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## COVER

*The Cover was designed and created by*  
**Mario Bernardo**

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# Beginning Teachers' Conference

Some three hundred teachers, all within the first five years of their careers, met at the Delta Meadowvale on February 18 and 19, 2005. 26 members represented TECT. The conference's keynote speaker was Stephen Lewis, United Nations Special Envoy for HIV/Aids in Africa. Words cannot adequately express the reaction of the assembly when he spoke of the inhumanity of mankind and how that is being played out in Africa.

Let me focus on the conference itself and the "Next Generation" of Catholic Teachers. If the enthusiasm and ambition demonstrated by those new teachers that I had the opportunity to speak to is any indication or sampling of what our membership is going to be like in the future; then I will say that this Unit is being well served by our newest of colleagues.

These new members are experiencing challenges not unlike those teachers who have gone before them. How many experienced teachers remember the challenges in being admitted to Teachers' College, getting hired, starting out as Occasional Teachers and having to teach in dozens of schools and classrooms. Can you recall the coming to terms with an ambitious curriculum, parental concerns, and demanding assessment strategies? Sound familiar?

One of the themes of the conference that was expressed in the opening address by Donna Lacavera was "professionalism". She began with a simple yet very complex question, "What does it mean to be a professional teacher and a member of our professional association – the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association?"

Donna cited Peter Drucker, who is remembered for his comments on social transformations of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Drucker was asked what he thought was the most important challenge facing humanity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Given all the challenges he could have mentioned, famine, disease, ecological disaster, war, ideological fanaticism, economic disparity, he chose Education.

"Education, he said, is at the center of the knowledge society and the school its key institution. The number one challenge facing humanity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is that we have to learn to define the quality of education and the productivity of education, to measure and to manage both."

The world has recognized the role and importance that teachers play within the global society. It may be the worst, or the most challenging of times, because the work of a teacher is seen to be so important that society is reluctant

to leave it up to us. Donna went on to state that, "our professionalism – our expertise and our dedication – are in question, under continuous scrutiny, and on the line as never before."

Teaching has become a profession that is the most regulated of all professions in Ontario. Policy changes as well as legislative changes appear at every level and at the same time the profession and its' professional body are being inundated with competing theories on practice and pedagogy.

We need not look too far down the path to realize that "Professional Learning Communities and Networks" is the next initiative that we may have to endure. PLC's and PLN's can be a boon for our members or a bust. How the plan is rolled out will determine its success locally.

Technical rationalists may try to reduce our profession "to formulaic instrumentality – insisting that if we just used the right resources, the right programs, the right methods, applied the right research – our students would be more successful". Can a professional teacher's expertise be extracted, replicated and packaged for mass distribution? Not likely.

There are hosts of other issues that could be discussed but the most important concept that both new and experienced teachers all have in common is that, "education is not just about programs but about the right teacher." The core of our professionalism must be that we as Catholic Teachers are "dedicated and committed to ensuring that the students entrusted to our care learn, grow and develop to their fullest potential."

We must never doubt the importance or power of our profession, the work we do, or of the impact we have on our students whether we are in the first five years or the last five years of our careers. We have been blessed with an awesome responsibility. The children that have been entrusted to us can either flourish or wither while in our care.

For all the new teachers who have joined the profession of teaching let me first say, welcome; and as Donna concluded in her address to the "Next Generation," It's now your turn to take up the watch."

---

*John Pecsénye is President of the  
Toronto Elementary Catholic Teachers*



## Finding the Right Approach

I am thankful when members share their views on OECTA issues. Through this sharing of information, TECT has a better understanding of what is working well in our association and what approaches require attention. One issue raised often is the relationship that exists between knowing one's rights and the best way to protect these rights.

To illustrate this point, let us look at planning and evaluation time. The Collective Agreement states that a full time teacher is entitled to 150 minutes. Some members, once they are assured that any lost time must be made up, will act on that information. For others, this knowledge is not enough. For such members, the path for achieving what is lost is much more complex than simply knowing that it is their right to have 150 minutes. For these members, the process involves a consideration of one's own comfort level juxtaposed with this knowledge.

Arriving at suitable solutions is a learning conversation for both the member and the release officer. Through this dialogue, possible strategies and outcomes are developed. Members should voice any reservations with the advice given and, if needed, say to the release officer "This approach doesn't work for me." At that point, the conversation continues. Through this collaborative approach, an attempt is made to determine what is the most effective and appropriate advice. To reiterate, this process is always respectful of a member's particular comfort level.

*Release officers will never act without a member's permission and everything shared is kept in strict confidence.*

As I have in past editorials, I invite you to enter into these dialogues, so that TECT can address any concerns in a manner that is sensitive to your individual needs.

Where possible, TECT is attempting to initiate,

through discussions with senior management, Board wide structures for facilitating adherence to the collective agreement. Some of the initiatives being discussed are system wide procedures for making up lost planning time, a uniformed information sheet for grade assignment purposes, and a meeting that would bring together our Association Reps and the principals to discuss staffing. With these and other such joint initiatives, TECT intends to simplify the process for ensuring that your rights are protected. TECT welcomes your input in identifying other strategies or other areas that need immediate attention.

As we enter the last term, please remember to care for your health and well-being and that of your loved ones.

*Anthony Bellissimo  
is Editor of the Metro Voice*

### WHEN IN DOUBT CALL TECT

If you are experiencing any difficulties at your school or workplace or have any questions relating to the Board or the Association feel free to call the TECT office.

The three release officers will be more than happy to assist you. Be reminded that anonymous calls will not be taken.

To contact any of the release officers call the TECT office at (416) 398-6838.

If the release officers are not in the office they can be reached by cell phone or via e-mail.

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*TECT members are encouraged to contact release officers via the TECT e-mail addresses shown above rather than using the assigned TCDSB E-mail addresses.*



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# For a More Democratic TECT

**I**t is time to reform the antiquated TECT voting process in order to render the system more democratic and the leadership more accountable to the membership.

The TECT voting process is not very friendly. One needs to fight rush hour traffic and wait for hours until speeches are finished and then vote. This is ridiculous and unnecessary. This process puts too many obstacles in the way and essentially disenfranchises thousands of members. This results in a few hundred headstrong individuals running the union.

Electing our representatives should not be a case of survival of the fittest. The current process of listening to speeches, shouting down and booing speakers is intimidating and unbecoming a professional association such as ours.

The leadership of TECT cultivates and indoctrinates its reps to its way of thinking during its tenure and change is pretty much impossible.

In reality, we cannot fire our elected representatives. It has been my observation that incumbents are replaced only when they decide to retire, move to provincial or become ineligible due to legislation. It would be in the best interests of the TECT leadership to maintain the status quo but, if the TECT Executive is sincere about empowering members, it should do something about this sad situation.

Members of TECT may recall that voting for a contract was equally archaic many years ago and changes were made. Members had to wait until late at night until the vote was called and then the few hundred members who remained voted by raising coloured cards. How ridiculous!

What we need at the local TECT level is a system where members can vote with ease and dignity, similar to political elections. This could be accomplished by internet voting or by having a vote conducted at each school. The OECTA rep and a randomly chosen scrutineer could conduct the voting. The results could be called in or the ballots could be delivered to an auditor. Either process would save members thousands of hours of wasted time and tens of thousands of dollars in transportation costs. Platforms, speeches and information about candidates could be made available on the TECT website or by e-mail many weeks in advance of the vote.

Also, actual figures should be published as to how many people vote at TECT elections and the vote count for each candidate. Percentages hide important information, are potentially misleading and, therefore, are not appropriate. For example, a candidate receiving 90% of the vote could, in actuality, be receiving the endorsement of only a tiny fraction of the approximately 4,000 TECT teachers, if the turnout is as low as a few hundred, which is often the case.

The process of reform could begin with the recognition that we, as members of TECT, undermine our credibility as a bargaining unit if we continue to accept as normal a situation where perhaps 10% of the membership, give or take, chooses our elected TECT representatives.

---

*Vincenzo Tassone  
St. Brendan Catholic School*

*Thank you for raising this important issue. The TECT Executive always welcomes suggestions from the members.*

*During the last round of bargaining many members expressed a desire and need for an advance poll to facilitate a strike vote. After careful study, the TECT Executive organized the Strike Vote Information meeting, as was the usual practice, and also arranged for an alternate date to allow for an advance vote. Members responded positively and were appreciative of this initiative.*

*Similarly, the TECT Executive will examine your suggestions diligently and determine, with input from the membership, how best to serve the voting needs of the Association.*

*As well, we hope that your letter to the editor will encourage other members to comment on this issue. We will be happy to provide space in the next edition of Metro Voice to encourage this debate.*

# The Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

Having attended the TECT Association Representatives Meeting on February 8, 2005, I was left with unanswered questions about the handling, or mishandling, of our Pension Plan.

As a former member of the TECT committee appointed to study the fairness of the current Pension Plan, I found that the committee was not given adequate data to study in deciding if the current pension plan is fair to its members. Why was this data not forthcoming and why was the committee disbanded without completing its work? Does this imply a hidden agenda or motive?

At the Association Representatives meeting, we were told by OTF President, Jim McQueen, that even though there is a current shortfall in the plan, he felt that the current plan was the most viable and fair option. An increase in pension contributions would solve all our problems. I wondered if there could be another viable, fair option, based on capping pension contributions at A4 maximum, since I heard Mr. Lamoureux himself say that this could solve the shortfall problem.<sup>1</sup>

Another concern I had was expressed by one of my colleagues. He asked, 'When I return to my staff, how do I explain that, with the current shortfall in our pension plan, we are still subsidizing the administrators whose contracts we no longer negotiate and thus have no way of controlling their pensionable earnings?' If the current plan is our best option then I would appreciate having the evidence supporting that statement made available to every member.

---

*John Ferrante*

*St. Bernard Catholic School*

*Thank you for the opportunity to address some of the key issues you have alluded to regarding the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP).*

*The ad hoc committee to look at the OTPP served a very important function by identifying concerns about the pension plan and by making recommendations to address them.*

*While the committee has fulfilled its function, the TECT Executive continues to move forward with the original intended goal: To determine whether or not the current pension plan is fair to its members. To that end, the Executive has been very clear in its intentions.*

*TECT is the only OECTA Unit to i) strike a pension committee ii) move motions that allocate monies for actuaries and iii) move motions to the Provincial OECTA AGM to investigate the current pension plan.*

*It is TECT that proposed the following motion to AGM 2005: "That the Provincial Executive investigate the OTPP payout formula, based on "best five years", to determine the extent to which contributions made into the plan by different members relate to benefits received under the plan, and to report those findings to the February 2006 Council of Presidents."*

*The AGM motion was accompanied by the following rationale: "Currently there are members in the pension plan whose salaries are considerably higher than teachers at A4 Max. In certain cases, these salaries are realized only in the last years of contributing to the plan. Some plan members contribute increased premiums for only a small portion of their career, yet they receive substantially higher payouts for their entire pensioned years as a result. A reporting of this information will allow the membership to determine whether or not the present payout formula is equitable to all members in the plan."*

*The TECT Executive has already invited a series of speakers to address pension issues and is also planning a Pension Forum for all members on April 19, 2005. At this forum, Claude Lamoureux, President and Chief Executive Officer of the OTPP, and Horst Schweinbenz, Executive Assistant from Provincial OECTA, will be addressing the membership and answering questions.*

*There is no "hidden agenda". The only motive of the Executive on this issue is to gather the relevant information so that sound decisions can be made not only by the TECT Executive, but also by the TECT membership with regard to the OTPP.*

*Counseling patience is rarely well received when dealing with an issue that is, or is perceived to be, unfair; however, given the complexity and importance of the OTPP, the Executive would rather be painted as prudent and methodical than hasty and shortsighted when dealing with our members' hard earned pensions.*

---

<sup>1</sup> When asked to confirm this statement, Mr. Lamoureux replied by e-mail, "capping the contribution at the A4 maximum will not solve the shortfall problem."



# Honouring Our Retirees of 2004



BONNIE ASHBY



FELICITY ASHBY



ENZA BATTAGLIA



PETER BECKER



MARIA BERGANTINO



FRANCES BIZEAU



MARIE BOEHM



JANINA BOREK



SHEILA BRISTLON



THERESA BRYSON



AL CADIEUX



CARLENE CALABRESE



DONNA CAMPBELL



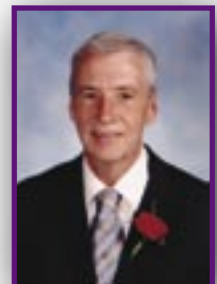
CARMEL CAPUANO



SANDRA CARLINI



CLAUDIO CHICHIARELLI



BILL CLIFFORD

# Retirees



CATHY COSENTINO



MARGARET CUCCUROLLO



FRANCA DELLA PIA



JELIANA DI BIASE



JANE DOMITRIC



JUDY FITZNER



ALEXANDER FLORES



CHRISTINE GAGNON



DIANNE GALLAGHER



LORNA GAMBOZ



FRANK GIANNACE



MARCEL GIDARO



CONNIE GIDARO



DONNA GILBERT



INCORONATA MARIA  
GROSSI



PAUL HOWELL



MARY HOWLETT



MARY HUBBARD



HELEN HUNT



ANNIE KHOJETSIAN

# Retirees



GEMMA LABITAN



PATRICIA LEVER



BARBARA LONGO



BRIAN MAC DONALD



CLAUDIA MANG



SANDRA MARVEN



MARGARET MC ANDREW



CAROL MC NAUGHT



MAUREEN MCKENNA



INEZ MELECA



SANDY MERELAID



LORI MICHELUTTI-GRAF



ICILDA MINOTT



KAREN MOLONEY



ARLENE MURISON



JACKIE NICHOLSON



IRENE NIEPOMNIK



ANDREW NOVINI



MARY SUE NUTSON



JIM OULAHEN

# Retirees



EUSILIA PAGNANELLI



DEL PATERSON



LINDA PIRRI



ROSE RAY



FRANCOISE ROY



CHRISTINE RUSSELL



RUTA RUSINAS



CAROLYN RUST



GREG SALA



OKSANA SHABOTYNSKY



MARIA SILVA



JANE C SMITH



JUDITH TITOV



LUCIA VANELLI



SANTA VATRI



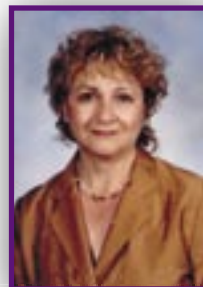
JOSIE VIVONA



TERRY WILSON



JOE ZAMBRI



ANNA ZUCCON

SEE NEXT  
PAGE FOR  
LIST OF  
OTHER  
RETIRES



## ALSO RETIRING IN 2004

JOSEPH	BELZAIRE
PAUL	CHANDLER
ROSE	DA CAMARA
JOSEPHINE	D'ALESSANDRO
IDA	D'ANDREA
RENATA	DE PIERO
VANDA	DELL'AGNESE
ANDREE	DESCHENES
MARIKA	DOKOLASA
BARBARA	EVERS
MYROSLAVA	FALENDYSZ
ANNE	FARRELL
ANN	FERRON
HARRIET	GAIZUTIS
LORRAINE	GEIGER
WANDA	HAMELIN
NADIA	HARAPA
SYLVIA	HART
ROSE	HILB
ADA	IABONI
FERNANDO	IANNUCCI
ELIZABETH	JENNINGS
MARJAN	KOLARIC
KEVIN	LACEY
MARGARET	LAMMING
IDUN	MCKEOWN
JANET	MILES
PATRICK	MULLROONEY
CLARA	PACITTI
JOSEPH	PALANICA
ANNETTE	PAQUIN
ANNA	PARZIALE
CAROLE	PITCHER
PATRICIA	PREDOVICH
BARBARA	SARDONE
PHYLLIS	SCIRIHA
VITO	SINOPOLI
STANLEY	SKAWINSKI
NATALIE	SOJA
URSULA	SOLECKI
MARIE-BETH	SULLIVAN
IRENE	SZUFLITA
LIDA	TERSIGNI
LINDA	VACHON
ANNA	ZIBERT

## POLICY H.M. 30: Complaint Against a Staff Member

**H**ave you ever found out that a parent raised a complaint about you weeks, or even months, after the fact? Have you ever been unable to get details of a parental complaint from your principal? Has your principal or superintendent dealt with a parent complaint before you had the opportunity to address their concerns? According to Board Policy H. M. 30 these scenarios should not occur.

If parents, teachers, or other staff, raise a complaint to your superordinate or trustee, they should be directed to you so that you are given the first opportunity to address that complaint.

If the complainant is not satisfied with your response it would then be appropriate for the complainant to ask the superordinate to assist in the resolution process. At that point, you may seek support from your Association Representative or one of the TECT release officers. Similarly, principals may involve the local superintendent.

According to H.M. 30, you have the right to be at any meeting where a complaint is being made about you. If, for whatever reason, you are not able to attend such a meeting you have the right to know the specific nature of the complaints. This information should be provided as soon as practicable (usually within three days).

If a complaint is made over the phone, and your principal has chosen to listen to the complaint, instead of directing the complainant to you, they are required to provide you with the specific nature of the complaint in writing.

If a complaint is in written form a copy of the correspondence should be immediately forwarded to you.

Board policy makes it clear that anonymous complaints will not be acted upon.

All efforts to address complaints must not only be consistent with Board policy, but they must also be consistent with legislation and provisions of the Collective Agreement.

H.M. 30 attempts to create an environment where complaints can “be dealt with in a just and timely manner that respects the dignity and rights of all parties involved.”

If you are considering making a complaint about another teacher, or colleague on staff, or if a complaint is being made about you, you are encouraged to call the TECT office. The release officers will review relevant policies and offer suggestions on how best to handle the situation.

*Members are encouraged to reference the actual Board policy H.M. 30. The information provided above is designed to highlight policies and regulations only, and should not be read as definitive. Where there is a difference between the information provided above and the information provided in the formal policy, the formal policy will prevail.*

The full policy document, along with all other Board Policy documents, can be viewed at:

<http://www.tcdsb.org/policyregister/default.htm>

H.M. 30 can be found amongst the Human Resources policies.

*Mario Bernardo is the Second Vice-President of the Toronto Elementary Catholic Teachers.*



# Why Inflation Matters

## TECT Salaries from 1981 to 2003

In September of 1981 an A4 Max teacher earned \$36,696. In September of 2003, an A4 Max teacher earned \$74,266. It would be easy to conclude that today's teachers are fairing much better than 22 years ago. Most people would be surprised to find out that a salary of \$36,696 in 1981 is equivalent to the purchasing power of \$76,009 in 2004! Inflation, it seems, matters.

To get an accurate picture of how we have fared as a profession over the past few decades we would need to do more than merely look at the dollar amounts negotiated over that time. We would have to factor in the cumulative inflation over that same period.

Graph #1, on the opposite page, charts the A4 Max. salaries, effective September of each year, from 1981 to 2003. Between 1981 and 1992 a steep upward incline in the graph line gives the impression of dramatic gains for teachers over that period. Even during the dark days between 1993 and 2001 (The days of the Social Contract and the Common Sense Revolution) the graph line gives the appearance that teacher salaries merely stalled rather than declined.

Graph #2 charts all of the A4 Max salaries adjusted for inflation. Using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) each salary identified on Graph #1 was adjusted to reflect 2004 dollars. For example, the 1981 salary of \$36,696 cited in Graph #1 would require \$76,009 in September 2004 dollars (See data point for 1981/82 on Graph #2) to allow a teacher the same purchasing power. What does this mean? It means that when we factor in inflation, an A4 Max teacher earning \$74,266 in September 2003 actually has less purchasing power today than an A4 Max teacher earning \$36,696 in 1981.

If we analyze Graph #2 we can see that the years from 1981 to 2003 have not been a steady upward incline in teacher salaries at all. Instead, we get a clearer picture of how devastating this past decade has been. Between 1985 and 1993 teachers saw their purchasing power (in September 2004 dollars) increase from a low of \$74,450 to a 22 year high in 1992 of \$81,530. Incredibly, with the coming to power of the NDP and the Tories all of the gains of that period, and more, were clawed back. Between 1992 and 2001, teacher purchasing power (In 2004 dollars) went from \$81,530 to a 22 year low of \$73,015!

It was only in the 2002/03 round of negotiations (The round in which we were locked out) that we were able to reverse this ten year pattern of steep decline.

The red horizontal line on Graph #2 represents our September 2003 A4 Max salary in September 2004 dollars.

All data points above the red line indicate years in which TECT A4 Max teachers enjoyed greater purchasing power. All the data points below the red horizontal line represent years in which TECT A4 Max Teachers suffered reduced purchasing power.

In September 2001, TECT teacher salaries were at their lowest ebb in 23 years. Two years later, through your support, and our collective will, we have started to reverse the trend.

It is my hope that when this round of negotiations is done, I will be able to report back that we are continuing the path forward and upward to reclaim the losses sustained over this past decade. I look forward to that day.

### TECT SALARY DATA FOR 1981 TO 2003

As of Sept.	Actual Salary Earned (See Graph #1)	Equivalent Salary In 2004 Dollars (See Graph #2)	Ranking 1 = Best 23 = Worst
1981	\$36 696	\$76 009	13
1982	\$40 366	\$75 815	15
1983	\$42 384	\$75 842	14
1984	\$43 867	\$75 572	17
1985	\$45 004	\$74 450	21
1986	\$47 273	\$75 120	18
1987	\$50 610	\$76 994	10
1988	\$53 697	\$78 442	6
1989	\$56 748	\$78 754	4
1990	\$60 050	\$79 960	2
1991	\$61 551	\$77 732	9
1992	\$65 407	\$81 530	1
1993	\$64 080	\$78 467	5
1994	\$64 807	\$79 202	3
1995	\$65 401 <sup>1</sup>	\$78 168	7
1996	\$66 062 <sup>2</sup>	\$77 768	8
1997	\$66 062 <sup>3</sup>	\$76 541	12
1998	\$66 723	\$76 738	11
1999	\$66 723	\$74 809	20
2000	\$67 951	\$74 188	22
2001	\$68 631	\$73 015	23
2002	\$72 103	\$74 985	19
2003	\$74 266	\$75 598	16

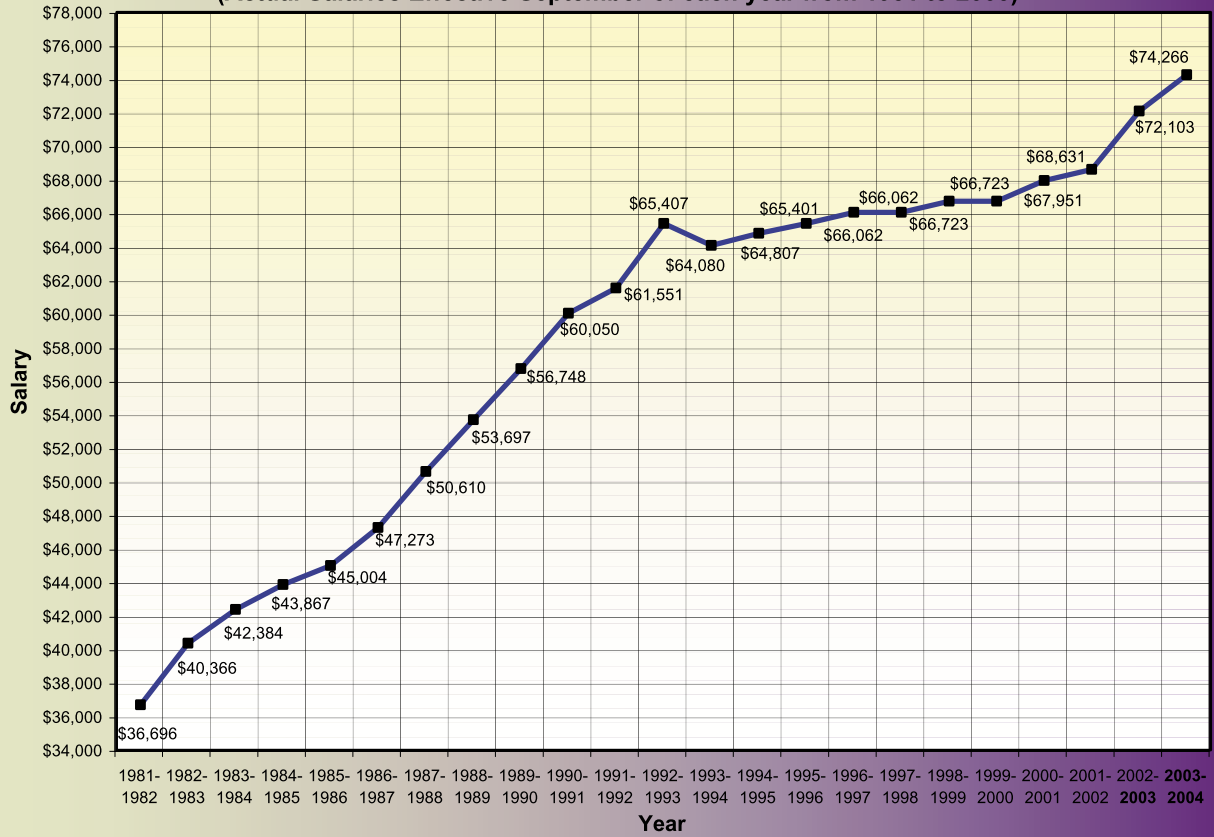
*Mario Bernardo is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President of TECT and a member of the Collective Bargaining Team. Special words of thanks are extended to Anthony Bellissimo for his assistance in preparing this article.*

*If you have any questions or comments, or if you would like to respond to this article, contact Mario Bernardo at (416) 398-6838 or e-mail to [mbernado@tect.org](mailto:mbernado@tect.org)*

<sup>1</sup> Salary rolled back 3.0 % under the Social Contract  
<sup>2</sup> Salary rolled back 1.9% under the Social Contract  
<sup>3</sup> Salary rolled back 1.0 % under the Social Contract

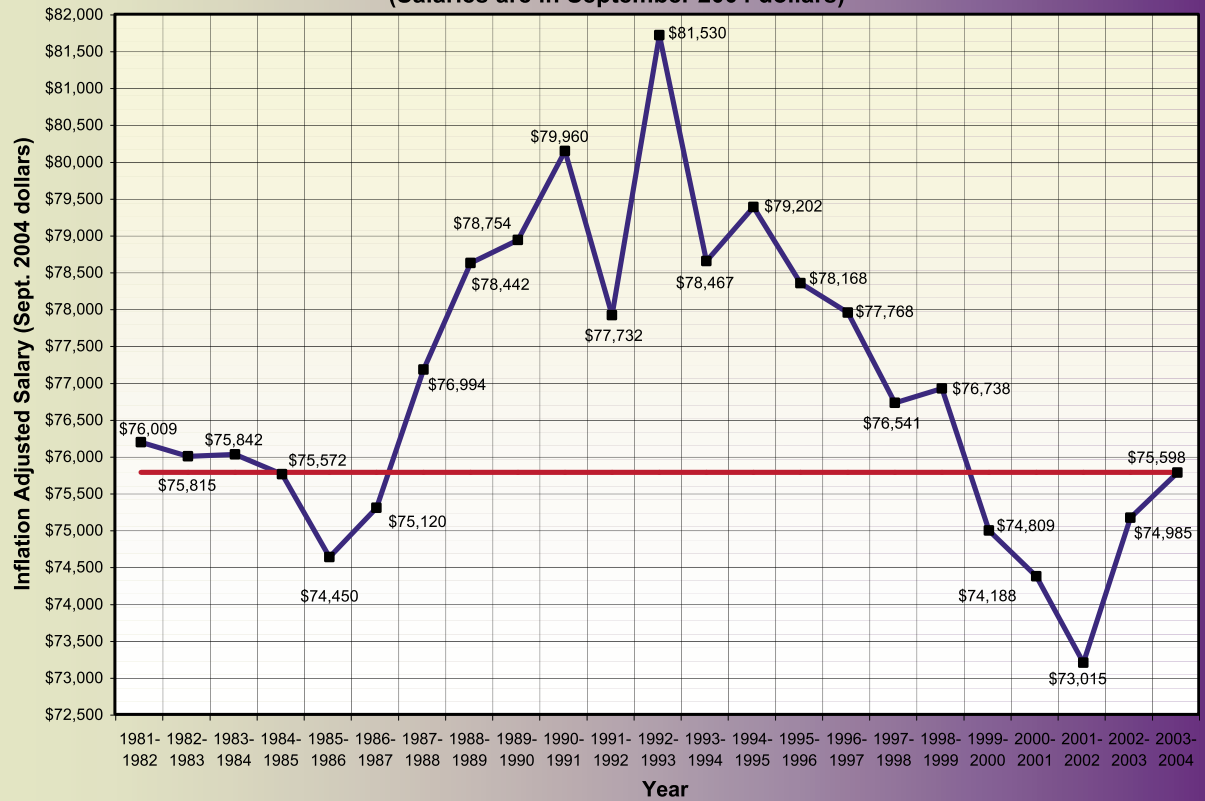
GRAPH # 1

1981-2003 TECT A4 Max Salaries  
(Actual Salaries Effective September of each year from 1981 to 2003)



GRAPH # 2

1981-2003 TECT A4 Max Salaries Adjusted for Inflation  
(Salaries are in September 2004 dollars)



## YOU WALK... KIDS BENEFIT!

On Sunday, May 1, 2005, The Metropolitan Toronto Catholic Education Foundation (MTCEF) is hosting their Annual 5KM Fun Walk. Registration for the MTCEF Fun Walk begins at the CEC (80 Sheppard Avenue, East) at 9:30 am. There is a Mass at 10:00 am and the FUN WALK commences at 11:00 am. Join the Christian Living/Human Rights committee and be part of the 'TECT TEAM' and walk to benefit kids. All participants will receive a free gift bag and t-shirt. Friends and family are welcome. For more information or to register call the TECT office at 416. 398. 6838.

The Metropolitan Toronto Catholic Education Foundation (MTCEF) is the charitable organization of the employees, trustees, parents and community representatives of the Toronto Catholic District School Board. The Foundation provides financial support to the school communities to ensure that all children benefit from a wide spectrum of opportunities that sustain and enhance the educational process.

### The Foundation exists to support:

- Programmes or activities which enhance the Christian presence in the local school community;
- Programmes or activities designed to benefit disadvantaged, marginalized and special need students;
- Education, social, recreational, nutritional and artistic experiences;
- Programmes or activities that assist new Canadians to better integrate into the school community;
- Innovative and experimental programmes, activities or research projects that support the objectives of the foundation.

MTCEF engages in many fundraising initiatives and events such as the Fun Walk, and the Charity Golf Classic and invites participation in the Cents-Off Payroll Deduction Program.

To promote awareness and advocacy, each school/department has a MTCEF representative who helps disseminate information and encourage support.

*Bruno Pileggi is the TECT representative on the MTCEF Board of Directors.*

### An Old Cherokee Story

*An old Cherokee is telling his granddaughter about a fight that is going on inside him. He said it is between two wolves.*

*One is evil: Anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego.*

*The other is good: Joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith.*

*The granddaughter thought about it for a minute and then asked her grandfather, "Which wolf wins?" The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one I feed."*

Author unknown

## INTERNET LIBRARY

### SPECIAL EDUCATION A Guide for Educators

Looking for the ultimate reference to help you get the answers to all the Special Education questions you have?

This comprehensive guide is organized to help teachers quickly and easily access all the information they will likely need regarding Program Planning, the IPRC process, and IEPs.

This reference guide also includes relevant legislation and policy relating to Special Education as well as a section explaining how Special Education is funded.

This is an indispensable guide for Special Education teachers and an invaluable resource for all classroom teachers.

### HOW TO GET THERE

[www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/guide/specedhandbooke.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/guide/specedhandbooke.pdf)

*Internet Library will be a regular feature aimed at providing teachers with useful internet sites that provide helpful resources for use in the classroom and for professional development.*

# Totally Positive Teaching

*A Five Step Approach to Energizing Students and Teachers*

This book is a great read any time during the school year, but perhaps even more poignant at the mid-way point. Ciaccio is an experienced educator who offers a different approach to dealing with career underachievers and the “at-risk, professional misbehaving student”.

According to Ciaccio, traditional teaching methods of control by coercion don’t work with these kids and turn teaching into drudgery. A steady diet of punishment poisons the school climate and intensifies the defiant, oppositional stance.

For the underachiever, the teacher is the last line of defense. “These struggling students have multiple problems: the initial obstacle that derailed the learning process; powerful fears that inhibit learning; negative feelings about themselves; negative labels; and relentless reprimanding, nagging and punishments.”

Suffering the consequences of his maladaptive behaviour all his/her life, these kids need a teacher who can bail them out. In fact, Ciaccio says it is the teacher’s choice whether a child succeeds or fails. “The child is locked into a rigid set of responses and only the teacher, through her/his patience and skill, can unlock that prison door and give that child a chance to make the effort, confront the demons, and eventually triumph over the hopelessness of the past.”

Ciaccio suggests five techniques to avoid or eliminate the negatives and help teachers connect with their students. As a result of their student’s achievement, teachers will grow professionally and experience personal growth. “All educators who uplift students rather than punishing

*Written by Joseph  
Ciaccio & Reviewed by  
Carol Soper*

them, and who make children’s growth and well-being the focus of their professional lives, are doing God’s work on earth.”

Ciaccio offers practical advice to end discipline problems. He also

says that material must make sense to the student and be relevant to his/her life. Connections must be made between student’s interests and new learning. Style is as important as substance when packaging the content.

We must take into account individual differences, learning styles and multiple intelligences because a “one-size-fits-all” approach to education lets too many children fall through the cracks. Many underachievers who prefer tactile and kinesthetic approaches, are often highly peer motivated, have a short attention span and are repelled by routine class work.

Zero tolerance for failure must become classroom practice. Ciaccio offers lots of ways to implement this. Underachievers should be guided to success in order to give options and hope. Building upon successes creates the mindset of being capable which is essential for academic progress.

Rather than bemoan the fact that these children are in our lives, we must place their needs at the top of our priorities for “the quality of the child’s entire future depends on his ability to escape the trap that imprisons him-to develop his abilities and become a responsible citizen. He can’t do it on his own. The child’s fate is in the teacher’s hands.”

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*Carol Soper is a teacher at St. Kevin Catholic School and a member of the Communications Committee*

## IMPORTANT DATES

### ***IN THE FIRST THREE WEEKS OF MARCH***

The principal must consult with the LSSAC about projected enrollment, staff allocation and school organization for the coming school year. These consultations should serve as the basis for a tentative staffing model and should include any available positions as well as the names of teachers who may be surplus to such model. *See Article 9.01*

### ***MARCH 15***

The initial Transfer List should be available at your school. *See Article 7.01 (b)*

### ***APRIL 15***

The supplementary Transfer List should be available at your school. *See Article 7.01 (b)*

### ***APRIL 30***

The transfer period begins. *See Article 7*

### ***NO LATER THAN FRIDAY APRIL 22***

The LSSAC is to report to the full staff regarding the tentative staffing model for the following year. *See Article 5.07 (d) (ii)*

### ***APRIL 30***

Teachers must be informed of their teaching assignments for the following year no later than this date (based on the tentative staffing model). *See Article 9.01 (h) (ii)*

### ***MAY 1***

Deadline date to submit proof of qualifications to receive Category upgrading retroactive to January 1. *See Article 3.09*

### ***MAY 15***

Date by which notice should be given by teachers electing to resign on June 30. (Such notice may be waived by mutual consent) *See Article 8.08*

### ***MAY 16***

Deadline date for transfer requests. *See Article 7.01 (a)*

### ***FIRST AND THIRD WEEK OF MAY***

Lists of available positions will be in schools. *See Article 9.01 (g)*

# TORONTO ELEMENTARY CATHOLIC TEACHERS

## **THE TORONTO ELEMENTARY CATHOLIC TEACHERS**

Cordially invite you to the

### **Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Forum**

On Tuesday, April 19, 2005

At the TECT Office

951 Wilson Avenue, Unit 12

5:00 p.m.

Featuring Special Guest Speakers

### **Claude Lamoureux**

President and Chief Executive Officer

Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

and

### **Horst Schweinbenz**

Executive Assistant

Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association

All members are welcome to take advantage of this unique opportunity to learn more about the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

Light refreshments will be served

**Please RSVP**

**if you are interested in attending by calling  
Anthony Bellissimo**

**(416) 398-6838**

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## ...and we'll say thanks with a gift

Toronto Catholic School Board Employees Credit Union is looking to grow their membership and with your help we can reach our goal. We're trying to add 100 new members in the next 3 months. So, if you know anyone within the employee base of the school board who isn't currently a member of TCSBECU and wants the best in personalized banking, send them over to us and we'll help them discover the benefits of Credit Union membership.

In appreciation of your help we'll thank you with a special gift.

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