

# Curriculum Corner



*By Brenda Zwicker*

The New Year brought the Curriculum Committee together for a busy day. All members were in attendance except our chairperson Nathan Orman. Stephane Richard, Cathy Doucet, Tanya Samson, Cindy MacKinnon, Grant Frost and Joyce Lively stepped up to the task with Brenda Zwicker filling in for the absent chair. Ron Brunton, staff liaison, as always lent his expertise to the discussions during the day.

The morning involved discussions based on two presentations of a Professional Learning Committee Study and PCAP (Pan-Canadian Assessment Program) results. Ron Brunton provided the group with the above mentioned documents and points of interest. The PLC report is very comprehensive and could be used as a valuable tool for guiding PLCs across the province. The release of this study is now available at [nstu.ca](http://nstu.ca). The PCAP analysis was an interesting read with its assessment results from school systems throughout Canada. This document reveals the performance of Grade 8 students primarily in math and secondly in science and reading.

Our invited guests for the day were Jim Rice and Beth Charlton from the Evaluation Services Branch of the Department of Education. The committee was educated about the Nova Scotia assessment development model. Rice spoke about general and provincial assessments and the role they play in our students' learning. It was noted that the role of the provincial assessments is to provide data which then reveal questions that require analysis. After the analysis, Rice recommended that the results should be given to the public in a simple, meaningful report.

The ELLA program was reviewed for us by Charlton. Many of our committee members have had firsthand experience with these assessments and the sharing of ideas was most informative. It is obvious from Charlton's conversation that the program is carefully reviewed and revised each year; again with a mind to get data that will assist teachers with their students' learning.

A most valuable aspect of this committee is the ability to have interesting conversations with the guests. This day was no exception with concerns and questions raised about assessing creativity, French first language assessments, the time allotted between ELLA results and reflections of these results. The membership is welcome to contact the committee members with topics of concern that can be addressed about curriculum.

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