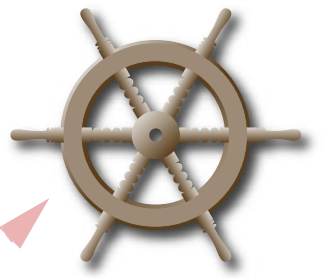


# Charting Your Course FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



## Ready, Set, Go!

*Betty-Jean Aucoin*

EXECUTIVE STAFF OFFICER, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Congratulations! You have completed another school year, a year filled with planning, teaching, assessment, and reflection. As professional development staff officers we have had the pleasure to visit and work with many of you at your schools, campuses, Locals, boards and provincial conferences. Through these interactions we have marveled at your professionalism, dedication and commitment in supporting all students in preparation for their future.

As you take time to look over this past year noting your successes, concerns and interesting moments, we extend to you our thanks and offer, as in the past, professional assistance that will allow you to have another successful year.

In outlining the *Charting Your Course* articles for 2008-09, we decided to devote our final article to assist you in preparations for September: **Ready, Set Go for 2009-2010.**

First, all members who have devoted so much of themselves to public education must now take the time to recharge their energy, spirit and passion. How this takes place differs with each individual. For some of you it's taking respite at the family cottage, for others it's pursuing summer travel for learning and enjoyment, and for others it's taking time to devote to the ones in your lives

that bring you joy. It does not matter what you do, but more importantly, that you do something for yourself.

Before the first days of school begin many of you will be preparing your mindsets, classrooms and programs. To assist you we have outlined a few proven research practices that bring forward success.

Teachers help students learn as well as enhance the quality of their lives. Teachers are often quoted as saying "I don't teach history, I teach students." Our focus should be on maximizing student learning and minimizing student off track behaviour. Start off the year assuming the best of all students and noting always that you assume the students want to be on track for learning.

Effective teachers, like effective leaders, manage their environment; they do not discipline their environment. Florists manage the flower shop, they do not discipline the flower shop. Classroom management is about preparation, preparation, and more preparation. At the beginning of the year successful teachers have the communication plan, unit work, books, and assessments ready. They have the room ready supporting a positive work environment. They are ready with positive expectations, positive attitude, and procedures.



In Harry Wong and Rosemary T. Wong's book, *The First Days of School*, they devote a number of chapters outlining procedures from entering the class, seating charts, first assignments to your important first words and set of directions. Just as summer vacations look different from teacher to teacher, so too will teachers' procedures and routines. Again, it doesn't matter that they differ, but that they exist and students are made aware of them at the beginning of the school year. You increase the chance of

student success and decrease the chance of student disruptions if materials, classroom climate, and teacher are ready before the students enter the class.

On a final note, we leave you with an excerpt from the *First Days of School*: "With desire and commitment, the leader builds fires inside that cause others to glow brightly. No matter what the odds, the leader knows that any task can be accomplished." We look forward to the next school year supporting you, the leaders, within our classrooms.

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