



# UPDATE

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## Teacher Consultation Provides Direction

Teachers from all over the province gathered in Regina on January 29 to provide a sounding board for development of the Foundation. The representative sample of 20 teachers, most of whom had little or no previous contact with the Foundation, stressed the need for the new research organization to be teacher-oriented.

Teacher representation on the Advisory Board was also increased to five, and a majority of teachers is planned for the Project Review Committee to be put in place later this year.

Teachers at the consultation expressed enthusiasm about the positive force that the Foundation will exert on education and the profession of teaching.

*“It has been a high getting the big picture and seeing the possibilities. There is potential here for teachers to do research and recognize action-based research as legitimate.”*

Comment at the January 29 Consultation

Teachers asked the Foundation to take steps to ensure that the research produced is practical and useful to classroom teachers. They also wanted clear supports for teacher involvement in the generation and sharing of new insights into teaching and learning.

In response to this advice, changes were made to the Foundation's governance structure. In the fall the Board of Directors will be changed to consist of five teachers, three major donors to the Foundation, a superannuated teacher, the STF President and General Secretary, and an STF Administrative Staff member.

Many noted that it will be seen as a positive development for teachers and kids by people both within and outside the education community. □

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## Research Recognizes Teachers as Experts

In speaking to the teacher consultation in Regina, Dr. Carolyn Krentz emphasized that research into education is changing to incorporate the

*“I believe that the McDowell Foundation can get people together and build teacher morale. We will see our self-worth through action research. I’ve wanted for years to do a project on Reading in the Classroom but never had the time.”*

Comment at the January 29 Consultation

expertise of teachers.

The idea of research as something done at universities or by experts outside the classroom is outdated, she said. Classroom teachers are the ones who know the most about teaching and learning. They are the experts.

Dr. Krentz urged teachers to become involved in action research projects in the classroom and to use the McDowell Foundation to gain support for such projects.

The key role of teachers in improving teaching and learning was also stressed by Verna Gallén, principal author of the *STF Study of Teaching*. Over 1,000 Saskatchewan teachers participated in the 1989 study which provided impetus for the creation of a research foundation devoted to the study of teaching and learning.

The STF study was successful, Gallén told teachers, because it tapped teachers’ collective understanding of what they do and encouraged them to share their experiences. The McDowell Foundation will continue this process.

Following the speakers, teachers had an opportunity to brainstorm research topics that they personally would like to address if the necessary time and resources were in place. The topics ranged from exploration of why girls don’t pursue careers in mathematics and science to an international survey of techniques for teaching reading. □

## It is the aim

- To contribute to
- To promote exper
- To support the a
- To widen the bas research; and
- To provide an ave those interested i

## Basic Criteria for Project S

The Board of Directors has approved policies and guidelines that will be used by the Project Review Committee in selecting research projects for funding by the McDowell Foundation.

The guidelines were approved after review by the teacher consultation, the Foundation’s Advisory Board and the staff and Executive of the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation.

### Some significant aspects of the guidelines are:

- Anyone is eligible to make application to the Foundation, including educators and non-educators, individuals, groups and organizations, Saskatchewan residents and

# of the Dr. Stirling McDowell Foundation:

knowledge about teaching and learning;  
experimentation and innovation in teaching;  
active involvement of teachers in research;  
use of individuals and organizations engaged in educational  
venue for discussing research directions with a wide variety of  
in high quality education.

## Selection Approved

those living outside  
Saskatchewan.

- All research proposals should be able to show that the research will provide direct benefit to teachers in Saskatchewan and elsewhere.

- Projects are preferred that involve teachers in a way that extends their ability and

motivation as researchers.

- Projects must contribute to knowledge about teaching and learning in the context of K-12 education.

- Project proposals must contain a strategy for the dissemination and application of the research among teachers in Saskatchewan and elsewhere.

- The Project Review Committee may interact with applicants to improve proposals prior to making a final decision on them.

The complete guidelines may be obtained from Verna Gallén, Foundation Co-ordinator, and will be included in application forms being developed. □

*“It’s exciting to be included in something starting out that may change education in Saskatchewan. Any teacher, even a primary teacher, even me, can do research. We need that.”*

Comment at the January 29 Consultation

## Teaching for Tomorrow Campaign Kicks Off!

**T**he fund-raising campaign for the McDowell Foundation will be officially initiated with a news conference in Saskatoon on April 30. The news conference will involve

*“Teachers are committed to kids and working to be professional. The Foundation has the potential to further that. We need to really get at teaching and learning - PhD and MA research doesn’t do it. We need to get at things like the self-image aspects of children’s learning and their ability to learn.”*

Comment at the January 29  
Consultation

major supporters of the Foundation to date and bring together all those who have contributed financially to its establishment.

At this point, well over \$500,000 in pledges and donations has been raised from superannuated teachers, friends of the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation and a few early corporate sponsors.

The teachers’ arm of the campaign is being organized by volunteer teacher co-chairs in

each region of the province. Teachers in every school will receive information about the Foundation and be given an opportunity to provide a donation.

Approaches to corporations, businesses, other organizations, superannuates and other individuals interested in K-12 education are on-going.

The goal of the campaign is to raise \$1.5 million by the end of this year and \$5 million over the next five years. □

Saskatchewan teachers may wish to note the retirement of Dr. Stirling McDowell after ten years as Secretary General of the Canadian Teachers’ Federation. Dr. McDowell retired on December 31, 1992. Prior to taking a position at the national level, he served as General Secretary of the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation for fifteen years. The Foundation was officially named after him at the 1991 STF Council in recognition of his work in support of educational research and the teaching profession.



**T**he Dr. Stirling McDowell Foundation was formed by the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation in 1991. It is governed by a Board of Directors that oversees the direction of the organization. An advisory board with representatives from educational, business and community organizations assists in the development of policies and procedures. For further information write to:

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