

Recruiting New Board Members

Henry Contant

SCSBC Executive Director

Great care is taken in the hiring of new staff: job descriptions designed, ads carefully drafted, applicants recruited, references checked, and candidates shortlisted and interviewed. Only then are contracts extended. Once hired, new staff typically participate in further orientation and training. Schools are to be commended for their thorough hiring practices. Our children deserve no less.

Yet, ironically the opposite often appears to be true when seeking to fill vacancies on the board? Do we really just want anyone to volunteer to serve? Do Boards prepare job descriptions/profiles for needed vacancies on the board? Are those with a specific needed skill set recruited? Once appointed, are new board members given appropriate orientation and training before being entrusted with the school's governance and future direction? If the answer is no, then our schools deserve much more.

Excellent, visionary leadership at the Board level is a hallmark of a 'good school'. Sadly, the opposite also holds. Who should be recruited to serve on next year's school Board?

Henry Contant (contant@twu.ca) is the Executive Director of SCSBC.

New Blood in the Boardroom

Jim Brown

The East Coast fish industry has long been prized for its cod. The delectable dish is enjoyed by residents and visitors alike, and years ago the reputation created demand for cod throughout North America. However, transporting the live fish was costly. Even worse, the cod lost their flavour and became soft and mushy.

Somehow, someone discovered that catfish will quickly adapt to saltwater. By adding a catfish to a tanker of cod, the activity level of the fish skyrockets. The cod see the unfamiliar catfish and fear it is a predator, so they vigorously swim away. The catfish is equally uncomfortable and swims frantically, as well. With all the wild swimming, the cod arrive to the Midwest as active, live fish in peak condition for cod connoisseurs. An unfamiliar fish in the tank makes a big improvement.

Bringing a new member onto your board is like putting a catfish in the cod tank. Some boards can become so familiar with each other, they fall into sloppy patterns. A new player at the table often asks questions, challenges the status quo, and keeps everyone "on their toes." While it may create some discomfort, new inquiries and ideas provoke the board to reflect, re-examine, and reaffirm. These are healthy steps toward governance excellence.

What Can You Do?

For virtually every board, there is someone out there who could add high value as a new director. Here are some steps you can take to find these people.

- Develop a list of the expertise and skills that would be helpful for your board.
- Create a matrix of those attributes represented by your current board members maybe even rating high, medium, or low for each.
- Review the final matrix and take note of expertise and skills that are underrepresented on your board.
- Pursue board members (or candidates for election) who particularly exhibit the attributes your board is lacking.
- Welcome new members by expressly inviting them to ask questions, challenge, and generally keep everyone active and in peak condition.

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26

School News: DiscipleTrip BC and Construction Zones

P3

Report Card Time - Again! and Shooting Stars, Lady Bugs ...

P4

Stewardship & Government Funding

P6

Mosaic

Shooting Stars, Lady Bugs, and Quarter Moons

Joanne den Boer SCSBC Director of Curriculum and Instruction

"What's this?" I ask the 3-year old preschooler as he gives me the tour of his classroom.

"That's our rocket ship," he replies. He promptly ducks inside a 5' tall, foil covered cardboard box. Sitting on a wee chair he peers out a tiny window. "And there's a shooting star! Wanna see?"

A shooting star? I go down on my hands and knees to look. Following the direction of his raised arm I look up, up, up. At the top of the cardboard box, way out in the black paper universe *is* a glow-painted shooting star! At the control panel opposite the rocket, a passel of 3-year old astronauts crowd around the preschool teacher. She clicks the number pad on the computer keyboard, and everyone counts down to blast-off!

Ah! Seizing the moment to have children count backwards by ones from 10. Slick!

Not one meter away from the energetic blast off, under a table, two little girls are absorbed with their new treasure – a dead, upside-down ladybug. While little engineers busily conduct the trains above, the entomologists gingerly remove their prized specimen and carry it to their lab. Out comes the magnifying glass.

"That's a lovely ladybug you've found," the preschool teacher says.

- "It has spots. God made it."
- "I wonder how many it has?"
- "One, two, three, four, five, six."
- "I wonder where a ladybug lives."
- "We have some in our house."
- "vve nave some in our nouse
- "What does it eat?"
- "Grass maybe."
- "Does it eat chocolate cake?"

Ah! I understand now where the teacher is leading this dialogue. She's making a direct link to a non-fiction picture book read to the children 30 minutes ago. The chrysalis in the narrative developed a tummy ache from eating chocolate cake. Will the girls make the connection? Masterful!

In yet another preschool, a group of 4 year olds explore the concept of 'whole' and 'half'. For safety reasons, the preschool teacher cuts some apples in half. Different coloured apples. Vertical and horizontal halves. The boisterous enthusiasm indicates the children catch on easily to the idea of 'whole' and 'half'.

"Now I'm going to do something very tricky. Watch," she says.

The preschool teacher takes one half-section and ... slices it in half.



Now that's brilliant. Intuition opens the way to extend the children's thinking. An unplanned moment emerges. Okay, let's see what happens next. She can either reinforce 'half', or she can introduce one-fourth.

"What do we have now?"

"A moon!" a child exclaims with obvious glee at knowing the right answer.

A moon! Even I am delightfully surprised by the unexpected. Whatever happens next is critical.

With an engaging laugh, the teacher affirms, "Yes, it <u>does</u> look like a moon! Have you all seen the moon look like this?" Plenty of nods help move the discussion forward.

"When the moon looks like this, we call it a quarter moon. This apple section has a special name. It's called 'one-quarter'." After the children explore the concepts of whole, half, and

quarter some more, the teacher asks them to summarize what they learned. She holds up pieces of apple and says, "This is a ..."

- "Whole apple."
- "This is a ..."
- "Half apple."
- "And this?"
- "... is a moon apple!"
- "Or?"
- "'Korter' apple."

Clever.



Clever? I've been thinking about these scenarios. What is the common denominator? Trained, experienced, early childhood educators? Preschools within a Christian school? Early numeracy activities? All of these, and more. It's a given that preschool teachers are well versed in creating age-appropriate development activities. However, it goes beyond skill development. What then?

Reaching for the stars, examining a ladybug, identifying a 'moon apple' are wonderful examples of the teacher entering into the self-initiated play of a child and creating a learning moment based on their play. Inherent in the process is the teacher's acknowledgement that God has created each child uniquely and with different interests. These teachers desire to see each child develop an interest in God's world, whether it be stars, bugs, or the moon.

Or was that an apple?

Joanne den Boer (**joanne.denboer@twu.ca**) is the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, focussing on Early Childhood-Elementary (preschool to grade 5).

Looking back, I wonder if I was too concerned about accurately calculating grades, rather than determining them.

Report Card Time - Again!

Bill de Jager

SCSBC Director of Curriculum and Instruction

"Doing" report cards has usually been an emotional time for me as a teacher.

Looking back, I wonder if I was too concerned about accurately *calculating* grades, rather than *determining* them. Too hesitant to have my professional judgment override numerical data that too easily could be defended. Too absorbed in the burden of the task; not enough in the blessing, as suggested by Elaine Brouwer¹. She writes that reflective educators will practice "assessment lovingly and skillfully." Such reflection fosters a willingness to examine our current assessment practices and to consider whether a change may enhance our students' learning.

Perhaps the following quiz can be a catalyst for staff room conversation:

1. Using an X, select only the practices that would be included in the consideration of a student's final grade for math: effort, participation, adherence to class rules, late work, extra credit, plagiarism, cheating, attendance, group scores
2. Determine the student's final grade as a percent, considering the following summative marks during the course: 87%, 87%, 87%, 87%, 87%, 87%, 87%, 87%,
3. Consider the following marks provided by a teacher of a student's work during a term of learning: 68%, 66%, 0% (student did not hand in the assigned project), 70%, 72%, 0% (student admitted to cheating on a unit test), 68%, 0% (student confessed to submitting an essay off of the internet), 68%. Determine the term grade. Term Grade:
 4. Consider the following marks provided by a teacher of a student's work covering a unit on paragraph writing. Each entry was based on a rubric of 6 levels. Marks recorded are in the order of student completion: 1, 2, 2, 2, 4, 4, 6, 6, 5, 6, 6. Determine the level to be publically reported at the end of the unit. Paragraph Writing Level:
5. Using an X, select only the practices that would support an accurate measurement of student achievement: grading records organized by learning goals, grades based on clear descriptions of achievement expectations, grades adjusted on a curve to account for a demanding assessment, a range of well-designed assessments

Here's how Ken O'Connor, author of A Repair Kit for Grading: 15 Fixes for Broken Grades would complete the quiz:

Question 1 – none of the practices would be selected. He believes that the primary purpose of grades is to communicate student achievement. He would argue that all the practices in Question 1 become distortions to providing an accurate measure of the student's achievement in math. Check out his book for his comments and suggestions about each of those practices. (His book and an accompanying DVD are available from the SCSBC Resource Library.)

Question 2 – 87%. Since the student performed at a level of 87% 9 times out of ten, he would view the 58% as an anomaly. Relying only on the mean (averaging all the marks) when dealing with extreme scores would be an inappropriate grade calculation. He believes that grading is "not as simply a numerical, mechanical exercise, but as *primarily* an exercise in professional judgment."³

Question 3 – I (for Incomplete or Insufficient Evidence). O'Connor suggests that submitting a term grade % is also an inappropriate grade calculation. Including zeros (given for missing work, cheating, and plagiarism) will distort an accurate measure of achievement. Schools should provide clear alternatives so that "students understand the impact of not submitting required assessment evidence." Unethical academic behaviors should be treated as discipline issues, separate from the eventual "reassessing to determine real achievement."

Question 4 – *level* 6 "When learning is developmental and will grow with time and repeated opportunities," O'Connor would "emphasize more recent achievement." Such a practice would support learning, build student confidence, and increase the intrinsic motivation towards life-long learning.

Question 5 – all except the one about grading on a curve. He would suggest that that practice provides poorly-organized evidence. It would be better to measure student performance against the learning outcomes.

It's worth considering O'Connor's easy-to-read book. His suggestions, with supporting rationale, have challenged some of my report card practices.

I'll let Brouwer conclude: "It is our task and our privilege to use the powerful educational tools at our disposal to help nurture and equip [our] budding disciples of Christ."

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References

- ¹ Elaine Brouwer. "Assessment For Learning: A Blessing for our Students", Christian Educators Journal, December 2007: p. 6.
- ² Ibio
- ³ Ken O'Connor, A Repair Kit for Grading: 15 Fixes for Broken Grades. (Portland: Educational Testing Service, 2007) p. 83.
- ⁴ Ibid, p. 91.
- ⁵ Ibid, p. 15.
- 6 Ibid.
- ⁷ Brouwer, p. 8.



Perhaps the time has come for our school communities to develop new paradigms for how we fund the total cost of

Did you know that from the 2006-07 school year financial statements of all 33 SCSBC schools:

- Tuition payments are only 82% of the amount we receive from government grants
- 24 out of 33 SCSBC schools are on the SCSBC salary scale
- These 24 schools on average are at 98% of the SCSBC salary scale
- There are 9,764 FTE students in SCSBC schools
- Of the 9,764 FTE students 3.9% were either native or international students
- Total capital and operating debt of all schools was \$26.5 million
- Total donations and fundraising amounted to \$5.5 million
- Total transportation expenses were \$1.4 million
- Average debt net of cash to revenue ratio is 19%
- Average net debt per student is \$1,505
- Number of months of total revenue to pay off all debt is 2.3 months
- 12 school societies issued audited financial statements, 13 issued review engagement financial statements, 2 issued notice to reader financial statements and 6 did not have an external accountant report
- Average salaries and benefits of total expenses is 71%
- Average professional development of total expenses is 0.6%
- Average tuition fee per student is \$3,041
- Average grant <u>per student</u> is \$3.864
- Average cost <u>per student</u> is \$7,071
- Average tax credit received by parent <u>per student</u> is \$1,060 each year?

Stewardship and Government Funding

Ever wonder what amount our 33 SCSBC member school societies receive from the BC and Federal Governments...and what our schools actually do with those funds?

It may surprise you to know that currently, on average, governments actually pay two-thirds of all operating costs of Christian schools to our schools and parents.

Based on an analysis of the 2007 year end financial statements of our 33 SCSBC school societies, operating expenses of all member schools totaled \$69 million. Our provincial government contributed \$36 million of grants. In addition, parents will receive approximately \$10 million in tax credits on the conversion of tuition payments to charitable donations using the current SCSBC Charitable Receipting Framework as provided for by Canada Revenue Agency.

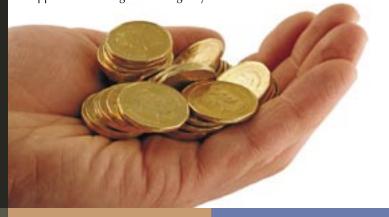
Therefore, the total of government grants of \$36 million and the tax recovery by parents of \$10 million result in a contribution by governments of \$46 million. This is exactly two-thirds of the total operating expenses of all of our schools. Therefore, the real cost of parents educating their children in our Christian Schools is only one-third of the actual operating expenses. The one-third actual costs to parents amount to \$23 million. As there are 9,761 FTE students in the 33 schools; the average cash cost per student is only \$2,356.

A number of our Christian schools are about to launch or have recently gone into capital expansion of land and new buildings. At the 2007 year end, there was \$26 million of term and operating debt within our schools. Parents and school boards need to reevaluate the true cost of Christian education. Presently, the operating expenses of \$69 million are funded by government grants of \$36 million, tuition of \$30 million and miscellaneous income of \$3 million. However, the capital cost of land and buildings are funded by capital campaign donations, annual fundraising donations and debt.

One significant way of assisting our schools to finance the ever-increasing cost of land and building construction costs is for parents to donate their tax savings, recovered from receiving donation receipts on tuition payments, back to the school. If all SCSBC parents would do so, it would raise \$10 million a year. Parents would still receive the benefit of 43.6% of the donation of the \$10 million or \$4.36 million on this donation. As this can be done annually, our schools could then eliminate all annual drives and capital campaigns.

Perhaps the time has come for our school communities to develop new paradigms for how we fund the total cost of Christian education. If development directors, business managers, treasurers and principals developed such a plan to begin converting tax savings recovered from receiving donation receipts, collectively our schools could raise \$10 million annually. It could then result in tuition payments and government grants covering operating expenses, and the tax savings on tuition conversion to donation receipt donated to cover all capital expansion and debt repayment.

Are we ready as school societies to put our Christian schools on a sustained sound financial footing? This approach should get us a long way there.



If Development director treasurers and principals of to begin converting tax say receiving donation receipts, could raise \$10 milli Christian education.

John Vegt SCSBC Director of Finance

In general, our SCSBC schools are in good financial shape. School Boards should be fair employers, keep tuition fees affordable, and develop a debt repayment plan. Boards should also provide for future infrastructure costs, cover all operating costs from tuition and government grants only and cover capital costs from donations, fundraising debt and transfer of depreciation charges from operating fund.

At our recent SCSBC Finance and Business Management Conference, schools were encouraged to consider developing a school business plan, based on a strategic plan, in order to manage risk and plan for the future. It can also be used as a management tool as well as a tool to provide information and confidence for lenders and donors.

Mathew 6:31-34 instructs us to seek His kingdom first. He admonishes us not worry about tomorrow as our Heavenly Father already knows the needs of our schools. It is with this knowledge and confidence that we can go forward with the task of sound financial planning of Christian education for our students.

John Vegt (**jvegtscsbc@shaw.ca**) is the SCSBC Director of Finance.

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Mosaic SCSBC International Student Program Coordinator

In a recent Statistics Canada report it was reported that the percentage of the total population which identifies themselves as a visible minority has increased by 11.5% since 1981.

The changing face of Canada has also become a reality in our classrooms; the necessity of providing ELL support, adapting curriculum in a way which reflects the diversity in our classrooms, learning about differing cultural practices and values has become a norm in our schools.

The SCSBC recognizes the joys and challenges that come with change and is committed to providing relevant support to schools. To that end in February 2008, SCSBC along with Pacific Christian School hosted MOSAIC, a conference addressing multiculturalism and community in independent schools. The goal of the conference was to provide support and resources to ELL instructors, International Student Coordinators, Academic Advisors and Administrators.

Some of the workshops topics were The Biblical Case for Hospitality, IE Programs: Motivated by Mission or Money, Culture and Its Role in the ELL Classroom, Counseling Youth Across Cultures and Working Effectively with Agents.

The goal of conference organizers was that participants would not only go away from the conference with practical resources but also experience what it may feel like entering a culture very different than their own. Participants were treated to ethnic meals, enjoyed a concert highlighting the Japanese Koto and a Korean Percussion Team, made Sushi, learned the art of paper folding and participated in an *Amazing Race*.

The diversity of the delegates who attended MOSAIC was also a reflection of the global community in which we live. Participants came from Canada, USA, Korea and China and represented thirty different schools and eight faith based school organizations. The opportunity to network and hear each others stories was invaluable for participants.

Marlene Bylenga (ieprogram@scsbc.ca) is the SCSBC International Education Coordinator. For more information on future conferences, workshops or to book a consultation, please contact the SCSBC office.





Christianity worldwide is a divine mosaic, with each piece being a different cultural expression of the Christian faith, the whole portraying the beauty of God's character as perhaps nothing else can. It is in our continual learning from these many cultural expressions of Christianity that our own faith can be made most complete. //





SCHOOL NEWS



NORTHSIDE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL - On May 16, students and staff members will embark on "DiscipleTrip BC 2008". The group will celebrate BC's 150th birthday by travelling on a tour of western BC. The focus is on discipleship, service, physical challenge, and hands-on study of British Columbia.

Each day students will ride a portion of the journey on bicycles as they travel to Whistler, Vancouver Island, Saltspring Island, Victoria, and back up through the Fraser Canyon. Camping in Provincial Parks along the way will also be a highlight. Students will experience scenic Whistler, visit the BC Museum of Mining in Brittania Beach, enjoy ocean kayaking and rock climbing on Saltspring Island, and will volunteer at Camp Qwanoes for a day. Time spent in Victoria will be very educational. Visiting the Legislature buildings, the Royal BC Museum, and volunteering with a local church will keep them busy

in the Capital, not to mention exploring the waterfront.

Students will have spiritual challenges daily, as well as competitive team activities.
Scripture memory, journaling, and prayer will be a vital part of the journey. Riding through BC's interior, Coastal Mountains, Vancouver Island and Cariboo, studying the rich geographical variety God has created in BC, blends the wonder of God's work and the classroom.

After this nine-day trip, students will be closer to God, in excellent physical shape, and feel as if they have just completed *Survivor*, *Fear Factor*, and the *Amazing Race!* DiscipleTrip BC 2008 is a work of faith.

They look forward to the blessing God will bring to their community through this trip. Their goal is to provide a platform where each participant will be able to truly draw closer to God, and devote themselves to living as Christ's disciples. Expect faith to be challenged, trust to be examined, and lives to be changed.

Safe travels, Northside!

PRODUCTIONS

Abbotsford Christian School - Les Misérables
Beacon Christian School - It's Cool in the Furnace
Bulkley Valley Christian School - Les Misérables
Centennial Christian School - Our Town
Comox Valley Christian School - Treasure Island
Duncan Christian School - Charleston! A 1920's Musical
John Knox Christian School - Paging Jonah
Langley Christian School - Flowers for Algernon



HIGH SCHOOL PROVINCIALS BASKETBALL PROVINCIALS

A Boys Provincial Basketball results: 3rd: Langley Christian School 9th: Abbotsford Christian School 10th: Pacific Christian School 13th: Houston Christian School

NANAIMO CHRISTIAN

SCHOOL has opened their

extention. On March 13th

Opening!

they celebrated their Grand

new Middle and High school

AAA Boys Provincial Basketball results: 2nd: White Rock Christian Academy

A Girls Provincial Volleyball results: 4th: Abbotsford Christian School 5th: Unity Christian School

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL TEAMS!

CONSTRUCTION ZONES



DUNCAN CHRISTIAN
SCHOOL gym construction
is making great progress.
Electrical, heating and
plumbing are roughed
in—awaiting installation
of the new floor! Staff and
students anticipate using
the facilities in the fall.



FRASER VALLEY CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL gym and classroom addition. The walls are now up! Here the foreman points out details to the Construction class.



RICHMOND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL will open its third campus, a new High school, this September.

SURREY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

field project is underway! Students look forward to the first grass field for SCS & FVCHS campuses.





Elements of a Successful Capital Campaign

Gerry Ebbers

SCSBC Consultant for Stewardship & Development

Unity Christian School (preK-12, 320 students) in Chilliwack, BC is completing a campaign to raise funds for a new elementary school and a building to house the high school trades program. The goal for the campaign is \$1.1 million and to date the campaign has raised \$970,000 with every expectation of achieving the goal. In many ways, this is a traditional campaign and the strengths and challenges of this campaign are mirrored in the campaigns that other schools are doing. For schools anticipating a capital campaign, here are some important considerations.

Strengths: the crucial elements every school needs to conduct a campaign.

- A strong campaign committee with good leadership. In Unity's case, the committee was only 5 people. The chair had time to lead the campaign and put in many hours of work. He is a recognized leader in the school community. All committee members were committed to making fundraising calls and did so with excellent results.
- The board strongly supported the campaign and all board members also made visits to supporters to ask for a commitment to the campaign.
- The committee chose the best way to conduct a campaign: train canvassers to visit supporters and give them the supporting materials (case statement and pledge forms) that they need to make the presentation.
- There was a clearly demonstrated need with strong endorsement from the school community throughout the timeline that led up to the campaign.





Challenges: the things that hamper success are often things that need to be addressed long before a campaign is undertaken.

- Lack of a complete data base which includes alumni, alumni parents and grandparents.
- Not enough canvassers to make the number of calls required to cover the whole supporting community with the result that some people who would give have not given because they haven't been visited.
- Lack of a complete development program which continually shares the vision of the school and builds community. When supporters come from many different churches it is difficult for everyone to know each other and to share a common vision. That gives rise to a 'fee-for-service' mentality which is counter-productive to fundraising.

Capital campaigns are the 'cream of the crop' of development efforts; they are not the foundation of a development program. Successful campaigns happen because a school has consistently shared its vision and needs, built community, and asked for gifts through an annual campaign. Donors are people who give to many causes. They will probably give to your campaign too, but not at a significant level if your school is not already on their list of annual causes that they support. And they will not support your campaign if they never hear from you except when you want their money. An important part of building community is to keep people informed through a regular newsletter and to provide them with opportunities to get together for fun and fellowship.

Schools would be wise to review their development programs years before they plan to do a capital campaign to insure they are building the commitment and loyalty of those people whom they are likely to count on for gifts.

Gerry Ebbers (geraldebbers@shaw.ca) is the SCSBC consultant for Stewardship and Development.

SCSBC CALENDAR

MAY

- Middle SchoolFocus Group
- 9 SCSBC Board Meeting
- 9 Special Ed Funding Pre-Approval Deadline
- 14 High SchoolFocus Group
- 15 Library Specialist Meeting
- 20 ElementaryFocus Group

JUNE

27 Last Day of School

JULY

- 2-4 Called To Serve,
 Prepared to Lead:
 Orientation
 Seminar for
 Principals and
 Vice Principals
- 2-13 TWU School of Education Summer Courses
- 7-11 Educators
 Leadership
 Development
 Institute (ELDI)
 Pacific

July 29 - August 1 CSI Leadership Convention 2008

SEPTEMBER

4 Schools re-open



A Leadership/Orientation Seminar for New and Beginning Principals and Assistant Principals

July 2 - 4, 2008

Trinity Western University Fosmark Centre

The SCSBC is offering this practical workshop is designed for all those new to or early in their administrative careers.

Visit www.scsbc.ca for more information.



2008 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

September 18-20, 2008 Sidney by the Sea/Victoria, BC

Register Online! www.christianschools.ca

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN-SERVICE

Over 30 resource teachers and Special Education coordinators came together at the SCSBC office for a one-day in-service on Friday, April 4, 2008. Each region was well represented: the North, the Interior, Vancouver Island, Fraser Valley, and Greater Vancouver. Attendees were reminded that the main focus of the Special Education program is to assist their school in providing

programs for all special education students and students with learning needs. However, any special education funding that a school receives is *supplemental funding* intended for students with special needs.

All funding categories were reviewed. Students with complex needs, e.g. fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD), may be included



in Category D: Physically Disabled, Chronic Health Impairment, *if* they have been diagnosed through the Complex Developmental Behavioural Conditions (CDBC) Network. Contact your local health authority for more information regarding assessment through the CDBC Network.

Attendees examined the Completion Guide to the Special Education Funding Application Form. **Please note:** The Pre-Approval Application Form for supplementary special education funding for the 2008/09 school year is now available at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/independentschools/is_forms/ spec ed/se app pre.doc. Applications are due by **May 9, 2008**.



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