



Faculty of Education

# The School Leadership Centre



Improving  
School  
Leadership  
through  
Research,  
Collaboration,  
Innovation, and  
Dialogue

Annual Report 2003 – 2004



Consider the Achievements of our First Year:  
The Directors' Perspectives

*Removing Barriers of Isolation*

*Someone once said that education is the most isolated of all professions. As educational leaders, too often we work within walls created by time, resources, knowledge, politics, and geography. The School Leadership Centre has the potential to become a means to lower those walls. All of us involved in leadership—teachers, administrators, parents, students, and academics—can benefit from this process. And the learners in our schools will be the ultimate beneficiaries.*

*Alex Holm  
Co-Director*



Co-Director Alex Holm

*Leadership has been defined as “deliberate intervention that requires the moral use of power”—those few words belie the challenges and complexity of educational leadership. While one cannot discount the importance of managerial skills, educational leaders must also build positive, caring relationships, develop understanding of multiple perspectives, create spaces in which people from diverse backgrounds can come together in new communities, and ensure that each child benefits from equitable opportunities and outcomes. The school leadership centre at UBC is committed to critical analysis, dialogue, and action to promote these goals.*

*Carolyn Shields  
Co-Director*



Co-Director Carolyn Shields



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## **The School Leadership Centre at UBC**

### **Introduction**

The School Leadership Centre (SLC) was announced by the Faculty of Education at UBC on July 1<sup>st</sup>, and officially launched November 18, 2003 by UBC Faculty of Education Dean Dr. Robert Tierney and the Deputy Minister of Education, Dr. Emery Dosdall. The Centre had been years in the planning—growing naturally from the work of the Educational Administration program in the Department of Educational Studies. The SLC was visualized as a place where researchers and educational leaders might meet, where global perspectives and local experience could mutually engage and inform each other, where best practices and exciting innovations could be fostered and tested. The SLC was visualized as a means to advance school leadership in British Columbia, in Canada, and internationally. You will find in the following pages that in its first year, the SLC is well on its way to making real these very important visions.

### **Location**

The School Leadership Centre is situated among the Network of Centres and Institutes in Education, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Neville Scarfe Building—Room 308b—in the Faculty of Education.

### **Staff**

Carolyn Shields, Head of the Educational Studies Department, and Alex Holm, formerly Administrator-in-Residence in the Department of Educational Studies, share the Directorship duties of the Centre. Mark Edwards, a PhD candidate in educational leadership, works for the SLC as a Graduate Administrative Assistant.



## **SLC Steering Committee**

The Centre is ably guided in planning and operations by its volunteer Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is composed of outstanding educators from a significant cross-section of school leadership roles in British Columbia. The Committee was formed in October of 2003 and began monthly meetings then. The Steering committee for 2003 –2004:

- Dr. Graham Smith, Distinguished Scholar, Educational Studies, UBC, and professor, University of Auckland, New Zealand;
- Ms. Bev Rundell, Principal, Sentinel Secondary School, West Vancouver;
- Dr. Wendy Poole, Associate Professor, and co-ordinator of the Educational Administration Program, UBC;
- Ms. MJ Moran, Teacher, Sir Matthew Begbie Elementary School, Vancouver;
- Ms. Brenda LeClair, Deputy Superintendent, Langley School District;
- Dr. Kit Grauer, Associate Professor, Curriculum Studies, UBC;
- Mr. Rick Davis, Superintendent of Field Services, Ministry of Education.



### **Advisory Board**

The Advisory Board of the School Leadership Centre was formed in the Spring of 2004. Unlike the Steering Committee, Advisory Board members have been directly appointed by their respective organizations as representatives of particular constituencies within the educational community of British Columbia. The Advisory Board's role is to provide advice and thoughtful reflection regarding the School Leadership Centre's principles, goals, and objectives. The first meeting of the Advisory Board was held April 22, 2004.

The Advisory Board for 2004- 2005 is made up of the following members:

- Dean Robert Tierney, Faculty of Education, UBC;
- Ms. Marlene Stringer, BC Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils;
- Dr. Lee Southern, BC School Trustees Association;
- Ms. Jinny Sims, BC Teachers Federation;
- Mr. Greg Louie, First Nations Education Steering Committee/ First Nations School Association;
- Mr. Doug Lauson, Federation of Independent Schools Association;
- Ms. Marie Kerchum, BC College of Teachers;
- Dr. Harry Janzen, BC School Superintendents Association;
- Ms. Denise Andrew, BC Principals and Vice Principals Association;
- Mr. Barry Anderson, BC Ministry of Education.



## **SLC Mission and Goals**

The following mission statement and goals have guided the first year of planning and operations.

### **Mission Statement**

To study and develop school leadership by engaging scholars, educational leaders, and prospective leaders in research, development, and reflection in order to provide equitable, inclusive, and democratic education to all students. This means timely research; relevant professional development, effective communication, networking, and support services for school leadership in B.C. and beyond.

### **Goals**

#### *1. Collaboration.*

To provide a catalytic function to enable participants from various organizations and groups to participate in scholarship, leadership, and educational development work in which they could not otherwise engage.

#### *2. Research.*

To encourage collaborative research that helps educational leaders (in both formal positions and informal roles) to better understand contexts, relationships, and processes of schooling as well as ways to promote positive changes.



### Goals—continued

#### 3. *Practice.*

To encourage leadership practices aimed at enhancing the success of all students.

#### 4. *Practice.*

To encourage a broader and more diverse cross-section of educators to consider taking on formal and informal leadership roles.

#### 5. *Dialogue.*

To provide a venue for people with related interests to come together to inform the critical topic of school leadership.

#### 6. *Dialogue.*

To facilitate dialogue about the aims and purposes of education.

#### 7. *Dialogue.*

To provide opportunities for interdisciplinary lectures, conferences, symposia, colloquia, etc. that will promote better understanding of excellence in educational leadership.

#### 8. *Partnerships*

To develop partnerships with government, public, and private community groups to seek funding to support the goals of the centre.

#### 9. *Partnerships.*

To attract visiting professors, highly qualified graduate students, and post-doctoral fellows interested in the field of educational administration and leadership.



### 10. *Partnerships.*

To develop broad-based understanding and support through the creation of a Steering Committee and an Advisory Board that represents many of the stakeholders.

### 11. *Self-Sustaining.*

The SLC is working towards being self-sustaining. It operates in a "cost-recovery " framework. Consequently, the SLC depends upon its ability to provide relevant services to practitioners, and to attain on-going research grants by remaining at the forefront of school leadership research.

## **Achievements of the First Year**

After receiving formal approval on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2004, from the Faculty of Education, the School Leadership Centre quickly got down to business. The Centre's activities may be summarized under three headings:

1. Infrastructure development,
2. Projects, and
3. Future Planning.

### **Infrastructure Development**

The SLC grew its operating infrastructure steadily during its first year. In August 2003, Alex Holm and Mark Edwards were hired as staff. In September, the Faculty of Education made office space available (Scarfe, Room 308b). The steering committee was formed in October and began meeting monthly. Finally,



the Advisory Board of the School Leadership Centre was formed in the Spring and had its first meeting April 22, 2004.

### **Projects**

The SLC undertook seven major projects during its first year of operations. These included:

1. Autumn Colloquium, November 18, 2003: *Alternative School Calendars: What Research and School Experiences Suggest*
2. School Recognition Awards, November 2003 – January 2004.
3. Spring Colloquium, April 5, 2004: *Leadership for Transformation of First Nations Education.*
4. International Educator Exchange: New Zealand, July/August 2004.
5. Shanxi, China School Leadership Program: October, 2003–June 2005
6. Parent Involvement Project: February, 2004 – January, 2005
7. Visiting Scholar Program.



Autumn and Spring Colloquia

Colloquy n. act of conversing; a conversation.

The Autumn and Spring Colloquia were both hosted at the Liu Centre for the Study of Global Issues. The unique case room of the Liu Centre, a miniature of the United Nations General Assembly meeting hall, enables practitioners and researchers to interact and engage in dialogue. The organizational and pedagogical approaches adopted by the colloquia strongly reflect the possibilities of



Spring Colloquium in the Case Room of the Liu Centre

this extraordinary space, and the SLC’s commitment to dialogue.

The intent of the colloquia is to allow practitioners and researchers to have an in-depth conversation about an educational topic of pressing interest. The number of participants is strictly limited (40), both by the space, and by our commitment to

enable participants to engage each other’s experience and critical reflections. Preference is given to teams of educators from districts or communities in order to enhance the

potential for new colloquia knowledge to root itself and grow in the vital, existing relationships of a collegial team. Ideas shared by several leaders in a school community are more likely to be critically evaluated, creatively adapted to a team’s shared context, and pragmatically implemented. The colloquia are organized to enable

*Perfect! A wonderful opportunity to hear from people from 17 different school districts-all with the wisdom of those heavily involved in this process.*  
**(Autumn Participant)**



teams to apply new ideas to the specifics of their own contexts. The colloquia also seek to develop research relationships between practitioners and academic researchers.

Several research relationships

grew out of the two Colloquia.

Following *Alternative School*

*Calendars: What Research*

*and School Experiences*

*Suggest*, Dr. Shields has been

engaged by, and worked with,

*Good role-modelling -> very helpful having First Nations persons discuss First Nations needs. Same thing needed in schools! Sharing of ideas, innovations, etc. caused us to look at "other" ways of doing things with FN education.*

**(Spring Participant)**

schools in Okanagan Falls, Williams Lake, and Richmond as well as participating in dialogue with the advisory committee of the West Vancouver School Board regarding balanced school calendars. And following *Leadership for Transformation of First Nations Education*, the School Leadership Centre, in collaboration with the Indigenous Education Institute of Canada, and the First Nations Education Steering Committee, launched the SAGE (Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement) program, setting the goal among post-secondary institutions province-wide of 250 Aboriginal students having completed or completing PhD programs by 2010.

### **School Recognition Awards**

The School Recognition Awards were established to recognize the excellent work to improve student learning undertaken by schools across British Columbia. In 2003, the Awards focussed on Kindergarten through grade 4 programs. 130 applications from primarily public schools were received. With funding provided by the Ministry of Education, 60 schools were awarded \$3000 each. Awards were granted to schools



demonstrating a history of, and a plan for, significantly improving the learning of students.<sup>1</sup>

*We were thrilled and delighted to hear from you regarding the School Recognition Award Program. We had been working with our fingers crossed for the last little while, which was pretty uncomfortable! We really appreciate the opportunity to support our project, and have been attacking our goals and targets with renewed ardour since we heard about the award. Thank you for administering this grant and making the whole process possible for us.*

*Janice Clark,  
Principal, Langley Meadows Community School*

### **International Educator Exchange**

The purpose of the International Educator Exchange program is to provide outstanding BC educators an opportunity to engage successful educational programs elsewhere in the globe. The program is reciprocal, promoting the sharing of expertise between BC educators and those of the exchange country.

In 2004, the program focuses on Indigenous education with an exchange of two teachers and two administrators to New Zealand. The purpose of this exchange is to:

- Share expertise with, and gain insights into, how educators in NZ have developed innovative approaches to Indigenous education.
- Develop wider support networks and on-going exchanges of information.
- Improve educational opportunities for Aboriginal students in British Columbia and in New Zealand.

The School Leadership Centre, supported by a grant from the Ministry of Education, provides return airfare and a \$1000 stipend for expenses to each participant. The four

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<sup>1</sup> The list of award winning schools may be viewed at the School Leadership Centre website: [www.slc.educ.ubc.ca](http://www.slc.educ.ubc.ca)



BC educators will spend 3 weeks in New Zealand during July and August 2004 and New Zealand educators will spend 3 weeks in BC during January 2005.

The SLC is grateful to Madeleine MacIvor, Associate Director of the First Nations House of Learning, for her assistance in the selection process. The 2004 selected educators are:

- Ms. Shielia Austin, teacher, Bayside Middle School, Saanich.
- Mr. John Chenowith, District Principal, First Nations Education, Nicola – Similkameen.<sup>2</sup>
- Ms. Gloria Cole, teacher, Surrey.
- Ms. DeDe DeRose, Principal, Beattie Elementary School, Kamloops.
- Ms. Robyn Gray, District Principal, First Nations Education, Nanaimo.

### **Shanxi School Leadership Project**

In October 2003, the School Leadership Centre hosted a tour of UBC for, and met with, an Education Ministry delegation from Shanxi Province, People's Republic of China. As a consequence of this meeting, negotiations were undertaken to develop and provide a school leadership in-service program for Shanxi School leaders and Ministry officials. A contract for these services was finally concluded in May 2004. The planned program has 2 phases. In November 2004, four instructors will work in Shanxi for two weeks with a group of forty secondary school principals. The second phase will bring forty principals to British Columbia for two weeks for a mix of academic and practical experience in the BC school context in April 2005.

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<sup>2</sup> Unfortunately, due to a significant scheduling conflict, Mr. Chenowith was unable to participate. Ms. Robyn Gray, as the first alternate, participated in his place.



### **Parent Involvement Project**

The Parent Involvement Project is a joint project, funded by a grant from the Ministry of Education, and undertaken in partnership with representatives from the major educational partners in BC. The purpose of the project is to enhance the involvement of parents in the education program of their children's school in general and in their child's educational experience in particular. The project responds to the compelling research that demonstrates a strong positive link between parent involvement and student success. The working committee for this project is slated to begin meeting September 2004.

### **Visiting Scholar Program**

The SLC provides research resources to invited scholars seeking to do research in school leadership. Fang-Hua Hsiao, Assistant Professor in the Department of Comparative Education, National Chi Nan University, Taiwan, is visiting scholar for 2004. She will be joined by Dr. Keith Walker, Professor of Educational Administration, University of Saskatchewan, for the period of July thru December 2004. In January 2005, Dr. Bill Mulford, Professor and Director of Research and Director of the Leadership for Learning research group, Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania, Australia will be working out of the SLC.

### **Future Planning**

#### **2004-2005 Colloquia Series: *Developing Leadership Literacy***

The 2004 / 2005 Colloquia Series, will explore four topics of note:



- Ethical leadership in times of conflict (Sept 24<sup>th</sup>) - Dr. Daniel Vokey;
- School leadership and media (November 26th) – Dr. Michelle Stack;
- Healthy schools: An arts based approach (January 21st) - Dr. Kit Grauer;
- School leadership and distance learning (March 25th) - TBA.

### **Continuing Projects**

The School Leadership Centre will continue the following projects in 2004 – 2005:

- School Recognition Awards: primary and intermediate grades—schools that have improved student learning.
- Parent Involvement Project.
- International Educator Exchange.
- Shanxi Leadership Program.
- Visiting Scholars Program.

### **New Initiatives**

Planning for new initiatives is well underway. These initiatives will advance the SLC's unique opportunity to provide a meeting place for all members of the educational community in British Columbia. Among these initiatives are an issues forum composed of noted British Columbians from a variety of social locations to identify pressing educational issues; the development of a think-tank approach to specific educational issues, followed by the publication of a monograph for professional use on each issue engaged; and administrative and research support for the Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement program (SAGE). This last is in keeping with the recent inclusion of the support and development of Indigenous educational leadership as a new goal of the Centre's operations in 2004-2005.



Faculty of Education

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