

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

WHAT'S INSIDE...

Our cover story explores an innovative approach to credit recovery that is putting students back on the graduation track. Also in this issue are

details of the report of the Expert Panel on Special Education, results of some Learning to 18 pilot projects, updates on the boys' literacy initiative and the curriculum review process, and a review of electricity and electronics software.

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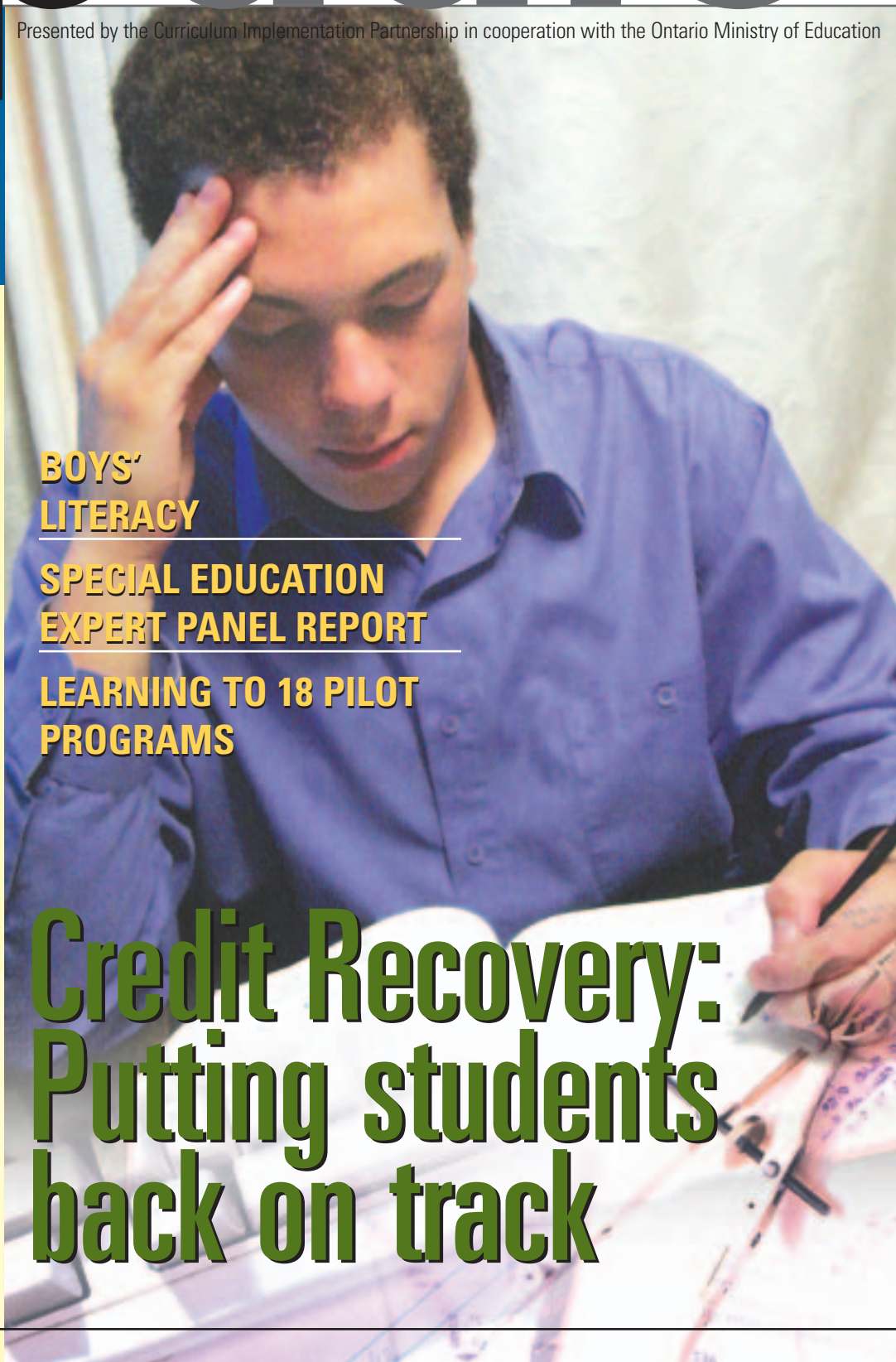
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BOYS' LITERACY

SPECIAL EDUCATION EXPERT PANEL REPORT

LEARNING TO 18 PILOT PROGRAMS

Credit Recovery: Putting students back on track



CREDIT RECOVERY: HELPING

An interview with Andy Nesbitt Student Success Leader



Can you describe the typical student who would need this program?

Well, they're a diverse group. All of these students have IEPs. Essentially, they are students who, for a variety of reasons, have had some difficulty accumulating all of their credits in Grade 9 and 10. The target is 16 credits by age 16, and these students aren't there. And the research shows that if students fall behind in Grades 9 and 10 they are at very high risk of not completing a pathway through high school.

So this is a critical time for intervention?

Very much so for a number of reasons. First, quite apart from the issue of low credit accumulation and dropout rates, there are social issues these students have to deal with. For example, they've fallen behind by a semester or two; they're of Grade 11 or Grade 12 age, 16, or 17, or even 18 but they're attending Grade 9 or Grade 10 classes with 13 and 14 year-olds; and they're taking English or Math for the third time. That's a difficult situation for them to deal with.

Second, you have to question how many times a student can fail a course and still maintain his or her resilience; walk into the classroom with a good attitude about themselves, and good self-esteem. That's also important.

Their attitude toward school in general is at risk?

Yes, and toward themselves and their abilities. The other attitudinal factor is that if we can get them flowing nicely into Grade 11, they have the opportunity to get into more specialized programs and pathways – technology, computers,

business courses such as marketing and entrepreneurship, co-op placements, and possibly apprenticeships through OYAP – and that's where the engagement factor goes up dramatically. So again, it's critical to focus on gaining those credits by Grade 10 so that there is an opportunity to make destination decisions, and re-engage these students in Grades 11 and 12 toward the workplace, apprenticeship, college or university.

Do students enrol in the program?

No, they're selected. It's not an easy route, and it's not for every student. It involves a lot of independent study, and it requires a good deal of commitment on their part. So we're looking for students who have a high likelihood of success – for example, the student who got a grade in the 40% range, and who has the attitude and the capability to be more successful.

How is the program structured?

The program is developed around the ministry's GLE course. That's a course that, in our view, has really been under-utilized. When students come into Grade 9, they'll take the traditional compulsory courses, and electives that interest them, and this course is sometimes missed.

It's an incredible opportunity for kids who are struggling with learning to get an entire course in 'learning how to learn' using various strategies. We believe it's an ideal platform for our Credit Recovery students.

How are credits recovered?

The course-specific work students need to do to acquire the incomplete expectations from a failed course or courses, is embedded within the context of the GLE course. Students will work through the GLE and at the same time, with guidance, they'll apply these learning strategies to the curriculum expectations with which they have experienced difficulty. The learning strategies they apply may include

In the fall of 2003, a group of educators from the Grand Erie District School Board, under the leadership of Student Success Leader, Andy Nesbitt, began discussing the possibility of creating a program that would allow students to recover failed credits while attending their regular day-school program.

After researching a variety of Credit Recovery strategies, the group decided to develop a model that would embed Credit Recovery in a Learning Strategies course. Specifically designed to support students with an IEP, the model demonstrates the use of Learning Strategies 1: Skills for Success in Secondary School (GLE 10), a modified version of GLS 10 which may be of benefit for all students. Following development of the implementation plan and accompanying supports for teachers, the program was first launched in the fall of 2004.

Since that time, the board has entered into a partnership with the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and the Waterloo Region District School Board to enhance the Credit Recovery model and develop more comprehensive teacher resources. The work was supported by the ministry through the Learning to 18 pilot funding.

The program is now available to 41 schools across the three boards and, in Grand Erie, has helped students gain more than 300 credits in its first year. A detailed implementation guide, based on this model, will be published by the Ministry this fall, as part of the sharing of resources developed through the Learning to 18 pilots.

In this issue, Andy Nesbitt, teacher Greg Carruthers, and parent Donna Dougherty, talk about the remarkable results this program has generated, and the thinking behind the Credit Recovery model.

STUDENTS ACHIEVE SUCCESS

organization, preparing for exams, understanding how to take notes, or how to study.

Credit Recovery eliminates repeating a course and being presented with the same material in the same way without adequate skills to be successful. With Credit Recovery, students approach their subjects with new skills and abilities.

And the subject-specific work is done independently?

For the most part, yes. We have reasonably small class sizes with approximately 20 students working on a variety of credits, with the teacher's assistance. Students are required to demonstrate the enduring learnings of the course and we include summative assessments as well as a final exam. It's a very rigorous program designed to position students for success in Grade 11. After each credit is recovered the teacher and student have a conference to review the types of learning strategies utilized to recover the credit, discuss future course selection(s) and pathway plans.

How are teachers prepared for the program?

We've provided substantial support for teachers in the form of resource packages, which outline the core enduring learnings for each area of the curriculum. In Grade 10 Math, for example, we asked: What are the fundamental learnings?; What are the critical outcomes of Grade 10 Math?; What skill-sets will the student need to experience success in Grade 11 math? We've provided teachers with a variety of lesson plans and strategies for each of those enduring learnings as well as providing them with summative assessments.

Is every student exposed to the core course outcomes?

Yes, but the learning strategies get customized. For example, if a student has no problem reading narrative text but has difficulty with graphic text, as required by some of the learning outcomes for Grade 9 English, we'll teach the appropriate strategies for approaching a piece

of graphic text. Another student may have no problems with graphic text, but may have difficulty reading narrative and that requires different strategies.

It's clear the program runs deeper than simply recovering a credit.

Absolutely. It's about putting students in a position for success. If you think about it – if you compare a student who passed Grade 9 Math at 50% with a student who failed at 45%, entered a Credit Recovery program and gained a solid grasp of the essential outcomes of Grade 9 Math, and effective learning strategies associated with each, which of those students is more likely to succeed in Grade 10? I'd venture that it's the one who participated in a Credit Recovery program.

How many credits can students recover at any one time?

There are students who can recover more than one credit at a time. What we have found is that students can recover one or two courses, embedded within the GLE course. But even if they only recover a half-credit they're still better prepared to be successful, and that's really the core concept, and the purpose of the program. Last year, we had 159 students recover more than 300 credits.

“...even if they only recover a half-credit they're still better prepared to be successful...”

This program no doubt requires dedicated teachers.

Yes, it requires total commitment and a great rapport with the kids. It also requires teachers who can teach a variety of disciplines, and who really enjoy working with students who may not have an easy time learning. Again, it's a demanding program, and consequently it depends on very high quality teaching and learning strategies.

The program has been very well received by our teachers. Last year, it was offered in 11 schools, and the majority of teachers who participated in the program volunteered to do so.

Was this program developed originally by Grand Erie?

Yes. We created the model, and implemented in the fall of 2004. When the Learning to 18 funding became available, we partnered with Hamilton and Waterloo to enhance the program, re-write the resource packages and implement the program in each board.

During the past five or six months, 64 teachers from each of the three boards have participated in joint writing projects to review each course, identify enduring learnings, and develop teaching strategies and lesson plans.

Each Board had a project manager who helped steer the writing teams through the process. In Grand Erie it was Laurie Tottle, in Hamilton Dan Palango, and in Waterloo it was Leslie Brien. Laurie has worked through the summer to ensure the new resources are published by the end of August.

Resources will be shared with boards and teachers through the Learning to 18 pilot initiative.

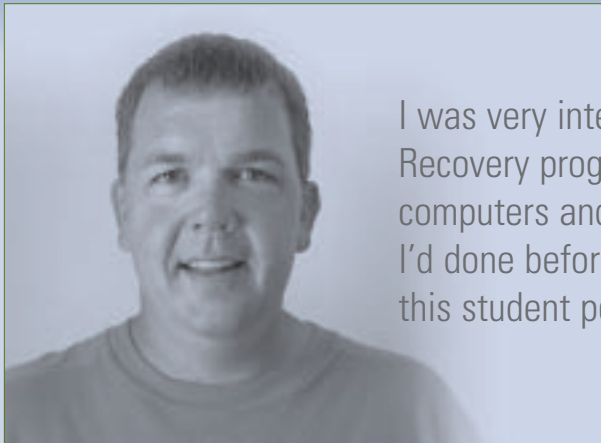
Overall you're pleased with the results?

Very much so. We had 185 students enter the program last year and, of those, 159 completed the program and recovered one or more credits. Just as important – and this was something I'm not sure we could have predicted – students who took Credit Recovery programs also did well in their other courses that semester.

So they not only recovered credits and gained more effective learning strategies, they passed their other courses, and broke the cycle of failure. When we set out to develop the program, we had no interest in creating a factory that churns out credits. The integrity of the credits was for us the core measure of the program. Two years later, the results are extremely satisfying, and it's a pleasure to see students breaking a cycle of underachievement and moving on toward a successful pathway and graduation.

CREDIT RECOVERY:

A Teacher's Experience Greg Carruthers



I was very interested in teaching a Credit Recovery program. As a teacher of computers and history, it's not something I'd done before, nor had I worked with this student population before.

Our program consisted of English, Math, Science, Geography, and History all in one classroom. It really isn't as difficult a challenge as it appears because these students are taken out of the Grade 9 and 10 classroom, where they weren't being successful, and where they may be frustrated, or act up, and they're placed in one room, as a group, where they're all there for the same purpose.

Attitude is a very important factor for these students. As a teacher, I think that's important to understand. We talked about that in the classroom on the first day. I asked the students why they were there. Some answered 'because we're stupid'. I responded that they're not stupid – they're kids who might have made some mistakes or have faced some personal challenges – they may have made some poor choices – but we all do that. They really need to be shown that they have the skills to succeed. My principal, Ross Francis, has observed an overall improvement in school climate. He feels this improvement is largely due to students not being repeatedly unsuccessful in courses and experiencing success in Credit Recovery.

These students may have had very poor attendance, gotten mixed up with the wrong people, alcohol and drugs, or have a negative attitude about school, so it's a real pleasure to see them progress in attitude as well as achievement. The bottom-line is that we worked together. The students did a lot of work on their own.

Some days they don't need or want a lot of help, and other days I'm run off my feet, but it's a lot of independent work. If they want to succeed, they have to work outside the class as well. These are very capable students who just needed a chance to demonstrate their abilities, especially to themselves.

My first class began with approximately 30 students, and 10 dropped out for a variety of reasons. The remaining 20, however, recovered at least one credit, as well as the GLE credit, and some recovered as many as three. As we become more experienced in delivering the program we have fewer students who drop out.

This experience has been very satisfying for me. At the end of the program, we sit down and map out the students' futures. One young man is going to graduate next year, something he absolutely would not have done prior to the program. That's a very common scenario.

One interesting thing I've found is that you have to be careful to avoid thinking you can predict who is going to be successful. You think you know, but sometimes the least likely student turns out to be the one who is ready.

We used to just send these kids back to try again, and of course they often failed. It's great to help get some great kids are back on track.

A Parent's Perspective Donna Dougherty

I think my daughter had fallen into a situation where there was a lot of peer pressure – some of her friends didn't have an interest in school.

I also think that the regular classroom was intimidating for her. A child won't ask questions over and over again if they are having trouble understanding.

My daughter realized she wasn't going to go anywhere without a high school education. And so she came to me and asked if she could take the course. It was her decision, but I was happy to support her.

She walked into that class with her eyes wide open, and she did the work, with the help of an absolutely fantastic teacher. It wasn't long before she was getting 80s in subjects where she had received 50s or 60s.

“

...I think she's going to have a fantastic year.

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I think she just had to learn that this is something she could do. It gave her confidence in herself. It gave back her self-esteem. Something just clicked, and she ended up recovering all three of her credits, as well as getting credit for the course. She earned four credits in total and got high 70s and low 80s in all of her other courses as well.

She'll enter Grade 12 this September, and I think she's going to have a fantastic year. She knows what she has to do, and more importantly she knows that she can do it.

BOYS' LITERACY: TEACHER INQUIRY RESEARCH TO LAUNCH PROVINCE-WIDE

A three-year, K-12, project to support teacher inquiry into the improvement of boys' reading and writing skills begins this fall, with teams of teachers developing research proposals and applying for project funding.

Teacher inquiry, also known as action research, allows the development of knowledge or understanding as part of teaching practice. Teachers study their own practice in order to improve it, alternating between action and critical reflection, in a cyclical process. This form of research has been selected for exploring boys' literacy because it allows for a system-wide mindset for school improvement, enhances decision-making and reflection, and empowers those who participate in the process.

One-day symposia will be provided in the fall by each of the ministry's regional offices to guide teachers in the development of research proposals, and help build board capacity to undertake this type of research. Boards may send one or more teams to the sessions.

The research will build on previous initiatives to improve boys' literacy skills, including the publication of *Me Read? No Way!: A Practical Guide to Improving Boys' Literacy Skills*, a two-day symposium on boys' literacy, and the establishment of a Boys' Literacy Advisory Team.

Boys' Literacy: The big picture

The results of provincial, national and international assessments indicate that boys' overall reading and writing skills are weaker than those of girls. Since poor literacy skills can have a profound effect on performance in other subjects, as well as on students' success throughout their lives, it has become a major concern for educators around the world.

In Ontario, the province-wide effort to improve boys' literacy is integrated with initiatives designed to ensure that all students achieve a high level of literacy and numeracy to support their ongoing success in learning. The goal is that 75% of students be at the provincial standard in Grade 6 reading, writing and math by 2008. The boys' literacy initiative is designed to support teachers and students in reaching these provincial goals, and improve boys' academic achievement in reading and writing.

The Learning to 18 initiative (see article in this issue) has also been introduced to increase the number of students who succeed in secondary school, and go on to training, post-secondary education, or academic upgrading programs.



IN SCHOOLS NOW: NEW BOYS' LITERACY RESOURCE PACKAGE!

A collection of workshop materials for teachers on boys' literacy, packaged on CD, has been distributed to schools.

Boys' Literacy Symposium 2005: A Collection of Workshop Materials is a compilation of English- and French-language workshop presentations and resource materials delivered at the boys' literacy symposium held earlier this year.



The CD contains a wide range of resources which focus on boys' literacy from a variety of perspectives including:

- Research findings
- Success strategies
- Parents and family literacy
- Program planning and implementation
- Profiles of school and board-based projects

It also includes an overview of *Me Read? No Way!*, a guide to improving boys' literacy skills, and sources for further information and resources.

WHERE TO FIND BOYS' LITERACY RESOURCES

A copy of the Boys' Literacy CD was distributed for province-wide use by K-12 teachers. Ask your principal for more information if you are unable to find this title, or see below to order additional copies.

Me Read? No Way!: A Practical Guide to Improving Boys' Literacy Skills, has also been distributed to schools. See below to order additional copies, or access this document online at: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/brochure/meread/index.html>

Educators in publicly funded schools can order additional copies of these resources by contacting:

Fax: (905) 668-2499

Email: eduservice@ppfd.com

Please note that copies will be shipped only to Ontario publicly funded school addresses.

Copies can also be obtained by contacting the Ontario Government Bookstore at 1-800-668-9938.

SPECIAL EDUCATION: EXPERT PANEL REPORT OFFERS PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS



A new expert panel report provides classroom teachers with a broad range of techniques to enhance instruction of primary and junior grade students with special education needs.

Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students with Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6 was developed by a panel of 23 English-language and French-language educators and researchers from across the province. The panel began its work in the fall of 2004, with a focus on recommending research-based practices that would improve and reinforce effective instruction of reading, writing, oral communication and mathematics.

Education for All builds on and expands the work of earlier expert panels in literacy and numeracy, and demonstrates the ways in which a variety of teaching strategies can be applied to meet the needs of special education students and enhance the quality of teaching and learning for all students.



Jean-Luc Bernard

According to the report, the majority of students with special education needs in Ontario now spend at least 50 per cent of their instructional day in the regular classroom. Given that reality, it is imperative, says expert panel vice-chair Jean-Luc Bernard, Director of Education, Conseil scolaire de district du Centre-Sud-Ouest, that teachers have the ability to meet the learning needs of every student in their classroom.

"This is a critical feature of our approach. We've taken an inclusive rather than an exceptionality-based approach, because the reality is that in a given classroom, the teacher may need

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The report responds to that reality by helping teachers to help all students to learn.

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to respond to any number of learning needs: students having difficulty with reading or writing; students learning a second language; students with behavioural problems; or students achieving at an advanced level. The report responds to that reality by helping teachers to help all students to learn.”

The inclusive classroom

Inherent in the report is the core belief that teachers can plan for and respond effectively to diversity in the classroom through the principles of Universal Design for Learning and differentiated instruction (see highlight 'Planning for Inclusion').

These approaches, according to vice-chair Dr. Lesly Wade-Woolley of Queen's University, ultimately benefit all students.

"The research has shown clearly that the most effective ways to teach reading, writing and

math to children with special education needs – regardless of behaviour, attention and other factors – are very similar, and in some cases identical, to what typically achieving children need.”



Dr. Lesly Wade-Woolley

"So we're saying to the teacher, if you're dealing with attention difficulties, for example, these are some of the things you can do to adapt, while continuing to use these same strategies for the entire classroom. There is not a set of strategies for typically achieving children, and a set of strategies for children with special education needs. What teachers already know how to do, and do well, can be adapted for children with special education needs.”

Research provides a road map

The report also stresses the importance of evidence-based research to guide instructional practice. Research can provide teachers with a roadmap that highlights effective teaching techniques for all students. In fact, research has demonstrated a significant lack of progress for students with special needs in literacy or numeracy, when they are not receiving a program based on research-

Education for All: Contents at a glance

Education for All provides teachers with a grounding in many facets of teaching, learning and instructional management, designed to enhance the learning experience for all students:

- Planning for inclusion
- Assessment and evaluation
- Developing learning profiles
- Building a professional learning community
- Research-based approaches to literacy and numeracy
- Effective instructional approaches and teaching strategies
- Instructional organization and management
- Computer-based assistive technology
- Professional development





Another critical success factor...is the development of professional learning communities...



supported instructional components (see highlight 'Research to practice').

The report provides detailed information on a variety of instructional strategies supported by research, such as scaffolding, modelling, instructional language, guided practice and strategy instruction.

Building a learning community

Another critical success factor, according to the report, is the development of professional learning communities including all school staff members, who work together at school improvement and creating learning opportunities for students.

The report explores the development of a school culture favourable to a professional learning community, the role of the principal, and suggestions for getting started. (see highlight 'Professional learning communities').

Education for All has been distributed to schools and boards across the province. Electronic copies of the document can also be found on the ministry website at:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/reports/speced/panel/index.html>

Research to practice

A growing body of research indicates that the following classroom-level practices are effective for all learners, but particularly beneficial for students with special needs in literacy and numeracy:

- instruction must be of sufficient duration and intensity to produce adequate learning and application to new situations;
- students with special needs benefit from cumulative review of important concepts and skills;
- students with special needs require guided practice to help them bridge the gap between what they know and don't know, and they need to receive explicit instruction in how to apply learned information in new situations;
- teachers need to monitor their instructional language (both oral and written);
- instruction needs to integrate both foundation skills and higher-order processes concurrently for students to be able to apply their knowledge and skills; and
- students benefit from clear, organized teaching that makes explicit connections across previous and current content areas.

Guiding principles

The expert panel report is based on the following key themes and core beliefs about teaching and learning:

1. All students can succeed.
2. Universal design and differentiated instruction are effective and interconnected means of meeting the learning or productivity needs of any group of students.
3. Successful instructional practices are founded on evidence-based research, tempered by experience.
4. Classroom teachers are the key educators for a student's literacy and numeracy development.
5. Each child has or her own unique patterns of learning.
6. Classroom teachers need the support of the larger community to create a learning environment that supports students with special education needs.
7. Fairness is not sameness.

Professional learning communities

Professional learning communities create a shared vision in which everyone can make a contribution in running a school, and staff are encouraged to collectively undertake activities and reflection to constantly improve students' performance. Professional learning communities can be an effective way to ensure success in literacy and numeracy for all students, including students with special needs.

In an effective learning community:

- a shared vision and values lead to a collective commitment of school staff which is expressed in day-to-day practices;
- solutions are actively sought in an environment of openness to new ideas;
- working teams cooperate to achieve common goals;
- experimentation is encouraged as an opportunity to learn;
- the status quo is questioned, leading to an ongoing quest for improvement and professional learning;
- continuous improvement is based on evaluation of outcomes rather than on the intentions expressed; and
- reflection is undertaken to study the impacts of action.



LEARNING TO 18: PILOT PROGRAMS YIELD RESULTS FOR STUDENTS

Pilot projects launched across the province in 2004-05, through the Learning to 18 initiative, have been successful in retaining – and in some cases re-engaging – hundreds of Ontario students in secondary school.

The innovative credit programs were designed to explore new approaches to retaining students at risk of dropping out, with the goal of reducing dropout rates, improving credit accumulation, re-engaging recent school leavers, and increasing graduation rates.

A total of 105 projects were implemented and results documented. A series of 2005-06 pilots – new programs and continuation and expansion of some existing programs – will begin this school year.

In this issue, we look at the results from a number of pilots launched in 2004-05.

NEW! Implementation guides to be released fall 2005

A series of implementation guides will be developed by the ministry during the fall of 2005, based on the Learning to 18 pilot projects. The guides will assist boards to adopt these innovative approaches, and will include detailed program descriptions, implementation guidelines and resources developed by the Learning to 18 pilot boards.

ACHIEVEMENT CENTRES: SUCCESS FOR ALL STUDENTS

Program Leader:

Hazel Lambert
Principal, Pathways for Success
Ottawa-Carlton Catholic District School Board

Program profile:

'Achievement Centres' are established in intermediate schools, high schools, and at neighbouring Algonquin College, to help meet the varied needs of students from 13 to 18 years of age.

At the intermediate level, the Achievement Centre teacher provides support to teachers, assists struggling learners in strengthening their academic skills, and facilitates the exploration of a wide variety of career choices and educational pathways.

At the high school level, a full classroom is devoted to the Achievement Centre. Students are provided with a learning environment which accommodates a wide range of needs such as flexible timetabling for credit recovery, participation in co-op, OYAP or PASS programs, and specialized supports such as mentoring, e-learning, individualized instruction and counselling.

For students who have left the system, an Achievement Centre has been established at Algonquin College. Here, students can complete their high school graduation requirements in a setting that is comfortable and appropriate for the mature student, while familiarizing themselves with the college environment.

Results in 2004-05:

Total enrolment in credit programs:	159
Students who completed credits:	146
Total credits earned:	162

TRAINING FOR EMPLOYABILITY

Program Leaders:

Yves Laliberté, Student Success Leader
Johanne Boisvenu-Blondin, Cooperative Education Coordinator
Conseil scolaire de district catholique du Nouvel-Ontario

Program profile:

This innovative program focuses on school-to-work transition for struggling students in Grades 11 and 12, and was developed by the Conseil scolaire de district catholique du Nouvel-Ontario in partnership with the Conseil scolaire de district catholique Franco-Nord and the Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud.

The program enables students who are destined for the workforce to finish their diplomas, while also receiving practical workplace training. Central to the program has been the development of an extensive network of community partners who can offer students work placements that meet their individual needs and interests.

Students benefit by becoming familiar with the employment opportunities available in the local community. They also develop practical skills in a variety of areas, from retail, hotel and restaurant to the trades and are able to obtain industry certification.

Results in 2004-05:

Total enrolment in credit programs:	30
Students who completed credits:	27
Total credits earned:	98

LATE SCHOOL: AN ALTERNATIVE PATHWAY

Program Leaders:

Jan Marrelli, Student Success Leader
Sergio Iacoe, Late School Principal
Algoma District School Board

Program profile:

The 'Late School' is a school-within-a-school, housed in a separate wing of Algoma's Batawing Collegiate. This specialized program provides an alternative educational setting for at-risk students, and has also encouraged early-leavers to return to school, by providing services – and an environment – that is suited to their special needs.

The Late School is designed for students aged 16 to 18 who have difficulty with regular school dynamics, as well as those who are socially and economically disadvantaged. Offering programs from 12:30 to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, the Late School provides a flexible, self-paced work environment with personalized instruction. Students are also provided with supports such as free on-site YMCA babysitting services and bus passes.

The Late School operates on a continuous-intake basis. Students can attend Late School exclusively, or continue to attend day-classes at their own host high school, use school facilities and participate in extra-curricular programs.

In order to meet the needs of additional at-risk students, the Late School model has been replicated in three other Algoma District School Board locations on a smaller scale.

Results in 2004-05:

Total enrolment in credit programs:	256
Students who completed credits:	181
Total credits earned:	273

A GUIDANCE-BASED APPROACH: EXPLORING CAREER DESTINATIONS

Program Leader:

Clovis Paquette
Guidance Program Facilitator
Conseil des écoles catholiques de langue française du Centre-Est

Program profile:

This approach fosters student success by helping students appreciate the connection between the learning experiences they choose today, and the opportunities they will have in the future.

Students take responsibility for designing projects that will give them 'real world' experience in areas they are interested in exploring. The school, in partnership with community organizations and parents, assists students by providing them with the services and supports they will need to successfully complete their projects.

The program was implemented by the Conseil des écoles catholiques de langue française du Centre-Est in an Ottawa school. In addition, the Conseil scolaire de district catholique Franco-Nord and the Conseil scolaire de district du Centre-Sud-Ouest implemented the model in both Sturgeon Falls and London. In all three schools, the program was focused on Grade 9 and 10 students.

Student projects varied from developing a career fair to participating in job shadowing, organizing a soccer tournament, participating in hands-on workshops with the Canadian Forces and learning about the operation of a water purification plant.

Results in 2004-05:

Total enrolment in credit programs:	88
Students who completed credits:	87
Total credits earned:	85

In the April, 2005 issue of Curriculum Update we highlighted a number of pilot projects launched through the Learning to 18 initiative. Within that article, the following pilot projects should have been attributed to the Bluewater District School Board. Student Success Leader Lori Wilder provides some details of the board's projects.



Lori Wilder
Student Success Leader
Bluewater District School Board

All of our projects are designed to provide students who are struggling and do not thrive in the traditional classroom, with skills to be successful in life. This often means more flexible programming options and more individualized support.

TRADES INTEGRATION PROGRAM (TIP)

TIP is a trade-focused survey program geared to students with learning and mild developmental disabilities.

It gives these students an opportunity to participate in co-op in an apprenticeship type trade, but in a setting geared to their needs, with increased staffing and individualized attention.

WIARTON DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM

This program, which operates on a continuous intake basis, uses a credit recovery model to deliver flexible, individualized learning programs. Two teachers deliver programming options, including English, Mathematics, Hairstyling and Aesthetics, Navigating the Workplace, Co-op and/or Technical Studies. Students also receive a high level of personal attention.

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CURRICULUM REVIEW: IMPLEMENTATION UNDERWAY

Revisions have been completed for five English-language and French-language curriculum documents, and are beginning implementation in schools this fall.

The ongoing cycle to review the curriculum was initiated in 2003 to help ensure that it is current, relevant and age appropriate for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12. The review process supports students, teachers, schools and boards by identifying targeted areas in need of support, and allows time for development and updating of related materials.

Each year several subject areas enter the review process, which includes research on new developments in the subject areas and comparisons of Ontario's curriculum with those in Canadian and international jurisdictions.

Information is also gathered from educators in all school boards, through focus groups, where the strengths of the current curriculum is discussed and potential areas for improvement are identified.

Another feature of the review process is a technical content analysis by teams of classroom teachers and subject experts. Consultations also take place with the Ministers' Advisory Council on Special Education, faculties of education, parents, students, universities, colleges, workplace-related organizations and other ministries.

Based on all information gathered, recommendations for revisions to the curriculum are made and writing teams, composed of teachers from several school boards, draft revised documents. Following this exercise, teachers, principals, school board staff and other stakeholders provide feedback on the proposed revisions. This input and information from other consultations are used to guide further revisions to the curriculum prior to the finalization and release of the documents to schools and school boards.

The following chart summarizes the English-language and French-language curriculum beginning implementation in the fall of 2005 and 2006.

CURRICULUM REVIEW: IMPLEMENTATION 2005/2006

September 2005

Social Studies, Grades 1 to 6, History and Geography, Grades 7 and 8

Canadian and World Studies, Grades 9 and 10

Canadian and World Studies, Grades 11 and 12

Mathematics, Grades 1 to 8

Mathematics, Grades 9 and 10

Études sociales, de la 1^{re} à la 6^e année, histoire et géographie, 7^e et 8^e année

Études canadiennes et mondiales, 9^e et 10^e année

Études canadiennes et mondiales, 11^e et 12^e année

Mathématiques, de la 1^{re} à la 8^e année

Mathématiques, 9^e et 10^e année

September 2006

Business Studies, Grades 9 to 12

Guidance and Career Education, Grades 9 to 12

Mathematics, Grades 11 and 12

The Kindergarten Program

Language, Grades 1 to 8

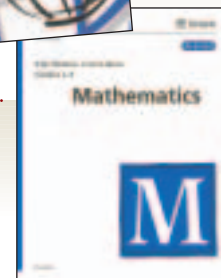
Affaires et commerce, de la 9^e à la 12^e année

Orientation et formation au cheminement de carrière, de la 9^e à la 12^e année

Mathématiques, 11^e et 12^e année

Jardin d'enfants

Français, de la 1^{re} à la 8^e année



MODULAR LEARNING CENTRE

The Modular Learning Centre is a credit-earning program specifically geared to at-risk senior students. Courses are divided into modules, so that students can complete each course step-by-step in small, digestible pieces. Students receive individual attention and learn at their own pace in a supportive environment.

DRAMATIC ARTS COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

Targeted at Grade 9 and 10 students who are struggling with the academic program, this program uses dramatic arts and cooperative education to enhance students' employability, self-esteem, sense of belonging and cooperation. A non-traditional classroom setting is established, with a single teacher; less sitting at a desk, more hands-on activity, and more one-on-one attention. The program is an alternative for those students who are at risk of dropping out and provides an environment in which they can engage and succeed.

HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM PROGRAM

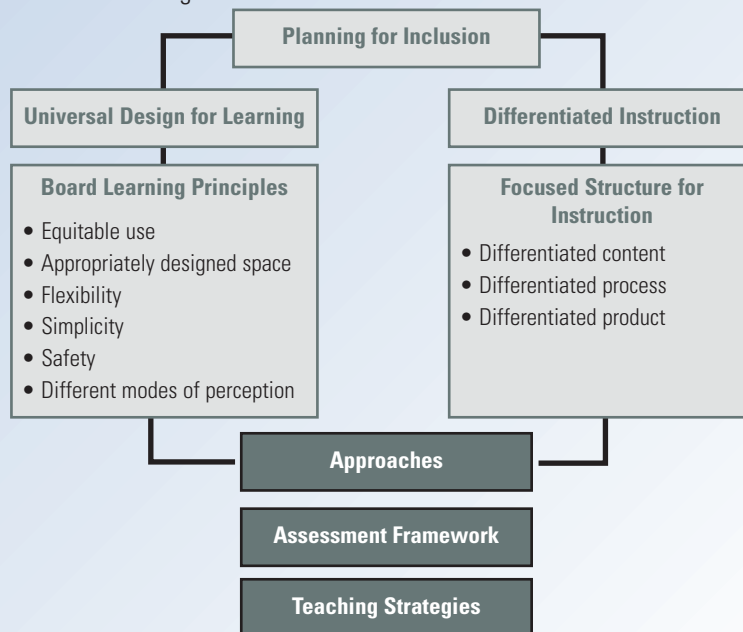
The long-standing relationship with Talisman Mountain Resort to provide students with a variety of co-op opportunities, such as working in the ski shop, is being expanded to open a second kitchen for students who want co-op credits in the hospitality and tourism fields and exposure to a potentially rewarding career path.

Planning for inclusion

Teachers can effectively plan for learning within a diverse, inclusive environment through the principles of Universal Design for Learning and differentiated instruction.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL): is based on the concept that assistance targeted to one specific group can help everyone. A classroom based on UDL is specifically planned and developed to meet the special needs of a variety of students. It is flexible, supportive, and adjustable, and increases full access to the curriculum by all students.

Differentiated instruction: enables teachers to address specific student skills and difficulties. Differentiated instruction requires teachers to transform their practice from a program-based to a student-based pedagogy, acknowledging that each student differs in his or her interests, learning profile and level of functioning.



ONTARIO CURRICULUM UNIT PLANNER (OCUP): SOFTWARE UPDATES IN SCHOOLS THIS FALL

An updater CD-ROM for the Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner Official Version 3.0 (2002) has been developed for distribution to schools this fall. The 2005 updater CD will be sent to the Ontario Educational Software Services (O.E.S.S.) representatives, for use in updating existing installations of the official 3.0 software version, originally distributed in January 2003.

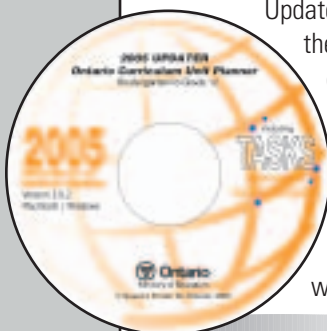
The OCUP software has been updated to reflect revised curriculum and grade-by-grade expectations (see 'Curriculum Review' in this issue), and also includes a variety of expanded and revised teacher resources. Use of the updater will not alter any of the user's content files.

The software has been upgraded so that future updates can be made via small files distributed to users over the internet.

Updates have also been made to the Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner website and to the runtime version of the software, designed primarily for use by teacher candidates. The new runtime version will be distributed to faculties of education.

What is the Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner?

OCUP is a comprehensive software package, developed by the ministry, which guides teachers through the unit planning process and provides an extensive support library of tools and information. For more information, visit the OCUP website at www.ocup.org and see the Winter 2003 issue of Curriculum Update at www.curriculum-update.info



SOFTWARE REVIEW

JOHN PALBOM

John Palbom is the computer consultant for Trillium Lakelands School Board. He is also a member of the Ontario Software Acquisition Program Advisory Committee (OSAPAC) and has extensive experience in the use of educational software as a teaching and learning tool.



Edison

Edison is an effective tool for introducing electronics and electricity to students in the Junior and Intermediate grades. Written at an age-appropriate level, Edison has more than 100 experiments and problems that can be used immediately.

Students select virtual batteries, resistors, diodes, LEDs, transistors, logic gates, flip flops, and integrated circuits from a workbench and use a solderless breadboard to create, test, and safely repair lifelike 3D circuits. As students build a circuit on the workbench, laying out and wiring components together, Edison builds and displays the appropriate schematic diagram.

The program allows students to print and save their diagrams, and export the results to OESS licensed word processors.

Tina Pro

Tina Pro is a more complex and sophisticated companion to Edison that may be of interest to secondary Science and Computer Science teachers.

With this software students can design, simulate and analyze analog, digital and mixed electronic circuits. Circuits can be tested with any of the 20 analysis modes, using an array of virtual instruments. Because Tina Pro is interactive, circuits can also be edited during operation. Schematic diagrams can be displayed, and built-in publishing tools make it easy to produce reports and presentations, which can be pasted into any word processor or desktop publishing program.

Where to find these software packages

Edison and Tina Pro should have been installed on your school network during the summer. Ask your computer technician for more information if you are unable to find either of these titles. For more information about Tina and Edison, as well as downloadable teaching and learning resources, visit www.osapac.org and follow the software link.

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 Ontario Educational Software Service (OESS) representatives at each board. To search for the OESS representative in your board, go to www.tvo.org/oess. To keep up to date on licensed software resources, visit the Ontario Software Acquisition Program Advisory Committee (OSAPAC) website at www.osapac.org. It contains news on software releases, negotiations, an online survey and a complete database of licensed software titles with many links to the curriculum expectations and other resources. If you are Interested in profiling a software title for Curriculum Update, write us at editor@curriculum-update.info.

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