



UPDATE

February 1998

McDowell Foundation Information Centre and Donor Recognition Wall



Although in only its fourth year of operation, the McDowell Foundation took on a sense of permanency December 15, 1997 with the unveiling of its high-tech information centre and donor recognition wall.

Located in the lobby of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation building, the audio-visual segment of the centre contains a wealth of information related to the Foundation, while there is also a nearby portrait of former STF and Canadian Teachers' Federation General

Secretary Stirling McDowell (which was done by Herb Wilde).

Harold Schultz, co-ordinator of public relations for the McDowell Foundation, said the centre signaled the fact the Foundation has gone from being a vision to reality, complete with a bank balance of a million dollars and the sponsorship of 40 research projects to date.

Fred Herron, General Secretary of the STF, is also the President of the Foundation's board of directors. "This is the third jewel in the crown

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as far as I am concerned, and it goes hand-in-hand with teacher welfare and professional development. For teachers to be doing their own research rather than have other people do these things for them is a wonderful thing for our profession," he said.

Thus far the Foundation has provided research opportunities for more than 115 teachers, through allocation of \$200,000 for research projects, including \$60,000 earmarked for 1998.

The Foundation was originally launched in 1991 with the support of a small group of founding corporate donors. Their efforts helped launch the first Teaching for Tomorrow fundraising campaign.

Cliff Wright, who was the head of the Future Corporation at that time, said he was particularly pleased at

the way the proposal to create the McDowell Foundation had captured the vision of the Future Corporation.

According to Wright, that clearly-defined, long-term vision made the Foundation a natural recipient of the \$150,000 grant from the Future Corporation, which effectively helped launch the original campaign.

Noting his disappointment with the inability of numerous other organizations to grasp the real meaning of the Future Corporation's existence, he applauded the STF and the McDowell Foundation for their ability to look to the future. Wright added that the Foundation's system is effectively able to monitor the projects and measure their success rate.

"It was always one of the Future Corps' greatest goals to help research education in Saskatchewan, and to further work in the province in that

area," Wright added.

Don Black, the CEO of Greystone Capital, said the main reason his firm became involved was also because of the Foundation's commitment to the future. "We always viewed our involvement in this project as being long-term in nature, and we have seen great success."

Education Minister Pat Atkinson, who earlier had announced a \$50,000 contribution to the McDowell Foundation, emphasized that she was confident the teacher research work being undertaken would have direct benefits to the classroom. "There is academic research, and there is grass-roots research — it is important we have both," she said.

Article and photo by Jens Nielsen

Foundation Funds Teacher-Researchers in Small Towns and Rural Areas

(adapted from April 30, 1997 News Release)

Saskatchewan's unique program of grassroots research into improving teaching and learning for children continues, as another seven studies have been awarded grants by the Dr. Stirling McDowell Foundation for Research into Teaching.

The Foundation announced today it will provide \$40,365 for the seven projects to be undertaken by over 36 Saskatchewan educators in 1997-98.

These awards mark the McDowell Foundation's fourth year of grants for research into practical improvements in classroom instruction.

This year's successful projects were chosen from 15 applications, which had asked for more than \$95,500 for school-based research.

Projects receiving grants for 1997-98 are:

- \$1,800 for a study on the Internet as a teaching and learning tool by Diane Hanson of Regina.

- \$14,467 for a four-year longitudinal study on primary school language intervention by Laurie Parbst and Linda Spice of Nipawin.
- \$4,900 for a study of what is learned in literature circles by Gail McKenzie Wilcox and Cathy Ambrose of Saskatoon.
- \$7,000 for a study on reaching and teaching at-risk students, and what classroom practice says about this, by Terri Mayne and Bruce Baldwin of Regina.
- \$1,000 to assist in the further development of a proposal for a research project on community involvement in education by Sheena Koops of Black Lake.
- \$4,560 for a study of how in-school suspension is working by Roza Sola Gray of Moose Jaw.
- \$2,280 for a study on accessing art through viewer-response by Debby Noble of La Ronge.
- \$5,358 for a study on the rural realities of oracy in English Language Arts 10-30 by Anthony

Baldwin, Janice Duncan, K. Marlyn Keaschuk, Greg Trithart, and Bonita Tucker, all of Chaplin.

- \$1,000 to assist in the further development of a research project on the adaptive dimension of the core curriculum by Cathy Mills of Birch Hills.

The Foundation's focus is on collaborative "action-research," which often teams classroom teachers with education professors in an effort to identify what teaching strategies work and why, says Lynda McLean-Woodward, on sabbatical from the Saskatoon Public School Division and chair of the McDowell Foundation's project review committee.

"The Foundation gives teachers time to analyze their own teaching practice and that of other teachers, to help improve teaching and learning in Saskatchewan's kindergarten to Grade 12 classrooms," she adds.

Coordinator's Message

This has been an exciting year for the McDowell Foundation and hopefully this Update issue shares some of the highlights with you. I want to applaud the work of the McDowell researchers and it was a delight to share their enthusiasm at the third annual Learning from Practice conference in November. We hope that enthusiasm will spread to others in the teaching profession.

It has been a pleasure to plan for the Teaching for Tomorrow's World fundraising campaign. The campaign features a new logo that is very attractive. Elsewhere you can see the order form if you would like to purchase some articles with the logo. Thanks go out to Greystone Capital Management for their assistance with the campaign and thanks to all of you who have responded.

While the Foundation is still in its formative years, it is showing very positive development which is due to the fact that many people are supportive in many different ways. You can get a better appreciation for the work of the Foundation and all of its supporters by visiting the Information Centre in the foyer of the STF building or you can visit the Foundation via the Internet at www.stf.sk.ca.

Best wishes to all of you and thanks for your continuing moral and financial support!

Sincerely,



Harold Schultz
Public Relations Coordinator

Memorial and Honourary Gifts

The McDowell Foundation provides the opportunity to make memorial and honorary gifts in recognition of a colleague or friend. The Foundation office maintains a special book which records the names of people that are recognized.

What is Planned Giving?

Planned Giving is simply a deferred gift - a way of personally expressing now, how you wish your resources to be used later.

Your gift can be in the form of a bequest, a life insurance policy, real estate possessions, or any other financial instrument which suits your needs.

Most important, a planned gift is your commitment to enhance the teaching profession and provide for research into teaching and learning. It is your opportunity to benefit teachers and students for generations to come.

For more information please contact:

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Saskatoon SK S7J 2H8
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The Financial Picture

Donations Analysis by Tracks July 1, 1991 to December 31, 1997

	Total Gifts and Pledges	Number of Pledges
Teachers, Superannuates	\$ 72,384.34	1278
Partners	\$ 244,702.43	142
Educational Organizations	\$ 60,389.54	32
Corporations/Foundation	\$ 391,220.00	26
Small Business/Organizations	\$ 310.00	5
No Information	\$ 2,092.00	36
Totals	\$ 971,098.31	1,519

Work of the McDowell Foundation Researchers Address Classroom Teaching

What follows are personal reports from McDowell Foundation researchers. They are provided here to show the positive impact the Foundation is having on teachers and students.

A Journey Toward Choice Theory: Our Story

Vincent Massey School, an elementary (K-8) school in Saskatoon, embarked on a journey towards more effective practices of student management during the 1997-98 school year as a result of a Dr. Stirling McDowell Foundation grant. Vincent Massey has an ethnically varied student body of about 300 and a total staff of 24. The purpose of this study was to develop a deeper understanding of individual behavior motivation, based on Choice Theory (Glasser, 1986) and its impact on classroom relationships and ultimately, classroom learning.

Background

Choice Theory is based upon the work of Dr. William Glasser. It purports that all behavior is purposeful and accepts that individuals are internally motivated as opposed to externally motivated. This theory also stresses that individuals are continually seeking to meet basic psychological needs of survival, love and belonging, power or recognition and fun and freedom. A key concept in the understanding of Choice Theory is the understanding of the power of a positive, trusting and quality relationship, whether it be with students in the classroom, with colleagues in the staff room or with parents in the community. These understandings enabled the teachers to assist one another throughout the school year in creating the conditions in which the students and the staff together could meet their needs in a positive manner.

At the conclusion of formal and intensive theoretical training on Choice Theory, teachers had a greater understanding of, not only the critical role which their behaviors impact upon classroom inter-

actions and the subsequent teaching and learning, but also the significance of positive and successful relationships within the classroom.

Throughout the year, students from Kindergarten to Grade 8 were formally taught Choice Theory. The theoretical concepts were integrated into the Language Arts, Lifestyles of Social Studies curricula. Each teacher presented the premises of Choice Theory to his or her students using a variety of resources and strategies. Bi-monthly, the staff met after school to share ideas, successes, and frustration and to clarify personal questions or understanding of the theory. There were two formally arranged professional development discussion sessions in which an outside resource was invited to work with the group.

Impact on Staff

Throughout the school year, the Vincent Massey staff members were asked to articulate their perceptions regarding the benefits and usefulness of learning and using Choice Theory as a means of behavior management. In most cases, staff members noted their belief that the classroom was less chaotic and the students were more positive and understanding of their own behavior and more tolerant of the behavior of their classmates. In essence, staff members sensed that the initial focus of enhancing teaching and learning in the classroom was being realized. For many staff members, a deeper understanding of the power of Choice Theory has begun to crystallize, and with this, a personal desire and commitment to assist future staff, students and parents in the understanding and practice of Choice Theory.

Impact on Students

An important consideration is that Choice Theory is not merely a technique used to control student behavior. Rather, it is a belief that individuals can and do control their own behavior, and for many, this concept alone requires a significant shift in thinking and acting in the classroom and around the school. Observations of behavior and interactions among students showed the beginnings of an understanding of the impact of either positive or negative behavior choices on a specific situation. The students were also questioned as to the value of learning Choice Theory throughout the year. For the most part, students indicated that, as a direct result of learning Choice Theory, they were more aware of their own needs and more tolerant of others' needs. Many students also began to consider ways to meet their psychological needs in a positive and respecting way. One student commented that, "Learning Choice Theory has really helped. I think about what I want and what I am doing (is it helping or hurting) instead of just reacting to a feeling." Like many of the teachers, some students were excited about teaching Choice Theory to their parents.

The members of the Choice Theory Committee at Vincent Massey School continue to be excited and optimistic about having Choice Theory as part of the school's mandate. The staff is grateful to the members of the McDowell Foundation Committee for supporting this project and a detailed and formal report will be submitted to the Foundation in January 1998.

Submitted by Jane McLeod

Primary School Language Intervention - A Window of Opportunity

Ecole Alex Wright School Staff, Nipawin. Submitted by Linda Spice on behalf of the research team which includes the total staff, a speech language pathologist and a University Faculty member.

The purpose of our project is to become more effective in assisting and teaching children who demonstrate a language delay. The number of these children appears to be increasing every year in our school system. We will monitor the language development of children in Alex Wright School for a four year period beginning in September 1997 and ending in June 2001.

The overall encompassing factor of this project is "teamwork". The whole school staff is committed to the improvement of language development in our students.

It is our objective to ascertain the effects of early school intervention and take advantage of children's optimal stage of learning. The young age of the child provides a "window" of learning opportunity that never occurs again in the child's life. We feel if we can intervene and help the child at this stage, the benefits will be long term.

We are investigating various program options, instructional strategies, and resources. We are currently identifying what we do in our classrooms that encourages language development. We hope to build on this foundation of knowledge for the duration of our project.

At the end of the project we hope to provide teachers with a practical handbook of ideas, methods, and resources. We hope to build an awareness of the significance of teaching environments and personnel at the primary level.

Submitted by Linda Spicer/Laurie Parbst

Research on Experiential Learning and Teaching

Being involved in an educational research project has been both a challenging and rewarding experience. It has given us the opportunity to reflect in greater depth on our teaching methods and has provided concrete evidence regarding an instructional method that has proved to be very beneficial to students. Through this evidence we now are able to share with other teachers who are looking for a way to improve the quality of education for their students.

The positive impact on our professional careers has been tremendous. Being able to interact with individuals on a professional basis at conferences has allowed us to grow intellectually and gain knowledge of different research methods

that have enhanced the final outcome of our research.

Beth and I believe that our education system will definitely benefit from our research. We believe in a teaching method, researched that method, and now have proof that the method has a positive impact on students and their futures.

The Dr. Stirling McDowell Foundation has provided the teachers of our province with an excellent opportunity for professional growth. It is our sincerest hope that our colleagues in secondary schools will undertake similar action research projects in order to improve upon practice in the high schools of our province.

submitted by Janice Hendry and Beth Warkentin

Governance of the Foundation

Meetings of the Board of Directors and Advisory Board were held last fall. The program of activities for 1997-98 was approved and the Annual Report and audited Financial Statement were approved. Copies of these reports are available upon request. The Board approved \$60,000 for research projects in 1998 and the call for proposals closes on March 31, 1998.

Members of the Board of Directors include Alice Andreas, Rex Beaton, Don Black, Ingrid

Gabert, Fred Herron, Jim Jeske, Doreen Lloyd, Rita Priestley, Earle Robertson, Joan Smith, Gordon Tamblin, and Boyd Taylor.

Members of the Advisory Board include David Bale, Marie Bandet-Prebushewski, Marilyn Braun, Robert Devrome, Cort Dogniez, Ralph Fram, George Georget, Ron Holloway, Evelyn Jones, Margaret Lipp, Larry Lozinski, Deborah Miket, Debbie Ward, Beryl Robinson, and Michael Swityk.

Herron Resigns as General Secretary of the STF and President of the Foundation

Best wishes are extended to Fred Herron upon his retirement on March 31, 1998. Fred was a key figure in bringing the McDowell Foundation from an idea to a reality. His personal interest and support for the Foundation has been unwavering and greatly appreciated. He will be greatly missed in his role as Chairperson and President of the Board of Directors.



Challenges: Where the McDowell Foundation Can Go From Here

Excerpts from Associate Dean Sam Robinson's closing remarks at the 1997 Learning from Practice Seminar.

[The first challenge to the McDowell Foundation that I should note] is the need for growth in the dissemination of research. Up to this point, dissemination has followed the university model, with an emphasis on the publication of results and a focus on the research report. Yet there is every indication that this model has not been totally successful with practitioners. The writing and reading of research reports is not always an effective means of engaging teachers in reflection on teaching and learning and the improvement of teaching prac-

tice. The Learning from Practice seminar is one example of a new model of dissemination that appears to be more accessible and effective for many teachers. We need to work toward an understanding of such new models if research is to serve its purpose of adding to the profession's body of educational knowledge.

A second challenge may be seen in the number of McDowell Foundation projects that have underlined the importance of processes that allow teachers to come together to define teacher identity. Jim Jutras in his keynote address noted the need for teachers to develop their professional self-understanding, and numerous teacher researchers at this seminar have

noted the effect research had on their sense of themselves as teachers. What may be needed at this point are meta-studies that examine the role of McDowell Foundation projects, and research generally, in the development of teacher identity.

The third and final challenge relates to the uses of research. In education, we have mounds of research findings, but we don't have a means to make these findings known. Research organizations like the McDowell Foundation can play a useful advocacy role by putting the research forward to teachers and the public. We need somehow to develop the professional muscle that enables education to stand upon its research.

Learning From Practice: An Exchange of Teacher Knowledge and Research

Friday, November 20 & Saturday, November 21, 1998
Travelodge Hotel—Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

Plan now to attend! The focus of the seminar is sharing about the current McDowell Foundation research projects.

Donor Recognition

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The Teaching for Tomorrow's World Fundraising Campaign

The McDowell Foundation received tremendous support from one of its founding donors this past fall. Greystone Capital Management, under the direction of Don Black and Paul Hartman, planned and organized a direct mail canvass of all current teachers and superannuates. The package included important information about the work of the Foundation and included an appeal for charitable donations. It has long been the hope of the Foundation that this message could be placed in the hands of all educators in order to raise greater awareness and participation with the McDowell Foundation. The mail strike interrupted the momentum of the campaign, however, pledges and donations continue to be received.

In order to spark some interest in the campaign, a number of prizes were awarded to donors. The following prizes were awarded:

Barlow Travel Certificates were given to Brian Unverricht of Saskatoon and Lynda Tysowski of Saskatoon.

Barlow Travel air fare for 2 to Vancouver was awarded to John Dyer of Penticton, British Columbia.

Greystone Capital Management sponsored trip to the Edmonton Oilers/Philadelphia Flyer hockey game on December 30, 1997 (air fare, hotel accommodation, box seats, meals) was awarded to Sundras and Marg Nainaar of Canwood, Leonard and Eleanor Davidson of Moose Jaw and Wayne and Linda Clements of Regina.

A special thanks to Barlow Travel and Greystone Management for their generous support.

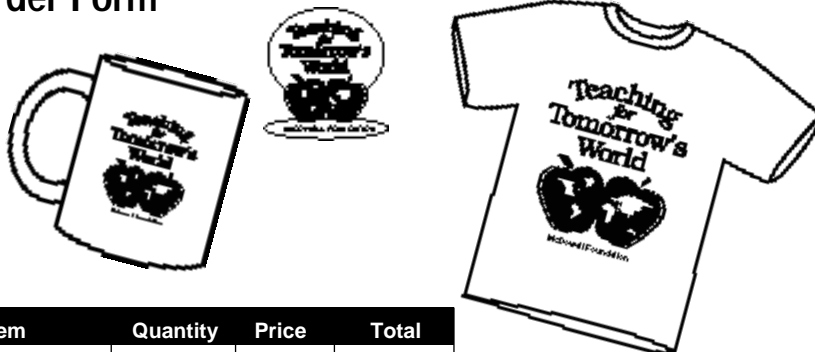
Teaching for Tomorrow's World Campaign

Donations Analysis by Tracks August 1, 1997 to January 31, 1998

	Total Gifts and Pledges	Number of Pledges
Teachers, Superannuates	\$21,305.00	120
Partners	\$52,282.00	11
Corporations/Foundation	\$300.00	1
No Information	\$ 10.00	1
Totals	\$73,897.00	133

***Kick off pledge by the Government of Saskatchewan for \$50,000 included.**

Order Form



Item	Quantity	Price	Total
A) PIN		\$2.00	
B) MUG		\$5.00	
C) T-SHIRT		\$10.00	
Total Items		Total \$	

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