free 1-800-663-9163, Fax 731-4891.

3

Teacher inquiry exchange

November 6 & 7, 1992 (at SFU) exchange for B.C. teachers engaged in classroom

inquiry/research is a BCTF/SFU collaboration. The exchange will focus on the sharing and extension of teachers' current work/inquiries/research. Individual and/or teams of teachers will be linked by themes in small groups. Teachers are encouraged to represent their projects in a paper format if they wish. Registration fee is \$65 (Friday dinner and Saturday lunch included, accommodation not included). Registration is limited to 100 teachers; send a one-page description of your theme and method of presentation with a contact phone and fax number, by October 13 to: Charlie Naylor, BCTF Research, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC V6J 3H9, Fax: 731-4891.

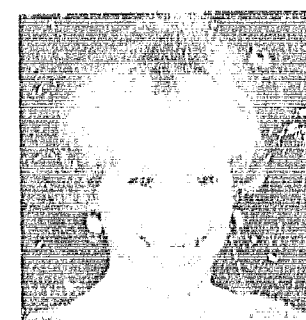
Towards E=Quality

Twelfth National Conference on Women and Education will be held in St. John's, Newfoundland, November 26 to 28, 1992. The conference, sponsored by the CTF, has the following keynote speakers: Honourable Audrey McLaughlin, national leader of the NDP; Kathy Mallett, head of the Original Women's Network; Dr. Myriam Miedzian, author of *Boys Will be Boys*; Madame la Juge Andrée Ruffo, judge of the Québec Court Youth Division; Dr. Patricia Pitsel will urge us to add humor to our approach to improving our own quality of life and that of those around us. For registration kit: phone (613)232-1505, fax (613)232-1886, or write: Towards E=Quality, CTF, 110 Argyle Ave., Ottawa, ON K2P 1B4.

PART THREE IN A SERIES

Living en français

by Anne Souther Gittens



"Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, cinq, quatre, trois, deux, one..." I gulped back any remaining apprehension, felt anticipation and excitement rising, and began from that moment to live, en français. For the next three weeks I'd use only French to communicate, no small challenge for someone with only very rusty high school French filed away in dusty mental files, unused for almost 20 years.

I looked around me at the several hundred people gathered in the foyer at L'Université du Québec in Trois-Rivières. We came from across Canada and beyond to

completely immerse ourselves for several weeks in French language and culture.

Following the countdown the area became remarkably quiet compared to the loud hum of conversation that had filled the air. Slowly a tentative buzz returned as we Anglophones grasped with varying degrees of facility for ways to express ourselves without a word of English. I turned to the person sitting next to me, "Je suis fatiguée. Bonne nuit. A demain." It was already late, and with many of us still adjusting to a new time zone, the foyer soon emptied and students left for nearby campus residences.

In the days that followed I was amazed at how quickly language acquisition occurs, when one must learn in order to survive. I was delighted at the speed with which many of those old unused phrases from high school days, which I thought I'd never remember, returned when needed. During my first week in Québec I awoke one night and realized I'd been dreaming in French.

Since returning from Trois-Rivières I've given considerable thought to my immersion experience. Taken as a whole it was tremendous, challenging in so many ways. I'd jump without hesitation at an opportunity to experience those challenges again. But

there were also moments of almost overwhelming frustration, discouragement, and disconcerting feelings of loss of self.

I came to understand how closely entwined are identity and language. In my journal one evening I wrote, adapting the old rhetorical question of the fallen tree in the forest, "Am I who I am if I cannot express who I am?" Having to ask, "Où est la salle de puce?" does not fit with the image I hold of myself, but pre-existing self-images must be cast off to free yourself to take the risks necessary to language learning. A sense of humor and the ability to laugh at the absurd situations one will inevitably experience are also absolute prerequisites for learning another language.

On the West Coast of Canada, so far away from where most Canadian Francophones live, the relevance of learning to speak French is sometimes questioned. Districts faced with tight budget constraints often look first to their language programs when cuts need to be made. Yet at the same time we value multiculturalism. With the inexorable link that exists between language and culture, exposure to another language simultaneously provides exposure to another culture.

What better way then, to teach children to value the mosaic of cultures around them, than to provide exposure to the multilingual/cultural heritage of Canada?

French as a third language for the many ESL students in Canadian schools is also sometimes questioned. Yet, the French-language classroom can be a great equalizer for these students, allowing them to begin on an equal footing with their native English-speaking peers. In fact, the French-language classroom is likely to be one place where the ESL students find they have an advantage—they have already learned how to learn another language.

Being in Québec gave me the opportunity to associate thousands of human faces with French language and culture. I look forward now to sharing with students here that very human dimension of language learning, not just so they will come to appreciate the significant Francophone culture existing within Canada, but also to lay a foundation of appreciation for the cultural and linguistic diversity of our world.

Anne Souther Gittens, a recent teacher graduate at SFU, is writing this series on her induction into teaching.

European posting confirms belief in social studies

by Don Wells

On Bergeron and his students have had front row seats for some of the most gripping political events in modern history. And his experiences working in a Department of National Defense School in Europe during the Gulf War, the reunification of Germany, the gradual evolution of the European Economic Community and the war in Yugoslavia have strengthened his conviction that emphasis on social studies should be increased in secondary schools throughout Canada.

Bergeron's classroom at Canadian Forces Base Baden-Soellingen, Germany is located in the heart of a continent that has been in transition and upheaval ever since the 37-year-old Dawson Creek native arrived three years ago from Kimberley's Selkirk Secondary School.

The approach of the DND school's social studies program is to "use Europe as the classroom," and Bergeron has made extraordinary efforts to put the philosophy into practise, albeit within the rather rigid confines of the Ontario curriculum that focuses strictly on geography and history.

He has taken his history students on field trips to Paris, to Berlin both before and after reunification, to the German capital of Bonn, and to famous battlefields from both world wars.

He has to inject strong doses of various social sciences almost daily, however, to help students completely understand events such as the Gulf War and the fragmentation of Eastern Europe, events that have had a dramatic effect on life in a NATO zone.

"The Ontario curriculum doesn't deal with the social issues as much as we do in B.C.," he said during an interview at his home in Jugelsheim, a village located just off the base in the Rhine River Valley near the French border city of Strasbourg. "They don't introduce economics or political science or religion and those things are relevant when looking at issues. To look at history without economics and political science is impossible."

"I find I am forever having to stop and give my students a lesson in religion, a lesson in economics, or a lesson in politics. If you look at something like the Gulf Crisis, you have to bring in all of those issues. You just can't look at it in isolation."

Despite the limitations within the prescribed curriculum, Bergeron is having the time of his life as an educator.

"I think that in many ways I have the best teaching job over here. Teaching math here is no different from teaching math in Canada, but teaching history has been a real high, especially in the last three years with all the events that have taken place in Europe

and the Middle East. Living in the midst of these political events has made the students more interested in history."

In addition to the many visits to historical sites throughout Europe, Bergeron and his students have had the opportunity to be in NATO headquarters, to meet top NATO officials, and to the German Parliament in Bonn to meet with representatives from the Ministry of Defence and Interstate Affairs.

Bergeron is particularly proud of the forays to World War I battlefields of Northern France, a tour that was initiated a few years back by innovative predecessors Dick Lonsdale (Armstrong) and Mike Fong (Vancouver).

After lectures and discussion about the role of Canadians in World War I, the week of the excursion begins with demonstrations by Canadian Forces army officers. Students are outfitted with the typical issue of equipment and uniforms worn by a Canadian soldier as he waded through and over the trenches of Vimy Ridge and Beaumont-Hamel. Then it's off to Verdun for a study of World War I strategies employed on the Western Front and finally to the battlefields for re-enactments of battles involving both the Royal Canadian and Royal Newfoundland Regiments.

The reflection, the poetry, and the laying of wreaths that follow the re-enactment of battle scenes are poignant for

the children of military families, some having seen their own parents dispatched to the Persian Gulf.

Bergeron will be entering his fourth and final year of his European posting this September as Canadian Forces staff begin the process of closing the bases at Baden-Soellingen and nearby Lahr. By December of 1994, Canadian Forces Europe will cease to exist as a command of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Until then, they continue to absorb as much of Europe, both past and present, as possible. Every now and then during their travels, a European will comment about the remarkable knowledge base and wider perspective of the Canadian students, particularly compared to the students from neighboring American bases.

Those comments are extremely satisfying to Bergeron, particularly given his belief that a more international outlook is vital to citizenship in the emerging global economy that Europe epitomizes. The emphasis on social studies, he says, must be increased in Canadian schools to meet that end.

"We're seeing Europe and everywhere else making a big push toward internationalism, but in North America it seems to be almost the opposite. There is more of an isolationist attitude developing."

"We're a small player in this huge game and it is incredibly complex and interwoven. I think we have to look more toward other cultures and history, other than our own, if we are going to survive."

Don Wells is a Vancouver-based freelance writer.

History 10 students in W.W. I trenches at Beaumont-Hamel waiting to "go up and over the top" as part of a simulation.

RON FORKHA PHOTO

After the bell

What's your risk?

Health experts today look at the way we live—our jobs, our surroundings, our habits—to judge our risk of serious disease. Do any of these phrases sound familiar? If so, a school wellness program could help.

- * Little time for exercise
- * stress on the job or at home
- * lack of regular blood-pressure and cholesterol screenings
- * poor nutrition and weight management
- * frequent colds and flu
- * little access to counselling
- * alcohol or drug use or misuse
- * smoking
- * unsafe habits (not wearing seatbelts, for example)

Source: *NEA Today*, February 1992.

A stress tip

Next time you're feeling the stress of a difficult situation, ask yourself how your favorite cartoon character—perhaps Bart Simpson—would handle it. This might cause you to pause and chuckle.

Steve Allen Jr., assistant professor of family medicine, SUNY Health Science Center, Syracuse, NY, cited in *The Washington Post*.

Source: communication briefings, April 1992

How to stop being everything to everyone

Given the many roles we play in an increasingly complex society, more often than not we find ourselves juggling more things than we can possibly manage. Whereas our demands have increased exponentially, unfortunately our expectations of ourselves have not diminished. This imbalance leads to feelings of frustration, fatigue, and very often decreased self-esteem. Here are five major factors that often lead to our "ride on the merry-go-round."

1. An inability to delegate often leaves us feeling that no help is available and that we are totally responsible for all work that has to be done.
2. Setting unrealistic goals for ourselves dictates that what we do is never enough, this is a major contributor to low self-esteem.
3. Not asking for what we need makes us turn our friends and partners into unsuccessful mind readers. When people don't assist us in the way we expect, often relationships suffer.
4. Not understanding our time and resources can lead to over scheduling and results in constant stress and frustration.
5. An inability to prioritize often leaves everything on our plates with a "should" label attached.

Source: Dr. Georgia Nemetz, *Fitness Group Newsletter*, Fall '92.

ABCDEF GHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

ESL

RETROSPECTIVE BY AN ESL CHAMPION

Look how far we've come

by Mary Ashworth

Big Angus McKenzie from Pictou County, Nova Scotia, strode into the Okanagan Valley in the fall of 1875 with his pack on his back and a teaching certificate from the State of Kansas in his hand. In late December he was hired to teach in the newly established Okanagan School for \$60 a month plus free meat, milk, butter, eggs, and firewood.

Five months after the school opened, the inspector wrote in his report: "The children in the newly established school are making remarkable progress in their studies, especially when the fact is taken into consideration that many of them when they commenced were almost entirely ignorant of the English language." McKenzie was one of many teachers in B.C. who faced groups of children whose first language was not English but Finnish, Russian, Chinese, Japanese, German, or any one of the many native languages spoken in the province.

From time to time Chinese and Japanese children were segregated, not so much because they needed help in mastering English but on racial grounds. Missionaries opened kindergartens to teach these children English before they entered school. In the years between World War I and World War II, teacher... did what they could for their ESL children, but large classes

made it difficult for them to give the kind of individual help needed in learning a second language.

It was not until the cessation of World War II, which brought an increase in immigration from Europe, that the teaching of English as a Second Language was taken seriously. Ontario led the way by establishing a teacher-training certificate course and publishing a textbook by Carson Martin entitled *An Introduction to Canadian English*. A few teachers from B.C. made the trip east to take the Ontario course; then in the mid-'60s the University of B.C. mounted its own course; first with the help of a visiting professor from England, A.V.P. Elliott, and later with its own professors. Soon the course, Education 478, Teaching English as a Second Language, was enrolling around 250 students/teachers a year. As time passed, other institutions, SFU, UVic, the Language Institute at UBC, and the Vancouver Community College, were all in the teacher-training business.

In 1967 the Association of B.C. Teachers of English as an Additional Language, commonly known as TEAL, was formed with the help of Stan Evans of the BCTF. Other provinces followed suit and 10 years later these provincial organizations banded together as the TESL Canada Federation.

The accomplishments of TEAL are many. It started a

professional journal called *TEAL Occasional Papers* which was later taken over by the TESL Canada Federation and the name changed to *TESL Canada Journal*. It joined TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), an international organization, and this year on its 25th birthday TEAL, in conjunction with its regular annual convention, hosted the annual TESOL convention in Vancouver with a registration of nearly 7,000 participants from around the world.

For some years, through a group known as Directions ESL, the voice of ESL teachers was heard by provincial and federal ministers as they spoke up for their students, but now TEAL speaks for itself. But perhaps TEAL's greatest accomplishment was to establish the TEAL Charitable Foundation which, in addition to its other activities, provides scholarships and travel grants for teachers and bursaries for ESL students, as well as giving grants to various organizations that are engaged in projects promoting effective language learning or harmonious race relations. The foundation currently has just under \$200,000 in its coffers—its aim is to reach \$1,000,000 by the year 2000.

In 1975, Pat Wakefield, the first president of TEAL, became the first ESL consultant for Vancouver's school board where, as the years have passed, the percentage of ESL children in

the schools has risen to 50%. Recently, following an external review of its ESL program, the district opened the Oakridge Reception and Orientation Centre (OROC), to which all ESL children are directed when they first arrive in Vancouver. The Ministry of Education appointed Margaret Early as the first provincial consultant in 1979, a position that comes and goes according to the financial state of the province.

In 1987 the BCTF established an ESL provincial specialist association (PSA). This group of 325 teachers and 15 subscribers hold annual meetings that are highly professional in both content and presentation.

Methods of teaching have changed considerably during the last 40 years. The audio-lingual approach has been superseded by other methods, the most important of which combines language teaching with content teaching, or from the students' point of view, language learning with content learning. Professors from UBC are currently working with Vancouver teachers in projects using this method. Most school districts offer in-service courses on different aspects of ESL and multiculturalism.

Many children attend classes after school or on Saturday mornings to learn or maintain their home or heritage language, and B.C. now has a Heritage Language Teachers' Association.

Research has shown the value of bilingualism—two ways of taking in knowledge, resulting often in better marks in school, and greater imagination and creativity.

Over the years bilingual-cultural workers have proved themselves to be invaluable both to the school and the homes they serve. Educators recognize the importance of involving the parents in their children's education and find ways of crossing the language barrier through using interpreters and, on occasion, letting the parents sit in on a class or showing a video of the class in action. Counsellors can now receive training in working with children and their parents from different speech and ethnic groups.

Before 1945, none of the services I have listed above were available in the quantity and quality they are today, if, indeed, they were available at all. Look how far we've come!

Mary Ashworth is the author of *Blessed with Bilingual Brains: Education of Immigrant Children with English as a Second Language*, Pacific Educational Press, 1988, a cross-Canada survey of ESL in the public schools; *The First Step on the Longer Path: Becoming an ESL Teacher*, Pippin Press, 1992, a methodology text for classroom teachers and beginning ESL teachers; and *Children of the Canadian Mosaic*, a brief history to 1950, OISE Press, in press.

by Susan Inman

When I decided to try a readers' theatre project with my transitional English class, I wondered how they would respond. They had enjoyed doing a play-reading and they were fairly comfortable in doing oral reports in front of the class. Although they were still shy about disagreeing with each other in discussions, they had become freer in offering opinions about topics we examined. However, the expressive qualities I was hoping to explore in this activity were quite different from the other experiences we had had together.

The class had been working on a thematic unit, tracing the experiences of immigrants in a novel, a film, and poetry when I came across a class set of Dennis Foon's *Skin*. (*It's in Your Voice and Mine 3*, an anthology used in communications classes.) Foon, one of the founders of Green Thumb Theatre, had interviewed immigrant teens in Vancouver and Toronto before writing this powerful one-act play.

We had read the play as a class, and I explained readers' theatre to the students. Although this version of performance doesn't require memorization or elaborate staging, it does require a commitment to reading the lines expressively. This entails concentrated work on voice and speech patterns and on character development. With



AUSTIN EAGLE PHOTO

Dramatic oral reading of Dennis Foon's play, *Skin*, gave voice to real issues facing these Vancouver ESL students.

some trepidation and lots of comments about being shy, the class decided to take on the project.

I suddenly had a wonderful opportunity to work on breath control, enunciation, pronunciation, intonation, and emotional flavoring of English. Students began to notice the tendency to speak in short, choppy sentences, and they experimented with ways to link their words into larger chunks of thought and feeling. The class became more aware

of the nuances of expression, a skill that will serve them well in a society where people convey messages as much in how they say things as in what they say.

Even more valuable than the oral work, however, was the opportunity to explore the central issues of the play through improvisation. The characters experience a variety of the difficulties common to immigrant teens. They must confront racism from peers, teachers, and

employers. As well, they must bridge the gap between the values of their families and those of the new country. Students constructed role plays that allowed them to inhabit these situations more fully. In one especially poignant role play, a 20-year-old student from mainland China who was playing a Vietnamese student visiting a doctor to discuss his problems, began to describe vividly the feeling of being overwhelmed by the demands of a new

country and a new language. In the safety of being in role, he was much freer to express such feelings than he had been in discussions on related topics.

We needed several weeks to complete the range of writing, reading, and discussion that accompanied our work on the play. By the time of their presentation of their readers' theatre version of *Skin* to other ESL classes, the class seemed comfortable and confident. As one newly arrived Korean student wrote, "At first time, it was hard and scared to read the lines in front of the people, but later on, it was not that hard." Another student put it this way: "At the beginning of the play, the first time we started to read it, it was almost the worst time we had. I never thought we can spread out our emotional feelings smoothly just by the speech. I have learned how to do this with classmates. We took care of each other, made a connective relationship between us and we also shared the victory after we performed it. I loved it; it had made a good, lovely memory forever."

I was pleased by the enthusiasm and commitment my transitional students brought to the project. I now feel sure that readers' theatre doesn't just belong in my drama classes but that it can be meaningfully incorporated into my ESL classes as well.

Susan Inman teaches ESL and drama at Windermere Secondary School, Vancouver.

TWO RECENT REPORTS

Demographic changes in B.C. & ESL provision in B.C. schools

The Lower Mainland Multicultural Education Project — Phase 1: Demographic Overview, Malatest Associates of Victoria, April 1991.

Highlights:

- The Lower Mainland accounts for the bulk of migration into B.C., and will experience a 34.9% increase in arrivals in the next 10 years.
- The highest proportions of immigrants from countries excluding the USA and UK compared to non-immigrant populations occur in School Districts 39 (Vancouver), 38 (Richmond), and 41 (Burnaby).
- Comparing the three largest

Canadian cities (Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver), Toronto had, in 1986, the highest proportion of its population born outside Canada, but the biggest increase in people whose home language was not English was in Vancouver. • In 1983-84, 10,750 ESL students were enrolled in B.C. schools, 4.6% of the school population. In 1990-91, 31,246 ESL students were enrolled, 12% of the school population.

Settlement Services for Immigrant Children: A Needs Assessment, Rivers & Associates Consultants, October 1991.

Highlights:

- This report documents a number of demographic changes, and provides useful information concerning funding of ESL programs in B.C. schools, and profiles of eight school districts' ESL programs. The eight school districts are: 34 (Abbotsford), 36 (Surrey), 38 (Richmond), 39 (Vancouver), 41 (Burnaby), 43 (Coquitlam), 44 (North Vancouver), 61 (Greater Victoria). The report also

discusses a number of issues related to immigration, including teacher training/in-service, parental involvement and multicultural understanding, and conflict. • Between 3,281 and 4,438 (for a total of 21,380) school-age immigrants unable to speak English are expected to arrive in B.C. each year between 1991 and 1995. • Ministry of Education funding for ESL programs in elementary schools for 1990-91 is 67.6% of total, and is 32.4% of total for secondary schools. • The eight school districts listed above receive 88.4% of all ESL funding in B.C. Vancouver School District

receives 61.4% of provincial funding, Surrey receives 6.8%, Richmond 6.6%, and Burnaby 6.3%. • Comparisons of school-district profiles show that in Surrey, 53% of students whose home language is not English speak Punjabi or Hindi and 11% speak Chinese. In Vancouver, only 14% of the same categories of students speak Punjabi or Hindi, while 53% speak Chinese.

— Charlie Naylor, BCTF researcher

Further information and copies of the full reports are available through the BCTF Information Desk, Resources Centre.

Yours for the asking



Canadian Underwater Safari

From October 19-24, 1992, students and teachers across the continent will join divers and scientists on the Canadian Underwater Safari, a live expedition to the depths of the Pacific in search of giant octopi and mighty Gray whales. Using the latest in communications technology, live images will be transmitted to downlink outlets across Canada and the U.S., providing students with direct communication lines to project scientists.

Transmissions can be seen in the classroom on your local cable station, or classes can visit the Newcombe Theatre broadcast centre (Royal B.C. Museum) in Victoria. There are exciting opportunities for students at the theatre or in B.C. Tel offices.

Look for the Safari poster and school letter that arrived in your school in late August. To book classes into the Newcombe Theatre, call 387-7907 (Victoria).

October 26 - November 1 is Immigration Week in B.C.

Materials to assist teachers to encourage understanding of experiences of immigrants will be sent to principals' offices in late September. If you would like to obtain an information kit, teacher suggestions, and selected book and film lists as well as bookmarks, an immigration map, an annotated bibliography for educators, and a research bibliography, contact the Immigration Policy Branch of the Ministry of Education at 387-7970 (Victoria).

Self-defense workshops

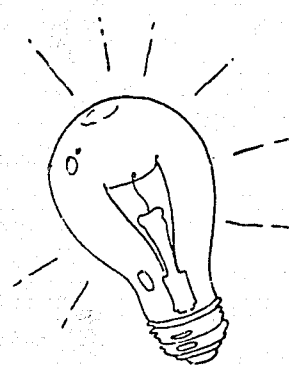
A teacher and instructor of combat martial arts offers self-defense for members of the BCTF. The workshops are offered free as a form of professional development. Contact Jon McCormick, H: 724-3570, S: 723-6251, local 27, Port Alberni, B.C.

500 Years and beyond: a teacher's resource guide

CoDevelopment Canada, with assistance from the BCTF W.R. Long Fund and the BCTF Global Education Project working with B.C. educators, has published a guide to help teachers address the issues presented by the 500th anniversary of Columbus' voyage to the Americas.

Teachers can use this guide to get students to think about, talk about, or reflect on the 500 years of contact between the indigenous and non-indigenous people of the Americas. It includes information on historical events and contemporary issues as well as curriculum materials for primary, and early and late intermediate. Available from the BCTF Lesson Aids Service for \$7.

There are also several other resources available: The First Nations Land Question: A Resource Package, \$10, BCTF Lesson Aids; Aboriginal Issues in B.C.: A resource kit, \$15, BCTF Lesson Aids; Colonialism in the Americas: A critical look, case studies, class activities, simulation game from VIDEA, phone 385-2333 (Victoria); Our Home and Native Land, annotated catalogue free from National Film Board of Canada, 300, 1045 Howe Street, Vancouver, BC V6Z 2B1; two annotated bibliographies from Chief's Mask bookstore, contact Renae at 687-4100.



October is power smart month

Attention primary and intermediate teachers. B.C. Hydro will soon be sending you a package of energy-education activities. They're hands-on, mathematical, creative, and just a little silly. These activities are also scheduled to appear in your community newspaper as part of Power Smart Month, when British Columbians focus on the importance and benefits of using energy efficiently. If you'd like more information on free energy education and electrical safety materials for primary, intermediate, and secondary students, phone 623-4289, or write to: Involvement in Education, B.C. Hydro, 333 Dunsmuir Street, 15th floor, Vancouver, BC V6B 5R3.

The Future of Canada

A curriculum resource package available through the BCTF Lesson Aids Service for \$20 (non-BCTF members \$24). The unit was developed for the BCTF by a team of social studies teachers and financed by grants from the Ministry of Education and Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism and Human Rights, the Secretary of State for Canada, and several school boards. Teachers will find the materials of assistance in dealing with the complex national unity issue in an objective manner. Order LA #9209 from BCTF LA Service, 2235 Burrard St., Vancouver, BC V6J 3H9, 731-8121, 1-800-663-9163, Fax 731-4891.

On the light side

Kid's-eye view of national indicators

by T. Evers-Chance

The setting: A typical Canadian household in the aftermath of Canada's adopting "national education indicators."

The characters: Jennifer, a bright-eyed student in the primary program. Her mother, works for Canadian Tire, which has just been purchased by the Japanese.

Jennifer: Mommy! Mommy! Guess what? I got a perfect mark on my spelling test. It was the best in the class.

Mom: That's not good enough, dear.

Jennifer: What do you mean, "it's not good enough"? I can't do better than that!

Mom: Of course you can! And you must do better. The future of our country and its ability to compete in the global economy depends on it.

Jennifer: I don't get it. I thought you would be proud of me.

Mom: There was a time when I would have been proud and would probably have called your grandparents to share the good news. But that was before I discovered that our education system can't cut the mustard, or should I say wasabe. To make it in the new economic order, you are going to have to get 120%. One hundred percent isn't good enough any more.

Jennifer: What do you mean? I like my school and my teacher. It's fun.

Mom: Sure it's fun. That's half the problem. According to the national indicators, how to have fun is just about all you learn in school. Canadian schools rank second among 17 industrialized nations in "fun," trailing only the United States. In everything else, we rank near the bottom.

Jennifer: What are national indicators?

Mom: National indicators are tests that every child in Canada writes. They tell taxpayers whether or not schools are doing a good job. They are just like tests written in other countries, so we can compare Canadian students with students in lots of other countries.

Canada Puzzle

When I was a little kid fifteen miles from the border I got a neat Christmas present. It was a jigsaw puzzle map of Canada.

I put it together and took it apart, over and over. It was not a game; it was a puzzle.

I got really good at it. I could put Canada together upside down. I could do it in the dark.

Then as often happens I lost a piece. I did what people always do when a jigsaw piece goes missing.

I threw the whole thing out.

— George Bowering

Source: *Urban Snow* by George Bowering, Talonbooks, 1992. Vancouver. \$12.95. ISBN 0-89922-305-X. Reprinted with permission.

Jennifer: It isn't fair. We can beat other people at lots of things. Maybe they are just asking Canadian kids the wrong questions.

Mom: Whatever do you mean?

Jennifer: Well, if the Swiss and the Argentines beat the pants off Canadian kids in spelling and arithmetic, let's test stuff Canadian kids know and kids in other countries don't.

Mom: Like what?

Jennifer: I bet the kids in my class know more about pop music than kids anywhere else in the world. The boy who sits next to me knows everything about hockey, including the birthdays of everybody who ever played with the Canucks. And lots of kids know the plots of soap operas. And you know that we can skate a lot better than the Cubans. Maybe, for once, they should let the kids make up the test. Who decides what should be on those tests, anyway?

Mom: I'm not sure. I guess business people tell the government what Canadian kids need to know in order to compete in the next century, and then the government writes the questions.

Jennifer: What is going to happen to Canadian kids if we keep messing up on these tests?

Mom: Canadians will be reduced to hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Jennifer: According to our social studies teacher, we already are hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Mom: I learned that when I was in school. They must be using the same textbook.

Jennifer: I'm serious, Mom. Supposing the test scores get worse, and Canada gets dropped right off the list of industrial nations?

Mom: What do you think will happen?

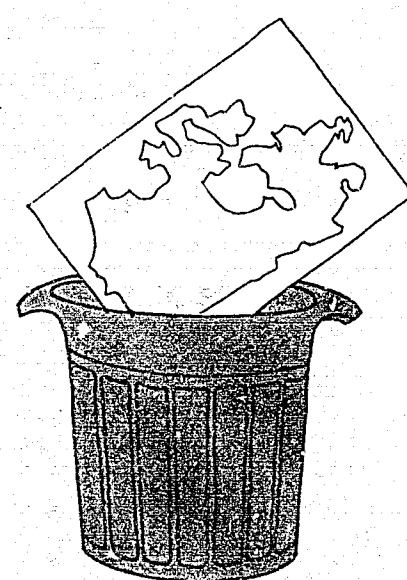
Jennifer: You're just like my teacher. You answered my question by asking another question. It makes my brain hurt ... Well, I guess there are two possibilities. Maybe, if people think that schools aren't very good, people will say that schools aren't very important and they will ignore them. Or maybe, people will say that we have to make our schools better, and they will care even more about our schools.

Mom: Don't be impertinent. When I was in school, we learned the basics. The problem is with schools today.

Jennifer: I didn't think we were supposed to compete with anybody any more. Our teacher says that we are supposed to do the best we can and move at our own pace. I don't even know how the kid who sits next to me is doing, so how am I supposed to know how the Koreans and the Germans are doing?

Mom: You aren't supposed to compete. The country is supposed to compete.

T. Evers-Chance is a B.C. teacher currently working for a provincial teachers' organization.



ESL IN NAMIBIA

by Carole Nakonechny

The decontextualization of time zones, airports, security checks is taking me away, back to the neutrality of daily life, away from Namibia...

I'm thinking back over the last two weeks, staring numbly out the airplane window. The images in my mind are more real than the present moment.

Greuzi, standing in direct confrontation with the Ministry of Education; Joyce, with the gentle heart of a young gazelle; Johnny's rage and Gerson's questions...and the rich glory of African voices, *Solidarity Forever*, rising in five-part harmony over the crowd.

The ride out to the airport was extraordinary. Our Namibian Teachers' Union colleagues decided at the last moment they would provide an escort to the airport. "It's like in the village," Marcus had joked, "you must accompany your guest to the next place. Technically, we should even slaughter a chicken for you to eat on the way!"

As we drove through 30 km of desolate countryside, our companions talked about conditions on the farms. The driver, an unknown face, spoke deliberately, eyes never leaving the road.

"The farmers are treating their workers very cruel, especially the Herero people. The Whites came and took their land. They had no place to go, so they came back to work for that farmer. Then, when the son would buy another farm, their children would go to work for them. The Whites massacred these people when they came, more than 100,000."

"I believe in revenge. The old law is an eye for an eye. Now there is no place for that. But if I had to, I would do it." This man will fight to death for his human dignity, and for those beside him. I can think of nothing to say except, "When you're strong, you want to protect others."

I realize again that nowhere have I felt the universal need for social justice and liberation as deeply as I have done these last weeks in Namibia. "Educate to liberate," the official slogan of NANTU, has been the daily inspiration of our project team.

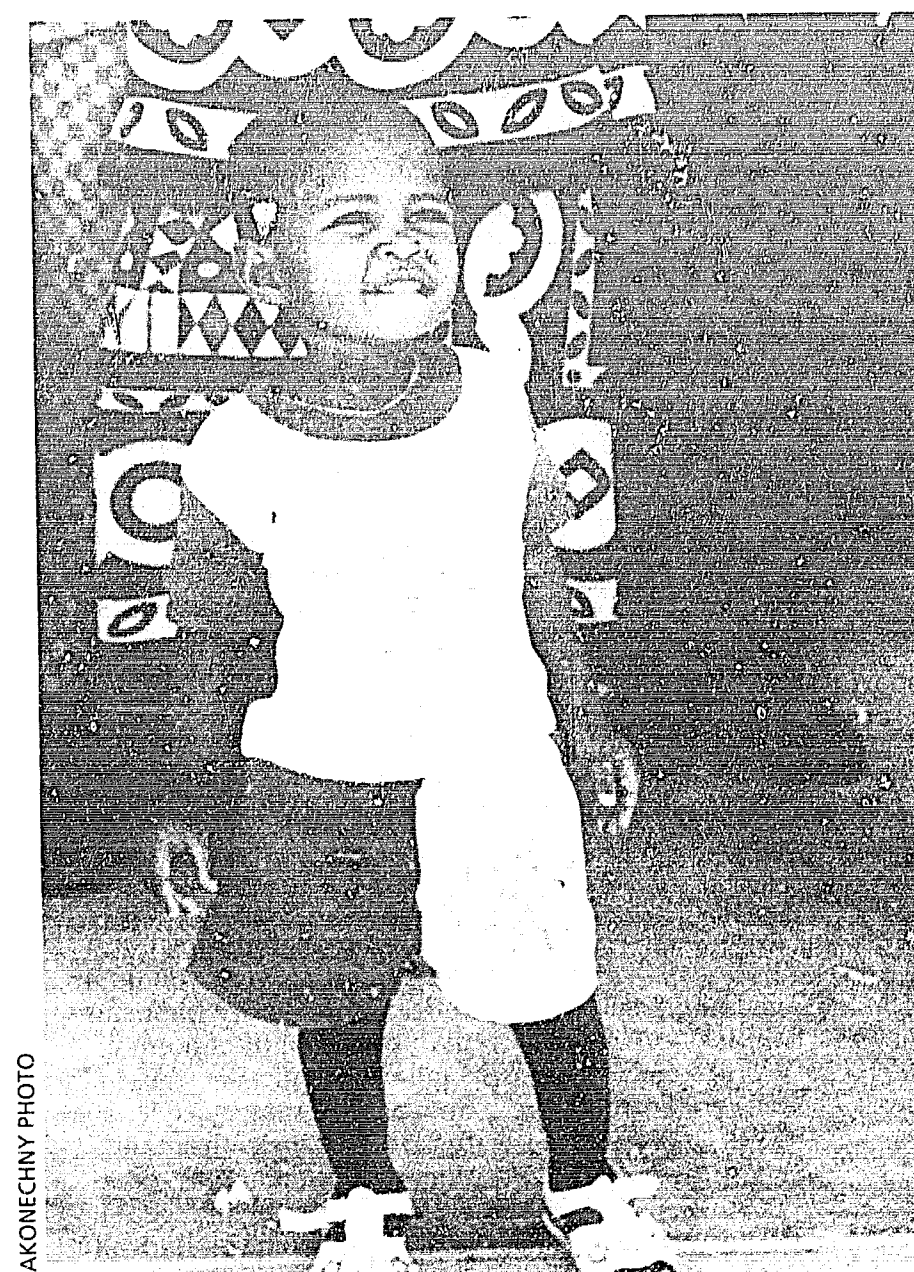
My partner, Sandra, and I arrived here two weeks ago as representatives of Project Overseas and the Canadian Teachers' Federation,* to deliver an in-service on language development and ESL methodology.

We are only the second Project Overseas team to be placed here. Namibia is the world's youngest country, having achieved independence in 1990 after decades of guerilla warfare between SWAPO (Southwest Africa Peoples' Organization) freedom fighters and the illegal colonial government of South Africa.

Orientation day. We are sitting in an air-conditioned conference room which could be inside any school board office, except all 40 faces in the audience are Black, and the topic of the opening address is "The Politics of Language in Namibia."

Language is an incendiary topic here in Namibia, where learning English is seen as an act of political liberation. For

Educate to liberate



NAKONECHNY PHOTO

Learning English is an act of political liberation for the 90% Black majority in Namibia.

the Black majority, over 90% of the population, their former official language of Afrikaans is the language of apartheid and colonial oppression.

The chairperson explains NANTU's position while fielding questions from the floor. "Since most teachers have been educated in Afrikaans, the immediate change-over to English can be problematic. NANTU's responsibility must be to facilitate this transition. Teachers must be agents of change in the introduction of English as a medium of instruction. The principals and administrators are part of the old colonial system. Our attitude should be that we are trying to assist them in the process of change. Our future is English."

Hands go up all around the room.

"We teachers in primary schools are only proficient in Afrikaans. We can't cope to teach those small ones in English."

"There are two reasons the administrators hesitate to speak English...lack of ability and sheer bloody-mindedness, they just won't change."

"I don't think a two-week course is enough for us to speak English." Sandra and I nod our heads in agreement and despair.

Two weeks, only two weeks in which to fulfill our objectives...

The next morning we get down to business and begin to rough out some theoretical and methodological priorities. Realistically, we ask ourselves, just how do you go about teaching a course in ESL methodology when many of the teachers are still in the process of learning English themselves? The team agrees our course material must be framed in practical and experiential terms. We decide

much. The most exciting moment was when I heard myself speak. I couldn't believe that I can speak so good in English. I can even speak before a crowd. Oh! what an exciting thing.

Our two weeks is coming to a close. Today the whole room is alive with intellectual excitement. Our guest speaker from the University of Namibia has opened up a wide range of issues such as racism and stereotypes, human rights, feminism, and linguistic equality, and as a native Zimbabwean, she has been able to explore these concepts from an African perspective.

This presentation has been a powerful experience for the students. They feel connected with the wider universe of free intellectual inquiry, a place outside the paranoid racist myths that have obsessed Southern Africa.

One of the teachers stays up writing in his journal late into the night.

"I would not mind listening for hours to Ms. Tarra lectures, that is the kind of education teachers need because our teachers have been brain damaged by the colonial system."

"Before independence the black teacher, as a result of the system, believed that he or she was inferior to the white man. That was the colonial image of the black teacher."

"The white teacher, as a result of the system, believed that he or she was superior to the black man. That was the colonial image of the white teacher."

"With independence, a new nation with a new image, the image of equality was born. Now the black man and the white man must struggle to reconcile their pre-independence images with the post-independence realities."

"After the phase of the reconciliation of the black man and the white man on an individual level has been completed, only then can we talk about national reconciliation."

NAMIBIA

Oxfam and BCTF working together

When Namibia gained its independence in 1989 it was a country that had suffered for decades under the occupation of South Africa and its imposed apartheid system. The majority of the population was forced to live in poverty and was confined to homelands. The right to organize unions, political parties, and other institutions we take for granted, was strictly controlled by the government and dissent was violently repressed. Now that Namibia is independent the people are rebuilding their society and creating new institutions that will be the foundation of their new non-racial democracy.

Oxfam Canada and the BCTF are working in solidarity with Namibian teachers to make this vision a reality. Representatives of the Namibia National Teachers'

Our closing ceremony has just finished. The Canada-Namibia Project Overseas session is now officially over but one very important thing still remains for me to do. I can't leave Africa without the NANTU Gospel. The core group of five male harmonizers, along with many other well-wishers, arrives for the recording session in Classroom C. A program is decided: *Amarulla*, my favorite, a folk song about strong drink and the avoidance thereof; *A Very Silent Night*, complete with frogs, crickets, and click sounds; the Namibian national anthem *Solidarity Forever*; and the Goodbye Carole, Goodbye Sandra Song.

The music is given out of each heart, soaring in rich natural harmonies. The room seems bright with transcendence. These are very ordinary guys, in jeans and sports shirts (except for Israel in his perpetual pinstripe) but this music makes me remember that we do come "trailing clouds of glory." The machinery of apartheid, anti-human, impossible, seems far away.

The music rises again, a baptism.

Then it's over. I seem to be giving everyone a big totally inappropriate Canadian bear hug goodbye. The room is empty and I am crying, staring through an empty window. I keep thinking of the last song they sang for us: "Goodbye Carole, Goodbye Sandra, May the sun shine on your way."

Goodbye our dear teachers Until we meet again."

And who knows, maybe someday we will.

Carole Nakonechny, a teacher at King George Secondary School, Vancouver, participated in a two-week Project Overseas session in Namibia last spring.

* Project Overseas is a volunteer assistance program directed by CTF in which teams of Canadians donate their time and expertise to teach academic and professional upgrading courses to teachers in developing countries. Every year an average of 75 Canadians are posted to approximately 120 countries.

Union, NANTU, and Namibian educators came to Canada to explain their needs. Through these discussions came some initial teacher-training projects designed to impart skills to Namibian teachers so that they can in turn teach others. Teacher training will remain high on NANTU's list of priorities for some time and Oxfam and the BCTF will continue to support these efforts.

But a relationship of solidarity requires ongoing communication to increase and maintain understanding of connections and shared interests. Oxfam continues to support the development of such a relationship between the teachers of Namibia and B.C. Working together for change, NANTU, Oxfam, and the BCTF are part of a global movement towards democracy, social justice, and international solidarity.

Source: Oxfam-Canada

Research/Resources

The Unschooled Mind: How Children Think and How Schools Should Teach
by Howard Gardner

r. Howard Gardner, co-director of Project Zero at Harvard, and author of *Frames of Mind*, has authored a new book, *The Unschooled Mind: How Children Think and How Schools Should Teach*. It is destined to be a best seller, offering practical advice to educational reformers who want to provide the best possible education for students. Far from offering simplistic solutions to today's educational dilemmas, Gardner discusses the complex issues related to assessment, curriculum, teacher education, and community support as the foundations of meaningful change. His goal is to reduce the gap between the agenda for school

and the agenda for life by focussing on understanding as learning takes place. He notes, "If we are to achieve a milieu in which understanding is prized, it is necessary for us all to be humble about what we know and to move away from our present, invariably inadequate perspectives." Every educator will find much of value in this book as present systems are being reassessed and restructured. Adapted from a Review by Jean K. Elder, Vice-President for Special Projects, Performance Learning Systems. Source: Performance Learning Systems newsletter, *The Heart of Teaching*, No. 10, May 1992.

Raising Standards in Student Testing

In a recent report of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), critics charge that current standardized tests measure only 30% of what school systems want students to learn. What's worse, many

schools are under pressure to teach to the test because tests are increasingly used for accountability, ranking schools from best to worst. The report discusses alternatives such as performance-based assessments of writing and math in California, and the use of student portfolios in Vermont. Portfolios collect student work, such as writing samples, and provide an authentic demonstration of student ability or understanding. The key, according to the report, is to use assessments to improve education for individual students and to avoid hiding a child's performance behind a school's average scores. The 102-page book, *The Changing Face of Testing and Assessment*, stock number 021-003-00338, is available for \$14.95, plus \$3.50 postage and handling, from AASA Publications, 1801 North Moore Street, Arlington, VA 22209-9988. Source: Performance Learning Systems newsletter, *The Heart of Teaching*, No. 10, May 1992.

New Salary Indemnity Plan (SIP) fee starts this September

The SIP benefit is an essential form of insurance. Startling facts support this. The likelihood of a teacher's becoming disabled for more than six months is one in three; for more than one year, is one in four. Being disabled for two or more years is a significantly greater likelihood than dying in service. As the teaching force becomes younger the level of disability should decline. The '92 BCTF AGM adopted an increased SIP fee after considering two principles. The first is that the Salary Indemnity Fund should operate on a fully funded basis, as stated in plan regulation 7.5: "Reserves, determined by annual actuarial study, shall be established in order to support the objective that the plan operate on a fully funded basis." The second is that benefits from the Salary Indemnity Plan should be sufficient to ensure that disabled members have an income adequate to allow them to live in dignity and financial security. There are four parts to the recommended premium for the operation of the Salary Indemnity Plan:

1. *Short-term premium.* It is currently 0.2% of salary. Short-term experience has increased 50%. As this experience has continued for two full years, it is prudent to assume that plan experience has reached a new level. Thus, the Salary Indemnity Plan: Short-Term premium needs to be increased from 0.2% to 0.3% based on the new higher usage.

2. *Long-term premium for current benefits.* The long-term plan, as may be expected from reviewing short-term experience, has had an increase in experience. Thus, a premium increase from 0.8% to 0.85% of salary to fund current benefits was required.
3. *Short-term and long-term unfunded liabilities.* A 0.1% of salary was added to the premium to amortize the unfunded liability over five years, to ensure that the plan operates on a fully funded basis. The best guarantee of any benefit is that the funds are on hand to pay it.
4. *Long-term premium for the required benefit improvement.* The AGM removed regulation 22.1, the two-year limitation on benefits for psychoneurotic claims. Given the state of various legal cases throughout Canada, the current restriction would likely be ruled contrary to the B.C. Human Rights Act, and the plan would have been forced to provide coverage without amendments to either plan regulations or the fee to provide such a change. The fee required for this amendment, for new claims as at September 1992, is 0.35% of salary. Thus the final premium recommendation has the following four components:

Short-term	(for current benefits) 0.30%
Long-term	(for current benefits) 0.85%
Short-term	unfunded liability 0.05%
Long-term	unfunded liability 0.05%
Removal of	two-year limit 0.35%
Total of gross	annual salary 1.60%

The new premium is very competitive with premiums of similar plans. Great West Life Assurance advises that if the Salary Indemnity Plan: Long-term were to be reinsured with them, they would quote 3.0% of salary for LTD benefits, compared to the 1.25% teachers will pay this fall. Teachers are reminded of the original rationales for self-insuring: to keep the costs as low as possible by eliminating excess reserves and profit margins, and to put control of the plan design and policy in the hands of teachers. For detailed information, refer to the full report in *Reports and Resolutions* to the 1992 AGM.



Teachers remembered

As reported by the Superannuation Commission, the following teachers died recently. The last known district in which the member taught is also listed.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Leonard Anderson, West Vancouver | John Meester, Vancouver |
| Shirley Bonfield, Alberni | Verle Moore, Vernon |
| Karen Bradley, Vancouver | Margaret Murray, Creston Valley |
| Isaac Braun, Langley | Lillian Nicolson, Chilliwack |
| William Brooks, Vancouver | Eleanor Ormrod, Alberni |
| Dan Campbell | John Parnall, UBC |
| Anna Lea Christensen, Queen Charlotte | Hilda Pickell, Vancouver |
| Ethel Clark, Victoria | Hubert Pritchard, Penticton |
| Marvin Deeds, Kamloops | Gau Purba, Delta |
| Jennie Forde, Powell River | Gerald Rodford, South Cariboo |
| John Gillatt, Cowichan | John Summers, Surrey |
| Frederick Harvey, Richmond | Ralph Taylor, Chilliwack |
| Freda Hayman, Delta | Aubrey Thomas, Central Okanagan |
| Agnes Henning, Victoria | Wilfred Tocher, Langley |
| Jessie Johns, Vancouver | Tsukiko Tsutsuki, Victoria |
| Ruby Kidd, Vancouver | Edna Urquhart, Kamloops |
| Albert Lacey, Kimberley | Allan Walsh, Vancouver |
| Stanley McFarland, Victoria | John Watkin, Alberni |
| Margaret McNiven, Vancouver | Margaret Watt, Vancouver |
| Catherine Matthews, Terrace | |

Retirement seminars a hit

More than 1,000 teachers attended 14 retirement-planning seminars held throughout the province last year. The youngest attendee was 36; the oldest, 77 (he is already retired but wanted to find out what was new on the retirement scene). The average age of attendees was 52, and those aged 50 and older reported being within three years (on average) of retiring. Ken Smith, BCTF staff, encourages younger teachers to attend. Written comments from participants are overwhelmingly positive. One Sunshine Coast teacher stated: "A fantastic eye-opening presentation. Very, very good. Great." Many attendees would prefer to focus just on the pension plan, perhaps not realizing that what you do in retirement is more important than the amount of money available. From Coquitlam: "I now realize that there is more to planning for retirement than just financial arrangements. The three gentlemen from the Retired Teachers' Association did a fantastic job of explaining the concept of retirement." From Fort St. John: "Your pension information saved me money." From Williams Lake: "Very good, information-packed day."

Ken Smith and Karen Harper, BCTF Income Security Department, write this column for Teacher.

- 1992-93 Retirement seminar locations**
Time: 09:00 to 16:00 (unless otherwise noted)
- November 14, 1992
Castlegar Hi Arrow Motor Inn
- November 21, 1992
Cranbrook, Inn of the South
- December 12, 1992
Nanaimo, Coast Bastion Inn
- January 9, 1993
Kelowna, Capri Hotel
- January 30, 1993
Coquitlam, Best Western Coquitlam Motor Inn
- February 6, 1993
Vancouver, Holiday Inn Vancouver Centre
- February 13, 1993
Richmond, Richmond Inn
- February 27, 1993
Surrey, Surrey Inn
- March 6, 1993
Chilliwack, Best Western Rainbow Country Inn
- March 27, 1993
Campbell River, Anchor Inn
- April 14, 1993
Smithers, Hudson Bay Lodge (16:00 to 20:00)
- April 15, 1993
Prince Rupert, Crest Motor Hotel (16:00 to 20:00)
- April 17, 1993
Terrace, Inn of the West
- May 1, 1993
Victoria, The Coast Victoria Harbourside Hotel
- May 15, 1993
Prince George, Coast Inn of the North

Retirement can be an exciting time of your life — but you need to plan ahead to make the most of it.

CHRISTMAS INDONESIA
Deluxe hotels, air, tours, inclusive \$2845

VIETNAM • CAMBODIA \$3700
Summer departures

INDONESIA IN DEPTH
3-week summer

BALI AND ORIENT HOLIDAYS
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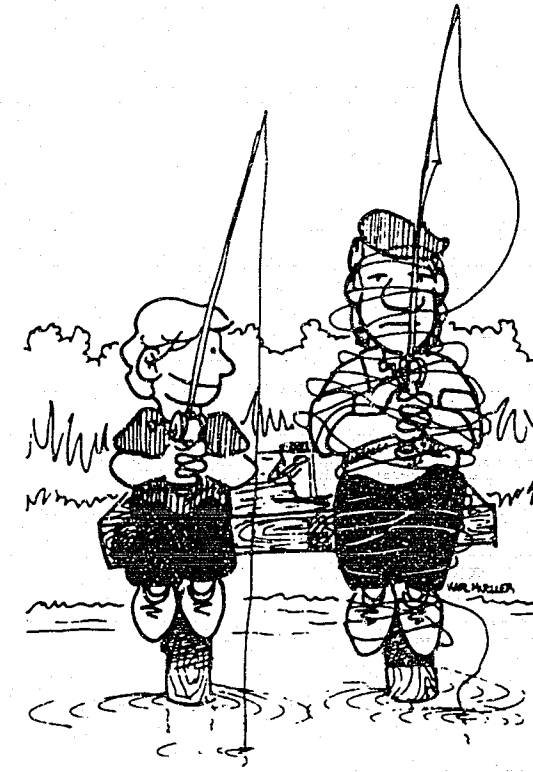
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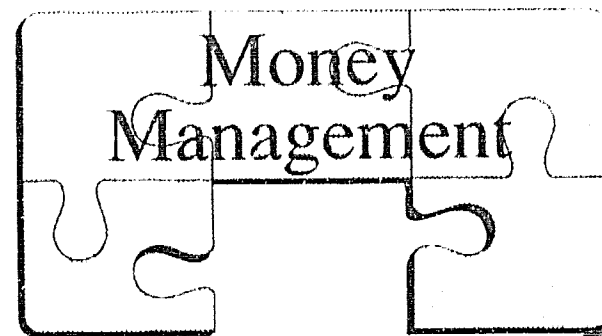
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Available: Monday-Thursday Sept. 14 - Nov. 26
Capacity: 50 students

The Museum Adventure Visit

Suitable for: Kindergarten, Grade 1
Times: 10:00 - 11:40 a.m. or 12:30 - 2:10 p.m.
Available: Fridays Sept. 18 - Nov. 20
Capacity: 50 students

The 3 R's

Suitable for: Grades 3,4,5
Times: 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. or 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.
Available: Monday-Thursday Sept. 14 - Nov. 26
Capacity: 32 students (no exceptions)

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Suitable for: Kindergarten - Grade 7
Times: Various from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Available: Monday-Friday Nov. 30 - Dec. 18
Capacity: 50 students

Avoid Disappointment, book early!
For information and bookings, call 293-6500 10-2 daily

Cost for each program is \$2.50 per child, \$4.50 per child if you book two different programs on the same day.

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16-17 B.C. Science Teachers' Association activities at Science World, the Vancouver Aquarium, and the Planetarium, Vancouver. Contact Lon Mandrake, Seagum Secondary School, 11584 Lyon Rd., Delta, BC V4E 2K4, 591-6166.

16 B.C. Teacher-Librarians' Association's "Update '92," Uvic. Registration contact: Libby Rush, 721-7874, Uvic.

16 Quality Daily Physical Education Conference, sponsored by the Physical Education PSA, Douglas College, New Westminster. Contact Chris Johnson, Douglas College, 527-5041.

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16-17 Okanagan Learning Assistance Teachers' Association Conference, Dr. Anita Archer, "Effective Delivery of Lessons for All Teachers," and "LA Strategies for Effective Collaboration," in Oliver. Contact LATA Conference, c/o SD 14, Southern Okanagan, 498-3481, F: 498-4070.

16-17 Provincial Intermediate Teachers' Association Annual Fall Conference, "Keys to Change," Vernon. Contact Carol Whitwell, 542-0456.

OCTOBER

14-17 West Coast Kaleidoscope—The Shapes, Designs, and Patterns of Communication, the 7th annual conference of the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education, Westin Bayshore Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Leslie Dyson, Vancouver School Board, 731-1131 (248), F: 736-8564.

15-17 6th Annual Pacific Coast Brain Injury Conference, "A Lifetime Challenge," Sheraton Landmark Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Pacific Coast Brain Injury Conference, c/o Classic Consulting International Inc., 2249 LeClair Drive, Coquitlam, BC V3K 6P6, 931-7600, F: 937-5898.

15-17 3rd "Get High on Nature" Environmental Conference for teachers, secondary school students, and parents; Nelson. Guests include Stephen Lewis, John Livingston, and George Woodwell. Contact Debbie Lindholm, 352-6681, F: 352-6686; Bob Harrington, 369-2281 (evenings).

16 B.C. Social Studies Teachers' Association Conference, "Social Studies—The Next Generation," David Thompson Secondary School, Vancouver. Contact Rob Sandhu, 5930 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC V6M 3E1, H: 263-9108, S: 321-6741, F: 322-5681.

16 B.C. English Teachers' Association annual conference, Hotel Vancouver. Contact John F. McGuinness, 12725 - 56th Avenue, Surrey, BC V3X 2Y7, 596-5315.

16 Action for Excellence Conference, "Motivating the Educational Team," presented by Dan Miesco with Vic Lindal and others; North Vancouver. Contact Irene Miesco, 3911 Southridge Avenue, West Vancouver, BC V7V 3H9, H/F: 925-3759.

16 Island Regional Science Olympics, a competition for Grade 11/12 students and science/math workshops for teachers, Uvic Physics Department, Victoria. Contact Dr. George Beer, 721-7745, F: 721-7715.

16 ESL PSA Annual Conference, Lower Mainland. Contact Vicki Rogers, 731-2157, F: 739-0093.

16 Learning Assistance Teachers' Association regional conferences, locations TBA. Contact Jennifer Blenkinsop, LATA president, 2906 Argo Place, Burnaby, BC V3J 7G3, H: 421-4055, S: 939-9247.

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16-17 B.C. Primary Teachers' Association Annual Fall Conference, Abbotsford. Contact Chris Bischoff, 956 Tronson Dr., Kelowna, BC V1Y 4E1, H: 763-9332, S: 762-7221, F: 763-8543.

16-17 Annual conference, Association for Educators of Gifted, Talented, and Creative Children in B.C., "Developing a System of Support for the Learner with Gifted Abilities," Vancouver. Contact Dave Halme, 3391 Hilton Rd., Duncan, BC V9L 4R1, H: 748-1955, S: 749-6634, F: 749-6222.

16-17 Annual conference, B.C. Association of Teachers of Mathematics, Pitt Meadows Secondary School. Contact Keith Chong, O: 463-8200, F: 463-4181.

16-17 B.C. Association of Teachers of Modern Languages Annual Fall Conference, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Ella Starr, Fairlane Terrace, Victoria, BC V8P 2E5, H: 384-9919, S: 388-5456.

16-17 B.C. Technology Education Association Annual Fall Conference, Centennial Secondary School, Coquitlam. Contact Brian Tivy, 10992 McAdam Rd., Delta, BC V4C 3E8, H: 583-2859, S: 931-3574, or Bob Drummond, 936-9491.

17 Teaching About Hong Kong: Issues and Resources, SFU Harbour Centre, Vancouver. Co-sponsored by the Social Studies PSA. Registration fee: \$10. Contact Kim Tan of S.U.C.E.S.S. at 684-1628 or Rick Beardsley at the BCTF.

17-25 Science and Technology Week, "Inventors—The Spirit of Innovation," Contact Eva Therkelsen, Science and Technology Week Coordinator, 2nd floor, 1022 Government St., Victoria, BC V8V 1X4, 387-1628, F: 356-0021.

23-24 Family Life Education in the '90s, a special conference for family-life educators, community health personnel, and Planned Parenthood workers. The Justice Institute, Vancouver. Contact Barbara Hestrin, Planned Parenthood Association of B.C., 305-2902 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6K 2G8, 731-4252.

26-1 November—B.C. Immigration Week. Contact Immigration Policy Branch, 387-7970 for information on materials available and events.

28-31 Canadian Vocational Association Annual Conference, "Challenges and Opportunities," Victoria Conference Centre. Contact Conference Co-ordinator, Camosun College, 4461 Interurban Rd., RR 3, Victoria, BC V8X 3X1, 370-4000, F: 370-3898.

31-7 November—16th annual Canadian Children's Book Week: "It All Begins Here...Read Canadian." Celebrate Canada's 125th birthday with Canadian books for children.

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31-7 November—16th annual Canadian Children's Book Week: "It All Begins Here...Read Canadian." Celebrate Canada's

SPECIAL NEEDS

Integration success pivots on support

by Barbara Gunn

When nine-year-old Derek isn't in school, he's immersed in the kind of fun that appeals to most kids his age. On sunny days, he's often found outdoors, zapping his Richmond playmates with a water gun, playing hockey, or swinging a baseball bat.

But Derek and his buddies have to make some minor accommodations when baseball's the game at hand. After Derek has slugged the ball, one of his friends has to push him from base to base. Derek has spina bifida and is confined to a wheelchair.

He may not be able to run, but Derek still sees himself as a typical boy, just one of the kids who packed away their water guns in September and headed into Grade 4 at Samuel Brighthouse Elementary School, in Richmond.

Had Derek been born not so long ago, the picture would probably have been a different one. His foster mom, Diane Zimich, reckons that if Derek had started school just 10 years earlier, he might have been placed in a segregated classroom.

Today, there is greater integration* of students with special needs, like Derek, in B.C. schools. Such integration, points out BCTF researcher Charlie Naylor, is now more commonplace, the result of a world-wide shift in thinking away from putting people into boxes and categories, and also a result of legislative changes in B.C.

Naylor, along with other observers, believes that integration has undeniable benefits.

For classroom teachers and so-called regular school children, there's been a lessening of fears and an acceptance of human differences. For the integrated children themselves, there can be benefits related to self-esteem, socialization, and education itself.

"When all kids finish school," says Naylor, "we want them to be part of the community. We don't want them to live lonely and isolated lives."

Yet in spite of that sentiment—echoed by others in the profession—there are acknowledged difficulties in the implementation of integration. Many classroom teachers cite stresses related to the inclusion of children with behavioral and social problems. Others point to organizational stumbling blocks, limited training for teachers, and lack of resources from government.

Naylor suggests that good intentions and government directives are not enough to make integration problem-



TIM PELLING PHOTO

Across B.C., students with special needs, like Derek from Brighthouse Elementary School, Richmond (centre) are learning alongside their friends and siblings. The benefits of integration show in his face. The sustained support for integration remains in question.

free. It's imperative, he says, that all teachers receive adequate resources, support, and appropriate training if integration is to work effectively.

"We have a government mandate to include students with special needs in our classrooms," says Naylor, "and therefore, every teacher will be a (potential) teacher of students with special needs."

But there is no mandatory training for people dealing with special needs... (Everyone) should have the basics, at least."

Fay Wheeler, a Grade 1 teacher in Nelson, knew little about autism at this time last year. But she quickly became familiar with the condition—through a process she calls "learn as you go"—after an autistic youngster was placed in her classroom. She admits that some advance knowledge of autism might have benefited her, but she also thinks it may have given her some biases and preconceived notions about that particular student. "As it was, I took him as I saw him."

Wheeler says she experienced some difficulties with the child—he could be extremely violent on occasion—yet he also made strides in his social development.

Monica Doyle, one of Wheeler's Nelson colleagues, also teaches Grade 1. Like Wheeler, she had a student with special needs in her class last year: a youngster with a hearing impairment.

Doyle has had no special-

education training, but doesn't feel it would have helped with that particular experience, which she describes as completely positive. "With a more severe case, it might have been helpful," she says. Doyle feels classroom

We have a government mandate to include students with special needs in our classrooms, ...therefore, every teacher will be a (potential) teacher of students with special needs.

teachers could benefit from training on how to effectively deal with the behavioral concerns that sometimes accompany the students with special needs.

Doyle is quick to applaud the contributions of her teacher's assistant, who not only worked intensively with the hearing-impaired child, but also taught signing to the

school's entire Grade 1 population.

Wheeler agrees that her teacher's assistant, who worked full-time with her students with special needs last year, made an enormous difference in the classroom. "I couldn't have done it without her," she says. All teachers need this support.

To BCTF's Naylor, who is researching this area, there is a crisis nearing, because few teachers receive anything close to appropriate support. While teachers see the merits in the idea of integration, they cannot be expected to bear the full load.

He points to a five-point research proposal that was drafted earlier this year following a two-day think tank involving teachers from across the province. That federation document includes a number of proposals ranging from the development of curriculum materials for secondary teachers through to examination of the roles of school-based teams and relationship of teachers to teaching assistants.

So far, says Naylor, the government's response has been "No" to supporting these proposals, i.e., funding.

Marilyn Miller, president of the provincial Special Education Association, suggests there's also a need for some clarification in the role of the special-education teacher.

"There's been a dearth of information from the ministry on our roles and responsibilities," she says.

"There's no manual on how to be an integration specialist."

As district-support teacher in Nelson—she works out of seven elementary and two secondary schools in her district—Miller's job is in complete contrast to what it once was. At one time, she was assigned her own room, where she independently developed and implemented programs for students with special needs. Today, her job is a collaborative, supportive one; she works alongside administrators, parents, teachers, and other professionals in mapping out and implementing individual education plans (I.E.P.s) for each student with special needs.

The Special Education PSA is taking the initiative to study what's happening in the field. A committee, headed by Nelson special-education teacher Antonia Huber, has been examining the role of the special-education teacher in B.C. Its report will go to the association executive in the fall and to the association membership for review.

"We've never actually formalized this before," says Huber. "We've looked (in the report) at the children we're dealing with, a little bit at our training, and the skills we need on the job... This is a way the Special Education Association can provide some kind of frame or outline that other districts could use to review their own model."

"We're still in the infancy stage. We're still in the hands-on-and-do-it stage," says Miller. "We don't even have any data yet. I don't even know if I have a vision for the future."

But Diane Zimich does have a vision for the future of young Derek, a vision that's been fuelled by his integration into his classroom.

"It's increased our hopes. He's with everybody else and will move through the system with everybody else. He'll graduate with everybody else and have a girlfriend like everybody else... Hopefully, he'll live as normal a life as his brothers and sisters."

Barbara Gunn is a Richmond freelance writer.

* When referring to programs for students with special needs, a variety of terms are used, such as inclusion, mainstreaming, etc. Each reflects a specific meaning along a continuum from inclusion in a neighborhood school to segregation. Integration will be used throughout this article as it is a more general term.

Write to us

What is your experience with integration of students with special needs? What is working? What is needed to support teachers and students with its implementation? Write: Editor, Teacher newsmagazine, c/o Integration.