

# ***CURRENTS***

Volume 4, No.4

READINGS IN RACE RELATIONS

Winter 87/88

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## **RACE EQUITY IN EDUCATION**

### **Also**

**Anti-Racist  
Education**

**Community  
Participation  
in Education**

**Training of School  
Administrators**

**Barriers to  
Implementing  
Policy**

**Community  
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**Who Seeks  
The Work?**

*Published by THE URBAN ALLIANCE ON RACE RELATIONS*



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The Urban Alliance on Race Relations formed in July 1975 "to promote a stable and healthy multiracial environment in the community," is a non-profit organization made up of volunteers from all sectors of the community.

The Urban Alliance on Race Relations is an educational agency and an advocate and intermediary for the visible minorities. It works toward encouraging better race relations, increased understanding and awareness among our multicultural, multi-racial population through programmes of education directed at both the private and public sectors of the community. It is also focusing its efforts on the institutions of our society including educational systems, employment, government, media, legislation, police, social service agencies and human services, in order to reduce patterns of discrimination and inequality of opportunity which may exist within these institutions.

The work of the organization is carried out through working committees such as: Educational Institutions; Legislation; Media; Law Enforcement.

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## Education Equity

Race relations must be a central concern for all those professionally involved in education. Eliminating racism can no longer be seen as marginal. The response of all educators is to examine all aspects of their procedures, practices and provision that might discriminate, exclude or otherwise disadvantage racial minorities in terms of access to, and participation in, educational opportunities.

Another nice piece of rhetoric you might say because you have heard, read or said something similar a hundred times before! And you have just seen another report containing another 100 recommendations as to how the educational system can better serve minority needs. To paraphrase somebody else, it seems that never in the field of policy-making have so many recommendations been made with so little effect. It has become a platitude to comment on the system's avoidance and resistance to change and the patchy, ad-hoc, incremental progress that has been made.

Why should this be so when existing Canadian law demands the elimination of racial discrimination, and existing legislation and policies within the context of education demands that all students should enjoy equal educational opportunity so that they may develop as completely as possible their individual abilities and interests?

The leading article in this issue of *Currents* summarizes the principles of a race and ethnocultural equity policy that has been developed for the Ontario Ministry of Education. It is a comprehensive and important document. It is significant in that for the first time the Ministry of Education has moved beyond the racially inexplicit nature of policies and recommendations - of "deracialising" racism, to a direct acknowledgment that "present education itself is bound up with the origins, growth and consequences of racism." The proposed policy has therefore been developed within a context "that conscious and active anti-racist educational efforts are now necessary if all our students are to develop to their full human potential".

And yet while this document is extremely useful in outlining what these anti-racist educational efforts should be, it is clearly limiting the role of the Ontario Government and placing all the onus of responsibility on local Boards of Education. The Provincial role is to advise, to assist, to promote, and to serve as a catalyst. It is a persuasive rather than an obligatory position. Such passing of the buck is not good enough. It would appear that the Ministry of Education is abdicating its legislative mandate.

What is the potential of the Ministry of Education policy document serving as an agent of change in educational practice? While serving a useful starting point, policy statements are really of limited value in actually combatting racial inequality. Policy statements cannot in themselves function as change agents. General statements in themselves will be insufficient to ensure a positive response from Boards of Education that they will promote and effect changes in school practices.

The Ministry of Education should issue a lead in combatting racial inequality. As a coordinator of change, it should specify how it will respond if Boards of Education request further help, what action will be taken if Boards fail to comply, and how it will ensure that Boards have taken policy implementation seriously.

### Dynamics of Change

Change does not come about as a result of a rational, intellectual process of understanding. Nor does change occur as the result of the operation of an 'invisible hand' of organization dynamics. Implementation of policy must acknowledge the full complexity of the system it is attempting to change and locate itself within the context of some of the obstacles to its implementation. It is naive to ignore the institutional constraints and limits to reform or the prevailing professional ideologies, values and networks. While acknowledging national and international factors as enabling conditions that can precipitate change, the real impetus has

been and will continue to be *community* pressure. It is therefore misleading to denude the pursuit of education equity of any political dimension. Change is only precipitated by political imperatives. Does it matter whether the motivation to act is based on fear, preventive, moral panic, or altruism? Does it matter whether the response is based on attempts to appease, to defuse discontent, to manage a crisis, to repair the meritocratic credibility of schools, or to avoid separate educational institutions?

The point is, as one concerned parent has said, "A community cannot be passive and allow a racist education system to disadvantage our children".

Tim Rees



# The Development of a Policy on Race and Ethnocultural Equity

*Report of the Provincial Advisory Committee on Race Relations.*

The Ontario Ministry of Education sponsored a provincial conference in March, 1986 on the topic "Race and Ethnocultural Relations". In a letter welcoming participants, Premier David Peterson expressed the hope that the conference would "be a catalyst for all school boards to take a visible leadership role in actively developing and implementing a race relations policy."

At the conclusion of the conference, the Minister of Education asked school boards that have not adopted race relations policies to "very carefully assess the contemporary reality in which they now find themselves and to develop policies that they deem appropriate for their school, their board, their community." At the same time the Minister announced that a provincial advisory committee would be formed to provide input "so that the commitment to develop a generic provincial race relations policy that will serve as a model for all school boards in Ontario can be discharged."

The following excerpts from the Committee's Report describe the mission statements for each of the nine areas of concern identified. Within each of these areas the Report goes on to list a number of priorities which are intended to inform and facilitate for individual boards the identification of local priorities and the discussion and drafting of policy within the area of concern. While draft guidelines only, the principles contained in these mission statements provide a significant and far-reaching measure of the potential scope and scale of equity policy in Canada's educational systems.

## 1. Leadership

*The Ministry of Education recognizes that school boards must provide informed leadership at every level, if we are to achieve race and ethnocultural equity.*

The Ministry encourages those in positions of Board leadership to actively foster an environment of respect for the racial and ethnocultural plurality of Canadian society;

and to take the lead in the development of anti-racist education by involving all of the Board's diverse constituencies in the development of Race and Ethnocultural Equity Policies.

The role of school principals and administration is pivotal. So too is the visible leadership of trustees, superintendents, principals, and teachers, via the development of policies to eliminate racism in their own leadership selection processes.

## 2. School and Community Relations

*The Ministry of Education recognizes the capability of school boards to engage in constructive and open dialogue with parent and community groups, and thereby to increase co-operation and collaboration among home, school, and community.*

The Ministry encourages school boards to take affirmative steps to ensure the active participation of racial and ethnocultural minorities in the development of equitable educational policies and practices.

Just as the involvement of this wider community is essential in the development of each young person, so too it is essential in the process of identifying and eliminating barriers to the full and unrestricted involvement of all racial and ethnocultural minorities in our society. If schooling is to become reflective of a multicultural society, all racial and ethnocultural groups must be actively involved in shaping Ontario schools. The challenge of the coming years will be for school boards to provide leadership in valuing, promoting and increasing this active involvement.

## 3. Leadership

*The Ministry of Education recognizes the potential for all school boards to undertake and promote research on the impact of ethnicity, race, and racism on the successful education of all*

*students in their jurisdictions.*

The Ministry urges school boards to examine the research that has been undertaken about race relations and anti-racist education, as a prelude to giving appropriate weight to equity policy issues in any local studies.

Research in the field of anti-racist education is sparse. Two reasons for this seem apparent. First, racism is an issue most Canadians do not acknowledge, so its insidious societal effects do not receive the attention of academics, or of groups with the resources for such studies. A second reason for the paucity of research on anti-racist education has been the national focus on multiculturalism. Supported by legislative force and government funding, the focus on celebratory multiculturalism has taken precedence over the need for action to encounter racism. It is therefore now necessary to identify racism in current practices, to isolate it, and to deal with it constructively.

The Committee recognizes that school boards differ in the resources available for research activities. Boards with well-staffed research departments, those with a single research officer or with their research done externally on contract, and those that rely heavily on the reports of research done elsewhere together comprise a powerful network for learning that must be activated.

## 4. Curriculum

*The Ministry recognizes that much existing curriculum focuses on the achievements and experiences of Europeans, and that such curricula ill-prepare today's students to function effectively in multiracial Ontario.*

The Ministry encourages all school boards to develop and implement equity policy criteria to govern the creation of all curriculum guidelines, and the selection of all instructional material or resources by the board.



"Curriculum planning is a process that must be widely shared. Working within the boundaries of provincially and locally established purposes and priorities, those most aware of children's needs and communities' expectations — parents, teachers, principals, supervisory officials, as well as the children themselves — must be involved in the planning process [Ministry of Education, *The Formative Years*, 1975;2]."

Students must be able to analyse the historical and contemporary forces that contribute to racism in Canada. They must learn that racism and all forms of inequity will not be tolerated in Canadian society. In order to do so, they must learn what racism and inequity are, and how to recognize and deal with them.

If curricula are to be restructured to reflect the realities of multiracial/multicultural society and to demonstrate a commitment to equity, then guidelines for the restructuring process must explain how the often unconscious transmission of Eurocentric, social and economic norms and expectations to students takes place. These norms are so much a part of traditional schooling in a middle class Canadian context that they are seldom questioned and consciously examined.

This hidden curriculum promotes and sustains racism by omission and commission. An ethic of equity must permeate the explicit curriculum, or the negative influence noted here will continue.

## 5. Personnel Policies and Practices

*The Ministry recognizes that an effective policy on race and ethnocultural equity depends very much on the nature, quality, composition, and behaviour of a school board's personnel. Race equity in education can be best achieved when all members of a board's workforce understand the intent and provisions of the board's equity policy. Such policies will be best understood if they apply to the Board's own personnel policies and practices. The Ministry encourages all school boards in conjunction with their employees and*

*their school community to develop equitable criteria in the areas of employee evaluation, hiring and promotion, with a view to ensuring the removal of all institutional barriers to equal employment opportunity.*

In terms of recommendation 77 of the Special Parliamentary Committee on Participation of Visible Minorities in Canadian Society, "governments and school boards should introduce affirmative action programs to increase the number of racial/ethnocultural minorities in teaching and administrative positions."

Race and ethnocultural equity in this area will come with the recognition that schools with staff as racially diverse as our society is, with women and men in every area of employment, can have the edge in terms of the range and quality of the services they deliver. A policy to eradicate all forms of inequity from employment and promotion decisions is the crucial first step on this road.

## 6. Staff Development

*The Ministry of Education recognizes that the staff and trustees responsible for the educational development of the children and youth of Canada's multi-racial society need opportunities to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours, necessary for effectively combating individual and institutional racism.*

*The Ministry of Education encourages school boards to include criteria for appropriate staff training in the area of race and ethnocultural equity.*

Combating racism in schools requires the co-operation, active participation, and commitment of trustees and all staff. This includes teachers and librarians, principals, superintendents, directors, guidance counsellors, psychologists, social workers, secretarial staff, nurses, custodial staff, bus drivers, crossing guards, cafeteria personnel/lunchroom supervisors, educational assistants, and hall supervisors.

Staff training in anti-racist education, can raise staff sensitivity to manifestations of racism and to its effects. This heightened awareness can better enable them to work to change discriminatory behaviours, institutional practices and bias that impact nega-

tively on the learning process.

## 7. Assessment and Placement

*The Ministry of Education recognizes that while it is ministry policy that all students should enjoy equal opportunity to develop their individual abilities and interests, concern is being expressed that young people from certain racial and/or ethnocultural groups are being streamed into inappropriate programs.*

*The Ministry of Education encourages all school boards to put policies in place to monitor the assessment and placement of children, facilitate the involvement of parents in this process and assess the equity of student services.*

Research reveals that many standardized tests (achievement, aptitude and psychological) are racially and culturally biased. Assessments which rely heavily on the results of these tests contribute to an accumulation of information about minority children that is often invalid and prejudicial. Use of such data can result in misconceptions about students' capabilities and lead to inappropriate programming. It is critical that assessment procedures reflect life and cultural experiences of children from racial and ethnocultural minorities.

Recent research has found a correlation between cultural diversity and cognitive styles. Children are not homogeneous in their affective and cognitive responses to the environment. However, the majority of teachers and other personnel interacting with students have been trained in the assumptions and values of the dominant culture. They may assume that their own cognitive style and frame of affective and values reference are the only legitimate ones, rather than some of many in a galaxy of ways of thinking.

Anti-racist assessment allows every student to demonstrate personal achievement and abilities in relation to the goals of the educational system, while evaluating how well the system is meeting the needs of every student.

## 8. Support Services in Guidance

*The Ministry of Education recognizes that because counsellors play a critical role in the assessment and placement*



*of students, educational planning, and career orientation and planning, guidance counsellors can exercise a powerful role in identifying racism, helping to dismantle discriminatory barriers, and providing proactive strategies to ensure that racial and ethnocultural minority students achieve their full potential.*

*The Ministry of Education encourages all school boards to promote the development of cross-cultural counselling skills, and to develop equity policy criteria for the review of streaming, assessment, career guidance, and placement.*

Guidance and counselling is an area of great importance because it provides students with the opportunities to:

- know and appreciate themselves;
- relate effectively to others;
- develop appropriate educational plans;
- explore a range of career alternatives.

## 9. Racial/Ethnocultural Harassment

*The Ministry of Education believes that it is the responsibility of every school board in Ontario to condemn*

*and refuse to tolerate any racial/ethnocultural harassment perpetrated by anyone in schools, whether it be intended or unintended.*

*The Ministry urges all school boards to draft policies which enable any constituent of the board to deal decisively and quickly with any incident of racial/ethnocultural harassment.*

Racial/ethnocultural harassment involves verbal or physical interactions which express negative attitudes, derogation, and/or hate for a person or persons based on their race, skin colour, ethnicity, language or religion. Racial/ethnocultural harassment in schools can involve students, teaching and non-teaching staff, administrators, trustees, others contracted by the board, and visitors to school premises, or combinations of any of these groups. Whether deliberate or unconscious, racial/ethnocultural harassment is likely to cause hurt, humiliation, shame, and/or anger. Such incidents are inimical to the healthy positive environment necessary in any school if all children are to enjoy equal educational opportunity and if all adults are

to enjoy equal employment opportunity.

Racial/ethnocultural harassment in schools is manifested in racist name-calling, jokes and slurs, graffiti, insults, threats, discourteous treatment, intimidation, and written or physical abuse. Such harassment may be of a subtle nature or it may be overt. In all cases it is the responsibility of the school system (a) to take an immediate and consistent stand in response to such behaviours, and (b) to make it known that such socially disruptive and psychologically destructive incidents will not be tolerated within the system.

# Affirmative Action in Education

## Indian/Native Education in Saskatchewan

Based upon international documents to which Canada is a signator, and based upon national and provincial legislation, there is a legal, as well as moral, responsibility on Canadian society to develop an education system that provides equal benefit to all members. This is the mandate within which legislators, human rights commissions, boards of education, teachers and parents must operate.

Throughout 1985, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission undertook an extensive process of consultation and research\* to address the concern that students of Indian ancestry are not receiving equal benefit from the education system.

In addressing this concern, the

Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission utilised both the terminology and technology of affirmative action, acknowledging that it is the most comprehensive strategy yet developed to counteract and eliminate systemic discrimination. Affirmative action is a method for identifying and eliminating barriers, and for assisting those groups of people who have suffered the effects of past discrimination to achieve equality in our educational systems.

### THE GOAL: EQUALITY

What is equality? There are two main approaches relevant to the educational system:

- Equality of opportunity
- Equality of results

Equality of opportunity is likened to identical treatment. If one treats every individual the same then that person has had equal opportunity or identical treatment.

Equality of results implies that one be given equal opportunity, but in addition to that, a system or institution will be looked at to determine whether on a proportionate basis a minority group has achieved the expected proportionate representation. In the education system context, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission asked whether the percentage of students of

\*This article is excerpted from the results of this process "Education Equity: A Report on Indian/Native Education in Saskatchewan." Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.



Indian ancestry graduating from the education system has been the same as the percentage of students of Indian ancestry who entered the system. They also asked if the percentage of students of Indian ancestry graduating from the system has been the same as the percentage of persons of Indian ancestry in society. If the answer to the last two questions is no, one is then in a position to say that the education system is not producing an equality of results insofar as persons of Indian ancestry are not graduating from the system in the proportionate representation that might be expected. The causes of this disparity of results may be numerous and may encompass all aspects of our society. However, in attempting to address this disparity, it is essential to look first to the education system itself to ascertain whether any barriers have been unwittingly built into that system which may be contributing to the inequality of results.

### AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The fact that many social traditions have had an adverse impact on whole groups of people, the fact that these traditions remain embedded in the normal operations of the education system and continue to have a discriminatory effect, clearly demonstrates the need for affirmative action if these groups are to enjoy in fact the equality which the law promises.

There are two basic reasons for the development of affirmative action programs. First many education systems, through their normal operations have inadvertent discriminatory effects, and they therefore perpetuate historical patterns of disadvantage for racial minorities. The fact that these discriminatory effects are unintended and often result from seemingly neutral practices does not in any way lessen the need to identify these practices and alter them where that is possible.

Second, because of historical patterns of discrimination and disadvantage, some groups within our society are far behind and cannot compete on an equal footing for available opportunities in education.

In other words, for the groups that are disadvantaged there are two problems. Those that are already qualified

for different or better opportunities are often barred from them by systemic practices which have inadvertent discriminatory effects. And those that are not already qualified or eligible for different or better opportunities need extra assistance to overcome the historical patterns of discrimination and disadvantage that have been placed in their path.

To address these two problems, affirmative action programs have two major components: the elimination of systemic practices which act as barriers, and the establishment of special measures within education systems to assist disadvantaged groups to overcome the effects of past practices.

Instituting either one of these components without the other will not be sufficient. The elimination of systemic barriers will bring neutrality to education systems but simply neutrality is not enough. Certainly the elimination of these barriers will assist those individuals in the disadvantaged groups in taking advantage of previously unavailable opportunities. However, such a situation will not help those who are not qualified because of the disadvantage they have experienced.

On the other hand, providing special measures to assist the members of disadvantaged groups will not in and of itself eliminate systemic practices which act as barriers. If these barriers are not eliminated, the same exclusionary factors will be in place when the special measures are dropped. Consequently, both components are necessary for effective affirmative action programs.

'Systemic barriers' have been defined as those practices or procedures which are normal and look neutral but which have discriminatory or exclusionary effects. An example in the field of education is the sex stereotyping of occupations in schoolbooks and course materials and the lack of role models in fields or positions which are not traditional to the child's sex. The effect of these indirect practices has been the continued streaming of boys and girls into those disciplines and occupations that are traditional to their sex.

Affirmative action programs are designed to identify and remove these kinds of inadvertent and systemic practices. They function to identify

needs and create those special measures which will speed access to opportunities for members of disadvantaged groups. Goals and timetables provide a planning and measuring structure.

### EQUAL BENEFIT

Equal benefit means that persons of a group or class are not only given equal opportunity to enter into a system, but that in addition, the system or institution will be examined to determine whether the minority group has achieved the expected proportionate representation. This approach concentrates on determining whether the results are fair. Based upon graduation rates and drop-out rates of person of Indian ancestry, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission concluded that "there can be absolutely no doubt that persons of Indian ancestry are not receiving equal benefits from the education system . . . the disparity in benefits to persons of Indian ancestry from our education system is tantamount to a crisis."

### EDUCATION EQUITY

In response to this crisis the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission developed the following affirmative action plan, which, in acknowledging the semantic problems many have with that phrase, they called "Education Equity":

- I. Every school board in the Province of Saskatchewan whose enrollment of students of Indian ancestry exceeds 5% should immediately apply for approval, pursuant to Section 47 of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. The Commission would consider reasonable, a plan of action for education equity which would have as its components the following:

1. A statement of the number of students of Indian ancestry enrolled with the Board of Education at the time of the application for approval;
2. A plan to hire over the next ten years, qualified teachers of Indian ancestry so that at the end of the ten year period the percentage of teachers of Indian ancestry employed by the Board of Education



will equal the percentage of students of Indian ancestry enrolled in the school division, or will equal 9.6% of the teaching staff or will equal a percentage of the teaching staff to be approved by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission;

3. A plan by the Board of Education to annually, over the ten year period, fill a percentage of its vacancies of teaching positions with qualified teachers of Indian ancestry equal to the percentage of students of Indian ancestry enrolled in the school division or 9.6% of the vacancies in teaching positions for that year, or a percentage of vacancies in teaching positions for that year to be approved by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission;
4. A plan to review its recruiting and hiring practices to determine whether such practices have any barriers to the recruitment or hiring of teachers of Indian ancestry within five years from the approval of the program;
5. A plan to actively recruit teachers of Indian ancestry from the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Regina, and other teacher training programs;
6. A commitment that it will work closely with teachers employed by it, in designing and implementing "education equity" and establish a joint committee of representatives from both the administration and the teachers' associations in the division to design and implement such a program;
7. A plan to provide cross-cultural training on a regular basis for the teachers employed by it;
8. A plan to increase and improve the participation of parents of Indian ancestry in the school system.

## II. The Department of Education should:

1. Make available the financial resources from the education Development Fund required by the Boards of Education to implement a program of education equity;
2. Implement the recommendations

contained in the "Directions" report and the "Five Year Action Plan for Native Curriculum Development";

3. Continue to fund and, where possible, increase funding to programs established for the training of qualified teachers of persons of Indian ancestry;
4. Develop policies, guidelines, and funding for alternate forms of education, including alternate programs for students of Indian ancestry, provided students of Indian ancestry have freedom of choice to enter or leave the alternate program and return to, or stay in, the regular school system.

## III. Parents of Indian ancestry should:

1. Actively seek positions on Boards of Education;
2. Where they reside on reserves, utilize the provisions of the *Education Act* to have their reserve designated as sub-divisions (Section 27 (2) (b) or have a trustee appointed to the district board of trustees (124(1.1)).

IV. The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission will promote and encourage Boards of Education in the Province of Saskatchewan to voluntarily develop programs for education equity, but if a Board of Education has not applied for approval for its program of education equity by the 1st day of December, 1986, the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission will consider applications under Section 47 of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*, requesting it to order a program of education equity. Under Section 47 of the code, any person can make an application requesting the Commission to order a program. If such an application is made, the Commission, in exercising its discretion to order a program under section 47 of the Code, will consider, among other things, the following:

1. The percentage of parents of Indian ancestry resident in the School Division who support the application;
2. The percentage of non-native parents in the School Division

who support the application;

3. The percentage of teachers employed in the School Division who support the application;
4. The number of individual school trustees on the Board of Education who support the application;
5. The number of interested organizations operating in the School Division that support the application;
6. The percentage of students of Indian ancestry enrolled in the School Division;
7. The percentage of teachers of Indian ancestry employed in the School Division;
8. The initiatives already undertaken by the Board of Education to implement education equity.



## From Equality of Opportunity to Equality of Results

E. N. McKeown

*The following article is excerpted from the annual "State of the System" remarks given by Dr. McKeown, the Toronto Board's Director of Education on September 3, 1987. In his comments, Dr. McKeown called on senior staff to develop action plans for their Divisions and Departments. These plans, he said, should be S.M.A.R.T. That is, specific, measurable and manageable, appropriate, realistic and timebound.*

Working to support and *live* our race relations policy in everyday practice must continue to be our goal as a system. Achievement of this goal requires committed action on the part of all of us, immediately and over the long term. For me, the work to realize this goal is not something in addition to, or apart from, everything else we do. Nor is it something for which only the Race Relations Advisor and the Curriculum Advisor on Race Relations and Multiculturalism are responsible. Living the policy in our daily practice means that all of us take it into conscious consideration in the decisions that we make in all areas of our work, be it curriculum, assessment and placement of students, reporting to parents, extra-curricular activities, delivery of support services, or selection and promotion.

I believe that the full implementation of the race relations policy in personnel matters goes hand in hand with the implementation of the policy in other areas. We must continue to emphasize excellence and ability as the most important criteria for selection and promotion. I firmly believe that there are people in every racial and ethnocultural group who meet these criteria. By giving them increased access to our workforce, we provide ourselves with a rich and diverse human resource, and that can only benefit us as we continue our commitment to making race relations an integral part of our everyday practice.

We are leaders in the province in

terms of the number of visible minorities that we employ in our system. In 1986, approximately 25% of the new teachers and 10% of the administrative staff we hired were from visible minority backgrounds. Close to 10% of the promotions for administrative staff in that year also went to visible minority employees. I am concerned, however, that our performance was not uniformly good across the Board. As a system committed to our Race Relations and Equal Opportunity policies, we cannot accept this situation. I have, therefore, decided to meet with the supervisory officers and administrative department heads to review the findings of the various workforce related studies that the Research staff has undertaken. I expect that following this review, these officials will meet with their own groups to develop their own plans of action that they will implement within a specific timeframe. The purpose of these action plans will be to achieve realistic and real improvements on our performance so far.

I realize that people need very specific skills and knowledge if they are to be held responsible for carrying out the race relations policy and I am committed to the continued availability of training programs needed by staff to do an effective job.

I believe that those of us who are in positions of leadership particularly need this kind of support.

There is no question but that ours is an ambitious policy. The review of our success in its implementation has

clearly shown that we have accomplished a great deal in many areas generally, and especially in respect to curriculum, in-service of staff and personnel practices. The information received from schools and administrative departments for the first annual Race Relations Assembly held on June 13 of last year reveals that an impressive range of activities is going on throughout the system.

A recent newspaper article said, "The Toronto Board is widely acknowledged as being at the forefront of fighting racism in schools". I believe that we can be proud of our record but we must continue to take every necessary step to ensure that the racial and ethnocultural diversity of our community is reflected right across the curriculum and throughout the entire system.



## *Anti-Racist Education*

Carol Tator

Public perceptions have changed in recent years as a result of growing evidence that racial discrimination is systemic, and that it is deeply entrenched within the policies and practices of educational institutions. In 1977, Daniel Hill publicly declared in a report on Human rights in Canada, that racial discrimination is written on the daily agenda of every Black, Asian and native pupil (CLC, 1977). In 1980, the Attorney General of the Province of Ontario attempted to draw an important distinction between the issue of multiculturalism versus racism. In a public address he stated that: "cultural heritage is vital to the long term viability of our chosen society, but it cannot offer immediate solutions to, nor amelioration of the devastating consequences of the racism which lies amongst us."

In 1982, Moodley's research among minority parents in B.C. clearly showed, "that there is a preference for competence which overrides a concern for heritage." She stated, "while knowledge of other cultures is important for teachers . . . it is clearly less important than the concern about race issues and how racism permeates society and the school . . ." In a growing number of boards of education in the 80's, parents and spokespersons from community organizations argued eloquently that the fundamental issues at stake were not so much cultural as racial; not lifestyles but lifechances; not heritages but competence; not diversity but disparity; not prejudice but discrimination.

Few attempted to deny the importance and positive values of multicultural initiatives taken within some educational systems. However, as one parent stated in the foreword to the Toronto Board of Education's policy on race relations: "The issues facing the colour of my skin are more pressing than those facing my culture." Colour differences could no longer be ignored. A Quebec Human Rights

educator put it this way: "Pretending to be colour-blind in the face of the hardships encountered by Asian, Native and Black youngsters and professing not to perceive any difference in treatment, is still tantamount to sidestepping the problem." (Thornhill)

If then, racism is the malady, anti-racist education is the primary antidote. The concept of anti-racist education is one which has been widely accepted in Great Britain, the United States and New Zealand for more than a decade and more recently is gaining acceptance in Canada.

The goal of anti-racist education is to change institutional, organizational policies and practices which have a discriminatory impact; and to change individual behaviours and attitudes that reinforce racism. The primary thrust however is on behaviour and practice rather than perceptions and attitudes. Anti-racist education seeks to prepare all children to learn to live and work in a society where racial prejudice and discrimination has historically been a fact of life for visible minorities.

What are some of the critical areas of school life which race relations policies and a philosophy of anti-racist education are designed to tackle?

### **Curriculum**

First, and perhaps foremost, is the development and implementation of an anti-racist, multicultural curriculum. Race relations policies should view curriculum as an inclusive term which encompasses all the experiences of the students for which the school is responsible. Curriculum therefore must reflect and respond to the needs and life experiences of students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. It must provide opportunities through which students acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to realize their own potential. Curriculum within an anti-racist educational context enables students to deal with the diver-

sity of human ideas, achievement and experiences so they learn to value the thoughts and work and contributions of individuals and groups with an unprejudiced understanding. As Barbara Thomas suggests in an article in *Currents* (Vol. 2, No. 3):

"Anti-racist curriculum means searching out a broad range of literature, poetry, music, art, oral history and biographies; it means teaching children about how people have tried to change things which are wrong and unjust and nurturing a respect for the courage and skills it takes to do this.

"The process of learning should lead students to consider as a matter of course what biases and assumptions are reflected in the treatment of a topic, in terms of the questions that are asked, the range of perspectives brought to bear, the conclusions drawn and the questions which remain."

Within curriculum, issues which continue to arouse particular interest and concern include the recognition of heritage language and dialects as a legitimate communications system which should be taught within the school curriculum. Secondly, the cooperative role of the school working with staff, parents, and community to develop new curriculum materials and resources. Similarly, input from the community is viewed as a critical component in establishing the accuracy, authenticity and equity in the treatment of non-white and ethnic groups in textbooks and other learning materials. Having guidelines and procedures to monitor for bias and stereotyping in the depiction of groups' histories, cultures, achievements and experiences, is essential. In dealing with bias, it is important to stress the fact that it is a function of omission as well as commission; thus requiring the development of a curriculum that touches more broadly and sensitively emerging realities.

Based on the premise that anti-racist education should permeate the



curriculum and affect all learning experiences, the following discussion illustrates how an integrative approach to anti-racist education could be applied to most or all subjects within the school curriculum.

The teaching of literature at all levels is a powerful force in allowing children to enter a world of experiences imagined by writers from a wide spectrum of diverse cultures who speak with varying voices. The work of novelists and poets who reflect the history and experiences of non-western cultures is a vital component of an anti-racist, multicultural curriculum. While Shakespeare, Twain and Browning have an important place in the curriculum, so too should writers such as Gordimer, Naipaul and Sojinka. As well, major Canadian novelists and poets should be a critical component of the English curriculum. Canada today, has deep reservoirs of writers whose creativity is, to some extent, influenced and shaped by their own unique cultural experiences and their relationship to the dominant culture. The voices of Joy Kogawa, Austin Clarke and Bharti Mukherjee deserve also to be heard.

The issue of bias in the classics has become a source of deep concern within various community and parents' groups. There is increasing evidence that the reading of these classics without dealing with their racism does untold damage to both children of minority groups who are singled out by these words. Moreover their biases influence the perceptions and attitudes of white students. The Council on Interracial Books in analyzing *Huckleberry Finn* comments, "Whatever the purpose and affect of the term 'nigger' for Twain's original audience, its appearance today tends to reinforce racism, inducing embarrassment and anger for Blacks and feelings of superiority and/or acts of harassment by Whites" (*Interracial Books for Children*). Therefore, concludes the NAACP in the U.S., "Before *Huckleberry Finn* is put on the reading list, we ask that teachers be given the opportunity to increase their insight into the nature and pervasiveness of racism in the past and present society."

The history curriculum in schools also needs to be reassessed in terms of the ethnocentric bias which has so dominated the teaching of this subject in Canadian classrooms. A willingness to look beyond the study of only Canadian, American or European history is the first step. Furthermore, the resource materials and curriculum which are used for the study of Canadian history in particular, requires a re-examination in order to eliminate the biases and address the omissions. As Lee points out, "We need to remember that history by and large is the history of a particular group of people in the society arising from their experience, their point of view. And history, generally speaking, has been the history of men, particularly the history of white men."

The Regina Public School Board has taken a positive step forward in this direction by removing at least three Canadian history textbooks from school libraries which depict Native Canadians as savage, barbaric and merciless killers. The chairman of the Regina Indian & Native Education Council says in reference to these teaching materials: "It's poisonous material and constitutes hate literature."

While the mathematics curriculum may not seem like an obvious focus for developing an anti-racist multicultural curriculum, it too can be used to heighten the awareness of students as to the significant contributions of other cultures to the development of this discipline. For example, studying some of the different ways in which diverse cultures count is a creative way of informing students about the mathematical riches of other cultures as well as increasing knowledge and skills. The use of relevant "live data" is another approach to increasing the interest of students as well as broadening their cultural horizons. There is clearly some educational benefit in studying the statistics of world population and the distribution of wealth, particularly the differentials between so called developed countries and the Third World. In one board of education's staff development workshops for math teachers in Toronto, they are encouraged to use statistics and graphs

relating to the success rate of discrimination complaints to the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

In the same way, the science, social science and geography curriculum can be used to further the concepts underlying anti-racist education. For example, the question of race itself and its alleged links with intelligence, the issue of population control, disease and health care, food production and pollution, are all relevant and can be used to help students understand the many different perspectives that exist concerning these issues. Such viewpoints vary both between and within countries and are affected by gender, age and economic condition as well as cultural, sociological and political circumstances. Young people urgently need to be helped towards an understanding of such differences and the conflicts which may rise from them, since they often relate to an inequitable distribution of power and therefore access to society's and the world's resources. (Craft and Bosdell)

One of the most important functions of anti-racist education is to identify and help illuminate the whole area of the "hidden" curriculum. The "hidden" curriculum dramatically affects the entire 'ethos' of a school. School calendars, celebrations, food services, athletics, assemblies, concerts, bulletin boards, hallway displays, school libraries, guidance offices all communicate powerful messages to students and staff about the norms, expectations and values of the school.

### Assessment and Placement

In the last five years there has been growing concern about assessment and placement procedures that affect or limit the educational opportunity of minority group children. Black parents in particular have expressed a sense of alarm over the disproportionate numbers of their children being placed in basic level programmes and vocational schools. One study done by the Toronto Board of Education provided the statistics which demonstrated the crisis faces by black children in one system. Only 36% of black students are enrolled in courses that would allow them to enter university compared to 54% of all students (TBE, 1983). In the



North York Board of Education, a similar study of West-Indian born students revealed that 24.2% were in advanced courses in 1984, compared to 55.6% for the general secondary school population, 30.5% were in basic, vocational courses compared to only 13.6% of the general population.

By Grade 9, 35% of black students, both Canadian born and immigrant will be deemed to need special education designed for slow learners, according to an independent research by Hilroy Thomas, Director of the Centre for Achievement which provides after school remedial help.

Community groups and organizations consistently raised concern about streaming to the Parliamentary Task Force on the Participation of Visible Minorities in Canadian Society.

"The practice of streaming... is not uncommon and is perceived as an easy out for school systems that used culturally bound texts, counselling strategies and assumptions to make decisions about students' education and thereby their lives. Many groups indicated their view that the use of traditional texts of intellectual assessment with newly arrived immigrant students, or with students whose native tongue is not English is nothing short of institutional racism." (Currents)

A number of recent studies including one done by Ron Samuda have examined formal testing procedures and have found that many standardized tests (achievement, aptitude and psychological) have built in racial and cultural biases. Assessments which rely heavily on the results of these tests contribute to the accumulation of information about racial minority children that is often invalid, misleading and results in inappropriate programming and misconceptions about their capabilities.

Recent research has also found a correlation between cultural diversity and cognitive styles of learning. Children demonstrate a wide range of affective and cognitive responses to their environment. However, the majority of teachers and other school personnel have been trained in the assumptions and values of the dominant culture. This fact can clearly have a significant influence on educators'

assessments of racial minority students' abilities. Informal and culturally biased assumptions and assessments by teachers, guidance counsellors and others often provides one more link in the chain that prevents many non-white children from achieving their full potential.

### School Community Relations

Historically there has existed in educational institutions the deeply entrenched notion that neither parents nor the community had any role to play in the educational process. The assumption that parents' duties and responsibilities cease at the school gate, has led to a sense of isolation and alienation experienced particularly keenly by non-white parents. Not only do parents frequently feel excluded from the school, there is a widely held view that they are kept uninformed about decisions which affect the educational well-being of their children.

An anti-racist educational approach to this problem is to create programmes and initiatives which promote a heightened sense of involvement on the part of both parents and the community in the education of their children. The principle underlying this objective is that the education of children is best achieved through a process of co-operation and partnership between the home, school and community. The meaningful involvement of these various constituencies can positively affect all areas of school life. At the same time, there is little doubt that many educators feel concerned about this kind of open, accountable and collaborative relationship. They fear it will reduce their independence and autonomy, and diminish their professional status. Thus, there needs to be careful preparatory work with educators in order to reassure them that their professionalism will be more surely founded, recognized and acclaimed when they engage in an equal relationship or partnership with parents and the wider community across the range of issues which are of mutual concern.

### Staff Development

Anti-racist education cannot become a reality without appropriate training

for all staff. Combatting racism in schools requires the cooperation, active participation and commitment of all those who are responsible for the education of children. This includes teachers and librarians, principals, superintendents, directors, guidance counsellors, psychologists, social workers, secretarial staff, nurses, custodial staff, bus drivers, educational assistants, cafeteria personnel, etc.

Staff development should focus on providing opportunities to acquire knowledge, skills and resources which will assist participants in moving ahead on a number of levels: personal, working group and institutional level of the total organization. Race relations training provides a context for new personal norms and values to be developed and reinforced. Training provides an opportunity to consider both individual attitudes towards one's own culture and the culture of others; and to consider one's biases whether filtered through race, class, gender or linguistic screens.

Training programmes must help staff acquire skills in dealing with the many inequitable institutional practices that place minorities at a disadvantage in schools and classrooms including: handling of racist incidents, identifying and counteracting bias and stereotyping in textbooks and other materials, identifying and incorporating new multiracial and multicultural teaching resources and finally strengthening the relationship between school and home and community.

Because system-wide staff development is such an enormous task, in large school boards, involving hundreds of personnel, some system of prioritizing must be established. The experience of boards which have had race relations policies for a number of years suggests the importance of ensuring the training of senior staff as an initial target group. The role of school principals and administrators is central. So too is the visible leadership of trustees and superintendents. The commitment of senior staff can go a long way in creating a supportive environment for the training of teachers and other personnel.

Staff development must of course be made available to teachers. Because



the teacher is the most important variable in the child's learning environment, teachers must be given the competence to function in a multiracial classroom. It is well established in extensive research in Great Britain and the U.S. that teachers' attitudes and expectations have a profound influence on the academic performance of all children. But this especially holds true for minority students.

Enid Lee, in her role as race relations consultant for the North York Board of Education, makes the point that one of the most difficult problems is the failure among educators to recognize their own cultural biases. There is great attachment to the concept of colour-blindness among professionals, teachers and other educators who frequently contend that they operate on the principle that all children are the same and should be treated the same. Many would argue that this is a most dubious premise upon which to operate. By denying racial differences, educators are re-

fusing to recognize the child's full range of social experiences and history which includes membership in a racial or cultural group as well as the possibility of painful episodes of discrimination. (Lee)

One final concern around training is the fact that while in-service training is becoming more accepted, pre-service training in race relations within faculties of education is almost non-existent. While there have been some sporadic attempts to include multiculturalism as a curriculum course, the context is generally woefully inadequate in preparing teachers to deal with the challenge of institutionalized racism inherent in many of the school policies and practices.

A further issue addressed by most race relations policies and critical in the achievement of anti-racist educators is fair hiring, evaluation and promotion practices. Pro-active measures must be introduced into the system which will ensure that both overt and covert biases and barriers are removed. While

many Boards of education are beginning to recognize the importance of this issue in principle and in policy statements, few across Canada have attempted to introduce affirmative action or employment equity measures which will bring about race equity within the system. In order to overcome the resistance to change, this fundamental area of the educational institution — personnel departments within boards — need to develop in co-operation with employee associations, federations and unions, affirmative action policies with goals and timetables. Until this happens, not only will minorities suffer from lack of access to job opportunities, but minority children will continue to suffer from an absence of role models.

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## **CURRENTS**

### **READINGS IN RACE RELATIONS**

### **BACK ISSUES**

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>1. Volume 1, No. 2 (Spring 1983)<br/>Minorities in the Media ..... \$6.00</p> <p>2. Volume 1, No. 3 (Summer/Fall 1983)<br/>Human Rights in B.C.; Race Relations Training ..... \$6.00</p> <p>3. Volume 1, No. 4 (Winter 1983/84)<br/>Visible Minority Women ..... \$6.00</p> <p>4. Volume 2, No. 1 (Spring 1984)<br/>Visible Minorities: Invisible (A Content Analysis of Submissions to the Special Committee on the Participation of Visible Minorities in Canadian Society ..... \$7.50</p> | <p>5. Volume 2, No. 2 (Summer 1984)<br/>Advocacy and the Media ..... \$6.00</p> <p>6. Volume 2, No. 3 (Fall 1984)<br/>"The Fourth R?" Racism and Education ..... \$6.00</p> <p>7. Volume 2, No. 4 (Winter 1984/85)<br/>Discrimination in Employment ..... \$6.00</p> <p>8. Volume 3, No. 1 (Spring 1985)<br/>Race Relations and Municipal Government ..... \$6.00</p> <p>9. Volume 3, No. 2 (Summer 1985)<br/>Policing in a Multiracial Society ..... \$6.00</p> | <p>10. Volume 3, No. 3 (Spring 1986)<br/>Racism in the Press ... \$6.00</p> <p>11. Volume 3, No. 4 (Summer 1986)<br/>Apartheid in Canada and S. Africa ..... \$6.00</p> <p>12. Volume 4, No. 1 (Fall 1986/Winter 1987)<br/>Immigration and Racism ..... \$6.00</p> <p>13. Volume 4, No. 2 (Spring 1987)<br/>Native People and Racism</p> <p>14. Volume 4, No. 3 (Summer 1987)<br/>Access to Services .... \$6.00</p> |
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# *Race Relations Training for School Administrators and Employees: An Adult Education Model*

Alok Mukherjee and  
Elaine Cooper

In 1985, the Toronto Board of Education decided to introduce a Race Relations training program as a major component of its efforts to enhance the effectiveness of its Equal Opportunity and Race Relations policies. The program was two-fold. On one hand, all senior managers were to receive training designed to increase their effectiveness in managing a multi-racial workforce. Participants were to include all principals, heads of non-teaching departments, and supervisory officers. On the other hand, racial minority employees (teaching and non-teaching) interested in and qualified for seeking promotions were to be provided with training that made them better prepared to compete for promotional opportunities. The training of senior managers was carried out during October 1986–February 1987. Training for employees was started in May 1985. So far, four groups of racial minorities have participated.

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

A number of assumptions informed the introduction of the program. These were:

1. The Toronto Board of Education cares about its staff.
2. The culture of the Toronto Board of Education is organic and open, and believes in accountability. Thus when the racial minority staff and community indicated that there was a discrepancy between belief and practice, senior managers responded with an extensive training program.
3. Change comes through education.
4. It is possible to change behaviour and attitudes through education and experiential learning.

The following assumptions were taken into account in designing the

program:

1. Adult learning programs are most useful and effective when developed in consultation with the learners.
2. Adults are motivated to learn as they develop needs and interests that learning will satisfy. They learn most rapidly those things which meet their perceived needs.
3. Adults need to utilize their experiences and must be actively involved in the learning experience. Therefore, they learn best by doing.
4. Adults have a deep need to be self-directing and to have some control over the direction of learning. In this way the learning is maximized.
5. Adult learning requires that goals must be clear.
6. Error is part of the adult learning process.

## **FEATURES**

### **Participation**

One part of the program was directed towards all senior managers, teaching as well as non-teaching. They were required to attend, the only option being the choice of dates. All eligible participants were provided with a series of dates spread over a year and a half so that they could select the ones most convenient.

The other part of the program was for racial minority employees. This included two separate activities, one entitled "Training Program for Visible Minority Teachers" and the other called "On Being a Woman and a Non-White: Double Handicap?" As the titles suggest, the first was open to teaching staff while the second was

intended for racial minority women employees. Attendance in these was voluntary. Participants either decided on their own to attend or they were identified and encouraged by their supervisors.

### **The Delivery Process**

The training for senior managers was designed and delivered with the active involvement of a Reference Group chaired by the Associate Director of Education-Personnel.<sup>1</sup> The group included one representative of each of the management constituencies in addition to the Board's Career Development Officer, the Race Relations Advisor and two Superintendents of Personnel.<sup>2</sup>

The two training programs were offered in approximately the same time period, with data from one group being shared with the other.

Participants' experiences were a key feature of the design. In the case of the managers, these were generated and processed through a structured experiential exercise and actual case studies. The personnel experiences of the employees were brought out through a combination of one on one interviews and group discussions.

The training for senior managers was facilitated by the Race Relations Advisor, an outside consultant and a member of the Reference Group. The training for employees was facilitated by the Race Relations Advisor, the Affirmative Action Advisor (in the case of the program for women employees) and an outside consultant.

Resource persons for the managers' program included senior Board staff, the President of Metro Toronto's Urban Alliance on Race Relations and a senior staff of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Senior staff of the



Board, white and non-white, served as resource persons for the employee programs. They served as role models and provided information on preparing for promotion.

## **Design**

### **Length of Program**

Training for employees included 6-8 evening sessions of three hours' duration. The groups met once a week. In addition, there was a final full-day session held on a Saturday. Training for senior managers, on the other hand, was conducted over a day and a half.

### **Number of Programs**

Eight day and a half long sessions were organized for managers. These were preceded by two pilot sessions. The eight subsequent sessions were spread over a year and a half allowing the participants to select the dates most convenient to them. However, participants were expected to attend one entire day and a half long session.

A total of four programs were conducted for racial minority employees. These included two for teachers and two for women.

### **Number of Participants**

Participation in the managers' training sessions varied considerably. The smallest session was attended by eight people while the largest group consisted of twenty four participants. The average size of a group, including the two pilot groups, was eighteen. Thus, a total of one hundred eighty managers attended the program.

Each of the four employee programs was attended by twelve to fifteen participants. In all, fifty five people attended the four programs. They included teachers, department heads in secondary schools, administrative assistants, secretaries and Social Work staff.

## **Setting**

The ten sessions for managers were held outside the Board premises. One was organized as a retreat. Sites were chosen in different geographic locations to enable participants to select a setting most convenient to them.

The sessions for employees were held partly outside the Board premises

and partly at the Board. One of the groups went to a retreat for its final full day.

## **Stated Outcomes**

The stated outcomes of the Race Relations training for managers included the behavioural skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to manage a multiracial and multicultural environment. The stated outcomes of the program for racial minority employees were enhanced behavioural skills as well as knowledge and understanding required to successfully move within the system. However, in both cases, there were several serendipitous outcomes which had not been foreseen. These will be described in the discussion of the program.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Reference Group**

A formally constituted Reference Group to design and assist in the delivery of the program was used for training the managers. The group was spearheaded by the Superintendent of the Board's Personnel Division and its composition was decided by her in consultation with the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel (Staff Development), the Assistant Superintendent of Personnel (Teaching), the Career Development Officer and the Race Relations Advisor. The Reference Group consisted of these five individuals plus five others representing the elementary and secondary school principals, the non-teaching department heads, and the supervisory officers. Three members of the group were racial minorities.

The Reference Group, as initially conceived, had a consultative function. Its members had three tasks:

- a. To refine the objectives for a Race Relations training program for managers;
- b. To develop a viable design for a pilot, including length of program, its components and the method of delivering information; and,
- c. To liaise with their constituencies and report back to the Reference Group.

After the delivery of two pilot workshops and the consideration of feedback from the participants,

this ad hoc committee assumed two additional responsibilities:

- d. To develop the design of a program for all senior managers; and,
- e. To actively assist in the delivery of the program.

## **Design Features**

### **Managers' Training**

The design of the program for managers was laid on by the Reference Group. In order to meet the stated outcomes, the following considerations were taken into account in the design:

- a. It had to present concrete data regarding the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the external and internal trends with respect to Race Relations issues.
- b. It had to provide an opportunity for managers to examine their own beliefs and preferences in a safe and trusting environment.
- c. It had to provide an opportunity to do some problem solving around issues which concerned racial minority staff and students.
- d. It had to provide the impetus for participants to develop strategies and an action plan for their workplace.

In order to fulfill these considerations, the program consisted of several modules intended to allow participants to move from information about external and internal environment to examination of personal preferences to problem solving. Resource persons were used only in the first segment. For the segment on problem solving, actual cases were solicited from participants themselves. These were rewritten by members of the Reference Group in order to ensure anonymity of individuals involved. In addition, real cases from the Human Rights Commission were used to develop an understanding of the Human Rights legislation.

### **Employee Training**

The absence of a Reference Group to assist in designing this program meant that the facilitators' intentions and the participants' perceived needs were divergent. The original intent was to provide a coaching/training workshop



to provide the skills, knowledge and understanding that would allow for increased mobility and success in promotion. Participants indicated to the facilitators by direct confrontation and indirect actions that these were not their needs.

The emergent design of this program allowed for group members to "take charge." Each of the participating groups formed their own reference group who then assisted the facilitators in setting a relevant agenda. Thus, for example, those attending the first session of "On Being a Woman and a Non-White: Double Handicap?" completely rejected the program developed for participants in the workshop for racial minority teachers that had just preceded. Instead, they worked with facilitators to design a program that they felt to be more suited to their needs.

It is, however, possible to draw some generalizations from all the sessions:

- a. None of the groups was interested in training but rather in penetrating the system with their opinions.
- b. Most participants felt that they had the necessary skills and qualifications for promotion. They viewed systemic barriers as being the issue. Whereas the managers felt that they were dealing with inadequate skills and attitudinal problems, employees believed that the issue was one of "we versus they," that is, of power.
- c. Most participants had difficulty with the notion that the onus was on them to adapt to the organizational culture. They felt that the organization, too, had a responsibility to respect their culture and history. Consequently, they were more interested in advocacy skills in order to be able to effectively articulate their opinions and experiences than in developing practical skills in writing a resume or appearing for an interview. Negotiations between facilitators and participants resulted in sessions that combined the development of advocacy skills with the development of job-related skills. The extent to which participants

wanted to pay attention to one or the other set of skills varied from one group to another and from one racial group to another. Generally speaking, women employees tended to be more interested in advocacy skills than men.

### Serendepitous Outcomes

Both the programs, for managers and for employees, had outcomes which were not intended. It is fair to say that they were positive outcomes and testify to the potential dynamism of the design. In light of the foregoing discussion, it is not surprising that, for managers, these were of a practical nature whereas, for employees, they related to system changes and group needs.

### Managers

It became clear quite early in the sessions for managers that they were not as interested in knowledge and understanding as they were in learning the pragmatic skills to do their job better. Racial minority issues and concerns constituted for them a problem that they were reacting to. Their major concern was to find ways of handling the problem. Thus, although they were willing to hear about the expectations of the community at large and to examine the implications of their own cultural preferences for decision-making in an Equal Opportunity setting, they wanted an opportunity to develop some very specific skills. These were:

- a. Giving feedback to staff on sensitive issues, such as, to male white staff on reverse discrimination and to racial minority staff on non-appropriate behaviour;
- b. Handling complaints of staff, parents and students; and
- c. Coaching, counselling and mentoring racial minority staff.

It became apparent that the need for developing skills in these areas was widely shared among managers. Groups not only spent considerable time discussing these, they also used the case studies to develop their strategies and approaches in these areas.

### Employees

The employee groups were less in-

terested in promotion as a career issue for individuals than as a justice issue for groups. For them, lack of career mobility was a symptom of a larger malaise: the built-in and historic nature of the racial biases that permeate the dominant institutions. Unlike the managers, they spent a considerable time grappling with issues of racism, human rights and inter-group relations. They approached these issues not only as employees looking for mobility but also as parents and educators concerned about creating a non-racist education system.

A surprising outcome of these sessions was the decision by two of the groups to write briefs to the system raising issues of concern and making recommendations for change. The writing of the briefs provided the participants a concrete opportunity to use their personal experiences to develop effective advocacy skills as well as to have an impact on the system. The two briefs have resulted in some significant changes in the Board's personnel practices.

The racial composition of the groups had another unintended outcome: skills in inter-group relations and conflict resolution/management. The groups included Canadian born racial minorities as well as immigrants from the Caribbean, South Asia and South-East Asia. Many of these groups have difficulty communicating with each other. The sharing of experiences and the sharing of a common task — writing the briefs — brought participants from these groups closer to one another.

### Group Consciousness and Behaviour

#### Managers

Group consciousness and group behaviour among managers depended upon the composition of each group. As a rule, however, there tended to be greater group cohesiveness among the secondary school principals than among the members of any other manager group. There was, as well, little interaction between managers from the teaching and the non-teaching sides of the Board. However, there was among managers greater



sensitivity to gender equality than there was among employees.

The presence of women or racial minority managers tended to cause groups to grapple with equity issues more intensely than when they consisted almost exclusively of white male managers. Nonetheless, an overarching consideration appeared to be the issue of reverse discrimination and the attendant white male backlash.

### Employees

There were differences among members of different racial groups around questions of strategy and acceptance of the organizational culture. As well, sexist attitudes of some of the South Asian men affected group behaviour. The greater influencing abilities of some members also caused some others to feel "isolated." However, shared feelings about the dominant culture brought the groups together. Thus, group cohesion came from the shared experience of discrimination, not only as employees of the Toronto Board of Education, but as racial minorities.

This shared experience was revealed in the discussions around the issues of trust and fairness. Members saw Equal Opportunity and Race Relations policies as being connected to survival and justice.

Group cohesiveness also came from the members' perception of themselves as role models for racial minority students and as resource people to their communities.

Finally, there was no significant split between teaching and non-teaching employees, as there was among the managers.

### CRITIQUE

The managers focused primarily on sensitization and self-awareness, information and problem solving. Most of them viewed the matter of employment equity for racial minorities as "just another problem" in their work day, and hence their anxiety to find the practical skills to deal with it. This response was consistent with the observation that a feature of the management style in Toronto Board of Education is "management by crisis."<sup>3</sup> A majority of the managers had a hard time treating the question of equity in

the workplace for racial minorities as a matter of justice or fairness rather than as a problem that could become a crisis. This was particularly true of male managers, regardless of their backgrounds. A feature of the "collegial atmosphere" they brought with them seemed to be an identification with the dominant organizational culture. However, women managers were more "politicized" than their male colleagues. They tended to be vocal about the validity of the underlying concerns.

Another limitation may be traced to the obligatory nature of the program. While this conveyed to the managers the importance that the Board attached to the program, it may be argued that this created commitment issues. A mandatory program can be effective only if, on one hand, it forces participants to deal with hard issues in a forthright manner and, on the other hand, it is backed up by clear expectations. We must question whether the Reference Group was in a position to anticipate these considerations when it decided to make the program mandatory. "I've been to the Race Relations workshop and now I'm clean" may, we fear, be the response of some participants.

Those who attended the voluntary programs for racial minority employees demonstrated a greater commitment than the managers. For them promotion and mobility were part of a much broader set of problems, namely, racism in the wider society.

A major issue for these participants was that of trust. They lacked trust in the system and the management. They thus needed a program that focused not on training but on assisting them to deal with the "political" issues involved in their negative experience in seeking mobility and promotion.

To the extent that the program, as initially designed, did not deal with these "political" issues, its design was flawed. The use of a reference group for carrying out a needs assessment and for planning might have remedied the flaw. At the same time, however, the open-ended, emergent nature of the design was its strength. This allowed the design to be adjusted rapidly.

### CONCLUSION

The Race Relations training carried out at the Toronto Board of Education for senior managers and racial minority employees was an innovative program in that it attempted to develop skills, knowledge and understanding simultaneously at both levels. Principles of adult education were used to design a program that drew on the concrete experiences of the participants. The ownership of the program was with the participants whose input enabled the facilitators to adjust the design so that the expressed needs of the learners could be met.

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*This article is drawn from a paper presented at the CASAE '87 Annual Conference, McMaster University.*

#### Footnotes

1. At the time when the Reference Group was set up, the designation of the Associate Director of Education-Personnel was Superintendent of Personnel. It was in that capacity that the head of the Personnel Division initiated the group.
2. In 1985, the two Superintendents of Personnel were designated Assistant Superintendents of Personnel. All the titles of the senior staff of the Personnel Division changed as a result of a major administrative review carried out in 1985-1986.
3. Hitner-Starr Associates, *Race Relations Program Review* (December 1985).



# Community Participation in Education

Mavis Burke

Many of us have our origins in societies in which there has been a tradition of regarding the teacher as sole authority figure. If parents were consulted about their children's education it tended to be at the level of information exchange or disciplinary problems. In the case of the latter, the school could usually expect parental support and even reinforcement of punitory measures. The broader community would become involved in educational issues through appeals for material assistance or concern for a fondly remembered 'alma mater', but not as advocate or active participant in policy making or programme development.

## THE CANADIAN CONTEXT

Newcomers to Canada have had to adjust to a different perspective on the relationship between school and family. There is an overriding expectation, that there will be keen parental concern for student progress throughout the school system demonstrated by active participation in school activities and availability as a point of reference when needed.

School authorities have come to recognize that there is a mutually beneficial advantage to school/family interaction. Learning about the student's cultural and parental background, can provide the educator with a framework for relating to the student's learning needs, as well as a means of interpreting the school to the parent.

Many schools have reached out to parents by way of weekday parent-teacher meetings as well as written communications. The extent of partnership is limited. Some institutions have developed programs that use parents as a resource for student learning at special days or for curriculum units. However, it is generally agreed that the results of these efforts have often been disappointing as they have not had the

ongoing multiplier effect by way of building the level of trust expected from interaction with racial minority communities.

The evidence suggests, that further adjustments are needed, in order to reflect the changing situation of families in general, and immigrant and newcomer families in particular. The increasing number of single parent families and families working at two jobs, puts a great deal of pressure on time and energy needed to cope with extra demands, such as those of the school. Linguistic minority families are not being reached by customary forms of print communication and there appears to be an increasing gap between home and school.

The paradox here is that most racial minority parents place a high priority on their children's education as the means of advancement for the next generation. As noted in a recent article on the role of low-income parents in U.S. schools, what is lacking are appropriate strategies or structures for involvement. "Traditional parent-involvement models, aimed at parents in the mainstream, will probably prove ineffective in promoting the participation of the parents of these children," concludes the writer.

In some cases parents are beginning to assume the role of advocate, due to immediate concerns about the lack of progress perceived for an individual child, or more often when a group of students appear to be sharing a common pattern of placement, assessment and consequent limitation in life chances. Parental complaints do not seem to have made any inroads towards changing the general direction of the education of minorities, though representation may have resulted in the review of specific cases.

## COMMUNITY ROLE

In the light of the above-noted

realities of the family/school situation, this networking interchange will identify ways in which the community itself can become an active participant in the learning process, supporting, complementing and strengthening the interaction between family and school.

## Advocacy

The advocacy role is the one that has come to the fore in recent years, and will continue to be an important source of support for the family, beleaguered as it is by the practicalities of every day living. In past years, a rudimentary level of public demonstration served to relay to school authorities and politicians in urban areas the views of racial minorities on particular issues. However, a different level of sophistication is *now* required and community efforts will have to recognize this fact. Detailed knowledge of policy and legislation must precede development of community positions. Data collection and examination of alternative courses of action will need to be an integral part of the study of relevant issues, prior to preparation of written briefs with accurate documentation to support the position presented to the responsible level of government.

Community intervention on educational issues will need to seek out key decision makers at various points in the hierarchy. Too often in the past, local groups have directed their efforts at the inappropriate point in the system. For example, representation at provincial government level has not been able to succeed in changing school board decisions, yet school board elections have not been targeted as critical to affecting the kind of change identified as necessary to student well being. If community efforts are to be successful they must be part of an ongoing strategic plan rather than an occasional emotional outburst.



## Community and Extended Family Function

As previously noted, family-focused remedies are unlikely to succeed, if they ignore the structural realities of today's families, the resources available to them, and their ability to interact with the school.

This situation provides a new role for racial minority communities to respond by becoming active participants in the learning process experienced by young people. Acting as surrogate for the extended family, individuals can become involved in the socialization process regarded by schools as a family responsibility. Further, there is a considerable body of evidence to suggest that improvement in social competence and a heightened sense of dignity and selfworth can have a positive impact on academic achievement.

Opportunities for sharing experiential learning with students can be easily found within this society. In addition to community organizations there are a wide range of out-of-school educational activities at hand. Racial minority communities can develop activities on the model of or within the structure of Big Brothers and Big Sisters, taking responsibility for an individual student or family. Many activities can be shared and it is encouraging to observe that a broad spectrum of resources are already available for this purpose. Libraries are an important activity centre, as are museums. In Metropolitan Toronto cultural agencies abound — such as the Royal Ontario Museum, the Ontario Science Centre, and a host of art galleries, heritage and multicultural centres. Recreational spaces and activities provide another focus, as do music, drama, films etc. These are

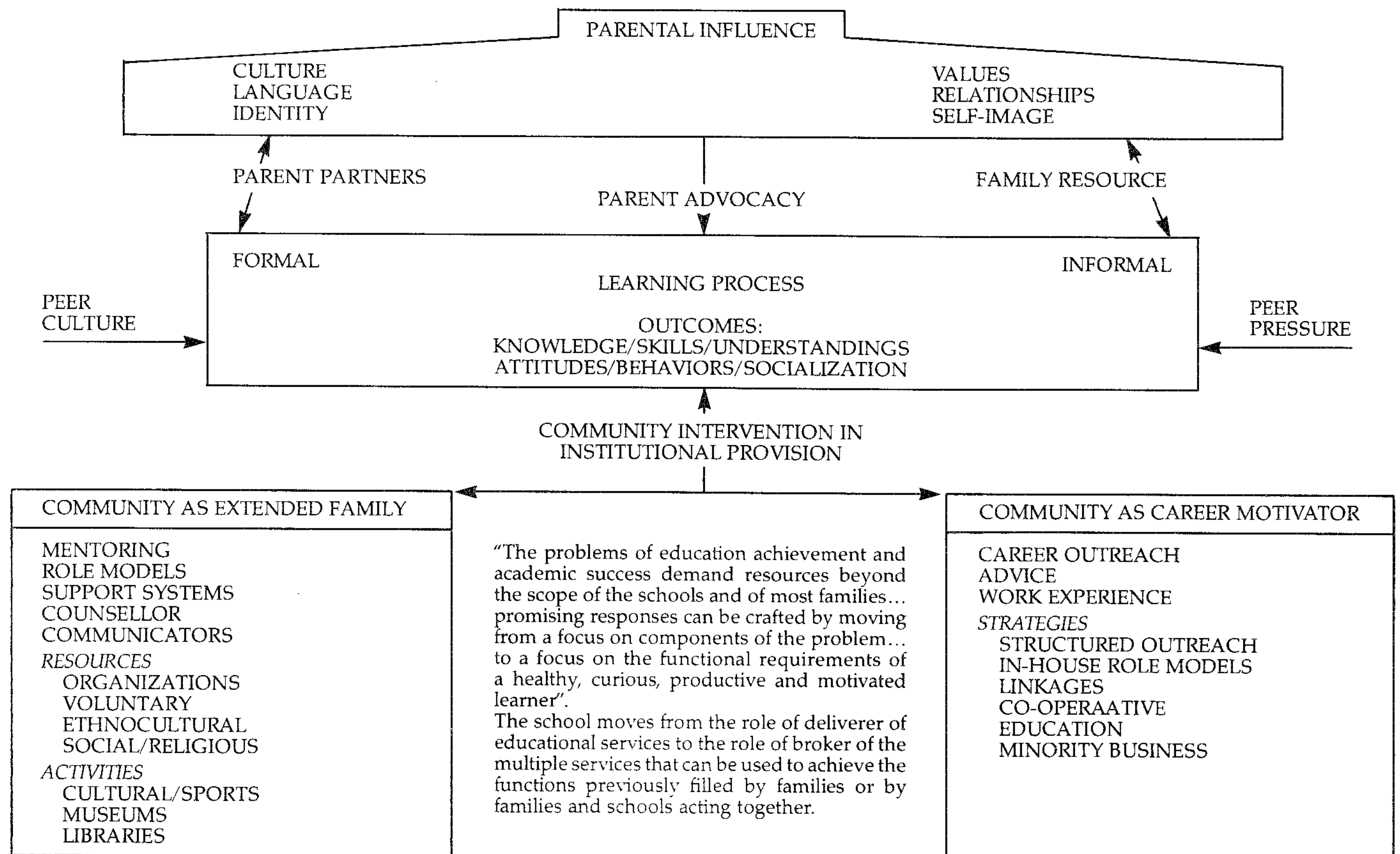
sources of informal learning.

The community reaction may be that these offerings will not directly reflect anything of the racial minority cultural heritage. This is not an acceptable argument for two main reasons — the Canadian heritage is ours collectively, and reflection of specific cultures will only be realized if we become active participants in these facets of the cultural community.

In this role of extended family to community members, individuals can serve as mentors, helping youth to create their own future; as role models indicating the possibility of goal achievement; as counsellors assisting with problem solving; as communicators interacting with family and school on behalf of youth.

It is encouraging to discover that there are schools in some areas of the United States which have found that student achievement benefits from

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION



Prepared by Mavis E. Burke



community intervention of this kind. For example, the Atlantic Public School system has utilised community resources and individual mentors for school children and it is reported that dramatic improvements have resulted in standardized test scores as well as school attendance.

### Community As Career Motivator

Another important component of community participation in education is for the community to act as contributor to career motivation. In the light of current data on persistent unemployment of Black and other minority youth, this could be the most critical priority to be addressed by racial minority communities and the most urgent problem-solving initiative to be developed at the present time.

As career motivator there is a need to move beyond discussion of the value of work and the work ethic, to practical forms of assistance at key points in youth development. Discussions supported by career information on a variety of fronts can be useful if provided in a non-threatening setting, without parental or school pressure. This kind of exploration should be initiated at an early stage and followed up to evaluate outcomes.

Documentation of efforts will be essential to guide further community participation. Visits to workplaces and identification of role models will be a significant means of expanding horizons at this point. Non-traditional occupations for racial communities will be an added component.

Community members can meet the challenge for youth by facilitating pre-employment workplace experience. For example, many members of racial minority communities are self-employed in small businesses or in areas of select skills. The school-based Co-operative Education movement has become increasingly popular between big business and young people preparing for employment or to proceed to college or university. It seems possible that, introduced at an earlier stage, with community effort to offer community small business experience, young people can be encouraged to remain in school. These efforts should also be directed to

the school age population who have dropped out, to encourage use of the new government programme that permits part-time work and part-time schooling. There are other opportunities for motivating students to take advantage of the learning opportunities. For example, the value of community intervention in creating a supportive environment to promote formal education in racial minority communities has been well demonstrated by the Portuguese experience at the University of Toronto. A recent report in *Ethnocultural Notes and Events*, describes the University of Toronto Portuguese Association Outreach Program, which aims to promote education and to encourage higher education. Outreach has been using a variety of methods, including ethnic media, to communicate this message to various age groups. Other minority communities could develop a similar model of aggressive interaction within their own community to make an impact on the dropout rate of racial minority students.

In conclusion, the emphasis here has quite consciously been on *the community as catalyst*. The focus is on the potential for initiating action as individuals and as members of community groups. The outcome of this networking experience should be an action-oriented work plan for communities, not only a series of recommendations awaiting government intervention.

"The problems of education achievement and academic success demand resources beyond the scope of the schools and of most families.....

The school moves from the role of deliverer of educational services to the role of broker of the multiple services that can be used to achieve the functions previously filled by families or by families and schools acting together."

It is time for us as community members to become aware of the potential for our own role in the educational process; to recognize and utilize the dynamic nature of the community resources available to us as participants in the social networks of students.

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This article was originally presented at the Conference "Participation Through Networking" October 24, 1987, sponsored by the National Council of Jamaicans and Supportive Organizations.

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## Community Colleges in Crisis

### **"Access to Potential: A Two-Way Street. An Education and Training Needs Assessment of Metro Toronto's Diverse Racial and Cultural Communities."**

INTERIM REPORT, JULY 1987.  
Maureen Hynes, Community  
Outreach Department,  
George Brown College.

The investigation of race relations and multicultural concerns in the educational institutions of the country has been much less noticeable in the community colleges than in other educational sectors. This needs assessment was undertaken by George Brown College in recognition of the, "need to improve its level of service to Toronto's diverse racial and cultural communities."

Notwithstanding this positively phrased motivation for undertaking the study, the picture that emerges from the findings indicates a much starker interpretation. The report provides clear evidence to suggest that Toronto's racial and cultural communities do not have equal access to training.

#### **Barriers**

The inequality of access suffered by racial communities was identified as the result of a number of institutional, linguistic, cultural, and situational barriers; to the non provision of specifically identified training needs of racial and cultural communities; to the non-existence of College policy and staff training in response to these needs; to inadequate outreach activities to these communities; to no advocacy or lobbying activities on behalf of the training needs of these communities; and to the inadequate content of many existing programmes.

The institutional barriers that were identified included:

- admission criteria

- a lack of transferability of skills and experience to the community college system
- a lack of vocational counselling available
- a lack of flexible scheduling of courses to accommodate women and shift workers
- staffing levels within the College, allowing smaller classes and more time for counselling, dispensing information and help
- an absence of bilingual, bi-cultural staff
- a lack of cross-cultural sensitivity on the part of College personnel
- general discrimination, sometime on the basis of an accent or a name
- the tendency of programmes not to take culture into account in design or implementation
- a lack of childcare.

The findings of this year-long study are largely based on 38 interviews with community representatives. As a preliminary and somewhat impressionistic survey, the results are nevertheless disturbing for an inner city community college with perhaps the largest English as a Second Language instruction programme in the country. A number of interim recommendations are offered relating to policy, access, outreach, advocacy, staff development, and programming and curriculum content. And while it would have been preferable to have some harder, quantifiable data (along the same lines as those generated by the Toronto Board of Education that are described in other articles of this issue), this report nevertheless provides some disquieting insights into the community college system.

In responding to this situation at the very minimum, the author notes, "the College must adopt some clarity in re-examining the formal and informal rules by which they operate and some strategies for redressing" the pattern of systemic discrimination against racial and cultural communities in gaining equal access to training. If George Brown College is not reflective

of, and not as responsible to the multiracial, multicultural population it supposedly exists to serve as it should be, one can be equally certain that the state of affairs in any other community college is no better.

If the community college system is undergoing a crisis in direction, and if government is redirecting its dollars to the private sector to provide more relevant training, the content of this report clearly provides some of the reasons as to why this is occurring. The changes that have to be made does not, and should not require additional funds for these publicly funded institutions but rather a major reordering of present priorities and expenditures to ensure the removal of systemic barriers and an equitable service to all sectors of the population.

Tim Rees



## *A Model For Diagnosing, Changing And Explaining Conditions Which Perpetuate Institutional Racism*

### **Indicators for measuring institutional racism:**

1. Over or under-representation of minority employees in same job categories.
2. Consistent over or under-employment of minority employees in terms of matching job qualifications (i.e. education, experience etc.) with job category.
3. Employee evaluations which show consistent biases in favour of or against a particular race.
4. Race effects in the degree of agreement between employees and their supervisors on the employee evaluations.
5. Race effects in the type of employment actions taken.
6. Differential access to in-service training.
7. Differential enrolment to in-service training.
8. Lack of adequate mechanisms to handle discrimination complaints.
9. Findings of grievance settlements.
10. Lack of policies, procedures, so designed to facilitate employee relations.
11. Failure to recruit minorities.
12. Hiring criteria.
13. Consistent hiring of non-minorities.
14. Lack of action plan.
15. Race as an important functional variable within the organization from both employees and employers perspective.

### **Categories of information required for this paradigm are:**

1. Demographic stats.
2. Policies and Practices: Job and Performance Factors.
3. Employer-Employee Relations.
4. Administrative Procedures.
5. Perceptions of personnel and organization climate.

# *Achieving Educational Equity for Black Students in Toronto Schools*

Black parents and students have for several years expressed many concerns about the education of Black children. Statistics collected by the Toronto Board on the placement and aspirations of students have appeared to support the validity of these concerns. In the picture that emerges Black students have an unequal place. Their experiences are not validated. Their aspirations are not supported. Their history, heritage and culture are absent from the curriculum. Their complaints of racist harassment are not dealt with adequately. A disproportionate number of them are in Basic Level schools. Too many give up and drop out, discouraged.

Findings of Board research studies show that although Black students tend to rank education as very important in their lives and are likely to aspire to attending post-secondary institutions, only 36% of Black students are enrolled in Advanced Level courses compared with 54% of all students, and Black students are more likely than other students to be found in Special Education programs.

On March 6, 1986, the Board set up a Consultative Committee on the Education of Black Students to make recommendations on how this situation could be turned around. The Committee's Draft Report was released in June 1987.

The Committee, consisting of parents, trustees and staff, visited schools to observe initiatives and activities that are working and met with parents, principals, school staffs and students to seek ideas and suggestions regarding action which might be taken.

During the consultation four major points emerged that were repeated again and again:

- The school, like the society in which it functions, is a highly complex institution and this complexity makes it very difficult for some parents to act in their children's best interests.
- Just as parents have a responsibility to become better informed about the

school system, the system needs to become more responsive to the parents so that they can act more effectively on their children's behalf.

- The Board has developed many policies to address the parents' major areas of concern but serious attention must be directed to the implementation of its policies and the recommendations of its many reports.
- In addition to the problems many parents face in relating to the school system, Black parents experience other problems because of their colour or race.

Perhaps the most moving and persuasive experience for the Committee came from its consultations with students themselves. Approximately 200 Black students in Grades 7-13, recent graduates and drop outs were interviewed regarding their experiences in the Toronto school system.

These students, brought together from across the city, were articulate and passionate; they had a very positive self-image and high expectations of themselves. In the words of the Draft Report:

Students feel best in schools where staff consistently, openly and immediately deal with instances of namecalling, racism and stereotyping. Students said teachers and other students frequently expressed such stereotypical attitudes about blacks as "black kids steal", "black students are always planning something", "black kids are not as intelligent as Canadian kids", and "all blacks are called Leroy and Sharon". Students also related a lot of examples of namecalling (e.g. nigger) and said it is most likely to happen in the junior grades and frequently leads to fighting.. Students feel proud and are more enthused about learning when teachers introduce curriculum topics and materials that include positive affirmations of the black culture. They like the occasional opportunity to do special



assignments on black culture and history. They are distressed that many materials that do involve blacks (e.g. the novel *Huckleberry Finn*) present them in a negative light and tend to be racist. According to the students, History and Geography courses have little mention of blacks, their contributions to society, and their countries of origin. And, blacks are not discussed in mathematics, science, and French courses. In addition, Black Studies curriculum materials that are available at the Board tend not to be used in the schools; the teachers prefer the old materials.

The draft Report of the Committee makes 45 recommendations to the Board. These recommendations are based on the consultations with staff, students and parents as well as on a review of the policies and initiatives that are already in place.

The concerns and proposed solu-

tions are presented under five major headings:

- Streaming
- Discrimination
- Dropouts
- Special Education
- Curriculum Issues including Black Cultural Studies

The Committee concludes that "there can be no question that the Board has expended an enormous amount of time, effort and money to investigate and respond to parental concerns by developing and implementing procedures and programs to provide effective education opportunities for all its students." Nonetheless, the Draft Report states, "the information provided by the consultation process supported the parents' concerns. The Committee became more aware of the frustrations and feelings of powerlessness which some parents experience..

The consultation process also re-

vealed that everyone wants to do the right and best things for every student so that each individual as well as our entire society benefits. Politely, but insistently, the parents are saying, "Despite the Board's policies, despite the considerable efforts of some Board staff, our children are hurting. Please do something. Help us to help you to help them."

The central issue of import thus becomes, 'How do we achieve this goal?'

The recommendations are the Committee's answer to this question.

*The Final Report of the Committee will go to the Board in April 1988. A series of Consultation Meetings have been scheduled to receive comments on the Draft Report. In addition, written submissions are also being received. The Draft Report is available by calling (416) 591-8285.*

## Who Seeks The Work?

### Representation of Visible/Racial Minorities in the Toronto Board of Education Work Force, 1987. Part I.

Maisy L. Cheung, Information Services Division, Toronto Board of Education, Nov. 1987. Research Report No. 186.

### Who Seeks The Work? A Pre-Employment Pilot Survey.

Maisy L. Cheung, Information Services Division, Toronto Board of Education, Nov. 1987. Research Report No. 184.

The above two studies were carried out by the Toronto Board to determine

first, what proportion of the applicants for jobs in 1986 were from various racial and ethnic minority groups and secondly, what percentage of the current permanent staff of the Board is from visible/racial minority backgrounds.

The *Who Seeks The Work?* survey represents the first public document from any institution in Canada that provides data at the pre-employment stage. As a ground-breaking document, and as a companion piece to the research "Who Gets the Work?" (Urban Alliance on Race Relations, 1986), it provides the methodology for an essential part of assessing institutional employment discrimination. While approval from the Ontario Human Rights Commission is required to undertake such a survey, this document clearly shows how and why such a survey should be undertaken. The survey was designed to ascertain whether a pool of qualified visible minority candidates had sought non-

teaching employment with the Board. Secondly it sought to determine whether all qualified candidates, regardless of their racial/ethnic origin, showed the same rate of success in getting the appointments. And thirdly, it sought to find out which advertising and recruitment system is most effective in reaching potential candidates.

The results of the survey found that the pool of visible minority candidates seeking non-teaching appointments with the Toronto Board of Education in 1986 seems to be proportional to the visible minority work force of Metro Toronto. The group of visible minority applicants who participated in the survey tends to possess higher paper qualifications than the other applicants. They seem to be as motivated as the white candidates in seeking appointments with the Board, judging by the percent who repeatedly applied for a variety of positions or the same type of position in 1986. Yet, they do not appear to have had the same success



rate as the other candidates in being hired, promoted or transferred.

The newspaper appears to be the most effective advertising system in reaching potential candidates outside the Board, while internal job postings seemed most effective in reaching internal candidates. Both groups of candidates in this survey also depended on word of mouth to a certain extent.

Finally, the majority of the applicants who responded to the survey were likely to apply for positions which are traditionally held by their gender. This tends to perpetuate occupational segregation by sex in the Toronto Board of Education.

The findings of the work force

audit, *Representation of Visible/Racial Minorities in the Toronto Board of Education Work Force 1987*, show that the racial composition of the Toronto Board of Education's existing work force does not reflect the proportion of racial minorities in the external work force. The percent of visible minority staff is 7.9% in the Board, compared to 19% in the Metropolitan Toronto work force.

The presence of visible minority teaching and non-teaching personnel in the schools (8.5%) is low relative to the proportion of visible minority students in the schools (26-30%).

Representation of non-White staff is uneven across the positions and departments. On the whole, under-

representation of the target population is most apparent in the Maintenance positions (under 5%). Administration positions (15%) are closest to reaching the proportion of non-Whites in the Metropolitan Toronto work force. There are a few departments which have actually exceeded the 19% mark. They are the Director's Office, the Library and Computer Services Departments.

There was no change in the overall representation rate of non-White employees between 1981 and 1987. However, the increase (1%) in representation among the managerial and supervisory positions, is an improvement.

### Who Seeks the Work?

According to the survey of those who applied for 90 administrative<sup>1</sup> and field positions<sup>2</sup> advertised by the Board in 1986,

- 19% of the applicants were from visible/racial minority groups
- Non-white applicants tended to have proportionately fewer job offers than their white counterparts
- 58.7% of the visible/racial minority applicants had schooling above the secondary level compared to 47.6% of all applicants
- 38% of the non-white respondents to the survey, compared to 28.2% of all respondents, had some specialist certificates/diplomas or qualifications
- 24.7% of all respondents, compared to 18.8% of the visible minority respondents, had heard about the vacant positions by word of mouth

<sup>1</sup> non-teaching

<sup>2</sup> e.g. caretakers, matrons

### Work Force Audit

- 7.9% of the Toronto Board's current permanent workforce is made up of visible/racial minority people
- Over half of the non-white and white employees are employed in teaching positions
- 9% of the non-white employees, compared to 20% of the white employees, are employed in field positions
- There are three non-teaching departments in which over 20% of the staff is non-white compared to nine in which less than 10% of the staff is non-white
- In only one area of the city are over 10% of the elementary teachers non-white
- 5 out of 133 principals, 9 out of 131 vice-principals, 17 out of 341 secondary school department heads and 20 out of 262 secondary school assistant department heads are members of visible/racial minorities
- Blacks and East Asians each comprise one-third of the Board's permanent racial minority work force
- The total number of people permanently working for the Board is 8348. 660 of these are members of visible/racial minority groups



## *The Impact of The Media on Race Relations*

*The National Conference on Minorities in the Media held in Toronto on June 27 to 28, 1987 was sponsored by the Urban Alliance on Race Relations, in cooperation with Ryerson School of Journalism, and the Canadian Ethnocultural Council.*

### **Why Another Conference?**

In the late 70s, community organizations became increasingly concerned that the mass media in Canada, for the most part, ignored the presence and contribution of racial minorities as part of the multicultural/multi-racial fabric of Canadian society. Attempts were made to get governments at the provincial and federal level to become aware of the nature and scope of the problem and to seek ways to remedy the situation particularly through legislation.

The federal government, through the Multicultural Directorate held a national conference in Toronto in November 1982, "Visible Minorities and the Media." Many of the concerns and issues were identified and a number of recommendations made toward seeking appropriate and effective solutions. If one examines the recommendations it soon becomes apparent that as a society, we've hardly moved since 1982.

Recommendations related to access and opportunity, depiction and balance, and research and education are just as relevant today as they were when presented in 1982.

Five years was adequate time for meaningful change to have taken place if both the government and the media were serious about their commitment to present an accurate portrayal of racial minorities in the media.

Peter Desbarats, Dean of the Graduate School of Journalism, University of Western Ontario, and the moderator of the opening panel not only set the tone of the conference but also at the same time managed to summarize the sense of all the discussion that ensued:

It is not difficult to be critical and incisive (about the media) because the

record of Canadian news media as active promoters of the concept of the multi-racial Canadian society is far from outstanding. If you are looking for polite words to describe this record, you could say that it has been cautious and pragmatic. If you want to be more direct, you could call it timid and hypocritical.

I will begin with a statement of the obvious, but perhaps it needs to be stated as it is the premise that underlies this whole conference: media do have an impact on race relations and a fundamental one.

Collectively, the media, all forms of print and electronic media — I'm not just talking about news media, but books, films, magazines, radio, all forms of media — collectively these represent our image of ourselves. That total picture is our version of what we are and it both reflects what we think we are and influences what we think we should be. There is ample evidence today of this influential role of the media...though we don't always understand exactly how that process works.

Because media exert a strong influence on all of us, those of us who work in media have a special responsibility. We have to influence society in the right direction. We have to provide leadership. Some media workers, journalists among them, try to evade

this responsibility by claiming that their role is only to reflect society objectively. But we all realize in this day and age that there is no such thing as a perfect mirror. The image of reality is always distorted by the nature of the mirror. The subjective character of all media makes it impossible for journalists and other media workers to evade the responsibilities of leadership.

Leadership requires knowledge of society and its shortcomings. When problems are identified, leadership requires a commitment, not just a general statement of goodwill. It requires targets or objectives that can be used later to evaluate progress. Leadership also requires follow through, the ability to persist in achieving objectives over long and often discouraging periods of time.

As this conference probably will discover, Canadian media by these standards, have failed to provide leadership in building a society of equal opportunity in Canada. The problem has been identified often enough. But media have been slow to make specific commitments to change. As a result, there has been discouragingly little change over the years, and this conference, like others in the past, will have to tackle the whole subject almost afresh without much sense of real progress.

Even after decades of discussion and political pressure from minorities, we are still at the point of symbolic or token gestures.

## *A Personal Review*

Robert Asgeirsson

What do you think of when you hear the term "minority group"? Do your thoughts contain suspicion, distrust or caution? When you hear the term "Ethnic" do you think about painted Easter eggs, pasta, accents, malcontents or revolutionaries? Many Canadians do and the Media continues to use these terms.

Although I have Icelandic forefathers who came to this country over 100 years ago and although I was born in this country and although I speak the English language as well as any other Canadian — I am still considered to be in a minority group. To be absolutely correct — an invisible minority group and ethnic to boot.



Well, I've always considered myself to be a Canadian first and foremost and somehow a quiet inheritor of this 'Icelandic stuff' that has been passed on to me and my offspring as a gentle reminder of our roots. Who do I threaten with this inheritance? The only thing I may be guilty of is boring someone by extolling the virtues of being Icelandic by descent.

Arnold Toynbee, famed historian, has defended us in his chronicles by stating that the 'Icelander' makes the best immigrant because he is the first to abandon his culture.

There are certain practical advantages to being an invisible minority group and apparently we have worked successfully at becoming that way. We seldom, if ever, bear the brunt of racial jokes or slander. We seldom, if ever, experience oppressive racial discrimination. These are ugly and uncomfortable experiences and who in their right mind would want that?

There is strange social stigma in our land, however, and it's attached to the terms "Ethnic" and "Minority group". Should anyone find out about my particular ethnicity, well, heaven forbid, I may be classified as being less than a full-fledged Canadian. How's that for unfair? . . . Lucky I have this invisible culture, I guess.

In my invisible cloak of culture and white Anglo Saxon appearance, I attended the special conference, "The impact of the media on race relations" as a delegate on behalf of the Icelandic National League. When I arrived at the Hotel to register for the Conference it was like stepping into a United Nations Assembly. All about me were Canadian citizens, 100% full-fledged, but of different physical appearances including colour and dress. All of them, I say again, were Canadian citizens, accorded the full human rights, equality and dignity that our new Constitution proclaims. The reason that we had all gathered here was to find ways of bringing the legal and theoretical status into reality.

"We've got to break down the stereotyped images and attitudes that insult and distort the perception of the 'visible minorities' in Canada," said one of the delegates. "We constitute one third of the population of Canada

and we pay taxes! Many of us are better educated than many of the so-called white Canadians" said another.

The modern Media (Print, Radio and T.V./ Film) are now recognized as the most powerful social influence ever to appear in the history of mankind. The Media now have the ability to alter perceptions. They produce an ongoing conditioning process that influences the way we dress, talk, think, consume, and generally conduct our lives.

Leading representatives from the national Media sat as panel members during the various Plenary and Workshop sessions held over the two day period. A two-way dialogue on ways to improve the portrayal of the minorities was desired by the conference organizers and delegates. What happened was that in many cases the media defended itself at great length before any two-way dialogue ever happened. The remaining time allowed for delegate input was very short and proved frustrating for many. Media inadequacies and unfairness soon became obvious — even, thankfully, to their representatives. In the end, the panel members seemed to be grateful for the enlightening experience and Conference delegates hoped that they would pass their new awareness along to their colleagues who could do something concrete.

Some of the thought provoking points that were raised:

- Invisible minorities have been invisible in the media.
- The News media has been cautious, timid and even hypocritical in recognizing the ethnic minorities.
- The media has this contradiction of preaching virtues and not practising them with respect to equality and hiring practices.
- Ethnic minorities are part of the Canadian identity and should be seen as an equal partner in Canada, not an adjunct. We are all Canadians.
- The use of the words 'minority' and 'ethnic' currently works, in a way, against the concepts and ideas being talked about.
- The recognition of 'difference' poses an interesting dilemma.
- Ethnic programming ensures a differentiation or a sense of separ-

ateness. Do we want this?

- The laws serve more to protect the minorities against negative images than to foster positive portrayal.
- We all came in different boats but we're all in the same boat now.

Basically the delegates, representing one third of Canada's population, want the rest of the Canadian population to recognize them, first and foremost, as fellow Canadians. Following that recognition, hopefully, will come the true equality of all citizens in this land. Although some speak with accents and/or halting English, many have excellent educations from their former homelands and are very capable people. What they want is an equal chance to prove themselves on the job and in a society unfettered by racist attitudes, distrust and misconceptions. They want genuine social acceptance and the Media can be very helpful in portraying them as just regular Canadians.

Minority groups want to shed the stigma of their image. They can and will do more than their share if given a chance. As productive Canadians, they can also contribute something extra in return — gifts, rich in diversity: their cultures and experience from around the world.

During the short breaks I met many interesting Canadians. The most memorable encounter was with a young man who barely managed to escape from Saigon as it fell into Communist hands. He told me of the terrible atrocities he witnessed and about the loss of many of his friends at sea during their escape by boat. With a look in his eyes that brought more meaning than I can convey, he said; "Believe me, I know what freedom means." A poet and recent Engineering graduate, he loves Canada passionately . . . perhaps even more than we do. He's a great Canadian, in my opinion.

There was a feeling as the conference closed that many real and productive steps had been taken towards the goal of true equality for all Canadians. I am grateful for the experience.

*Robert Asgeirsson is a member of the Icelandic National League from Coquitlam, B.C.*



## *The Ideal Educational System*

### **"Reflections on the Race Relations Program at the Toronto Board of Education. A Discussion Paper"**

Barb Thomas, Toronto Board of Education Race Relations Program, Phase II.

In reviewing all the initiatives undertaken by the Toronto Board of Education to address the issue of racism, this background paper raises the seemingly obvious but as yet unanswered question, how would the system look if the completion of these tasks had the

desired results?

Some agreed upon vision or a desired future is essential as a measuring stick to evaluate the relevance and the impact of existing activity, and as a starting point for the formulation of new strategies. Establishing action plans and timetables is only meaningful within the context of realisable goals.

This discussion paper proposes a number of possible measurements which, cumulatively, begin to provide some images of "an ideal future". The measurements apply largely to the life of schools — and the ways in which people in them work, think and feel.

While much of the present documentation and focus of how the educational system can address racism em-

phasises policies, and the work of administrative personnel, coordinators and consultants, the author warns that it is frequently unclear how the implementation of these policies and activities actually affect the way schools operate.

The indicators proposed in the "ideal system" that are suggested in this paper fall under the categories of curriculum, the practice of teachers, the role of principals and the management of the school, assessment and placement, and system administration. They provide an invaluable basis for developing appropriate measuring instruments in analysing progress and assessing how initiatives may be affecting the way schools work.

## *Organizational Barriers to Education Equity*

### **"Race Relations Program Review,"**

Hitner Starr Associates,  
Toronto Board of Education

The pursuit of racial equality in any large company or similar institution (public or private) entails essentially the same set of organizational change processes. Notwithstanding the genuine and sincere commitment to change that has been expressed by so many educators, why are the racial equality goals still so far from being realized in our educational system? To understand why requires an understanding of the system and how it works. The phenomenal range of obstacles thrown up by large bureaucracies and institutions to circumvent new policies and activities from realizing racial equality are basically the same. It is the system, the organi-

zational arrangements existing within Boards of Education, as they do in any private corporation or public institution, which determine ultimately what targets will be achieved.

Hitner Starr Associates, in the Review of the Race Relations Program for the Toronto Board of Education, provide an analysis of the "system", of the organizational arrangements within a Board of Education that have served to hinder the implementation of the race relations program. For those who would like to see and expect their Board of Education develop and implement a cohesive and systematic plan of action with measurable goals and objectives, this report documents the sober realities of the difficulties of changing an organizational system.

An organization's policies and practices are broadly influenced by among other things, their culture, hierarchies, objectives and political environment. A Board of Education is

no different. In assessing the implementation of the Toronto Board's Race Relations Program, the authors of this report identified the collegial culture, management by crisis, unfocussed organizational objectives, dysfunctional reporting lines, and ineffectual communication as five specific factors which have had an adverse impact. It is not unsafe to presume that these factors can probably be applied with equal validity to every other Board of Education in the country.

### **Collegial Culture**

The authors note that a collegial system, relatively free from formalized management control, has historically evolved quite simply from the nature of the teaching system. While this reliance on teaching staff as 'professionals' is no doubt a powerful motivational force in that it allows teachers to control their working environment, as well as perhaps foster a cooperative



and productive teacher-student relationship, it works best when there are few policies or constraints imposed on the teacher.

With the enormous expansion of the school system with new and additional responsibilities being imposed on all staff, it is no longer adequate to rely solely on professional integrity and trust to ensure activities are implemented. The authors were unable to ascertain if the Board's Race Relations Program had been fully implemented throughout the system precisely because of this reliance on the 'collegial system of trust and professionalism'. To determine the extent to which a program has been implemented and its impact, the report recommends three critical and inter-related components must be incorporated:

#### Accountability

- who is responsible for doing what activity
- what reporting lines are established
- what reporting mechanisms are established to ensure that responsibility is exercised

#### Monitoring Procedure

- what procedures are in place to determine if program activities are being conducted
- what timeframes are in place for completion of program activities

#### Evaluation Mechanism

- what mechanisms are in place to determine whether program objectives have been met and program activities have been implemented
- how does the program allow for modification of objectives and activities.

### Management by Crisis

The "collegial culture" gives rise to a management style which dictates that formal monitoring and evaluation is not required because it is assumed that everything is going well unless they hear to the contrary. If management only hears about problems and crises, there is a built-in tendency to assume that policy is being implemented.

To overcome the resultant ad-hoc,

inconsistent, and in many cases, superficial implementation of the Race Relations Program, the authors reiterate managements' responsibility to continually:

- \* communicate policy to staff
- \* train staff to implement the policy
- \* ensure that staff fulfill their obligations under the program.

### Unfocussed Organizational Objectives

The lack of direction and priority given to all the policies promulgated by the Board has led to their discretionary interpretation and application.

Because of the lack of well-defined organizational objectives, race relations was perceived as a low-priority, and staff used their own discretion to determine the applicability of specific obligations imposed on them.

### Dysfunctional Reporting Lines

The example cited by the report is a mandate given to an Advisory Council to monitor the implementation of recommendations relating to curriculum bias when it has no line authority over those who oversee curriculum matters in the schools. The consequence of this type of situation is that nobody can or does assume responsibility for implementation.

### Ineffectual Program Communication

The report notes that the Race Relations Program has suffered because of:

- \* an excessive number of recommendations
- \* poor organization and presentation of content
- \* ambiguous wording of some recommendations
- \* lack of training for implementers
- \* downplaying the importance of the program.

For those involved in a process of organizational change in pursuit of racial equality, this report provides both a warning and a direction that organizational barriers that are likely

to occur must be clearly acknowledged and addressed head-on. The analysis provided by Hitner Starr Associates show that it would be naive to pretend these realities do not exist. By not directly addressing these realities, the result is likely to be the dissipation of limited energies, frustration and further delays.



# **UPROOTING, LOSS AND ADAPTATION**

## **The Resettlement of Indochinese Refugees in Canada**

**Kwok B. Chan and Doreen Marie Indra (Eds.)**

**Published by the Canadian Public Health Association  
1335 Carling Avenue, Suite 210, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1Z 8N8**

**Price: Canadian \$12.00**

Over 120,000 Indochinese have come to Canada since 1975, primarily as refugees from Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea. Their settlement presented a wide range of challenges both for them and for those involved in facilitating their integration into Canadian society. For the first time, this edited book brings together papers representing contemporary Canadian research on their resettlement in Canada.

***Central topics include:***

- Indochinese family and community organization
- economic, linguistic and psychological adaptation
- the interface between Indochinese refugees and key
- helping institutions.

This book also contains an exhaustive bibliographic survey of Canadian research on Indochinese communities and original photographs.

***Suggested Audience:*** general information, courses in ethnic relations, cross-cultural social service delivery and multicultural education; as a source book for social, education and health care professionals interfacing with Indochinese people.

***Uprooting, Loss and Adaptation is published with support from the Canadian Secretary of State, Multiculturalism, and the Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission.***



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**In the next issue:**

Race Relations in Canadian Boardrooms