

The United Nations has declared 2011–2020 as the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity.

As they say in France, *vive la différence*. That hearty exclamation, though it often refers to the difference between the sexes, could apply to the theme of this newsletter, although perhaps *vive la diversité* would be a more apt phrase, given that this issue of *Just in Time* is about the value and richness of difference and diversity. We will consider a number of kinds of diversity, all of which impinge somehow on education, because in the end, everything impinges on education. First, we will examine the importance of biocultural diversity, which the nonprofit group Terralingua defines as “the true web of life: diversity in both nature and culture.” And we will look at the relationship between cultural, linguistic and biological diversity. You will also read about two outdoor educators’ experience learning first-hand about the difference between white and Aboriginal ways of being in the world, in a story in which it is not entirely clear who are the teachers and who are the students. A former member of the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee, Lynn Smarsh, talks about “unpacking” diversity at a large and highly multiethnic Edmonton high school. We also have reprinted excerpts from an article from the *Exceptionality Education International* journal about how administrators can help teachers who might be dealing with cultural diversity in their high school (that is, probably every administrator and teacher in Alberta). As usual we supply a list of resources and events at the end of this newsletter.

So, read on, gentle reader, and remember that oft-repeated phrase: there is strength in difference.

A Diversity of Diversities

By Karen Virag

For the past decade, researchers have turned their attention to the field of biocultural diversity and have studied the links between the world’s cultural, linguistic and biological diversity as manifestations of the diversity of life. Their interest was spurred by observations that the world is losing much of its diverse culture (the term *culture* is used in the broadest sense possible) and that an approaching tsunami of monocultural sameness is becoming the norm. As evidence we have only to consider some of the most well-known global symbols: McDonald’s golden arches, the Nike swoosh, and the Coca-Cola sign, all of which can be seen in almost every country on earth. It is no coincidence that these symbols are all signs of American capitalism, and even though the US economy is in grave peril at the moment, the majority of the planet’s biggest, most successful and most powerful companies are from the US.

A Tale of Two Cities

I well remember the stark contrast between two versions of Budapest. The first was the pre-fall-of-

the-Berlin-Wall Budapest, which I visited with my father in 1982. At that time, the Iron Curtain (which in actuality was a barbed wire fence, a huge disappointment to my young and still-quite-literal point of view) demarcated a politically fraught line down the middle of Europe whereby the west was good and the east bad. The second was post-fall-of-the-wall Budapest, when the market economy, hallelujah!, finally arrived and was going to save everybody in those downtrodden lands, through the agency of Pizza Hut and Kentucky Fried Chicken, which sprung up on city streets like strange neon mushrooms, and also through a great fire sale, in which almost everything in the country was put up for sale.

There was no question that the Berlin Wall had to fall, but the hidden costs are hard to measure. How much does a soul cost, anyway?

Economic Globalization, or Why Leave Home at All?

Some decades ago, travel meant encountering new, strange, wonderful, awful, fascinating, perplexing,

Language bears the stamp of the physical environment in which speakers are placed.

—Noted linguist and anthropologist Edward Sapir (1884–1939)

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odd, silly and magnificent places, people and things. But the common denominator in all of this was difference. Now, with the sameness brought about by international hotel chains, restaurants and chain stores, one is sometimes pressed to wonder why one should travel at all. Economic globalization promotes a homogenization of development and enterprises that favours multinational corporations at the expense of small, independent businesses. Two chief proponents of globalization are the World Bank and the World Trade Organization, two extremely powerful entities that favour efficiency over diversity. Now, efficiency is not always a bad thing—who doesn't appreciate an efficient mechanic or transit system?—but for global capitalism, efficiency translates into the sameness brought about by economies of scale. McDonald's restaurants look remarkably similar, no matter what country you are in. So do Hilton hotels and the Gap. And with that economy of scale comes the decimation of small, usually independent, competitors. Fewer competitors means more powerful corporations whose sheer size enables them to buy even more property to build even more Walmarts and Targets, and the clout to flout local labour and environmental laws.

How Many Ways Can You Say “Linguistic Diversity”?

A major factor in this growing monoculture is the advent of global forms of electronic communication in the form of the Internet, which can be both wonderful (how did we ever do research, find long-lost friends or book airline tickets before it came along?) and terrible (the Internet is at once a giant cosmic garbage heap, the biggest shopping mall in the world and a fabulously efficient way to spread misinformation). Many languages have become extinct over the centuries, due to such factors as colonialism, genocide and war, but now, because the predominant language of science, international commerce and now the Internet is English, many

smaller languages are at increasing threat of extinction; many have already died.

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), it is impossible to estimate how many languages have become extinct over the course of human history. Linguists have estimated, though, that at the time of Columbus's arrival in America, in 1492, there were approximately 280 languages spoken in what later came to be called North America. Since then, 115 have become extinct. The UNESCO interactive atlas of endangered languages (www.unesco.org/culture/languages-atlas/en/atlasmap.html) identifies 576 of the world's languages as critically endangered. Of Canada's 88 languages (bet you thought we had only two, didn't you?), 32 are critically endangered.

In February of 2010, the last speaker of the language Bo, which was spoken on the Andaman Islands, in the Bay of Bengal, died, thus breaking a link of at least 65,000 years to an ancient culture thought to date to pre-Neolithic human settlements of southeast Asia. The woman spent the last few years of her life unable to converse with anyone in her mother tongue. The loss to humanity of such precious human traits as language, with all the wisdom, experience and knowledge that each language embodies, is incalculable.

As stated by UNESCO, although

it is widely acknowledged that the degradation of the natural environment, in particular traditional habitats, entails a loss of cultural and linguistic diversity, new studies suggest that language loss, in its turn, has a negative impact on biodiversity conservation. There is a fundamental linkage between language and traditional knowledge (TK) related to biodiversity. Local and indigenous communities have elaborated complex classification systems for the natural world, reflecting a deep understanding of their local environment. This environmental knowledge is embedded in indigenous names, oral traditions and taxonomies, and can be lost when a community shifts to another language.

***A partial list of the extinct language of North America:** Eastern Abnakei, Alsea, Apalachee, Atakapa, Barbareño, Beothuk, Biloxi, Calusa, Cayuse, Chebalis, Chimariko, Chitimacha, Coquille, Cowlitz, Cruzeño, Delaware, Eel River Athabaskan, Esselen, Echemin, Galice-Applegate, Ineseño, Iowa-Oto, Karkin, Katlamet, Kitsai, Kwalhioqua-Clatskanie, Lower Chinook, Lumbee, Mahican, Massachusetts, Mattole-Bear River, Miami-Illinois, Miluk, Bay Miwok, Mobilian, Mobegan, Molala, Nanticoke, Narragansett, Natchez, Northern Kalapuyan, Obispeño, Pamlico, Pentlatch, Piro, Powhatan, Purisimeño, Quiripi-Naugatuck-Unquachog, Salinan, Shasta, Shinnecock, Siuslaw, Susquehannock, Takelma, Tillamook, Timucua, Tonkawa, Tsetsaut, Tutelo, Twana, Upper Umpqua, Ventureño, Wappo, Wiyot, Wyandot, Yana, Yaquina, Yonkalla*

Yes, We Have No Bananas

We all know (don't we?) that a big problem facing the world's food supply is the rise of one-cropped industrial agriculture. When farmers concentrate on growing one crop they risk losing everything if, say, a particular blight were to affect that one crop. Biodiversity—growing lots of different varieties of the same crop—assures that, in the event of the ruination of one crop, a farmer would not lose his entire year's work.

An excellent example of the danger of monogenetic cultivation happened with one of this continent's most popular fruits: the banana. The most common variety of edible banana, the Gros Michel (fondly called the Big Mike), was almost completely wiped out by disease some decades ago. Its replacement, the Cavendish, is in similar danger of becoming unviable for large-scale cultivation in the coming decades because, as almost the only cultivar being grown for commercial purposes, it is vulnerable to diseases that threaten both commercial cultivation and small-scale subsistence farming.

The Link Between Language and Agriculture; Putting Your Mouth Where Your Money Is

The idea of a link between languages and species, and between evolutionary biology and historical linguistics, dates as far back as Charles Darwin (Maffi 2005, 600). Indeed, “ethnobotanists and ethnobiologists recognize the importance of indigenous names, folk taxonomies and oral traditions to the success of initiatives related to endangered species recovery and restoration activities” (UNESCO nd). In a study done among the Amuesha Indians, a tribe living in the upper Amazon area of Peru, researchers found that the loss of native speakers and keepers of collective knowledge had a negative effect on the diversity of crops. Other researchers have made links between ancestral sayings of the Maori, of New Zealand, and information on soils and nutrients, ecological communities, plant growth and landscapes.

“Such studies demonstrate that efforts to preserve biodiversity can greatly benefit from engaging with local communities on one hand and anthropologists and linguists on the other hand. The former can share their unique traditional ecological knowledge, while the latter can serve as bridges between traditional knowledge and ecoscience” (UNESCO nd).

Since the late 1980s, all sorts of people—linguists, biologists, environmentalists—have been increasingly concerned about the disappearance of plant and linguistic diversity such that, in 1988, the Declaration of Belém was signed (see page 4).

To provide some credible scientific underpinnings to the theory that language and biology are linked, various mapping studies completed over the last decade (identified in Maffi 2005) found striking correlations between linguistic and biological richness. Harmon (cited in Maffi 2005, 604) “showed notable correlations between linguistic and biological diversity on a global scale. He found that 10 out of the top 12 ‘mega diversity’ countries for diversity also figure among the top 25 most linguistically diverse countries.” Maffi notes that “these findings also suggest that the pattern of human cultural diversity is not simply the random effect of historical factors, but reflects both the length of population history in a given location and the constraints and potential carrying capacity of the environment” (p 608). Another finding to come from the mapping studies was that indigenous peoples play a vital role in conservation. And it will be those people, and those who think like them, many of whom speak languages that are fading from history or whose ancestral ways of life are being threatened by global forces, who will ultimately lead the charge against the levelling of the world.

The continued decrease of biocultural diversity would stanch the historical flow of being itself, the evolutionary processes through which the vitality of *all* life has come down to us through the ages. (Harmon, cited in Maffi 2005, 603)

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It is estimated that, if nothing is done, half of the 6,000 plus languages spoken today will disappear by the end of this century.

—UNESCO



Declaration of Belém

The relationship between human diversity and diversity of plant and animal life (biodiversity) has received more and more attention in the past 20 years than it ever has. Indeed, the signing, in 1988, of the Declaration of Belém (in Belém, Brazil) was the first time that an international body, the International Society of Ethnobiology, recognized this link.

The declaration was signed when scientists and environmentalists met with indigenous peoples from all over the world to talk about how to stop the alarming decrease in the earth's cultural and biological diversity. It was recognized that indigenous peoples have a different attitude toward how to perceive, use and manage natural resources, and that the world needed to develop programs to guarantee, preserve and strengthen the indigenous ways of being in the world and traditional knowledge.

This is the background behind the Declaration of Belém, a document that delineated the responsibilities of scientists and environmentalists in addressing the needs of local communities and acknowledged the central role of indigenous peoples in global planning. The Declaration of Belém was a landmark document—it recognized a basic obligation that “procedures be developed to compensate native peoples for the utilization of their knowledge and their biological resources.”

Declaration of Belém (1988)

Since tropical forests and other fragile ecosystems are disappearing, many species, both plant and animal, are threatened with extinction, indigenous cultures around the world are being disrupted and destroyed and given that economic, agricultural and health conditions of people are dependent on these resources, that native peoples have been stewards of 99 per cent of the world's genetic resources, and that there is an inextricable link between cultural and biological diversity, we, members of the International Society of Ethnobiology, strongly support that

1. a substantial proportion of development aid be devoted to efforts aimed at ethnobiological inventory, conservation and management programs;
2. mechanisms be established by which indigenous specialists are recognized as proper authorities and are consulted in all programs affecting them, their resources and their environments;
3. all other inalienable human rights be recognized and guaranteed, including cultural and linguistic identity;
4. procedures be developed to compensate native peoples for the utilization of their knowledge and their biological resources;
5. educational programs be implemented to alert the global community to the value of ethnobiological knowledge for human well-being;
6. all medical programs include the recognition of and respect for traditional healers and the incorporation of traditional health practices that enhance the health status of these populations;
7. ethnobiologists make available the results of their research to the native peoples with whom they have worked, especially including dissemination in the native language; and
8. exchange of information be promoted among indigenous and peasant peoples regarding conservation, management and sustained utilization of resources.

Cultural Diversity in Outdoor Education

by Graham Thompson and Erin Horvath

The following excerpts are from an article that originally appeared in Volume 20:1 of Pathways: the Ontario Journal of Outdoor Education. Reprinted with permission.

You might think Sioux Lookout, Ontario, would be an ideal spot for outdoor education, just as we did when we moved here only a couple of years ago. In fact, we specifically envisioned building a not-for-profit business that would fill the need for alternative professional training and youth programming through the use of outdoor experiences. However, we were unaware of how the atypical culture of Sioux Lookout would instead expose the need for change in our outdoor education programming.

Approximately half of Sioux Lookout's residents are Aboriginal, and the town services more than 40 First Nations communities. Riding on a cultural history proven to survive everything from the

harsh Canadian climate to the assimilation tactics of political and religious groups, the First Nations culture has challenged us to continue our own learning process in outdoor education.

Furthermore, we should point out that neither of us is Aboriginal; we have, however, spent a lot of time in the North and developed close cross-cultural friendships wherein real dialogue about cultural differences has taken place. We are grateful to Aboriginal friends who have patiently helped us, first, to realize when we have been culturally inappropriate and, second, to learn other ways of doing things. Lastly, we would like to point out that the terms *Aboriginal* and *non-Aboriginal* refer to the two main cultural groups in this area. We acknowledge that there is diversity within mainstream cultures, and between the various Aboriginal nations in Canada. These terms are used here simply to highlight some similarities and differences between these cultures.



The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, Article 1 – Cultural diversity: the common heritage of humanity Culture takes diverse forms across time and space. This diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind. As a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature. In this sense, it is the common heritage of humanity and should be recognized and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations.

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Throwing the map to the wind

On a canoe trip with some friends, we relied on a map to guide us. Though we understood that ecological literacy is valued and practised by most Aboriginal communities, we still made the mistake of approaching land-based experiences as challenges to be conquered. We failed to realize that many participants in outdoor outings see the experience as a normal and everyday event. With their familiarity with the land and keen eye for seeing changes in landscape, our Aboriginal comrades thought it was hilarious that we relied so much on an overvalued resource, so we threw the map into the wind.

The eyes have it

We have learned that many Aboriginal people in northern Ontario consider excessive eye contact and dramatic body language to be intrusive. As students of mainstream society in southern Ontario, we were taught and often required to use an aggressive form of communication. Leadership in mainstream society correlates animated body language with confidence. Aboriginal leadership style is often far more subtle, yet reflects a confidence rarely seen in non-Aboriginal people. Both of us have learned that, when facilitating a cross-cultural group, it is important for the facilitator to include and role model other ways of leading. If the facilitator does not, Aboriginal participants may conclude that they can never be leaders because they do not lead the way that is most common in mainstream society.

Shy or just listening?

During a regionwide leadership training camp for youth, we were privileged to have participants from a number of northern First Nations communities as well as non-Aboriginal youth from local towns, most of whom were unfamiliar with Aboriginal culture. This led to some interesting group dynamics. In one instance, several participants said that the Aboriginal youth were shy because they were out of their element. But the Aboriginal youth said that they weren't shy, they were just listening. They explained that some non-Aboriginal participants talked more than they were used to and left few chances for Aboriginals to contribute. We have noticed an important difference between the problem-solving and group-work styles of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants; instead of adopting the "brush yourself off and try again" strategy, many Aboriginal participants prefer to wait, watch and

try once they feel confident of success. When working in a culturally diverse group they often stand back and silently strategize rather than lead a conversation about strategy. Unfortunately, many facilitators interpret this behaviour as timid or even uninterested. In another incident a non-Aboriginal group huddled together and brainstormed solutions while randomly trying to see what would work. The Aboriginal participants stood to the side, observing and thinking about what might work. During a pause, we asked the participants to examine their use of physical space—the non-Aboriginal participants realized that they had turned their backs to the Aboriginal participants, thus excluding them from the conversation. After a non-Aboriginal participant asked a question, an Aboriginal participant suggested a solution, which turned out to be the right one! Another Aboriginal participant later explained that she did not want to seem rude and interrupt the group but had, in fact, seen the solution early on. Later, Aboriginal participants explained that in their culture it is impolite to tell someone his idea is wrong because it robs that person of a learning experience. We have observed that Aboriginal participants often wait to share their ideas until asked and have learned that it is vital to acknowledge and talk about different cultural approaches before beginning an initiative, first, to avoid misunderstandings and, second, to give everyone the chance to approach the problem in their own way.

Being aware of biases

Our learning is definitely ongoing as we strive to become more culturally sensitive and relevant facilitators in a culturally segregated community. We still feel as though we are at the beginning of an awkward yet important journey of seeing the world through different cultural lenses. This process has made us more aware of our own biases, processing preferences and leadership styles. And it has made us painfully aware of how other cultural expressions (in this case Aboriginal culture) are muted and suppressed inadvertently when facilitators unknowingly promote mainstream cultures' ways of communication, problem solving and leadership.

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Promoting Leadership in the Ongoing Professional Development of Teachers: Responding to Globalization and Inclusion

By D F Philpott, E Furey and S C Penney

The following article is an abridged version of a longer article from Volume 20:2 of Exceptionality Education International (EEI), a journal devoted to the analysis and communication of knowledge concerning exceptional students and methods for meeting their exceptional needs. EEI provides a forum for scholarly exchange among national and international professionals in education and related disciplines who are involved with students across the spectrum of exceptionality. EEI's purpose is to present current research and theory and to identify emerging trends and visions for the education of students with exceptionalities.

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Concern for the readiness of new teachers to face the challenges of contemporary classrooms has been the source of much research, debate and criticism. Even though classroom teachers are assuming more responsibility in meeting the needs of all students, many do not feel prepared to instruct students of diverse cultural backgrounds or abilities (Ellins and Porter 2005; Forlin and Hopewell 2006; Jenkins and Ornelles 2009). In a recent Canadian study, Crocker and Dibbon (2008) reported that while 81 per cent of Canadian school principals ranked preservice training in accommodating diverse needs as important for new teachers, only 8 per cent felt that current graduates are prepared.

Levin (2009) called for more effective leadership in ongoing postservice training that partners with parents and engages students. While Levin did not negate the importance of initial teacher preparation, he emphasized the need for renewed focus on postservice training to ensure competency of existing teachers. School administrators play a critical role as facilitators of pre- and postservice professional development to meet the needs of contemporary classrooms.

Contemporary Classrooms

The 2006 census (Statistics Canada 2007, 2008a) determined that there are more than 200 languages spoken in Canadian schools, and 20 per cent of the population reports a first language other than English. It is predicted that by 2017, 23 per cent of

Canada's population will be from a visible minority, with at least two-thirds of that diversity stemming from new immigration (Statistics Canada 2008b). Cultural diversity is not just an urban issue, but a rural one as well, given Canada's mushrooming Aboriginal population. Complicating service delivery for this diverse population is a pronounced increase in interregional migration and a population shift from rural to urban regions. As well, educational services for children with disabilities have evolved from segregated settings to environments of inclusivity (Kauffman 1981).

This paradigm of inclusive education actually bridges the response to students who have individual needs because of ability with those who have cultural or linguistic needs. Inclusion is viewed as central to a democratic school system, one espousing a philosophy of community development and educational programs that create environments embracing all differences (Sands, Kozleski and French 2001; Smith 1998; Stainback and Stainback 1992; Thomas 1997). It is a philosophy of education that focuses on diverse teaching strategies that meet diverse needs by empowering the classroom teacher with the knowledge, skills and willingness to welcome all students.

Teacher Attitudes

Teachers who feel unprepared to meet diverse needs of students suffer diminishing confidence in their own knowledge and skills (Eggen and Kauchak 2006; Poulou 2007). Jordan and Stanovich (2001) found that teachers' beliefs have a major influence on their views of students and teaching. These researchers reported that teachers who saw barriers to learning as environmental were more likely to engage children than were teachers who saw the barriers to learning as inherent in the children. Teachers who view the obstacle as internal believe that exceptional or at-risk students are unable to keep up with the rest of the class, and that other, more specialized teachers should be primarily responsible for instruction (p 45).

Murphy (1996) reported that once negative attitudes of teachers toward inclusion are

Life in a particular human environment is dependent on people's ability to talk about it.

—Peter Mühlhäusler,
Professor of General Linguistics,
University of Adelaide

established they can be difficult to change. Moreover, they result in teachers having lower expectations for their students and subsequent lower achievement levels (Loreman 2007). The macro climate of the whole school is also of critical importance. If diversity is an expanded concept in today's schools and if such trends continue to expand, it falls to current school leaders to respond effectively and ensure healthy and responsive environments. School leadership has long been seen as central to establishing this healthy school environment of positive attitudes toward diversity, facilitated by the principal, but shared by the entire teaching team (Foster 2004; Loreman 2007; Stanovich and Jordan 1998). As society redefines itself in pluralistic concepts and embraces a much broader interpretation of inclusiveness, school leaders must work as diligently at leading this process as teachers must in enacting it in their classrooms.

Six Core Areas for Renewed Professional Development

The following section identifies six areas in which administrators should help teachers prepare for a broader and more positive concept of diversity.

1. Professional Development for Inclusive Policy

Clear policies to support the acquisition of skills to respond to greater diversity are required. Loreman (2007) cautioned that even supportive leaders will have difficulty promoting inclusive education in an environment devoid of supportive policies (p 25). However, policies and legislation do not necessarily ensure that changes will actually occur. There is a need for sustained investment by stakeholders—those implementing change—to prevent policies being ignored in favour of the status quo.

Goddard and Hart (2007) indicated that board and school policies are key to supporting principals in developing inclusive schools for all children. Policies support monitoring and provision of resources to enable inclusive practices and equal and equitable access to language programs, early literacy and culturally balanced curriculum. As well, policies enable schools to actively recruit, hire and retain teachers from minority cultures.

2. Professional Development for Diversity

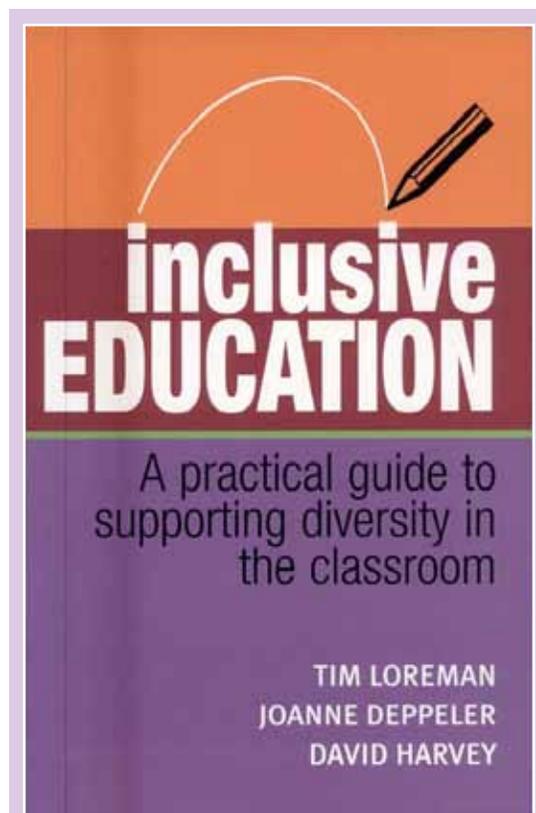
Teachers' understanding of diversity, awareness of the nuances of culture, selection of planned lessons, activities, classroom structure, and methods of both praise and discipline are especially influenced by their own cultural background.

Consequently, professional development needs to support teachers in a personal examination of their awareness of the very nature of difference.

Those charged with teacher education must understand that classroom teachers must be informed about differing abilities and cultures to align instruction and student-specific accommodations, and to prevent stereotypes and discrimination (Golder, Jones and Quinn 2009). As is the case with accommodating students with disabilities, much of the literature on accommodating students from culturally diverse backgrounds stresses the importance of teacher relationships with students and the wider community, including the child's family (Goddard and Hart 2007; Wilgosh and Scorgie 2006).

3. Professional Development to Nurture Positive Attitudes

Silverman (2007) noted that educators must promote and foster the inclusive model and have the necessary skills to implement it. Silverman further indicated that a positive attitude toward inclusion and a belief that learning ability is



Inclusive Education: A Practical Guide to Supporting Diversity in the Classroom was named an exceptional book of the year for 2011, by Exceptionality Education International. For more information, go to <http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/eei>

improvable are essential for all teachers of students with disabilities in inclusive environments. Stanovich and Jordan (2002) identified a sense of teaching efficacy and a repertoire of teaching behaviours (p 175) as key characteristics of teachers in the successful inclusive school. The responsibility for establishing this sense of efficacy and repertoire of behaviours is identified as being shared between those engaged in delivering preservice training to teachers and current school leaders (Munby, Russell and Martin 2001).

4. Professional Development for Evidence-Based Teaching Strategies

Classroom teachers need strategies on accommodating students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (Buell et al 1999; Cook et al 2001; Jenkins and Ornelles 2009). In an effective inclusive school, classroom teachers are supported in understanding student abilities, in assuming greater responsibility and in integrating effective strategies for both instruction and evaluation (Emanuelsson 2001; Golder, Jones and Quinn 2009; Jenkins and Ornelles 2009; Kamens, Loprete and Slostad 2003; Lohrmann, Boggs and Bambara 2006). Leaders need to ensure professional development that responds to needs of teachers by promoting in-depth, empirically validated teaching strategies for specific curricular areas, as well as social/emotional needs (Baker and Martin 2008; Forlin and Hopewell 2006; Leko and Brownell 2009; Ross and Blanton 2004).

5. Professional Development for Collaborative Teaching

School leaders need to ensure opportunities for effective PD that supports collaborative teaching. Effective school leaders enable their schools to become professional learning communities of practice and knowledge building to help teachers address the needs of students of differing abilities and cultures. Through collaborative communities of inquiry and through classroom and special education, teachers learn to question critically and discuss their assumptions and beliefs about teaching and learning for all students (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1999, 293; also see Bakken, Clark and Thompson 1998; Ross and Blanton 2004). Through planned, authentic efforts, school leaders correct misconceptions that collaboration is merely unstructured good communication (Friend 2000). Designated PD days should be realigned for frequent teacher conversations about pedagogy, instructional differentiation, curriculum, student progress and individual ongoing PD needs. In addition to developing partnerships between

general and special education teachers, school principals need to support formation of collaborative relationships between schools and postsecondary teacher education institutions (Boyer and Gillespie 2000; Jenkins and Ornelles 2009). In an effective inclusive school, leaders collaborate with postsecondary educators to support teachers as action researchers who are continuously and critically examining the effectiveness of instruction for diverse student populations (Leko and Brownell 2009).

6. Professional Development for Meaningful Teaching

Principals must support teachers in their quest for knowledge about disabilities, diversity and instruction (Gleeson and Gunter 2001, 110). Preservice special education teachers need meaningful and authentic inclusive experiences with students and their families (Forlin and Hopewell 2006; Golde, Jones and Quinn 2009) and practising teachers need ongoing PD. School leaders should establish meaningful opportunities for ongoing PD that actively engages teachers in acquiring knowledge and strategies in the context of the broader school reform movement (Leko and Brownell 2009). A pragmatic focus on meaningful skill acquisition should be closely linked with preservice teacher educators so as to supplement practical, enquiry-based coursework. The effective inclusive school would be an open environment that welcomes preservice field experiences in a friendly, unsuspecting and benign manner.

Implications for School Administrators

These six focus areas will help school administrators enhance teacher training and will enable teachers to become leaders in implementing inclusion. Stanovich and Jordan (1998) cited research that clearly establishes that it is the principals' attitudes, the norms they establish, and their own values and beliefs that imprint inclusive practices in the inclusive classroom.

School administrators require PD that is practical, functional and context specific to their current roles and responsibilities (Powers, Rayner and Gunter 2001). In striving to meet the professional training needs of individual teachers, PD must help school leaders align the individual needs of teachers with ongoing school development plans and provincial standards and accountability mechanisms (Leko and Brownell 2009; Penuel et al 2007). School leaders must reconcile barriers and tensions inherent in the individual school context. Collaborative professional development

The effective, inclusive school, an educational environment increasingly identified as essential in our society, is one where professional development is an ongoing, fluid balance between pre- and postservice training for both teachers and administrators.

for leaders is required to harmonize standards, organizational goals, individual learning needs of students (whether in mainstream or alternative programs), site-based performance management, and the need for intra- and interagency collaboration (Brownell et al 2009; Leko and Brownell 2009; Powers et al 2001; Watson 2009).

Conclusion

To help school administrators help teachers engage in shared leadership in response to globalization and inclusion, new models of professional development are required. Renewed postservice training for both administrators and teachers must be pragmatically linked with effective preservice training. Such linkages will prioritize the acquisition and meaningful understanding of essential concepts including exceptionalities, cultural and linguistic differences, program planning, curriculum development, general and intensive instructional differentiation, assistive technology, social/emotional issues, collaborative practice, and self-efficacy (Angelle 2009; DiPaola and Walther-Thomas 2003; Griffin, Jitendra and League 2009; Leko and Brownell 2009).

An informed first step in accommodating diversity is a focus on training school administrators to develop and deliver meaningful and pragmatic training to their teachers. The effective, inclusive school, an educational environment increasingly identified as essential in our society, is one where professional development is an ongoing, fluid balance between pre- and postservice training for both teachers and administrators.

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***The UNESCO
Universal
Declaration
on Cultural
Diversity,
Article 4 –
Human rights
as guarantees
of cultural
diversity***

The defence of cultural diversity is an ethical imperative, inseparable from respect for human dignity. It implies a commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the rights of persons belonging to minorities and those of indigenous peoples. No one may invoke cultural diversity to infringe upon human rights guaranteed by international law, nor to limit their scope.

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How teachers can help immigrant children adjust to their new school

By Lynn Smarsh

ELL teachers have to be many things that the ordinary teacher is not—counsellors, assistant settlement workers, diplomats, sympathetic listeners and cheerleaders. The article below was written by Lynn Smarsh, a long-time member of the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee and an ELL teacher at St Joseph High School, in Edmonton. Here is her take on unpacking ethnic diversity at St Joe's.

Get personal information for funding

ELL teachers are on the front lines when it comes to immigrant children. They work in conjunction with the school's secretary to obtain the necessary information required for funding from Alberta Education. For example, when an immigrant child registers at school, the teacher photocopies the landing papers. Children of temporary foreign workers receive the same funding as regular children; children of refugees receive extra.

Come to know the child

Many ELL students come from stressful or violent circumstances that people who grow up in Canada cannot begin to comprehend. For example, many children have spent considerable time in refugee camps. To properly help these children, the ELL teacher must determine if they were in a camp and how long they attended school. The teacher needs to ask questions like, Was the child's schooling interrupted? What type and amount of schooling did the children receive? Are the children healthy? Do they need glasses? Have they had specific



illnesses? This information helps the teacher determine how much extra support the child requires to be able to participate in class activities. For young students, the teacher asks the family these questions. Older students can often answer such questions themselves, though parents or interpreters can also be present.

Inspire immigrant students to participate in school life

ELL students should participate in all core academic classes, options and extracurricular activities as soon as they can succeed. It is well known that ELL students use English more readily when they are involved in school activities. One Edmonton school organized a tutoring group from the Grade 12 cohort, and offered a girls' time and a boys' time. These extracurricular activities help ELL students make friends, another factor in student success.

Get used to colds and watch out for bullies

The ELL teacher quickly learns that many immigrant children experience severe colds and flu in their first year, and the first mosquito bites might leave large welts. Immigrant children need time to build their immunity.

Immigrant children can be easy targets for gangs and bullying, so teachers must keep an eye open for children who do not join in or who are targeted. Teachers also need to be on the alert for fighting and aggressive behaviour. Teachers often assign helpers to immigrant students to ease their adjustment period. Social agencies that deal with immigrants are excellent sources of additional information and help.

Remember that parental support is crucial

To best support immigrant students, teachers must also support families. Parents will have many questions about the education system and will have different expectations, too. Good communication is key to a successful school experience. Teachers should think of differentiation and support as being a best practice for all students.

Teachers should make every effort to include the family as much as possible. If the parents do not speak English, teachers may need the help of

interpreters or community liaison workers. It is helpful to bring the parents in with the interpreters at the beginning of the year. Many parents can communicate through writing, so using e-mail can help if the parents have access to a computer. Finding good interpreters is not easy in rural areas, so teachers may have to contact interpreters in the major centres. As children progress through school, they often act as interpreters for their parents and will sometimes miss school to do this. Immigrant parents often work two or three jobs to pay the bills. Therefore, teachers should give plenty of notice for parent meetings and be as supportive of the family as possible while maintaining a high standard for school work and homework. Immigrant parents generally expect their children to do homework every night—this is what they would have done back home. Extra reading homework is the best because it is the most difficult part of a student's school time. If no one in the home reads or speaks English, the student has no one to turn to for assistance. Audiobooks, short newspaper articles or the television news are all helpful.

Search out resources from the ATA's English as a Second Language Specialist Council and Alberta Education

Teachers play an important role in helping students from other countries adjust to a new life in Canada. The English as a Second Language Council (ESLC) of the Alberta Teachers' Association has many excellent resources. Check out their website at www.eslc.teachers.ab.ca. There, you will find curriculum links and guides for differentiated instruction for immigrant students and links to specialist council support in your area. Also, every year the ESLC holds a conference that provides excellent PD and an opportunity to network with other ELL teachers. Again, check the website for information about the conference.

The ESL curriculum can be found on the Alberta Education website (www.education.alberta.ca); the site also provides an up-to-date list of resources and websites.

Lynn Smarsh was a long-time member of the Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee and an ELL teacher at St Joseph High School, in Edmonton. Lynn retired in June 2011, after 39 years in the classroom.

Biocultural diversity is a living network made up of the millions of species of plants and animals that have evolved on Earth, and of the thousands of human cultures and languages that have developed over time. ... Biocultural diversity is both the source and the expression of all the beauty and potential of life on Earth.

— Terralingua

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Biocultural Diversity Conservation is devoted to protecting and restoring the biocultural diversity of life. Biocultural diversity is the interlinked diversity of nature and culture: the millions of species of plants and animals that have evolved on earth, and the thousands of different cultures and languages that humans have developed by interacting closely with one another and with the natural environment. www.terralingua.org/bcdconservation/

British Columbia Teachers' Federation. These subsites of the BCTF website provide support to educators of school-aged students of all abilities with information, strategies and resources related to special education, learning assistance and ESL (www.bctf.ca/IssuesInEducation.aspx?id=10564) and several social justice issues, including racism; child labour; globalization, trade agreements and education; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) issues in schools. www.bctf.ca/SocialJustice.aspx?id=6024

The Central Alberta Diversity Association is a charitable, not-for-profit organization that consists of a coalition of groups and individuals who work to promote community action against all forms of discrimination and in favour of diversity. www.cadiversity.ca

The Cultural Diversity Institute at the University of Calgary. Although this institute is now closed, you can still access an excellent list of resources related to diversity at www.ucalgary.ca/dtoolkit/.

The Cultural Diversity Program at the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) is a research unit that focuses on immigration, multiculturalism, and ethnoracial relations from a social and economic perspective. www.ccsd.ca/subsites/cd/

This is a link to an annotated bibliography of diversity resources developed by community organizations with the support of the **Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund of Alberta's Ministry of Culture and Community Spirit**. <http://culture.alberta.ca/humanrights/bibliography/bibliography.pdf>

Diversity, Equity and Human Rights Committee of the Alberta Teachers' Association. www.teachers.ab.ca. Click on For Members then Professional Development.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The IUCN, world's oldest and largest global environmental network, seeks pragmatic solutions to the world's pressing environmental and developmental challenges. It supports scientific research, manages field projects all over the world and brings governments, nongovernment organizations, United Nations agencies, companies and local communities together to develop and implement policy, laws and best practice. www.iucn.org/

The [US] National Council of Teachers of English has published *Language Diversity in the Classroom: From Intention to Practice*. It deals with the challenges of teaching linguistically diverse students in an era when standardized American English is required for success. The book includes a bibliography of resources on bilingualism and language diversity. www.ncte.org

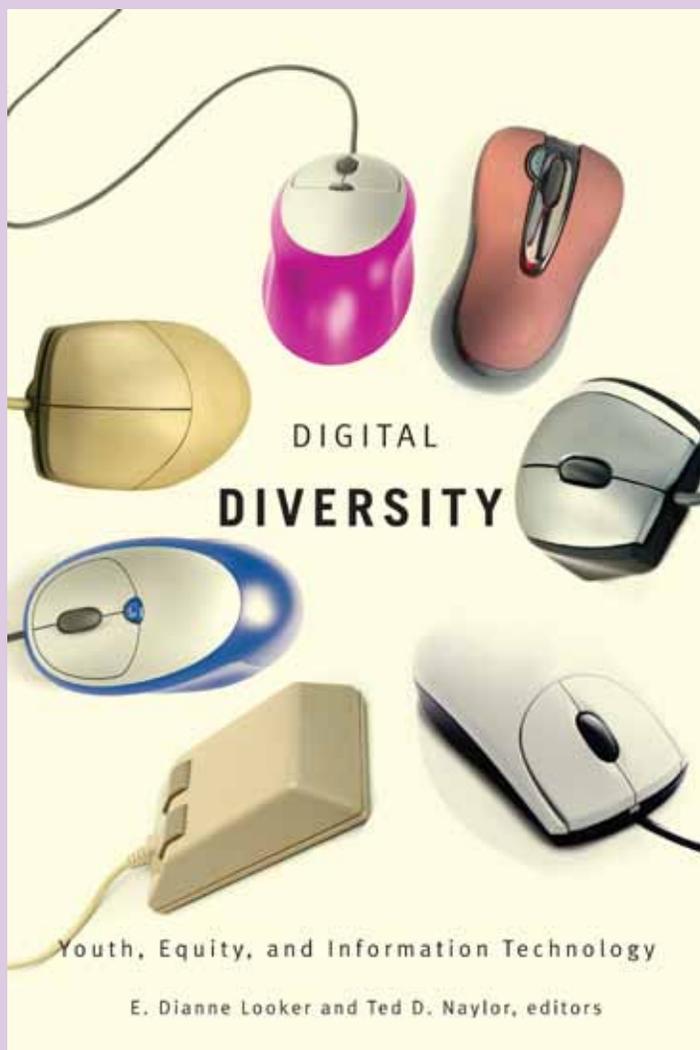
Teaching Tolerance is a project of the Southern Policy Law Center. The site describes itself as "A place to find thought-provoking news, conversation and support for those who care about diversity, equal opportunity and respect for differences in schools," and contains blog posts, a link to *Teaching Tolerance* magazine and links to other resources. www.tolerance.org/

Terralingua is an international nongovernmental organization founded in 1996 by a group of committed people from different backgrounds who shared a fundamental set of beliefs about the interconnectivity of biology, culture and language. Terralingua works to sustain the biocultural diversity of life—the world's precious heritage of biological, cultural and linguistic diversity — through an innovative program of research, education, policy-relevant work, and on-the-ground action. www.terralingua.org



nature and culture.
the true web of life.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). UNESCO's mission is to contribute to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information. www.unesco.org



Digital Diversity: Youth, Equity, and Information Technology is about youth, schools and the use of technology, all of which are directly affected by the proliferation of computers in schools and the increasingly heavy use of the Internet for both information sharing and communication.

The contributors to this volume investigate how the resources provided by information and communication technology (ICT) are made available to different groups of young people (as defined by gender, race, rural location, Aboriginal status, street youth status, Inuit from the high Arctic) and how these people do (or do not) develop facility and competence with this technology. How does access vary for these different groups? Which

young people develop facility with ICT? What impact has this technology had on their learning and their lives?

Rather than state how youth should or could better use technology (as much of the existing literature does) the contributors focus on how youth and educators are actually using technology. By paying attention to how young people and their teachers routinely use and understand ICT, the book highlights the current gaps in policy and practice, and challenges assumptions about the often taken-for-granted links between technology, pedagogy, and educational outcomes and highlights a range of important equity issues.

E Dianne Looker, a Canada Research Chair in Equity and Technology, has undertaken several longitudinal surveys focusing on youth in a changing society and has provided expert advice to numerous policy groups and government departments. Her recent work looks at how the shift to an information society has affected equity for subgroups of youth in Canada and abroad.

Ted N Naylor is currently studying men's health, biopolitics, and healthy policy in the Interdisciplinary PhD program at Dalhousie University, in Halifax. He is also a research manager and associate for the Health, Illness, Men and Masculinities Project (HIMM), Dalhousie University. Prior to this role, Naylor was the project coordinator for the Equity and Technology Project, led by Dianne Looker, at Mount Saint Vincent University.

Digital Diversity: Youth, Equity, and Information Technology is published by Wilfred Laurier University Press.

ISBN13: 978-1-55458-185-6.

\$38.95, 204 pp.

Online orders receive a 25 per cent discount.

For more information, go to www.wlupress.wlu.ca.

October 14–16. Joint conference of the ATA’s Social Studies Council, the Educational Technology Council and the Alberta School Library Council. Theme: “Connecting Globally: Inviting the World into Our Classroom.”

Keynote speakers: Samantha Nutt, founder of War Child Canada; Craig Kielburger, founder of Free the Children; and Steve Patterson, comedian extraordinaire. For more info, go to www.connectingglobally.ca/.

October 27–30, 2011: Third Asian Conference on Education. Osaka, Japan

Theme: “Learning and Teaching in a Globalised World”

Subthemes include the following:

- Community, culture and globalization
- Diversities, belonging and un/belonging
- Equity, social justice and social change

<http://ace.iafor.org>

October 28–29, Canmore, Alberta. The annual conference of the Second Languages and Intercultural Council, of the Alberta Teachers’ Association. Theme: “Authenticity in the Classroom.” For more information, go to <http://slic.teachers.ab.ca/Pages/Home.aspx>.

November 2–5, 2011: NAME 2011 International Conference (National Association for Multicultural Education) Chicago, Illinois

Theme: “Reworking Intersections, Reframing Debates, Restoring Hope”

From the conference website: “The 21st Annual International NAME Conference will enrich multicultural education research and practice by grounding our work in new perspectives of this bigger picture. We invite teachers from preschool through university, education leaders and counsellors, and community activists to submit proposals that offer constructive ways of grappling with intersecting identities and oppressions. We invite proposals that embody the paradoxes and promises of examining the intersections of race, ethnicity, class, language, gender, sexual orientation,

religion, disability, immigration status, and other dimensions of diversity. We also invite proposals that contextualize the current attack on multicultural education within broader movements, institutions, and discourses, and that help us to develop concrete strategies and resources for improving our practices, programs, and policies. As we imagine viable alternatives with creativity and courage, we will continue to remake education into the site and the source of hope for our next generation.”

<http://nameorg.org/2011-conference/>

November 3–5. The annual conference of the English as Second Language Council of the Alberta Teachers’ Association. Theme: “It Takes a Village: Coming Together to Support English Language Learners.” For more information, go to <http://eslc.teachers.ab.ca/Pages/Home.aspx>.

November 23–26, 2011: 3rd International Conference on Language, Education and Diversity. Auckland, New Zealand

Sponsored by the Faculty of Education, University of Auckland, the conference will consider the impact of increased cultural linguistic diversity and its consequences for the theory, policy and practice of language education.

www.led.education.auckland.ac.nz

December 6–9, 2011: International Conference on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education 2011. Singapore

Theme: “Sustaining Student-Centric Higher Education: Embracing Diversity and Empowering Gen Y Learners”

Topics to be discussed include the following:

- Diversity and multiculturalism on campus—opportunities and challenges for teaching and learning
- Literacies for the new world economy
- Technology-assisted education for Gen Y learners and the 21st-century classroom
- Toward advanced personalized learning: A grand challenge for 21st-century education

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