

Creating a Culture of Professional Learning

by Ardith Shirley, NBTA Staff Officer - Professional Development

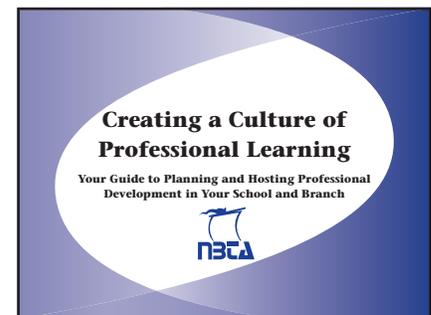
As this NBTA News goes to press for publication, another resource is also soon to be hot off the press from the NBTA print room. **Creating a Culture of Professional Learning: Your Guide to Planning and Hosting Professional Development in Your School and Branch** is a document that has been created through the work of the NBTA Provincial PD Committee. It is intended to be a "one stop shop" for anyone who is planning, or wondering about, professional learning opportunities for an individual, school, branch, or district.

While we certainly cannot pretend that all of the answers to your questions regarding PD will be found between the covers, we do think that we have managed to answer a good number of the most frequently asked ones. As well, the extensive appendices section at

the back includes a number of the documents that may come in handy in the world of professional learning: **Need the application form to apply for an Educational Improvement Grant? Check out Appendix G. Looking for the guidelines for Alternate Proposals for Council Day? Check out Appendix H.** You get the picture. We even get so brave on Page 6 of the guide as to attempt to explain the "Mysteries of the School Calendar." (Anyone who has ever attended an NBTA Board meeting knows how confusing that one can become!)

Speaking of the Board, it has been approved that a complimentary copy of the document will be provided to every Administrator and School PD Rep as well as District Office Staff with responsibilities in the area

of Professional Development. As well, the resource guide is available to anyone who is interested in an electronic version from our NBTA website (www.nbta.ca). Simply click on the icon that looks like this:



We hope the guide is of use to the people who work within our NB education system to create a culture of professional learning for our teachers.

Council Day 2011 Plans Well Underway!

It may seem like May 6, 2011 is still a long ways away, but our three Councils are already working very hard to provide three quality programs at three sites in the province on our Council Day. (See locations and specifics below.)

This year, our Councils are pleased to be trying a new recruitment strategy for session presenters – there is currently a call for proposals to present at any of

our three Council Day Programs posted on our website. If you have expertise that you would be willing to share with your NB colleagues, we welcome you to apply using the specifics as outlined in the Agreement of Service that is found under the Council Day icon.

Simply fill in the details, and submit to the program chairperson by the November date. Should your proposal be accepted, confirmation of your

inclusion in the Council Day Program could be expected by February 18.

We know that there are many teachers who have many gifts and talents to share with their colleagues... we need you!



Share Your Expertise!

Mark Your Calendar!
Council Day 2011, Friday, May 6th

Presenters Needed!

Elementary & Music Specialist Strand – Fredericton
Middle Level & Art Specialist Strand – Saint John
High School & Phys. Ed. Specialist Strand – Miramichi

Do you have expertise that you are willing to share with your colleagues? Why not answer the Council's Call for Proposals and offer a session as part of one of our Council Day Programs? Go to www.nbta.ca. Click on:



May I Recommend?

It seems that the fall issues of most of the journals that NBTA subscribes to were chock-a-block full of articles to inspire, grow and learn from! If any of the following tweak your interest, drop me an email and I would be happy to send a copy along to you.

Teaching Without Talking by Jacqueline Hansen (*Phi Delta Kappan*, August 2010, Pg. 35) reminds teachers that the non-verbal messages that we send to students through proximity, eye contact, gestures and touching can speak far louder than the words we choose. An interesting read!

The Middle School Journal's September issue contained an article by Curry and Choate titled, **The Oversexualization of Young Adolescent Girls: Implications for Middle Level Educators**. (Pg. 6). This one particularly struck a chord with me as I watch and listen to all of the changes as my niece transitions from Elementary to Middle School. As an aunt, I am finding the new implications of the transition difficult. I can only imagine how she and her parents are feeling!

Different Families, Different Dances: Helping Children of Substance Abusers by Ann Mary Roberts explores the challenges that some of our students may face at home and how we, as educators, can respond more effectively to these challenges at school. (*Middle Ground*, August 2010, Pg. 11)

The September issue of *Educational Leadership's* theme was "Giving Students Meaningful Work". There were a number of articles that caught my attention:

Five Hallmarks of Good Homework by Cathy Vatterott (Pg. 10), **Even Geniuses Work Hard** by Carol Dweck (Pg. 16) Carol Dweck is the Stanford University psychologist who wrote the book *Mindset* – if you haven't read it yet, you may want to add it to your Christmas Wish List!),

Seven Essentials for Project-Based Learning by John Larmer and John Mergendoller (Pg. 34-37) reminds all of us that some of the "projects" that have been called PBL border on busywork. The authors suggest that seven components are essential for quality and meaningful inquiry that engages student minds.

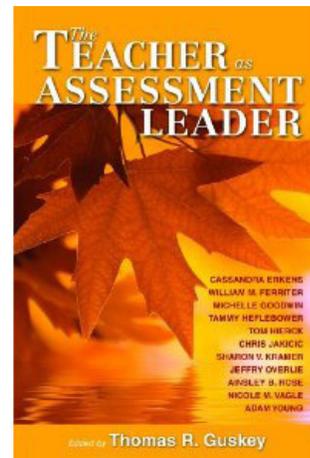
An honourable mention from this issue goes to **Beyond One Right Answer** (Pg. 28) that is filled with examples of differentiating Math instruction through the use of open-ended questions. I mention this one for its content, but also because the author is Marion Small who many of us know from her time spent at UNB Fredericton.

In the October issue of *Educational Leadership*, William M. Ferriter makes the case for using **Cell Phones as Teaching Tools** in the magazine's regular feature Digitally Speaking (Pg. 85). If you or your school is struggling with a technology policy, you may want to have a read!

Book Give-Away!

NEW FEATURE!

We are pleased to introduce a new feature in our Growing, Living and Learning column this month – a book give-away! This month's book is **The Teacher as Assessment Leader** edited by Tom Guskey.



In order to have a chance to win, simply drop me an email at the address below before November 30th with the subject line – **Book Give-Away**.



Closing Quote:

"The highest reward for a person's toil is not what they get for it, but what they become by it."

John Ruskin

Website of the Month:

kappanmagazine.org

The online version of the popular *Phi Delta Kappan* has the most current issue and articles available in full text versions as well as access to online professional development guides that accompany many of them. Another bonus is the great educational cartoons that they encourage you to share in your presentations, etc.