

What's inside...

In this issue, Curriculum Update looks at the new programs, initiatives and supports for students-at-risk. You'll also find a report on the Early Reading Strategy, an interview with Education Officer Leslie Banner, a software review by Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board consultant Tom Steinke, and winners of the Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner contest featured in the Winter issue.

In an effort to broaden access to Curriculum Update, a pilot project has begun with five boards to post the publication on their intranets.

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Curriculum update

Presented by the Curriculum Implementation Partnership
in cooperation with the Ontario Ministry of Education

Students-At-Risk: New programs support students and teachers

A new Grade 12 Literacy Course; innovative program pathway models for students transitioning from school to work, post-secondary education or training; a province-wide network of students-at-risk leaders; new supports for teaching literacy and numeracy in Grades 7 to 12. These and other initiatives will begin to appear in boards and classrooms across the province this September.

The new programs and initiatives reflect the thinking and advice of educators from across the province who came together in the fall of 2002. Chaired by Limestone District School Board Director of Education Barry O'Connor, the At-Risk Working Group of the Curriculum Implementation Partnership included teachers, school and board leaders, community members, and representatives of the parent and special education communities. In early 2003, the group developed an action plan for boards and schools and a set of recommendations, which are being supported and acted on by the ministry, through a wide variety of initiatives.

New literacy course

One recommendation was the creation of a new literacy assessment course, in addition to the OSSLT. The course would allow students who have failed the Literacy Test to demonstrate their reading and writing skills. A new full-

credit Grade 12 course, the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC), has been developed to address this need. (See Q&A on page 2). The course will be ready for board implementation this September.

At a Glance: New initiatives to help students-at-risk

- Grade 12 literacy course
- Board-based students-at-risk leaders
- Literacy and numeracy teaching supports for Grades 7 – 12 teachers
- New program pathway models for workplace transition
- Successful practices resources for boards and schools

Board-based students-at-risk leaders

The At-Risk Working Group also called for the establishment of full-time board leaders to work with principals and classroom teachers to support students-at-risk.

Hired by the boards through new permanent ministry funding, these individuals will address school work transitions, literacy, numeracy, and remediation initiatives for at-risk students at both the board and school levels. They will be responsible for creating board-level plans, and assisting

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schools in developing and implementing school-based initiatives.

Supports for schools, boards and students-at-risk leaders

Two expert panels, focusing on the needs of French-language and English-language boards, will provide assistance to boards, students-at-risk leaders, and classroom teachers in supporting students-at-risk. The Expert Panels on Students-at-Risk are composed of expert educators, community members, parents, and representatives from the special education community. They are chaired by Marilyn Gouthro, Director of Education of the Lakehead District School Board, and Janine Griffore, Superintendent of the Conseil scolaire de district des écoles catholiques du Sud-Ouest.

"Our mandate is to take the recommendations and operationalize them in a way that will be genuinely helpful to the classroom teacher in developing both numeracy and literacy skills," said Ms. Gouthro. "We're very mindful of not simply giving teachers lists of strategies and resources, but doing the research required to find out what works."



Janine Griffore

The expert panels will also play a major role in supporting the students-at-risk leaders, she added.

The two panels are working in parallel, but focusing on the distinct needs of English and French-language boards. Janine Griffore explains. "The challenge is that at-risk students don't fit a single profile. There are a variety of factors that come into play, and these inevitably vary across the French and English-language boards, given that they are operating in a very different milieu," she said. "So as much as we're working together, we are also mindful of the need to identify strategies that are truly appropriate to the students we're serving."

New program pathways for students

Successful school work transition pathways, and remediation programs for students-at-risk, from Grades 7 to 12, are being developed by the Program Pathways for Students-at-Risk Work Group. Chaired by David Armstrong, Director of Education for the Bluewater District School Board, this group is composed of representatives from private industry, school boards, colleges, and the Ontario Parent Council.



David Armstrong*

"Overall, it's our responsibility to liaise with school boards and support them in putting into place a variety of successful pathways for students who are at risk and instilling into this group of students a sense of excitement about pursuing educational choices that lead to opportunities in the real world," said Mr. Armstrong.

"At this early stage of our work, a primary target for us is getting good resources into the hands of the new students-at-risk leaders so they can begin to implement action plans for their individual boards."

New resources to highlight successful practices

As a part of the students-at-risk initiative, two new resources are being developed to share current successful practices from boards and schools across the province for supporting students-at-risk.

The first of these resources, to be distributed in June, is a ministry-produced booklet highlighting successful practices in preparing students for the OSSLT. The second resource will highlight practices to support students-at-risk from Grades 7-12. The English-language version will be produced by the Council of Directors of Education (CODE). A French-language resource will also be prepared.

Q&A: The New Grade 12 Literacy Course

The new Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC), scheduled for implementation in September 2003, will provide students who have been unsuccessful in the Grade 10 Literacy Test with an opportunity to improve on and demonstrate their literacy skills.

Quick Facts

- The OSSLC is a full credit Grade 12 course which will provide intensive, focused instruction in reading and writing.
- The course will also function as an assessment tool, enabling students to demonstrate their reading and writing skills for diploma purposes.
- The course can be used for credentialling purposes by students who have had two opportunities to take the OSSLT, and have failed at least once.
- Students who complete the OSSLC successfully will have demonstrated the provincial expectations for literacy required for diploma purposes.
- The student transcript will indicate that the student has passed the OSSLC.
- Students who do not pass the course will need to continue working on their literacy skills, and pass either the OSSLT or the OSSLC to earn a diploma.
- Curriculum documents are scheduled for completion this June.

Does the new course replace the OSSLT?

The new course will combine remediation in reading and writing with opportunities for students to demonstrate that they have successfully attained provincial expectations for literacy. The OSSLT is still the standard method for demonstrating those expectations.

* Photo of D. Armstrong courtesy of James Masters, Owen Sound Sun Times

If a student has failed only one component of the OSSLT, reading or writing, will he or she have to take the entire course?

Yes. Reading and writing are closely related. If students have failed either component, they need to improve their language skills generally, and they'll need the extra help this course will provide.

Who is developing the course?

The course is being developed, like all Ontario curriculum, by a team of practising teachers, language consultants and assessment specialists with particular experience in literacy acquisition, under the direction of the ministry. The course has undergone an extensive review process with members of the At-Risk Working Group, principals, teachers, coordinators, professionals with expertise in special education and ESL, superintendents, and the EQAO. Parallel literacy courses will be developed for both the French and English-language systems.

What kind of support will be provided?

Course profiles in English and French are being developed, along with the curriculum policy document, and will be available in June. The ministry will also provide in-service for the new students-at-risk leaders, and support for teachers of the course. The training will focus on the unique characteristics of the course with a special emphasis on assessment strategies and practices.

Will the course be accessible to all of the students who need it?

School boards will be responsible for ensuring that the course is available to all students who need it, during their regular school program. Boards might, of course, also decide to offer the course as part of night school or summer programs. That will vary from board to board, depending on need.

How are you ensuring that the OSSLC is comparable to the literacy test?

The OSSLC will have an equivalent standard for reading and writing skills, will use the same reading text types (informational, narrative and graphic), and will demand the same writing forms as the OSSLT. The course was developed working

closely with EQAO to ensure that both the OSSLC and OSSLT are tightly aligned.

What accommodation can be made for special needs students and ESL students?

The accommodations made available to students in all courses, including the OSSLC, will be those outlined in their Individual Education Plan.

Short Takes *News for Ontario educators*

Interdisciplinary studies

Course profiles for the final secondary school policy document, Grades 11 and 12 Interdisciplinary Studies, have now been distributed to secondary schools, with a CD-Rom version to follow this summer. The three profiles – Information Studies, Archaeology and Science and Community – can also be viewed at www.curriculum.org/occ/profiles/ids.htm.

The Interdisciplinary Studies curriculum builds on the rigour of subject disciplines to support cross-curricular connections, insight and innovation, according to Tim Gauntley, Education Officer with the Ministry of Education.

"Interdisciplinary Studies courses require students to apply the concepts, methods, language and skills from diverse disciplines," he said. "Students learn to analyze and evaluate complex information from a wide range of sources. That may include bringing together research methods from a variety of disciplines to identify and solve problems that are beyond the scope of a single discipline."

A new Interdisciplinary Studies website is also under development by the Ontario Library Association. The website will break new ground in providing a collaborative, interactive environment for the Interdisciplinary Studies community.

Contact: Tim Gauntley (416) 325-6529

International attention for Early Reading and Math

In response to interest in test results achieved by Canada's and Ontario's students in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Marie-Lison Fougère, Director of the ministry's Policy and Program Branch, was recently invited to participate in a five-day speaking tour of Germany in which Early Reading and Early Math strategies were featured.

Accompanied by Valerie Nabb, Deputy Head of Culture & Public Affairs in the Canadian embassy, Berlin, Ms. Fougère's speaking program was a combination of presentations to diverse audiences which included the KMK (Kultus Minister Konferenz, the German equivalent to the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada), officials from three state-level ministries of education, representatives of pedagogical institutes, teachers from all levels of education, and more general audiences.

Interest in Ontario's approaches to learning in the early grades, with a particular focus on the Early Reading and Early Math strategies was also reflected in the attention given to the tour by some media.

Reflecting Germany's interest in Ontario students' performance, high level delegations from that country continue to visit Ontario. Early this fall, the Federal Minister of Education and Research, the Honourable Edelgard Bulmahn, is planning to come to Toronto. A few weeks later, a delegation of parliamentarians from the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg is also scheduled to visit the ministry.

Contact: Marie-Lison Fougère (416) 325-7645

Educators in Action

An interview with Education Officer Leslie Banner, Teaching Policy and Program Office



The Schools that Need Extra Help program provides assistance to selected schools across the province to improve the reading performance of their Grade 3 students. Leslie Banner talks to Curriculum Update about this initiative.

What prompted you to come and work at the ministry?

I had been a principal with the Peel District School Board for 15 years, which I thoroughly enjoyed. I'd had the opportunity to establish a new school. It was a wonderful experience taking a school right from bricks and mortar, but when I finished that – I was there 7 years – I really didn't know what I wanted to do. I had done all of the jobs at the board level I was interested in. I needed a new challenge.

And the Schools That Need Extra Help program appealed to you?

Well, I didn't actually come to the ministry to work on that program. I came to work on the teacher performance appraisal initiative, which was of great interest to me, and something I felt very passionately about. I worked initially on that and I work on other ministry initiatives as well, but the Schools That Need Extra Help program interested me a great deal. So when the opportunity arose to work on that program, I was very excited to take it on.

What is your role?

I'm the Education Officer. In the beginning, my role was to work with a policy advisor and develop the program. That

process works well. One person understanding policy and government, the other with an in depth knowledge of what happens at the boards and in the classroom. This partnership was particularly critical here, because the program goes right into the classroom. It was very exciting to build the program from the ground up, in consultation with some very capable and knowledgeable people.

How many schools are involved?

There are 29 schools in the program. We began working with 16 schools in 2001, although one of those schools subsequently closed. Fourteen more schools were added in 2002.

What do you do in the schools?

At this point, there are four of us on the team who work in the field – one project coordinator and three Education Officers, including myself. We work on a one-to-one basis with all 29 schools, so it's very hands-on. One of my fellow Education Officers is bilingual, and the other francophone, so we can work very effectively in both French and English-language schools.

We begin by assessing where the school is currently in its reading programs. We also conduct meetings to familiarize school staff with the program, and we work with the principals and the school improvement team to develop a school improvement plan. We visit every school a number of times a year. We look at professional development, resources available in the school, how the principal can work effectively with the staff, those kinds of things. We may also conduct workshops on a variety of topics such as how to make effective use of the school's EQAO results.

So that's typically what we do at the school level. We also visit every JK to Grade 3 classroom and work with the teachers individually. As well, we work closely with external literacy experts.

What we're looking for here are the teaching strategies being employed, the resources being used – levelled readers and so on – assessment practices, and of course the work being done by the students. We're also looking at what steps are being taken to successfully implement the school improvement plan, and how the funds given to the school are being accounted for.

We may also encounter some added challenges that need to be addressed. French-language schools, for example, often have a high percentage of incoming students who have limited previous exposure to French. There may be one French-speaking parent in the home. But the language in the home – and the community – is English.

So we'll work with the teachers and look at how they might adjust their teaching, and we'll talk about how to expose parents to French-language opportunities they can share with their children – home/school reading projects, information sessions, and so on. Our francophone literacy experts and Education Officer have valuable insights in this area.

Over time, we expose the teachers to a whole range of techniques and best practices. We'll go in and do professional development. We'll talk about reading, teaching reading, and what to do with the material. We'll take the teachers into another school that's experiencing success in the program. St. Anthony's in Toronto, for example, went from 17% to 53% at Level 3 in just one year. So we expose them to a teacher or teachers at a school like St. Anthony's who have really benefited from the program. Teachers teaching teachers has proved to be highly motivational and successful.

What has the response been to your visits?

Well, the response has been very positive. Initially, some teachers may be a little hesitant. But it becomes evident

very quickly that our aim is to support them in teaching their students. And when they realize that, they will open up to us and express their concerns and challenges. The Program Coordinator is a teacher. She's been a classroom teacher for 30 years, and she shares considerable knowledge and skill.

What kinds of results are you seeing?

The first group of schools wrote the EQAO Grade 3 test in May of 2002. Of the 15 schools, 11 increased their scores, some by quite a large margin. A couple went down and a couple remained more or less level. But 11 of the 15 schools made significant gains. We've seen students moving from level



one to two, from two to three, and in some cases, to level four. That's very gratifying.

Both groups of schools recently wrote EQAO, so we'll be taking a close look at those results as well.

What these numbers don't show, of course, is the professional and personal learning and satisfaction individual teachers have experienced. We've seen teachers who initially told us that the students were reading at the highest level they could. Six months later, they're telling us that they need to order more challenging books, because the books they have are at too low a reading level for the students. We've heard that in school after school.

And what has the program and the process of developing it left you with personally?

Well, it's been a wonderful experience. There are incredible people in the ministry and in the schools. And there have been a few 'ah ha' moments along the way.



I've been in the classroom, in the school environment, and I've worked as a consultant at the board level, so I've seen all that. But this

is a different perspective. The policy people have been a big eye opener. These people are knowledgeable. They write with us. They listen. We talk. We do it together. And I had no idea up until now how much goes into the development of these kinds of initiatives before they ever reach the boards. For example, the stakeholders – teachers, consultants, directors of education, parents. I didn't realize that ministry staff met so extensively with stakeholders. There's a lot of listening, discussion, and hearing the stakeholders' recommendations.

Quite apart from that, it's just been a very rewarding experience. I think we're doing important work. It's very gratifying to know that our work is helping teachers and helping students.

What is the Schools That Need Extra Help program?

The Schools That Need Extra Help program is part of the Early Reading Strategy, which was introduced to improve the learning and teaching of reading in the early grades. The Schools That Need Extra Help program currently provides intensive support for 29 schools throughout the province.

Participating schools were recommended by a committee composed of representatives from the ministry, the Council of Ontario Directors of Education, the Conseil ontarien des directrices et directeurs de l'éducation, provincial supervisory officers' associations, principals' associations and learning specialists.

The selected schools consistently had two-thirds or more of their Grade 3 students perform below the provincial standard on the Grade 3 reading test. As well, the selection process took into account the need to have schools that serve students from varied socio-economic backgrounds and schools of different size, as well as schools from different types of school boards – English and French language, public and separate.

Each of the selected schools follows a three-year improvement plan which sets targets for improvement, and the strategies that will be used to achieve it.

Participating schools begin by creating a school improvement team which includes the principal, teachers, a board representative, a school council representative and a community representative. The team develops an early reading improvement plan. External literacy experts visit every JK to 3 classroom in the participating school and prepare a diagnostic report which becomes part of this improvement plan.

The Schools That Need Extra Help program provides ongoing support to help participating schools successfully meet their improvement goals by providing access to early reading learning and teaching resources, and early literacy experts.

Experts provide vision of best practices in early reading

By Bonnie McEachern

Co-Chair, Expert Panel on Early Reading, Superintendent, Upper Grand District School Board



For any teacher involved in helping young students learn to read, the *Report of the Expert Panel on Early Reading in Ontario* provides a clear vision of teaching and learning in the early grades, and best practices that lead to success for all students.

The report was prepared by a panel of experts composed of teachers, educational consultants, principals, school board administrators and academics from across Ontario. The Ministry of Education brought together this diverse group of specialists, with a mandate to explore current research on early reading, along with effective classroom practice, and present their findings.

The panel members found consensus in the academic research, and common ground in these guiding principles:

- reading instruction should be based on the evidence of sound research that has been verified by classroom practice;
- early success in reading is critical for children;
- the teacher is the key to a child's success in learning to read; and
- to succeed in the classroom, teachers need the cooperation and support of instructional leaders at the school and board levels who value and provide ongoing professional development.

With effective instruction, time and support, all children can learn to read, and elementary teachers must be equipped to make it happen. For most children, learning to read depends on both the quality and quantity of classroom instruction in the early school years.

The report is not a lengthy list of recommendations that depend on new ministry or board policy; it is a vision that can be acted on today. It offers a clear snapshot of what effective instruction looks like in the classroom—including the goals for reading instruction; the key knowledge and skills children need to become proficient readers; a comprehensive range of instructional approaches, principles for assessment, evaluation, reporting, target setting, and improvement planning to measure achievement.

WHERE CAN I GET THE REPORT?

Copies of the report have been distributed to schools, in quantities sufficient for every Kindergarten to Grade 3 teacher. Additional copies are available free of charge by calling the ministry's toll-free information line at 1-800-387-5514. The publication *Helping Your Child to Read: A Parent's Guide* is also available free of charge.

The report emphasizes that the essential knowledge and skills for reading are the same for all children, whether the language of instruction is English or French, and regardless of the child's gender, background, or special learning needs. Although some children will need more help with one skill than another, children need all of the identified knowledge and skills to become proficient readers.

The six instructional approaches (phonics and word study; read-aloud; shared reading; guided reading; comprehension; and independent reading) must all be presented in a comprehensive mix that addresses the specific learning needs of the child. The report

stresses that each approach is a necessary part of the whole, and none is sufficient on its own.

How you can promote early reading

- Read The Report of the Expert Panel on Early Reading in Ontario.
- Discuss the report with your colleagues and explore ways to support each other in promoting a whole-school approach to literacy.
- Examine your current program and classroom resources to determine how well they address the essential knowledge and skills for reading, and whether they offer an appropriate, comprehensive approach to instruction.

As the expert panel concluded: "The time is right to consolidate the lessons learned from the convergence of research and classroom practice into a consistent framework for reading instruction that will raise the overall level of reading achievement in Ontario schools. For the sake of all children, the time for reading is now."

What is Ontario's Early Reading Strategy?

Introduced in 2001, the Early Reading Strategy is a province-wide initiative designed to help improve the reading skills of young students, and the techniques used to teach reading. Like the Early Math Strategy introduced in 2002, the Early Reading Strategy requires the setting of targets to improve student achievement, and provides teachers, students and parents with resources aimed at achieving those goals. The Schools That Need Extra Help Program, one component of the Early Reading Strategy, is also featured in this issue (see 'Educators in Action', an interview with Leslie Banner).

Early Reading supports for teachers

A broad range of Early Reading supports is being developed for teachers, including lead teacher and principal training, a technical guide, an interactive e-learning website being developed by TFO-TV Ontario, and a family literacy kit. Here's what you can expect to see during the coming months:

Training: lead teacher and principal training, based on the research-supported methods described in the Expert Panel report began this May, and will be completed during the 2003-2004 school year. The training provides an intensive review of instructional methodologies and techniques, and focuses on the practical implementation of effective practices to improve and assess early reading skills.

Technical Guide for Teachers: this comprehensive guide will provide teachers with an in-depth exploration of the teaching and learning process for early readers. Included will be practical techniques for developing an effective reading program, a detailed review of six key instructional approaches, and information on student assessment and classroom organization

and timetabling. The Technical Guide will also provide information for school leaders on the role of the principal and lead teacher, and the successful development of professional learning communities and home/community connections. The guide will be distributed to schools this September.

Interactive website: a companion to the Technical Guide for Teachers, this website will provide e-learning training modules that can be easily integrated into the e-learning systems of most boards. In addition to text-based learning modules, the site will also offer interactive streaming video, which will allow a variety of teaching techniques to be demonstrated in a realistic classroom setting. Developed jointly by the ministry and TVO-TFO, the website will be introduced in January 2004.

Family literacy kit: a kit designed for use by schools and community agencies to encourage parents to become actively involved in their children's reading activities at a young age. The kit will be distributed to schools and selected agencies across the province in time for the beginning of the new school year.

And the winners are...

In the Winter edition, readers were offered the chance to win a copy of the Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner (OCUP) software for home use. The winners were:

Nancy Scott *District School Board of Niagara*

Sandra Zuwerkalow *Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board*

Dave Maheu *Toronto Catholic District School Board*

Jay Rothenburg *Simcoe County District School Board*

Donna Browne *Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board*

Susan Boyd *Huron Perth Catholic District School Board*

Kirk McCarthy *Essex County Children's Rehabilitation Centre School Authority*

Amy Parker *Peel District School Board*

Rosemarie Moss *Upper Grand District School Board*

Bev Langill *Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board*

Phil Sim *Ottawa-Carleton District School Board*

Enzo Ettore *Toronto District School Board*

Chris Finner *Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario*

Rachel Winter *Peel District School Board*

Ann Cotter *Greater Essex County District School Board*

Jody Itzkovitch *Toronto District School Board*

Gail Trelford *Bluewater District School Board*

Micheline Roy *Conseil scolaire de district catholique du Nouvel-Ontario*

Lynda Lavergne *Conseil scolaire de district catholique du Centre-Est de l'Ontario*

Natasha Boudreau *Conseil scolaire de district catholique du Centre-Est de l'Ontario*

Thank you for participating. The Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner software has been distributed to every board for use in schools. Teachers employed at publicly funded boards can also install the software on their home computers for personal use. If your school does not have copies of this software, ask your board's Ontario Educational Software Services (O.E.S.S.) representative for more information.

Teaching Students with Autism Enhancing Capacity in Ontario's Schools

Conference rescheduled for September 2003

The Autism conference has been re-scheduled for September 10th-12th 2003. For further information, contact the superintendent in your school board responsible for special education.

Software Review

Fathom Dynamic Statistics Software

By Tom Steinke

Consultant, Educational Programs

Department

Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board

Warning – Fathom use can be addictive and will lead to significant learning!

Over the past year, Fathom dynamic statistics software has made quite a name for itself in Ontario secondary school classrooms. According to the Ontario Mathematics Coordinators Association (OMCA), its use has become pervasive in most schools and boards. Interestingly, it has also emerged as an invaluable data sense-making tool for school administrators, allowing student and school data to be viewed and analyzed, quickly and easily.

Fathom is dynamic statistics software for Mac and PC from Key Curriculum Press (www.keypress.com). It is extremely visual and intuitive – a dream for visual and tactile learners! It has drag and drop functionality that has novice users becoming skilful users of data in very short order. Data anywhere in electronic format can painlessly be imported into Fathom. Once in Fathom, data comes to life.

Licensed by the Ministry of Education as a learning tool for secondary students, Fathom has allowed students to become creative users of real data: samples of the incredible work from our Ontario secondary students in mathematics with Fathom can be seen online at www.vlearning.ca/fathom/student/index.html.

An online article from Statistics Canada: "Data-driven learning in Ontario Schools", available at www.statcan.ca/english/edu/feature/data.htm, describes additional projects undertaken by three grade 10 students who combined the power of

Fathom with the wealth of data freely available to Canadian schools from Statistics Canada on E-STAT. In fact, the E-STAT server ground to a halt this past fall due to unprecedented student-use volume!

Fathom has been supported with numerous teacher training opportunities. The Fields Institute hosted a series of four-day Ontario Fathom Summer 2002 workshops, attended by more than 160 teachers from across the province, and summer workshops are also planned for 2003. For information, visit www.thevisualclassroom.com.

In addition to its use in the classroom, Fathom can also support principals by facilitating data-driven decision-making. In fact, electronic versions of the Ontario Provincial Report Card, including the Relational Report Card, have macros for extracting data that can be imported directly into Fathom. To learn more about this application of Fathom, you can view the supports that were developed for a conference held in March 2002, as part of the Early Reading Strategy. At this session, more than 400 teachers and administrators were working with EQAO, report card and other reading assessment data using Fathom. The supports are available online at www.vlearning.ca.

A wide variety of organizations have developed additional resources for learning and using Fathom. For more information, visit these URLs:

www.keypress.com

www.thevisualclassroom.com

www.vlearning.ca

www.brocku.ca/cmt/mdm4u

If you haven't had the opportunity to explore Fathom, invest a few minutes and discover this remarkable tool for students, teachers and administrators.

Each year a wide variety of software titles is licensed by the Ministry of Education for use in publicly funded Ontario schools. Information on these titles is available through the Ontario Educational Software Service (OESS) representative at each board or at www.tvo.org/oess. Interested in profiling a software title or contributing an article to Curriculum Update? Write at editor@curriculum-update.info.

Point of View

Our readers write

"The staff was really excited when I put the newsletter in their box. They found it most beneficial."

Judy Blemkie

Hastings & Prince Edward District School Board

"I have been reading the current issue of Curriculum Update and I noticed that there is a 5 year cycle for reviewing policy documents. I'm glad to see this will occur."

Gary Killen

Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board

"Congratulations on the new look for the curriculum newsletter."

Bob Cowan

Hastings & Prince Edward District School Board

Do you have comments or suggestions? Write or email at the address on the front page.

Curriculum Update will not respond to or acknowledge receipt of individual letters. At the discretion of the editors, selected letters may be published without further notice to the writer. Letters may be edited to suit the requirements of the publication. Letters not published will be destroyed.

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