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EDUCATION

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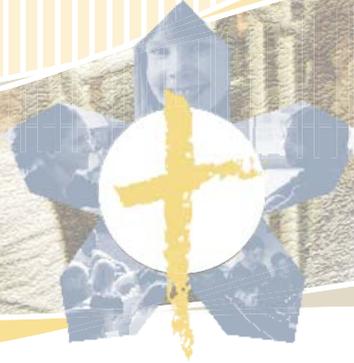
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VOL. 30 NO. 3



The LINK

JANUARY 2007

A Challenge in Christian Education Funding

Gerald Ebbers, FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT geraldebbers@shaw.ca

No, the government of British Columbia is NOT planning to decrease or eliminate their block grant for operating costs. But offering Christian education requires the facilities to do so and the challenge facing a number of our schools right now is finding the money to fund capital projects; you know, things like classrooms and gymnasiums, the facilities many current Christian school parents assume were paid for by the government.



I am amazed how often a current parent will suggest in the midst of a capital campaign that we approach the government for funds to build our school. Sorry, folks, there are no government funds for capital projects. Our schools are built with donations.

The challenge is twofold. First, there is the scarcity of land and the price of what little land is available (in greater Vancouver, \$1 million per acre). For many schools, the acquisition of land to build much needed additional facilities is already more than a community can afford. Add to that zoning complications, development cost charges, and the sky-rocketing cost of construction which is now between \$175 and \$250 per square foot, depending on location and quality of construction, and the challenge seems insurmountable. As more parents opt for Christian education, schools are faced with the need for more space. Schools could decide to limit enrolment based on the space currently

available, but for most boards that would be in conflict with their mission to provide Christian education for all parents who seek it. And eventually, even the most well-kept facilities become inadequate.

The second part of this challenge is the difficulty schools have in convincing their current parents that in addition to paying tuition, they need to contribute to campaigns to raise funds for new facilities. Compared to former generations of parents, current school parents get their children's Christian education at a bargain. The government grant covers about half of what it costs to educate a child; it's something that previous generations did not have. And there is the tuition charitable tax receipt, another benefit unknown to previous parents. Finally, current parents benefit (free of charge) from facilities which were built by previous generations of parents.

The first challenge is beyond our control, but the second is of our own making.



(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

In our fear that the cost of tuition alone is enough to drive parents away from Christian education, boards have been careful not to suggest to new parents that in addition to paying tuition, there is the expectation that parents support campaigns for facilities with their donations. As a result, we have a generation of current parents who see Christian education as a fee-for-service and have no inclination to donate additional funds for new facilities.

I believe boards need to be intentional, bold, and direct in informing parents of the expectations when it comes to annual fundraising for facilities and program support beyond what is covered by tuition. It starts with the interview process. Whoever interviews new parents needs to tell them directly that if their children are enrolled in the school, the school expects that parents support the school with their involvement (volunteer hours, service on boards and committees, attendance at AGMs) AND their financial gifts. That message needs to be repeated in whatever orientation process the school uses to integrate new families into the school community. And it needs to be followed up quickly with a request for volunteer help and financial gifts. EVERYONE can give some time and some money. The primary goal is participation in both ways; the amount of time and money will increase as parents come to appreciate what the school is providing their children.

Current parents who were not so boldly challenged when they joined the school community need to be challenged now. The message needs to be loud and clear that they are benefiting from the gifts of previous parents and it is their responsibility to support

the school now. Arguments that they can't afford it should not be accepted. Most current parents have greater resources than previous generations of parents, their cost of education is less as a percentage of their income, and they have the capacity to give even if that is a small amount to begin with.



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At this time gas prices are hovering around a dollar per litre. Compared to only a year or so ago, that is almost double what we paid. Despite all the complaints about how difficult it is to pay for gas now, the current price has not changed anyone's lifestyle substantially, which suggests that there is more flexibility in our budgets than most of us realize. I use a tank of gas a week so my cost for transportation has increased by \$100 a month. I haven't noticed any change in my lifestyle and I believe that is true for almost all of us. If I can handle that kind of challenge to my budget, surely I can support my local Christian school with a gift of \$100 per month. If all our parents gave even that small an amount, our schools would not be facing the challenges they are currently facing to raise funds for much needed facilities.

The problem is not a scarcity of funds; it is the choices we make about what is important to us.

However, even these changes in our donation support may not raise the dollars schools now require for land and new facilities. Are there other options available to schools? Yes. More about that in future articles.

*Don't forget about the annual **Developing Christian Schools Conference**,
February 21-23, 2007*

(see page 8 of The LINK for more details).

Knowing 'Why': Good Reasons to Enrol International Students

Marlene Bylenga, INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM COORDINATOR ieprogram@scsbc.ca



It's that time of year again: boards and committees are beginning to plan for the upcoming school year. Part of that planning includes projecting student numbers and the effect it may have on the overall budget.

One of the temptations schools may face is to view international student enrolment

as a means of topping up the budget rather than considering how the enrolment of international students fits into the mission and vision of the school. I would like to spend a little time exploring with you the rationale and vision for establishing an International Student Program.

Our world is becoming increasingly smaller through globalization. On a daily basis, we may encounter individuals from many differing cultural backgrounds even if we may not be meaningfully connecting with each other. Many of our Christian schools have traditionally been culturally homogenous and do not reflect the diversity that may be evident in our communities.

One of the benefits of intercultural interaction is the reflection and growth that can happen when we can examine our own cultural values through the lens of another culture's perspectives. As we learn from each other and hear each other's perspectives, we not only learn to appreciate each other but also develop a respect for each other as God's image bearers. Jesus' prayer for all believers was "that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (John 17:22b-23). Introducing international students into our schools enables communities to begin the process of cross cultural understanding. In providing these opportunities for open and honest dialogue/sharing, we are giving our students skills to become effective co-workers in bringing God's redemptive story to those who have not heard it.

In order to develop a program that reflects inclusion and mutual respect it is important that the program be structured to model **inclusivity**. How can that be done? Firstly, the admissions criteria for international students should be the same as the requirements for domestic students. Those who are involved in the admissions process

need to ensure that the school's vision is clearly understood and that the parents of the students agree to that vision. Our admissions criteria should model an attitude of hospitality and inclusion rather than viewing these students and their families as sojourners.

The tuition fee for international students should also be structured in such a way that it enables the school to provide all the necessary services the students need to be successful in their new school environment. Schools need to be diligent in providing a quality English Language Learning program for students. The school also has a responsibility to ensure the safety of the students; one way of doing that is to build into the tuition fee structure the cost of providing adequate medical coverage while they study in Canada. And finally, it is necessary to have an international student coordinator on staff who can provide support to students and parents.

There are many articles and resources that address the challenges individuals face as they transition into a new culture. The SCSBC is committed to providing support to schools in the whole area of international education; please feel free to contact me if you need assistance with establishing a fair tuition structure or with any other questions you may have.



NEW RESOURCE

당신의 자녀의 사랑을 위하여
FOR THE LOVE OF YOUR CHILD,
Korean Translation – This booklet is a wonderful way to share a vision for Christian education with Korean families.

www.scsbc.ca/resources/promo/ftlkorean.html

Making Any Mid-year Adjustments?

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It's that time of year again – post Christmas and New Year – looking forward to the remaining months of the school year.

While attending a professional conference this past December, I found myself thinking about the numerous yet often significant adjustments teachers and principals make during the course of the year.

Now that we've completed four months of the school year, we are aware of the difficult challenges many students and teachers face and we wonder if they can be successful in the work that needs to be done. As a result we adjust our expectations and sometimes even resign ourselves to accepting lower quality work from many students and colleagues. Teaching and learning becomes a matter of surviving day-to-day, doing just enough to fill the time (teaching), and just enough to reach 'satisfactory' on an assignment (learning).

When mediocrity takes hold in a classroom or school, teacher lessons and learning activities tend to dedicate more and more time to colouring, 'cut and paste,' and collage-type activities. In and of themselves these can complement real learning. However, if these activities become too frequent they waste valuable time for focused teaching and learning. Take an inventory of time allocation in your school and classrooms . . . how much time is spent on operational and management details compared to time focused on teaching and learning?

What can we do to avoid mediocre teaching and learning? Over and over again, research into teaching and learning points to the "teacher effect," as being the crucial factor in student learning. Clearly established expectations regarding time-on-task, writing quality, class discussions, depth of thinking, and skill development reinforce the significance of learning activities. Purpose-full focus on what and how lessons are taught assists children and young people in determining the value of lesson content. Teachers' attitudes and behaviors reinforce or contradict the goals and objectives of particular topics. What expectations do we have for each student in our class? each teacher in our school? If we lower our expectations for some students or teachers for the remaining months of the year, they will fulfill those lower expectations. On the other hand, if we maintain high expectations and commit ourselves to fully support and challenge each student and teacher, they will likely work up to the standards we've set.



A second challenge Christian schools face is providing well-developed and clearly articulated curriculum. The mid-point of the school year is an excellent time to assess the likelihood of completing the year's planned and required content and to determine if your current pace will make it likely that you can ensure that ALL students will have had the opportunity to learn the expected curriculum. Furthermore, now is also the time to assess whether or not students are receiving the support and/or the challenge they need to achieve their learning. Ask yourself questions such as,

- "am I using materials that foster ALL children's learning?"
- "will the learning activities we use ensure that ALL children will successfully complete the learning outcomes we set out at the beginning of the year?"
- "which colleague can challenge and/or support the particular issue or need that I'm experiencing right now?"
- "which colleague can I support and/or challenge in their work?"

The third challenge Christian schools face in the mid-point of the year relates to vision and mission. By this time of the year, we've faced numerous realities in our day-to-day teaching and learning. Life's realities – illness, tragedies, conflicts, financial woes, etc. – appear to interrupt well-intended and carefully-planned lessons. Clearly-articulated thematic statements somehow disappear in the day-to-day hectic pace of relating-teaching-learning. Or do they? Doesn't vision and mission actually deepen when we offer a cup of cold water, turn the other cheek, mourn with those who mourn, and pray for those who criticize us?

At the mid-point of the school year, may each of us take the time to make adjustments in our teaching and learning so that for the remaining months of the school year we continue to provide nourishing opportunities to learn for ALL students and teachers.

MINISTRY UPDATE

Draft IRPs are now available at <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/drafts/> for:

1. Home Economics: Family Studies 10 to 12; Foods and Nutrition 8 to 12; and Textiles 8 to 12
2. Science 9 and Science 10
3. Social Studies – BC First Nations 12; Geography 12, and History 12. There is also a needs assessment questions for Social Studies 8-12.
4. English Language Arts K to 7
5. Mathematics K to 7

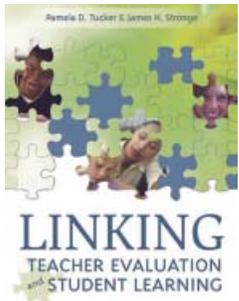
Healthy Schools

Be sure to peruse the abundance of ideas and resources available on the Healthy Schools website <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/welcome.htm>

Data for Education

Are you looking for achievement results? Do you want to do some number-crunching for your FSA results or Science 10 results? Go to Edudata Canada <http://edudata.educ.ubc.ca/>

New RESOURCES



Linking Teacher Evaluation and Student Learning, Pamela D. Tucker and James H. Stronge (2005) Alexandria, VA: ASCD. ISBN:1-4166-0032-9.

If you've ever doubted that it was fair or effective to judge teachers on the basis of student test scores alone, then here's a book that will introduce you to better ways to use measures of

student achievement in your teacher assessment system.

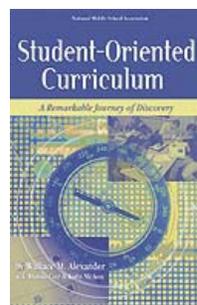
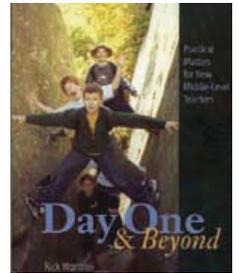
The authors show you how to link teacher performance to student learning by using the following objective measurements:

- Quality of student work and how it reflects the outcomes specified and taught by the teacher
- Level of student content knowledge during pre- and post-instruction assessments
- Student progress toward annual, quantifiable academic goals
- Learning gains achieved by students in relation to their growth-rates in previous years

Day One & Beyond: Practical Matters for New Middle-Level Teachers, Rick Wormeli (2003). Westerville, OH: NMSA and Portland, Maine: Stenhouse. ISBN 1-57110-355-4

For new teachers or those just new to the middle school environment, this book by the author of *Meet Me in the Middle*,

will guide you through the unique experience of teaching young adolescents. This book delivers proven best practices and frontline advice on topics such as what to do the first day and week, getting students' attention, relating to students, collegiality with teammates, and professional resources.



Student-Oriented Curriculum: A Remarkable Journey of Discovery, Wallace M. Alexander with Dennis Carr and Kathy McAvoy (1995). Westerville, OH: NMSA. ISBN: 1-56090-197-7

An excellent resource for teachers, administrators, and parents who want to see curriculum integration in action, Student-Oriented Curriculum

covers major issues such as getting started, planning, assessment, adjusting, and team building. This account of their success will encourage and guide those who seek to empower students and integrate learning.

The Employee Relations Committee: It's more than a Salary Committee!

Henry Contant
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"Our school's Salary Committee meets only once a year, simply to review the latest SCSBC Compensation Report." This appears to be an all too common refrain echoed by school boards and teachers throughout our province.

Therefore, it is noteworthy that one of the recommendations of the recently released SCSBC 2007-09 Compensation Report is that an active Employee Relations Committee (ERC) be established in each school community. Typically the mandate of an Employee Relations Committee is much broader than that of a Salary Committee. The report recommends that the mandate of a local ERC consider how it will do the following:

- maintain fair and equitable treatment for all teaching and support staff;
- provide provisions for continuity and uniformity in employment policies, salaries, and benefits;
- give experienced teachers and support staff reasons to remain working in a Christian environment as well as attracting new Christian teachers and support staff to the school;
- provide a sense of security that builds employee loyalty, morale, and attitude;
- try to make their local Christian school the best school to be employed in;
- provide an avenue for conflict facilitated resolution, mediation and/or arbitration should that be necessary.

Annually, the ERC ought to recommend a basic compensation (salary and employee benefits) package for teachers and all support staff to the school board. The ERC is also encouraged to regularly review and update various school employment policies and deal with matters pertaining to benefits, increments and allowances. The development of policy pertaining to issues such as early retirement, pensions, teacher exchanges, sabbaticals, leave of absence, professional development, job sharing and teacher preparation time would all be within an expanded ERC's mandate.

The SCSBC encourages boards, administrators and the ERC in each school



community to follow the lead of the SCSBC Compensation Committee and form an ERC that is collaborative in implementing and/or adapting the recommendations of the Compensation Report, according to specific needs and conditions of each individual school community. The consequence of such collaboration ought to be the development of a sense of mutual satisfaction. For Christian school employees that would mean an understanding and appreciation that fair and equitable treatment is being provided for them. For school boards, it would mean an opportunity to develop responsible fiscal and budgetary policies. For parents it would mean that tuition fees remain appropriate, yet affordable.

As SCSBC Compensation Committee chair John Nieboer writes, "The implementation of compensation policies, however well they are articulated, can and should be carried out in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Compassion, care and kindness should be the hallmark of board/employee relations in every Christian school. Financial remuneration and entitlements soon become distant memories; a magnanimous response to a temporary need or a generous interpretation of policy will long remain in our hearts."

Structure of Employee Relations Committee

The Compensation Report recommends that local Employee Relations Committees (ERC) be constituted as follows:

- a. The board appoint at least one person from the Board to the ERC.
- b. The staff appoint one of its members to the ERC. If a school has multiple campuses it is recommended that one representative from each campus be appointed.
- c. The board appoint one member-at-large (society member/parent) from the community as its representative on the ERC.

- d. The staff appoint one member-at-large (society member/parent) from the community as its representative on the ERC or a member representing the support staff.

Typically, the school board appoints one of the ERC members as chairperson. Normally, terms on the ERC are for a minimum of three years, renewable for a second term. The entire ERC should receive input from and report to both the staff and the board. Several meetings may be necessary annually in order to reach a consensus--and both parties should aim at a mutually agreeable compensation recommendation.

An ERC ought to meet regularly throughout the school year. Ideally it would present a written recommendation to the school board in late January of each year in order to ensure that salary, benefit, and employment policy recommenda-

tions are in place by April contract renewal dates and the new school year budget.

Making recommendations that are intended to guide all members of our Christian School community is a challenging task. Just as I believe the SCSBC 2007-09 Compensation Report has achieved fairness for all, my prayer is that local ERC's do the same. The words of Micah ask and answer the question essential for living as a people of the Lord: "And what does the Lord require of you?" The answer is, "To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).

May this be our guiding principle as we make recommendations concerning salaries, benefits and employment practices within our Christian schools.

- o Vancouver Christian School has a new logo! The redesign incorporates the spirit of the original VCS



logo, created by Vancouver graphic artist Reinhard Derreth in 1977. Be sure to check out their new look on the VCS website:

www.vancouverchristianschool.org

- o Vancouver Christian School was also one of two SCSBC schools that recently had the privilege of hosting Shirley Bond, Minister of Education, as part of her tour of BC schools. During her visit to VCS on November 17, along with Inspector of Independent Schools Susan Penner, the Minister toured the school and spent some time reading with kindergarten students.



Shirley Bond visited

Langley Christian School at the Middle/High campus, along with Assistant Deputy Inspector of



Langley Christian School at the Middle/High campus, along with Assistant Deputy Inspector of

Independent Schools Theo Vandeweg, on December 1. During a reception in the library, the three LCS principals and some of the LCS coordinators had the opportunity to talk about their various programs. Time was also set aside for the Minister to speak with the grade 11/12 leadership class.

- o Congratulations to the Abbotsford Christian School community on another successful auction fundraiser: \$120,000 (31,000) from the charity auction alone!



- o Over 800 alumni families, current families and honored guests participated in the 3-day 25th anniversary "celebration to remember", November 23-25, at White Rock Christian Academy. The Saturday evening program included performances by the current jazz choir and band, and an Alumni Choir led by former WRCA music teacher Pastor Dave Mctaggart.



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Upcoming EVENTS



Nurturing Growth

11th Annual Developing Christian Schools Conference

Keynote Speaker: JAN STUMP
 Director of Development & Public Relations,
 Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)



- "Your Remarkable Mission: The Cornerstone of Marketing Your School"
- "Cultivating Families (& sustainable relationships) through the Admissions Process"
- "Building Strong Schools through Successful Re-recruitment"
- "Evaluating, Choosing, and Implementing Strategic Marketing Tools"
- "Your Marketing Plan: Getting Started, Growing Strong"

The **International Education Track** will include:

- "Detective Training: A Case For Cultural Understanding!"
- "International Student Programs 101"
- "Toolbox for Short Term Programs"
- "Trends & Issues in International Education"
- "Opening Our Hearts & Homes"

February 21-23, Cedar Springs Christian Retreat Center

To register or for more information:
www.scsbc.ca/services/conferences/dev/devcon.html



March 7-8, Cedar Springs Christian Retreat Center

This is the premiere conference of SCSBC's Business Administrators Forum. Those who should attend include:

- Business Administrators
- Finance Committee Members
- Bookkeepers
- Employee Relations Committee Members
- School Treasurers
- Capital Campaign Committee Members
- Principals, Vice-Principals, Superintendents

It's your opportunity to network with colleagues from a variety of Christian school communities, and to hear from experts in a variety of fields related to finances and business management.

To register or for more information:
www.scsbc.ca/services/conferences/dev/busman.pdf

CALENDAR January-April

January

- January 8 Schools reopen after Christmas vacation
- Jan. 19-20 SCSBC Regional Board and Committee Training Seminar - Vernon, BC
- January 22 Special Education Specialist Meeting, Surrey Christian Primary
- January 26 Sunshine Coast CTABC Pro-D Day - Gibsons
- Jan. 26-28 MissionsFest Vancouver

February

- Feb. 16-17 SCSBC Regional Board and Committee Training Seminar - Nanaimo, BC
- Feb. 21-23 SCSBC Developing Christian Schools conference, Cedar Springs Retreat Centre in Sumas, WA
- February 23 Island CTABC Pro-D Day - Nanaimo, BC

March

- March 2 • Lower Mainland CTABC Pro-D Day - Primary (K-5), John Knox Primary; Middle/High (6-12), Richmond Sec.
- Secretaries/Admin. Assistants Pro-D Day
- March 7-8 SCSBC Finance and Business Administrators Conference, Cedar Springs
- March 19-23 Spring Break - one week
- March 12-23 Spring Break - two weeks (dates may differ from school to school)

April

- April 6 Good Friday
- April 9 Easter Monday
- April 5 Interior CTABC Pro-D Day - Vernon
- April 18-20 CPABC Spring Conference, Cedar Springs
- April 22-28 Christian Education Week
- April 26-27 Northern CTABC Pro-D Day - Prince George

www.scsbc.ca/calendar.html



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