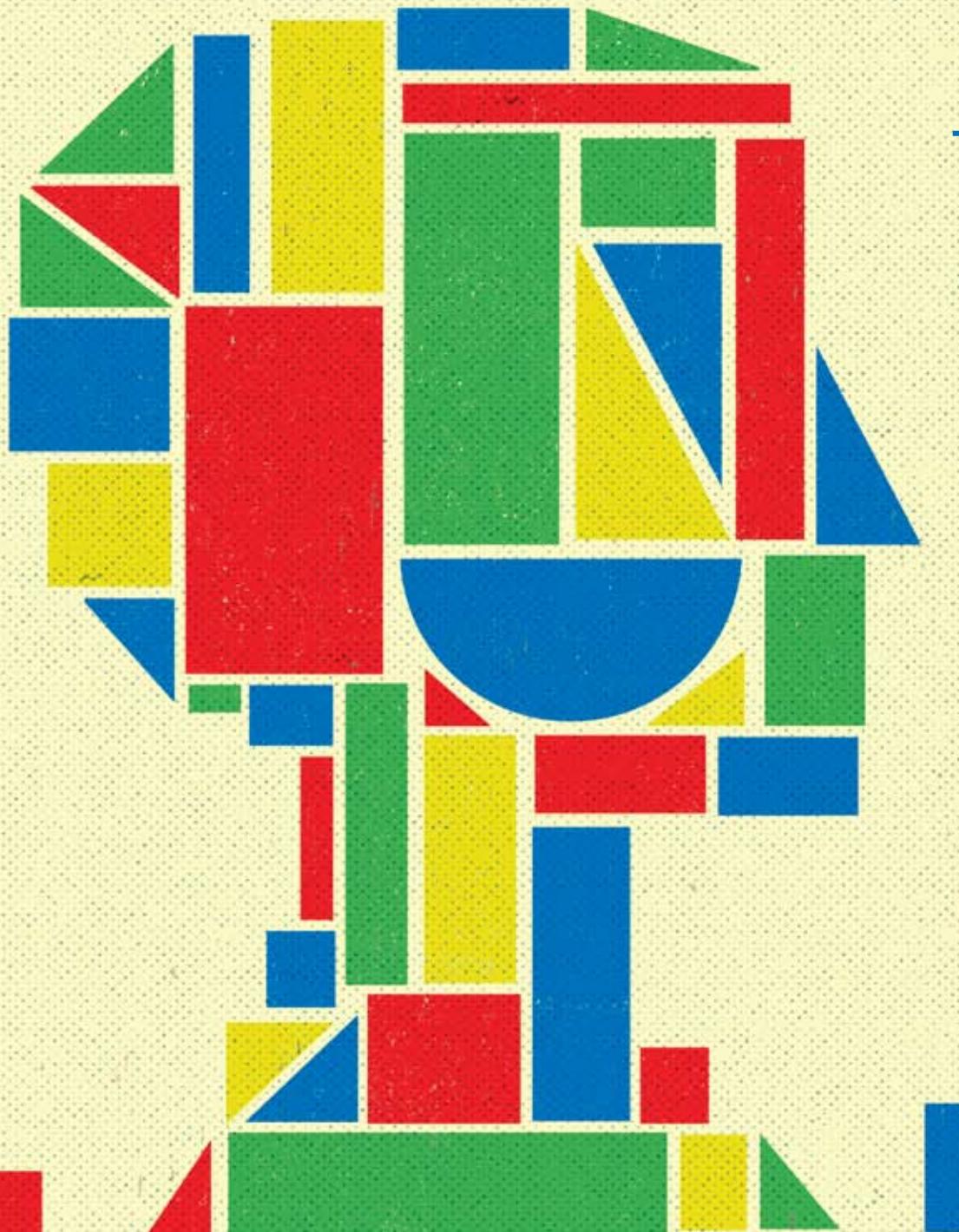


EDUCATION

FORUM



Thoughtful
education
reform

It can happen, if we
steer clear of corporate
education bandwagons

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Editor Wendy Anes Hirschegger **Managing Editor** Ronda Allan **Traffic Co-ordinator** Audrey Bourque **Copy Editor** Jocelyn Laurence **Translation** Diane Saint-Pierre; Publicité Services **Art Direction and Design** Fresh Art & Design Inc. **Cover** Dan Page **Editorial Submissions** Unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, artwork, and materials sent on speculation should include ample postage on a self-addressed, stamped envelope **Member** Canadian Educational Press Association; Education Forum (ISSN 0840-9269) is indexed in the Canadian Education Index and available online in the Canadian Business & Current Affairs Database from Micromedia Ltd., 20 Victoria Street, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2N8. Tel. 416-362-5211 **Publisher** Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation/Fédération des enseignantes-enseignants des écoles secondaires de l'Ontario, www.osstf.on.ca. Published tri-annually. Advertising rates listed in CARD, on OSSTF/FEESO's website www.osstf.on.ca or available upon request. **Business Manager** Pierre Côté **Sales Director** Renate M. Brandon **Advertising Office** Education Forum, 60 Mobile Drive, Toronto, Ontario M4A 2P3. Tel. 416-751-8300. Fax: 416-751-3394. GST 107800682. Although advertisements are screened as carefully as possible, acceptance of an advertisement does not imply OSSTF/FEESO endorsement of the product or service. Advertising contracts are subject to cancellation upon receipt of complaints from members. **Subscription Rates** One school or calendar year (3 issues): \$15. Outside Canada: \$20. Single issues: \$5. Back issues: \$6. **Postmaster** Return undelivered copies to 60 Mobile Drive, Toronto, Ontario M4A 2P3. Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement No. 40012523. **Submissions** Education Forum, 60 Mobile Drive, Toronto, Ontario M4A 2P3. Tel. 416-751-8300, Toll free 1-800-267-7867; allanr@osstf.on.ca



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Strong public education

Weaving Canadian values into the social fabric

Last December, the results of the Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009 were released, and Canada scored very well indeed: 6th overall. Of even greater interest, though, is the fact that Ontario was specifically noted among the “strong performers” and “successful reformers.” In an opinion piece in the *Toronto Star* on January 26, 2011, Andy Hargreaves, formerly of OISE and respected in education circles both in Canada and abroad, had this to say:

“Being Canadian is not about occupying the middle ground in everything. It’s also about being co-operative and inclusive and about valuing shared community and public life. It’s not this or that province’s policy that makes Canada such a strong educational performer, but a social fabric that values education and teachers, prizes the public good and doesn’t abandon the weak in its efforts to become economically stronger. These are the things that make Canada educationally successful, and that it should cherish and protect compared to poorer PISA performers, like the U.S. (17th) and U.K. (24th).”

As we move closer to a provincial election in October, it will serve us well to remember this and to ensure the candidates we vote for also believe in these ideals, which are serving Ontario and Canada so well at present. The articles we have included in this issue of *Education Forum* also reflect some of these ideals.

The cover story, “Thoughtful education reform: It can happen if we steer clear of corporate education bandwagons,” deals with these themes directly. The article speaks of the current trends in the United States to adopt policies that are only serving to weaken public education and undermine the ideals Hargreaves describes above. Indeed, the policies

of increased standardized testing, the proliferation of charter schools and the introduction of merit pay have not improved public education nor strengthened society in the U.S. but rather have

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undermined both. As such, any attempt to bring those policies to Ontario must be actively opposed.

Rena O’Halloran’s article, “Doing a U-Turn: A restorative approach to getting back on track,” describes a very successful program that helps students who had been suspended or expelled to re-engage in their education so they can ultimately graduate. This program clearly does not “abandon the weak” but rather assists them to acquire the skills they need to succeed.

In a similar vein, “No deposit, no return: Supporting sustainable child welfare in Ontario” by Suzette Clark describes OSSTF/FEESO’s collaboration with the Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies to better understand the “need to work together to improve educational outcomes for children and youth in care.”

“Confessions of a union junkie: The rewards of federation work” by Suzanne Burchell reminds us that our individual involvement as an OSSTF/FEESO member serves the greater good of society when we fight for social justice and quality public education. In addition, being an active union member will also provide lasting friendships and personal satisfaction.

Prizing the public good and strengthening the social fabric are also themes in the article “Many faces, one community: Positive school climate, student engagement and a revitalized school” by Rob Savage and Paul Schaffner. This grassroots school program, supported by teachers, educational workers and administration alike, fosters not only academic achievement but also “the development of the whole person and the students’ overall well-being.”

Finally, Roger Langen’s article “The lion in cell-block six: Fighting for human rights from a prison cell” reminds us to value the democratic rights we have here in Canada. His article about Liliany Obando, a political prisoner in Colombia, shows us that other countries do not necessarily enjoy the freedoms we have here. Obando’s story is a testament to the human spirit and the need to be not only politically astute but also politically active.

As you read through this issue, we hope you will find inspiration and/or renewal of spirit in the career you have chosen, whether as a teacher or an educational worker, and that this in turn will motivate you to work towards ensuring public education in Ontario will continue to be supported and valued by the provincial government and society at large. With a provincial election approaching quickly, these stakes are all the more important. ☀





Une éducation publique aux valeurs solides

Imbriquer les valeurs canadiennes dans le tissu social

EN décembre dernier, les résultats du Programme international pour le suivi des acquis des élèves (PISA) de l'année 2009 ont été publiés. Le Canada a obtenu d'excellents résultats, se classant 6^e parmi tous les pays. Il est surtout intéressant de noter que l'Ontario a été tout spécialement remarquée parmi les régions qui obtiennent les meilleurs résultats en matière de rendement et de réforme. Dans son article d'opinion publié dans le journal *Toronto Star* du 26 janvier 2011, Andy Hargreaves, qui appartenait auparavant à l'Institut d'études pédagogiques de l'Ontario et qui est respecté dans le milieu éducatif au Canada comme à l'étranger, déclarait ceci :

« Être Canadien ne veut pas dire figurer au deuxième plan dans tous les domaines. » Cela veut dire accorder de l'importance à la coopération et à l'intégration tout en soutenant les valeurs de la collectivité et de la vie publique. Ce n'est pas telle ou telle politique provinciale qui fait du Canada l'un des pays les mieux notés sur le plan du rendement des élèves, mais un tissu social qui valorise l'éducation et les enseignants, loue le bien public et n'abandonne pas les faibles dans le seul but de consolider son économie. Voilà ce qui fait le succès de l'éducation au Canada. C'est bien ce qu'il doit chérir et protéger, contrairement aux pays qui obtiennent de moins bons résultats au PISA, comme les États-Unis (17^e) et le Royaume-Uni (24^e).

Alors que l'élection provinciale d'octobre approche, il importe de nous en souvenir pour veiller à ce que les candidats pour lesquels nous votons croient eux aussi en ces idéaux qui servent si bien l'Ontario et le Canada à l'heure actuelle. Les articles inclus dans le présent numéro d'*Education Forum* font également écho à ces idéaux.

L'article-vénette, intitulé : « *Une réforme de l'éducation réfléchie passe par le refus des doctrines corporatives de ralliement sur*

l'éducation » traite directement de ces thèmes. Cet article porte sur les tendances américaines actuellement d'adopter des politiques qui ne servent qu'à affaiblir l'éducation publique et à miner les idéaux décrits par le journaliste ci-dessus. En effet, les politiques visant l'augmenta-

**« Être Canadien ne
veut pas dire figurer au
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les domaines. »**

tion des tests normalisés, la prolifération des écoles à charte et l'introduction de la rémunération au mérite n'ont ni amélioré l'éducation publique, ni consolidé la société, mais ont bien au contraire mis tout cela à mal aux États-Unis. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous devons nous opposer vigoureusement à toute tentative d'introduction de ces politiques en Ontario.

L'article de Rena O'Halloran, intitulé « *Prendre un virage - Une approche réparatrice pour se remettre sur les rails* », décrit un programme qui remporte un énorme succès en aidant les élèves suspendus ou renvoyés à reprendre leurs études pour obtenir leur diplôme. Il est évident que ce programme « n'abandonne pas les faibles, » mais les aide plutôt à développer les aptitudes dont ils ont besoin pour réussir.

Dans la même veine, l'article intitulé « *Non consigné, non repris en faveur de la viabilité des services de bien-être à l'enfance* », qui est signé Suzette Clark, décrit la collaboration entre OSSTF/FEESO et l'Association ontarienne des sociétés d'aide à l'enfance pour mieux comprendre « la nécessité de collaborer pour améliorer les résultats scolaires des enfants et des jeunes pris en charge. »

Les « *Confessions d'une accro à la Fédé: La récompense du travail syndical* », de Suzanne Burchell, nous rappelle que notre mobilitation individuelle en tant que membre d'OSSTF/FEESO sert la société tout entière lorsque nous nous battons pour la justice sociale et la qualité de l'éducation publique. De plus, le fait d'être membre actif du syndicat crée des amitiés durables et suscite un sentiment de satisfaction personnelle.

Louer le bien public et consolider le tissu social sont également des thèmes de l'article intitulé « *Many faces, one community: Positive school climate, student engagement and a revitalized school* », signé Rob Savage et Paul Schaffner. Ce programme scolaire de base, appuyé d'un commun accord par les enseignants, les travailleurs de l'éducation et le personnel administratif, favorise non seulement de bons résultats scolaires, mais aussi le développement de la personne et le bien-être général des élèves.

Enfin, l'article de Roger Langen, intitulé « *The lion in cell-block six: Fighting for human rights from a prison cell* », nous rappelle l'importance des droits démocratiques qui sont les nôtres au Canada. Son article sur Liliany Obando, prisonnière politique de Colombie, nous montre que les autres pays ne respectent pas nécessairement les libertés dont nous jouissons ici. L'histoire de Liliany est un témoignage de l'esprit humain et du besoin d'être non seulement au fait de la vie politique, mais également d'en être l'acteur.

En parcourant ce numéro, nous espérons qu'il vous inspirera ou donnera un nouveau souffle à la carrière que vous avez choisie en tant qu'enseignant ou travailleur en éducation et que cela vous motivera à déployer des efforts pour faire en sorte que l'éducation publique ontarienne continue d'être appuyée et valorisée par le gouvernement provincial et par la société tout entière. L'élection provinciale étant toute proche, ces enjeux sont primordiaux. ☺

A worrying trend

Adam Mercer's piece "A worrying trend" is full of the sort of gross generalizing that one expects from news media, but not from a trained and experienced educator. And yet, his ideas are not uncommon. I have long wondered why some teachers hold the belief that we are not obligated to teach every single one of the people in our classrooms. And why do many persist in promoting the idea that to help those in need is automatically to neglect the needs of others? Finally, while Mercer does not actually say that his idea of a "leader" is a middle class white guy who has read a lot of Dickens and can name all the members of the British monarchy, it almost appears that this is who he believes deserves the majority of available educational resources.

Mercer specifically references Native and Gender Studies courses as being ones that promote a political agenda but have no academic integrity. I suggest that these courses give voice to those whom our existing curriculum consistently marginalizes. Ideally such classes would not exist because our mainstream courses would be inclusive, contemporary and empowering. However, the Ministry, recognizing a dearth in Native content provides funding to ensure this omission is corrected. Contrary to Mercer's apparent support of "their" right to learn about "their own past, tradition and languages," it is not only Native students who need to learn this piece of Canadian history. Surely all students can benefit from learning compassion and social justice. Some would argue that these are precisely the qualities we hope for in good leaders.

When teachers favour their academic

students they, whether intentionally or not, reinforce barriers of class, race and gender that already inhibit the success of non-academic learners. To suggest that disadvantaged students will never improve their lives and thus they do not deserve every effort teachers can make to help them learn is a shocking reproach to the foundations of this profession. The leaders we need most are those who understand that no one suffers when all are treated with respect and compassion.

Wilma Aalbers

Upper Grand District School Board

A worrying trend

Does the focus on underachieving students disadvantage others?
By Adam Mercer

"Our best students will have a greater chance to succeed than our worst students. That is my concern, but it is a concern about the worst students that I am addressing here." - Adam Mercer, in his article "A worrying trend" in Ontario Education magazine, Fall 2010, Vol. 36, Issue 3, page 30-33



"A worrying trend," Fall 2010, Vol. 36, Issue 3, page 30-33

It makes me cringe from time to time to hear a group of teachers talking about how well some students have improved and someone has to say, "But we're not doing enough for the straight A students." When that person starts sounding like Adam Mercer's article, "A worrying trend" on how the future will be doomed if we don't do more for these straight A students, I'm stunned.

In fact, we do a lot for straight A students. Mr. Mercer points out that we have Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs for them. Some schools have gifted programs where you don't actually need to be gifted, you just need to be a straight A student.

We have banquets for straight A students. At many high school graduations, we have many, many awards, bursaries and scholarships for straight A students. After high school, we have many fine universities in this province for these students to go to. A lot of our tax dollars go to these universities also. Then I get phone calls from universities asking if I would like to give money to their scholarship fund because really smart students have a hard time paying for their education. I thought all university students had a hard time paying for their education.

I'm not saying we should not do things for these students, but we should not be saying that, if we help students who are having difficulties in our education system, it is in some way going to hurt the straight A student and then the future of our society.

I was not a straight A student in high school. I was what Mr. Mercer calls a "lower academic achiever" or a member of the "have-not club." I did not use drugs or come from a so-called broken family. I wasn't violent or a gang member. I was and still am dyslexic.

I didn't worry about our future leaders. My worries were more personal: would I graduate? Would I get a job? What would my future be?

With a lot of hard work, special programs and encouragement from my family and many teachers, I graduated from high school and was accepted into a good university. Those special programs were an important part of my education. To sum it all up, what gives me great pride is that Ontario public education works so all students can achieve success.

Wayne McFarlane

District 14, Kawartha Pine Ridge



The lion in cell-block six

Fighting for human rights even from a prison cell



Liliani Obando is the woman in the yellow t-shirt with her arm raised

According to the Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement, the forced displacement of 4.5 million Colombians—80 per cent of them women and children—continues at a rate of 290,000 Colombians per year. Liliani Obando objects. Amnesty International indicates that, of the disappearances, torture, kidnappings and murder of trade unionists, community leaders, human-rights activists and ordinary Colombians, 92 per cent are attributable to the state. Liliani Obando objects.

Liliani Patricia Obando Villota objects a lot. We are in her cell in Patio 6, the political prisoners' wing of Buen Pastor, Bogotá's prison for women. We will be joined

by her friend, Rigoberto, a professor of mathematics and the notarized escort for her son, Camilo, 17, who will write his high school graduation exams the following day. He has not seen his mother for a month. He aims to be a journalist.

My visit lasts five hours. "I am a kind of lawyer here," Obando explains, "the only professional. The others are from the country. They have no education. Like me, their crime is their opinion. I help them to assert their rights. I am so busy!" and she laughs. She is on the phone to human-rights lawyers daily.

She refers to her cell as her apartment, sometimes her office. "Today it is my apartment," she says. Although a tiny

cell, it is charming. There is a hand-made curtain for a door; a wardrobe that hangs from the ceiling; a "kitchen" that slides out from under the double bunk she shares with one, sometimes two, other women; posters and messages and photographs taped to the walls; crates of law books and files piled high to the ceiling.

"The prison can't win me," she says. "I try to convey this idea to the others." Her chin is held high. She joshes with her son, banters with Rigoberto. I easily forget the two days of checkpoints to get this far: the fingerprinting, the nine consecutive arm stamps, the pat-downs, the sniffing by dogs for drugs or weapons concealed on my person. Obando's cell may be windowless, but it is filled with light.

A single mother, she is happy I am staying with her family. Her mother, Marta, 65, supports her daughter and the two children on a minimum-wage pension of \$250 a month. It is more than the cost of Camilo's high school tuition. I have brought gifts including, for Laura, seven, a vintage Pelham puppet that I thought a fair likeness of her mother.

Obando was arrested in her home on August 8, 2008. She was charged with "rebellion." Eleven other prominent Colombians were denounced with her in the national press, but she alone is in prison. For several years, she had represented the human-rights concerns of Colombia's largest federation of peasant farm workers, FENSUAGRO, and visited unions abroad, including OSSTF/FEESO. A sociologist, she might have represented FECODE, the national union of teachers, but she was more interested in the peasants' struggle. Both organizations have been severely bled by assassinations.

Her trial will be the first test of Colombia's strategy, under former president Alvaro Uribe, to associate criticism of the state with support for the Revolutionary

Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The stigmatization, known as the *farc-politica*, criminalizes dissent. Amnesty International is a FARC supporter, Uribe loudly proclaimed. Uribe has since moved on, but his successor, Juan Manuel Santos, founder of the Party of the Uribistas, continues the Uribe policy.



**The struggle
continues here.
But it is not about me.
It is about all of us, all
the political prisoners.
We are Colombia.”**

In truth, there are only two parties in Colombia, the rich and the poor. Wealth is held by a few families, Santos among them. In the early 1960s, the emergence of self-sustaining peasant regions like Marquetalia threatened the wealth system. Led by Manuel Marulanda, the little republic successfully repulsed a government invasion. Thus the FARC was born, and with it, the civil war between rich and poor, now 45 years old.

To attract investment, Colombia had to give an impression of calm. In 2005, it issued Directive 29, a cash reward system for guerilla capture or death. Mario Montoya, commander of the national army, demanded “litres of blood.” Since the guerillas were dangerous and hard to find, civilians were used instead. Nearly

2,000 young men, many of them teenagers, were lured out of the barrios by phony job offers, executed, then dressed in ill-fitting fatigues and photographed. The practice was condemned as “cold-blooded, premeditated murder of innocent civilians for profit” by Philip Ralston, UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Killings, in March 2010. Montoya was reassigned as ambassador to the Dominican Republic.

Civil dissent—by students, trade unions, NGOs, the women’s movement, Afro-Colombian and indigenous groups—has always been countered by death lists. But the recent discovery that Jorge Noguera, the director of national security, was the mastermind led to an outcry. He was reappointed as consul to Milan. Meanwhile, the far-reaching collusion between the government and the paramilitaries—the so-called *para-politica* scandal—continues to thrive.

Not that the paramilitaries themselves are concerned. The actual number of trade-union deaths for 2010 (from figures as of June from the Colombian Union of Workers) is 46, 25 of whom were teacher unionists. When she was arrested, Obando was nearing completion of her study, *Dissident Memories and Peasant Resistance: FENSUAGRO—A Case History*. It documents 30 years of the union’s survival through hundreds of assassinations.

Formerly private armies that defended large landholders from peasant insurrection, the paramilitaries are now essentially a government land-clearance mechanism. Financed by the drug trade, their reputation for brutality is spectacular. Unable to meet armed resistance directly, their specialty is terrorism against civilians: targeted killings, disappearances, kidnapping, torture—chainsaws for arms and legs, public disembowelment of children. The impunity rate for their crimes is above 97 per cent.

Unlike the political prisoners in Patiño 6, imprisonment for paramilitaries (when it occurs) is comfortable. “They are close to the guards,” Obando says. “They have access to cell phones, computers and fridges. They have visits with their children. The men can have home

detention even if they have no children.” Obando has been denied her right as a single mother to home detention nine consecutive times.

There are over 7,000 political prisoners in Colombia’s jails. “What’s important,” she says, “is that the world is watching. Letters help. Visits are important. That



**For more information, go to
www.freeliliani.net**

**Donations to support Liliy's family & legal defense can be made out to:
OSSTF/FEESO
Attention: HRC – Liliy Obando.
(Ten dollars goes a long way in Colombia.)**

**Letters to Liliy can
be addressed to:
Liliy Obando (#065593)
Reclusión de Mujeres de Bogotá
Patio 6, Buen Pastor
Carrera 47, 84-25
Distrito de Bogotá, COLOMBIA**

has protected me.” She has had over 20 international visits: parliamentarians from the U.K., trade unionists from Australia. She has now caught the eye of Václav Havel and Desmond Tutu. Their legal advocacy organization, Freedom Now, counts among its select clients Burma’s Aung San Suu Kyi and China’s 2010 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Liu Xiaobo. Liliy Obando has been chosen for their first Colombian campaign.

As Obando reminded me about her activity in jail, “The struggle continues here. But it is not about me. It is about all of us, all the political prisoners. We are Colombia.”

Roger Langen is an Executive Officer and human-rights activist in District 12, Toronto.

Many faces, one community

Positive school climate, student engagement and a school revitalized



Our urban elementary school faces many challenges, but they have not stood in the way of our achievements. As a staff, we set our standards high and provide all of our students with the necessary support to achieve. This requires creative programming, ensuring a safe school atmosphere, building sustainable community partnerships and meeting the needs of students and their families.

One of our best practices in creating a climate that fosters a safe and caring school environment is our open-gym program. The school day begins at 8:30 a.m.; however, we have staff volunteers and community partners who arrive every morning by 7:30 to begin preparing breakfast for the students. In addition

to providing a nutritious start to the day, we also provide them with the opportunity to use the gym to play basketball, socialize with friends and complete unfinished work under the guidance and support of staff.

This ensures students who are chronically late for school are now on time so they have the chance to play basketball with their friends in a safe environment before school starts. It also provides extra academic support for students who may not have that support at home.

We have a number of volunteer staff to ensure the program runs smoothly. Every day, there are three to four professionals in the gym to greet the children. This collaborative and socially inclusive approach also serves as a model

for our students: "Differences do not mean divisions."

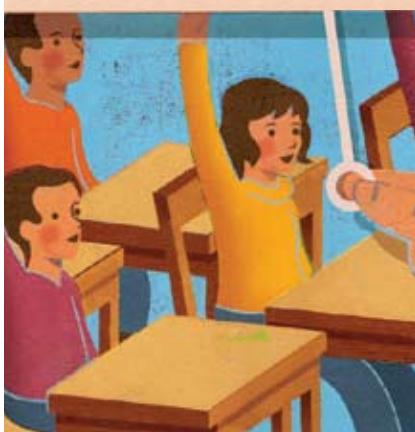
This teamwork model allows for the building of meaningful connections with our students and allows us to foster relationships that we need when times get tough. It also allows us to reach out to students and families by bridging gaps between cultures, attitudes and our school community.

The gym doors remain open to all, in the morning and at both recesses. The intermediate students, including any other student who may benefit from this opportunity, can come to the gym where a number of basketballs wait for them. Our philosophy is that students with nothing to do will find something to do, and that may involve getting into mischief.

The availability of our open-gym program reduces the possibility of such misguided pursuits and instead provides students with lively daily physical activity. Board games, basketball, socializing and playing cards are all staples.



This program has spawned many new relationships, and has allowed our students to become completely engaged in their school and ultimately in their own success.



Supervision is about relationship-building and role modelling. Our staff members welcome these opportunities to establish and continue connections between students and themselves. We also understand that the playground can pose challenges for some students in a variety of ways, while others need a more protective environment, including active supervision as opposed to intrusive supervision. Opening our gym is a way to meet the needs of our students

during unstructured times.

In 2002, there were almost 500 reported hands-on altercations in the playground; this year, there were only 162. In 2002, over 1,900 behavioural incidents were reported. As a result of modelling appropriate social behaviour, implementing character-education programming and investing in positive relationship-based interventions, the number of behavioural incidents has been dramatically reduced to 800 occurrences for the 2009–10 school year.

The decrease in negative behaviours has led to an increase in our positive school climate and student achievement. We know that feeling and being safe at school is a precondition for learning. Occasionally, police officers from the Windsor Police Services will drop by to play basketball with students or bring newspapers for students to read during recess. This relationship has been extremely beneficial for our students and our school community.

To date, students, staff, parents and community partnerships all strongly agree that this program is extremely valuable. We have seen some of our most challenging young people flourish in the classroom because they now understand the value of self-monitoring, they have created a positive relationship with staff and have been included in a community.

We believe that quality education is about more than academic achievement—it is about the development of the whole person and the students' overall well-being. This is a shared responsibility. This program has spawned many new relationships, and has allowed our students to become completely engaged in their school and ultimately in their own success.

Furthermore, the Ontario Ministry of Education's new Health and Physical Education Curriculum has incorporated the importance of interpersonal skills, relationship-building, social skills and the child's adaptive ability by weaving them as a common thread throughout all strands of learning, from kindergarten to Grade 12.

The new Ontario Provincial Report Cards will also be putting a much stron-

ger emphasis on a student's learning skills in terms of assessing their overall learning. These are, without a doubt, necessary skills that all children will need to be successful in their endeavors, and something that had been previously ignored,

FROM HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM, GRADES 1-8, 2010

The first goal listed under the heading "Vision and Goals of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum" states: "Students will develop the living skills needed to develop resilience and a secure identity and sense of self, through opportunities to learn adaptive, management, and coping skills, to practise communication skills, to learn how to build relationships and interact positively with others, and to learn how to use critical and creative thinking processes."

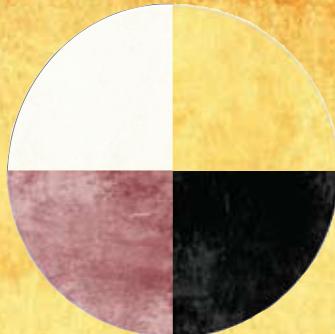
"The expectations for health and physical education are organized into three distinct but related strands—Active Living, Movement Competence, and Healthy Living. Integral to expectations in all these strands is a further set of expectations, presented at the start of each grade. These are the living skills—the personal, interpersonal, and critical and creative thinking skills that are essential to the achievement of expectations in the three strands."

particularly in the case of students who did not receive these skills at home.

We embrace inclusion and continue to look for ways to make our school community stronger. We hope this best practice will benefit your school community, too. ☺

Robert Savage, a member of District 9, Greater Essex, is a Child and Youth Worker. He and Paul Schaffner, the principal, both work at F. W. Begley Public School.





COMMON THREADS V— VOLUNTEERS WANTED

ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES IN EDUCATION

A S the original inhabitants of Canada, First Nation, Métis and Inuit people have a variety of inherent Aboriginal and treaty rights. Since the history of Canada begins with them, Aboriginal peoples are unique in Canada's mosaic. These rights however, have often been denied by governments or misunderstood by the majority in society or by the media. Our education system has also had difficulty in adapting to meet the needs of Aboriginal students.

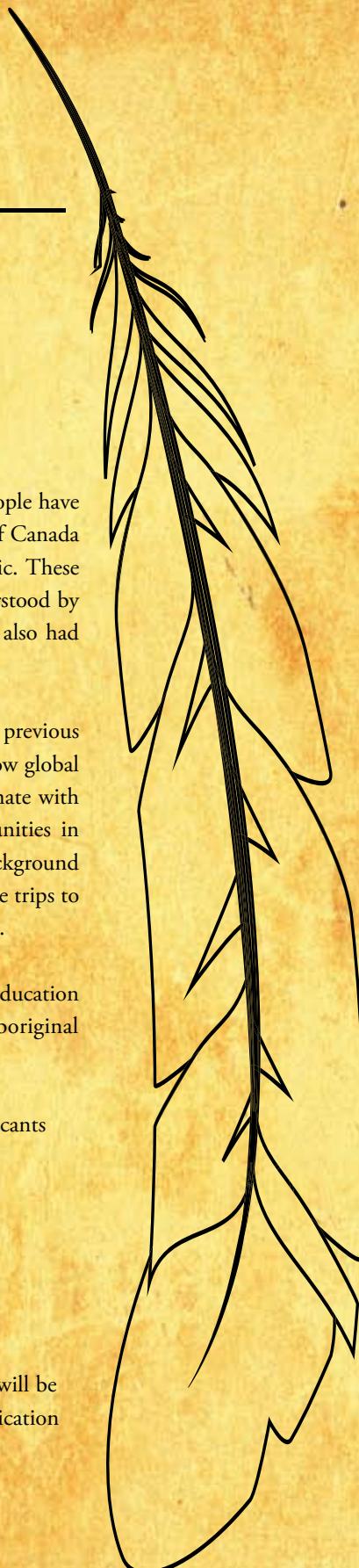
For all of these reasons, the fifth Common Threads Project will be a departure from the previous format of travelling overseas and researching a topic leading to a better understanding of how global citizens can tackle a common problem. We propose to produce a resource which will resonate with students and educators and address a number of challenges faced by Aboriginal communities in Canada. The material will explore the various issues in a cross curricular format providing background context and examples of successful strategies to overcome these challenges. Travel will include trips to various First Nations or Métis communities and schools in Southern and Northern Ontario.

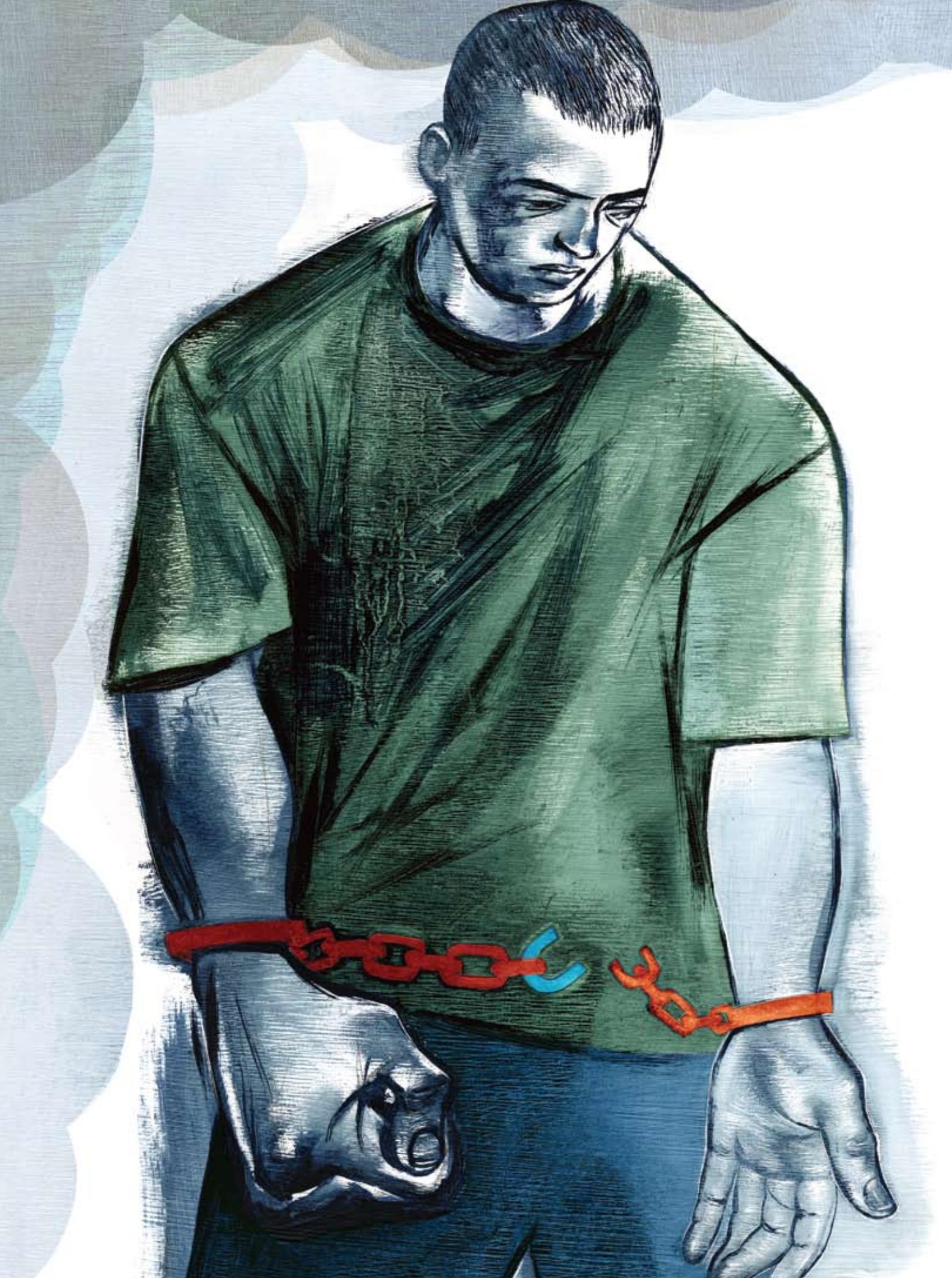
The Common Threads team will work with members of our OSSTF/FEESO Aboriginal Education Work Group and will consult widely with respected organizations within the Aboriginal communities.

We are looking for **a minimum of five** members and preference will be given to those applicants with a combination of the following:

- First Nations, Inuit or Métis members;
- Knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal issues;
- An understanding of current and creative teaching strategies;
- Demonstrated excellence in curriculum writing;
- Skills in photography, film making and editing;

Applications will be received until **Thursday, March 10, 2011**. Final selection of the team will be made by the Provincial Executive. For more information on the project themes and an application go to osstf.on.ca/commonthreads





DOING A U-TURN

A restorative approach to getting back on track

By Rena O'Halloran

Larry started the 2009-2010 school year handcuffed to a hospital bed. His final year at school did not start the way he had planned, nor did he anticipate how it would end, as valedictorian of his graduating class.

Larry's education could have ended abruptly that first week in September when he became involved in a violent melee at his school. When he awoke at the hospital, in addition to the handcuffs, he had a seven-cm gash on his head, courtesy of a lead pipe, and three charges of aggravated assault resulting from his role in the fight.

This was not Larry's first setback in school. He had made poor choices throughout his school career. First suspended in Grade 3, he had had a decade of trouble, leading to his removal from one high school, and he was on the verge of being asked to leave another as the school year began. He hoped that this new school year would be a good one where he could put the past in its place and focus on finishing up the requirements for his diploma, but the past was not willing to let go.

This last fight resulted in an expulsion that a number of years ago would have meant the end of his education.

Fortunately for Larry and other students like him,

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PRENDRE UN VIRAGE

Une approche réparatrice pour se remettre sur les rails

Par Rena O'Halloran

Larry a commencé l'année scolaire 2009-2010 menotté à un lit d'hôpital. Sa dernière année d'école n'a, en effet, pas commencé comme il l'avait prévu, et il était également loin d'imaginer comment elle se finirait, puisqu'il serait l'élève qui prononcerait le discours d'adieu.

Les études de Larry auraient pu se terminer brutalement en cette première semaine de septembre, lorsqu'il a pris part à une bagarre violente à son école. Quand il s'est réveillé à l'hôpital, en plus des menottes, il avait écoper d'une entaille de sept centimètres sur la tête, causée par un tuyau en plomb et de trois accusations pour voies de fait graves, à cause du rôle qu'il avait joué dans la bagarre.

Ce n'était pas le premier revers de Larry à l'école. Il avait toujours fait les mauvais choix. Tout d'abord suspendu en 3^e année, il avait connu dix ans de problèmes qui l'avaient conduit à être retiré de son école secondaire et, en ce début d'année scolaire, il était sur le point d'en quitter une autre. Pourtant, il espérait beaucoup de cette nouvelle année scolaire pour pouvoir oublier le passé et se concentrer sur ses exigences d'obtention de diplôme; le passé en avait toutefois décidé autrement. Cette bagarre lui avait valu un renvoi qui, il y a

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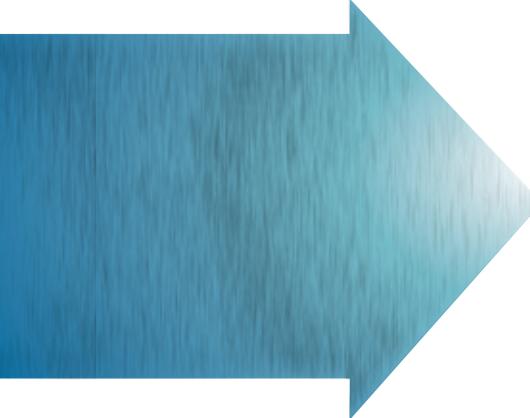
Bill 212, *An Act to amend the Education Act in respect of behaviour, discipline and safety*, was passed and received Royal Assent on June 4, 2007. One section of Bill 212 requires school boards “to provide programs for suspended pupils and expelled pupils, which must be provided in accordance with policies and guidelines of the Minister.”

U-Turn, the suspension and expulsion program for the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB), is about “turning negative choices into positive learn-

worker, a social worker and a psychologist. The London site team also includes a youth justice worker employed by our community partner and host of our classroom, St. Leonard’s Community Services—London & Region.

Students on a six- to 10-day suspension or those with longer suspensions who live in the outlying areas of the board are served itinerantly. A teacher, with work provided by the home school, meets with students in a public spot near their homes. This could include anything from a community centre or

offering credit recovery, Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) or new credits. The afternoon program focuses on wellness: emotional, social and physical. Here, the rest of the educational team, our social worker, the St. Leonard’s worker and the psychologist run groups that deal with many issues relevant to the well-being of our students: gender stereotyping, anger management, making informed choices and healthy relationships are a few examples. In addition, physical well-being is explored by visits from the public health



U-Turn is about “turning negative choices into positive learning experiences.” The program allows suspended and expelled students the opportunity to continue their education.

ing experiences.” The program allows suspended and expelled students the opportunity to continue their education. While our primary aim is credit attainment, equally important is helping students gain insight into the behaviours that led to their suspension or expulsion and ideally offering them the opportunity to return to a regular school or obtain their OSSD in the program.

Dedicated to the philosophy and rooted in the strategies of restorative justice, the U-Turn team strives to create an atmosphere that will help students break through some of the barriers that have resulted in a disconnect between students and their school community by focussing on the behaviour and not the student. The program offers daily activities that help build relationships between peers and staff. Building a restorative community gives students the opportunity in a healthy way to explore the behaviours that resulted in their suspension or expulsion. The U-Turn team consists of teachers, an educational assistant or counselling support

church hall to the local Tim Hortons. The itinerant teacher offers academic support and often discusses the circumstances of the suspension and how better choices could have been made. When appropriate, the itinerant teacher will ask the program’s social worker to counsel students and help co-ordinate outside services if needed.

U-Turn has two on-site locations, one in St. Thomas and one in London. These sites are for students with longer term suspensions (11 to 20 days) or expulsions. Students who choose to join this voluntary program are offered a full weekly schedule. Mornings are devoted to academics. The educational team, consisting of a classroom teacher and an EA, acts as facilitators as each student works on independent course packages that meet the academic requirements of their diploma. U-Turn also employs a co-operative education teacher to help senior students earn credits in a workplace setting. The program is extremely flexible, meeting the immediate educational needs of each student and

nurse and weekly trips to the gym. Since afternoon programming, with some additional paperwork, coincides with the curriculum of the “Health for Life” (PPZ) course, students are able to earn an additional Health and Physical Education credit through participating in this program.

In London, we are fortunate to have our classroom situated in the St. Leonard’s building. St. Leonard’s provides a youth justice worker who, in addition to assisting with programs, offers access to knowledge that helps our students and their parents navigate the legal system, as many face charges connected to their expulsions. Probation officers also work closely with St. Leonard’s and our youth justice worker to ensure our students are aware of their legal obligations. Our social worker, psychologist and St. Leonard’s worker also help connect and co-ordinate with outside agencies to provide services for students and their families that can include everything from dental work, eyeglasses and beds

ILLUSTRATION: JOE MORSE

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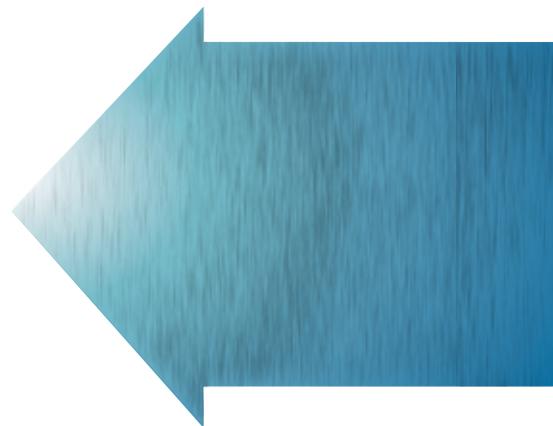
quelques années de cela, aurait signifié la fin de ses études.

Fort heureusement pour Larry et d'autres élèves dans sa situation, le projet de loi 212, ou *Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'éducation en ce qui concerne le comportement, la discipline et la sécurité*, a été adopté et a reçu la sanction royale le 4 juin 2007. L'un des articles du projet de loi 212 exige que les conseils scolaires « offrent des programmes à l'intention des élèves suspendus et des élèves renvoyés, conformément aux politiques et

sur leur personnalité. Le programme propose des activités quotidiennes qui permettent aux participants de tisser des liens entre eux et avec le personnel. Façonner une collectivité réparatrice donne aux élèves la possibilité d'analyser sainement les comportements qui ont abouti à leur suspension ou à leur renvoi. L'équipe chargée du programme *U-Turn* est composée d'enseignants, d'un éducateur ou d'un travailleur de soutien en orientation, d'un travailleur social et d'un psychologue. L'équipe déployée à London inclut également

dans deux sites : l'un à St. Thomas et l'autre à London, tous deux étant destinés aux élèves qui ont écopé de suspensions plus longues (entre 11 et 20 jours) ou ayant été renvoyés. On propose aux élèves qui choisissent ce programme facultatif un programme d'études hebdomadaire à temps plein. Les matinées sont consacrées aux études théoriques. L'équipe éducative, composée d'un titulaire de classe et d'une aide à l'enseignement, conseille chaque élève qui travaille sur un bloc de cours indépendant répondant aux exigences d'études

U-Turn à l'intention des élèves suspendus et renvoyés, est conçu pour « transformer les choix négatifs en des expériences d'apprentissage positives »



aux lignes directrices communiquées par le ministre. » *U-Turn*, le programme du *Thames Valley District School Board* (TVDSB) à l'intention des élèves suspendus et renvoyés, est conçu pour « transformer les choix négatifs en des expériences d'apprentissage positives » en permettant aux élèves suspendus et renvoyés de continuer leurs études. Si notre but premier est de leur faire obtenir des crédits, il est tout aussi important d'aider les élèves à mieux comprendre les comportements qui ont mené à leur suspension ou à leur renvoi et, dans l'idéal, de leur offrir la chance de réintégrer une école ordinaire ou d'obtenir leur diplôme de fin d'études secondaires de l'Ontario en suivant le programme.

Reprenant à son compte les thèmes de la philosophie de justice réparatrice et puisant dans ses stratégies, l'équipe qui se consacre au programme *U-Turn* s'efforce de créer une atmosphère qui aide les élèves à franchir certains des obstacles qui ont mené à leur exclusion de leur milieu scolaire en se concentrant sur leurs comportements et non

un travailleur spécialisé en matière de justice pour les jeunes employé par notre collectivité partenaire et invité dans notre salle de classe des services communautaires de St. Leonard, qui dessert London et sa région.

Les élèves suspendus de six à dix jours ou ceux qui ont écopé de suspensions plus longues et qui vivent à la périphérie de la zone desservie par le conseil bénéficiant de services itinérants. Un enseignant apporte du travail de l'école et rencontre les élèves dans un endroit public proche de leur domicile. Il peut tout aussi bien s'agir d'un centre communautaire que d'une salle paroissiale ou du Tim Hortons du coin. L'enseignant itinérant offre son soutien pédagogique et discute souvent avec l'élève des circonstances de sa suspension et de la manière dont il aurait pu faire de meilleurs choix. Si besoin est, l'enseignant itinérant demande au travailleur social faisant partie du programme de conseiller les élèves et d'aider à coordonner les services externes.

Le programme *U-Turn* est dispensé

de son diplôme. Le programme *U-Turn* emploie également un enseignant en coopération qui aide les étudiants de cycle supérieur à obtenir des crédits en milieu de travail. Le programme est extrêmement souple pour répondre aux besoins immédiats de chaque élève en matière d'études, leur permettre de récupérer des crédits ou d'en obtenir de nouveaux, ou encore de bénéficier de l'évaluation et reconnaissance des acquis (ÉRA). L'après-midi, le programme est axé sur le bien-être émotionnel, social et physique. Le reste de l'équipe éducative, notre travailleur social, le travailleur du centre communautaire de St. Leonard et le psychologue, animent des groupes qui traitent de nombreuses questions liées au bien-être de nos élèves comme le stéréotype de genre, la gestion de la colère ou comment faire des choix éclairés et entretenir des relations saines. En outre, leur bien-être physique est favorisé par des visites de l'infirmière en santé publique et des séances hebdomadaires au gymnase.

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to mental health treatment. In addition, the London program has on-site access to the Restorative Approaches team created for the TVDSB. When harm occurs in the program, we are able to access the team and arrange for a restorative conference to deal with the issues in a positive manner.

When Larry applied to our program, he wasn't sure he would be accepted because, as he noted, "I didn't look good on paper." He was initially offered an itinerant program, but after showing dedication, was given a full-time program on site. Determined to "get it right this time," Larry focussed on his academics, completing the 7.5 credits he needed to graduate plus a few extra, just for fun. He eagerly participated in all the afternoon programming and became a role model for other students. Larry may not have started out the year on a high note, but he completed it as the spokesperson for his class and was proud to serve as its valedictorian. He is now looking forward to continuing his education at college in a radio broadcasting program.

Not all our students will become valedictorians, but with U-Turn, all can continue their education while being offered the opportunity to gain the kind of insight into their decision-making processes that leads to greater success. ☐

Rena O'Halloran is one of the teachers in the U-Turn program and a member of District 11, Thames Valley.

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Puisque le programme de l'après-midi, avec quelques papiers supplémentaires à remplir, coïncide avec le curriculum du cours intitulé *Health for Life* (PPZ), les élèves peuvent obtenir un crédit supplémentaire en santé et en éducation physique en suivant ce programme.

À London, nous avons la chance que notre salle de classe se trouve dans le bâtiment du centre communautaire de St. Leonard qui offre les services d'un travailleur spécialisé en matière de justice pour les jeunes. Celui-ci, en plus d'apporter son aide au niveau des programmes, offre un accès aux notions qui aident nos élèves et leurs parents à s'y retrouver dans le système juridique puisque nombreux sont ceux dont le renvoi s'assortit également de délits. Des agents de probation collaborent également étroitement avec le centre communautaire de St. Leonard et le travailleur spécialisé en matière de justice auprès des jeunes pour que nos élèves connaissent leurs obligations juridiques. Notre travailleur social, le psychologue et le travailleur du centre communautaire de St. Leonard les aident aussi à prendre contact avec des établissements externes et coordonnent les rendez-vous pour offrir aux élèves et aux familles des prestations qui vont des soins dentaires aux lunettes, en passant par les nuits d'hébergement et les traitements de santé mentale. De plus, le programme de London comprend un accès sur place à l'équipe chargée des approches répara-

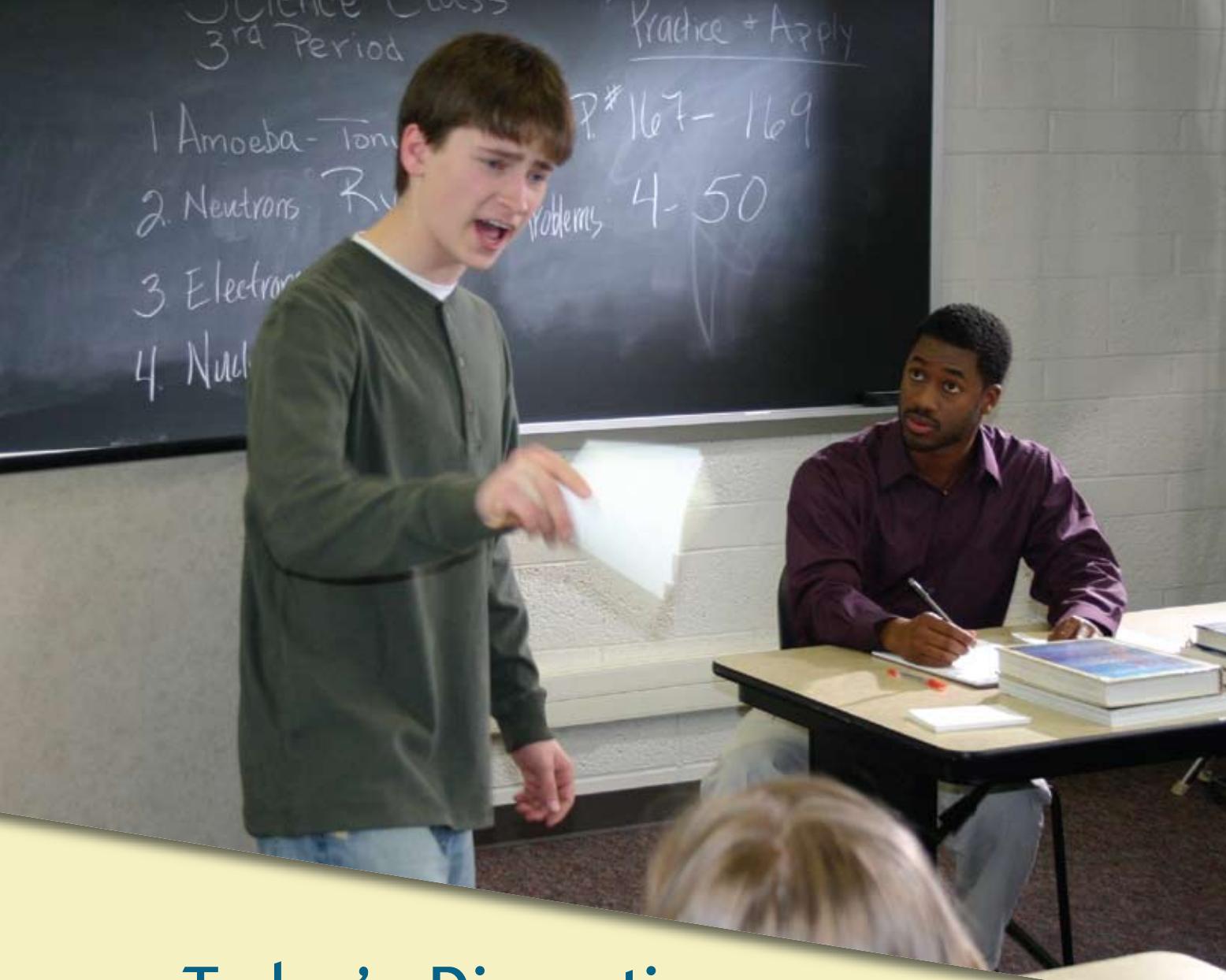
trices mise sur pied pour le TVDSB. En cas de préjudice dans le cadre du programme, nous avons accès à cette équipe et organisons une conférence à visée réparatrice pour traiter les problèmes de manière positive.

Lorsque Larry a fait sa demande, il n'était pas sûr d'être accepté, car selon ses propres dires : « Ma demande écrite n'a rien d'attristant. » On lui a tout d'abord proposé le programme itinérant, mais voyant son engagement, il a intégré le programme à temps plein sur place. Déterminé à « bien faire cette fois-ci », Larry s'est concentré sur ses études, obtenant les 7,5 crédits dont il avait besoin pour obtenir son diplôme plus quelques autres, juste pour s'amuser. Il a participé avec enthousiasme au programme de l'après-midi et est devenu un exemple pour d'autres élèves. Si Larry n'a pas commencé l'année comme il le devait, il l'a terminée en tant que porte-parole de sa classe, fier d'être l'élève qui a prononcé le discours d'adieu. Il est à présent impatient de poursuivre ses études postsecondaires en radiodiffusion.

Tous nos élèves ne prononcent pas le discours d'adieu, mais grâce au programme *U-Turn*, tous peuvent poursuivre leurs études tout en bénéficiant de conseils sur le processus de prise de décisions qui trace la voie vers un avenir meilleur. ☐

Rena O'Halloran est l'une des enseignantes du programme U-Turn et est membre du District 11, Thames Valley.





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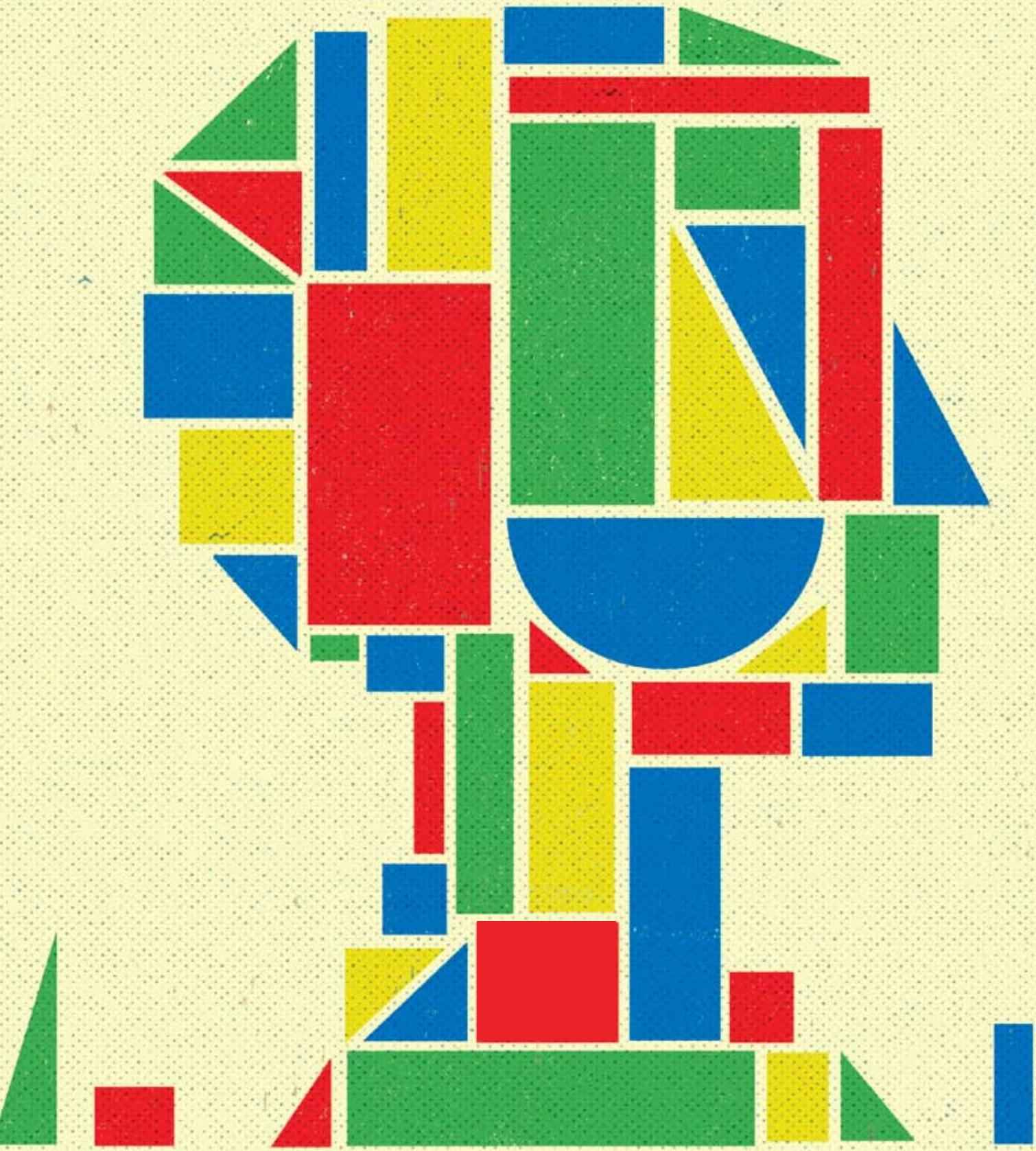
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Une réforme de l'éducation réfléchie

Thoughtful education reform

It can happen, if we
steer clear of corporate
education bandwagons

By Wendy Anes Hirschgäger

“It is time, I think, for those who want to improve our schools to focus on the essentials of education. We must make sure that our schools have a strong, coherent, explicit curriculum that is grounded in the liberal arts and sciences, with plenty of opportunity for children to engage in activities and projects that make learning lively. We must ensure that students gain the knowledge they need to understand political debates, scientific phenomena and the world they live in. We must be sure they are prepared for the responsibilities of democratic citizenship in a complex society. We must take care

Doctrines corporatives de
ralliement sur l'éducation

Par Wendy Anes Hirschgäger

« Pour ceux qui souhaitent améliorer nos écoles, il me semble que le moment est venu de se concentrer sur l'essentiel de l'éducation. Nous devons nous assurer que nos écoles disposent d'un programme d'études solide, cohérent et explicite qui se fonde sur les sciences et les arts libéraux et donne aux enfants de nombreuses occasions de participer à des activités et à des projets d'éveil. Nous devons nous assurer que les élèves acquièrent les connaissances nécessaires pour comprendre le débat politique, les phénomènes scientifiques et le monde qui les entoure. Nous devons aussi faire en sorte de les préparer à leurs responsabilités de citoyens vivant dans une démocratie et une société complexe. Nous devons veiller à ce que le corps enseignant soit non seulement bien formé, mais aussi bien éduqué et nous devons nous assurer que les écoles sont aptes à faire appliquer les normes d'apprentissage tout comme les normes de

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that our teachers are well educated, not just well trained. We must be sure that schools have the authority to maintain both standards of learning and standards of behaviour." Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*.

Once a whole-hearted believer in standardized testing, charter schools and merit pay under the George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton governments, Dr. Diane Ravitch, a Research Professor of Education at New York University, is now an ardent opponent of those same measures. In her recent book, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education* (2010), she explains in detail how it came about that she no longer believes in them. Those false promises are being forced on the United States by so-called reformers like Arne Duncan, Michelle Rhee and Joel Klein, among others, who are, in turn, being politically and financially supported by corporate giants such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation, The Walton Family Foundation (Walmart) and Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook).

In her thoughtful and well-researched book, and in her many articles posted on her website (www.dianeravitch.com), Ravitch not only proves these measures to be ineffective but shows them to be detrimental to public education and, in turn, to society. Despite this, these corporate-influenced viewpoints are gathering momentum in the United States. The pseudo-documentary *Waiting for Superman*, financed by members of that same billionaires' club, has been playing across the U.S., with a few airings in Canada, and is convincing the ill-informed American public that education reform can only be accomplished through the corporate-education bandwagons of increased standardized testing, indiscriminate proliferation of charter schools and the implementation of merit pay for teachers based on increasing those same standardized test scores.

In Ontario, much has been done in the last eight years to repair the dam-

age done to public education by the previous Harris/Eves government. Curriculum revision has been carried out in a thoughtful manner. Expert teachers in each field are consulted and propose revisions that not only emphasize meaningful content but also critical-thinking skills, and social and environmental responsibility. *Growing Success*, the new assessment, evaluation and reporting policy, emphasizes professional judgement and multiple assessments of various kinds to support student learning.

recent Building Blocks for Education (BB4E) conference, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan was a guest keynote speaker. While Duncan acknowledged Ontario's success in education and in out-performing U.S. students, he hasn't pulled away from the increasingly onerous No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top programs that the U.S. is using to mandate increased standardized testing, charter schools and merit pay.

However, in this regard Ontario must not follow in the footsteps of its much



Ontario must not follow in the footsteps

of its much larger neighbour,

because doing so would certainly derail the

vast improvement the public-education

system in Ontario has undergone.



Funding has been provided to support a wide variety of student-success programs, such as revitalized technological education programs, special education, co-operative education and Specialist High Skills Majors, as well as professional development and other educational supports.

These kinds of positive and effective policies have resulted in the very things the Ontario government set out to accomplish, namely "High levels of student achievement, reduced gaps in student achievement and increased public confidence in publicly funded education." In fact, the report of the results of the 2009 Programme for International Student Achievement (PISA) tests highlights Ontario as a jurisdiction with an exemplary education system.

That said, at the Ontario government's

larger neighbour, because doing so would certainly derail the vast improvement the public-education system in Ontario has undergone. Clearly, what we are doing here is working, and what they are doing in the U.S. is not.

Finland is a country whose education system would be a far better example to follow in order to make even further gains. In her article "The Myth of Charter Schools" for *The New York Review of Books*, Ravitch had this to say about *Waiting for Superman*: "While blasting the teachers' unions, [director Davis Guggenheim] points to Finland as a nation whose educational system the U.S. should emulate, not bothering to explain that it has a completely unionized teaching force. His documentary showers praise on testing and accountability,

ILLUSTRATION: DANI PACHECO

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comportement. (*traduction libre*) » Diane Ravitch, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System*.

Autrefois éminemment convaincue par les tests normalisés, les écoles à charte et la rémunération au mérite sous les gouvernements de George H. W. Bush et de Bill Clinton, Diane Ravitch, professeure de recherche en éducation à l'Université de New York, s'oppose à présent ardemment à ces mêmes mesures. Dans son ouvrage récent (2010)

publique et, à terme, de la société. Malgré tout, ces doctrines corporatives prennent de l'ampleur aux États-Unis. Le pseudo-documentaire intitulé *Waiting for Superman*, financé par certains membres du même « club des milliardaires », qui a été diffusé chez nos voisins et parfois au Canada, trompe le public américain sans méfiance en lui faisant croire que la réforme de l'éducation ne peut s'accomplir qu'en se ralliant aux doctrines corporatives visant l'augmentation des tests normalisés, la prolifération aveugle des écoles à charte et

et de la multiplicité des évaluations de tous ordres dans le soutien de l'apprentissage des élèves. Un financement est prévu à l'appui de divers programmes de réussite des élèves, comme les programmes d'enseignement technologique revitalisés, l'éducation de l'enfance en difficulté, l'éducation coopérative et les Majeures Haute Spécialisation, ainsi que pour le perfectionnement professionnel et d'autres services éducatifs.

Ce genre de politique positive et efficace a abouti justement à ce que le gouvernement de l'Ontario s'est promis d'accomplir : « de hauts niveaux de rendement des élèves, la réduction des écarts en matière de rendement des élèves et l'accroissement de la confiance du public dans l'éducation publique. » En fait, le rapport sur les résultats des tests 2009 du Programme international pour le suivi des acquis des élèves (PISA) souligne le système éducatif exemplaire de l'Ontario en tant que province.

Ceci dit, lors du récent sommet du gouvernement de l'Ontario, intitulé *Les assises de l'éducation* (BB4E), l'un des conférenciers était Arne Duncan, le secrétaire à l'Éducation des États-Unis. S'il a reconnu le succès de l'Ontario en matière d'éducation et souligné que le niveau des élèves ontariens dépassait celui des élèves américains, il ne jure toujours que par les programmes *No Child Left Behind* et *Race to the Top*, de plus en plus onéreux, que les États-Unis utilisent pour rendre obligatoire l'augmentation des tests normalisés, des écoles à charte et de la rémunération au mérite. Toutefois à cet égard, l'Ontario ne doit pas emboîter le pas à son voisin, bien plus imposant, car cela ne manquerait pas de faire échouer le vaste programme d'amélioration dont a bénéficié le système d'enseignement public de la province. Il est évident que ce qui est entrepris chez nous donne des résultats et que ce que font les États-Unis n'en donne aucun.

La Finlande est un pays dont le système éducatif mérite d'être reproduit pour améliorer encore les résultats. Dans son article intitulé *The Myth of Charter Schools*, rédigé pour la revue *New York Review of Books*, D. Ravitch déclare ceci sur le documentaire *Waiting for Superman*,

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 l'Ontario ne doit pas emboîter le pas à son voisin, bien plus imposant, car cela ne manquerait pas de faire échouer le vaste programme d'amélioration dont a bénéficié le système d'enseignement public de la province. 

intitulé *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education*, elle explique en détail comment elle en est arrivée à ne plus y croire. Les fausses promesses sont dictées aux États-Unis par les soi-disant réformateurs, comme Arne Duncan, Michelle Rhee et Joel Klein, entre autres, qui sont, à leur tour, soutenus politiquement et financièrement par des géants comme les fondations *Bill and Melinda Gates*, *Eli and Edythe Broad*, *Walton Family* (Walmart) et par Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook).

Dans son livre réfléchi et dans les nombreux articles qui sont publiés dans son site Web (www.dianeravitch.com), D. Ravitch prouve non seulement que ces mesures sont inefficaces, mais montre aussi qu'elles agissent au détriment de l'éducation

l'application de la rémunération au mérite pour le personnel enseignant en fonction de l'augmentation des notes obtenues auxdits tests normalisés.

En Ontario, on a beaucoup œuvré au cours des huit dernières années pour réparer les dommages qu'avait subi l'éducation publique sous la houlette du gouvernement Harris et Eves. Les révisions apportées au programme d'études ont été menées de façon réfléchie : des enseignants experts dans leur domaine ont été consultés et ont proposé des révisions qui ont non seulement un contenu pertinent, mais sont également axées sur les aptitudes à la pensée critique et à la responsabilité sociale et environnementale. *Faire croître le succès*, la nouvelle politique d'évaluation et de communication du rendement des élèves, souligne l'importance du jugement professionnel

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yet he does not acknowledge that Finland seldom tests its students. Any Finnish educator will say that Finland improved its public-education system not by privatizing its schools or constantly testing its students but by investing in the preparation, support and retention of excellent teachers. It achieved its present eminence not by systematically firing five to 10 per cent of its teachers but by patiently building for the future. Finland has a national curriculum, which is not restricted to the basic skills of reading and math but includes the arts, sciences, history, foreign languages and other subjects that are essential to a good, rounded education. Finland also strengthened its social-welfare programs for children and families. Guggenheim simply ignores the realities of the Finnish system."

Fortunately, Timo Lankinen, Director General of the Finnish National Board of Education, was another keynote speaker at Ontario's BB4E conference to provide some balance. Moving forward, Ontario would be best advised to put more emphasis, as does Finland, on meaningful professional development and strengthening our already well-rounded curriculum and programs, with less emphasis on Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) test results. Using EQAO tests in a sample of schools, as is the case with the PISA testing, rather than testing every student in every school, would be a step in the right direction.

Ontario has made great strides in building a world-class education system, but in order to preserve this and to continue to move forward, we must guard against falling into the traps of false reforms touted by the political right. I highly recommend Ravitch's book as a way for members to learn more about what is wrong with basing an education system on the wrong-headed corporate strategies of standardized testing, charter schools and merit pay. It is up to us to make sure that public education doesn't slide back into the dark ages following the provincial election next October. ☐



Nous devons néanmoins nous garder de tomber dans le piège d'une fausse réforme vantée par la droite.

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« Tout en fustigeant les syndicats du personnel enseignant, [Guggenheim] fait remarquer que la Finlande est un pays dont les États-Unis devraient s'inspirer, sans toutefois prendre la peine d'expliquer que l'ensemble du personnel enseignant finlandais est syndiqué. Son documentaire fait l'apologie des tests et de la responsabilité, mais il ne mentionne pas que la Finlande teste rarement ses élèves. Tout éducateur finlandais dirait que la Finlande a amélioré son système d'enseignement public non en privatisant ses écoles ou en testant constamment ses élèves, mais en investissant dans la préparation, le soutien et la rétention d'un personnel enseignant de haut niveau. Elle est parvenue à son éminence actuelle non en licenciant systématiquement entre 5 et 10 pour cent du corps enseignant, mais en édifiant patiemment l'avenir pierre par pierre. La Finlande dispose d'un programme d'études national qui ne se limite pas aux aptitudes de base de la lecture et du calcul, mais comprend les arts, les sciences, l'histoire, les langues étrangères et d'autres sujets essentiels à une éducation complète. La Finlande a également renforcé ses programmes d'aide sociale visant les enfants et les familles. M. Guggenheim ignore purement et simplement les réalités du système finlandais. (*traduction libre*) »

Fort heureusement, Timo Lankinen, directeur général du Conseil national finlandais de l'éducation, était lui aussi conférencier au sommet BB4E pour équilibrer les choses. Dans un proche avenir, l'Ontario aurait tout intérêt à favoriser, tout comme le fait la Finlande, un perfectionnement

professionnel pertinent et à renforcer son programme d'études et ses programmes, déjà bien étoffés, tout en accordant moins d'importance aux résultats des tests de l'OQRE. Utiliser ces derniers auprès d'un échantillon d'écoles, comme c'est le cas pour les tests PISA, au lieu de les faire passer aux élèves de toutes les écoles, serait un pas dans la bonne direction.

L'Ontario a notablement progressé dans l'édification d'un système éducatif de renommée internationale. Pour le préserver et continuer d'avancer, nous

devons néanmoins nous garder de tomber dans le piège d'une fausse réforme vantée par la droite. Je recommande chaudement l'ouvrage de D. Ravitch aux membres qui pourront ainsi en savoir plus sur les dangers de fonder un système éducatif sur les stratégies corporatives mal avisées de tests normalisés, d'écoles à charte et de la rémunération au mérite. Il nous appartient de veiller à ce que l'éducation publique ne soit pas reléguée à l'âge des ténèbres suite à l'élection provinciale d'octobre prochain. ☺

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CANADA



NON CONSIGNÉ NON REPRIS

En faveur de la viabilité des services de bien-être à l'enfance en Ontario

Par Suzette Clark

Les résidents de l'Ontario connaissent bien la notion de consigne des bouteilles et des canettes achetées dans les magasins de bières, d'alcools et de vins. Certains se souviennent même peut-être du jour où l'on exigeait une consigne pour les bouteilles de boisson gazeuse. L'idée à l'origine de cette initiative est simple : si vous payez une consigne pour un article, il est probable que vous le rendrez pour obtenir quelque chose en échange. Bien entendu, à plus grande échelle, cela permet de réduire les déchets en encourageant les consommateurs à rapporter les bouteilles et les canettes pour qu'elles soient recyclées. Ce faisant, chacun d'entre nous s'engage sciemment à préserver l'environnement. Le moment est également venu d'investir dans les enfants et les jeunes pris en charge.

Selon le Rapport 2010 sur la pauvreté des enfants et des familles en Ontario, « le taux de pauvreté infantile en Ontario était de 15,2 pour cent en 2008 d'après la Mesure de faible revenu après impôt. Ainsi, 412 000 enfants et jeunes de moins de 18 ans (près d'un sur six) vivaient sous le seuil de pauvreté en 2008. Le taux a augmenté par rapport à 2007 alors que l'économie ontarienne est entrée dans une grave récession. L'impact de la récession signifie que le taux actuel de pauvreté infantile est encore plus élevé. »

Il n'y a pas si longtemps, l'Ontario était pourtant l'une des provinces les plus riches du Canada. La récession économique à l'échelle locale, provinciale et mondiale a provoqué des changements radicaux pour

NO DEPOSIT NO RETURN

Supporting sustainable child welfare in Ontario
By Suzette Clark

Ontario residents are very familiar with the notion of deposits on bottles and cans purchased from stores selling beer, liquor or wine. Some of us may even recall the days when deposits on bottles for soda pop were required. The premise behind these initiatives is simple. If you pay a deposit on an item, you are more likely to return it to get something back. The larger picture, of course, is that we reduce waste by encouraging the general public to return bottles and cans so they can be recycled. Each of us is making a conscious commitment to improving the environment.

It's time we made the same investment for children and youth in care.

ILLUSTRATION: LINDA

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According to the 2010 *Report Card on Child & Family Poverty in Ontario*, "Ontario's child poverty rate was 15.2 per cent in 2008, based on the 'Low Income Measure After Tax.' This indicates that 412,000 children and youth under age 18 (more than one in every six) were living below the poverty line in 2008. The rate increased from 2007 as the Ontario economy entered a serious recession. The impact of the recession will mean that the current rate of child poverty is even higher."

Not so long ago, Ontario was one of Canada's wealthiest provinces. Economic

Their realities are described as overwhelming yet challenging, heartbreak- ing yet inspiring. The mention of the Children's Aid Society (CAS) or Child and Family Services as part of a student's life often brings sympathy and support but also curiosity and questioning. What is a Crown Ward? What's it like living in foster care? Don't you miss your family? Each question is often asked in an attempt to better understand and support the student, but often results, unfortunately, in a painful experience that reminds the student of their atypical family circumstances and, sometimes, the

behavioural, developmental and/or emotional disabilities, and this adds to the challenge for youth trying to become independent and to succeed educationally. Finally, consider the fact that 40 per cent of Crown Wards in school are progressing slowly or have been identified as "promotion at risk" and the challenges can seem almost insurmountable.

The OACAS's *Child Welfare Report 2009/2010* says that, "For youth in care, independence programs are available to support the move to independent living; however, most youth are not ready to move. Many youth have special needs, have high drop-out rates, and need more support beyond 18 or 21 in order to graduate from high school."

In an effort to address these overwhelming statistics that reflect overwhelming need, Student Success Leaders from across the province met with child welfare personnel in November 2009. Representatives from OSSTF/FEESO were also invited to attend. OSSTF/FEESO has continued a rich dialogue with the OACAS and particularly with representatives of Youth-CAN (the Youth Communication Advocacy Network), which has resulted in a better understanding of the need to work together to improve educational outcomes for children and youth in care.

Recent trends have stressed the importance of moving from "child welfare" to the "welfare of children." While the CAS has the responsibility to ensure children are safe and to help their parents keep them safe, if the children are not safe at home, then the OACAS, on behalf of all Ontario's residents, acts as their parents until they are able to return home or find a new home with another family. We are reminded of the responsibility of all members of society to care for children and youth who are in care. Educators play a crucial role in supporting them in our schools and universities. The more we invest in these youth, the greater the future return on our investment. In these days of financial instability and societal uncertainty, we can't afford not to make a commitment. After all, no deposit, no return. ☺

TERMINOLOGY RELATED TO CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE

Crown Ward: a child who has been permanently removed from the care of their parent becomes a Crown ward until his/her 18th birthday

Crown Ward With Access: a child who has been permanently removed from the care of their parent, but has ongoing contact with the parent

Society Ward: a child who has temporarily been placed in the care of an agency

Temporary Care Agreement (TCA): a temporary agreement between the parent and the CAS to place a child in the care of an agency

Customary Care: the attempt to find caregivers for Aboriginal children within their Aboriginal communities

Extended Care & Maintenance (ECM): youth over 18 years who are offered limited support by a CAS after reaching the age of majority.

Extended Family "Kin" Care: placement with a relative while in the care of an agency

Permanency Planning: the attempt to find permanent homes with extended family (kin), an adoptive family or a legal guardianship with foster parents.

downturns, locally, provincially and globally, have resulted in drastic changes for many Ontarians. Our status as a "have" province has now radically shifted to "have not." In light of this new reality, we know how quickly circumstances can change in society.

The same can be said for the swiftness of change that can occur in the lives of our students and the homes they come from. Despite the fact that Ontario has the second-lowest rate of children in care in Canada, Ontario has over 9,200 children and youth who are in the permanent care of the Crown. More significant to educators is the fact that 7,500 of those Crown Wards have been identified as having special needs. These are startling realities—not averages, not projections but real students with real needs in our schools.

traumatic events that moved them from the home they lived in to a life in care.

In a recent report released by the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS), three major priorities for change have been identified: Aboriginal services, adoption, and youth in care. Improving educational outcomes for all of these children and youth is critical in order for them to become contributing members of society. The challenge for any 18-year-old without family support or adequate finances to become independent is daunting. Many try to balance continuing their education (which is mandatory to receive Extended Care & Maintenance; see "Terminology") with part-time work. In addition, according to Ontario's 2006 Crown Ward Review, 82 per cent of Crown Wards have special needs, including

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de nombreux Ontariens. Notre statut de province « opulente » a alors radicalement changé. Cette nouvelle réalité nous fait comprendre la vitesse à laquelle les circonstances peuvent changer dans la société.

La même remarque peut s'appliquer à la vitesse à laquelle la vie de nos élèves et des foyers d'où ils viennent peut elle aussi changer. Malgré le fait que l'Ontario se classe avant-dernier en termes de taux de prise en charge des enfants au Canada, la province compte plus de 9 200 enfants et jeunes sous la tutelle permanente de la Couronne. Les éducatrices et les éducateurs trouveront d'autant plus significatif le fait que 7 500 de ces pupilles de la Couronne ont été identifiés comme ayant des besoins particuliers. Ce sont des faits alarmants et non des moyennes ou des prévisions; ils s'appliquent à des élèves réels qui fréquentent nos écoles et ont des besoins réels.

Cette réalité est à la fois accablante et stimulante, déchirante et inspirante. Mentionner qu'un élève a connu une société d'aide à l'enfance (SAE) ou les services à l'enfance et à la famille suscite souvent la sympathie et le soutien, mais soulève aussi des questions et une certaine curiosité. Qu'est-ce qu'une pupille de la Couronne? À quoi ressemble ta vie en famille d'accueil? Est-ce que ta famille te manque? Chaque question est posée pour mieux comprendre et soutenir l'élève mais, malheureusement, elle est souvent vécue comme une expérience pénible qui lui rappelle sa situation familiale atypique et, parfois, l'événement traumatisant qui l'a arraché à sa famille pour être placé en famille d'accueil.

Un rapport récemment publié par l'Association ontarienne des sociétés d'aide à l'enfance (AOSAE) identifie trois domaines principaux à changer : les services aux Autochtones, l'adoption et les jeunes pris en charge. Améliorer le niveau scolaire de l'ensemble de ces enfants et de ces jeunes est essentiel pour qu'ils puissent apporter leur contribution à la société. Les défis que doivent relever les élèves de 18 ans sans soutien familial ou moyens financiers adéquats et qui aspirent à l'autonomie peuvent les décourager. La plupart tentent de trouver un équilibre entre éducation permanente (obligatoire pour bénéficier de la prise en charge et des soins prolongées) (voir la terminologie

ci-contre) et travail à temps partiel. En outre, selon l'Étude 2006 des pupilles de la Couronne en Ontario, 82 pour cent d'entre eux ont des besoins spéciaux et présentent, notamment, des troubles du comportement et des déficiences développementales et (ou) émotionnelles, ce qui ajoute aux défis que doivent relever les jeunes qui tentent de devenir autonomes et de réussir leurs études. Enfin, si l'on tient compte du fait que 40 pour cent des pupilles de la Couronne qui sont scolarisés ont de la difficulté à faire des progrès ou ont été identifiés comme pouvant avoir de la difficulté à obtenir leur diplôme d'études secondaires, les défis

poursuit un dialogue enrichissant avec les membres de l'AOSAE et plus particulièrement avec des délégués de YouthCAN (*Youth Communication and Advocacy Network*), ce qui a permis de mieux comprendre la nécessité de collaborer pour améliorer les résultats scolaires des enfants et des jeunes pris en charge.

Les tendances récentes soulignent l'importance de passer de la « protection des enfants » au « bien-être des enfants ». Bien que les SAE soient chargées de veiller à ce que les enfants soient en sécurité et d'aider leurs parents à l'assurer, s'ils ne sont pas en sécurité chez eux, l'AOSAE, au nom de

GLOSSAIRE SUR LA PRISE EN CHARGE DES ENFANTS ET DES JEUNES

Pupille de la couronne : Un enfant retiré de la garde de ses parents à titre permanent devient une pupille de la couronne jusqu'à ce qu'il atteigne l'âge de 18 ans.

Pupille de la couronne avec accès à la famille : Enfant retiré de la garde de ses parents à titre permanent, mais conservant un contact continu avec ses parents.

Pupille de la société : Enfant pris en charge par une agence à titre temporaire.

Entente de garde temporaire : Entente temporaire entre le parent et la sae pour confier l'enfant à une agence.

Prise en charge conforme aux traditions : Tentative de trouver des prestataires de soins pour les enfants autochtones dans leur propre communauté.

Prise en charge et soins prolongés : Soutien limité d'une sae accordé à un jeune qui a atteint l'âge de la majorité.

Prise en charge par une personne apparentée : Placement d'un enfant auprès d'une personne de sa famille lors de sa prise en charge par une agence.

Planification de la permanence : Tentative de trouver un foyer permanent auprès de membres de la famille élargie (personnes apparentées) ou d'une famille adoptive ou tentative de tutelle légale par une famille d'accueil.

peuvent sembler presqu'insurmontables.

Selon le rapport des sociétés de l'aide à l'enfance 2009-2010 publié par l'AOSAE, « pour les jeunes pris en charge par les SAE, des programmes sont offerts pour les aider à devenir autonomes; cependant, la plupart d'entre eux ne sont pas prêts à voler de leurs propres ailes. Bon nombre de jeunes ont des besoins spéciaux, le taux de décrocheurs est élevé et ils ont besoin de davantage de soutien entre 18 et 21 ans pour obtenir leur diplôme d'études secondaires. »

Dans le but de faire baisser ces statistiques alarmantes, qui traduisent un besoin immense, les dirigeants de la stratégie visant la réussite des élèves de toute la province ont rencontré du personnel de l'aide à l'enfance en novembre 2009. Des délégués d'OSSTF/FEESO ont également été conviés à cette réunion. OSSTF/FEESO

tous les résidents de l'Ontario, agit alors comme leurs parents jusqu'à ce qu'ils puissent rentrer chez eux ou trouver un nouveau foyer et une autre famille. Cela nous rappelle que chaque membre de la société a le devoir de prendre soin des enfants et des jeunes pris en charge. Les éducatrices et les éducateurs jouent un rôle crucial en les soutenant à l'école et à l'université. Plus nous investissons dans ces jeunes, meilleur sera le rendement de notre investissement dans l'avenir. En cette période d'instabilité financière et d'incertitude sociétale, nous ne pouvons pas nous permettre de ne pas nous engager. Après tout, non consigné, non repris. ☺

Suzette Clark est travailleuse sociale autorisée et adjointe exécutive au Bureau provincial d'OSSTF/FEESO.



Confessions of a union junkie



The rewards of
federation work

By: Suzanne Burchell

I am addicted to OSSTF.

It began in 1984 when Jim Wright, a teacher in the former Wentworth County, District 36, tapped me on the shoulder and asked if I would like a weekend at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto as a delegate to the Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA). My answer was an emphatic "Yes!" I thought a time-out from two very busy kids in a beautiful hotel would be super. At that AMPA, I was bitten and smitten. I even appeared on CBC talking about our issues. What was to come were 23 amazing consecutive years of union work and play.

First came the job of Branch President. I was going to show that we women part-timers were not just dilettantes but fully fledged OSSTF/FESO members and could pull our union weight.

Six years later, a position as Excellence in Education chair promoting the ideals of the teaching profession came along. John Byers, a man I most respect, was the bargaining unit president. He had great integrity and supported all of my schemes. I lost that election to Joe Hirschegger for Excellence in Education (I forgive you, Joe!) and to stop my tears, John promised I could be Political Action Committee (PAC) chair because no one else wanted

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Confessions d'une accro à la Fédé

La récompense du travail syndical

Par: Suzanne Burchell

Je suis accro à OSSTF/FEESO!

Tout a commencé en 1984, lorsque Jim Wright, enseignant de l'ancien District 36 du comté de Wentworth, m'a interpellée pour me demander si je voulais passer la fin de semaine à l'hôtel Royal York de Toronto comme déléguée à la Réunion annuelle de l'Assemblée provinciale (RAAP). J'ai bien entendu acquiescé avec enthousiasme, pensant qu'une « pause » loin de deux enfants turbulents dans un hôtel magnifique serait géniale. C'est lors de la RAAP que j'ai attrapé le virus. J'ai même été interviewée par Radio-Canada pour parler de nos problèmes. Devaient s'ensuivre 23 années sensationnelles d'action syndicale plus que jubilatoires.

J'ai tout d'abord été nommée présidente de division. J'allais montrer que les femmes à temps partiel n'étaient pas seulement des amateurs, mais bien des membres à part entière d'OSSTF/FEESO qui pouvaient influer sur notre action syndicale.

Six années plus tard, on m'a proposé d'être candidate au poste de présidente d'Excellence en éducation pour promouvoir les idéaux de la profession enseignante. John Byers, un homme que je respecte énormément, était alors président de l'unité de négociation. D'une intégrité

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I could see
that union life
was always
going to be a
great personal
support.

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that job. "Now?" I asked. "No, you have to wait to be elected," he kindly replied.

At the Leadership Conference for Women when Liz Barkley was President, we were told to do union work in our own way as individuals. So for 10 years as the district PAC chair, I marched costumed in the streets of Hamilton Labour Day parade. I had the most fun spoofing Mike Harris as a chicken ("No more fowl play, Harris"), as Santa ("Maybe Santa will bring clean classrooms and textbooks, ho ho ho") and as Charlie Brown ("Good grief, Mike Harris"). We got great photos in the *Hamilton Spectator*. I went to Queen's Park with a 12-meter banner signed by teachers protesting Bob Rae's wage freeze. I refused to leave the door to Rae's office until I got an interview. I was a driven woman for our cause. The CBC came with a camera and I aired our side to the cameras with glee. An MP asked my husband, "Is she like this at home?"

I am a drama teacher and I was doing union work in my own way—totally obsessed by the union cause of the day—so protest T-shirts became my garments of choice. I loved nothing more than standing up for OSSTF/FEESO. Perhaps the most exhilarating experience during the Harris years was the AMPA when Janet Ecker, the then Minister of Education, tried to provoke us at the microphone and all the delegates sat in absolute solidarity and total silence. Our silence roared our displeasure. When my husband died in 1999, the provincial president at the time, Earl Manners, called three weeks later and said, "Come to AMPA—we will look after you." I did. When I arrived at the hotel, there was Bob Thompson, the treasurer of District 36, waiting to help me check in. So many people helped me to get through that AMPA and that time in my life. I could see that union life was always going to be a great personal support. Unbeknownst to me, I was to receive the Wendell Fulton Award (which recognizes outstanding contribution in political action) at that AMPA luncheon. In my speech, I thanked my husband for all the times he minded the fort so I could do my beloved union work.

After many years of political action, I turned to professional development in

the district. We began with a budget of \$3,000 and ended with \$11,500 due to the hard work of the committee to provide workshops (almost all with waiting lists) to our members in the district. After eight years, including three on the provincial Educational Services Committee (ESC), Karen Metherall, the Co-ordinating Secretary, and Bill Reith, the head of the Educational Services department, have become dear friends as we shared the work and ideals of our union.

I was trained to do Crisis Awareness Learning Modules (CALM) workshops, which provided opportunities to assist educators with strategies to deal with the crises in education today. As a presenter at provincial ESC conferences, I have had the opportunity to pass on my classroom experience; my workshop Addiction Crossing the Line (available through the Educational Services Resource Bank) is the one that has been most personally rewarding for me to present. Feedback from workshops has been so uplifting. Much to my great surprise, I received the André Lécyuer Award at AMPA 2008 for my work in professional development. This was one of the most wonder-filled moments in my life, when I received an award for doing what I love. I am so grateful for all of the training, friendships and inspiration of these years of union service.

In the Labour Day parade this year, I was once again the old-fashioned teacher ringing my old-time school bell as the members of District 21, Hamilton-Wentworth, dressed in fabulous hockey shirts, marched alongside. Once again we got great press. Still, after 23 years of exhilarating union work, I thought I would retire to do a masters degree in education. However, that feeling of being of service and contributing called once again: the position of district Human Rights Chair was vacant this year. It is an irrepressible and irresistible passion!

Next year I will retire from secondary teaching but I will continue to teach drama methodology to prospective teachers on a part-time basis, as I've been doing for the past 10 years at Brock University's Drama in Education program.

While passing the torch of pedagogy,

/CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



parfaite, il soutenait tous mes projets. J'ai néanmoins perdu l'élection au poste de présidente d'Excellence en éducation au profit de Joe Hirschegger (je te pardonne, Joe!). Pour me consoler, John me promit que je pourrais devenir présidente du Comité d'action politique, car personne d'autre ne voulait de ce travail. « Tout de suite? » ai-je demandé. « Non, il faut d'abord que tu sois élue », m'a-t-il répondu gentiment.

Lors de la *Conférence de leadership à l'intention des femmes*, lorsque Liz Barkley était présidente, le ton était inflexible : chacun d'entre nous devait mener son action syndicale à sa façon. Pendant dix ans, en tant que présidente du Comité d'action politique, j'ai donc arpentré les rues en costume lors de la parade de la fête du Travail de Hamilton. J'ai surtout adoré parodier Mike Harris en costume d'oiseau (« Ne nous prends pas pour des pigeons, Harris »), de Père Noël (« Peut-être que le Père Noël nous apportera des salles de classe et des cahiers décents, ho! ho! ho! ») et de Charlie Brown (« Misère, Mike Harris. ») Le *Hamilton Spectator* a pris d'excellentes photos. Je me suis rendue à Queen's Park portant une banderole de 40 pieds de long signée par des enseignants qui protestaient contre le gel des salaires imposé par Bob Rae. J'ai refusé de quitter son bureau avant qu'il m'accorde une entrevue. J'étais une femme animée par notre cause. Radio-Canada m'a filmée pendant que je défendais notre position avec jubilation devant les caméras. Un député a demandé à mon mari si j'étais toujours comme ça à la maison.

Je suis enseignante d'art dramatique qui mène à bien ses actions syndicales à sa façon, totalement obsédée par « la cause syndicale du jour ». C'est ainsi que les tee-shirts sont devenus mes articles de lingerie préférés. Rien ne me fait plus plaisir que de défendre OSSTF/FESO. Mon expérience la plus exaltante pendant les années Harris a probablement été la RAAP, lorsque tous les délégués, assis dans un silence absolu, ont écouté Janet Ecker, alors ministre de l'Éducation, qui tentait de nous provoquer au microphone et n'a reçu en réponse que notre silence total et notre solidarité absolue. Ce silence assourdissant traduisait notre mécontentement. Lors du décès de mon époux, en 1999, le président

provincial de l'époque, Earl Manners, m'a appelée trois semaines plus tard pour m'inviter : « Venez à la RAAP. Nous nous occuperons de vous. » J'ai suivi son conseil. En arrivant à l'hôtel, Bob Thompson, le trésorier du District 36, m'attendait pour m'aider à m'enregistrer. Bien des personnes m'ont aidée lors de la RAAP de cette année-là et tout au long de cette période difficile de ma vie. Je savais que la Fédération serait toujours d'un grand soutien pour moi. À mon insu, je devais recevoir le prix Wendell Fulton (qui récompense les contributions remarquables à l'action politique) lors du déjeuner de la RAAP. Dans mon discours de remerciement, j'ai cité mon mari pour toutes les fois où il avait « gardé le fort » pour que je puisse accomplir les tâches syndicales que j'aimais tant.

Après de nombreuses années d'action politique, je me suis tournée vers le perfectionnement professionnel des membres du district. Ayant commencé avec un budget de 3 000 \$, nous avons finalement obtenu 11 500 \$ grâce au travail assidu du comité qui s'est dévoué pour offrir des ateliers (presque tous avec une liste d'attente) aux membres du district. Huit années plus tard, dont trois ans passés au sein du Comité provincial des Services éducatifs, Karen Metherall, secrétaire-coordonnatrice, et Bill Reith, directeur des Services éducatifs, sont devenus de bons amis avec qui je partageais les tâches et les idéaux de notre syndicat. J'ai été formée pour animer les ateliers CALMe (modules de sensibilisation à la gestion des crises) qui offrent au personnel scolaire des stratégies pour gérer les crises dans le milieu éducatif moderne. En tant que présentatrice aux conférences du Comité provincial des Services éducatifs, j'ai eu l'occasion de faire bénéficier les membres de mon expérience en salle de classe. Mon atelier, intitulé *Addiction Crossing the Line* (disponible dans la banque de ressources des Services éducatifs) est celui qui a été le plus valorisant pour moi jusqu'à présent. La rétroaction sur les ateliers est tellement stimulante. À ma grande surprise, j'ai reçu le Prix André Lécuyer lors de la RAAP 2008 en récompense de mon travail en matière de perfectionnement professionnel. Recevoir ce prix lors de la RAAP pour avoir fait ce que

Je savais
que la
Fédération
serait toujours
d'un grand
soutien pour
moi.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30/

I urge future teachers to get involved in union work when they enter the field. I already have my eye on chairing our district's Active Retired Members (ARM) chapter in retirement. My desire to stand and serve my beloved union will not be quenched. These years have been one of the best parts of my entire life. The scope of membership in our union has revitalized my spirit throughout the years, since I knew I was supported by

incredibly dedicated members throughout the province who were promoting the good of students.

In my will, I have asked to be buried wearing my OSSTF/FEESO blazer, whether it still fits or not.... Obsessed until the end! ☺

Suzanne Burchell is a long-time union activist who teaches at Orchard Park Secondary School in District 21, Hamilton-Wentworth.

SUITE DE LA PAGE 31/

j'aimais a été pour moi l'un des meilleurs moments de ma vie. Je suis infiniment reconnaissante pour toute la formation et l'inspiration que j'ai reçues, ainsi que pour les amitiés liées tout au long de mes années de service à OSSTF/FEESO.

Lors de la parade de la fête du Travail de cette année, je suis redevenue l'enseignante vieux jeu qui fait retentir la bonne vieille cloche de l'école alors que les membres du District 21, Hamilton-Wentworth, arroraient de fabuleux maillots de hockey et marchaient à mes côtés. De nouveau, les critiques ont été extrêmement favorables. J'ai cependant pensé qu'après 23 années de travail passionnant à la Fédération, je cesserais mon travail pour obtenir une maîtrise en éducation. Alors que je pensais mes années de travail syndical révolues, l'envie de servir et de contribuer m'a reprise : le poste de présidente des droits de la personne du district était vacant. Cette passion est irrépressible!

L'année prochaine, je cesserai d'enseigner dans les écoles secondaires, mais continuerai d'enseigner les techniques d'art dramatique à temps partiel aux élèves-enseignants comme je le fais depuis ces dix dernières années dans le cadre du programme d'art dramatique de l'Université Brock. Tout en passant le flambeau en matière de pédagogie, j'incite fortement les futurs enseignants à prendre part aux actions syndicales dès leurs débuts. Je songe déjà à présider la section des membres retraités actifs de notre district lors de la retraite. Ma soif de défendre et de servir la Fédération à laquelle je tiens tant ne se tarira pas. Ces années ont fait partie des meilleures de ma vie. Les effectifs de notre syndicat m'ont revitalisée au fil des années, sachant que j'étais appuyée par des membres incroyablement dévoués dans toute la province et qui tiennent à promouvoir le bien des élèves.

Dans mon testament, j'ai demandé à être enterrée avec mon blazer d'OSSTF/FEESO, qu'il m'aille encore ou non, obsédee jusqu'au bout! ☺

Suzanne Burchell est une activiste de longue date qui enseigne à l'école secondaire d'Orchard Park, dans le District 21, Hamilton-Wentworth.



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CANADA



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Wild life

Conrad lives in Clinton with his wife Sheryl and son Daniel (Grade 11). His daughter Nicole is in her second year at The University of Waterloo. Conrad teaches English at Central Huron Secondary School. He is the administrator of the school website (chss.amdsb.ca) and produces most of the photo galleries of school events. Photography has been a hobby of his for about five years. Conrad believes that to be in control of the creative process from composition to editing and printing is very rewarding. He loves hiking, and photography allows him to capture and share his experiences. He enjoys the challenge of trying to present the natural world from different perspectives. ☺

Clockwise from top left: A self-confident llama acts as a guard animal for a herd of cattle on a farm near Clinton. This caterpillar blends in well with a tree in the Hullett Provincial Wildlife Area. A juvenile raccoon attempted to gain access to my neighbour's shed. A white-marked tussock moth eats a leaf breakfast in Rondeau Provincial Park. At right, seagulls take flight at the southernmost tip of Canada on Pelee island







Evoking the power of the spirit

Canada's Museum of Inuit Art

The hypnotizing, chanting music calls to you as you walk through the Museum of Inuit Art (MIA). There is a peaceful feeling emanating from the serene surroundings. The artwork, which is encased in glass, sits against a white background that showcases the pieces and makes them all pop with a life of their own. You can almost feel the blood, sweat and tears of the individual artists. It is no wonder you experience a sense of spirituality, knowing that the Inuit believe good and evil spirits roam freely, inhabiting various places and objects. The carvings and sculptures are clearly far more than the materials with which they were created.

There are expressive faces carved into the many sculptures of an Inuit Shaman—a figure in the community who has great spiritual powers. The Inuit people also believe that both humans and animals have souls, and a sense of that soul is very much evident in many of the showcased pieces made from a variety of media, including ivory, bone, paper and ceramics.

The MIA is southern Canada's only public museum devoted exclusively to Inuit art. As you make your way through the space, you will see multiple displays of prehistoric art, early post-contact art and early works of the modernist period, as well as con-



PHOTOS: MUSEUM OF INUIT ART

"Spirit" by Karoo Ashevak (1940-1974) from Taloyoak (Spence Bay). c. 1970: whalebone, antler and stone.
Museum of Inuit Art Collection, acquired from the Sprott Acquisition Fund

temporary art and masterworks. They also rotate exhibitions that feature individual artists, communities, themes and materials.

The museum displays over 500 objects in both permanent exhibitions and also temporary shows that change periodically, so there is always something new to see and learn about.

The artistic history of Canada's Inuit represented throughout the museum focuses on the cultural and thematic foundations of their art and highlights the regional diversity and various media. The displays not only house the artwork but celebrate the achievements of individual artists from all regions of the Canadian Arctic. The MIA says it "...aims to present Inuit art in a varied, changing and stimulating context that includes and is sensitive to the Inuit perspective." It has definitely achieved its aim.

The permanent collection is separated into five galleries, each of which focuses on a separate theme.

Gallery I (Artistic History and Thematic Foundations of Inuit Art) examines the evolution of art in Canada's Arctic through recognized historical periods. This space also showcases the themes that are based on traditional culture and have inspired so much Inuit art: belief systems (shamanism, spirits and transformation), myths and legends (e.g. the sea goddess), animals, the human figure, community life, the roles of men and women, modes of transportation and hunting by land and by sea.

Gallery II (Diversity of Styles and Artistic Expression) provides an overview of modern artistic styles and media that have evolved in Canada's Arctic in the various regions and major communities, reflecting the scope



PHOTOS: MUSEUM OF INUIT ART

Inside view of the Museum of Inuit Art



PHOTOS: MUSEUM OF INUIT ART

Inside view of the Museum of Inuit Art



and depth of artistic expression within Inuit art. Various media employed in Inuit sculpture are displayed and major regional styles are represented from Arctic Quebec, Baffin Island, Keewatin, Central Arctic and Netsilik.

Gallery III (Masterworks and Contemporary Sculpture) presents major works by leading Inuit artists and also includes an installation of contemporary sculptures made mostly by younger artists, some now living in the south.

Gallery IV and V (Special Exhibitions and Audio-Visual Presentation Centre) are devoted to rotating special exhibitions. The goal of these exhibitions is to focus more specifically on particular artists, communities, themes and media. (The centrally located Gallery IV can also be used as a space for audio-visual presentations and lectures.)

The MIA, which is located within Queen's Quay Terminal at Toronto's Harbourfront, has been open for just

over three years. Whether you visit as an individual, a family or with a group of students, the experience will provide a fascinating glimpse into the depth and breadth of art made by Canada's Inuit.

As part of the Harbourfront Centre School Visits Programs, the MIA provides a wide variety of school tours and information packages for teachers. All tours relate to Ontario's Ministry of Education curriculum, including The Arts, Native Studies and Canadian and World Studies. If you wish, the museum will also work with educators to create a tour based around subject matter that can be incorporated into lesson plans.

The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (check holidays and summer hours). To learn more about this exciting venue and its specific offerings, call the Harbourfront Centre Registrar for School Visits at 416-973-4091. For any other information or enquiries visit www.miamuseum.ca. ☐



Keeping you in the loop

Reviews, conferences, PD opportunities and other items of interest

BOOK REVIEW

Hooray for Diffendoofer Day

By Dr. Seuss and Jack Prelutsky

Illustrations by Lane Smith

Published by Alfred A. Knopf

64 pages, \$22.00

Reviewed by Wendy Anes Hirschegger

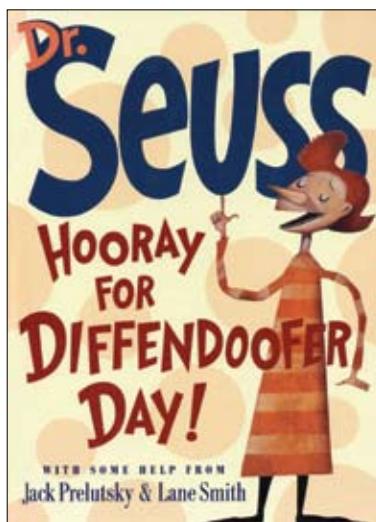
I was still teaching when the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) was first introduced in Ontario, ushering in the province-wide testing in reading, writing and mathematics in Grades 3 and 6, the Grade 9 mathematics test and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test in Grade 10. In those early days, the tests were a lot more onerous than they are now, but the testing can still cause anxiety for students, teachers, educational workers and even parents. There is so much emphasis on raising achievement levels in Ontario schools that the stakes around the EQAO tests seem higher than they ought to be.

All of that can take its toll on students (not to mention teachers, educational workers and administrators), and so when I was preparing students in my Grade 9 and 10 classes for their EQAO tests, I would share the book *Hooray for Diffendoofer Day* by Dr. Seuss and Jack Prelutsky with them.

In the book, the Principal of Diffendoofer School announces to the students one day that
 "All schools for miles and miles around
 Must take a special test,
 To see who's learning such and such—
 To see which school's the best.

If our small school does not do well,
 Then it will be torn down,
 And you will have to go to school
 In dreary Flobbertown."

The students begin to fret because Flobbertown is "miserable" and "everyone does everything the same." However, Miss Bonkers, one of their



teachers, reassures the class: "You've learned the things you need to pass that test and many more—I'm certain you'll succeed." And she says the school has taught the students "something else that matters more—We've taught you how to think." As it turns out, the students do exceedingly well on the test and the story ends with a celebration.

Despite the fact that this is a kids' book, the theme is as recognizable to Grade 9 and 10 students as it is to younger children. As such, it would be suitable for use at any grade in which EQAO testing takes place. Teachers and educational workers alike could use the story to prompt a discussion about learning and help allay any anxiety students may have about the standardized testing.

In addition, the book has a section that would be extremely valuable for a Writers Craft class. Following the conclusion of the story, the second half is called "How

This Book Came To Be." While Dr. Seuss had conceived of the idea and had written notes and drawn some sketches, he died before he could complete it, and eventually author Jack Prelutsky and illustrator Lane Smith were approached to finish the book. This section describes that process and includes some of Seuss's original notes and sketches, and so would be extremely useful for lessons on story development and editing.

All in all, this is one of my favourite children's books, and it is also one that I often use as a gift for special educator friends who are cut from the same cloth as Miss Bonkers.

Wendy Anes Hirschegger is the editor of *Education Forum* and an Executive Assistant at the Provincial office

WEBSITE REVIEW

Resources for Rethinking

www.r4r.ca

Reviewed by Karen Allin

Resources for Rethinking (r4r) is a Canadian database that provides links to lesson plans and unit plans based on environmental and sustainable development. Each resource is reviewed by Canadian teachers and is assessed on theme, curriculum matches and pedagogical approaches. Currently the website has almost 500 links. You can search by grade, subject, theme or organization. The broad themes include air, citizenship, economics, ecosystems, energy, food and agriculture, governance, human health and environment, human rights, indigenous knowledge, land use and natural resources, science and technology, waste management and water.

This website does more than link you to other websites. It provides a detailed review of the lesson plans, a specific listing of all the materials needed to complete the activity and the year the resource was published. The majority

of the lesson plans can be downloaded for free. Along with being available in English, many of the lessons are available in French and even Cree.

This website is not just for those teaching science or world issues. It also has applications to all subjects. For instance, there are lessons where students can learn about clean drinking water and sanitation, analyze the entire life cycle of electronics or use proverbs and metaphors to learn about global unity. This website is highly recommended for anyone interested in incorporating environmental and sustainable development into their classroom. It is easy to use and provides useful and relevant resources.

Karen Allin teaches in District 19, Peel, and is a member of the Curriculum, Resources and Research Subcommittee of the OSSTF/FEESO Educational Services Committee.

RESOURCES REVIEW

Stratford Festival teaching resources and PD opportunities

Reviewed by Louanna Alexander-Hudgel

There was a time when I thought the Stratford Festival and its offerings were a tad out of my league. How could I possibly encourage my students to partake of something I didn't know much about? What if they asked me to explain what Shakespeare was saying—what he meant?

Then I was introduced to the Stratford Festival's Education Department through a brochure inviting teachers and their students to attend plays. That department's remarkable and dedicated staff—Andrea Jackson, Katherine Laing, Shira Ginsler (Education Coordinators), Edward Duranyi (Resident Teaching Artist) and Director of Education Pat Quigley—have developed an incredible variety of accessible and enriching programs. There are study guides with enough information to

make any teacher become very clever about Shakespeare and, in fact, about many other playwrights and plays and musicals. There are programs to let us meet and talk with the actors, and the Festival staff also provide information and assistance to make a trip to the theatre an effortless, enjoyable and memorable event.

An annual Teachers' Conference, held in mid-October, is enriching both for elementary and secondary English, arts and history teachers, plus any teacher wanting to broaden their teaching strategies. The conference includes two plays—this year they will be *Twelfth Night* and *The Grapes of Wrath*—brilliant workshops, meals, performance ticket draws, a wine and cheese reception to meet actors and more. It really provides outstanding value. This fall's conference—the 30th—will be equally spectacular. It fills quickly with Canadian, American and even some international teachers. Register at www.tflc.ca by June 30, 2011.

Stratford's Teaching Shakespeare School allows teachers and students to explore Shakespeare's plays in a hands-on way: not as literature but as theatre. It's practically free (for low-income schools, it's entirely free). The only costs are your students' theatre tickets and buses for Stage Three (and Stage Four, for drama section classes) and your overnight accommodation in Stratford during Stage One (three days in August), if you choose to stay over.

Meanwhile, each year the Shakespeare on Wheels program invites two to four schools within driving distance from the Festival to work with a Stratford director, musician, choreographer and designer to put together a 20-minute scene from one of Shakespeare's plays.

Shakespeare School is a residential summer program of one-, two- or three-week sessions where students study plays with teachers, directors and actors. Every session culminates in a

production that families can attend. Students can participate with little or no background, and usually leave the program impressed with their growth and capabilities in understanding and acting in Shakespeare and other great playwrights' works. There are even musical-theatre sessions and master classes. This is an incredibly enriching experience for any student. As a teacher at Shakespeare School, I have seen students blossom socially and intellectually in this superbly run program.

In addition, teachers can also download

- Teaching Materials (PDFs of classroom activities)
- Study Guides for many plays
- Stratford for Students, a magazine for teachers and students.

And if all of that weren't enough, the website also provides information about

- The "Stratford Shakespeare Challenge," a video contest for Ontario students in Grades 9–12
- Teacher Ticket Deals (teachers may book two tickets for selected dates at a greatly reduced rate)
- The new Ontario Schools Project, which has the goal of making it possible for each and every student in Ontario to experience live theatre at Stratford at least once before they graduate from Grade 12
- Additional Qualifications courses (Dramatic Arts—Part 1, Part 2 and Specialist).

The Stratford Festival is more than just a place to see a play. Do yourself and your students a huge favour and carve out a few minutes of your time to find something just right for your educational needs. Go to www.stratford-festival.ca/education/education.aspx and click on "Teachers" and "Students" to find more information about the programs and resources listed above.

Louanna Alexander-Hudgel formerly taught drama in District 8, Avon-Maitland, and now teaches drama and special education in District 9, Greater Essex.



CONFERENCES**April 7, 2011**

Region 5 (Ottawa)

May 6, 2011

Region 1 (Thunder Bay)

May 26, 2011

Region 2 (Sudbury)

OSSTF/FEESO Regional Symposia

OVERLOADED: Strategies to Stay Healthy in a Stressful World

SURCHARGÉ : Stratégies pour rester en santé dans un monde plus stressant

Competing demands have become the norm rather than the exception, and we are paying the price. Increased stress levels can have physiological, emotional and behavioural effects and contribute to symptoms of depression and anxiety in otherwise healthy individuals.

Françoise Mathieu, M.Ed., CCC., a certified mental health counsellor and compassion fatigue specialist and an engaging and dynamic speaker, will present the most recent research on anxiety and depression and explore the consequences of chronic stress. She will present strategies to identify warning signs and offer concrete ideas to help us regain better emotional and physical balance both at work and at home, and to support one another in our challenging work environments. Registration details will be posted at www.osstf.on.ca prior to each event.

March 24–26, 2011

The Road We've Travelled...

The Road Ahead

Ontario Modern Languages

Teachers Association

DoubleTree by Hilton - Toronto Airport Hotel

The OMLTA's 125th spring conference theme is intended to encourage reflection, celebration of our successes and looking ahead to the future and the importance of language teaching. Looking back on the road we have travelled and ahead to the 21st-century skills our students will need, two of

the key areas needed for the future are respect and empathy. We are pleased to announce that our keynote speaker is Dr. Samantha Nutt. Dr. Nutt is the Founder and Executive Director of War Child Canada, and is committed to peace, human rights and social justice. For more information, visit www.omlta.org.

April 10–11, 2011

Thriving Through Adversity

Ontario Association for Students At Risk

Holiday Inn Toronto Airport

This 23rd annual conference features two keynote speakers, over 28 workshops and covers such topics as mental health issues, youth issues, special education support, student success and hands-on technology, as well as vendor and publisher displays. The annual meeting will take place on Sunday evening, followed by the President's Reception with live entertainment and great networking opportunities. Register by March 11, 2011 for early-bird rate. For full details and conference registration information, visit www.oasar.org.

April 28–30, 2011

EcoLinks 2011

Ontario Society for

Environmental Education

Garriock Hall, Seneca College,

King Campus

The focus of the conference will be on helping teachers to integrate environmental education in every subject in every grade. The emphasis is on the science and technology curriculum revisions, the social studies and geography curriculum and other subject areas, including literacy and art. Keynote speakers are Charles (Chuck) Hopkins, who holds both a UNESCO Chair and a United Nations University Chair, and singer/songwriter Ian Tamblyn, who has just returned from a teaching and guiding position in Antarctica with a group called Students on Ice. For more information, visit www.osee.ca.

May 1–3, 2011

CO-OPTIONS FOR SUCCESS ~

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Ontario Cooperative Education Association

Sheraton Parkway Toronto

OCEA's 2011 Spring Conference will offer workshops in the following strands: expansion of co-operative education, resources to support best practices and reaching every student. For more information, visit www.ocea.on.ca.

May 2–3, 2011

Body-Image and Self-Esteem:

Shades of Grey

National Eating Disorder

Information Centre

89 Chestnut Conference Centre,
University of Toronto, Toronto, ON

Recognizing, understanding and celebrating our multi-faceted identities is an exercise in seeing shades of grey. At a time when beauty and fitting in have never appeared more fluid and yet so narrowly defined, what other perspectives can we explore? What other voices do we need to hear? Join NEDIC and leading-edge practitioners, educators and activists to share experiences, learn new approaches and change perceptions about body image and self-concept issues. Early-bird registration ends March 25, 2011. For more information and to register, visit www.nedic.ca.

May 12–14, 2011

Growing Success through Technology

Ontario Council for Technology Education

Nottawasaga Inn, Alliston ON

This conference, for science and technology teachers K–8 and technology teachers 9–12, consists of workshops and seminars organized around the conference theme, keynote speakers who deliver engaging and motivating speeches on current issues and a large vendors market that focuses on literature and software, supplies, materials, tools and machinery specific to technology education. Take advantage of OCTE's early-bird registration before



April 1 and save. Visit octe.on.ca and register online.

May 17–19, 2011

Indian Control of Indian Education:

A Legacy for Change

Ontario Native Education

Counselling Association

Courtyard by Marriott, 475 Yonge St.,
Toronto ON

The 27th annual conference presented by the Ontario Native Education Counselling Association will feature keynote speakers and workshops on the theme "Indian Control of Indian Education: A Legacy for Change" and will be of interest to Native counsellors as well as teachers. Conference and registration information can be found at www.oneca.com. Reduced rates are available for members who have paid their 2011/2012 membership by April 8, 2011.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

EduGAINS

www.edugains.ca

EduGAINS stands for Education: Growing Accessible Interactive Networked Supports. EduGAINS is an ever-changing site provided by the Ministry of Education where all educators involved in Grades K-12 teaching and learning can access a wealth of resources and information to enhance their own learning, and the learning of others. There are different pages linked to the home page.

- AER GAINS
(Assessment Evaluation Reporting)
- Math GAINS
- Literacy GAINS
- ELL GAINS
(English Language Learners)
- Differentiated Instruction
- International Languages for Elementary.

The target audiences for the EduGAINS website is primarily K-12

teachers but many of the resources and videos are relevant to other educational workers. All resources that are uploaded are vetted by the Ministry before being posted.

Teaching Matters: PD Calendar

The OTF's Teaching Matters PD Calendar, www.teachingmatters.on.ca/site/index.php, tracks subject association conferences, Additional Qualifications courses, affiliate workshops and events on a wide array of topics and across all grade levels. Most of the events are sponsored by teaching organizations, subject associations and faculties of education.

Search the calendar by type of event, region, topic, grade or date, and sign up for e-mail notification of similar opportunities as they are added. Event citations include such information as the start/end dates of the course/event, cost, provider, location, website links if any and contact details if more information is required or if one wishes to sign up.

The PD Calendar is available in both English and French.

Canadian Aboriginal Writing and Arts Challenge

The Canadian Aboriginal Writing and Arts Challenge is a program that awards more than \$16,500 to youth across Canada. An initiative of The Historica-Dominion Institute, the Canadian Aboriginal Writing and Arts Challenge invites Aboriginal writers and artists (ages 14-29) to compose or create an original work that explores an aspect of Canadian Aboriginal history. The deadline for the Challenge is March 31, 2011.

For the first time in the Challenge's seven-year history, the Institute is also seeking two-dimensional visual art submissions. They hope the program's expansion to visual arts will make the Challenge available to a new audience of Aboriginal youth—those who prefer to express themselves through mediums like painting, drawing and photography.

Emerging writers and artists have

their work judged by the foremost in the field, including Tomson Highway, Brian Maracle and Joseph Boyden, as well as distinguished figures such as National Chief Shawn Atleo and Mary Simon, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami.

The Writing Challenge is also a great classroom tool. Use it as a class project, an alternative assignment for an English class or an extra credit assignment! It fits in well with curricula in both English and Social Studies and will help get Aboriginal students excited about writing and engaged in the material because it's about them.

The *Aboriginal Writing Challenge Teacher's Guide* provides simple step-by-step guidelines on how to participate in the Aboriginal Writing and Arts Challenge, plus classroom activities that aid in the research and creative process. Teachers can also consult the *Curriculum Correlation* to find out how this program fits in with provincial curricula across the country.

Students can use the *Six Steps to Writing Historical Fiction* for tips on researching and creating a work of historical fiction. In addition, the website has published the submissions from 2005 to the present, so there is also a wealth of Aboriginal writing that students and teachers can explore.

Winning written entries are published in *Canada's History* magazine, and winning artwork is exhibited in a gallery. Finalists are awarded cash prizes of up to \$2,000 and published on the program website: www.our-story.ca.

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The OSSTF/FEESO Federation Family Bursary

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation established this bursary program to assist financially the children of OSSTF/FEESO members to enter college, university or apprenticeship programs. Ten \$1,500 bursaries are available this year.

The following are the criteria for the Federation Family Bursary:

1. The applicant must be a child or ward of a member, or deceased member, of OSSTF/FEESO in good standing.
2. The applicant must be a student in a publicly-funded secondary school in the school year in which the application is made or must have been a student who graduated from a publicly-funded secondary school in June of the previous year.
3. The applicant must have applied to enter a publicly-funded post-secondary college or university program or an apprenticeship program that includes an academic portion offered through a college. All awards are made conditional upon the recipient being enrolled in the program for which the award is being requested.
4. The applicant must have a proven record of involvement/leadership in the school and in the community, showing leadership and interest in community, labour/union and/or other social issues.
5. The online application form is accessible from the provincial website: www.osstf.on.ca. (Go to "Services", then "Awards", then "Financial Assistance for Further Education" then "Federation Family Bursary".)
6. Completed applications should be electronically submitted or mailed with all attachments to:
OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Scholarship Committee
c/o Bill Reith
60 Mobile Drive, Toronto, ON M4A 2P3

Applications must be received at OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office no later than **April 30**.



Last word

by Ken Coran, President

Mot de la fin

par Ken Coran, président

What's the message?

Stepping up to the plate to defend public education

Over the last several issues of this magazine, I have outlined the challenges currently faced by the Ontario government and those specific to the education sector. I have explained how your Provincial Executive approaches these challenges in order to best serve and protect you, our members, and I have requested your commitment to standing strong with your colleagues and in standing up for public education at all levels.

As the provincial election next October draws ever closer, your support and vigilance will become critical, and your active participation will become even more necessary in order to ensure we will have a government that cares about public education from early learning to post secondary, that values the entire education team and that understands education is Ontario's best investment.

How do we achieve that lofty goal? Although that is not a question easily answered, it is one that must be considered. First, we must be smart about decoding the messages the political parties will be selling. Second, we must point out the contradictions and flaws in that political messaging and clearly and plainly state our message. Finally, we must recognize that those we disagree with may share some similar viewpoints that we can use as the basis for dialogue. As was pointed out in the January issue of *Update*, when we hear politicians calling for parents to be able to choose their children's schools, we need to be able to clearly explain how this leads to the ghettoizing of communities. When we hear a phrase like "respect the taxpayer," we must emphatically state that we are taxpayers, too, and want to know what that respect looks like. When we hear that educators are overpaid, we must be articulate in the defence of the value of our work.

OSSTF/FEESO is currently in the process of influencing and monitoring the election platform of all parties. We expect the roll-out of the platforms to occur no earlier than late spring. We also anticipate that the platforms will be released in stages. Staying on top of countless education trends as they unfold also prepares us to question the parties' education platforms and to counter their floating of ideas popular in jurisdictions in the United States such as more standardized

Quel est le message?

Mettons-nous à l'œuvre pour défendre l'éducation publique

Ans les derniers numéros de ce magazine, j'ai mis en évidence les défis auxquels est confronté actuellement le gouvernement de l'Ontario et ceux que le secteur de l'éducation doit relever plus spécifiquement. J'ai expliqué comment votre Exécutif provincial relève ces défis dans le but de vous servir et de vous protéger au mieux en tant que membres et je vous ai demandé de vous engager aux côtés de vos collègues pour soutenir l'éducation publique à tous les niveaux.

Alors que l'élection provinciale d'octobre approche, votre soutien et votre vigilance deviennent primordiaux et votre participation active est d'autant plus nécessaire pour veiller à élire un gouvernement qui se soucie de l'éducation publique, de la petite enfance au postsecondaire. Un gouvernement qui accorde de l'importance à l'équipe éducative tout entière et qui comprend que l'éducation est le meilleur investissement de l'Ontario.

Comment atteindre ce noble but? Bien qu'il n'y ait pas de réponse facile à cette question, elle mérite qu'on s'y intéresse. Tout d'abord, nous devons décoder intelligemment les messages que les partis politiques tenteront de nous vendre. Ensuite, nous devons montrer les contradictions et les défauts de ces messages politiques et énoncer le nôtre en des termes simples. Enfin, nous devons reconnaître que nos adversaires peuvent avoir des points de vue qui se rapprochent des nôtres et sur lesquels nous pouvons nous fonder pour engager un dialogue. Comme nous l'avons souligné dans le numéro d'*Update* de janvier, lorsque nous entendons des politiciens réclamer que les parents puissent choisir l'école de leurs enfants, nous devons pouvoir expliquer clairement en quoi cela contribue à la ghettoïsation des communautés. Quand nous entendons qu'il faut respecter les contribuables, précisons catégoriquement que nous sommes aussi des contribuables et voulons savoir ce que veut dire le mot « respect ». Lorsque nous entendons que les éducatrices et les éducateurs sont trop payés, nous devons défendre sans ambiguïté la valeur de notre travail.

Actuellement, OSSTF/FEESO influence et surveille le programme électoral de tous les partis. Nous prévoyons que le dévoilement de ces programmes ne se fera pas avant la fin du printemps et qu'il se fera progressivement. Rester au fait des innombrables tendances en matière d'éducation au fur et à mesure de leur apparition nous prépare aussi à remettre en question les programmes



LAST WORD CONTINUED/

testing, exit exams for high school students, merit pay based on those standardized tests and publication of performance appraisal ratings. We consistently review various education studies and policy documents produced around the world. Lately we have focused on studies completed in Ontario, British Columbia and the United States around education being powered by technology and what 21st-century learning and teaching look like.

We will continue to ensure that we will be in the strongest position to protect our members and public education. Consequently, OSSTF/FEESO has its own game plan to highlight public education and why it works for Ontario. The Communications/Political Action Department is developing an election strategy and materials around the theme “Public education works for Ontario” that districts will be able to use to lobby local candidates. In addition, we are working with the Ontario Teachers’ Federation and the other affiliates in sponsoring a symposium called “Creativity, Citizenship, Community and Creative Thinking in the 21st Century.” Scheduled for May 4 and 5, during Education Week, the symposium will feature Dr. Diane Ravitch, a well-respected champion of public education in the United States, as a keynote speaker.

Over the next seven months, each of us has a responsibility to make sure we understand the issues facing us. As the election machine starts up and gathers speed, we also need to make sure that our family, friends and neighbours understand what is at stake.

We will continue to ensure that we will be in the strongest position to protect our members and public education. Consequently, OSSTF/FEESO has its own game plan to highlight public education and why it works for Ontario.

Your Provincial Executive members will provide leadership throughout the election campaign and then in establishing and maintaining a working relationship with the elected government. We will provide you with the information and tools you need in order to be able to do your part. What we will need most, however, is for all our OSSTF/FEESO members to be on the public education team, to step up to the plate and to work together to make public education the winner, no matter which political party is pitching to us. ☺

MOT DE LA FIN SUITE/

des partis à cet égard et à contrer leur afflux d'idées, populaires dans certaines circonscriptions américaines, comme les tests de plus en plus normalisés, les examens de fin d'études secondaires, la rémunération au mérite en fonction des résultats obtenus aux tests normalisés et la publication des notes obtenues aux évaluations de

OSSTF/FEESO a mis au point son propre plan de bataille pour mettre en avant l'éducation publique et les raisons pour lesquelles elle donne de bons résultats en Ontario.

rendement. Nous analysons régulièrement les diverses études et politiques sur l'éducation qui sont publiées dans le monde entier. Dernièrement, nous nous sommes penchés sur certaines études menées en Ontario, en Colombie-Britannique et aux États-Unis au sujet de l'éducation appuyée par la technologie et sur ce à quoi l'apprentissage et l'enseignement ressembleront au XXI^e siècle.

Nous continuerons à nous positionner de façon à protéger au mieux nos membres et l'éducation publique. Dans ce but, OSSTF/FEESO a mis au point son propre plan de bataille pour mettre en avant l'éducation publique et les raisons pour lesquelles elle donne de bons résultats en Ontario. Le Secteur des communications/ action politique élabore actuellement une stratégie pour l'élection et du matériel sur le thème « L'éducation publique fonctionne pour l'Ontario » et que les districts pourront utiliser pour faire pression sur les candidats de leur localité. En outre, nous collaborons avec la Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'Ontario et d'autres organismes affiliés pour parrainer un colloque intitulé « C à la quatrième puissance pour le XXI^e siècle » (*Creativity, Citizenship, Community and Creative Thinking in the 21st Century*). Prévu les 4 et 5 mai, pendant la Semaine de l'éducation, ce colloque accueillera Diane Ravitch, défenseure réputée de l'éducation publique aux États-Unis, en tant que conférencière d'honneur.

Au cours des sept mois à venir, chacun d'entre nous sera chargé de faire en sorte de bien comprendre les défis à relever. Alors que la machine électorale démarre et gagne de la vitesse, nous devons aussi nous assurer que les membres de notre famille, nos amis et nos voisins comprennent ces enjeux.

Les membres de votre Exécutif provincial vous offriront leur leadership tout au long de la campagne électorale. Ils forgeront et renforceront ensuite une relation de travail avec le gouvernement élu. Nous vous fournirons l'information et les outils dont vous avez besoin pour faire votre part. Néanmoins, nous aurons surtout besoin que tous les membres d'OSSTF/FEESO se joignent à l'équipe de soutien de l'éducation publique et se mettent à l'œuvre pour qu'en ensemble, nous la faisions gagner, quel que soit le parti politique choisi. ☺

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