

Issue 4
October 2009



Mary-Catherine Kelly, NOEL Chair

Director of Education
The Northwest Catholic District School Board

As Chair of NOEL, it is my pleasure to welcome back all of our NOEL school boards and educational partners, to our new 2009/2010 school year. I am proud to be working with all of our outstanding Directors of Education and NOEL Partners across Northwestern Ontario as we support professional development for the staff in all of our schools.

This year our theme for the fall NOEL Leadership Conference is "Courage to Lead". We encourage all of the educational communities in Northwestern Ontario to participate fully in this wonderful learning community that works to serve students across the region. Our goal is to encourage leaders to inspire their colleagues through excellence in coaching, mentoring and teaching so that we help our students to grow mentally, physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

The line up of key note speakers and presenters for this NOEL conference is first class!

Dr. Damian Cooper will examine the role of leaders in creating a climate of success and excellence. Dr. Douglas Reeves will focus on the importance of leadership to encourage vision, and clear and specific ways to encourage professional learning communities. The theme, "Courage to Lead", implies that we are learning how to create communities of HOPE so that we lead with optimism, purpose, and empathy. The conference workshops will provide opportunities for leaders to continue their journey to learn more about how we support children in their learning. This time together will allow us the chance to network and share best practices across the region.

We look forward to seeing you at NOEL.

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...in the North,
by the North,
to meet the needs of
Northern Educators!

LNS/SIP Oral Language Project

Jeannie McMaster

The Oral Language Project is a research project involving all 8 NOEL school boards that is funded by the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat. We are working with Carmel Crevola and Dr. Peter Hill to study the impact of oral language skills on literacy development. We started the project in 2007-2008 working with JK and SK teachers. Last year, Grade One teachers joined us and by this fall the project was extended to include the Grade Two teachers.

Carmel is our expert in Oral Language who facilitates our learning and the development of strategies that will help students not only understand language and express themselves, but also listen and respond to others. She has exposed us to the strategies of: Generating a Discussion, Read To and Guided Reading with an oral language

approach. She has also talked about the four main areas to focus on when using these strategies. These are:

1. Expressing thoughts and opinions
2. Listening and Responding
3. Questioning and Clarifying
4. Justifying a point of view

Carmel facilitates large group Professional Learning sessions and school visits, in addition to a series of newsletters to keep us on track.

Dr. Peter Hill analyzes the data for us, and informs us of how our students are doing. He shows us their scores on the OLA (Oral Language Assessment) by grade, by age, by gender and by ancestry. This has provided a great deal to think about as we have discovered that all groups are more than capable of developing good oral language skills, but some

Continued on page 2



need more direct teaching than others. Dr. Hill has also done sessions with principals on leadership and how to use data with staff.

During this school year (2009-2010) we are really working on capacity building. We need to ensure that when the project is completed we will have experts within our own boards to make sure that the learning continues. We are using a tier system to make sure this happens. The following is an explanation of the role of each tier.

Tier 1

This will be a school-based person. They can be either a Literacy Coach, or classroom teacher. Each board will decide who would best fit this role within their structure. This person will be the lead school person, who will champion the project and ensure that people have accurate information. They will attend network meetings that will be organized and conducted by the Tier 2 facilitators. They will also be leaders in the school-based Professional Learning sessions. Most of the teacher Professional Learning would be site-based and delivered by the Tier 1 person along with the school principal.

Tier 2

These are Board Level people who will also be members of the Steering Committee. They will help guide the direction of the project as well as be responsible for keeping their board on track by using the strategies that have been discussed. They will participate in school level PLC's (Professional Learning Communities) as well as support individual teachers, which includes support for any new teachers to the project. One concern in any implementation is sustainability and we see the Tier 2 people as a strong support. These Facilitators will be exposed to live video stream training provided by the Researcher and Project Manager in addition to having a library of Demonstration Lessons for observation and discussion. The following is a list of the Tier 2 people by board:

- KPDSB Steven Roffe
- KCDSB Mary Cunningham
- RRDSB Diane Rumbolt-Carlson
- TNCSB Kim Anderson
- Lakehead DSB Diana Madunic
- TBCDSB Charlene Cavanagh
- SGDSB Nicole Morden Cormier
- SNCDSB Mary Anne Baker

Tier 3

This will be me, Jeannie McMaster. My role is to organize the Professional Learning sessions; both the face to face sessions and the school-based sessions. I will also be working with Curriculum Services Canada to set up a NING. This will allow participants in the project to access videos of Carmel and others teaching lessons. I am also responsible for conducting the "Implementation Visits". I will travel the region visiting schools, working with teachers, Tier 1 and 2 people to increase communication between and among the various tiers as well as to ensure that strategies are being implemented consistently. I will do demonstration lessons and have teachers critique my lessons so that I can learn along with the teachers. I will also work with Principals to help them understand the

project and what these strategies should look and sound like in their schools.

Tier 4

Carmel Crevola

Demonstration teaching sessions will be done by Carmel and these will be videoed and used in future professional learning sessions as well as posted on the NING. Carmel will provide a bi-monthly newsletter to all Tiers of the PPLM (Practitioner Professional Learning Model).

Tiers 2 and 3 will be provided with professional learning in the form of intensive discussion, reflection and observation sessions guided by Tier 4 Researcher, through the use of videoconferencing to provide short, but focused input on a periodic basis.

During the week of Sept. 8th- 11th we held our first PLC sessions. These were school-based sessions where all the teachers involved in the project as well as the principals met. They worked with the Grade 2 teachers and any other teachers new to the project, to help them understand the OLA assessment and how to administer it. They also began looking at one of the teaching strategies. They viewed a video of Carmel teaching a lesson and used a viewing guide to support their discussion. We are looking forward to continuing this learning this year as we all agree that Oral Language is essential to literacy development. The data that we have collected is confirming the importance of oral language development and the difference that we can make for language learning.

Thank You!

The Faculty of Education at Lakehead University is deeply indebted to the hundreds of associate teachers who as a vital part of the Professional Year invite our teacher candidates into their classrooms. Without these professionally enriching experiences our candidates would be unable to fulfill their certification requirements in the province of Ontario, so our faculty associates locally and across the other 57 partner boards provide an invaluable service to Lakehead in particular and to the profession and society in general. Further, we wish to extend a special thanks to all who facilitate the placement process for our 700 students annually, including school principals, administrative teams, and placement officers. We wish to express our deep gratitude to the school communities who provide a nurturing and welcoming learning environments which support our teacher candidates as they begin their journey to becoming productive and caring members of the teaching profession.

Emilia Veltri
Professional Experiences Coordinator
Department of Undergraduate Studies





Keewatin-Patricia District School Board



Kenora Catholic District School Board



Superior North Catholic District School Board



The Northwest Catholic District School Board



Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board



NOEL Conference Information

Have you registered yet?

THE COURAGE TO LEAD

Tuesday, October 13, 2009 (Evening)

Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Thursday, October 15, 2009 (a.m.)

Valhalla Inn Thunder Bay



This fall NOEL will be hosting the Fall Leadership Conference entitled "Courage to Lead" at the Valhalla Inn. Damian Cooper will kick off our conference with his keynote on Tuesday evening. Wednesday, participants will have an opportunity to hear Dr. Douglas Reeves' keynote, in which he will share his most recent research which reflects the ideas that leadership matters and that there is a need for clear and specific blueprints of actions. Furthermore, that hope in troubled times is not a matter of blind faith, but a combination of several factors in the H.O.P.E. matrix: Hope, Optimism, Purpose, and Empathy. www.leadandlearn.com

Participants can choose to spend some time with Damian Cooper (Assessment and Evaluation), Elaine Hines and Denis Maika (Setting Direction and Staying the Course), Karen Rowe and Paul Toffanello (Resiliency), or the whole day with Carol Rolheiser (13 Parameters of Literacy).

On Thursday morning, we will have an opportunity to hear from local leaders as they share their practice with us. You will find a description of the following workshops in the online brochure.

Workshops

- **Building School Community: One relationship at a time**
- **Lessons Learned from the SEF: Instructional Leadership and Moving Forward**
- **Teaching Learning Critical Pathways**
- **Balanced Literacy- Weaving the Thread**
- **Journey through Change - Mapping a Story of School Success**
- **Shifting gears: Moving from School Managers to Instructional Leaders**
- **Urban Aboriginal Education Project**

<http://www.noelonline.ca>



2010 Frontline Conference

The NOEL Frontline Conference Planning Committee, consisting of Trina Henly (Kenora Catholic DSB), Darlene Mayo (Lakehead DSB) and Carol Volbracht (NOEL) has already met twice to review your evaluations of last year and your suggestions for the upcoming conference.

We are pleased to announce that we have booked the Valhalla Inn for the **9th Annual Frontline Conference on April 15 and 16, 2010.**

Nina Spencer, who was highly recommended by your colleagues from the Thunder Bay Catholic

DSB, has agreed to give a keynote on Thursday evening and follow-up with a workshop on Friday morning, using the format that worked so well last year. Nina has authored a book entitled: *Getting Passion Out of Your Profession*. To avoid disappointment, this year's registration form will allow you to request to purchase a book in advance. If you would like to find out more about Nina, check out her website at www.ninaspencer.com.

Our research on speakers continues for additional workshops in response to your requests for more information on wellness, dealing with stress, bereavement and aesthetics. Look for updates in the next edition of NOELights.

Contact **Carol Volbracht**
NOEL Leadership for Literacy Development Coordinator
carolv@noelonline.ca

LITERACY KALEIDOSCOPE: ENRICHING OUR PRACTICE

REPORT



As our abbreviated summer drew to a close, 125 people chose to spend August 24 and 25 at The Travelodge Airline sharing or enriching their teaching practice. David Bouchard shared his latest work *The Seven Sacred Teachings* in addition to a variety of his other books as he encouraged us through story and song to seek ways to give Aboriginal students the gift of reading. David's warm, enthusiastic and anecdotal style left us all with the common desire to "Let Literacy be our Legacy"!

Keep an eye peeled for his tour throughout Northwestern Ontario, when his new book is published this fall. For more information on David Bouchard see:

www.davidbouchard.com.

David's work capturing many aboriginal stories and the work of a variety of artists, was echoed with the work of a number of presenters including Rachel Mishene, looking at *Aboriginal Perspectives*, Ruth Mackie and Gail Jones, looking at *Integrating Ojibwe Language and Teachings* and Bryon Brisard sharing his toolkit entitled *Aboriginal Perspectives in the Curriculum*.

French language teachers also had an opportunity to consolidate many ideas as well as extend their strategies for classroom management, games and literature, specifically using literature circles. This year, we were able to ask FSL teachers about their needs at the end of June, which allowed the presenter to answer their specific questions. This proved to be a very powerful strategy as participants got the answers they needed. If you have any suggestions for a workshop or questions that you would like answered, we would be very happy to find a speaker and communicate your queries in advance.

Mary and Steve Reid, authors of OWA (Ontario Writing Assessment) walked us through their strategies for moderating writing within a PLC or a school. Some participants found this to be a wonderful confirmation of present practice, while many others were able to see future applications. Their workshop "Writing with Purpose: Social Justice... More Than an Event" was absolutely inspirational for many participants. As Mary and Steve discussed the way in which they developed critical issues, using a variety of literature selections as springboards, teachers were awed by the emotional content and could immediately see how their adolescent students would be engaged. As one teacher wrote: "Amazing! I'm inspired to begin social justice lessons, read alouds this year!"

Apple computers sponsored sessions by Cara Petrone and Rob Policicchio on the use of technology in literacy development, which were very well received. We even tried a virtual session from York University using new technology to learn about New Designs for Teaching and Learning. You can continue to see this on the NOEL website until November at www.noelonline.ca.

In reading our brochure you might have wondered how Math could be included in a Literacy Conference. As the Oral Language was demonstrated through Mary Lou Kestell's Math Talk Communities and our amazing local research teams including Nicole Walter-Rowan and Diane Scocchia Games in a Reform-based Classroom, or Laurel Moir and Jacqui Soulias working through problem solving strategies, the development of Language across the curriculum was evident in these rich environments.

We were very fortunate to be able to showcase a wide variety of local researchers and their work. In addition to the aforementioned Math sessions, The Cohesive Team, including Jo-Anne Giertuga, Christine Sullivan and Paula Lombardo brought participants a wealth of information and resources from their research project, a guide for the direct instruction of comprehension and answering skills.

As our conference drew to a close on Tuesday afternoon, one of the workshops, back for an encore performance, was The Artistic Eye for Curriculae featuring Holly Haggarty, Jamie Gerow, Shy-Anne Hovorka and Claudia Otto, four of the artists from the Learning Through the Arts team.

As one participant wrote: "This conference always gets me motivated for the next year of teaching. I always leave with my head full of ideas to use!"

We hope that you will join us next summer. Your planning committee has already started, so make sure you let us know if you have a question or an idea for a workshop.

Summer Conference Planning Committee

Carol-Lynne Oldale (Ministry of Education)
Margaret Strerz (LNS)
Charlene Cavanaugh (TBCDSB)
Pauline Fontaine (LDSB)
Jamie Gerow (Faculty of Education, Lakehead University)
Janice Radburn (KPDSB)
Jeannie McMaster (NOEL)
TBA (SGDSB)
Yvonne Morrison (Ministry of Education)

NOEL offers a wide selection at no cost to educators.

NOEL Courses ONLINE


Visit www.noelonline.ca for a complete list of courses and for more information about online courses.

Aboriginal Series

- First Nations Culture and the Environment
- First Nations of Canada
- First Nations of Canada: Aspects of Culture and Heritage
- The Social History of the Algonquian People
- Integrating Native Culture with the Curriculum and in the Classroom
- First Nations Perspectives in the Classroom
- And more!

General Series

- Primary Mathematics through Aboriginal Art
- Junior Math Comes Alive Through Aboriginal Art
- Intermediate Math Comes Alive Through Aboriginal Art
- Enhancing Oral Language in the Core French Classroom
- Math Strategies to Support Students at Risk 7/8
- Math Strategies to Support Students at Risk 9/10
- Reading Strategies to Support Students at Risk 7/8
- Reading Strategies for Grades 9 and 10
- Making Sense of Math Problem Solving
- Developing Number Sense in the Primary Grades
- Balanced Math
- Math Instruction Best Practices
- EQAO: Education Quality and Accountability Office
- Running Records
- Assessment as a Planning Tool:



Teacher Professional Development / AQs


Professional development that suits your needs!

Lakehead University's Faculty of Education offers a number of online, blended delivery, and independent study courses designed to help you integrate your professional development into your personal and professional needs.

OUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES OFFER:

- *Flexibility* – Flexible schedules allow you to decide on the best time for you to work on your course.
- *Academic Credit* – All Additional Qualification (AQ), Additional Basic Qualification (ABQ), and Honours Specialist Qualification (HSQ) courses carry full university credit. Shorter online courses and workshops are recognized on a non-academic university transcript.
- *Professional Recognition* – All of our AQ, ABQ, HSQ, and Principal's Qualification Program courses are accredited by the Ontario College of Teachers.

For information about our offerings, please visit our website. If you cannot find the course you are looking for, please contact us to see how we can help you meet your learning needs.



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Lakehead UNIVERSITY

Where on earth do they find these people?

If you have a question to answer, an idea for a workshop or a suggestion for a guest speaker, you can get in touch with your local committee member (see the list below for a representative from your board or area) or you can call or e-mail Carol Volbracht at 807-767-9355 or carolv@noelonline.ca. This is your conference, so we hope to hear your suggestions to ensure that the conference meets your needs.

Trudy Cederwall
Caryl Hron
Lucinda Meyers
Susan Maclellan
Leah Vanderwey
Mary Anne Baker
David Tamblin
Devona Crowe
Kim Falcino
Susan Aris
Lise Haman
Carol Volbracht

Kenora CDSB
Keewatin-Patricia DSB
Rainy River DSB
The Northwest CDSB
Lakehead DSB
Superior North CDSB
Superior-Greenstone DSB
Northern School Resource Alliance
Lakehead University
Ministry of Education
Literacy/Numeracy Secretariat
NOEL

The newest member of the NOEL team is Christy Radbourne in the role of R.E.E.L. (Regional Environmental Education Lead). See the upcoming issue of NOELights to learn more about her new job and how it can help you in your classroom!

