



# Northern Ontario Education Leaders NOELights

News & Views



Issue 1  
January 2009

Find out about workshops recently presented at the NOEL Fall Leadership Conference

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Find out more about NOEL activities Read the following excerpts from Mary-Catherine Kelly's speech at our recent Fall leadership Conference:



...in the North,  
by the North,  
to meet the needs of  
Northern Educators!

## From the NOEL Region

Carol Volbracht

When I introduce myself as an employee of N.O.E.L., it rarely fails to bring forth a smile. Initially I found this reaction a little alarming, until I realized that most people had no idea what the acronym represents. Some thought I was getting an early start on Christmas, albeit with a French flavour. I think that some people in Southern Ontario actually thought I was an emissary from the North Pole, once they had gotten over the fact that North Bay and Thunder Bay were not remotely close to one another. After a few interesting introductions followed by lengthy explanations even within my former school board, I think it is time to clarify. N.O.E.L. actually stands for Northern Ontario Education Leaders, a consortium of school boards and educational institutes. If this document has reached you, you are likely a member of N.O.E.L. and therefore eligible for

the many associated benefits. NOEL hosts at least 3 conferences each year (Frontline, Summer Literacy and Fall Leadership), which showcase well known educators from across the world as well as exemplary local practitioners. There is a NOEL website on which we try to capture the results of the research projects undertaken throughout the region. This same website features a wide variety of courses in which you, as a member, can enrol at no cost. How do you become a member? If you work for one of the affiliate boards\* or agencies, you are a member. There is no cost involved, except for cost recovery of any conferences. Visit the NOEL website for more information. My official title is the *NOEL Leadership for Literacy Development Coordinator*. This means that I work with committees drawn from all boards to plan and present NOEL conferences. If you wish to make suggestions about conferences or the website, please contact me at [carolv@online.ca](mailto:carolv@online.ca).

[www.noelonline.ca](http://www.noelonline.ca)

\* See the list on page 3

## Mary-Catherine Kelly, NOEL Chair

*From the Fall Conference Introductory Speech*

**This is the only region in the province where the Directors of Education, of both the public and Catholic schools voluntarily meet together and intentionally strategize about how best to utilize our Ministry of Education funding to best meet the needs of all of the children across the region.** This collaboration is unique, rare and most valuable for all of our boards, big and small. NOEL has a wonderful reputation for demonstrating true collaboration in the strongest way. Last year both Janet Wilkinson and I were asked to be part of an LNS video/podcast to share the journey of the NOEL group, with the province. We have been able to accomplish so much more, as a collective than we could if we all tried to do it on our own. The NOEL group encompasses both Catholic and Public Boards but it also included:

representation for our First Nations, Métis and Inuit organizations, our French boards, our School Authorities, Lakehead University and Confederation College.

I would like to take just a minute or two, to share with you some of the many benefits that come to our teachers and leaders through our NOEL Partnership:

We offer outstanding professional development opportunities for our boards such as 3 annual conferences a year:

- The NOEL Summer Institute for teachers in August
- Our Frontline Conference for school administrative assistants in the spring
- And of course our Fall NOEL Leadership Conference, which gives us

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the opportunity to bring the best speakers in the province to all of you, our system leaders.

- What is most significant is that we build in an opportunity for our leaders to network with each other, share best practices and build capacity within all of our boards.

A few other very significant NOEL Projects, I would like to highlight are:

NOEL has worked very hard at the development of our Data Warehouse that houses, stores, manipulates and provides reporting opportunities for all of the student achievement data for all our schools across the region.

This data warehouse or COGNOS project has been instrumental in helping our boards with our board improvement plans, school improvement plans and provides our Principals and Teachers with the data necessary to help them drive the instructional practices in the schools to support student achievement.

The ability to do this is cutting edge in the province, and other boards are looking to partner with us, because the tools are so powerful. We never could have done this alone. Our collaboration between the 8 boards has made this possible.

Another significant project that is supported by our NOEL partnership is the Oral Language Project with world renowned researchers Carmel Crevola and Peter Hill. This research is going to have an amazing impact on education here in Ontario and maybe across the world.

**NOEL is all of us, it is a team of educators who share and collaborate to maximize resources to serve the children of Northwestern Ontario.** As Chair it is my honour to introduce our Directors of NOEL to you.

**Barbara Spadoni** Superior North Catholic DSB  
**Patti Pella** Superior Greenstone DSB  
**John DeFavre** Thunder Bay Catholic DSB  
**Terry Ellwood** Lakehead Public Schools  
**Jack McMaster** Rainy River DSB  
**Phyllis Ekre** Kenora Catholic DSB  
**Larry Hope** Keewatin-Patricia DSB  
**M-C Kelly** Northwest Catholic DSB

I am proud to also recognize our other partners:

**Fred Porter, representing all of our Education Authorities (NSRA)**  
**John O'Meara, Dean of Education, Lakehead University**  
**Delbert Horton, 7 Generations**

**Judi Maundrell, Dean of Education Confederation College**  
**Sylvie Mauro, representing our French boards**  
**Dawna Johnson, Ministry of Education**

I would also like to recognize the following people who take on leadership with NOEL:

**Conference Coordinator, Carol Volbracht**

**Oral Language, Jeannie McMaster**

**MISA Coordinator: Marie Clarke**

**COGNOS Data Warehouse: Diane Finlay and Ling Meng**

**Lakehead Public Schools Finance Department for looking after the NOEL financial resources and reporting.**



## Learning to 18 eLearning

Watch for information in the next issue of NOELights!





Keewatin-Patricia  
District School Board



Kenora Catholic  
District School Board



Superior North Catholic  
District School Board



The Northwest Catholic  
District School Board



Thunder Bay Catholic  
District School Board

Lakehead  
UNIVERSITY



## NOEL Conference Information

FALL

### Instructional Leadership: From Research to Results Oct. 15-17, 2008 Airline Travelodge Hotel

It has been several months since you had an opportunity to share with your colleagues, as we sought to improve our Instructional Leadership. The following outline may refresh your memory or, if you missed the conference, it may give you a glimpse of the wealth of experiences available.

#### News from Far and Away

##### Dr. Stephen White

Dr. Stephen White opened our conference on Wednesday evening with his keynote "Research to Results". He outlined that: "We need to honour our own professional judgment to move staff and students forward. We can't do everything...as much as we want to, so let's work on the data that will help us have insights to change."

Today's Leadership Objective is to equip participants to:

- Inform Research by emphasizing smart goals
- Apply Antecedents of Excellence to data that counts
- View Teams and Leaders as Experts in Data Analysis
- Triangulate Data to inform Decisions
- Expand Understanding of Data without numbers
- Improve school improvement for results

Dr. White referred the use of data to inform instructional decisions as "Chasing success". He suggested that in order to do that we need to start to answer the following questions:

- What adult teaching practices are working to improve student achievement?
- To what degree are the practices working well?
- What practices are not working well as well as anticipated and need to be discarded or modified?
- How can I augment my current teaching practices?

This process needs to be focused on and in the classroom where actual results are evaluated when compared to projections and best practices are replicated.

For an in depth explanation of Dr. White's work, see his book, *Show me the Proof*.

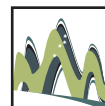
Would you like to share your work with your colleagues across Northwestern Ontario?  
Why not give a workshop at our next Literacy or Leadership Conference?

Let us know!

<http://www.noelonline.ca/index.php?pid=33>

Contact  
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to find out more about  
presenting at workshops!



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**Carol Volbracht**  
NOEL Leadership for Literacy Development Coordinator  
caroIV@noelonline.ca



Our second keynote speaker, Michael Reist, inspired us all with his address entitled “Teaching for Character”. Initially, he reviewed the “Post-Modern Crisis” including changing value structures, as well as the influence of the media and the Internet. Michael went on to outline 16 key words as a basis for character education:

## 16 Ways to Teach Character

Integrity  
Empathy  
Moderation  
Respect  
Love  
Acceptance  
Fairness  
Freedom  
Trust

Discipline  
Involvement  
Hope  
Conscience  
Honesty  
Courage  
Humility

One face  
Another person's shoes  
In a culture of excess  
versus bullying  
your neighbour as yourself  
versus judgement  
One size does not fit all  
Obedience = virtue  
People become what they're  
perceived to be.  
versus control  
versus self-interest  
the lesson of history  
“the still small voice within”  
playing roles versus being real  
is not a man with a gun  
Humility is truth

He reminded us of the importance of teaching these values through modelling, using our own actions and those of others, to develop understanding and similar actions in our students.



## Dr. Carol Campbell

Chief Education Officer for the Ministry of Education

Finally, on Friday morning, Dr. Carol Campbell, the Chief Education Officer for the Ministry of Education reinforced Dr. White's message as she shared an overview of the research being done through the Ministry of Education with her keynote address: “Connecting Research to Educational Improvement; Being Evidence-based in Practice.” To see the slides that Dr. Campbell presented, check [www.noelonline.ca](http://www.noelonline.ca) under the Fall Conference.

If anyone is interested in or already involved in doing a research project, they are invited to contact the <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/research/> for ideas, support and perhaps sharing their results.

In addition to these keynote addresses, we also had a variety of workshops from noted presenters.

## Instructional Intelligent: What Would It Look Like?

**Dr. Barrie Bennet, Associate Professor OISE**

Barrie discussed the research he has been doing over the last ten years in eleven districts and three countries around instructional intelligence. He pointed out the importance of such issues as checking for understanding, framing of questions, wait time and effective structuring of groups. The fish bone graphic organizer was also utilized as a tool that can be effective in classrooms from JK to Grade 12. Participants were encouraged to look for his new book “Beyond Monet” that further explains the brief synopsis he gave in the workshop.

## Effective Assessment and Grading

**Dr. Kris Nielsen**

Kris reviewed her work in the area of assessment and evaluation. She emphasized the need for leadership to ensure that assessment and evaluation are an integral part of the learning process and that they result in meaningful feedback to students and parents.

## Foundational Coaching Skills for Inspired Instructional Leaders

**Jeannie Nishimura and Kate Sharpe**

Jeannie and Kate introduced us to the idea of coaching as a structured conversation. They explained that we listen at two different levels and that in order to be effective coaches; we need to use our Level 2 listening skills as we assist our teachers and colleagues to unlock their ability to deal with a situation.



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## NOEL Courses ONLINE

Visit [www.noelonline.ca](http://www.noelonline.ca) for a complete list of courses and for more information about online courses.

### Aboriginal Series

First Nations Culture and the Environment  
First Nations of Canada  
First Nations of Canada: Aspects of Culture and Heritage  
The Social History of the Algonquian People  
Integrating Native Culture with the Curriculum and in the Classroom  
First Nations Perspectives in the Classroom  
And more!

### General Series

Primary Mathematics through Aboriginal Art  
Junior Math Comes Alive Through Aboriginal Art  
Intermediate Math Comes Alive Through Aboriginal Art  
Enhancing Oral Language in the Core French Classroom  
Math Strategies to Support Students at Risk 7/8  
Math Strategies to Support Students at Risk 9/10  
Reading Strategies to Support Students at Risk 7/8  
Reading Strategies for Grades 9 and 10  
Making Sense of Math Problem Solving  
Developing Number Sense in the Primary Grades  
Balanced Math  
Math Instruction Best Practices  
EQAO: Education Quality and Accountability Office  
Running Records  
Assessment as a Planning Tool: Grades 1 - 8  
And more!

## Best Practices from Home

Every year the last morning of our conference features workshops which showcase local leaders and the work they have done in their schools. We wish to thank Deanna Pacheco, Heidi Patterson, Nicole Morden Cormier, Linda Penna, Barbara Willcocks, Phil Cameron, and Cindy Glavish for agreeing to share with their colleagues.

In her **Oral Language in the Classroom** workshop, Deanna shared a variety of “ready-made” activities that leaders could take back and put into practice at Staff Development meetings. Deanna can be reached at [deanna.pacheco@kpdsb.on.ca](mailto:deanna.pacheco@kpdsb.on.ca).

In their workshop Implementation of an **Effective Behaviour System for your School**, Heidi, Nicole and Linda shared practical ideas, based on their experiences as they implemented the EBS system. They discussed the collection and analysis of data relating to behaviours as they worked to establish a positive school climate. Each participant received samples of the forms they used to collect this data, including surveys and audits. If you would like further information, you can contact presenters at:  
[hpatterson@sgdsb.on.ca](mailto:hpatterson@sgdsb.on.ca)  
[lpenna@sgdsb.on.ca](mailto:lpenna@sgdsb.on.ca)  
[nmorden-cormier@sgdsb.on.ca](mailto:nmorden-cormier@sgdsb.on.ca)

**In The Positive Impact of Family and Community Partnerships on Student Achievement**, Barbara drew from the work of Wayne Hulley to develop a framework to foster partnerships. She has previously successfully implemented this framework at the elementary level and is now working with it at the secondary level  
Presenter Contact:  
[bwillcocks@sgdsb.on.ca](mailto:bwillcocks@sgdsb.on.ca)

Phil and Cindy shared **Trends in Information Technology and their Impact on Classroom Practice**, discussing how to start the conversations about preparing students for the 21st Century. Leslie Hamill of e-Learning Ontario explained how to access the many e-learning resources available from the Ministry of Education, including the Ontario Educational Resource Bank (OERB). You can find out more at [www.elearningontario.ca](http://www.elearningontario.ca).  
Presenter Contact:  
[cglavish@tncdsb.on.ca](mailto:cglavish@tncdsb.on.ca)



<http://www.noelonline.ca/index.php?pid=9>



## Research Expo

Apple Technology and Writing  
Cara Petrone [cpetrone@sncdsb.on.ca](mailto:cpetrone@sncdsb.on.ca)

Job Embedded Professional Learning in Numeracy  
Kathy Smeeth [ksmeeth@mail.rrdsb.com](mailto:ksmeeth@mail.rrdsb.com)

The Math Connection: A Teacher Learning and Leadership Project  
Nicole Walter Rowan  
[Nicole\\_WalterRowan@lakeheadschoools.ca](mailto:Nicole_WalterRowan@lakeheadschoools.ca)

Self Identification Oral Language Project  
Jeannie McMaster [jeannie.mcmaster@kpdsb.on.ca](mailto:jeannie.mcmaster@kpdsb.on.ca)

NOELights Next Issue  
Upcoming Conferences for 2009



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